

AN INSIDE VIEW OF THE REBELLION.

Statements of John Parker, a Contraband.

HIS SERVICE IN THE REBEL ARMY.

THE BATTLE OF BULL RUN.

Thirty-six Hundred Rebels Buried After the Battle.

NEGROES EMPLOYED IN THE REBEL ARMY.

Beauregard's Promises of Pay and Freedom to Slaves.

From an interview with an unusually intelligent "contraband," who has been in the employ of the rebels since March last, and who was in the third battery during the whole engagement, we are furnished with a graphic picture of the rebellion from the other side, as well as a very interesting account of the battle of Bull Run, the forces engaged and the results of the engagement. We give his story, with dates and numbers, as he told it, and after a rigid cross-questioning we are satisfied of the general truth of the statements.

In reply to inquiries he gave his name as John Parker, stated that he was born in King and Queen county, near Richmond, Virginia; is about forty years of age, a carpenter by trade, married and has four children. One of his children, seventeen years of age, is a body servant with his master, Thomas Griggs, now a colonel in the rebel army. The next, fourteen years old, was sold six months before the war. The others (a boy aged eight years and a girl of six years) escaped across Coon's Ferry with their mother in the latter part of December. Parker is a stout, healthy mulatto, intelligent above the average of slaves, can read the large print of the Bible, speaks quite plainly and very fluently, appears extremely conscientious, and appears to be a sincere and devoted Christian.

In March, 1861, he was hired out to the rebel government, with nine others of his master's forty slaves, to work upon masked batteries and trenches at Winchester, Virginia. These batteries are dug under the bank in form of a "half moon," about six miles from the town. There were between four and five hundred slaves at work at Winchester until April last, when two hundred were taken to Fredericksburg to construct entrenchments and masked batteries along the Rappahannock river, both below and above the town.

THE DEFENCES OF RICHMOND.

In May there was a great call for hands to fortify Richmond, as the seat of government had been removed thither. Over one thousand slaves were hired in the vicinity of Winchester and Fredericksburg alone to do this labor, and many thousands of negroes were kept at work, under white masters, building batteries and entrenchments and fortifying the city. The hills on each side of Richmond were fortified, but the principal fortifications were on the other side of James river, in Manchester and Spring Hill.

There were also many hundred slaves employed in building a military macadamised road from Bull Run to Fredericksburg. This road is almost straight, very wide, and very hard, and is shorter than the route formerly used. Parker states that the distance from Richmond to Bull Run by the new road is but sixty miles, while the distance by the old one is eighty-four miles.

PARKER'S SERVICE IN THE REBEL ARMY.

In the course of conversation, Parker described his view of the battle of Bull Run as follows:

"When did you leave Richmond?"
 "Discharged 'bout first of June; went home to plantation. Master lived near Bull Run. He went into the army then, with two young masters, and the 'cruffing man came and got the overseer; and old mistress and young mistress lock up all but dining-room, and they go away, and leave us to keep house; don't know where; we 'spects gone to the free states."

"What became of you, and what did you slaves do?"
 "Oh, we jist eat and eat all we could, and took care of ourselves; didn't do nothing. The army took away six pair mules, six pair oxen, and give master bonds for 'em."

"Did all the masters go to the army and leave their slaves at home?"
 "Yes, jist you can't find one master in the country. All gone, all gone."

"But how came you in the army?"
 "Oh, there comes an officer and takes all the best of us to drill down to Bull Run."

"How many colored persons were there in the army at Bull Run?"
 "One whole regiment free colored persons, and two regiments slaves among the white regiments, one company to each. All white officers."

"What did you do then?"
 "We jist drilled, drilled, drilled—swab, load, charge cannon in the mask' batteries at Bull Run."

"How many masked batteries were there at Bull Run?"
 "Four. The first jist over in the corner of the wheat field; the second—that's two—round the corner, right down in the woods; and the three—that's mine—at the left side of wheat field, and then the fourth way back. All cross fire and cross-cross. De jist fourteen guns, the other twelve, the three—that's mine—fourteen guns, the other ten."

THE BATTLE.

