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Arrest of Escaped Prisoners.

It will be remembered that on the night of the 30th of April five convicts escaped from the Penitentiary, three of whom afterwards returned, stating to the Warden that they had only been taking a May-walk. Alfred Higgins, a notorious thief, convicted in Utah county of grand larceny, and William Ekels, convicted in this county of a similar offence, being of the number of walkers, walked so far that they resolved not to return, in other words, made good their escape. That they subsequently visited some of their clan in Provo was reported and believed, after which no trace of them could be obtained till recently when it was rumored that they had gone north.

A report is now in circulation that a few days since a man by the name of Thomas, of Slaterville, Weber county, having had a fine horse stolen from him, got on the track of the thieves and followed them northward towards Bear River ferry; that on his arrival at Brigham city he procured a warrant, which was placed in the hands of the sheriff of Box Elder county, who, taking with him a sufficient posse, followed after the villains, who were believed to be making their way to the Salmon river mines, and that at daylight the next morning the officer with his posse came upon a camp of some twenty gold-seekers in Malad valley, somewhat unexpectedly, and thereupon two fellows attempted to escape, but were soon taken alive and unharmed, who were ascertained to be Higgins and Ekels, the two absconding May-walkers.

Four animals were taken, as reported, from the company's band, pointed out as having been brought there by the prisoners, two of which had been stolen from citizens of Brigham city. One of the other two was a bay mare, and the other a yellowish or sorrel mul, supposed to have been stolen from citizens of Provo. Thomas' horse was not found and had probably been taken by some other thief or thieves for gold hunting purposes, for which, more than two of the scape-graces who have gone with others to the mines, will take animals whenever opportunity may present, the fear of incarceration in the Penitentiary to the contrary notwithstanding.

There is evidently but one effectual way of reforming that kind of thieves, and when that method shall be adopted by legislative enactment there will be but little or no use for a State prison, and for grand larceny no one will be indicted for a second offence.

The captured felons will, if the law be honored, soon be returned to the prison from whence they escaped, to get out again, and steal another outfit for the gold fields of Washington or Cariboo.

Since the foregoing was in type we have been informed that the prisoners have "come up missing." Particulars not ascertained.

THE FRENCH IN MEXICO.—A dispatch from Orizaba, Mexico, of the 9th of May, received at Washington, stated that the French army had been attacked on their march towards the capital, when within a few leagues of that place, by a force of ten thousand Mexican, and repulsed with a loss of five hundred killed. Later intelligence states that, having been defeated by the Mexicans, the French had retreated to Vera Cruz.

HIGH WATER IN UTAH COUNTY.—The American Fork, Provo, Hobbie Creek and Spanish Fork rivers, with other lesser streams in Utah county, are reported higher than ever before known by the "oldest inhabitant," and impassable for teams.

LAWS OF THE ELEVENTH SESSION.—The laws enacted by the Legislature of the Territory of Utah can be obtained, by those entitled to receive copies, by making the proper application to Secretary Fuller.

General Banks' Defeat and Repulse from Virginia.

The reports that have recently come to hand relative to the disastrous defeat of the army under Gen. Banks, and his hasty retreat down the valley of the Shenandoah and across the Potomac at Williamsport into Maryland, are not much more specific than those first received; the loss and damage sustained, and the principal incidents of the several battles not having been made public.

It is stated in the reports that have been permitted to be published, that the first attack on Col. Kentry's command near Front Royal, was made by a large force of cavalry, under Ashby, with several infantry regiments, at noon on the 23d of May, when a battle ensued, which lasted till night. The first fight is represented to have taken place on the east side of the Shenandoah, where a repulse took place, and Col. Kentry withdrew to the west side, destroying one of the bridges, and that on the west side of the river another stand was made, and some two hundred rounds of shot, shell and grape were fired at the enemy. The last fight is said to have taken place four miles below Front Royal. It was stated by a soldier, that in the last charge Ashby displayed a white flag, until within short range, when it was thrown down, and a rush made upon the Federal troops, giving them no quarter. The New York cavalry broke, and rode through the ranks of the infantry, and it was stated, by a captain who escaped, that neither the wounded nor the dying were spared by the Confederates. Col. Kentry was wounded and taken prisoner, and of the eight or nine hundred of the Federal troops engaged in the fight on that day, it was stated that only one hundred and fifty escaped, and the Maine and Vermont cavalry, without saying how many, were all killed and captured, excepting one captain, one lieutenant, and six men.

