

Ramors of a Battle on Wednesday.

Report that Lee's Left Flank Has Been Turned.

ARMORED CAPTURE OF FIFTEEN GUNS.

The Enemy Disposed to Stand Their Ground.

A DECISIVE BATTLE LOOKED FOR.

WEATHER GOOD—ROADS DRYING UP.

Meade's Army in Excellent Condition.

No Later Official News from Gen. Butler.

HIS LATE MOVEMENTS DETAILED.

HE RETIRES TO HIS INTRENCHMENTS.

Good News from General Sherman.

ROME, GA., OCCUPIED BY OUR FORCES.

WAR DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL DISPATCHES.

Secretary Stanton to Gen. Dix—No Later News from Grant—No Later News from Butler—Good News from Sherman—He is Beyond Kingston—Rome Occupied by a Part of Sherman's Forces.

WASHINGTON, May 19—10:15 p. m. To Major-Gen. DIX: No official reports of military operations to-day have been received by this Department from Gen. Grant or Gen. Butler.

Reports from Gen. Sherman's command, dated at Kingston, Ga., 2 p. m., to-day, announce that Sherman reached Kingston and encamped last night. This morning he advanced upon the enemy, who again retreated.

The dispatch states that while it was being written, Hooker's and Howard's guns were hammering at Johnston, and the two armies were in plain sight of each other two miles east of Kingston.

Davis's division of the 14th Corps is in possession of Rome. Gen. Sherman reported the weather fine, roads good, and country more open and less mountainous.

SPECIAL DISPATCHES OF THE N. Y. TRIBUNE.

Operations of Tuesday—Strength of Our Army Increasing—Care of the Wounded—News from Sheridan—A Deserved Promotion—Gen. Barlow's Achievement.

Special Dispatch to the N. Y. Tribune. HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF POTOMAC, May 18, 1864. Little was done all day yesterday beyond reconnoitering the enemy's position, resting our men, and getting up supplies and ammunition from the rear.

A strong force was visible from headquarters with the naked eye, upon the crest of a high hill beyond Spotsylvania Court-House, but there was an evident endeavor on his part to exhibit his force, which of course would receive no other interpretation than that it was a strong rear guard established, this conspicuous to cover his further retreat.

Our wounded are nearly or quite all sent in to Frederickburg and Washington. About 300 of these left at the Wilderness were also brought in yesterday. They had been robbed of everything by guerrillas and Mosby's men.

The reports from the hospitals are exceedingly encouraging. There are less fever supervening, and as yet no hospital gangrene apparent, and the general health of the men wonderfully good, in view of the fearful joltings they have endured in the long and tedious transportations.

gallant exploit of the whole war, has been so erroneously stated by reporters that it may without impropriety be given again, as can now be done authoritatively. In the daring assault of the enemy's works on the night of the 12th inst., Hancock left the affair with the 1st Division of the 2d Corps, under Barlow, and the 3d Division, under Birney, each to make its own formations. Barlow's division got an advanced position on the night of the 12th. Barlow, on the night of the 12th, massed his men into columns, and, owing to his advanced position and the better marching ground, was the first to enter the first line of Rebel works.

Birney formed his division into three lines, and so advanced, while Gibbon and Mead (3d and 4th Divisions) advanced as supports. The 1st Division, under Barlow, swept on in the advance, clearing the earthworks, and performing prodigies of valor, while the 3d, under Birney, following immediately upon the 1st, secured all that the 1st Division had accomplished. It is said the intrepid "Boy General," as he is sometimes called, was the first to mount the parapet and cheer his command onward, and it is for this heroic action that the Lieut.-Gen. Promotes him.

It will be remembered that he was wounded on the Peninsula, and again at Gettysburg, and in both instances, as was supposed, mortally; but he is good yet for the ending up of this dire rebellion. The incident of his noble wife riding through the leaden hail of bullets into the village of Gettysburg in search of the General, then a prisoner and wounded, will be remembered by all. She is now devoting herself, with other noble women, to the care of the wounded at Fredericksburg.