"How long did you drill, and did you know when the attack was to be?"
 "O yis; dey jist knew four five days, all the time afore; drilled and charged cannon more 'n a month. O, dis sich a hurry, sich preparation; dey knowed when you troops come. The first charge you drove us over de Run; then we all get in de trenches. Dis Saturday, 'bout one or two o'clock, fight till eight—den our guns die down. 'Bout eight General Johnson come down from Winchester with ten thousand troops to Junction. Dis yer two railroads come in, two go out, and a canal, and we call it Junction. Buregard keep way down the hill; his aid de camp ride to him tell the news."

"Great many troops come from Richmond that night; 40,000 at Bull Run Saturday morning; 50,000 at Junction; Johnson come from Winchester and bring ten thousand. We stay in mask battery all night; ready in the morning; commence fighting Sunday morning seven o'clock. At nine or ten the cars bring up troops from Junction; reinforce 50,000 at noon; troops all up at three o'clock. Begin with the heavy cannon in the morning till two o'clock; the muskets under the cannon. Sunday morning Sherman battery go round the wheat field and fire, fire, fire on the battery down in the woods; but it did not answer till the first battery in corner of the wheat field open; then them in the woods open, and dey jist had the battery 'tween two fires; took 'em all, six brass guns."

"When your troops charge the muskets we run behind the trenches. Our guns kill most, as you could not see us. Fight till nine o'clock—jist light so to see. Den dey jist run, all de jist go toward Richmond and Junction, till aid-de-camp tell Beauregard you run; den de 600 Black Horse Cavalry jist follow you, chase you clear to Alexandria."

"Black Horse all rich mens' sons, jist complete their own, horses all black, on their own money. Dey not come till almost day light. They bring 1,500 prisoners. All night we jist pick up boots, shoes, muskets, coats. Oh, de awful noise—some men cry 'Help! help!' Some cry, some hollering, some water, some most dead. Oh, me never want to see 'nother war. Hundreds! hundreds! most killed on the ground. Some no arms, some no legs! Oh, oh!"

"Why did you not follow our troops?"
 "We did not go after you; 'frald 'nother fight Monday. Kept fixing guns and trenches. Jeff Davis come on Wednesday, and he said he could take Washington if he know'd you go clear there. He 'spects 'nother fight every day."

TERRIBLE SLAUGHTER OF THE REBELS.

"You pris'ners went to Richmond, and de band play 'Way in Dixie.' March all de way. Kept repairing all de time—'frald bigger battle."

"Buried dead ones; took two weeks. De Colonel keep paper and pen; we dey trenches eight feet deep, jist put one soldier in every one 'tother, fight in trench, and cover 'em. Takt all de rings, de lockets, de money, coats, de shoes, trowsers, and everything off; put all money, rings, in a box to send to Richmond. Some had all cut to pieces; some not buried for long time; buzzards—oh, hundreds, hundreds—bite and pick out der eyes; de fust thing they look for is de eye; pick der face; dey smell bad. Colored pussons not like to take off der clothes at all. De Colonel keep number, eight in all trenches; can count trenches now; none of our troops and you put in together—all separate."

"How many of your troops were there killed?"
 "Mor'n three thousand. Three thousand and six hundred."

"Are you sure there were as many as that?"
 "O, sartly, jist know. De Colonel keep de paper and de pen jist's you do, and de trenches, know sartly. Wy when you shells come in de trenches dey jist kill ebery-body there. One bigger split, kill most all in de trench. Dey climb out and not go back. De shells jist go clear ober de four mask battery, kill ebery-body. Most ebery one of de free colored regiment killed. Two hundred black horse cavalry. Only de colored persons bury de dead ones. You killed four thousand."

"Do you think you killed four thousand of our troops?"
 "Yis, yis, dis sartly; de Colonel count em all. But we no charge to kill de white people. We turn de screw, charge over and under; we knew all de colored people knew, they not shoot you. Master say de white people cum to take us away to kill us, sell our children; but de colored people not believe him, an say yis, yis, but not think so. We talk ourselves that you cum to kill our masters—make us free."

AFTER THE BATTLE.

"We had great fast day, thanksgiving-day, great prayer—pray, pray, pray; all de slaves go, and minister, John Williams, pray; pray de good Lord make us strong to whip our enemies as of old. He thank de Lord he help us to fight and whip the North. He pray that we whip them ebery time—dat de good Lord be on his side. We, colored people, not believe him—not till Bull Bluff, den we frald de Lord hear his prayer. Den hundreds of old people and slaves come to fight; still we

colored people not believe, we still hope de Lord will free us."

