

AFFAIRS IN THE WEST.

**Return of the Expedition to Independence—
Desperate Condition of Affairs in Missouri—
The Fight at Independence—A Formid-
able Rebel Force in Southwest Missouri—
Movements against the Rebels—Death of
Col. Cloud.**

From Our Own Correspondent.

LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS, Sunday, Aug. 17, 1862.

My last letter closed with the departure of an expedition to Independence, Mo. We returned last evening. But little was accomplished beyond the obtaining of valuable information relative to the number and whereabouts of the "Confederate Partisans," the style and cognomen by which the Government of Secession recognize as in their service the numerous gangs infesting Missouri, of outlaws, horse-thieves, murderers, and perjured wretches who have taken the oath on being paroled by Union forces.

It is a startling fact, that in spite of all the blood and treasure poured out to hold and control Missouri, the Union cause has scarcely ever seemed so desperate, or affairs been in so miserable a plight as at the present moment. From one end of the State to the other, the country is overrun by large and growing bands of guerrillas, who evidently are cooperating in carrying out an extensive and well-organized conspiracy to form another army and make another attempt to carry the State into the Southern Confederacy.

The telegraph has some days since borne you the news of the taking of Independence, Mo., the capture of four hundred National troops, a large number of guns, ammunition, camp equipage, horses, &c., by a Confederate force of eight hundred, under Brig.-Gen. HUGHES, formerly of Liberty, who was killed in the fight. The National force at Independence consisted of three companies of the Missouri Seventh Cavalry, one company of Missouri State troops, under Capt. AXLINE, from Kansas City, and a mounted detachment of fifty-four men, of the same grade, under Lieut. HARRINGTON. These, with a few Home Guards, constituted the force under Lieut.-Col. BUELL. This officer has, since his advent here, won a peculiar notoriety by various acts indicating a sympathy with the rebels. The night before the attack, the picket-guard consisted only of infantry, and of but two men at each post. The enemy surprised and killed these, and entered the town by 3 A. M. BUELL's headquarters were in the Bank Building, in the centre of the town, at least a half a mile from the camp, which was to the north of the town, on the outskirts. The Provost-Marshal's office, Quartermaster's and ordnance stores, were captured, and headquarters attacked. Col. BUELL, with twenty men, made a gallant resistance for some time. The camp was attacked by about four hundred men. It was completely surprised, the men having only time to rally, form, and fall back upon a stone fence near by, where they maintained a severe skirmishing fight for several hours. The enemy undertook to dislodge them, but failed in their object, and were driven completely from a flanking position in a neighboring orchard. The men claimed that they silenced and drove back the rebels. The most miserable exhibition of poitroonery and cowardice was manifested by the senior officer in command, Capt. BRACKENRIDGE, who several times undertook to display a flag of truce, and would have done so had he not been prevented by his men.

In striking contrast with this was the bravery and vigor displayed by Lieut. HARRINGTON, and the sad fate of Capt. THOMAS, of the Seventh Missouri Cavalry. Both these officers are Kansas men, and Lieut. HARRINGTON's detachment of fifty-four men, with two or three exceptions, was recruited from this State. Capt. THOMAS, on the night of the attack, was with his family in a house near by. He was captured in endeavoring to reach his men. His wife came out of the dwelling and begged for his life, which the captors told her should be respected, as he was a prisoner of war. She entered the house, and almost immediately, and within sight, they surrounded the unfortunate officer, beat him cruelly, dragging him across the street by his beard and hair, and finally one of the gang deliberately shot him dead. The special animosity displayed against Capt. THOMAS was caused by that gentleman having waged active war against guerrillas, and carried out general orders in shooting one of them caught with arms in his hands. The murderer of Capt. THOMAS claimed to be the friend of the man killed.

