

IMPORTANT NEWS.

The Capture of Roanoke Island Fully Confirmed by the Rebels.

TERRIBLE FIGHTING.

Three Hundred Rebels Killed and One Thousand Wounded.

THE ENTIRE REBEL FLEET DESTROYED

ELIZABETH CITY TAKEN.

The Place Burned by the Rebels.

Two Thousand Rebel Prisoners Taken.

Advance of the Union Troops on Edenton.

OPINIONS OF THE REBEL PRESS, &c., &c., &c.

We learn by the flag of truce which arrived at Fort Monroe on Sunday of the complete success of the Burnside expedition at Roanoke Island. The island was taken possession of and Commodore Lynch's fleet completely destroyed. Three hundred rebels were killed and wounded, and two thousand taken prisoners. Scarcely any escaped. Elizabeth City was attacked on Sunday and evacuated by the inhabitants. The city was previously burned. The first news of the defeat arrived at Norfolk on Sunday afternoon, and caused great excitement. The previous news was very satisfactory, stating that the Yankees had been allowed to advance for the purpose of driving them into a trap. The rebel force on the island is supposed to have been only a little over three thousand efficient fighting men. General Wise was ill at Nag's Head, and was not present during the engagement. When the situation became dangerous he was removed to Norfolk. All the gunboats but one were taken, and that escaped up a creek, and was probably also destroyed. The report says that only seventy and another that only twenty-five of the rebels escaped from the island. General Huger telegraphed to Richmond that only fifty of the island escaped. There appears to be no bright side of the story for the rebels.

THE REBEL DETAILS.

The following despatches on the subject are taken from the Richmond papers of Tuesday morning:— NORFOLK, Feb. 10, 1862. The latest news states that Captain O. Jennings Wise, son of Governor Wise, was shot through the hip and disabled, though his wound was not mortal. Major Lawson and Lieutenant Miller were mortally wounded. About three hundred confederates were killed. Our wounded number over one thousand. The number of Yankees wounded is about the same. Middleman Camm had an arm shot off. The other casualties are as yet unreported. A late arrival this morning says that Elizabeth City had been shelled and burned by the Yankees, and that the enemy was pushing on to Edenton. SECOND DESPATCH. NORFOLK, Feb. 10, 1862. A rumor has prevailed that Commodore Lynch's fleet of gunboats had been captured. It is not regarded as true, but it is believed that all were turned by the confederates to prevent their capture, with the exception of one, which was endeavoring to make its escape. The fleet went to Elizabeth City from Roanoke Island, and was probably burned at the former point. THIRD DESPATCH. NORFOLK, Feb. 10, 1862. A courier arrived here this afternoon at four o'clock, and brought the intelligence that Elizabeth City was burned this morning by the Yankees. During the conflagration the federal landed a large force. All our gunboats excepting one were captured by the enemy. General Wise had not yet arrived at Norfolk.

THE VERY LATEST.

The following "very latest" we copy from the Norfolk Day Book:— [From the Norfolk Day Book, Feb. 10.] It is said that the enemy came up in their boats on the south side of the island, and by means of their boat howitzers effected a landing in the rear of our batteries, and that after landing about fifteen thousand on all parts of the island, they marched up and flanked the batteries. It is also reported that, notwithstanding our small force of twenty-one hundred men against about fifteen thousand, on some parts of the island the resistance was of the most desperate nature, and a hand-to-hand contest lasted for a considerable time, showing the most desperate courage. This is said to have been the case particularly with the Richmond Blues, under command of Captain O. Jennings Wise. Captain Wise, we learn, fell bravely upon his men. [From the Norfolk Day Book, Feb. 11.] A courier arrived here yesterday afternoon about three o'clock, from whom we gather the following information:— The enemy advanced in full force upon Elizabeth City yesterday about seven o'clock, and began an attack upon that place. The citizens, finding resistance vain, evacuated the place, but before doing so set fire to the town, and when our informant left it was still in flames. We have also to record the capture by the enemy of all our little fleet, except the Fanny or Forrest—our informant is not certain which. This eluded the enemy and made up Paquotank river. She was pursued, however, and fears are entertained that she was captured. It is said that before our boats surrendered they were abandoned, and that their crews succeeded in making their escape. If so, we are at a loss to conjecture why the boats were not fired before they were abandoned. The disaster to our little fleet is attributed to the fact that the Fanny, finding resistance vain, evacuated the place, and proceeded to Elizabeth City for the purpose of obtaining a supply. Every effort was made to obtain coal, but without success, and the boats could not, therefore, return to the island and send any assistance whatever to our forces. All the details, as published, with reference to the capture of Roanoke Island, are confirmed by the courier, who represents our loss at three hundred killed and wounded, and that of the enemy not less than one thousand killed. Great havoc was made among the enemy while coming up the road leading to the fort. Our forces brought to bear upon them two thirty pounders, and at every turn their ranks were terribly thinned. The places of the alien, however, were quickly filled. The York Point battery was manned by the Richmond Blues, and most ably did they defend it. During the conflict they were attacked by a whole regiment of slaves, and though completely overpowered, they stood

