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THE LATEST.

Our latest advices from the immediate front were to last evening. The contending armies occupied about relatively the same position that they had maintained throughout the day. There were rumors to the effect that the Abolitionists were retreating, but we have no confirmation of them. The smoke of their camp fires were to be seen in the distant woods. It was also reported that they were being reinforced, and throwing up entrenchments, but this also needs confirmation.

The Great Battle.

In our yesterday's necessarily brief and imperfect account of the sanguinary battle of Wednesday, December 31st, we brought the events of the engagement up to nightfall. Our left had driven the enemy's right for several miles, occupying the field of battle, capturing the hospitals and most of the wounded, and resting within two hundred yards of the Abolition pickets. Our right was not so actively engaged, the enemy concentrating and massing his troops in a strong position. Byrne's battery of seven pieces and Cobb's Kentucky battery were very actively engaged during the afternoon with the batteries of the enemy, but the casualties on our part were small.

Yesterday the New Year dawned upon us with a bright, smiling and propitious face. The previous night was intensely cold and must have seriously affected the condition of the wounded on the field. But the genial sun soon dispelled the white rime of frost that covered the landscape and changed the icy air into a pleasant spring like atmosphere.

Every thing was perfectly quiet in front until about 8 o'clock, when the cannonading opened on the right centre and was kept up spiritedly for a short while. There was another lull. The enemy seemed indisposed to show himself, and under the cover of heavy timber it appeared was making preparations for a retreat.

THE BATTLE FIELD.

Yesterday presented the usual horrible, sad, heart-appalling scenes. The dead lay scattered in every direction—the Confederate gray uniform and the Yankee blue in fearful proximity, "after life's fitful fever." At points where our braves had charged and taken the batteries of the foe there were plain evidences of desperate struggle. But it was quite evident that the dead of the enemy outnumbered ours ten to one. This proportion may seem unreal and improbable, but it was the opinion of every one who visited the field. Upon every hand were the common debris of a battle—broken gun carriages, dismantled wagons, piles of dead horses, scattered accoutrements—all indicating the fearfulness and desperation of the contest.

THE LOSSES.

Our loss in killed, wounded and missing will sum up 5,000. That of the enemy is triple, if not five fold our own. We captured forty pieces of artillery, and up to last night had paroled forty-seven hundred prisoners. Of small arms, ordnance, camp equipage, &c., we captured vast quantities. The prisoners are being rapidly sent South to Vicksburg for exchange, that being in

accordance with the previous agreement between Gen. Bragg and Rosecrans. The wounded prisoners, of whom there are a great number, are comfortably housed and being well cared for.

THE NUMBERS ENGAGED.

Rosecrans' grand army of invasion numbered according to the lowest estimate 75,000 men. Gen. Bragg's force we have never yet heard computed at over forty thousand, and not more than one-half those were engaged in the battle. The disparity in numbers, however, was more than atoned for by the difference in pluck and determination of the two combatants, as well as by the impulses that actuated the men.

Sill a walk through the hospitals discovers to the most careless looker on the saddest and most sickening spectacle—spectacle which we hope will never again mar the quiet and happiness of so many hearthstones in the Confederacy.

THE WOUNDED AND THE HOSPITALS.

The spirit of heroic endurance manifested by our troops during the perilous and fearful days and nights of the battle was worthy of themselves and their holy cause. But what shall we say of the patience, the fortitude, the bravery, even the gaiety displayed by the wounded. We saw hundreds of them on the field and in the hospital and from not one of them did we hear a single word of complaint or repining. Many of their wounds were ghastly, many requiring amputation and the severest surgical treatment, but all of them bear up with the determined spirit of heroes.

It will be gratifying to the friends of these brave boys to know that the hospital arrangements are admirable and ample. Dr. D. W. Yandell was particularly conspicuous in providing for the reception of the wounded, and all of the surgeons are kind, attentive and skillful. The ladies, foremost always in every good work, are assiduous in their attentions. Indeed from the good order, careful nursing and fine medical skill displayed, we have every reason to believe that the mortality will be small.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The body of Maj. Gen. Sill, one of the division commanders of the Federal forces, was brought to town yesterday afternoon and laid out in the Courthouse. Gen. Sill was shot through the left eye with a minnie ball.

Col. Allen, of the 3d Alabama cavalry, was seriously wounded in the hand. Col. Marks, of the 17th Tennessee, was also wounded. Captain Jo. Desha, of the 9th Kentucky, was severely wounded in the head by the fragment of a shell. He came to town, had his wound dressed, and immediately repaired to the field. Adjutant Henry M. Curd, of the same regiment, was shot through and through by a six pound cannon ball. Lieut. Curd was a nephew of Col. Thos. I. Hunt and cousin of Gen. John H. Morgan.

It was reported yesterday that Brig. Gen. W. E. Woodruff was among the Yankees slain.