"When did you leave Bull Run?"

"O, jist we fix up de trenches and batteries and go to Munson Hill, to de Potomac, bu'ld more up here, Georgetown, and all round. Dey give us pass to go home and see de plantation, and how de mistress live. All white folks gone to de war, all de mistress go way South and to the free states."

"Den Beauregard say he giv all de slaves eight dollars a month, der freedom and big farm of land if they fight and be good soldiers. Den de slaves go to fight to get their freedom."

In reply to further cross-questioning, Parker stated that there are now twelve regiments of negroes in the vicinity of Bull Run and Manassas Junction. He knew nothing of others, except that there were three companies at Gray's Ferry and one at Coon's Ferry on the Potomac. These regiments are distributed, one company in a regiment, with white officers, and trusted with all guard and picket duties in their turn; the officers first making them promise to kill all the white pickets and keep a good look-out. One slave from Alabama was recommended by his master, John Peco, as a sharp-shooter, and was placed on picket duty and killed three of your pickets, and was afterwards shot one night, which was a source of general congratulation among the negroes, as they do not intend to shoot the white soldiers.

He gave us a direct and candid account of the promise of Beauregard to pay the slaves eight dollars a month, and that the notice was published in the Richmond Dispatch the next week after the battle of Bull Run.

In speaking of the battle of Bull Run Parker succinctly narrated the manner of each attack, and the progress of the battle until its close. He said some one came in and told them four or five days before the attack, and "they kept learning every day," and that a large number of southerners rode ahead of the Yankee troops to Bull Run on Saturday.

BATTLE SCENES.

At the time the battle commenced the rebels had forty thousand troops at Bull Run, which had been sent from Richmond and the Junction, and that the rebels made the first stand on the other side of the Run, and were drove back at the first charge.

The manner in which the batteries were concealed let Sherman's battery past the first to an attack upon the second in the woods, when they both opened fire and took the whole of the battery, men and guns. The contraband told one incident with great gusto. In the afternoon of Saturday a rebel drummer boy, about twelve years of age, was sitting upon his drum, when a Yankee cannon ball struck the drum and "knocked it all around."

At the close of the battle on Saturday night, between eight and nine o'clock, the rebels were woefully frightened, and expected to fall back to Manassas on Sunday. To our inquiries the contraband gave us the station and number of each brigade at the commencement, and was positive that there were forty thousand engaged. He said Johnston brought only ten thousand from Winchester, and arrived on Saturday night, taking command of the army under Beauregard on Sunday. Beauregard had his headquarters about a mile from Bull Run, to which place the aids were in constant communication. On Sunday morning the battle opened at seven o'clock, and at nine the reinforcements began to arrive by railroad as fast as they could be brought. At noon a body of thirty thousand came on foot from the Junction and about twenty thousand had come by railroad. The rest came up by three o'clock, and the fight continued until nine o'clock, when the batteries were deserted, and the rebels left in haste for Manassas, making a stampede, like a flock of sheep.

At this juncture, while Beauregard was trying to rally his men, his aid informed him that the Yankees were flying for Washington, and he sent all the force he could command (that of the six hundred Black Horse Cavalry) in pursuit, who, upon their return, reported that they had chased the Yankees to Alexandria. They lost two hundred killed. Those of the rebel troops who could be rallied were employed all night in picking up the guns, baggage and ammunition left in the field, and rifling the dead and wounded of whatever they could find. At the assurance that our troops had fled Beauregard rallied, and again manned and repaired the batteries, and threw up additional entrenchments in hourly expectation of another attack. But his army was so frightened that they could not get any force to follow outside the fortifications. In fact, from the description of the contraband, the whole rebel army was whipped-routed, and had our troops held out an hour longer would have been in possession of the works at Bull Run and the new macadamised road from Bull Run to Fredericksburg.

PRAYER AND FIGHTING.

