

THE POSITION OF AFFAIRS.

[From the Washington Republican.]

At this present writing, not much is known of the fighting of Sunday beyond what was contained in the dispatches of Gen. McClellan. Those dispatches, as our readers recollect, gave nothing but the general facts that the Federal forces had carried certain heights upon which the enemy had made a stand, and that it was discovered, the next morning, that he had retreated during the night. Of losses upon either side, Gen. McClellan said very little, for the reason, doubtless, that the reports of the Federal generals engaged in the battle had not then been made to him.

The Baltimore American, upon the authority of private advices, says that the battle lasted nearly the whole day, the contest being to drive the Confederates from the mountain heights, which command the Hagerstown road at a point between Middletown and Boonsboro'.

It also speaks of it as the battle which was to decide the fate of Western Maryland. We do not understand things at all in that way. On the contrary, it appears to us nothing more than a contest resulting from a stand made, at an advantageous point, by the rear guard of a retreating army.

On the next day, Monday, according to the telegrams from Harrisburg, Gen. Longstreet was at Boonesboro' with thirty thousand men. Hagerstown was not occupied by the Confederates, but by a small force of Pennsylvania troops.

The Frederick, Md., correspondent of the Baltimore American, is indignant at the conduct of the Federal troops in Frederick county. He says:—"It is difficult to point to an act of vandalism perpetrated by the Confederate soldiers during their occupation of Frederick, while a countless host of stragglers are crawling after the Federal army devastating the country for miles along their devious line of march. In squads of twos and threes or more, these cowardly skulkers are rambling along the country roads robbing hen-roosts, destroying orchards and killing stock, until many of our farmers are left without the food necessary for their families. Unless this evil of 'straggling' is abated it is useless to try to fill up regiments. They will become depleted faster than they can recruit."

A Chicago paper publishes a sensational report of an Indian dogging Gen. Pope's footsteps while in that city.

The Peace Society of London has issued an address to the people of the United States, urging that the time has come when an attempt should be made to arrest the destructive conflict that is being carried on. It deprecates any interference with American affairs but such as would prove acceptable to Americans, but says, "surely the idea of friendly mediation may be entertained without any derogation of national dignity." It argues that there are only two alternatives to issue out of the war—either the utter extermination of one of the parties to it, or some form of accommodation and compromise between the contending sides. It asks, "Is it not better to have recourse to the latter at once, before the feelings of the North and South become hopelessly inflamed with the most bitter animosity and vengeance?"

The Hagerstown, Md., correspondent of the Baltimore American says that the Confederate troops whilst in that place did not interfere with the Union men, or attempt to prohibit them from the free expulsion of their sentiments.

Movements on Monday.

The army correspondent of the "Baltimore American," has the following statements relative to reported operations on Monday: we have as yet, no other account.

"General McClellan pursued the Confederates on Monday morning with his reserves and a large body of fresh troops. The enemy took the road towards the river at Harper's Ferry and at Shepherdstown, and he was pursuing them and shelling their retreat with great loss. In several contests on Monday, where they made a stand, the Federal troops charged on them with such vigor, that they fell back from point to point in great haste.

The battles and advantages obtained on Monday are thought to be superior in importance and brilliancy to those of Sunday. Drayton's South Carolina Brigade is entirely gone, either killed, wounded or prisoners. The 17th Michigan, a new regiment, did up this brigade first with bullets and finally with the bayonet. Howell Cobb was wounded and taken prisoner. Everything was based on Harper's Ferry holding out, and if it had done so until Monday evening the greater portion of the Confederate army would have been captured, as they could not have crossed at the Ferry.

He was pushing on them last evening, however, very close, and is reported to have sent to the rear 8,000 prisoners, and four batteries.

Colonel Strong, of the 19th Virginia, and Colonel James, of the 3rd South Carolina Battalion, were killed on Sunday last, and their bodies left in possession of the Federal troops. The South Carolina brigade was very severely handled.

General Hatch, commanding King's division, who is sick, was slightly wounded. The Major of the 96th Pennsylvania, was killed.—Capt. Brady, of the 11th Pennsylvania Reserves, was killed.

It is said that both Sigel and Heintzleman are on the south side of the Potomac."

Hospitals for the wounded in the late battles near Hagerstown are being established at Frederick. Two thousand beds were sent them yesterday.

Dr. Milkan has been appointed general superintendent of all the hospitals in and around Washington.

The capture of Harper's Ferry puts the Confederates in possession of a quantity of commissary stores, a number of wagons and horses, and some fine cannon. The amount of ammunition on hand was small.

Gunboats are now said to be stationed fifteen miles apart, from Washington to the mouth of the Potomac, and tugs patrol the river constantly.

There are 13,769 patients in hospitals in Washington and Alexandria. Within the last week over 1,000 have been removed to New York, Philadelphia, and Point Lookout, on the Potomac.

The N. Y. Post tells a large story of the freaks of lightning in France. A young girl was struck by lightning and changed to a boy. Whereupon a Western paper remarks: "The very thing wanted in this vicinity."

Mr. G. Francis Train is coming on to Washington, where, it is said, he is not wanted.—He represents every body, and everything, almost, in England, as bitter against the U. S. Hagerstown, Md., was evacuated by the Confederates on Monday morning.

The number of recruits to the Confederate army in Maryland is said to be about a thousand; fifty or sixty joined from the town of Frederick and its neighborhood.

The New York World says that "hereafter free discussion of the management of the administration must be received with as little deference or scruple as in time of peace"—at least, it intends to exercise it.

A clerk in the U. S. Marshal's office in N. Y. has forged checks and obtained money upon them from some of the banks, and attempted to pass a forged check upon the U. S. Sub-Treasurer at N. York.

The late Gen. Reno, U. S. A. recently killed in battle, was a brave and accomplished officer.

A great many cattle and horses has lately been driven over from Maryland into Virginia; also, some grain.

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY GOVERNOR, ALEXANDRIA, VA., Sept. 16, 1862.

General Orders, No. 2: Information having been received at these Headquarters, that certain citizens and soldiers of low repute are constantly committing depredations upon the property and persons of defenceless inhabitants, who have by force of circumstances been compelled to resort to Alexandria as a place of shelter and protection:—therefore, notice is hereby given, that all persons detected participating in such lawless acts, will be arrested and placed in confinement. By order of JOHN P. SLOUGH,

Brig. Gen., Military Gov. of Alexandria. ROLLIN C. GALE, Capt. and A. A. G. sept 16--tf

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