CHAPTER XVII

SECOND BATTLE OF BULL RUN

THE next morning, June 2, 1862, my brother and I set out on leave with surgeon's certificate of disability. To Fair Oaks Station I rode beside the driver of the ambulance, while Lieutenant Howard, Capt. A. P. Fisk, and others reclined inside.

At the station I had hardly reached the ground when General Philip Kearny rode up with his staff. They dismounted and stood near us, while Kearny and I grasped hands. He had lost his left arm in Mexico. To console me he said in a gentle voice: "General, I am sorry for you; but you must not mind it; the ladies will not think the less of you!" I laughed as I glanced at our two hands of the same size and replied: "There is one thing that we can do, general, we can buy our gloves together!"

He answered, with a smile: "Sure enough!" But we did not, for I never met him again. He was killed at Chantilly. That evening I was near by but did not see him.

All the passengers in our freight car, which left Fair Oaks for the White House landing that day, save Captain F. D. Sewall, my adjutant general, were suffering from wounds. Some were standing, some sitting, but the majority were lying or reclining upon straw which covered the floor of the car. From one of

the latter I received a pleasant smile and a word of recognition. It was Capt. A. P. Fisk, the adjutant general of French's brigade, who greeted me. His surgeon, having examined his most painful wound near the knee joint, at first feared to leave his leg unamputated, but the captain and he finally decided to take the risk. Every tilt or jar of the rough car gave him intense pain; still his cheerfulness, showing itself in sprightly conversation, never forsook him. He also constantly cheered others around him who were gloomy and despondent.

The roadbed was in bad condition and the freight peculiarly sensitive, so that from compassion the conductor moved us at a snail's pace. With pain from bruised nerves and loss of blood I found it difficult to endure the shaking of the car and be as cheery as my brother and Captain Fisk. The trial lasted three hours, and I was glad enough to catch a glimpse of the steamer *Nelly Baker*, which was to transport us from the White House landing down the York River. It took but a few minutes to get us on board. Here were plenty of medicines and other supplies. Three or four ladies, serving as nurses, gave the wounded men their quick attention and care.

As soon as I could get ink and pen, I made my first effort at writing with my left hand. The letter is still preserved and fairly legible, the letters having the backward slant. To this is added Lieutenant Howard's postscript, which ends: "There is for me only a flesh wound in the thigh."

Only a flesh wound, it is true; but so severe as to necessitate the use of a stretcher to carry him from place to place. It was a more troublesome wound than mine and required more time for healing.

Twelve years before, while a cadet at West Point, I had had a severe wound in the head, made by a fall while exercising in the gymnasium; a hard attack of erysipelas followed. Surgeon Cuyler, of Georgia, attended me there. No mother could have been more faithful and gentle than he during the period of my suffering. The same good physician, as we neared Fortress Monroe, came on board our steamer, dressed our wounds, and prescribed a proper diet. He begged my brother and myself to remain with him until we were stronger, but the home fever had seized me and nothing short of compulsion could then detain us.

Several little children were playing about the steamer and now and then dodged in and out of the room where the wounded officers were sitting. When I noticed them, they began their happy play with me. The nurses, fearing injury, endeavored to remove them, but the other wounded joined me in a protest. It was a great comfort to be not only rid of the scenes of carnage but able to mingle again with the joys of childhood. Many there knew that their own little ones were waiting hopefully, though anxiously, for their return.

We had a rough experience after our arrival in Baltimore. Thrust into a hack, the lieutenant and I were driven swiftly two or three miles over the cobblestones from the wharf to the railroad station. In great distress I clung to the side of the carriage, made springs of my knees, and thus found a little relief from the jar. My brother could get no such respite, so the agony he endured was excessive.

On our arrival in New York, Wednesday afternoon, we were taken directly to the Astor House, considerably exhausted and remained a night and a day. We received the most motherly attention from Mrs. Stet-

son, the wife of the proprietor. Would that every bruised soldier had fallen into such kind hands!

From New York we went directly to Lewiston, Me., meeting on the steamer and the cars, in the cities and villages wherever we passed, every demonstration of sympathy and affection. Our condition suggested to other hearts what had happened or might happen to some beloved relative or friend still on the field of strife.

At last, arriving at Lewiston station, the whole population appeared to have turned out to greet us. We were not suffered to cross the river into Auburn, and meet my little family after more than a year's separation, till words of welcome and appreciation had been spoken and acknowledged. Then the desired relief from such patriotic love came and we hastened to the hotel in Auburn where my wife and children were.

Sweet, indeed, was the rest of a few subsequent days when we enjoyed the nursing and comforts of home.

My confinement to my room was brief—not over three days. Ten days after our arrival, accompanied by my friend Dr. Wiggin, later a surgeon in the Twenty-first Maine, I visited Portland and participated in a State religious convention, where I gave two public addresses.

After speaking in Livermore on July 4th, in descending a flight of steps I slipped and fell. I tried to catch support with the hand which did not exist and so thrust the stump of my amputated arm into the ground, making the hurt from the fall very severe; it would have been worse, except for a sole-leather protection. I felt for my comrades on the peninsula who were worse wounded and suffering. For I had sym-

pathy, tender nursing, and gentle voices at hand, and they often had not.

The people in Maine were restless and anxious. What has the army effected? What does it purpose to do? When will this dreadful war end? Is McClellan the man for us? These were the questions that met me at the convention. At that time I warmly espoused the cause of McClellan and resented every criticism as an aspersion. I entertained and expressed the strong hope that he would yet lead us to victory. At the same time I fully believed that slavery must go to the wall before the end.

The speeches which I made at that large Portland meeting were the beginning of a canvass of Maine for filling the State quota of volunteers. Governor Washburn entreated me to aid him in this matter, as the enlistments just then were too slow to supply the men who were needed. I went over the State, my wife going with me, visited the principal cities and villages, and often made two addresses a day, urging my countrymen to fill up the ranks. My speech in substance was: "Our fathers, with their blood, procured for us this beautiful heritage. Men now seek to destroy it. Come, fellow citizens, regardless of party, go back with me and fight for its preservation."

The quota of Maine was filled, and after an absence of two months and twenty days I returned to the field in time to participate in the closing operations of the second Bull Run campaign.

Military affairs during the summer of 1862, particularly the second battle of Bull Run, fought August 29th and 30th, excited virulent controversies which only subsided with the death of the participants. The ferment was by no means confined to the field.

By the help of his secret service bureau and his own strong will, Mr. Stanton, the Secretary of War, from the time he took the department, began to turn and overturn with a view to eliminate every disloyal element. As the abolition sentiment, constantly growing in the country, was evidently beginning to dominate public affairs, Mr. Stanton, penetrated with new convictions, hastened to leadership. We need only to follow him in the Cabinet, in Congress, in the committees of inquiry, and in every branch of military administration to account for a disturbing influence which had for some time been perceptible in military operations. This influence, more than Mr. Lincoln's apprehensions, kept up small armies, as Wadsworth's in defense of Washington, Fremont's toward the Ohio, Banks's and Shields's in the valley, and McDowell's at Fredericksburg—a division of forces that resulted in the defeat of them all, and perhaps, as McClellan claimed, in his own discomfiture on the peninsula. McClellan's Seven Days' Battles, in which he had repulsed the enemy each time, and yet changed his base to the James River, and his final retreat, all took place while I was absent from the army.

The administration now made a shift of policy. John Pope was brought from the Mississippi Valley and made the peer of McClellan, commanding all the armies above named except his. Halleck, under whom Grant, Pope, and others had won laurels in the Mississippi Valley, was called to Washington and assigned to duty as general-in-chief.

After this, Abraham Lincoln, endeavoring to follow, not lead, a changing public conviction, often lowered his head under the weight of heavy care. Once he said in his peculiar humorous sadness, when a case

of plain justice to a soldier was hindered at the War Department: "We'll try; but, you see, I haven't much influence with this administration!"

He many times, however, took control when he was convinced that he ought to act.