On the 24th, it is stated that Gen. Banks telegraphed to the Department, from Winchester, that he had removed from Strasburg to that place, to secure his stores and trains, and that a strong attack was made on the trains at Middletown by the enemy, which was repulsed. The next day he telegraphed from Martinsburg to the Secretary of War that the enemy attacked him at daybreak that morning with a force estimated at fifteen thousand, consisting of Jackson's and Ewell's divisions, that his men stood their ground, and fought well for a time, when two regiments broke their lines, under the heavy fire of the Confederates, and the right wing fell back with considerable confusion, but after passing through the town they re-formed, and continued to march in good order to Martinsburg, twenty-two miles. He stated that his entire force engaged was less than four thousand, consisting of Forman's and Donnelly's brigades, with two regiments of cavalry and two batteries of artillery, and that his loss was considerable, as was that of the Confederates.

A Washington dispatch on the 25th, announced that it was understood that Jackson's army was advancing from Winchester towards Harper's Ferry; that Gen. Banks was being reinforced, and that prompt measures had been taken to meet the exigency of the case. A dispatch from Gen. Banks, at Williamsport, that evening, stated that his whole force had arrived there, and had made good their retreat across the Potomac.

An official dispatch from Gen. Banks, on the evening of the 25th, stated that although serious, his loss was much less than might have been anticipated, considering the great disparity of force, and the long-matred plans of the enemy, which aimed at the capture of his whole army; that his command encountered the enemy in a constant succession of attacks and well-contested engagements, at Strasburg, Middletown, Newton, Winchester and other places, their force being from fifteen to twenty thousand, while that of his own was less than four thousand, and that it was a source of gratification that his supply train, numbering five hundred wagons, subject to constant attack in front, rear, and flank, was brought through with a loss of only about fifty wagons, on a forced march of fifty-three miles, thirty-five of which was performed in one day. A dispatch on the 27th, represented that the soldiers composing Gen. Banks' command were in excellent spirits, and were then occupying both sides of the Potomac.

During the retreat, Gen. Banks is said to

have been in the rear of his army, and when in the vicinity of Martinsburg, a shell exploded within four feet of him without injury. It is not stated, in any of the reports, at what point Jackson discontinued the pursuit of Gen. Banks' column. A Williamsport dispatch of the 26th stated, that the enemy pursued them the night previous, but had not appeared that morning, and that the labors of the night were fearful. It was announced, later in the day, that Jackson with his whole force was retreating from the valley, but the report was subsequently stated to be incorrect, and that he was in the vicinity of Winchester on the 28th with his whole force, and that his advance had made an attack on Harper's Ferry, and had been repulsed. In corroboration of that report, a correspondent of the Tribune in writing from Harper's Ferry, said, that the operations there on the 28th and 29th reflected great credit on Gen. Saxton, as but for his exertions, Jackson with twenty thousand men would have pushed over the bridge into Maryland towards Baltimore. Such was unquestionably his intention, at least, prisoners so stated, and from the preparations that were made to meet the exigency of the case by the government, it is evident that fears were entertained that the war for a season might be transferred to the left bank of the Potomac. The Baltimore American of the 28th, stated that eighteen thousand men had been sent to reinforce Gen. Banks, and several car-loads of heavy guns from the Washington Navy yard.

The Secretary of War issued an order on the 25th, taking possession of all the railroads in the United States, and requiring all railroad companies to hold themselves in readiness to transport troops and munitions of war, to the exclusion of all other business, when needed by the War Department.

On the 26th, Gov. Curtin, of Pennsylvania, issued an order, as he said, upon the pressing requisition of the President in the existing emergency, directing all the generals and colonels throughout the commonwealth to muster their respective commands immediately and march to Washington or to such point as might be indicated in a future order. Gov. Andrews, of Massachusetts, issued a similar order on the same day, requiring all the active militia of the State to report themselves on Boston Common that evening. Reports both from Boston and Philadelphia, that night, stated that the call made on the military of the respective States was being responded to with alacrity; and a large force from each State would be in readiness to march that evening or the next morning. If other States were called upon for troops to march to the capital, it has not been made so to appear, although on the evening of the 26th it was announced that troops had left Indianapolis for Washington city.

Some very hard stories were told about the barbarities practised by the Confederates towards the unfortunate soldiers who fell into their hands in the several battles, and during the hurried retreat, such as shooting and bayoneting the wounded, which may have been more or less true; but whether so or not, such things may be expected before the sanguinary conflict shall have terminated.