Gen. Carroll to whom the Associated Press report assigns the honor of the capture of the Rebel works, guns, colors, Generals, &c., was only in the support, and, while all did their duty nobly and heroically, it is due to history that the merit of praise should rest where the Lieutenant-General has correctly placed it.

A band of eight of Mosby's men were captured yesterday several miles above Bell Plain. Their persons were loaded with various Yankee souvenirs, including quantities of greenbacks, indicating that they had been doing a very prosperous business in the capture of and robbery of our wounded men and stragglers.

A rumor is circulating in camp that a guerrilla who shot one of our wounded men through the bowels, as he was making his way through the woods, was caught, tried and executed yesterday.

Operations on Wednesday—Skirmishing—Prospect of a Battle—Lee Obstinately Funnishment of Guerrillas. Special Dispatch to the N. Y. Tribune.

WASHINGTON, Thursday, May 19—12:10 p. m. Your correspondent "Beta" sends the following, dated Headquarters Army of the Potomac, May 18 11 p. m.:

Since forwarding my first dispatch this morning, the desultory skirmish firing, which commenced at day-break, has grown into a very considerable battle. The enemy discovering our change of position last night, and taking advantage of the same, were found to have dashed all their strength on our right, designing, no doubt, one more desperate assault to break our lines and get through to our supply trains.

This movement of the foe, of course, occasioned a re-occupation of our old positions yesterday morning, and it was here we fought our extreme right, and with the 2d and 6th Corps, that the struggle has been kept up with more or less severity up to noon to-day. Our troops were advanced to within very close range of their earthworks, when a murderous artillery fire was opened upon us, occasioning us considerable loss.

Our own guns were soon got into position, and, under cover of their fire, we charged and took their first line of rifle-pits, capturing a considerable number of prisoners, and several of their guns.

At the moment of this present writing there is a cessation of firing along the lines, and the indications are that there will be no more fighting before evening or tomorrow. It is estimated that the Rebel loss is considerably greater than ours, notwithstanding the momentary advantage of their artillery range upon us.

The Vermont Heavy Artillery, just arrived, participated in this fight, and is highly complimented. It is stated that the decisive battle is not unlikely to be fought right here, and that within a few days at farthest.

Of the casualties, the report comes in that Lieut. Bartlett, 10th Massachusetts, is killed; Capt. Bigelow and Pearce and Lieut. Cobell and Whitney of the same regiment, wounded; Adj. Dean, 7th Massachusetts, wounded. These men were of Gen. Estess's 4th Brigade of 2d Division, 6th Corps, and were in the charge.

A party of guerrillas got in behind a barn about four miles out from Fredericksburg, on the road to the front, this afternoon, and fired upon a party of our men while they were at the well. One of our men was killed, and three wounded, when our boys rallied, charged upon the murderers, killed two, wounded three, and then burned the building. Guerrilla warfare is fast becoming an unprofitable mode of warfare hereabout.

The Army on the Eve of Battle—Important Changes of Position—How the Different Corps are Placed—Commanding Officers—Recovering the Wounded—Assignments to Command. From Our Special Correspondent.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, NEAR SPOTSYLVANIA COURT-HOUSE, VA., Tuesday Night, May 17, 1864. To-night the glorious old Army of the Potomac rests undisturbed by the shot of a single skirmisher. The day has been unusually quiet and monotonous, and the very monotony is ominous of momentous events.

To-night, while down the vigilant lines bands are discoursing enlivening music, movements are transpiring in the rear which speak of preparations for to-morrow's battle, which, will, if possible, be more desperate and sanguinary than any of the recent conflicts.

roads, were unable to reach the position assigned it until after daybreak, and when our real designs had become apparent to the enemy. Under the circumstances, hostilities were temporarily postponed.

