IMPORTANT FROM THE PENINSULA.

CONTINUED FROM THIRD PAGE.

lished last February, when they said that McClellan had them, "as it were, in a vice." They have discovered ere this that the leveage is now being applied with vigor, and soon the jaws of the vice will have its object tightly compressed beyond all hope of relief.

The rebel army retreated from Yorktown solely because the members thereof have begun to awake to a sense of their folly. Since McClellan has appeared before their lines they have heard nothing but a succession of victories against them. Shiloh, Island No. 10, Fort Pulaski, Fort Macon, and lastly, their own retreat has operated to demoralize them, and mutiny, open mutiny, assures their desperate leaders that to have met a large Union army, inspired by a young, skilful and noble leader, would only end in their total annihilation. They choose now to fall back, not with any ulterior hopes of success, but merely to gain time and prolong the struggle, in the hopes that, at the eleventh hour, some mismanagement or false step on the part of the federal government might force foreign intervention.

Lieutenant Colonel Eagan, of the Forty-second New York, or Mozart regiment, was arrested on Sunday, near Yorktown, by order of General McClellan, charged with the high crime of treason. The charge is that on the evening previous to his arrest he signalled the enemy by means of rockets, showing them our most vulnerable points, which were, after a while, attacked by a terrific storm of shot and shell, many of which proved fatal to the prisoner's own comrades. The prisoner was brought here under a strong guard, and was subsequently placed in close confinement in Fort Wool, on the Rip Raps. He should have a speedy trial, and if guilty should be summarily punished, and if innocent set free.

Yesterday morning a rebel schooner, laden with coal, while *en route* from Richmond for Norfolk, via James river, when opposite Newport's News ran on a shoal. A boat was sent by General Mansfield to seize the schooner. Being unarmed the rebel vessel was easily captured, her crew made prisoners and the vessel fired. The cargo of coal was for the use of the rebel battery Merrimac.

The weather here is very rainy, and consequently the roads are in a muddy condition.

A rebel steamer made its appearance off Sewall's Point at noon to-day, apparently on a reconnoissance. Those on board took an unobstructed and unmolested view of our fleet in the Roads and subsequently returned to Norfolk.

The steamboat New Haven went up the James river under a flag of truce to receive on board five hundred exchanged Union prisoners. Up to the time of closing this letter she has not returned to this point.

HARBOR REGULATIONS—HAMPTON ROADS.

All captains of merchant vessels of every description are required to report upon arriving, without delay, with their papers, to the office of the Captain of the Port, who will endorse the same if found correct.

Vessels consigned to the Assistant Quartermaster United States Army, will also report to that officer without delay.

All vessels will anchor on the "Shoe," easterly side of the fort, before making their report, and not leave there until permitted to do so.

Having been registered by the Captain of the Port, he will then designate their proper permanent anchorage. All masters of merchant vessels are required to report to the Captain of the Port every morning, between the hours of nine and twelve, and all consigned to the Quartermaster will receive a clearance ticket for the day.

Allowance for demurrage and lay days will be based upon these clearance tickets.

No vessels will be allowed to leave the Roads without having their papers endorsed by the Captain of the Port, and none after dark or before daylight.

No vessel "of any description" allowed to anchor in range of the parapet or casemate guns of the Fortresses.

No boats allowed to communicate with the shore or leave their vessels after dark. Boats landing at the steps at the wharf will not lay there any longer than is necessary to land their crew, and no boat to be left without a boatkeeper.

No persons allowed to dredge, drag or trail in the harbor without special permission from the Captain of the Port, or remove anything that does not belong to them on any pretence whatever.

All persons connected with vessels in this harbor are strictly forbidden to furnish liquor to any person whatever.

All persons violating the above rules will be strictly dealt with. By order of

Major General JOHN E. WOOL,
Commanding Department of Virginia.

JAMES MILLWARD, Jr., Captain of the Port and Harbor Master.

SCENES IN AND AROUND YORKTOWN.

Our Special Army Correspondence.

YORKTOWN, May 4, 1862.

INTEREST OF OUR TROOPS IN EXAMINING THE WORKS AT YORKTOWN, ETC.

The special correspondent of the HERALD, who sent you this forenoon full details of the evacuation of Yorktown by the rebels and its occupancy by the Union troops, after his thorough inspection of the town and the encompassing fortifications and the opportunities he had for such examinations, has left but little, in the way of gleanings for me, as material for the present letter. The town has been a scene of constant excitement all day. From our highest generals to our lowest privates there has been intense eagerness to inspect the earthworks, with their mounted guns, which have so long looked out with such menacing wrath upon our troops, and the town itself, whose occupation by our forces has so long been looked forward to as a foregone conclusion. The revolutionary associations connected with the place had no doubt added intensity to this eagerness of course. It is beyond question that many have been doubly disappointed. In the first place there were more strength and durability in the works and their armament to resist attack than were expected; and, in the second place, there are less features of interest in the town, intrinsically considered, than most persons expected to find.