Lieut. HARRINGTON took his command and succeeded in fighting his way from camp into the town, a distance of half a mile, with the intention of reaching headquarters. He finally had to throw himself into a brick dwelling-house, which he defended for three hours, until his ammunition was nearly expended, when he left the building, fought his way through the rebels, and succeeded in making his escape to Kansas City, twelve miles distant, without the loss of a man. Everybody unites in praise of his heroic courage and coolness. In the same company were four of his brothers, the youngest of whom is not yet 15. They all fought well, but the boy best of all. Lieut. HARRINGTON shot KIT CHILDS, a notorious guerrilla, as also Gen. HUGHES, in command. The command was then assumed by a Col. J. W. THOMPSON, who is not known in this section. The National loss is 18 killed and 20 wounded, 250 taken prisoners, 400 horses captured, 600 guns, 200,000 cartridges, and a large quantity of other munitions. The rebels report the loss of but ten men and nine wounded. The Sexton of the town cemetery states that he buried twenty-four Butternuts in one hole, and there were other graves dug for them likewise. Their loss cannot be less than thirty. Among their wounded was Lieut.-Col. BORD, formerly a Border Russian citizen of Kansas, who was shot through the left lung. The rebels remained in town till nearly sundown, and marched out more numerous than when they entered, having been joined during the day by nearly all of those whom Col. BUELL had for months past been so busy giving safeguards and administering the oath to. On evacuating the town, they marched toward Lexington, encamping that evening about four miles below town, and on the next night some ten miles further.

Lieut.-Col. BURRIS being telegraphed to from Kansas City, left this place at noon on the day of the fight, and proceeded with 300 men and two guns on the steamer *MAJED*, to Kansas City. There we found Maj. RANSOM, of the Kansas Sixth, cavalry, with two squadrons. He brought information of a camp of 800 rebels on the State line, eight miles below Westport. By order of Col. BURRIS, the Major's camp equipage was removed to Wyandot, from its previous location on the State line at Little Santa Fe. Maj. RANSOM was an invaluable addition to the command, as he possesses the most perfect knowledge of the country, its every road and bypath. At 3 A. M. we took up the march for Independence, taking a circuitous and but little used route in hopes of finding the rebels in their bush-camps. After a fatiguing march of about twenty miles, the command came in sight of Independence. The cavalry was sent forward with directions to surround the town. This was done completely, but the place was found almost deserted. Even in the midst of the desolation of this intestine strife, there were to be seen bright spots. The rebels had left the Federal wounded, (after paroling the prisoners,) with a number of their own most badly hurt in the Court-house. The ladies, we found, had carefully and tenderly nursed all. God bless them for these sweet charities.

It was determined to remain in the town that night. Toward morning an alarm was raised by the report of the post gun at Kansas City. It was supposed to be a signal of alarm for us that the enemy were threatening that place. The men were got ready, breakfast prepared, every preparation for defence made, and a messenger sent to Kansas City. He returned about 8 o'clock with the information that the pickets were driven in during the night, and that an attack was apprehended. It was supposed that the force to the west of us was endeavoring to flank us

and get between us and Kansas City. Scouts were sent toward Lexington. Three of these in citizens' clothes rode nearly fourteen miles in that direction. Passing themselves for rebels. Some twelve miles from camp they came across an unarmed party of eight men, who informed them they were bushwhackers, hunting some horses that had strayed from camp. Our scouts proposed to join in the search, which was agreed to. Riding a mile or two further, the party came suddenly upon a heavy picket, and in full sight of an entrenched camp, situated at the brow of rising ground, in such a manner as to render it difficult for artillery to play upon it, and yet to enable its defenders to pour a raking fire of musketry on any attacking force. Evidently the bushwhackers were not aware of the existence of this camp, for on our scouts raising the cry of "Feds," and firing upon the pickets, they immediately turned and run with our men, whose fire had either killed or wounded three men, one for each rifle fired. The party was hotly pursued for several miles, but managed to escape. About eight miles from camp the bushwhackers were informed that they were prisoners, and the scouts brought the whole into camp. Information received at noon decided Col. BURRIS to return to Kansas City, and thence to Leavenworth, to make preparations for its defence. We left Independence at 3 P. M., and did not reach Kansas City till next morning. The same day we returned by the *Three Majors* to Leavenworth, leaving Maj. RANSOM in charge of the post. In addition to his cavalry, there are a company of Missouri State troops and two of militia. The National force below was Col. NUENTZ's Regiment, supposed to be at Chapel Hill or Lexington. Maj. LINDEB, with two guns and two companies of the Missouri Seventh Cavalry, have been stationed at Harrisonville, Cass County, and were ordered to Independence, but did not reach there before the surrender. Maj. LINDEB reached Kansas City on Friday night and assumed command.