The dispositions of the corps for to-morrow's attack will, no adventitious circumstances preventing, be as follows: The 2d, 3d and a portion of the 1st Division will march to the right during the night, and occupy the works wrested from the Rebels by Hancock on Thursday morning; the 6th Corps, commanded by Gen. Wright, will follow the 2d, and take post between Burnside and Warren, whose commands will remain in their present position.

At early dawn, a grand attack will be made upon the enemy's lines, and unless our movements are discovered and provided for by the Rebel General, we have every reason to hope for a decisive success. Since Saturday, our movements have all been from the right to the left, and but little more than a heavy skirmish line kept up in front of the works taken from the Rebels on Thursday. The enemy, finding his left threatened, has made his dispositions accordingly, and nothing but his anticipation of our maneuvers to-night can prevent the success of the present movement.

The weather is fine to-night and bids fair to be pleasant to-morrow. Large numbers of officers showing the white feather in the recent battles have resigned within the last two days on receiving intimation that their resignations would be accepted at headquarters. An order from headquarters of the army to-day directs that all officers and men returning to their commands without a sufficient excuse for their absence, be immediately arrested and tried by courts-martial, the approval or disapproval of the sentences to be decided at headquarters. There is every indication that summary punishments will be inflicted upon those found guilty of straggling or cowardice. Nearly 800 enlisted men are now under guard at Gen. Patrick's headquarters for going to the rear without sufficient excuse. Most of them were sent back to the army from Washington to-day.

A deserter to the enemy, John Davis of Company H, 39th Mass. Vols., is tied to a tree in front of Gen. Patrick's headquarters, and will undoubtedly be "mustered out" for his revolting crime. When found in the enemy's lines he gave as an excuse that he was a bearer of dispatches to Gen. Meade.

An expedition consisting of Gibbon's division of the 3d Corps, went to the rear yesterday p. m., for the purpose of obtaining the wounded, a large number of whom were left behind on Saturday for want of transportation. The expedition was highly successful, as every wounded man was brought off without loss. Seen after the hospitals were abandoned, they were visited by a squad of Rebel cavalry, who like fiends pillaged them of most of their medical and commissary stores and captured three of our men acting as nurses to wounded Rebels in a house near by. A brigade of the enemy's cavalry afterward visited them, the commander of which possessed sufficient humanity to prohibit further acts of vandalism.

Dr. Jones of the 8th Pennsylvania died yesterday morning from the effects of wounds received by a detachment of our men who were left to guard the hospitals. He was accidentally shot, under the impression that he belonged to a party of Rebel cavalry which had just disappeared in the woods where he received the fatal wound.

The following new assignments of officers to command of brigades have been made: Col. Thos. W. Egan, 40th New-York, to command the brigade of Brig.-Gen. Ward, now under arrest; Col. Crocker, 2d New-York, to Gen. Egle's brigade; Col. Harry McKean, 81st Pennsylvania, to the 3d Brigade of the 1st Division, 3d Army Corps, in place of Col. Paul Frank, under arrest; Col. Burns, 63d New-York, to the Irish Brigade, in place of Col. Thos. A. Smyth, assigned to the command of Carroll's brigade.

In mentioning these changes, it is but justice to state that Col. Egan deserves the credit of the capture of the Rebel Generals Johnson and Stewart, whose swords are now in his possession. Col. Smith, at the special request of Gen. Gibbon, assumes command of Carroll's brigade. In relieving Col. Smith, Gen. Barlow, in order, expresses his appreciation of the courage, skill and gallantry of Col. Smyth, compliments him upon his success in improving the efficiency of his command, and closes by asserting that he will be a valuable accession to any command.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, 6 o'clock. The first gun sounded on the right at 4:45 this morning. A moderate cannonading is going on. Artillery reinforcements are filing toward the right. The day will be very warm.