CAUTION CONCERNING THE DESTRUCTIVE CONTRIVANCES OF THE ENEMY.

But not all who wished to visit the place have been permitted to do so. The villanous concoctions of the fugitive rebels, in the way of "infernal machines" and other diabolical contrivances to kill our men by wholesale, enforced the necessity of placing a competent guard to protect our men against falling into their fiendish traps. The loss of life and the wounding of others occurring soon after the occupation acted as a salutary warning. Several men were at once detailed to examine the earthworks, streets, houses and fields for some distance around, to discover these concealed machinations for the destruction of human life. They were found scattered all about in the streets, adjacent to the entrances leading into the town, through the intrenchments, along the parapets of the earthworks, by the river shore and in the roads and fields facing the fortifications.

I do not know how many were discovered altogether, but there were hosts of them. An officer told me that he found thirty of them within a compass of ten square rods. They are eleven-inch round shell, and so concealed under the ground as to leave little, if any, external indication of their presence. Captain Weeden and Colonel Woodbury dissected one and found it to contain nearly four pounds of very coarse and very fine powder mixed. Each has a quill fuse, and above it a plunger, with knob so constructed that a person walking along and stepping upon it brings the plunger down with sufficient force upon a cap underneath to cause it to explode. At present small white flags indicate where they are concealed—that is to say, as far as their presence has been discovered. I should have stated that a number were found in deserted officers' tents. Only two casualties have happened from explosions occurring since your correspondent sent his account of the evacuation this morning. William Perkins, a telegraph operator in Gen. Heintzelman's headquarters, stepped on one, and was instantly killed. His body was fearfully mutilated. The other casualty consisted happily in only the killing of a horse.

THE BODY OF ONE OF OUR SHARPSHOOTERS FOUND.

While some of our men were delving in search of these murderous missiles, they came upon the body of young Durkee, one of the sharpshooters, who was killed a few mornings since, as will be remembered, in a slight scrimmage between our pickets. He was buried but a few inches below the ground, with his clothes on and face down—the rebel way of showing their disrespect to our dead, when they condescend to bury at all. His head was riddled by a dozen bullets. The presumption is that he must have been shot at after being killed, as a gratification to the fiendish hatred entertained toward our sharpshooters, who, through their watchful vigilance and unerring rifles, have worked such terrible destruction in their ranks. The remains were taken care of by the regiment and will now receive a decent burial.

MILITARY GOVERNOR OF YORKTOWN.

General Fitz John Porter, as I just learn, has been appointed Military Governor of Yorktown, and the Forty-fourth New York Volunteers, Colonel Stryker, ordered here as present guard, and to put the place in a condition, if possible, bordering on respectability. The place is certainly very filthy now, with the refuse of every imaginable character left behind by the rebels, and the multitudinous specimens of the porcine species, who wallow about in a luxuriousness of dirt and mire that to them is the culmination of sumptuous regality. For the present this will be the depot for government stores, the army post office and port from which daily steamboat communication will be had with Fortress Monroe, Baltimore and Washington, and in consequence the town for a time will occupy an important position in the further conduct of the war. On this account General Porter may have his hands full of important work, and it may be necessary such an important man as he should be placed in charge. The brigades and regiments constituting his division, however, I hear, will complain sorely if they are kept in the back ground through his appointment. Thus far his division has occupied the post of honor in leading the advance, and it will be a grievous trial to them to be kept in the rear.

CHANGED ASPECT OF THE TOWN.

I am writing this communication in the dwelling recently occupied by General Hills as his headquarters. It is a one story and a half brick house, painted white, with green blinds and portico, and altogether one of the neatest houses in the place. The General, who had charge of the rebel left wing, has left nothing possessing either value or capability of giving intelligence, aid or comfort to those coming after him. From the front windows is obtained, through a deep gorge running up from the river, a fine view of York river and Gloucester Point. Several of our gunboats are now advancing up the river with flags flying. They will soon have an opportunity to see something of the effect produced here and in Gloucester of their past month's shooting. The Stars and Stripes are also floating in Gloucester, and in and about Yorktown, with a profuseness calling to mind the flag crowned dwellings and flag festooned streets in New York following the fall of Fort Sumter. In the distant approaches to the town are columns of cavalry, starting after the flying enemy. This sudden and unlooked for evacuation of the rebels has started up a visible activity. For weeks our men have been working in the trenches, under cover of darkness and pickets, riflemen and guns; now they are coming out with new hopes and new endeavors.

THE REBEL LOSSES.

It is the unanimous story of the negroes and otersh left behind that during the seige the rebels lost a good many killed and wounded. According to their accounts their loss cannot have been less than three hundred killed, and among them three colonels. Our gunboats have been an eyesore to them, as they were unable to make any effective retaliation. Our large siege guns got the most perfect range upon them on the day before the evacuation. Their large one hundred pounder gun, which burst three or four days ago, I am told, exploded through their using one of our unexploded shells, which proved too heavy for it. At this explosion six rebels were killed outright and seven wounded. Those remaining here further say that the rebels have started for Richmond; but will halt at Williamsburg just long enough to annoy us. They say that the fortifications of the latter place do not compare with those of Yorktown.