After reaching Harrison's Landing, McClellan entreated to remain there, be reënforced, and go back again toward Richmond. The President at first favored this course. Pope, on his arrival from the West, had strongly opposed the change of base to the James. He predicted that every chance of mutual support would thus be lost to our Eastern armies. Concerning the Confederates, he said: "The loss of Richmond would be trifling, while the loss of Washington to us would be conclusive or nearly so in its results on this war!" This was before the Seven Days battling. After the retreat, Pope was more courteous to McClellan. He wrote him, seeking concert of action, and promised to carry out his wishes with all the means at his command.

It was a touch of human nature for McClellan to reply with reserve and some coldness; partisanship *pro* and *con* ran high at that time.

Halleck came to Washington ostensibly to make the Eastern armies cease maneuvering and fight. He determined that Pope should begin direct operations against Richmond; that McClellan, when brought back by water from the peninsula, should strongly reënforce him. Pope was to be bold, so as to free McClellan from pressure, and enable him to speedily transport his army to the Potomac. This McClellan did.

Pope promptly concentrated, bringing Fremont's army under Franz Sigel to Sperryville, Ricketts's division of McDowell's corps to Waterloo Bridge, and

Banks's command to Little Washington. His cavalry under General Hatch was kept well out toward the Rapidan. Pope's aggregate was then about 40,000 and well located for his undertaking.

Hearing that Stonewall Jackson was already crossing the Rapidan at different points, Pope ordered everything he could get to Culpeper. He would have hastened his army to the foothills of the Bull Run Range, that he might make a descent upon his foe, choosing his own time, but his orders from Halleck obliged him to protect the lower fords of the Rappahannock. Halleck thus insisted on his covering two independent bases: Falmouth, opposite Fredericksburg, and also Washington. It was a grave mistake. Pope's order of the 7th to Sigel to join him at once was not immediately obeyed. Pope says: "To my surprise I received, after night on the 8th, a note from General Sigel dated at Sperryville at half-past six o'clock that afternoon, asking me by what road he could march to Culpeper. As there was but one road, and that a broad stone turnpike, I was at a loss to understand how Sigel could entertain any doubt as to his road." Because of Sigel's delay Pope did not have his corps for the next day's battle. Another annoyance ruffled his temper. He sent Banks forward toward Cedar Mountain with all his force to join his own retiring cavalry and check the advancing foe. Banks was ordered to halt in a strong position designated, and send out his skirmish line and notify Pope. Ricketts's division was put at a crossroad in rear of Banks, with a view to help him in case of need.

But, strange to say, Banks, on approach of Stonewall Jackson, left his strong position, advanced two miles, and assailed the Confederates in a vigorous

manner. He had to cross open fields and was obliged to attack Jackson, who was just moving into a fine position for defense. The terrible struggle that resulted continued for an hour and a half. Against Jackson's leading divisions Banks was successful; but A. P. Hill's arriving drove Banks's men back little by little to the strong position which he had left. Ricketts's troops, ordered up by Pope, were only in time to prevent a retreat. Banks's defense was that a staff officer of General Pope had brought him subsequent instructions to attack at once as soon as the enemy came in sight. Pope's loss in this battle of Cedar Mountain was heavy: 1,759 killed and wounded, 622 missing. The Confederates' total loss was 1,314. Jackson gained a victory, though not as complete as he had hoped. Without renewing the conflict, he backed off slowly to the Rapidan. Jackson's advance had been for the purpose of defeating the portion of Pope's army reported isolated at Culpeper Court House.

A few days after this battle, Lee discovered our transports running from the James to Aquia Creek. Burnside with his command back from North Carolina was already at Fredericksburg.

Lee organized his troops into two wings—Longstreet to command the right, Jackson the left, and Stuart the cavalry, Lee himself taking the field in person. This force numbered between fifty and sixty thousand. Lee moved toward Pope, at first directly. Pope now had all of McDowell's corps and part of Burnside's. The rest of the latter was retained to guard the lower fords of the Rappahannock.

As soon as Lee began to advance in earnest, Pope drew back to the north side of the Rappahannock, placing Banks to keep his center near the railroad

crossing. McDowell was designated to hold the left and lower crossings, and Sigel the right and upper, while the active cavalry now under Buford and Bayard took care of Pope's extreme right flank.

After a few skirmishes Lee began a turning operation. On August 22d, the day I reached Philadelphia on my way back to the army, Lee sent Stonewall Jackson, preceded by Stuart's cavalry, up the Rappahannock as far as Sulphur Springs, well beyond Pope's power to defend. Lee then, with Longstreet, followed slowly.

In the face of this strategic move, Pope decided to retire from the Rappahannock, but Halleck interposed and directed Pope to stay where he was two days longer and *he* would take care of his right, for was not McClellan's army coming in its strength? There was, fortunately for Pope, an unexpected help. Early's brigade only had crossed the river when a storm struck that up-country. The mountain streams poured in so rapidly that all fords were rendered unsafe and all bridges carried away.

Next, Pope aimed a blow at Early, Jackson's advance; but swollen streams delayed his eager march, so that Early, by Jackson's help, made a rough bridge and got back before the blow fell.

Lee gained some advantage during that freshet; he kept most of his troops quiet, cool, and resting, knowing that the streams in twenty-four hours would run down and be fordable.

Had Halleck allowed Pope to retire at once behind Warrenton, to meet there the reënforcements from McClellan, the problem of the campaign would have been of easier solution. But Lee's next move gave a sad lesson to Halleck. First came another of Stuart's

raids. On August 23d, when I reached Washington, his cavalry was close by at Catlett's Station and our communications with Pope cut off. Stuart captured provisions, and carried off Pope's important orders. He then returned to Lee, the way he had come, with the detail of our plans in his possession. Lee acted quickly, making a bold move like that of Grant at Vicksburg, having on the face of it but few reasons in its favor. He ordered Stonewall Jackson, on August 25th, to cross the Rappahannock above Waterloo; move around Pope's right flank; strike the railroad in the rear; while Longstreet must divert his attention in front and be ready to follow.

Jackson made the march with great celerity, Stuart ahead and working his way to Gainesville, on the Manassas Gap railroad, and keeping the eyes of our cavalry upon himself. Jackson was at Salem the first night, and, bursting through Thoroughfare Gap, joined Stuart, and appeared on our railroad at Bristoe Station just after dark the next day. Without considering the fatigue of his troops, that night he sent Trimble's brigade with cavalry, ten miles up the railroad, to seize Manassas Junction. Very early the next morning Jackson himself was there with everything except Ewell's division—left at Bristoe for a guard against a rebound from any Union force below. The Manassas garrison, abundance of artillery, small arms, ammunition, and quantities of food fell at once into his hands. Our railroad guards and a Union brigade were driven back toward Alexandria, and Stuart's force continued on even to Burke's Station.

While Jackson thus delayed near Manassas, feasting on captured stores and destroying what he could not carry away, Ewell, at Bristoe, was not having so

comfortable work. For Heintzelman's, with Hooker's and Kearny's divisions, coming from McClellan before Jackson's arrival at Bristoe, had passed beyond there by rail; and on the evening of the 25th they had been dumped down at Warrenton Junction. Porter's corps, too, marching west from Aquia Creek, was approaching the same point.

The instant Pope had found Jackson in his rear and upon his communications he turned his whole command north. His left, under McDowell, he sent to Gainesville; his center, under Heintzelman, to Greenwich, a few miles south of Gainesville, while he himself, leaving Hooker in command of the right, rushed on to reëstablish his connections with Washington. Sigel's corps was attached to McDowell, while Reno replaced Hooker with Heintzelman. That arrangement made Porter's approaching corps a strong reserve.

The afternoon of August 27th Hooker came upon Ewell's division at Bristoe. On sight, these veterans—veterans on both sides—had a sharp battle. Ewell was dislodged with a loss of 300 men and some of his *materiel.* But as he retired northward he burned the bridge over Broad Run and tore up the railroad track. While Hooker's men were restoring the bridge, Ewell made a rapid march and joined Jackson at Manassas.

In spite of the confusion here and there and the anxiety at Washington on the evening of August 27th matters could have hardly been better for Pope. There was the best ground for belief at his headquarters that Jackson and Longstreet were far asunder, and that Pope with at least 50,000 men would fall upon Jackson and defeat him.

