

OUR CAMP NEVIN CORRESPONDENCE.

IMPORTANT EVENTS NEAR AT HAND—PROBABLE
ADVANCE OF BUCKNER—THE ARRIVAL OF
HARDEE WITH REBEL REINFORCEMENTS—DAN-
GER TO THE NATIONAL CAUSE, ETC.

CAMP NEVIN, NINE MILES BELOW ELIZABETH-
TOWN, Ky., Friday, Oct. 18, 1861. }

I have been meditating a trip to Camp Dick Robinson and the seat of war in the eastern part of the State, but a somewhat attentive study of the signs of the times has decided me to remain here for the present. Events are near at hand which will rivet the attention of the whole country upon this division with an eager interest, such as has not been felt since the first peril of the capital after the battle of Bull Run. It is certain, a fixed and absolute fact, which none but a madman can longer doubt, that BUCKNER'S late retreat from the southern bluff of Green River, the destruction of the magnificent railroad bridge across that stream, and various other steps of a like kind, which seemed to indicate a permanent retrograde movement, were intended only to blind and mislead our Generals. Indeed, it appears from an account given me this evening, by a lad who had just come through from Mumfordsville, that the rebels only intended to have a make-believe affair of it in blowing up the bridge, and did not wish to destroy it utterly. Some such mistake was made as that at Leipsic, in NAPOLEON'S day. They had the bridge undermined so that they could destroy it at any moment, and BUCKNER probably ordered the explosion of a keg of gunpowder, to make the country people around believe that he had blown up the bridge; but those to whom the business was intrusted misunderstood the command.

Whatever the explanation may be, it is certain that the regiment that had the bridge in charge are now being soundly cursed throughout the rebel army for their stupidity in blowing it up. Further, it turns out that BUCKNER'S advance only fell back some two or three miles. They pretended to draw in their pickets and outposts from several directions, but it is now ascertained that there was only a sham execution of the movement. The rebel pickets are in pretty nearly their old position, on this side of Green River. The roving, unattached, free-fighting horse, who swarm so about the rebel armies in the West, have certainly not become less saucy and confident since the pretended retreat. PRICE'S experience in Missouri shows that these fellows are always the first to be damped by ill fortune, and if there were really anything in BUCKNER'S late pretended fright, they would be the first to feel and exhibit it.

At the very time that BUCKNER was pretending to be scared out of his boots by the advance of ROUSSEAU and MCCOOK to Nolin Creek, some twenty miles from Green River, he was receiving reinforcements which would make him stronger two to one, than they were. HARDEE has come over from Arkansas and joined him with a heavy column. It is said the ex-author of tactics brought 2,000 Indians with him. I have been unable to find out whether he really did so or not. A rather nervous old gentleman told me he actually saw them; but he may have mistaken the wild, embrowned demi-savages of the Arkansas frontier for aborigines. If they have brought savages into Kentucky, a brigade of free negroes should be formed and put into the field against them. Tennesseans, Mississippians, Alabamians are pouring north to join BUCKNER, and I know to a certainty that his force is now double our own and rapidly increasing. His late retreat then, was only a feint. Its object was to draw our forces south of Green River and crush them. Having failed in this ruse, he is just as certain to advance as the sun shines. I think it is likely that Paducah and Louisville will both be assailed at once. An advance is a vital necessity to the rebels, and not to advance would be worse for them than a defeat. Their army cannot be kept together without an advance. They subsist wholly by plunder, and must be constantly advancing in order to be maintained in the field. It is necessary for them to reach the Ohio River before Winter, and there can be no more doubt that they are now preparing for a desperate effort to do so, than there is of the sun's shining.

It seems to me that while this great danger is threatening us, we have no adequate preparations to meet it. I have long been painfully convinced that our people are blind, most wofully blind, to the true measure of the peril. An infatuated confidence cost the nation Bull Run. Must it cost us more? To say that the rebels are destitute of supplies of all kinds amounts to just nothing at all, for to fanaticism and military spirit destitution is only a spur to conquest. Look at the Saracens and the soldiers of the French Republic. The lean hand of famine will wave these wild Southern fanatics on to conquer or die. I cannot see in the prospect in Kentucky that rosy promise, that food for self-complacent security, which some affect to see. This way of underestimating the danger, and lulling the public energies and public vigilance into a false repose, is not only unworthy of any man, or any Press, that has any moral responsibility, but is a most egregious and mischievous mistake of policy. Especially in Kentucky at present is it fraught with disaster to the State and Nation.

It is announced in the newspapers—I hope not correctly—that the erection of Eastern Kentucky into a separate military department is to be followed immediately by active operations with a large army in that quarter. If this step be taken, not only are all the advantages which were promised by the cutting off of Eastern Kentucky from this department lost, but that measure will ruin us here. The mountains can and will defend themselves, and, that accomplished, every man, every gun, every energy should be concentrated upon the line of the Louisville and Nashville Road. I imagine that BUCKNER and JOHNSTON grin with delight as they hear of one fine regiment after another being thrown away among the mountains, which, strong by nature and unanimous Union sentiments will never be in any serious danger, until all the rest of the State has fallen. The separation of the eastern from the western part of the State was a wise measure, because it promised to relieve the commander of this department from the embarrassment and perplexities of operations in two totally distinct and independent fields, and to leave him free to bring his whole mind and resources to bear on this vital line; but I say now, as the whole country

[Continued on Eighth Page.]

The New York Times

Published: October 24, 1861

Copyright © The New York Times

NEWS OF THE REBELLION.

[Continued from First Page.]

will say presently, that if Eastern Kentucky is to be converted into a huge maw to devour men, the only result of its formation into a separate department will be the loss of the State. But it is said, we intend to release East Tennessee, turn the rebel flank in Western Virginia, and create a diversion in favor of Gen. McCLELLAN. A most magnificent scheme—like that of the Persian visionary, who, in spurning the King's daughter, whom he was to marry, kicked over his little basket of wares, and demolished all his wonderful air-castles at a single blow. But we shall, at least, emancipate East Tennessee. Yes, and lose Louisville and Kentucky. Throw away a great city and a wealthy and populous State for a sterile and worthless rock.

If the readers of the *Times* have been reading any marvelous accounts of skirmishes in this quarter recently, the best advice I can give them is not to believe them. The telegraph is considerably quicker than my letters, but not quite so truthful. Such plundering, devastation and marauding as the rebels are now practicing in the neighborhood below here would disgrace barbarians. They rob Secessionists quite as readily as Union men. They steal horses, cattle, sheep, hogs, bed clothing, wearing apparel, in short, everything. The plundered parties arrive in camp daily with their woful stories. The robbers go up to the fields where the farmers are seeding, and forcibly take their horses from the plows. This is no sensation paragraph. I do not write such. I have a list, several pages long, containing the names of those plundered, and the amount of their losses.

Brig.-Gen. Wood arrived in camp last night. He will command a brigade in this division.

The New York Times

Published: October 24, 1861

Copyright © The New York Times