RELICS.

The searching after relics has been unremitted. To commence with the oldest that has come to my knowledge, I have seen a sword dug from near a rifle pit that must have belonged to a British officer in the old siege. It is gold mounted and shows the English crown and other marks of its antiquity and genuineness. Captain Hollingwood, of the Fourteenth New York Volunteers, had the good luck to forage the sleeping cot of General Magruder. The tick part is made of rich tapestry carpet, and on it is written his full name. One of the Sixty-second Pennsylvania boys got hold of the dressing gown of the rebel commander, also identified by being marked with the full name of its recent owner. The Louisiana Tiger caps and bowie knives were abundant, as also cartridge boxes, bayonets, old pistols and old swords.

At three o'clock this afternoon a heavy smoke was seen in the direction of Williamsburg. It is supposed that the rebels are burning the large bridge near that place.

CONGRESSMEN AND TORPEDOES.

A good joke occurred about Congressmen this afternoon. A Michigan Colonel was in command of the guard. Citizens were prohibited admittance. Several came up and asked the corporal to pass them, saying that they were Congressmen. The corporal stated the case to the Colonel.

"They are Congressmen, are they?" asked the Colonel.

"So they say."

"Well, let them pass and go where they please," said the Colonel. "Let them tramp on torpedoes, go into the magazines and where there is any prospect of their being blown to the devil, for that is the quickest way to end the war."

A REBEL'S PARTING WORDS TO THE YANKEES.

The following document, found in one of the dwellings, speaks for itself:—

TO THE FUTURE YANKEE OCCUPANTS OF THIS PLACE:—

We have retired to the country for a short time to recruit our health. We find that with your two hundred thousand men you are too modest to visit this place, and we give you an opportunity to satisfy your curiosity with regard to our defences, assuring you that we will call upon you soon.

We hope a few days' residence in a house once occupied by men will induce enough courage in your gallant hearts to enable you to come within at least two miles of white men hereafter. Be sure to have on hand a supply of "pork 'n beans" when we return, also some codfish and whale oil spiced with "apple sass." When we learn to relish such diet we may become like you—puritanical, selfish, thieving, God-forgotten, devil worshipping, devil-belonging, African-loving, blue bellied Yankees. Advise father Abraham to keep his Scotch cloak on hand, to keep sobered, and your wise Congress to hunt up 2,500 millions of specie to pay the debt you have incurred in winning the contempt of every live man. We have on hand a few tools which we devote to the special duty of loosing the links of your steel shirts. Couldn't you get a few iron clad men to do your fighting? Are you not horribly afraid that we will shoot you below the shirts? When are you coming to Richmond? Couldn't you go up the river with us? There is one score which we will yet settle with you to the death. Your friendly treatment of old men and helpless women reads you out of the pale of civilized warfare, and if rifles are true and knives keen we will rid some of you of your beastly inclinations.

When you arise as high in the scale of created beings as a Brazilian monkey we will allow you sometimes to associate with our negroes; but until then Southern soil will be too hot for the sons of the Pilgrims. The only dealing we will have with you is, henceforth, war to the knife. We despise you as heartily as we can whip you, easily on any equal field.

Most heartily at your service where ever you offer a fight.

J. TRAVERS SCOTT,
Company A., Sixth Georgia Volunteers.

Documents of different descriptions were found in several of the houses. In that which had been used by the engineers there were copies of United States coast survey maps, and in others books and papers which were of little value. Among them were copies of a treatise against gambling, and of regulations for the commissary department of the rebel army.

INTERESTING DOCUMENTS FROM THE REBEL CAMPS.

Among the papers found in the rebel camps were several belonging to Captain Seymour, of the Fifth Louisiana regiment. A letter from his sister, living in the North, an extract from which we give below, and the accompanying letter to her, which it appears did not go by flag of truce as he expected, show how some families are divided on the war question:—

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM A SISTER TO HER BROTHER.

MOUNT PLEASANT, May 19, 1861.

MY DEAR BROTHER GEORGE—We have been expecting to hear from you for several days, and from your silence judge that you are still in New Orleans, and very busy. You say that you enjoy receiving my letters, and I am sure that I enjoy writing you, so I will promise to write you as often as I can, although in these times I hardly know what to say, for the subject that we do not, and I suppose cannot, agree upon at present, is always uppermost in my mind. However, it seems impossible to change your views, and as I am not accustomed to argument, I must content myself with the hope that you will yet see your error. The right will certainly triumph in the end; and, although it seems different to you, I feel that the South is fighting for despotism under the name of liberty, while the North is only seeking to maintain the glorious liberty of the original constitution. I know that you will be defeated, and would give anything that you, at least, should be undeceived before it is too late. But if it must be otherwise, I shall still be your loving sister, and must leave the issue of this terrible conflict to our Heavenly Father. * * * * * *

I remain your loving sister. JOSEY.