Pope's sanguine heart was filled with joy at that

prospect. But how soon the change! The night of the 27th news came that A. P. Hill's division and part of Jackson's wing had got north of Centreville, and that Stuart had gone from Burke's Station also north to Fairfax Court House; true, Jackson himself with a few troops lingered at Manassas, but Pope believed that his adversary would try to escape him by passing over the mountains at Aldie Gap and turn back in the great valley beyond to join Longstreet. That was not, however, Jackson's purpose, but Pope under this misconception rashly issued a new set of orders.

With his Manassas force Jackson quickly moved to a strong position several miles west of Centreville, slightly north of Groveton. He placed his men behind a railroad cut; his line faced south and stretched off eastward to our old Sudley Spring crossing of Bull Run. How easy now for A. P. Hill to dillydally about Centreville, till our forces should rush that way via Manassas and touch his outposts, and then slip off via the upper crossings of Bull Run, and close in on Jackson in his new position. That ruse showed Jackson's generalship. He was adroitly giving Lee and Longstreet time to get near him before battle.

Phil Kearny's division, passing to the north of Manassas, soon skirmished with A. P. Hill's rear guard, while the latter was drawing off toward Sudley Springs and Jackson. Naturally, Kearny was not able to bring him to battle. King's division, of McDowell's corps, coming toward Centreville from Gainesville along the Warrenton Pike, unexpectedly encountered just at evening Confederate troops. A combat resulted. Gibbon's brigade, of King's division, supported by Doubleday's, with remarkable persistency resisted these assailants, the Confederates at once

having attacked this intruding division. There was heavy loss on both sides. Ewell and Taliaferro were badly wounded, the former losing a leg. King's command remained two hours after the conflict and then went to Manassas. The end of this remarkable day found Pope with his headquarters at Centreville. He now saw plainly that he had been outgeneraled, having misinterpreted Jackson's purpose; in fact, he had helped Stonewall Jackson to concentrate his brigades, where Longstreet might join him.

Now, for Pope to get back his army from Centreville, from Manassas, and from wherever the night of the 28th found his hurrying troops, was not easy. It caused, indeed, much countermarching. Many men, short of food and ammunition and overfatigued with going from place to place on errands which they did not understand, had become discouraged.

But Pope resolutely gave new orders: the morning of August 29th, Heintzelman was turned again westward from Centreville; he led three divisions under Hooker, Kearny, and Reno toward Gainesville. Sigel's corps, on the Sudley road, south of Groveton, was faced northward and pushed forward toward Stonewall Jackson. McDowell with King's and Ricketts's divisions and Porter's corps was also ordered to come up to the left of Sigel.

Sigel deployed his troops as early as 5 A.M. and moved carefully and steadily forward. Soon a stubborn resistance came from Jackson's chosen position. It was a hard battle that day, begun differently from the first battle of Bull Run, but not far from that point. Sigel put in the divisions of Schurz, Schenck, Milroy, and Reynolds, and kept on firing and gaining ground till noon, when the ardent Kearny arrived.

By two o'clock Hooker and Reno also were on the ground.

Pope coming up rearranged the battle front; he placed Kearny's troops on his right, Reynolds's on his left, with Hooker's and Reno's at the center, and then made a reserve. There was irregular fighting till about 4.30, when a desperate attack was made. Kearny and Hooker got nearer and nearer, firing and advancing, till it appeared as though the railway cut and embankment of Jackson would certainly be taken by their repeated charges.

McDowell and Porter, quite early, marching from the east had come upon a stubborn skirmish line; the former left Porter to watch this resistance, whatever it was, and bore off with King's and Ricketts's divisions to the right and formed a solid junction with Pope's front.

Judging from Pope's orders of 4.30 P.M., he did expect Porter to attack Jackson's right. However, according to the weight of testimony now extant, Longstreet's large command had already joined Jackson's right when the order of Pope to General Porter was issued.

Owing to all the unhappy circumstances of this and the day previous, August 29th ended this prolonged contest in a drawn battle.

During the anxious night which ensued, from various circumstances which influenced the mind of a commander, Pope received the impression that Lee was retiring; but, strange to tell, Lee and Pope were both preparing to advance and take the offensive.

Porter's command was at last drawn forward to the main army, and on the 30th his men went into action, side by side, with the rest. It was a stormy fight, bad

enough for us, because Stuart and Longstreet were able to envelop Pope's left flank, and they pressed our army back to the same old ground of the first Bull Run. There was a constant change of front; our best troops held woods, ravines, knolls, and buildings with unwonted tenacity. But we were undoubtedly defeated; at dark Lee held the fields which were covered with the dead and wounded; yet our lines were not broken up, and we still stuck to the Warrenton Pike. During the darkness of the night, by using that highway and such other roads south as he wished, Pope slowly drew back his command to the heights of Centreville.

During these exciting operations I was an observer from different places. August 23d I went in the afternoon to Halleck's private dwelling in Washington, and waited half an hour for him to finish his nap. At last he stood in the doorway of his reception room, and, looking at me sternly, as if I had committed some grave offense, said: "Do you want to see me officially, sir?" Being taken aback by his manner I stammered: "Partly officially and partly not." "Well, sir, what is it?"

With no little vexation I told him that I had been wounded at Fair Oaks, but was now sufficiently recovered for duty, and that I wished to find my command. Without relaxing his coldness or offering me the least civility he replied: "The adjutant general will tell you that, sir." I bowed and said: "Good day, sir," and instantly left his house. I was afterwards assured that this uncalled-for treatment was not intended for insult or discipline, but was rather the way Halleck behaved after great perplexity and trial.

By August 27th I had found my way to Sumner's corps, then at Falmouth. Stern as he was by nature

and habit, he received me kindly; gave me a seat at his mess table, and Colonel Taylor, his adjutant general, surrendered to me his own bed for the night.

My old brigade gave me every demonstration of affection; but thinking that I would never return to the army, Sumner had caused General Caldwell to be assigned to it. He quickly offered me another brigade in Sedgwick's division. General Burns, its commander, wounded at Savage Station, was away, and I was put in his place. It was the " California brigade " of Colonel Baker, who fell at Ball's Bluff.

On the 28th Sumner's corps was moved up to Alexandria and went into camp in front of that city near the Centreville Pike, where we had early news of Jackson's raid and shared the capital's excitement over that event.

Toward the evening of the 29th, when so many of our comrades were falling on the plains of Manassas, General Halleck ordered our corps to march to a place four or five miles above to Chain Bridge, on the Potomac, to anticipate a raid of Stuart.

We made all possible speed, but were hardly there when peremptory orders sent us back in haste to Alexandria, and then, at last, out to Centreville. By forced marches, moving night and day, and following Franklin's corps as soon as we reached the Pike, we arrived on the heights at noon of the 31st. We met Pope's overworked army there and, fatigued as we were, cheered our companions by our comparative freshness. Just to the north of the other troops, between there and the supposed position of Lee, we went into bivouac.

To my satisfaction I was selected the next morning

to conduct a reconnoissance in force still farther north, to find if Lee were there and report. Besides my brigade I had some cavalry. Covered with a good body of skirmishers, we marched rapidly till we aroused Lee's pickets. They gave way; then we came in sight of his skirmishers, who opened fire upon us at once. When we had pressed them more closely we succeeded in drawing the fire of their noisy batteries. My purpose was now gained, and I fell back slowly and steadily to my place in the general lines. We had found that Lee's army, or a part of it, was out on the Little River Turnpike between Aldie and Fairfax Court House. On that pike, somewhat east of the point to which I had pushed out, was the small hamlet of Chantilly. While I was reconnoitering, Stonewall Jackson, cautiously feeling his way eastward to gain Pope's rear and cut his communications near Fairfax Court House, was advancing his command along that same turnpike. But this time Pope, having troops enough, had sent a wing in the same direction and so was ready to check the enterprising general.