BRILLIANT OPERATIONS AT ROANOKE ISLAND.

Scene of General Burnside and Commodore Goldsborough's Victories—Roanoke Island and Elizabeth City.



their ground. They did not yield a foot until all but seven of them had fallen bleeding to the ground. There is good reason to believe that Colonel Henningsen, with his artillery, been on the island, it would not have been forced to surrender. The lack of field pieces was sadly felt, and had they been at hand perhaps the enemy never would have been able to land their forces. Colonel Henningsen had orders, we understand, to report at Roanoke Island, but by some misunderstanding he mistook Elizabeth City for his place of destination. Captain Taylor, of this city, is represented as having distinguished himself for his coolness and bravery. He fought the enemy like a tiger, and not an inch of ground was yielded by him without its being well disputed. In addition to the above there are many rumors we might give, but as they are nothing more than rumors we prefer withholding them. Among them, however, is one worthy of notice—that General Wise had been shot while on his way in an ambulance. The statement, so far as we have been able to learn, is untrue. We can only account for it by supposing that the name of the General was confounded with that of his son, who was reported among the killed. ADDITIONAL PARTICULARS. [Special correspondence of the Richmond Dispatch.] NORFOLK, Feb. 10, 1862. With inexpressible sorrow I announce the fall of Roanoke Island, after a spirited and heroic resistance by our brave troops. This occurred between twelve and two o'clock on Saturday, and the news was received here with every indication of regret and indignation. We gather the following particulars from a young man from the Richmond Blues, who participated in the fight, escaped in a small boat and rowed to Nag's Head, where he was taken up by one of our gunboats and brought to this city. He is an intelligent lad, and I believe a son of your Postmaster. The enemy's ships, he says, opened fire on our batteries, at Roanoke Island, about seven o'clock in the morning, and kept up an incessant fire until seven o'clock in the evening. Long, however, but little injury to the island. About nine o'clock the next day (Saturday), the Hessians were allowed to land on a point to the east of Roanoke Island, where they marched upon that point. The booming of heavy cannon in the distance heralded the enemy's approach. Our brave troops prepared to meet them, supposing their numbers to be about 5,000.