LETTER FROM CAPTAIN SEYMOUR TO HIS SISTER.

REBEL CAMP, DEEP CREEK, VA., Jan. 3, 1862.

MY DEAR SISTER JOSEY—For the hundredth time your dear letter, of May 19, 1861, has just been read and pondered over; and, often as I have thought of you, of Fred., that dearest and best of brothers; of dear brother John, Lizzie and children; and of my few kind friends in Massachusetts, I have not before been impelled by an irresistible impulse to write you what may prove to be the last letter I shall ever indite. To-night you dear ones fill my heart and monopolize every thought. To-night I feel more keenly than I have ever felt before, the full tenderness of my love for these dear brothers and sisters whose tenderness has been so freely and so faithfully lavished on your isolated, far distant brother. Thus alive to the oneness of feeling between us, it is a source of bitter regret that our political views should be so widely dissimilar; you, the earnest supporter of what I cannot but regard as the vilest despotism; I, the enthusiastic revolutionist, the ardent supporter of a cause which I esteem holy, and a firm believer in the great and glorious destiny that awaits the Southern confederacy. I shall say no more on a subject we have mutually agreed to proscribe in our correspondence, for argument, were it never so able, would be useless where each are so firmly and conscientiously wedded to our opinions. I will simply say, therefore, that after seven months in the field, sharing some danger and privation with my gallant comrades, I am, if possible, more earnest, more hopeful than when the flag of our new nationality was first unfurled. What a change the past seven months must have made in my dear little nephew, Ellis. Fourteen months old! I can fancy your little darling toddling around and just beginning to shape his mouth into the dear words ma and pa. God only knows when, if ever, I shall teach him to love his old uncle George; but you, perhaps, dear Josey, will teach him that; although you deem me a misguided "rebel!" I must not write much if I expect my letter to pass through—long letters have no chance.

Dear sister Josey, I sometimes sicken with eager desire to hear from you all. If letters can be sent hither per flag of truce as they are forwarded hence—via Old Point and Norfolk—do, pray do, write me a few lines, telling me of your health and fortunes, of Fred. and John's business, of all, in short, that can be compressed into a brief letter. That your old love for me has not been weakened by events I feel sure. Mine for you all seems more tender than ever. I love the South and her cause, for during my sojourn of many years in New Orleans I have experienced kindness and appreciation; but though Mason and Dixon's line may politically sever us, it opposes no obstacle, real or imaginary, to the union of fraternal hearts. Ever your affectionate brother,

GEO. SEYMOUR.

The following document, with the endorsements, will explain the reason of Captain Seymour's resigaation and the proceedings connected therewith:—

IN CAMP, NEAR LEE'S MILL, Nov. 6, 1861.

Major JOHN JONES, Assistant Adjutant General, Yorktown, Va.:—

SIR—Special Order No. 481, dated October 30, 1861, was this day promulgated, and, in prompt obedience thereto, I have received the men therein ordered to be released.

Circumstances of a peculiar nature prior to the release of these men, induce the belief that the charges against them had been represented as of a frivolous character. That sentence, too, in the special order which directs me to "treat them with impartiality" naturally suggests the inference that an erroneous impression has been created of my conduct as an officer. Believing that, I take leave respectfully to submit the following remarks for the consideration of the Commanding General:—

On the 8th of October, at an election for company officers, I was promoted to the captaincy from the office of first lieutenant. On the 10th of October an election for non-commissioned officers was held, consequent on the promotion of a sergeant as second lieutenant. In that election all of the members of the company participated, yet no objection to the previous election was then, nor for some days thereafter, made.

Some ten days had elapsed when I learned that a few of my men were in secret communication with the Commander of the Post, Colonel Hunt, with reference to alleged informalities in the election.

Having assembled my company, I pointed out to them the impropriety of their course, and, advising them of the proper course to pursue, avowed my willingness to forward through the prescribed channels any protest or petition the majority of my company might present to me. At the same time I stated my determination to invoke military law against those who should persist in encouraging secret cabals or again place themselves in direct communication with the Commander of the Post.

The course I suggested and invited was not pursued. With the Colonel on their side, the Captain's authority might with impunity be defied, and accordingly, Frank Moore, the defeated candidate for captain, left camp without leave, and visited Colonel Hunt; I arrested him. The following day private Read—defeated candidate for second lieutenant—with privates Straube and Clifford, absented themselves without leave and for a similar purpose; I arrested them also, and at once preferred charges against the four.