Near a crossroad was an abrupt knoll named Ox Hill. This hill with a considerable ravine in front of it was already occupied by our troops, Reno's and Stevens's divisions, with Phil Kearny's near at hand. Hooker's had passed beyond, nearer to Fairfax. When, toward evening, Jackson came near Ox Hill, as usual, he promptly put his men into line of battle, and pushed forward. On our side Reno's division on the left held its ground and repelled every charge; General Stevens did the same for a while and then his soldiers began to give way, and he himself was killed. Then Reno's flank was uncovered and his right regiments had to break back. It was at this trying epoch

of this battle that Kearny sprang to the rescue. Birney's brigade he caused to replace Stevens's troops, and the battle was renewed with fierce energy, while a heavy chilling rain poured down upon the combatants. Kearny, to see what more could be done at the right of Birney, as he had often done before, instead of sending another, rode his horse straight out toward his right front beyond his own men. He encountered Confederates. They fired upon him and he was instantly killed. Thus passed from the stage of action in that brief combat at Chantilly two officers of great ability and energy—Philip Kearny and Isaac I. Stevens. It was a serious loss to the Union cause.

Jackson was forced to halt, and Pope's line of communication became his line of withdrawal. Pope, doubtless with much chagrin, formed his retreating column, and marched back to the Potomac, retiring within the ample fortifications of our capital.

I had command of the rear guard; of that one of these columns which fell back toward the Chain Bridge. General Sumner gave me a detachment of all arms to do the work assigned. Who will forget the straggling, the mud, the rain, the terrible panic and loss of life from random firing, and the hopeless feeling—almost despair—of that dreadful night march! After passing Fairfax Court House we were not molested by the Confederates, yet the variety of experience of that march gave me lessons of great value for all my subsequent career. A most important one was to have, as I then had, a cool, courageous, and self-reliant officer, like Colonel Alfred Sully, in command of the last regiment. Another lesson was, in order successfully to cover a retreat in the night, a degree of discipline for

cavalry, infantry, and artillery is required beyond that needed at any other time. A third, which is always necessary, but there impressed me as indispensable, was for the rear-guard commander to have a well-instructed, reliable, indefatigable staff.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE BATTLE OF SOUTH MOUNTAIN

COULD the reader have seen with Mr. Lincoln's eyes—sad, earnest, deep, penetrating as they were—the condition of the Republic on September 2d and 3d, when the Union army with broken ranks and haggard looks came straggling and discouraged to the protection of the encircling forts of Washington, he would have realized the crisis. Divisions in council—envy and accusation among military leaders, unsatisfied ambition struggling for the ascendency—waves of terror gathering force as they rolled from Washington through Maryland and Pennsylvania northward—a triumphant, hostile army, well organized, well officered, and great in numbers, under a chief of acknowledged character and ability, within twenty miles of the capital—these served to blow the crackling embers, and fan the consuming flame.

But Abraham Lincoln, who cried to God for strength, was equal to this emergency. He brought Halleck over to his mind. He checked the secret and open work of his ministers which he deemed too abrupt; he silenced the croakings of the war committees of Congress; he stirred all truly loyal hearts by cogent appeals to send forward men and money; he buried his personal preferences and called back McClellan, his former though fretful lieutenant. from the position of

helplessness and semidisgrace to which he had recently been consigned by having his army turned over to Pope piecemeal. He gave McClellan command of all the scattered forces then in and around the District of Columbia. A vein of confidence in McClellan as a safe leader ran through the forces—in fact, just the commander for that tumultous epoch, and Mr. Lincoln's good judgment was sustained by the army.

McClellan accepted the trust without remonstrance and without condition, and at once went to work. He refitted and reorganized, moving each division with caution by short marches northward; and this time he made proper provision for the defense of Washington. Slowness was wise then.

It gave proper supplies. It arranged order, which soon replaced an unparalleled confusion and brought cheerfulness and hopefulness to us all. Hooker became commander of McDowell's old First Corps. Sumner retained the Second. One division of the Fourth Corps was present under Couch. Porter still had the Fifth, and Franklin the Sixth. The Ninth was commanded by General Cox after Reno's death. The Twelfth Corps was commanded by General Mansfield; the cavalry by Alfred Pleasonton.

After Chantilly, Lee, whom we left in force not far from Centreville, after one day's delay for rest and refitting, marched to Leesburg, near the Potomac, in Northwestern Virginia. He was beginning an invasion of Maryland and Pennsylvania, for he could there obtain more supplies than Virginia, denuded by the war, could furnish. Such a movement also transferred the theater of the war beyond the borders of the Confederacy. Confederate hopes were based on Maryland. Would not a victory on her soil aid her down-

trodden and oppressed people to set themselves forever free from Northern domination?

By September 7th the Confederate army had crossed the Potomac above us at different fords between Poolesville and Point of Rocks and bivouacked in the neighborhood of Frederick City, Md. The Confederate political leaders were disappointed with Maryland. It was too late for a few fire eaters to carry by storm the hearts of the Union Marylanders. So Lee, though in a slave State abundant in resources, with here and there a sympathizing family, found himself virtually in a land of lukewarm attachments to his cause. But few recruits joined him. The Confederate currency was not willingly received as money. The stars and bars flying over some of the public buildings gave the people no satisfaction. General Lee, though aided and encouraged by a few secession citizens, soon ceased his futile efforts, and gave his attention to the military problems before him.

Harper's Ferry, with an outpost at Martinsburg, eighteen miles to the west, was commanded by a veteran Union officer of the regular army, Colonel Dixon S. Miles. He had under his authority about 13,000 men, including artillery and cavalry, while General Julius White had a small force at Martinsburg.

The Confederates, after crossing the Potomac, below Harper's Ferry, had completely turned Miles's position. McClellan then asked Halleck to have Miles move from Harper's Ferry up the Cumberland Valley. Halleck being unwilling, for he had much wrongheadedness concerning that historic place, McClellan then requested the withdrawal of Miles to Maryland Heights; but even this was denied him.

At this time the Potomac, between Harper's Ferry

and Maryland Heights, was not too deep to ford. The country is rugged, and the Shenandoah entering the Potomac there from the south makes with it a right angle. The two rivers after confluence break through the mountain chain and roll on eastward. Between this increased torrent and the Shenandoah are Loudon Heights. Crossing from the Maryland side the village of Harper's Ferry is on a lower level than any of its environment. The old armory and its dependencies were already in 1862 in ruins, and there was little else there. A well-pronounced ridge called Bolivar Heights, two miles out toward the southwest, extended from the upper Potomac to the Shenandoah. To an unpracticed eye these heights signified a line of defense. Colonel Dixon Miles, not realizing how completely Loudon and Maryland Heights commanded every nook and corner of his position, remained at Harper's Ferry to defend it.

By September 12th our Army of the Potomac, well in hand, had worked its way northward to Frederick City.

Lee, after he was north of the Potomac, had pushed off westward, crossing the Catoctin Range, seizing and occupying the passes of the South Mountain, with the intention to take Harper's Ferry in reverse and pick up the garrison of Martinsburg, that he might have via the Shenandoah clear communications with Richmond, and gain the prestige of these small victories, while he was making ready to defeat McClellan's large army. All the while this rich region of Maryland gave him abundant supplies of animals and flour. From the mountain passes Stuart's cavalry was watching our slow and steady approach.

On the 13th inference and conjecture became a cer-

tainty. D. H. Hill lost one copy of Lee's order of march and it was brought to McClellan. That order sent Stonewall Jackson west from Frederick City, through Middletown, to recross the Potomac near Sharpsburg, choke the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, capture Julius White at Martinsburg, and then close in on Harper's Ferry, and be sure not to permit the Union troops of Colonel Miles to escape west or north. McLaws, adding Anderson's division to his own, was to branch off southward from the Middletown road and, keeping north of the Potomac, hasten to seize and hold Maryland Heights, and thus to do his part in capturing Harper's Ferry; while Longstreet would halt at Boonsboro, west of South Mountain, and delay our westward march. To make assurance doubly sure Lee sent Walker's division to hurry south to Cheek's Ford, cross the Potomac there, and turn back by Lovettsville, Va., and seize Loudon Heights. Lee kept the new division of D. H. Hill for his rear guard, to be gradually drawn in till it should join Longstreet at Boonsboro.