Good Weather—Great Events at Hand—Severity of Late Battles—Gen. Wright—Splendid Achievement of Gen. Barlow's Division, &c. From Our Special Correspondent.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF POTOMAC, One Mile North of Spotsylvania Court-House, Va., 4 p. m., May 17, 1864. The sun shines brightly to-day; the ground is fast drying. Grand events are on the tapis. As illustrating the severity of our work, I note that Getty's Division 6th Corps reports but 4,100 muskets, and it marched with 8,400, and only 580 are "missing," the others all killed and wounded, and this one instance is but an illustration for the whole. But I know that the loss inflicted equals or exceeds the loss suffered, and I trust to the unconquerable endurance and tenacity of the rank and file.

Gen. Wright is the natural successor of the lamented Sedgwick, and none other would have been so well received by the corps. In social, personal, and temperamental, and in military qualities, he seems to bear a marked resemblance to Sedgwick himself. His instant promotion to a Major-Generalship's assignment to the corps is, indeed, peculiarly happy and auspicious, regarded as a recognition of the wishes of the thousands he is to lead.

In the endeavor to be first in point of time, it is inevitable that glaring inaccuracies of statement and misstatements of credit should be made in the first accounts of battles that reach the public. It has thus happened that Hancock's splendid success of Thursday, with its trophies of prisoners and guns, should be wrongly attributed. Let me make the correction on authority, and in the light of four subsequent days. The main assault was made, and the chief success gained, by Gen. Barlow's division.

This is from Hancock's own lips, and will appear in his report. Not that there need be any detractor from Birney's work. His division was on next, not attacking so soon and going in. While it attaches particular honor to Gen. Barlow's Division attaches the highest credit. Besides, the formation of their commands for the charge was left to the Division Commanders, and Barlow formed his front twenty men deep, and the momentum thus gained was irresistible. The other Divisions, as usual, attacked in thinner lines, and were unable to push so far.

I have written this on request and as a matter of justice, and have backing for the statement. Dr. Morton of Boston, one of the first discoverers, if not indeed the first discoverer of the anæsthetic properties of ether, has been with the army the last week, working and observing in his capacity with all his might. During this time he has, with his own hands, administered ether in over 2,000 cases. The Medical Director, when asked yesterday in what operations he required ether to be used, replied, "In every case."

I believe the division of labor in the manufacture of any given article has now reached the point where 25 different men help make a pin. Science is scarcely behind art in this particular, as the following incident will show.

Day before yesterday some 300 Rebel wounded fell into our hands. Of these, 21 required capital operations. They were placed in a row, a slip of paper pinned to each man's coat collar telling the nature of the operation that had been decided upon. Dr. Morton first passes along, and with a towel saturated with ether puts every man beyond consciousness and pain.

The operating surgeon follows and rapidly and skillfully amputates a leg or an arm, as the case may be, till the 21 have been subjected to the knife and saw without one twinge of pain. A second surgeon ties up the arteries; a third dresses the wounds. The men are taken to tents near by and wake up to find themselves out in two without torture, while a window of lopped-off members attest the work. The last man had been operated upon before the first wakened, nothing could be more dramatic and nothing could more perfectly demonstrate the value of anæsthetics. Besides, men fight better when they know that torture does not follow a wound, and numberless lives are saved that the shock of the knife would lose to their friends and the country. Honor, then, to Morton and Jackson, the men who so opportunely for this war placed in our hands an agent that relieves the soldier from untold misery, and his friends from untold anguish.

C. A. F. ASSOCIATED PRESS AND OTHER ACCOUNTS. Preparations on Tuesday—Lee Has Not Retreated—Stragglers from Meade's Army Sent Back—Resignations Frequent—A Battle Beginning on Wednesday Morning. HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, Wednesday, May 18, 1864. Yesterday was spent in making preparations for an attack this morning, and we expect a battle to-day, provided Gen. Lee has not disappeared, which is not at all probable, the published reports to the contrary notwithstanding.

His army was in strong intrenchments yesterday in front of the 5th Corps, on the stage road, 15 guns being counted in one place, with strong lines of earthworks wherever the openness of the country permitted a view.

Last night a body of stragglers arrived here from Washington to the number of 600, including 17 officers, some of them having Surgeon's certificates of disability, and others slightly wounded. Gen. Meade has ordered the latter to be tried by court-martial.