Gradually the sounds came nearer and nearer, and the shell came thick and fast over our intrenchments. Confident of their own strength, our troops moved rapidly forward, when, in a few minutes, the ball opened and the terrific contest ensued. Bravely did our boys stand up to the overwhelming forces of the enemy, and not till nearly every man was dead or wounded did they leave their stand. Nothing remained but retreat, which our men did, constantly turning and giving them a shot. Finding it useless to hold the island under such overwhelming numbers, the order to retreat from the island was given, and our remaining troops retired, leaving their stronghold in the hands of the enemy. It will be a pleasure hereafter to record on the page of history the heroic fortitude of our gallant troops. Nobly and well did Captain O. Jennings Wise, of your city, stand up with his men to the fierce encounter, when, suddenly, he was shot through the side and instantly fell. One of his men asking him if he was much hurt—"Not much," said he, "but fight them yet." He was borne from the scene of action in a blanket. About 500 of our brave boys fell, and nearly all the rest were either wounded or taken prisoners. The enemy's loss is said down at 1,000. Four of their ships were sunk, they doing but little damage to any of our boats. Commodore Lynch and other parts of our fleet did noble service, his ship being among the first to open fire on the enemy's shipping. As last accounts they were in pursuit of Commodore Lynch. In the midst of this terrible struggle it will be regretted that General Wise was seriously indisposed at Nag's Head. Both he and his son are expected here to-day. I am sorry to say that but very few escaped from Captain Wise's company. Large quantities of ammunition were saved by our troops. The women, children and a number of negroes are reported now on their way to our city. The enemy will be successfully checked from getting possession of our railroad in this vicinity. Active preparations have been made here regarding this disaster, which it may be imprudent for me to mention. The news fell upon the ears of our citizens with fearful significance. Many would dare their eyes against the fact had not dread conviction come so direct. Every man was as his post, and our departments here were engaged in sending despatches to the various encampments. The anxiety with which every officer executed his orders is a theme of public praise; and especial praise is due to the Young Guard, of our city, for their services on the

occasion. At a very late hour military movements were going on, and everything is in great excitement. NORFOLK, Feb. 10, 1862. The intelligence of the desperate and unequalled contest at Roanoke Island, and its result, have doubtless reached you by telegraph. Of course this is the principal subject of conversation here. Considering all the circumstances attending the fight, a more favorable termination of the affair could scarcely have been expected by those competent to judge. Our force on the island at the time of the attack was but small in comparison with the heavy and numerous forces of the enemy. Of the bravery and gallant conduct of our troops too much can scarcely be said in commendation. That they were overpowered by greatly superior numbers, after fighting with a recklessness and desperation never surpassed, is a fact already established, and which will be placed upon the truthful pages of history. I send you herewith such particulars of the battle as I have been able to gather. A true account cannot be given now. We know enough to cause a deep sigh of grief for the brave men slain, and the gallant sons of the South, who are now captives in this cruel war—of homes rendered desolate, of hearts wrung with anguish, and ties of love and friendship severed. But who believes, except the deluded and revengeful Yankees, that the South will ever yield to them—that the great cause of Southern liberty, and honor, and humanity is not still onward? True, the news comes that the hospitable town of Elizabeth City has been shelled and burned, and that the vandals are despoiling the pleasant places of the Sound coast. But they cannot go far into the interior, and the day is coming when these Northern minions shall be driven back in disgrace to their inhospitable and barren soil. General Wise, though still sick, I learn, on his way to this city. Captain O. Jennings Wise was dangerously wounded. Major Lawson, Lieutenant Miller and Captain Cole, are reported among the killed. The enemy lost in killed and wounded one thousand; our loss three hundred, besides more than two thousand prisoners. We must be nerved for a vigorous resistance, and Providence will assist us as heretofore in this cause of honor, and truth, and human rights. OPINIONS OF THE REBEL PRESS. [From the Richmond Examiner, Feb. 11.] The loss of an entire army on Roanoke Island is cer-

tainly the most painful event of the war. The intelligence of yesterday by telegraph is fully confirmed. Twenty-five hundred brave troops on an island in the sea were exposed to all the force of the Burnside fleet. They resisted with the most determined courage; but when fifteen thousand federal troops were landed against them, they were forced to surrender. This is a repetition of the Hatteras affair on a large scale. It is reported that one regiment from Massachusetts was badly cut up; but it is impossible to ascertain which of the five that were attached to the expedition it was. All the Southern papers received to-day are unanimous in admitting a complete victory to our troops, and in saying that the loss of the island is a very serious one. The prisoners captured, numbering at least two thousand, will arrive at Fortress Monroe in a few days. [From the Richmond Dispatch, Feb. 11.] THE DISASTER AT ROANOKE ISLAND. The exciting occurrence at Roanoke Island, resulting in the reverse to our arms, was the theme of conversation yesterday in the city, to the exclusion of almost every other topic. The fact that some of our Richmond companies were engaged in the fight occasioned an intense and painful anxiety, particularly among those who had friends or relatives among them, which could not be well concealed. It is but a short period since the Wise Legion, after an arduous and toilsome campaign in Western Virginia, left here for the coast of North Carolina, and though now defeated in one of the most desperate conflicts of the war, it is at least consoling to know that the men fought with determined bravery, against overwhelming odds, and won for themselves the proud appellation of heroes, of which their present situation cannot deprive them. The Light Infantry Blues (Company A, of the Legion), date their organization as far back as the year 1793, and number among their honorary members many of our oldest and most venerated citizens. The history of the company is so well known that we need not repeat it here. Captain O. Jennings Wise was elected commander a short time before the war broke out, and the corps was one of the first to respond to the call of the country. Captain Wise is reported badly wounded, and Lieutenants Fred. Carter and Charles P. Bigger are taken prisoners, with it is presumed, a majority of the men. The Jackson Guard and the Light Guard, both attached to the Legion, were enlisted here after the commencement of the war.

