

The Late Indian Fight at Bald Mountain.

The narrative of the attack upon the Indian Fort at Bald Mountain, published in our last issue was made up from information obtained from Lieut. Beckwith, Company A, 1st Battalion Mountaineers. We intended and believe we have been faithful in the statement of the facts thus received. If however we did not correctly apprehend the account given by him and have thus committed an error we would gladly rectify any error we may have committed.

We have observed a disposition in certain quarters to find fault with the account we have given of this affair, but in what particular it was deemed incorrect or censurable we are not aware. If it be in regard to what took place from the time the information was received at Fort Gaston of the whereabouts of this fortified stronghold of the Indians to the close of the fight on Sunday we have only to say that we are in receipt of a statement from good authority which corroborates that given by Lieut. Beckwith in every important particular. If it be in relation to the escape of the Indians, or the cause of, or who is to blame for that most unfortunate occurrence then we say we did not know nor could we ascertain from any source then within reach, the particulars of the escape or that censure was attached to any one because of it. Since then, however, a thousand and one rumors are in circulation a title of which if true go to show that the Indians which occupied the Fort and for two days defied our forces, are indebted to mismanagement and neglect on our part, for their lives and the freedom they enjoy to-day.

We have it in the statement referred to that the Fort was situated in the centre of a small prairie "almost surrounded by gently rising hills covered with heavy timber," and on the south of which was a "deep slough" which made it "impossible to extend our line across;" that a careful reconnaissance of the position occupied by the Indians, on the morning of the second day (Saturday) "found the Indians all in their Fort evidently feeling perfectly secure." At noon eighty-five men were on the ground and were disposed of as follows: Lieut. Beckwith took the extreme right within easy range of the Fort, Lieut. Hale held the centre and on the left was Capt. Ousley with the howitzer. The bombardment commenced immediately after the above disposition.

howitzer. The bombardment commenced immediately after the above disposition was made, and was kept up until the ammunition for the howitzer was expended, which was nearly dark, when the fighting ceased, the Indians still in possession of their Fort and exhibiting no disposition to yield. The Fort had been considerably damaged by the shells thrown at and into it but not sufficiently so to warrant an assault as a vigorous fire was kept up by them from the port holes all the while. A strong guard was posted around the Fort for the night. Notwithstanding this however, morning came and found the bird flown. What disposition was made of the men entrusted with this important and responsible duty we are not informed, nor do we know who is justly chargeable with the unfortunate occurrence of that night. One thing we do know, however, that a prize for which our citizens and the military had been for a year and a half striving to secure, has slipped from us, even after it was within our power to grasp it. We admit it is oftentimes easy to see where an unsuccessful enterprise might have been so managed as to have insured success, after all is over. So we admit it is evident now if this Fort had been thoroughly invested while the Indians were resting in confident security, and before the final attack made, a larger body of them than has ever been encountered here at any one time, and armed to the teeth, might now be beyond the power of doing any more harm. The people of this county are driven to madness by this red-skin scourge that has so long been preying upon their lives and property and are impatient to have the county rid of it. With them a failure such as this, is looked upon with suspicion, and injustice is liable to be done though circumstances may have transpired that should be a justification. From the present light afforded the conviction seems to have settled upon the minds of a large majority of the people that there has been mismanagement and neglect in this affair. We charge no particular officers or men as responsible in either case for we do not know where the blame lies, if in reality any at all is chargeable, but if it be true that the escape of those Indians is attributable to either mismanagement or neglect the people have a right to know who is responsible for it. We do not say this much in the spirit of fault-finding, and shall be sorry if what has been said shall do injustice to any one. It is by far the more agreeable task to award the mead of praise than to cast censure upon the conduct of men, and in the performance of this acknowledged duty of public journalists there would be less liability of bestowing praise where none is due, or of casting censure where it does not attach, if those who are in possession of the truth would make it known.

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When the War is Over.