These instructions of the Confederate leader were plain. They were dated September 9th, and their execution began the morning of the 10th. Three days and a part of another passed before McClellan had in his hand the hostile plan; he was three days too late for its prevention; yet if our troops at Harper's Ferry could make a reasonably successful defense, two important things might follow: First, Lee might be caught, as was McClellan on the Chickahominy, with an army worse divided, and be overwhelmed in detail; and second, the Harper's Ferry force might be saved.

This view of the situation became current among us; the hope of officers and men was an inspiration as

our columns marched off. The soldiers pressed forward eager to fulfill their new instructions.

Stonewall Jackson, having good roads, quickly led his noted marchers from Middletown to Williamsport, and September 11th crossed the Potomac into Virginia. Getting wind of this, General White during that night withdrew from Martinsburg to Harper's Ferry, but did not assume command over Dixon Miles. Early on the 13th Jackson encamped just beyond the range of Bolivar Heights, near the village of Halltown, in full view of Miles's skirmishers.

Our Colonel Ford, of the Thirty-third Ohio, with a brigade was across the river on Maryland Heights. McLaws drove in Ford's farthest outpost the evening of the 11th, and on the 13th deployed his command for severer battle.

Colonel Ford gave up, with practically no fight at all, the vital point—the very citadel of Harper's Ferry —spiked his four cannon, and crossed the river to swell the force already there. His alleged excuse was that his own regiment refused to fight.

The Confederate division under Walker had performed its part. The morning of the 13th found them at the base of Loudon Heights; a few hours later cannon, supported by sufficient infantry, had crowned that convenient mountain. Before night Walker had concerted with McLaws and closed up every eastward escape on the Potomac.

At sunset of the 13th Miles's garrison was completely invested. The whole story of the defense is a sad one—more than 13,000 of as good troops as we had were forced to surrender.

One would have thought that any army officer, one even as feeble as Dixons Miles, would have placed his

strongest garrison on Maryland Heights and defended it to the last extremity; and, indeed, while he ventured to remain at Harper's Ferry, how could he have failed to fortify Loudon Mountain and hold its summit and nearer base? Had this been done there would have been some reason for facing Jackson along the Bolivar Ridge.

Sunday evening my friend and classmate, Colonel B. F. Davis, had obtained Colonel Miles's permission, and with 1,500 Union cavalry forded the Potomac and passed off northward. He captured some of Longstreet's wagons on the Maryland shore, made a few prisoners, and, avoiding the Confederate columns, joined McClellan, the 16th, at Antietam.

The Army of the Potomac was still *en route* westward toward Lee. On September 13th McClellan simplified his organization. The right wing was assigned to Burnside, the left to Franklin, and the center to Sumner. Burnside had two corps — Hooker's and Reno's; Franklin two—his own and Porter's; Sumner two—his own and Mansfield's. As each corps commander had three divisions, except Mansfield and Porter, who had two each, there were sixteen divisions, giving forty-seven brigades of infantry, the brigades averaging 1,800 strong.

Our cavalry division then counted five brigades of cavalry and four batteries. We had, all told, some forty batteries of artillery generally distributed to the divisions for care and support in action.

Franklin with the left wing was sent from his camp south of Frederick City, the 14th, past Burkittsville, and on through Crampton Pass into Pleasant Valley, aiming for Maryland Heights. Three requirements were named: To gain the pass, cut off, destroy or cap-

ture McLaws's command and relieve Miles. "I ask of you," McClellan added, "at this important moment all your intellect and the utmost captivity that a general can exercise."

Skirmishing began with the enemy before reaching Burkittsville, and Franklin's men swept on, driving the Confederate pickets up the mountain defile until his advance came upon a force of Confederate artillery well posted.

General Howell Cobb, of Georgia, was left back by McLaws to defend this defile. It was a strong position; but Franklin came on with vigor and carried the first position by storm.

Cobb and his main force fell back, ran hastily to the top of the ridge, and there made another stand.

Our men after rectifying their lines followed on over rough ground on both sides of the narrow road till they approached the summit. The crest was soon carried and Franklin warmly congratulated his men for their sturdiness. He took one piece of artillery and three Confederate flags. Of our men 110 were killed and 420 wounded, while Franklin buried 150 Confederate dead and held 300 as his prisoners.

Franklin camped in Pleasant Valley the night of September 14th, only five miles from Maryland Heights. Had that position not been deserted, Franklin could have drawn off the garrison at Harper's Ferry from the grasp of Jackson. Of course, Franklin was disappointed by Miles's surrender and McClellan chagrined, yet they had done their best.

In our march to attack Lee's divided forces my small brigade belonged to the center in Sedgwick's division. We pushed our way northward a few miles up the valley just east of the South Mountain, and skir-

mished with Stuart's watching force, backing up our own cavalry in that direction.

Meanwhile, Burnside's wing, followed by the remainder of Sumner's forces, hurried straight forward to Turner's Gap on the direct road from Frederick to Hagerstown. This part of the South Mountain is a mountain indeed, much wooded, very rugged, and steep. The National road leads from one side straight up through the natural depression, which is named Turner's Gap. A road to the right, called the old Hagerstown road, after leading to the north, comes back into the National road at the summit. Another highway crosses the mountain a mile or so to the south of the National road, and is called the old Sharpsburg road. Should we ascend by the one to the right of the turnpike, we would wind around a spur and find a small valley between this spur and the main ridge. This valley was occupied by the enemy. The Confederates found a crossroad near the crest. Along this crossroad D. H. Hill arranged his brigades. Both to the north and south of the National road fine locations for cannon were selected and occupied by him. Some were placed so as to sweep a high point well to the north, rather too commanding to admit of possession by an enemy. This, a sort of peak, every engineer called the key of the position. From it two distinct mountain crests coursed off southward for a mile or more with hardly a break. These crests protected the little summit valley and D. H. Hill's Confederates held them.

The evening of the 13th Pleasonton followed Stuart to the mouth of the gap. Feeling instinctively that the Confederates would occupy and defend such a defile he dismounted half of his men and sent them up the *old* Hagerstown road. They were soon stopped by

a heavy fire. That night Pleasonton contented himself with reconnoissances for information. Early, the 14th, Burnside having sent him an infantry brigade he so located a battery as to cover an advance, and sent the brigade up the National road. It had just started when Cox, the division commander, arrived with another brigade and pushed it on to help the other. They made a lodgment near the top of the mountain to the left of the National road. General Cox now brought up artillery and two brigades to the points gained, when Garland's successor commanding that part of the Confederate field undertook by desperate charging and rapid firing to regain the important crest. But he could not. During the first part of the engagement when our men cleared the crest and made the first break, General Garland lost his life. D. H. Hill denounced that success of Cox as a failure, because it did not secure the extensive crossroad behind him, and he gave the credit of its defense to Garland, alleging that "this brilliant service cost us the life of that grand, accomplished, Christian soldier."

The battle thus far had consumed five hours; there came then, as is usual, a mutual cessation from strife —a sort of tacit understanding that there would be some artillery practice and skirmishing only while each party was getting ready to renew the conflict.

Meanwhile, Rosser had come to replace Garland, and several Confederate brigades had been brought up and located for a rush forward, or for an effectual defense.

On our side Reno's division had closed up to Willcox's, Sturgis's, and Rodman's divisions.

The men of the South, possessed of American grit, were wont to exhibit all the *elan* of the French in ac-

tion. They were ready sooner than Reno and charged furiously upon our strengthened line, aiming their heaviest blows against our right, upon which they had brought to bear plenty of cannon. Though not at first prepared to go forward, Reno's men stood firmly to their line of defense. At last, not being satisfied with this, though volley had met volley, and cannon answered cannon, Reno ordered his whole line to advance. These orders were instantly obeyed and the forward movement started with enthusiasm. Our charge, however, was checked here and there by countercharges, the Confederates putting forward desperate efforts to break and hold back the advancing line. After all, at dark, it seemed but a drawn battle to those in immediate contention on this front. While examining his new line, General Jesse L. Reno was killed. Reno was one of our ablest and most promising commanders. D. H. Hill's comment, considering his passion, was a compliment, when he said: "The Yankees lost on their side General Reno, a renegade Virginian, who was killed by a happy shot from the Twenty-third North Carolina."