Captain Hiram B. Dickinson, of the former, and Captain Gus. Wallace, of the latter, reported captured by the enemy, are well known citizens of Richmond. Lieutenant Miller, of the Jackson Guard, is said to be mortally wounded. Major Hugh W. Fry, who is among the prisoners, has many friends here, who regret his misfortune, but who are proud to believe that he sustained himself gallantly in the fight, and the same remark applies to Frank Johnston, of the Blues, as have a young man as ever shouldered a musket.

The telegraph informs us that our killed and wounded amounts to 300, while that of the enemy reaches 1,000. The reader will find some further particulars of the affair in our Norfolk papers, from which it appears that the famous scoundrels who shelled and burned the pleasant little town of Elizabeth City, and are threatening Edenton. Their operations in that quarter, however, will be limited; and instead of depressing the spirits of our people, such acts of vandalism will serve to make them more determined, and rouse them to three vigorous resistance. Personally we regret the loss of our accomplished correspondent "Dobsonian," whose letters from the Potomac and other points have for some time past adorned the columns of this paper. Dr. Shepherson is well known throughout the South, and in his captivity (which we trust will be brief) he has the sympathy of a vast number of friends.

THE CAMPAIGN IN CAROLINA.

[From the Richmond Dispatch, Feb. 11.] Until within a day or two past, the capture of Roanoke Island by Burnside was considered a foregone conclusion. A fleet of nearly a hundred sail and an army of fifteen or twenty thousand men, with guns and equipments in profusion, were esteemed equal to the capture of any exposed piece of water bound land like the island in question. But the brave resistance offered for nearly two days by our troops, and the hopeful terms in which they spoke of their prospects, led our people to believe that the island might be held. It has, however, been lost, and we are compelled to resign ourselves to the conclusion which a day or two of hope—we confess not strong in our own case—had unsettled.

Burnside has landed, after a hard fight, on a seaboard island, not so advantageously situated, nor encompassed by as rich surroundings of country as Beaufort. His object is supposed by some to be Norfolk; but if we are to believe the recent outgivings of Northern journals, his leading purpose is to make a demonstration against the Weldon and Wilmington Railroad, with a view to cutting our great lines of Southern communication. That thing seems, for the present, to be the special aim of the enemy in this quarter. His movements in Western Kentucky and Tennessee seem to have that single object for the present in view; and it has been repeatedly declared by Northern journals that Burnside's primary purpose is a demonstration upon our railroad. It remains to be seen whether such be his real design, and with what success he will prosecute it. The experience of Sherman in a similar undertaking may possibly be his own.

An assault upon Norfolk is the only object next after this railroad enterprise, and commensurate in importance with the magnitude of the expedition. In such an undertaking the enemy's vessels could be of little direct use. The water approaches to that city from North Carolina are too narrow, tortuous and easily obstructed to admit the use of vessels; and if the enemy attempts a land attack the chances in our favor of repelling him are two or three to one. The reduction of Norfolk would be the work of months, and could only be effected by a large increase of Burnside's forces, an increase which the Yankee exchequer is not able to afford for an operation stretching through a protracted period. Nothing at all can save their treasury, and nothing can help our war on foot and rapid operations and decisive success. Yet we do not see wherein the Burnside expedition promises these results more unmistakably than Sherman's did, which landed in November, nearly three months ago.