With every encouragement from me to an open and manly course, the very opposite was, in preference, adopted by these men, and persisted in, even after their arrest; for, three days subsequent thereto, a petition was presented me for a new election, with their names at its head, supported by but fourteen other signatures—in all, eighteen—about one-fifth of my company. This document was, I am informed, drawn up at the suggestion of Colonel Hunt, to whom a copy was, at the same time, and without my knowledge, transmitted. This copy the Colonel forwarded to the Adjutant General of Louisiana, omitting the courtesy of informing me thereof, or affording an opportunity for the simultaneous transmission of counter statements. I remonstrated with Colonel Hunt, and, obtaining no satisfaction, avowed my intention of addressing myself to the Commanding General. To the repeated requests of Colonel Hunt in person, and by his adjutant, I persistently refused the release of the prisoners, feeling the stern necessity for at once asserting and proving that I could maintain my authority as captain. The accompanying note from Colonel Hunt, addressed to me, speaks for itself. I can, I believe, also prove that the colonel visited the prisoners and assured them "they should not be hurt." Their release is now regarded by them as a triumph over discipline, for they feel satisfied that the charges, being in the hands of their friend, Colonel Hunt, will be quietly suppressed.

It may be necessary to explain that these men were part of forty-nine of my company, who, at Camp Moore, Tangipaho, La., addressed a letter of condolence to the colonel, and condemning the action of the line officers in inviting him to resign on the ground of military incompetency.

I now respectfully ask leave to withdraw the charges against these men, believing that the anomalous positions they and I now hold must be subversive of the true interests of the service.

In laying the foregoing facts before the Commanding General I am actuated by but one motive—that of asserting the claim of subordinate officers to the support of their superiors in the enforcement of discipline.

The low ebb to which discipline has fallen in the battalion commanded by Major Dean renders it difficult for one or more subordinate officers to elevate its character. Where so much laxity prevails as a rule, he who simply does his duty, and enforces its performance with others, is denounced as a martinet. With volunteers, martinetism would be justly odious, but strict discipline can be enforced if those in authority know their duty and have firmness to perform it.

I now respectfully tender my resignation as captain in the provisional army, to take effect from the 1st proximo, as I am unwilling to retain a position which has lessened in the esteem of those by whom should be found its greatest strength. I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

GEO. SEYMOUR,
Captain, Co. D, Fifth Regiment, La. Vols.

IN CAMP NEAR LEE'S MILL, Nov. 6, 1861.

George Seymour, Captain, Company D, Fifth regiment, Louisiana Volunteers, tenders his resignation, for maltreatment by Colonel Hunt, of his regiment.

Captain Seymour will do himself no harm make a very good officer, and, as he appears to be laboring under a temporary irritability of temper, it is recommended that his resignation be accepted.

By order of Major General MAGRUDER.
THOS. JEFFERSON SNEAD, Aid-de-Camp.
YORKTOWN, Nov. 8, 1861.

Under existing circumstances this resignation cannot be accepted. The public interest requires the service of all officers fit for duty. Resignation returned.

By order of the Secretary of War.
R. H. CHILTON, Acting Adjutant General.

A. & I. G. O.
Nov. 18, 1861.

ORDER OF THE REBEL GENERAL RAINS.

ORDER NO. 26.

HEADQUARTERS FIRST DIV. ARMY OF THE PENINSULA,
YORKTOWN, VA., Dec. 4, 1861.

1. All the cannon on the land side of the defences, as well as the mortars, will be removed at once to the water side, leaving their traverse circles and beds undisturbed, to be made use of in case of need.

2. It is desirable, should the enemy's ships approach, to use as far as possible shells and red-hot shot; and to procure these latter, the furnaces must be kept full of wood and a few shot, the wood to be kindled immediately at any moment, and each furnace to be attended by three men detailed for this purpose, one to kindle the fire supplying the fuel and placing the cold shot in the brick part of the furnace, leaving a small space in front for fuel; another to take out the hot shot, and place them upon a stand to be scraped, and the third to scrape them, putting them in a ladle to be transported to the guns. The commanders of batteries will see to this matter, and also to the proper wads.

3. Elongated shells, such as are thrown from eight and ten inch rifled guns, are found to be the most destructive missiles against woodwork, and will undoubtedly be against shipping, especially when they explode by percussion (they are effective at more than 3,000 yards at a ricochet) and it is believed that the jamming of these shells can be relieved by greasing them; this had better be provided for, and can be done rapidly just at the moment of inserting them.

3. At any moment of alarm, each man must repair speedily to his gun, not waiting for roll call or anything else, supplying himself quickly with his proper implements; every man beforehand having had his position and duties designated at the battery by the commandant thereof.

5. The fire of a cannon, with one or more rockets sent up, and the ringing of a bell, will be the signals of alarm at night generally, and the bell alone by day for the post.

6. We have evidence that the enemy's plan of attack, if made, will be by water, in their ships, approaching so as to throw a large number of shells; and when the troops are driven away or so render, they land and take peaceable possession. His weakest time is when part landed.

7. Our plan of defence and offence must be arranged accordingly; the artillerymen, as far as possible, not required at the guns, to be in the bombproofs, the infantry to be formed in companies at the breast heights of the works by their commanding officers, and also at the batteries to defend them; but to be kept away from the shells as much as possible, and, if necessary, on one side of their position at the works, but in such proximity as to be able to approach during the action.