From the best information I can obtain, I believe there is a rebel force of at least six thousand in Western Missouri, south of the river, principally concentrated in the counties of Jackson, Lafayette, Johnson and Cass. Most of this force are the veteran partisans of Price, who have fought from Boonville, Mo., to Shiloh field in Tennessee. They are under tried leaders, too. The guerrillas, who have been operating under UPTON HAYS, QUANTRELL, JACKSON and others, are now operating under the direction of COL. THOMPSON, HUGHES, COFFEY, COLEMAN and others. HAYS, QUANTRELL, and the petty chieftains, now find themselves ranking as Captains and Lieutenants, in place of having no superior over them. All these scattered bands are being mustered into the rebel service as Confederate partisans, the commissions of their officers bearing with their rank that designation, coupled with the term Western Division. This shows conclusively that JEFF. DAVIS has reduced guerrilla warfare to a system. It is to be trusted that our Government will not recognize these marauders as entitled to the privileges of prisoners of war. To meet this rebel force we have now marching upon them about eight hundred men—cavalry, infantry, and a battery of brass guns from this place, under command of Col. BARSTOW, of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry, and Lieut.-Col. BURRIS, of the Tenth, commanding at Fort Leavenworth. They left here on Sunday night. Major LINDEB left Kansas City on the same day for Lexington with a force of cavalry and artillery, to reinforce that place, and move out on the enemy. Gen. TOTEN has also reached there; the forces under his command will number over 2,000. Gen. BLUNT has moved with a large portion of the late Indian Expedition—probably all of the cavalry and artillery, consisting of about 3,500 men and 12 guns. This will place the rebels within a triangle, of which Kansas City and Lexington form one side, and Gen. BLUNT, with a portion of BARSTOW's command, form the other side.

Aug. 19.—Since the above was written we have received information of the defeat of a Federal force at Lone Jack, Johnson County, fifteen miles southwest of Independence. Whose command this was, we have yet no definite information, but supposed it to be Col. NUENTZ's. The rebels report 800 guns captured, and a large quantity of ammunition, with two 6-pound guns.

Messengers just in from Fort Scott bring sad intelligence in the loss of one of our most gallant and efficient officers, Col. CLOUD, of the Kansas Second, and of the repulse, with the loss of fifty or sixty killed, of command of 1,500, acting under his orders, at Monte Vallo, twenty-five miles east of Fort Scott, on Friday last, by a rebel force under Col. COFFEY, of several thousand in number. Gen. BLUNT had moved with the balance of his force, about 4,000 men, with twelve guns, on Thursday evening, and met CLOUD's command retreating. Gen. BLUNT undoubtedly moved forward as rapidly as was prudent, and we shall probably hear from him soon. Should the present movements of the Federal forces succeed, the rebels will, probably, be penned in, with the Kansas and Missouri Rivers on their flanks, a strong force in their rear at Kansas City, and a force under Gens. BLUNT and TOTEN, of from 8,000 to 10,000 men, driving them in. They will be "corralled" as the Western men phrase it. The gunboat *Warner*, with several transports, is on the river and can be made available.

The death of Col. CLOUD is a great misfortune. He was one of the most efficient and most daring officers in the service. As Major of the Second, at Wilson Creek, he was in command after the wounding of the Colonel, and his conduct was the theme of general admiration. He was formerly from Ohio, resided at Emporia, Lyon County, Kansas, and was, I believe, a minister by profession. He served in the Mexican war with distinction. A good man, moral, temperate and brave, a strict yet kind disciplinarian, his regiment will mourn his loss, as that of an elder brother.

It is rumored that the rebels retreated on the approach of Gen. BLUNT, were closely followed, and that on Saturday a severe engagement took place, with what result is not known.

The removal of all our troops from this post has necessitated the enrollment of all able-bodied men among the citizens. The Mayor issued a call for the citizens to close the stores at 5 P. M., and drill till 7, each day. On Sunday, the Provost-Marshal issued an order calling all able to bear arms together at the Market-house, at 4 P. M., with such arms as they had. The order was fully and promptly complied with.

This city is infested with a number of semi-secession traitors, the dregs of the Pro-Slavery party, who have covertly thrown obstacles in the way of enlistments, especially among the Irish.

