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WAR NEWS.

What has been done of late by the two grand armies, the one near Richmond and the other in the vicinity of Corinth, has not been promulgated. It has been believed for some time that there would be some tall running or hard fighting done at both of those places before the end of May, but if either has transpired not so much as the first sound thereof has been transmitted across the continent. That something will be done soon no one acquainted with the position of the two armies and that of the Confederate forces opposed to them doubts. The latest assurances were that all were intending to fight.

In the absence of any connected history of the progress of the war, we have collected the following items, which may suffice till some more complete narrative shall come to hand.

Advices from General Burnside's division, early in May, stated that he had organized a regiment of North Carolinians, who were to be armed, equipped and mounted to defend their homes against Secessionists, and that his army had captured horses enough from the enemy, during the campaign in the Old North State up to that time, to mount two full companies. A subsequent and late dispatch announced that the work of organizing the regiment was progressing but it was doubtful if more than two companies could be raised.

On the 8th of May the Federal fleet at Fort Monroe, consisting of the Monitor, Naugatuck, Seminole, Susquehanna, Decatur and Sar Jacinto, made an attack on Sewall's Point, and after a bombardment of two hours the Merrimac appeared, when the Federal fleet returned to their former position, with the exception of the Monitor, which remained to get a fight with the Merrimac, but at 5 o'clock in the afternoon she also returned, leaving the Merrimac lying off the Point, where she remained over night. How much damage was done to the enemy's works, in the attack, was not known, but a dense smoke arose from the Point, late in the afternoon. The Confederate batteries replied, and most of the fleet kept at long range. The flag staff at Sewall's Point was twice shot away. None of the enemy's shot took effect.

The Captain of the Veron, in his official account of his fight with the rebel gunboat Morgan, states that the Captain of the gunboat set fire to and burned her up, with over forty wounded men on board.

Gen. Butler had declared martial law in New Orleans, and suppressed the collection of taxes, excepting such as are imposed by the United States. The Mayor and City Council had been arrested and imprisoned.

Gen. Fremont is reported to have given the enemy several thrashings in his department and driven the guerrillas out of Green Brier, Mercer and Giles counties, Western Va.

On the 10th of May, Gen. Paine's division on the left wing of the Federal lines, near Corinth, was attacked by a superior force of the enemy and, after a hot engagement of an hour's duration, in which he lost one hundred and fifty in killed and wounded, he fell back to Farmington. The Confederate force was subsequently reported by a deserter to consist of thirty-five thousand men under Generals Bragg, Price, Van Dorn and Hardee and that their loss in officers and men was heavy. One of their generals was reported killed—supposed, in the first instance by the Federal officers to have been Gen. Bragg, but subsequently it was believed to have been Gen. Price. Gen. Pope, in his official account of the affair, states the enemy's force at twenty thousand, and that they were held in check five hours before a retreat was ordered.

On the 13th, the President issued a proclamation declaring the blockades of the ports of Beaufort, Port Royal, and New Orleans, shall

so far cease from the first of June next, that commercial intercourse, except as to that contraband of war may from that time be carried on subject to the laws of the United States.

It was reported that the towns of Palestine and Burning Springs, Va., were burned on the 14th, by guerrillas.

General Curtis was marching on the capital of Arkansas on the 14th, and it was stated that after he left, Secessionists were more plentiful in north-western Arkansas and Southern Missouri than when the Federal army was in that vicinity.

Gen. Hunter had issued an order in the following words:

"The three States of Georgia, Florida and South Carolina, comprising the military department of the South, having declared themselves no longer under the protection of the United States, it becomes a military duty to declare martial law, this was accordingly done on the 25th of April. Slavery and martial law in a free country are altogether incompatible, persons in Georgia, Florida and South Carolina, heretofore held as slaves, are therefore declared forever free."

The Naval Engagement at Fort Wright.

The reports in relation to the fight between the Federal and Confederate fleets at Fort Wright on the 10th inst., which were first put in circulation were, if those of a later date were true, not exactly correct, and in some respects utterly false in detail.