8. The rifle company of Col. Fry's regiment, and also the Mississippi battalion, Lieut. Col. Taylor commanding, will practice twice daily, once in the morning and once in the afternoon, at a target on land, placed just half the distance that it is between this and Gloucester Point, and their business will be to pick off the men on shipboard, particularly the pilots and steersmen, if they can be seen when the ships come within range, or attempt to pass up the river; also as skirmishers to harass the enemy marching or landing, wherever that may be. By order of

Brigadier General RAINS, commanding.

TWO MILES FROM WILLIAMSBURG, VA.,
May 4—8 o'clock P. M.

THE ADVANCE OF GENERAL SMITH ON THE LEFT.

Gen. Smith having ascertained the report of the evacuation of the rebel fortifications in his front to be true, sent the brigade under Gen. Hancock across the dam where the battle of the 16th of April was fought, and took peaceable possession of the fortifications at that place. As the column was pushed forward immediately in pursuit of the retreating enemy, I cannot give you a full description of the extensive fortifications at this point, but can only say that they are of the most elaborate and scientific character.

From two deserters of the Tenth Georgia regiment we learned that the rebels commenced evacuating some two or three days since, and that the last of them in that vicinity left about dark last night. They removed all of their guns, but left a large number of tents uninjured. At one battery they had placed stove pipes in the embrasures; but we could plainly see where they had used artillery. After taking a hasty look at their works, the brigade was pushed forward, the Fifth Wisconsin in advance as skirmishers, supported by the Forty-third and Forty-ninth New York regiments. Before we got outside of the rebel works we discovered quite a number of percussion shell which the enemy had buried in the sand, the cap being covered by a small patch of rubber blanket, with which they intended to blow up our pursuing forces. But our boys were too intelligent to be caught in any such trap, and groups of them could be seen in all directions digging up the shells and laying them aside where they could do no injury.

PLACES PASSED AND SCENES ALONG THE ROUTE.

After advancing about a mile we came to a house which had been used as the headquarters of one of the rebel generals.

The house is a fine large two story brick house, and inside presented every appearance of having been left hastily. Everything had been removed that could be carried easily; but they left some fine heavy furniture, such as marble top tables, bureaus, &c., to the tender mercies of our army. When I left nothing had been disturbed. The country on this side of Warwick creek we found far superior to anything we had before seen in Old Virginia.

The fields in every direction were covered with grain just springing up, and the houses present more the appearance of a civilized country than most of those we had seen before.

The headquarters of the rebel General Johnston were in sight of those of Magruder. As our column pushed steadily on we found every little distance tents, boxes of muskets, cartridge boxes filled with ammunition, &c., which the enemy had thrown away in their haste and to lighten their labors.

After leaving Magruder's headquarters we soon came in sight of the cavalry of the enemy, who were hovering in the rear to watch our movements. Our cavalry, who were the advance pickets, soon made them leave at double quick, and nothing more was seen of them for some time.

Two men who had managed to stay behind at their homes were now brought in, who gave some valuable information. They say that the enemy have been evacuating this line for a week, and that the last of them had passed only a short time previous to our advance. According to their statement, it is the intention of the rebels to make their final stand at New Kent Court House, about thirty miles this side of Richmond. They represent the force of the enemy at from seventy-five to one hundred thousand.

About five miles from Warwick creek we came to Lebanon, which consists of a brick church and three houses. Here we were joined by the troops which were immediately in front of Yorktown, and the line of march was again taken up for Williamsburg.

MEETING THE ENEMY—BRILLIANT CAVALRY CHARGE—FIRING FROM ARTILLERY.

Nothing important happened until we reached our present location, about two miles from Williamsburg, when our cavalry encountered a body of the enemy's cavalry and charged upon them, routing them completely. At the same time a rebel battery, concealed in the woods, opened upon our cavalry and Gibson's battery, with grape and canister, killing and wounding some twenty of our men. In the confusion which ensued in getting them to the rear, it was impossible to ascertain their names; but I will send them as soon as they can be learned reliably.

Preparations were immediately made to charge upon the battery, but darkness coming on it was deferred till morning. If we can get up with the enemy to-morrow there will, undoubtedly, be a great battle, as our troops are anxious to meet them. We have marched ten miles to-day, and at that rate we shall be in Richmond by next Sunday. Much speculation is indulged in as to where the enemy intend to make their final stand, and the general impression seems to be that somewhere in the vicinity of Richmond will be the point, if they can be induced to fight us at all. The reasons they give, in order to satisfy their people for falling back is, that they wish to get us away from our gunboats. It seems a little singular that they should have chosen just the time to evacuate that we had selected to open our batteries upon them. It would seem that they must have some friend in our army occupying a high position. Our men are sleeping upon their arms to-night, preparatory to an early start in the morning. The enemy have they undoubtedly intended at this point, viz:—Keep us here all night, in order to give them a night's start of us.

Confidence in General McClellan.

