

THE NEWS FROM PETERSBURG.

THE ENEMY REPORTED TO BE LEAVING—TERRIBLE SUFFERING AMONG THE YANKEES FOR WATER, &c.

The Petersburg papers report nothing new in the situation there. The usual cannonading and skirmishing is kept up. An impression prevails with many that the enemy are withdrawing their troops. If this be so, the Petersburg papers think they are doing it very gradually, and proceeding with great caution, and that only a portion of the different army corps are leaving at a time. Parties from City Point report that the Yankees have erected a wharf there a half mile in length. They seemed to be doing an immense amount of business, and the steamers and transports were arriving and departing all the time.

Prisoners state that the army is suffering more than ever for water. Efforts have been made to haul water from the James and Appomattox rivers, but this has proved to be a most tedious as well as troublesome undertaking. Besides, the water, after being exposed to the sun in barrels for two or three hours, is so much heated when it reaches the camps that it is almost impossible to use it, and many of the men have sickened from its effects.

A day or two ago the enemy sent up in front of our extreme left and centre a large number of negro troops to relieve the white Yankees who had so long been in the trenches.

The enemy's fortifications at Reems' station, on the Weldon railroad, about eight miles below Petersburg, (which the enemy so soon evacuated,) have been found to be very formidable. The breastworks commence some two or three miles east of the station, and running in a due westerly direction, extend along in front of Oak Grove church, cross the railroad, and circle round to a point south, near Dr Crawford's former place, and quite a mile from the railroad station. They are built of posts driven into the ground about eight or ten feet, walled up on the inside with fence rails, and earth then dug and thrown upon the outside. The removal of the earth forms a ditch in front, but the ditch is entirely dry. About a half mile below the station, to the east of the railroad, and immediately on the Halifax stage road, are five redans, for the protection of cannon, all of which display considerable engineering skill. They were but the work of some fifteen or sixteen hours, and were hastily abandoned. They arrived on Wednesday evening, proceeded immediately to fortify, and, on Friday morning at 3 o'clock, were rapidly retreating to the main body of Grant's army. While in that neighbourhood, the people suffered terribly from their ravages. Plantations

were speedily stripped of every fence rail, growing crops destroyed, and horses, hogs and cows stolen. The vandals were not satisfied with stealing several thousand panels of rails to aid in constructing their breastworks, but they burnt many thousand more, and seemed bent on destroying everything that was in the least calculated to aid the farmers in that section in obtaining a mere subsistence.— All the corn, horses, cattle, meat, and even the clothing of these unprotected people were stolen; and their negroes carried off in a body.

It has been stated that slaves were not forced by the Yankees to go with them. This we believed at the time to be false, and so it has turned out.— Parties from Dinwiddie, whose residences were visited by the Yankees, state that the vandals rushed into the houses, and the first words spoken were: "Are there any slaves here—speak quick, or we will burn this d—d house down." The negroes were in the field ploughing, and the vandals immediately rushed to them, cut the horses and mules from the ploughs, and forced every man servant on the place to mount and ride off with them. In some instances all the negroes stolen made their escape during the night and were back at their places next morning.