By the following correspondence it will be seen how we propose to deal with such gentry.

Note from Major Calkins to Major Weed.

PROVOST-MARSHAL'S OFFICE, LEAVENWORTH, }
Aug. 18, 1862. }

MAJOR T. J. WEED, A. A. G.—Sir: I hereby request the privilege of placing in the camp of the Twelfth (colored) regiment, such persons of secession proclivities as are arrested for refusing or evading obedience to the call for the militia of the city to organize and drill; the prisoners to be well guarded, and placed on such fatigue duty as may be required in and about the camp, and to be held till further orders.

I am, Major, respectfully, your obedient servant,
E. A. CALKINS,
Major Third Wisconsin Cavalry and Provost-Marshal.

Maj. Weed's Reply.

OFFICE OF RECRUITING COMMISSION, }
DEPARTMENT OF KANSAS, }
LEAVENWORTH CITY, AUG. 18, 1862. }

MAJ. E. A. CALKINS, PROVOST-MARSHAL—Sir: In compliance with your request contained in your note of this date, Capt. J. M. WILLIAMS, commanding the Twelfth Regiment Kansas Volunteers, (colored,) has been ordered to receive, guard and discipline such prisoners as you may send to his camp. For your information, I inclose a copy of said orders. Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
T. J. WEED, Major and A. A. G.

Adjutant-General's order for the negro regiment to accept the prisoners.

SPECIAL ORDERS, No. 3.

(Extract.)

5. Capt. J. M. WILLIAMS, commanding the Twelfth Regiment Volunteers, (colored,) is hereby directed to receive into the camp of said regiment, and strictly guard and discipline, all persons who may be delivered to him as prisoners, by the order of Maj. E. A. CALKINS, Provost-Marshal of this District. By order of T. J. WEED, Major and A. A. G.

The Governor of this State is again at his work of manfully endeavoring to thwart the progress of rebellion, because he has hated and formidable foe, Gen. LINDEB, has control of the same. He declares that he has authority to recruit, and has appointed persons to act as recruiting officers. Gen. LINDEB refused

to recognize his action, and has issued the following order in relation to it:

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF KANSAS, }
FORT LEAVENWORTH, KAN., Aug. 18, 1862. }

GENERAL ORDERS, No. 20.—1. It having come to the knowledge of the General Commanding that persons are engaged in preventing enlistment in this State, he directs and orders that any person so found discouraging and preventing enlistment be arrested immediately and held subject to military authority.

2. Hon. J. H. LANE having been appointed Commissioner for recruiting in this Department, will have the supreme control of all enlistments made for new regiments, and as such will be obeyed and respected.

By order of Brig.-Gen. J. G. BLUNT.
JAS. M. GRAHAM, Act. Asst. Adjt.-Gen.

Recruiting is proceeding with great vigor. Three hundred men are encamped at Wyandotte, and 300 at Lawrence. At Troy, Doniphan County, two companies have been mustered. These will comprise the Eleventh, Twelfth, (colored,) Thirteenth, Fourteenth, (colored,) and Fifteenth Regiments. Several companies of "men of African descent" have been mustered, and are daily engaged in perfecting themselves in drill.

JOHN ROSS, President of the Cherokees, with his family and relatives, arrived here this morning, on his way to Washington. The Indian Territory has had, temporarily, to be evacuated; but we shall speedily, it is to be hoped, march southward again.

The Second and Third Indian Regiments are at Baxter's Springs, 80 miles south of Fort Scott. The First is at Leroy, Kansas. All of them are ordered to Fort Scott.

JOHN ROSS is a small man and wiry. The Indian blood is in so small a proportion that there are no traces of it visible in his face. He has keen, crafty eyes, bushy eyebrows and grey hair. A shrewd, sharp, practical, sagacious face with a good deal of the "canny Scotch" about it, and an expression that seems to be looking for treachery. The Chief is over 70 years, but seemingly very active and alert. He has played a very sharp game with the Secessionists, who all the time have suspected him. None of his friends here have doubted his Unionism, only believed he was waiting for the advent of the Federal troops. Our retreat will be a sad blow to the people and it is really to be hoped that the Kansas troops may be sent back to this Department so that with the aid of what levies we can raise now, we may be able to hold the country down to the Texas line. R. J. H.