One of our loyal citizens some time since had a splendid silk flag made, but refused to hoist it until, as he said, "General McClellan should take possession of Yorktown," preferring to keep up the old bunting that had been over his house since the day of the President's proclamation. His friends laughed at him for his "confidence in a general who had done nothing," but he stood by his determination, stating that he "should hoist his silken flag before long." Before daylight on Monday the silken flag was aloft, and his friends were early saluted with the words, "Whose turn is it to laugh now? I told you I should soon hoist my silken flag, and there it is." This is not the only one who has placed confidence in General George B. McClellan, and they will not be deceived, depend upon it.

The Approaches to Richmond—Fears of the Rebels.

[From the Richmond Examiner, April 30.]

No one can rely on the fortunes of war, and the brave as well as the wise neglect no preparations which a timely prudence can provide against the vicissitudes of a campaign. The greatest battles ever fought have turned upon accident, and the bravest armies have often been defeated by the chances of fortune. To risk a great cause upon the bravery of troops is to throw all upon a single hazard, and often to court destruction by neglecting and despising the means of averting it.

The fate of Richmond depends, in the present posture of affairs, upon the army at Yorktown and the efficiency of the Merrimac. If McDowell is concentrating a force of fifty thousand for a march from the Rappahannock upon Richmond, there is danger also in that direction; but it is a danger against which the government, being forewarned, we have a right to believe will be forearmed. Taking it for granted that a demonstration from the direction of the Rappahannock, being foreseen, is provided for, we return to the proposition, or rather the fact, that the safety of Richmond depends upon our army at Yorktown, and the obstruction which lies in the channel of the James river in the form of the Merrimac.

This vessel may be set upon by not only one Monitor, but by a fleet of them, in a very short time. It may be overcome in regular combat, or it may, by a spark falling into its magazine, or by the accident of fire, be put out of the way at any moment. If so, *Richmond is at once approachable by gunboats, under an attack from which it is perfectly untenable, and indefensible by land forces.*

Is it the part of wisdom to risk the great interests of such a city as ours upon a tenure so frail and uncertain as the hull of a single vessel? Not only is the city of Richmond hazarded upon such a contingency, *but with it also is hazarded the safety of our armies on the peninsula and northside;* for if Richmond were taken by naval assault, and the enemy's fleets should bring a land force to occupy and hold the city, our armies north of the James river would be pinned in and endangered.

Against these casualties, which every one must see are of the gravest character, it certainly behooves the authorities to provide promptly and effectually. Our numerous batteries on the banks of the river, experience has shown, *are utterly incapable of bearing off the enemy's boats.* If two vessels could run the gauntlet of two formidable forts on the lower Mississippi, and entire miles of batteries on its banks, surely *it would be madness to place any reliance upon similar and, we have no doubt, inferior defences on the James.* Happily there is one expedient practicable for the defence of the channel of the James river, which could not well be provided in the case of the Mississippi. The flow of the stream in our river is slow, and the depth of the channel comparatively slight. It admits of easy obstruction, whereas the Mississippi did not admit of such a thing except at the cost of immense labor, time and expense.

Various modes have been suggested for obstructing the channel of the James. Some recommend the plan of rafts constructed of entire trees dug up by the roots, and thrown, roots and branches, into the stream. The roots sink to the bottom, the branches point down stream, and an abattis is thus formed of thickly studded trees for a distance up and down the channel of the stream. The enemy have engines for removing promptly almost any sort of obstructions in the channels of rivers; but the removal of a raft of trees, matted together by the pressure of the stream, and held to the bottom by accumulated sand and earth washed against them, is found to be a work requiring the most powerful and expensive machinery.

Another plan of obstruction is that of filling the channel with stones large and small, the smaller the better, as the work of removal is thus rendered more tedious. The obstruction of the channel for a few hundred yards by this means would effectually stop the ascent of gunboats; and, if protected on each side by bombproof batteries, they could be put beyond the possibility of being removed by the enemy.

Many other modes of obstructing the channel of the river might be suggested, any of which would be effective to check the passage of gunboats; and, even if they should be such as would admit of removal, still other a higher up the channel, could be interposed by our own people fully as rapidly as those below could be removed, by the enemy.

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An obstruction in the channel of the river, interposed as a part of the line of defences on this stream, would answer the double purpose of protecting the channel of the stream and of supporting the land defences of the Chickahominy.

It is true that we are speaking in this matter of contingencies, to all present appearances remote and improbable; but the interests at stake in this city and its vicinity, both local and general, are too great to be hazarded upon any chances of war that may, by timely prudence, be provided for.

It seems to us that no proposition could be plainer than that of the duty of obstructing the James river channel; nor would any probable cost of the undertaking be a wasteful or useless expenditure. At all events, the public opinion of the city pronounces in favor of the measure and the press, which is the embodiment and expression of public opinion, has done its duty in urging the subject upon official attention.

Norfolk and Richmond Must Be Defended—Jeff. Davis Says He Will Never Surrender.

[Correspondence of the Norfolk Day Book.]

RICHMOND, April 27, 1862.