The first announcement was that an engagement had taken place, lasting about an hour and a half, in which the Federal gunboats had repulsed the enemy's fleet, sinking one of their boats and blowing up two others. The next report gave details of the principal occurrences of the fight, stating that at six o'clock in the morning, the Confederate steam ram Louisiana came up accompanied by four gunboats and opened fire on the gunboat Cincinnati which was stationed in advance of the rest of the flotilla, and which kept the enemy in check till the Federal fleet came to her assistance; that before the arrival of any portion of the fleet, which was at some distance up the river, the ram finding her guns were not effective against the iron armor of the Cincinnati, approached her with the evident intention of running her under, and that Captain Stembel, anticipating the intention of his antagonist, prepared for the assault by putting the steam batteries of the Cincinnati in readiness, and as the ram came within close range, the head of the Cincinnati was turned causing the ram to run alongside, when Captain Stembel drew a pistol and shot the pilot of the Louisiana through the head. The contest that ensued was represented as having been intensely exciting, and the crew of each boat armed with cutlasses, carbines and boarding pikes discharged volley after volley at each other in quick succession, and then the steam batteries of the Cincinnati opened with terrible effect, throwing volumes of steam and boiling water upon the crew of the Louisiana instantly clearing her deck and causing her to withdraw.

While the conflict between the Cincinnati and the Louisiana was progressing, the Confederates were reinforced by three other vessels, one of which was the iron-clad boat Mallory, all of which engaged the Cincinnati, without injuring her, as the shots of the enemy glanced from her iron plating without damaging her in the least, her guns, all the time, pouring shot and shell into the Confederate boats with fearful effect. During the engagement the Mallory approached the Cincinnati to do what the Louisiana had failed to accomplish; as she came near the Federal gunboat St. Louis, of which till then no mention had been made in connection with the battle, and which had probably just arrived, bore down upon her with a full head of steam, struck her amidship and nearly cut her in two, sinking her, as is stated, in a few minutes. While this feat was being accomplished the other boats of the Federal fleet engaged the enemy, and the battle raged with terrible fury, and during the deadly strife one of the Confederate boats blew up with a tremendous explosion, and shortly after, another—and both were reported blown to atoms and everyone on board lost. Under cover of the smoke, the remainder of the enemy's boats retired at twenty minutes past seven o'clock. In conclusion it was stated, that the Cincinnati, which bore the brunt of the fight, was not materially injured and would be put in complete repair in twen-

ty-four hours, and that the St. Louis, which sunk the Mallory, was but slightly damaged, and was ready for another action. No other boats were injured in the least, as per report.

A dispatch from Cairo, three days after the engagement, stated that the Cincinnati was more seriously damaged than was at first reported; and that finding she was in a sinking condition her commander run her into shoal water, where she went down, and had four feet of water on her gun deck, and that a wrecking derrick had gone down to raise her, and bring her up to Cairo for repairs. The report stated that the Cincinnati had one man killed and three wounded. Capt. Stembel was one of the latter, he received a severe wound in the neck. It was also stated in that report that the Mound City was struck by the steam ram Mallory, and ran into shoal water and sunk, but had been raised and brought to Cairo to be put in fighting condition.

The Confederate gunboat or ram, Mallory, was not sunk by the gunboat St. Louis, as at first reported, neither was she very materially injured, according to the statements of deserters. The Cincinnati was raised on the 16th, and, at latest dates, both fleets were repairing damages, as reported, and preparing for another engagement.

Nothing further having been said concerning the blowing up of the two Confederate gunboats, as reported on the day of the battle, at which time the Federal officers seem to have been considerably excited, and could not clearly discriminate between the Federal and those of the enemy, it is considered somewhat uncertain about the explosions having occurred as was heralded before the excitement had abated.

The Capture of Norfolk.

A dispatch from Fortress Monroe, on the evening of May 10th, stated that Norfolk, Portsmouth and the Navy yard were in the possession of the Federal forces under Gen. Wool. That announcement was hailed with demonstrations of joy wherever the Stars and Stripes floated throughout the length and breadth of the land. As has too often been the case, since the commencement of the war when any important event has transpired some of the rumors first put in circulation were fabulous or not strictly correct, and the brilliancy of the achievement was not considered so great and glorious after all the circumstances connected with it were made known, as when first heralded to the nation. There was no fighting done. The march to and occupation of the place was effected by Gen. Wool, without the firing of a gun; and, if not a brilliant, it was a bloodless victory.