The Battles before Richmond.

There was much skirmishing, and several battles were fought in the vicinity of Richmond, according to reports, between the Federal and the Confederate armies, during the week ending on the first of June, in which many fighting men were killed and wounded on both sides; the exact number, however, has not been made known, but the destruction of life is said to have been fearfully great.

On the 27th of May, there was a battle at Hanover Court House, in which the Confederate loss is stated at one thousand, and the Federal at three hundred and seventy-five, in killed, wounded and missing.

According to dispatches from Gen. McClellan to the War Department, an attack was made on Gen. Casey's brigade, occupying the right of his line, and stationed near the turnpike leading from Battam's Bridge, by Gen. Hill's division of five brigades, mostly South Carolina, Virginia and Georgia troops, which was disastrous to the Federal army, as Gen. Casey was forced to retire and lost all his camp equipage and artillery. His division was composed principally of New York and Pennsylvania regiments, some of which became demoralized, and behaved, not very heroically.

After having been driven back some distance, Gen. Heintzleman came up with his division, checked the advance of the enemy and caused them to fall back, and when night came had recovered all the lost ground excepting about one half mile. Gen. Sumner crossed the Chickahominy in about two hours after the battle commenced, with two divisions, and took position on Gen. Heintzleman's right, enclosing three divisions of the enemy under Generals Huger, Longstreet and Rains. A most desperate fight is said to have taken place. The Confederates, it is admitted, fought bravely, but fell back before the bayonet every time a charge was made.

The fight was resumed on Sunday morning, June 1st, by Gen. Sumner's division, at daybreak, and is said to have lasted nearly the whole day, extending along the whole line, a distance of fifteen miles. The enemy are reported to have been driven back at every point, excepting by Gen. Casey's brigade, which had gained no ground up to the time the fighting ceased, on Sunday night. The fighting was said to be of the fiercest kind, and during the day four separate bayonet charges were made by the Federal troops. Five hundred prisoners were taken, and over twelve hundred of the enemy were left dead upon the field.

The Federal loss in the two day's fight before Richmond, if definitely ascertained, has not been announced. A vague report stated that three thousand were killed and wounded, but two members of Congress who were at White House after the battle, saw two trains arrive there with over two thousand wounded, who were transferred to vessels to be distributed among the hospitals below, and they said there were many more to come, besides the many who were too severely wounded to be removed. The Confederate loss is estimated at ten thousand, based upon the report of contrabands and deserters. Gen. J. E. Johnston is said to be among the severely wounded.

Among the prisoners taken by Gen. McClellan were several officers of distinction. A large percentage of officers are reported killed on both sides. The fighting was, unquestionably, as sanguine and destructive as any that has been done during the war. Both armies claim the victory.

Evacuation of Corinth.

The Confederates, as per report, commenced evacuating Corinth on the night of the 29th of May, but conducted their movements so skillfully that Gen. Halleck was not aware of what they were doing for some time, and their fortifications, which are represented as having been exceedingly strong, were not occupied by the Federal army till the morning of the 31st.

On the night of the 23th, Gen. Halleck reported that he sent a detachment of two thousand cavalry to destroy the bridges on the railroads forty miles south of Corinth, which was subsequently reported to have been done; after forced marches of day and night through a country obstructed by the enemy. The official report of the expedition, stated that they tore up the track of the Mobile and Ohio road in many places, blew up one culvert, burned up the depot at Booneville with a train of twenty-six cars loaded with provisions, destroyed ten thousand stand of arms, and paroled two thousand prisoners. The enemy had been apprised of the movement, and had, as represented, a train of cars running up and down the road with flying artillery and five thousand infantry to prevent the success of the expedition. It was further stated, that before the road was destroyed, a large portion of Beauregard's army had passed down, the balance had to take another route, some on foot, who were greatly annoyed by Gen. Pope's division, who was sent in pursuit, and many of them are reported to have been taken prisoners.

BEAUTIFUL SHOWERS.—On Thursday and Friday of last week, there were several small showers, attended with some thunder; but the amount of water which fell in the valley, was, however, not much, and did but little good to vegetation. About eleven o'clock on Friday night, it commenced pouring down beautifully, and continued till about nine on Saturday morning, watering the fields and gardens finely. There was another splendid shower on Saturday night; and a very general irrigation is reported to have taken place throughout Great Salt Lake valley.