The news from New Orleans, confirming the fall of that city, has been read here with sorrow; but we are not dispirited, and do not doubt our final success.

Norfolk and Richmond must be defended at all hazards, and it is high time your forces should be more than doubled. Your city and the Navy Yard are of equal importance with Richmond. Not only is Norfolk and the Navy Yard of inestimable value to us, but the county of Princess Anne is indispensable in this crisis.

The delegation from South Carolina and Georgia waited on the President before Congress adjourned, and urged him to withdraw the troops from those States, and, at all hazards, defend Richmond and Norfolk, and I think they are coming. Indeed, you would have thought so, if you had seen, as I did, on Wednesday last, the South Carolina regiment, from Sullivan Island, thirteen hundred strong, pass Chester, twelve miles from Richmond, and heard cheer after cheer resound through the forest for "Old Virginia—she must and shall be free." I conversed with a South Carolina officer on the same trip, who said that *Savannah may be surrendered, and Charleston, too,* but Richmond never. He said, defend Richmond and Norfolk, cost what it may.

You have noticed in the papers a short account of President Davis' speech, lately made at Rocketts, to the soldiers passing to Yorktown. It was the best short speech I ever heard him make. He said, so far as he was concerned, he would continue this war for twenty years, rather than one inch of Virginia soil should be surrendered. So let us hear no more about surrendering Virginia.

News from Port Royal, S. C.

ARRIVAL OF THE BEN. DEFORD, WITH PASSENGERS AND REFUGEES—CAPTURE OF PON PON BATTERY BY THE GUNBOAT HALE, ETC.

The United States steam transport Ben. Deford, Commander J. C. Barker, Jr., from Port Royal, 3d inst., with passengers and refugees, to the United States Assistant Quartermaster, arrived at this port last night.

She brings forty-three cabin passengers, five children and eighty-two passengers in the steerage, and a number of refugees from Jacksonville.

The health of the troops at that place is excellent.

No movement of any consequence has taken place. Pon Pon battery, at the junction of Dahoo and Pon Pon rivers, was taken by the gunboat Hale. The rebels fled as soon as the gunboat came in range of three hundred yards of the battery, leaving one thirty-two-pounder loaded and primed, and one thirty-two-pounder empty. The harbor is clear of vessels. The Ben. Deford brings a small mail.

Capt. Geo. Tucker, of the Forty-seventh regiment New York State Volunteers, was accidentally shot through the neck, on Edisto Island, on the 30th ultimo, but is now in a fair way of recovery. He has resigned, and comes passenger by the Ben Deford.

The following is a list of the passengers by the Ben Deford:—Col. Farnsworth, of the Seventy-ninth New York State Volunteers; Lieut. Colonel Rocklin, of the Third Rhode Island State Volunteers; Lieut. Colonel W. G. Ely, of the Sixth Connecticut; Captain Sanford, Capt. Jno. B. Dennis, Lieut. S. J. Corey, Lieut. Wm. Charnley, Lieut. C. H. Keeler, C. W. Dennis (sutler), F. A. Kirtland (sutler)—all the above from Fort Pulaski. Captain Geo. Tucker, of the Forty-seventh New York State Volunteers; Capt. John N. Tracy, of the Sixth Connecticut; Capt. Geo. Proudfit, of the Eighth Michigan; Lieut. Geo. Macardle, of the Engineer Corps, United States Army; Lieut. John H. Babb, of the Ninety-seventh Pennsylvania; Lieut. Thos. S. Taylor, of the Ninety-seventh Pennsylvania; Lieut. Frederick Hurst, of the Forty-eighth New York; Adjutant Redfield Duryee, Sixth Connecticut; Assistant Surgeon Ed. Bulkley, Sixth Connecticut; Rev. R. A. Brown, One Hundredth Pennsylvania; Benj. S. Cooper, Allotment Commissioner from Pennsylvania; Capt. King, Harbor Master at Port Royal; Davis Crowell, F. H. Arms, Jas. Jamieson, Daniel Kilgore, J. Low, Jas. E. Flinn, Wm. F. Leonard, L. D. Newcomb, George H. Weber, H. W. Mather, Capt. Clark, Jos. W. Parker, Jas. Carey.

The following are the names of the refugees from Jacksonville:—

G. Friegel, lady and three children; Mr. Pretto and lady, Mr. Redman and two ladies, Mr. Gardiner and two children, Mr. Victorian, Mr. Alsop, Mr. J. W. Holliday.

Owing to the untiring perseverance and industry of Captain King and his corps of well disciplined assistants, the harbor of Port Royal has been entirely cleared of vessels. None are now kept waiting weeks before being discharged, as heretofore, but under the new regime of Major General Hunter everything moves smoothly on. The following [illegible] were in the harbor of Port Royal on May 3d:—

Steamers Oriental, Captain Tuzo; Cahawba, Captain Baker; Cosmopolitan, Captain Crooker; Delaware, Captain Cannon; Mattano, Captain Kearney; Honduras, Captain Clifford; Flora, Captain Fargang. The propeller