In reply to another inquiry about the thanks-giving after Bull Run, he repeated Rev. John Williams's prayer at considerable length—a good sample of southern bragadoelo and bombast—but said that "the colored people did not believe him, nor that the Lord was on that side, until after the battle of Bull's Bluff, when he was told there were about four thousand of our troops killed and many driven into the river and drowned." This event, he said, disheartened the slaves, and they were afraid that the Lord had heard the "pray, pray, pray of John Williams." He said that all the old men and the boys were in the army—many of their soldiers over sixty years old. Parker added that, until the government gained a victory, the slaves would fight for the rebels "for fear that the Lord was on the side of the South, and that they had got to be slaves always." A great many were escaping, however, determined to go to Canada, where they knew they should be free.

To our inquiry whether he would not like to charge a cannon upon the southern masters, he replied that he could do it with pleasure, and he should know how to "turn de screw;" but added he, "Oh Lord, dis colored person never want to see another battle."

STATEMENTS CONFIRMED.

After repeated and indirect interrogatories as to the number and disposal of the dead, wounded and prisoners in the rebel army after the battle, we were unable to get any contradiction of Parker's first statement, that their loss was three thousand six hundred killed, and that they told him ours was four thousand, and that they had one thousand five hundred of our prisoners, wounded and all. To the question as to the number of rebels wounded, he stated at one time five thousand four hundred, and at another gave those of the first day at one thousand six hundred, and that of the second day about four thousand, which shows a slight discrepancy.

The description of the battle-field while the surgeons were engaged in burying the dead, was revolting in the extreme. No commencement of the burying was made until after the arrival of Jeff. Davis on Wednesday, and the bodies were not all buried until Friday of the following week. Parker states that the bodies became offensive, and the buzzards had disfigured the faces of a large proportion of the killed on both sides. He numbered the birds by hundreds and hundreds. Every rag of clothing was taken off, and the slaves employed to clean it for the rebel army.

In reply to interrogations concerning the offer of Beauregard to pay the slaves, Parker stated that they had not yet got any money, and that he expected that the masters now had got "bonds." He said that the negroes had no faith in the promise of pay and freedom, and that they were escaping as fast as an opportunity offered.

To our inquiry whether the slaves were determined to come North, and if they knew that they would be free, he said they all understand it perfectly well, but every slave found coming towards our lines was shot. They may go as far as they please South and not a master be found to stop them. He gave the fact that about one hundred kegs of powder a day was manufactured at Fredericksburg, and that it was sent to all parts of the South. He said he was a carpenter by trade, and had made many of the carriages upon which the cannons at Bull Run were fired. He showed to our satisfaction that the slaves were looking out for their freedom, and that they perfectly understand the means of getting it, and on which side of this war their interests are. But we do not care to bind their shackles tighter, nor thwart any of their schemes—and they are many and well laid—by giving information to the rebels. The slaves well understand and believe that this war is to make them free.

To our inquiry whether the colored people wanted to shoot our troops, he said no! That they know how to turn the screw and fire over us. He said they might have killed a great many more of us, but the negroes had charge of the guns and they all agreed to fire over us "a heap of times."

In the course of his conversation he described the powder mills of Fredericksburg, saying that they made a hundred kegs a day, and the powder was sent South.

To an inquiry how he got away, he told us a deep laid plan, perfectly understood throughout the South, and that the slaves were putting it in execution, hundreds and hundreds escaping. He crossed Gray's ferry above Georgetown, and after an interview with General Banks's division returned through the enemy's ranks and gave his wife and the other negroes in the vicinity the assurance they so much wanted—that our troops were friendly, and that they would not be sent back; and after preparing for her escape again, crossed the ferry and came to New York. His wife, two children and seven others crossed Coon's ferry, a mile above, soon after.

PARKER AND HIS FAMILY.

Mr. Parker is now in search of his wife and two children, who came to this city some days since, and as soon as he finds them intends going to Canada (as he is not quite sure of his safety here) or to some smaller town, to settle and work at his trade, confident that he can take care of his family, and wishing to spend the remainder of his life in freedom.

Should this statement fall under the eye of Mrs. Richard Parker, (who was, on the night of December 28th, furnished a letter by her husband to Mr. Beecher, of this city, and informed how to escape, and who afterwards crossed the Potomac at Coon's Ferry,) or any of her friends, she can find her husband, who is anxiously awaiting her, by calling upon or addressing Mr. W. E. Whitney, No. 61 John street, New York.