Many resignations have been sent in within the past two days. All will have to be accepted for the good of the service. It is believed that no officer capable of and disposed to perform his duty would resign.

It was reported yesterday afternoon that the enemy were moving columns of troops and wagon trains toward Bayling Green, under the impression that our army were endeavoring to turn their right.

This morning at 4:40 firing opened briskly on our right, and it is believed that Generals Grant and Meade intended to push the Rebels sharply.

A large force of cavalry from the dismounted camp have arrived here with fresh horses, and will be of great service to the army in the absence of Gen. Sheridan's command.

MAY 18, 6 o'clock p. m.—From the firing it is believed that the enemy are falling back, as the sound becomes fainter.

Meade's Army All Quiet—Object of Late Movements—Attacks of the Enemy Repulsed—Danville Road and James River Canal Broken Up—Gen. Heckman Captured. ROME DA HUNDRED, Wednesday, May 18, 1864. All is quiet with our army to-day.

The object of the demonstration on Fort Darling was merely to draw off and entertain as many of Gen. Lee's troops as possible, and also to attract the attention of all the Rebel forces in and about Richmond, to enable Gen. Kautz to destroy the communications south of Richmond.

On Monday morning, the 16th inst., the Rebels came out of their intrenchments and earthworks in front of Fort Darling, at day-break, having been heavily reinforced by Gen. Longstreet's corps, and made three advances, all of which were promptly and energetically repulsed by our men.

The enemy lost in these charges from 1,000 to 1,500 men, while our loss was very slight.

Gen. Butler having learned that Gen. Beauregard was heavily reinforced by Gen. Longstreet's corps, and also ascertained by the Rebel papers and a Rebel courier that the bridge over the Appomattox River and several miles of the Danville Railroad were destroyed, and that the dams, locks, and embankments of the canal leading into Richmond were also destroyed, decided to fall back from before Fort Darling, and gave orders accordingly, and by Monday evening our army had securely arrived behind our new lines of intrenchments, having retired in perfect order, excepting Gen. Heckman's brigade, which was badly disorganized, and Gen. Heckman captured.

This brigade formed the extreme right wing, and the enemy attacked this point with great desperation, following them back nearly two miles with overwhelming numbers, capturing a large number, and killing and wounding many.

Three of our sledge guns fell into the hands of the Rebels, the horses being killed. The guns were spiked. At present it is impossible to estimate our loss.

Stragglers are constantly coming in. We have lost more prisoners than the Rebels, but their loss in killed and wounded doubly exceeds ours, as our men were protected by intrenchments.

Several of Longstreet's men were captured, who stated that his whole force was cooperating with Beauregard.

Lieut.-Col. Floyd and Capt. Couch of the 3d New-York Infantry are wounded, the former in the leg and the latter has lost his left arm.

List of Wounded. FORTRESS MONROE, Wednesday, May 18, 1864. The following is a list of wounded from Gen. Butler's army who arrived to-day on the steamer Monitor:

Major Sawyer, 4 N. H. Inf., W. Zelinski, 1 N. Y. Cav., back. Corp. W. H. G. Comb, 4 N. H. Inf., John Barr, 47 N. Y. Inf., and side. C. Finer, 47 N. Y. Inf., hand and side. Capt. G. W. Wells, 1 N. Y. M. Neveus, 4 N. Y. Inf., hand. Corp. F. W. Grover, 1 N. Y. Miller, 100 N. Y. Inf., hand. C. M. G. O'Connell, 1 N. Y. M. Neveus, 4 N. Y. Inf., hand. Q. M. Sgt. I. M. Foster, 1 N. B. Murray, 55 Pa. Inf., hand. J. McAlister, 160 N. Y. Inf., fingers. Sgt. J. W. Dwyer, 55 Pa. Inf., hand. T. Kain, 160 N. Y. Inf., hand. John Green, 2 N. Y. Inf., hand. C. Gagan, 7 Conn. Inger. R. P. Ford, 8 Me. Chock. J. B. Snow, 7 Conn. hand. Corp. O. W. Caswell, do. face. Thos. Davis, 7 Conn. hand. Frank Reider, 8 Me. Inf., hand. D. Ravine, 7 Conn. Inf. Corp. A. Westwood, 8 Me. Inf., hand. F. McNamee, 7 Conn. Inf. hand. Sgt. M. C. O'Connell, 7 Conn. Inf. hand. Scott Ross, 7 N. Y. Cav. Inf. Sgt. W. A. Brown, do., hand. A. Shoen, 8 N. Y. Cav. Inf. hand. J. Jones, 8 Me. side. J. Miller, 100 N. Y. Inf., hand. J. W. Dwyer, 55 Pa. Inf., hand. Serg. J. W. Donahoe, 6 Ohio. Sgt. H. Sawyer, 8 Me. hand. J. M. G. O'Connell, 7 Conn. Inf. hand. J. M. G. O'Connell, 7 Conn. Inf. hand. J. M. G. O'Connell, 7 Conn. Inf. hand. J. M. G. O'Connell, 7 Conn. Inf. hand.

P. D. Swann, 3 N. H. arm. J. Verill, 3 N. H. hand. John Hart, 3 N. H. hand. Wm. Carroll, 3 N. H. hand. J. Quinn, 3 N. H. hand. John G. Lane, 21 Co. side. John Wilmer, 21 Co. shoulder. Geo. Stain, 1 N. J. Caval. foot. C. P. Wood, 1 N. J. Caval. P. Slack, 1 N. J. Caval. captured. G. Hunter, 1 N. J. Caval. Andrew Briggs, 10 N. Y. Caval. hand.

John Gassell, 10 N. Y. Caval. Corp. L. Lewis, 12 Ind. Inf. J. W. Under, 4 Pa. Cav. Sgt. J. H. Daily, 3 N. Y. Caval. Sgt. W. F. Hunter, 1 Mich. side. J. R. Daily, 3 N. Y. Caval. Corp. H. Cole, 1 Mich. side. J. C. Nelson, 55 Pa. arm. Sgt. C. H. Foster, 1 N. Y. Caval. R. H. Holmes, 3 N. H. Inf. H. Stone, 3 N. Y. Caval. Sgt. M. J. C. Chase, 2 Me. C. James, 20 N. Y. Caval. J. E. Rogers, 1 D. C. Cavalry hand.

J. Dinger, 6 Co. side. J. Brown, 6 Co. side. A. Lewis, 10 N. Y. Caval. A. McKim, 2 N. H. side. A. B. Baker, 25 Pa. arm. H. Under, 2 Me. shoulder. P. Henson, 25 Penn. arm. F. Shattuck, 10 N. H. Caval. side. C. Brown, 2 Pa. Caval. Sgt. J. H. Daily, 3 N. Y. Caval. Sgt. J. H. Daily, 3 N. Y. Caval. Sgt. J. H. Daily, 3 N. Y. Caval. Sgt. J. H. Daily, 3 N. Y. Caval.

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Capture of Rocky Ridge—The Struggle for Buzzard's Roost—A Skirmish Among the Clouds—Inaccessibility of the Position from the Front—Result of the Day's Operations. From Our Special Correspondent.

TOP OF ROCKY-FACED RIDGE, Geo. May 15—5 a. m. I have just climbed to the top of this Ridge, 500 feet high, following the track of Harker's brigade, and Gen. Judah, who came up last evening. The top of this Ridge is nothing but a mass of broken rock and ledges, a sort of hog's back, not wider than a wagon track, along which only three or four men can march abreast. At intervals are abrupt and rugged ledges, so broken that a horse cannot travel, and men can only pick their way with difficulty. Our troops, led by the 12th Ohio, of Gen. Harker's brigade, took the heights yesterday, and advanced to a point one-third of the way along the crest. A mile further on is the cleared knoll used by the