As Reno was never a secessionist, and as he was always true to the flag of his country, to which several times he swore allegiance, no stretch of language could truthfully brand him as a deserter. He was a true man, like such other Virginians as Craighill, Robert Williams, John Newton, George H. Thomas, and Farragut.

The most decisive work was on another front. Hooker was at the head of his corps. McClellan in person gave him orders on the field to press up the old Hagerstown road to the right and make a diversion in aid of Reno's attack. That movement was undertaken

without delay. Hooker's corps took on this formation: Meade's division to the right, Hatch's to the left; Ricketts's in the center a little back in reserve.

Pleasonton sent two regiments of cavalry to watch the flanks. Naturally expecting slow progress from Reno, Hooker thought the best diversion would be an immediate assault on whatever was before or near him.

The high peak before named, the key of the field, did not appear to be strongly occupied by Confederates; there was a battery discovered and thin lines to sweep the height, but that was all that was apparent. So Meade and Hatch with their deployed lines went forward as fast as men could in climbing such a rough mountain. They soon encountered an enemy; probably at first there were but three opposing brigades and a few pieces of artillery, but the resistance increased. It was a rugged place where the Confederates could and did take advantage of every obstacle to disable or hold back Hooker's soldiers.

Longstreet, hastening up from Boonsboro, was ascending the mountain about this time. His brigades, as they came to the western crest, weary though they were from the march, were rushed into position and into hot battle; but our Ricketts dispatched thither a brigade which, by a prompt change of front, stopped that danger, while Meade had the satisfaction of crowning the desired peak. That key was taken and batteries drawn up before sundown. To cover the guns by barricades and arrange them to enfilade the two crests, artillerymen were not slow to accomplish. They saw at once that they had a plunging fire upon the little mountain valley.

Meade had the summit peak, but lest it be retaken, Hatch, to his left, struggled over the uneven ground

through the forest, fighting his way forward. He was so hard pressed that Hooker sent him a brigade from Ricketts to thicken his lines. This help came when most needed; but while Hatch during the rain of bullets was riding along and encouraging his soldiers to charge and take a fence line held by the enemy, he himself was severely wounded by a shot from behind that fence. Doubleday then took Hatch's place while the firing was still frequent and troublesome. He tried a ruse: he caused his men to cease firing. The Confederates, thinking they had cleared their front, sprang forward a few paces to receive from Doubleday's ambush a sweeping volley—this broke up their alignments and they were chased back from the battle ground. The woods which Meade and Doubleday had fought through, the minor combats continuing in the darkness of the night, resounded with the cries of wounded and dying men; while the many dead, especially on Hatch's route, at dawn of the next day, showed the severity of the struggle.

Burnside had detached General John Gibbon from Hooker to keep up a connection with Reno, but near night Gibbon was sent up the National road. He kept a battery in the road well forward. The Confederates from their crest began to fire as they got glimpses of this bold move both upon the brigade and the battery. But Gibbon's men by strengthening their skirmishers and steadily moving on pushed everything before them; they ran from tree to tree, or rock to rock, till the battery thus covered by them had worked ahead enough to be effective. Then Gibbon's battery began its discharges straight upon the Confederate guns, which had hitherto annoyed his march. By its effective help the battery aided the regiments abreast of it

to stretch out into lines as good and regular as the ragged, rocky slope would permit. The men, taking a fresh impulse, clambered up over the rocks, driving their enemies—two regiments of them—from woods, crags, and stone fences. The two Confederate regiments were then helped by three more, and our men were clogged for a time. But Gibbon in the end secured the gorge and slept on his battlefield.

I came to the scene of the conflict near the close of the contest. The triumph was evident and welcome, but much tempered by our severe losses and by the presence of the wounded men who with fortitude were suppressing the evidences of pain. Burnside was riding around among his troops. They generally looked pleased and hopeful, but very weary. They did not cheer.

About midnight Hill and Longstreet had drawn off their commands, leaving their dead and severely wounded in our hands. The Confederates had here the advantage of position, of course. We put more men than they into action. We lost 325 killed and 1,403 wounded and 85 missing. The Confederate loss was about the same as ours in killed and wounded. We took 1,500 prisoners. In spite of the Harper's Ferry disaster our army took heart again, on account of our victory in the battle of South Mountain, and reposed confidence in McClellan.

The spot where Reno fell is marked by a stone monument, erected to his memory by Daniel Wise. Friends and foes in that beautiful mountain valley fell asleep together. Would that they awake in the likeness of the Man of Peace!

Very early in the morning of the 15th our division passed the troops of Reno and Hooker, and pressed

forward down the western slopes of South Mountain, through Boonsboro in pursuit.

As we descended the mountain road thus early, I could see little puffs of smoke from many rifles and sudden clouds rolling up from cannon, yet, strange to say, could hear no sound. The air was very clear, and the distance greater than it appeared. Our own division's advance brigade and Pleasonton's cavalry were skirmishing with Lee's rear guard.

CHAPTER XIX

THE BATTLE OF ANTIETAM; I SUCCEED SEDGWICK IN COMMAND OF A DIVISION

THE two columns of the Army of the Potomac, fighting their way through Turner's Gap and Crampton Pass and pressing their pursuit of Lee, debouched into the valley west of the mountains; one appeared at Boonsboro and the other southward at Rohrersville. The stretch of valley from Boonsboro to the Potomac is named the Antietam Valley, because the Antietam, a small river which runs near Hagerstown and a little east of Sharpsburg, enters the Potomac a few miles below. The general course of this crooked stream is south.

September 15th, the day after the defeat at Turner's Gap, Lee rapidly gathered his material and troops upon the peninsula which is formed by the Antietam and the Potomac. The bends of the Potomac cause the intercepted space to be broadened here and there, yet, higher upstream, the neck of the peninsula is scarcely two miles across. The country around Sharpsburg is fertile and beautiful and afforded Lee special advantages as a position in which to halt and stand on the defensive till he could gather in his several scattered columns.

A main road, the Sharpsburg Pike, coming across the Potomac at Shepherdstown where there was a good ford, ran northeast through Sharpsburg, crossed

the Antietam by a stone bridge, and kept on through Boonsboro. Another, the Hagerstown Pike, divided the peninsula by a north and south trend. One other important highway divided the southeast angle of the other two bisecting roads; from Sharpsburg, as an apex, this road crossed the Antietam at Burnside's bridge and forked when it reached higher ground; the upper fork led to Rohrersville and the other ran south into the Harper's Ferry road. A few miles above the regular crossing was a zigzag country road —sometimes named "the diagonal." It intersected the Antietam at Newkirk and passed from pike to pike.

As the Antietam River, from Newkirk to its mouth, had steep banks and scarcely any practicable fords, it was to Lee just the obstacle he needed to cover his front.

He located D. H. Hill and Longstreet on the right and left of the main pike, while he sent off Hood's division to the left. The convenient curves of the Potomac would protect his flanks as soon as he had men enough to fill the space. At first he did not have more than 25,000 men on the ground; but with considerable artillery he was able to so arrange his batteries as to defend the bridges and cover all approaches from the Antietam to Sharpsburg. In fact, he had a surplus of cannon and so sent an artillery reserve across the Potomac to protect the fords in his rear. He found for his use in that uneven country rocky heights, favorable ravines, deep-cut roads, abundant fences of rail and stone, buildings, and well-located strips of woodland.

Dunker Chapel was near a hotly contested spot, being equidistant from Newkirk Bridge, the Potomac upper bend, and Sharpsburg. It was quite enveloped

by a small forest that stretched off for a half mile toward the Potomac. People called this forest "the Dunker Woods." No prize of chivalry was ever more desperately contended for than this locality. East of the Hagerstown Pike, and still farther north near Dunbar's Mills, was a large, open grove called "the East Woods." That grove was the left of Lee's first temporary line.

McClellan, seeing that Franklin was detained by McLaws, who, having now the impregnable Maryland Heights, was able to avoid battle, ordered Franklin to Antietam. McLaws, quick to notice Franklin's departure, crossed the Potomac twice and reached Lee at Sharpsburg at the same hour that Franklin reported to McClellan.