The circumstances and facts connected with the achievement, as gathered from the various reports in circulation, are believed to be substantially as follows:

On the afternoon of the 9th of May, Gen. Wool embarked at Fortress Monroe with a strong military force and effected a landing that night, at Willoughby Point, and the next morning, he commenced his march for Norfolk. After marching a few miles, he came to a place that had been prepared for a battle field by felling trees, digging rifle pits and constructing other defences, which had been abandoned that morning. A few recruits were captured near there, who stated that Sewall's Point was evacuated the night before by the four companies that had garrisoned the place for some weeks.

At about mid-day they came up with the enemy posted on the opposite side of a creek with three guns. They had set fire to the bridge over the stream, which was about a quarter of a mile wide, which was burning when Gen. Wool's command came up. The enemy fired a few shots and retreated. A circuitous route was then taken and the advance column arrived at the fortifications, a mile from the city, about five o'clock in the afternoon. The fortifications had been deserted as had also several camps on the way, and no opposition was made to their advance after they had left the creek, and few, if any Confederate troops were seen. Norfolk and all the defences in the vicinity had been evacuated and what guns had been left behind had been spiked.

The Mayor, with a committee of citizens, met Gen. Wool in the suburbs of the city, and arrangements were soon made between the mayor and the general by which the city was given up on condition that private property

should be respected. General Wool went into the town with the mayor but his command remained outside. A proclamation was immediately issued by Gen. Wool, appointing Gen. Viele, military commander, and ordering that no soldier be allowed to enter the city without a permit from his commanding officer.

The Navy-yard had been completely destroyed, and all the steam-boats and vessels in the harbor had been burned or blown up. The people were in the highest state of excitement, but quietness prevailed during the night and the next morning, the excitement was considerably allayed. Portsmouth was occupied by a Massachusetts regiment, and the stars and stripes were soon seen floating both there and in Norfolk.

The Merrimac was blown up at Craney Island the next morning after having been run ashore and deserted by her officers and men. Between Craney Island and Norfolk there were several earthworks mounting about seventy cannon which were left in position.

Gen. Viele, on assuming command as military governor, issued a proclamation announcing to the citizens that private associations and domestic quiet would not be interfered with, but violations of order, and disrespect for government would be followed by the arrest of the offenders. The policy of the officers seemed to be to let things pass along as quietly as possible. Up to the latest dates the mayor and city authorities had not taken the oath of allegiance, and refused to do so. It had not transpired what course would be taken in relation to the matter, but it was believed they would be arrested.

Miscellaneous Items.

Ex-Secretary Cameron, minister to Russia, and Bayard Taylor, Secretary of Legation, sailed from New York on the Persia, on the 7th of May.

President Lincoln made a visit to Fortress Monroe, arriving there on the morning of May 7th, and in the afternoon went over to Newport News to take a view of the Merrimac, which was lying off Craney Island.

Democratic members of Congress have issued an address to the people, setting forth the advantages of a party organization, which they consider essential to the preservation of public liberty, and state that such organization has now become a vital necessity. They invite all without reference to location or political predilections to come forward and unite with them in the great work of preserving the Constitution and Union upon the basis of equality.

There was a destructive fire in Troy, N. Y., on the 10th, which burned nearly six hundred buildings, sweeping over fifty acres of ground in the 2d, 3d and 4th wards. The houses destroyed were mostly private dwellings and among the best in the city. There were four churches and several hotels burned, and one thousand feet of the Rensselaer and Saratoga railroad bridge. The loss was estimated at \$3,000,000.

A fire broke out about the same time near Stony Brook, Long Island, and raged four or five days, sweeping over sixty thousand acres of land, principally in Brook Haven, destroying property, estimated at a half million.

A fire broke out on the night of the 11th, in Boston, and destroyed property to the amount of two hundred thousand dollars.

Some three weeks since, about a thousand slaves simultaneously left their masters, in Prince George's county, and went into the District of Columbia.

Secretaries Seward and Wells, and Attorney-general Bates were at Fort Monroe on the 15th.

The Military Board of Kentucky, created by the Legislature, and who, under its authority, have wrested the reins of government from the hands of Gov. Magoffin, have made representation that the emancipation act of Congress relative to the District of Columbia, together with the Confiscation bills pending, had created much uneasiness and disaffection in that State, and operated unfavorably to the Union cause.

COL. BURTON'S COMMAND.—We expect Col. Burton and the company that was sent out as escort to Senator Hooper will arrive in the city on Saturday. We have heard of no casualties.