Measured by its cost to the enemy, not even the capture of Norfolk, if it could be effected, would compensate him for his outlays, and this at last is the true standard by which his successes should be estimated. The South need not expect, and cannot rationally expect, that these huge expeditions, fitted out at immense expense, should fail to effect any achievement. Fifteen or twenty thousand men landed anywhere upon our seaboard must succeed in getting possession of it, unless we be able to expect otherwise, and unless we be discouraged by the fact. The true consideration is, whether such successes repay their cost. Measured by this standard, the achievements of the Burnside expedition are not likely to be very important. Its cost cannot have been less, in the first instance, than ten millions of dollars, and its charges every day are at least a quarter of a million. It has been thirty-one days prosecuting its career to the point of capturing Roanoke Island, a feat which has cost the federal government several millions, independently of the first outlay in the enterprise, and the losses incurred by the storm. If the expedition should succeed in capturing the whole Carolina seaboard, and even a considerable slice of the country besides, together with Norfolk, still the fifteen or twenty millions of federal money laid out in the whole operation would not be reimbursed by half.

We are not of those who suffer discouragement from occasional successes of the enemy. They have far overtaxed the resources of the North in bringing their prodigious forces into the field. The effect may be to damage us considerably, but they are damaging themselves much more. The injury they inflict upon us is local and remediable; that which they bring upon themselves in debt and taxation is general, universal and enduring. They have chosen a gigantic and expensive programme, which must break down, and which so successes, however great, can compensate the cost of.

THE REBEL ISLAND AND TOWNS.

ROANOKE ISLAND AND ITS ADVANTAGES. A few days ago we gave a brief description of Roanoke Island, and pointed out the advantages derived from its capture and occupation. The news, however, which we lay before our readers this morning, of the brilliant victory of the Union arms under General Burnside and Commodore Goldsborough, is so so much more important that we think it not out of place to give a more detailed account of the island and of the advantages which have fallen into our hands by its capture. Roanoke Island is twelve miles long and three miles wide, and is about fifty miles from Pamlico Sound. It was said to be fortified by the rebels on the southern, western and eastern shores, and defended with heavy ordnance, and on the 12th January, when the rebel learned of the arrival of Gen. Burnside at Hatteras Inlet, they instantly commenced the construction of a battery about midway of the island. In addition to this they had thrown up five forts, with an entrenched camp in the centre, and had their works garrisoned by some five thousand troops, in order to prevent the passage of our gunboats through the Croatan Sound—the only communication with Albemarle Sound. But the cheering news has now reached us of their being shelled out of their strongholds by the powerful Union expedition which was brought against them, consisting of seventeen gunboats most powerfully armed with rifled artillery, among which were a dozen nine-inch guns, two one hundred pounder rifled guns, four eighty-pounders, and a large number of eight-inch shell and thirty-two pounders. The capture of Roanoke Island is of much importance, inasmuch as it commands all the water communication along the whole North Carolina coast, as well as a portion of Southeastern Virginia. Being in possession of it, we are enabled to cut off all supplies by water from Norfolk, so that hereafter the rebels will be compelled to get their supplies wherever they can, and "entirely by land;" for Norfolk is also cut off here, and also from the coast across Albemarle Sound northward to the point where the Pasquotank and North rivers empty. There are two routes from this last point to Norfolk—One by Pasquotank river, Dismal Swamp Canal and south branch of Elizabeth river, and the other by the North river of Albemarle and Pamlico Canal, Currituck Sound, the North river of Currituck, the upper cut of the Albemarle and Pamlico Canal, and the Elizabeth river. During the winter months the first is passable for vessels drawing about six feet of water. The Pasquotank river is three miles wide at its mouth, and gradually narrows until at Elizabeth City it is only about three hundred yards wide. Currituck is about fifty miles long, ten miles wide, and is navigable for vessels drawing ten feet of water. ALBEMARLE (CONTINUED ON EIGHTH PAGE.)