The column to which I belonged pushed forward its head as rapidly as possible from Boonsboro to the east bank of the Antietam. During that first day, September 15th, only two divisions, Richardson's and Sykes's, drew sufficiently near to receive the enemy's fire.

Eager as McClellan was to engage Lee before Jackson and other detachments could get back to him, Lee's bold attitude and evident preparation forced him to wait, to reconnoiter and get up force enough to attack. Putting together the sickness and discouragements that followed our second Bull Run and the Harper's Ferry disaster, nobody will wonder that our army had many stragglers between Washington and the Antietam. Even our moderate successes at South Mountain produced much additional weariness and wilfulness with some indifference and slowness on the part of certain officers holding important commands. These suggestions account for unusual delays in the marches

which McClellan had ordered, as well as for the comparatively small force assembled as late as the morning of the 16th to take the offensive. McClellan had hoped for a prompt attack on overtaking Lee, certainly by nine o'clock of the 16th. But, coming forward himself to the front, he did not order an immediate assault. He could not at first get Burnside with his left wing to understand or execute what he wished. His own information was too incomplete. He had word that Jackson was already returned to Lee, so that there was no longer need of precipitation. Later, he found that McLaws did not join the main army till the morning of the 17th, Anderson's division afterwards; and A. P. Hill's, left at Harper's Ferry to finish the work there, was still later on the ground. From want of previous knowledge and from a natural desire that Franklin and Couch should close up to swell his numbers, McClellan delayed action till late in the afternoon of the 16th.

Hooker's corps, Mansfield's in support, and then Sumner's, were destined for the right column. Burnside's command, consisting of four divisions with plenty of artillery to help him, was given the work of storming the lower stone bridge which now bears his name. Porter's or Franklin's troops, or such as could be brought up in time from Pleasant Valley, were to be held in hand for necessary reënforcement or for the direct central thrust, whenever that should become practicable.

The first movement in the way of executing the plan had to begin in plain sight of our watching foes. They understood it from the start. About 4 P.M. Hooker's divisions, having previously worked far up the Antietam, passed over that stream by a bridge and ford west

of Keedysville, crossings having been early secured and held for them by our cavalry. General Hooker led his corps, evidently with a hope of completely turning Lee's left, far away past Dunbar Mills. Doubleday's division was in advance. He had proceeded, perhaps, a couple of miles from the bridge and ford northwesterly when the enemy's skirmishers opened fire. Hooker at once faced his command to the left and deployed his lines. The Pennsylvania reserves under Meade formed the center, Doubleday's to the right, and Ricketts's division to the left of Meade.

Hood's division of Confederates with assisting batteries held the "East Woods" and was *vis-a-vis* to Hooker. D. H. Hill extended Hood's line down toward the Antietam. Jackson's two divisions, Lawton's and J. R. Jones's, were by this time holding the "West Woods" about Dunker Church. Stuart with cavalry and considerable artillery was farther west than Hood.

Without hesitation the Pennsylvania reserves pressed the enemy and opened a brisk fusillade which was returned with equal spirit. There was considerable musketry that evening and some artillery exchanges with apparent success to Hooker. About ten, Jackson, finding Hood's men overweary and hungry from a long fast, sent him two brigades and put in some fresh artillery, rectifying the lines as well as it could be done in the darkness of the night.

Hooker, sleepless at such a time, rearranged his batteries and their supports and had everything in order for an advance at the first glimmer of daylight.

Mansfield's supporting corps crossed the Antietam where Hooker did, but encamped through the night more than a mile in his rear; while our corps (Sumner's), intended also for the support of Hooker, was

still far off near McClellan's center, bivouacking by the Boonsboro and Sharpsburg Turnpike and all the time within the reach of a disturbing artillery fire.

One fact quite impressed me there the evening of the 16th. General Sedgwick, always a warm friend of McClellan, and I were standing together and examining by help of our glasses Lee's position beyond the river, when an officer in charge of McClellan's headquarters' baggage train led his column of wagons to a pleasant spot on the slope, just behind us, in full view of our whole division. The enemy sent a few bursting shells into his neighborhood. This officer, much disturbed, quickly countermarched his train and hurried it off far out of range to the rear. It was done amid the jokes and laughter of our men. Sedgwick, seeing the move, shook his head and said solemnly: "I am sorry to see that!"

McClellan himself did not go back that night; but the men thought that he did. Some of his staff never could understand how easily in times of danger the *morale* of an army may be injured.

For September 17th Sumner's orders were for him to *be ready to march* from camp one hour before daylight. We were ready on time, but McClellan's order of execution failed to reach us till 7.20 and then it embraced but two divisions, Sedgwick's and French's, Richardson's being detained to await Franklin's arrival. Immediately our division (Sedgwick's) moved off in good order to the upper crossings of the Antietam, marching at the rate of at least three miles an hour.

As soon as we had crossed the small river, by Sumner's arrangement we moved on in three parallel col-

umns about seventy-five yards apart, Dana's brigade in the middle, mine to the right, and Gorman's to the left.

We pulled on rapidly in this shape till we came in sight of the Dunbar Mills and our columns extended through the "East Woods." Here every column faced to the left, making three brigade lines parallel to each other with Gorman's in front and mine in rear. We formed in an open space in which was a cornfield.

Promptly at the break of day the battle had begun. Hooker's six batteries had started a roar resounding like thunder, being answered by a quick though not so noisy response, which, but for the return projectiles, would have passed for an echo of Hooker's guns. Then, hoping that his cannon had sufficiently opened the way, Hooker had each division commander advance. Doubleday, the first, astride of the Hagerstown Turnpike, pressed forward in the grove as far as the crossroad. But at once he encountered a heavy fire from both artillery and infantry as if it had been all fixed for them. They did as troops usually do, delayed, stopped, and returned fire for fire with rapidity.

Meade, who had the heaviest force before him the night before, succeeded in making more progress than Doubleday, firing and advancing slowly.

Ricketts's division, supporting the batteries to the left of it and materially aided by their fire, gained even more ground than Meade. But soon there was surging to and fro. The forces engaged on the two sides were about equal, and the losses of men, killed and wounded in Hooker's corps, were startling. Ricketts's division alone exceeded a thousand, while Gibbon's small brigade counted nearly four hundred. The

Confederate losses were equally heavy, but our men did not then know that.

The depletion was so great that when there was at last not enough infantry to guard his battery, Gibbon ordered it to limber to the rear and retire. Soon he followed with his infantry on account of reduction of numbers and want of ammunition.

Hooker, however, persisted as usual, and, contrary to his first design, kept swinging to his own left and pressing forward. It had the effect to dislodge Jackson and D. H. Hill from their first line, and at last to force them through the cornfields and open spaces into the "West Woods."

In this severe work General Starke, having the "Stonewall" division, and Colonel Douglass, leading Lawton's brigade, were killed. Lawton himself and Walker, brigade commanders, were sadly wounded. At least half of the men whom Lawton and Hays led into battle were disabled. Trimble's brigade suffered nearly as much. All the regimental commanders, excepting two, were killed or wounded.

This is enough to indicate the nature and severity of the struggle for those vital points, the "East" and the "West Woods." About the time Ricketts's enterprise succeeded in seizing the edge of the woods near Dunker Church, Jackson brought in a fresh division and located it in those "West Woods." It was harder for Ricketts's men, for they had no such help. Stuart, the Confederate cavalry commander, had his batteries ready, and the instant Hooker's soldiers came into the open field brought a hurtful plunging fire to bear upon them.

There is no marvel in the fact that Hooker's fine divisions were already much broken before emerging

into the open, and now were fearfully handled and must soon have gone to pieces; but just then, though too late for better results, the supports came on in time to prevent anything worse. Just as Hooker's opponents were taking the offensive and about to make a charge Mansfield, whom Hooker had urgently called for, appeared on the ground with his corps. It was then between seven and eight o'clock. Mansfield at first only reënforced Hooker's lines and enabled him to recover a portion of his front that he had lately lost; but the troops went forward only to come back again. Then the old general resolved to make a bold attack. He formed in semicircular order with Greene's division on the left and Williams's on the right. A brisk forward march was made like Hooker's of the early morning and met similar obstinacy. But under that impulsion the Confederates were forced to retire; they were losing heavily, and even Stonewall Jackson's command was driven beyond the Dunker Church, but the gallant Mansfield, with his snowy white hair, while urging his troops in that charge, fell from his horse mortally wounded.

About that period of the battle Lee, seeing little likelihood of McClellan's left under Burnside doing him much damage, almost stripped that quarter of troops. In fact, he left there only D. R. Jones and Toombs with thin lines and rushed the rest forward to his center and left. The distances were not great and the roads were good. In fact, the entire Confederate line did not exceed three miles in length and so curved on the upper flank as to be easily cared for. Hood, thus reënforced, now rested, and D. H. Hill, having all his available troops with the advance, made a strong charge against Mansfield's corps, which was not in

good condition for defense, and which was at best but weakly supported by Hooker's tired and broken divisions.

This Confederate move, backed by the fresh troops and batteries well located to sweep our lines, soon succeeded in breaking up and disorganizing the whole front. The greater portion of our men of the two corps fell back to the "East Woods" or northward to a grove on the Hagerstown Turnpike. Hooker, badly wounded, had left the field; and the two division commanders, Hartsuff and Crawford, were disabled. What an hour before were fine regiments now appeared in the edge of the woods and behind trees like squads irregularly firing toward the enemy. The batteries that came with Mansfield's corps were left almost alone, yet, unsupported, had checked that last Confederate charge and prevented the enemy from crossing the open ground between the "East" and "West Woods."

General George S. Greene, a tenacious officer, had, with a part of his division, clung to the "West Woods" at a projection, and kept up for a time an effective firing.

This was the condition of affairs in that portion of the battlefield on our arrival. I saw abundant evidence of the preceding conflict, surely not very encouraging to men just coming upon the field. Too many were busying themselves in carrying their wounded comrades to the rear. Sumner sent a staff officer to find the places where Hooker's corps was to be found. He came upon General Ricketts, the only officer of rank left there, who declared that he couldn't raise 300 men of his corps for further work. While at nine o'clock Sumner with our division was preparing to take

his turn in the battle, Lee, as we have seen, had already sent troops to watch him.

Without waiting for French's division, not yet near, or Richardson's, still at the distant bivouac, with an extraordinary confidence in our column of brigades and caring nothing for flanks, Sumner, with his gray hair streaming in the wind, rode to the leading brigade and ordered the advance. We broke through the cornfield; we charged over the open space and across the turnpike and forward well into the "West Woods" till Gorman's line encountered the enemy's sharp musketry fire. Then all halted. Our three lines, each in two ranks, were so near together that a rifle bullet would often cross them all and disable five or six men at a time. While Gorman's brigade was receiving and returning shots, the waiting brigades, Dana's and mine, naturally sought to protect themselves by taking advantage of the rocks, trees, and hollows, or by the old plan of lying down. While I could hear the whizzing of the balls, the woods being thick thereabouts, I could see no enemy. The first intimation which I had that neither Greene's division, which had held the projection of the woods, nor French's was covering our left flank, came from a visit of Sumner himself. He approached from the rear riding rapidly, having but two or three horsemen with him. The noise of the firing was confusing. He was without his hat and with his arms outstretched motioned violently. His orders were not then intelligible; but I judged that Sedgwick's left had been turned and immediately sent the necessary orders to protect my flank by changing the front of my brigade to the left. Those nearer to the general than I were confident that he said: "Howard, you must get out of here," or "Howard, you must face about!"

With troops that I had commanded longer I could have changed front, whatever Sumner said; but here, quicker than I can write the words, my men faced about and took the back track. Dana's line soon followed mine and then Gorman's. When we reached the open ground Sumner himself and every other officer of courage and nerve were exerting themselves to the utmost to rally the men, turn them back, and make head against the advancing enemy. But it was simply impossible till we had traversed those cleared fields; for we now had the enemy's infantry and artillery in rear and on our flank against our broken brigades, pelting us with their rapid and deadly volleys. That three-line advance had run Sedgwick's division into a trap well set and baited. Greene's spare command, hanging as we have seen to a projection or fragment of the "West Woods," was the bait, and Hill's brigades, already making for Greene, completely passed our left and sprung the trap. Sumner, too late, discovered Hill's effort. Sedgwick and Dana, badly wounded, left the field. The Second Division Second Corps then fell to me. It had good troops. Though losing heavily in our futile effort to change front before D. H. Hill, the division was speedily re-formed in the edge of the "East Woods" and gave a firm support to the numerous batteries which now fired again with wonderful rapidity and effect. We prevented all further disaster except the loss for the third time that day of those mysterious "West Woods."

I have a further picture. It is of a ravine in the "West Woods," where my own staff and that of General Burns sat upon their horses near me, just in rear of my waiting line, when the round shot were crashing through the trees and shells exploding rapidly over our

heads, while the hissing rifle balls, swift as the wind, cut the leaves and branches like hail, and whizzed uncomfortably near our ears. Astonishing to tell, though exposed for an hour to a close musketry fire, though aids and orderlies were coming and going amid the shots, seemingly as thick as hail, not one individual of this group was hit.

Captain E. Whittlesey had taken the place of F. D. Sewall, then colonel of the Nineteenth Maine, as adjutant general of the brigade. He and my brother, Lieutenant Howard, badly wounded at Fair Oaks, had rejoined after the command left Washington. It was the first time I had seen Whittlesey under fire. He reminded me, as I observed him, of General Sykes, who, in action, never moved a muscle. The effect of this imperturbability on the part of a commander was wholesome. With a less stern countenance, but an equally strong will, Whittlesey was to me from that time the kind of help I needed in battle. Lieutenant Howard also, if he detected the least lack of coolness in me, would say quietly: "Aren't you a little excited?" This was enough to suppress any momentary nervousness.

The worst thing which resulted from our retreat that day was the effect upon General Sumner himself. He concluded that if such troops as composed Hooker's corps and Sedgwick's division could be so easily beaten any other vigorous effort in that part of the field would be useless.

Franklin's corps arrived from Pleasant Valley and reported to McClellan at 10 A.M. That was all, except Couch's attached division which Franklin had dispatched to Maryland Heights, which came to us the morning of the 18th.

Franklin soon sent his leading division under W. F. Smith to aid Sedgwick, but, like all other supports in this ill-managed battle, it was a little too late. The trap had been sprung already and we had been forced back from the "West Woods." Smith, to guard the batteries, deployed Hancock's brigade to our left. Hancock separated the protecting batteries and put regiments between them. I sent a regiment, the Twentieth Massachusetts, to help him support his right battery. The Confederates fired upon these new arrivals and were answered by the batteries. They ventured no farther, nor did we. General Smith sent Irwin's brigade to prolong Hancock's line leftward, while Sumner took Smith's other brigade to watch his extreme right, being apprehensive of some hostile countermove from that direction.

French, as we have seen, was not in sight when Sedgwick went into action. He formed his parallel columns as we did. Instead of keeping on in our track, when about a mile behind us he faced to the left and marched off toward that part of the enemy's position. He directed his march obliquely toward Roulette's house, making a large angle with Sedgwick's direction. He doubtless thought Greene occupied more space and would move to the front with us—a natural mistake. But a big gap was left. It took four or five batteries, besides Hancock's and Irwin's elongated lines, to fill the interval.

French's division marched briskly, driving in hostile skirmishers and engaging first heavy guns in chosen spots and then thicker musketry. The diagonal road which cuts both pikes and passes in front of Roulette's house is what the officers called the "sunken road." D. H. Hill filled a part of it with Confederate

brigades; standing behind them were several batteries and the brigades of Rodes and Anderson in support. It was a well-chosen position for defense. Some of these troops had fought near Dunker's Church and had run back there after Sedgwick's discomfiture. Colonel Weber, commanding French's leading brigade to my left, now monopolized the fight. Soon his left was turned, while his front was hotly assailed. Kimball, seeing this, rushed his men up to clear Weber's exposed left and drove back the Confederate flankers, but they immediately ran to cover in the "sunken road" and there successfully defied his nearer approach. The hard contest here, varying in intensity from moment to moment, lasted three full hours and our men found quite impossible a decisive forward movement in that place.

French had upward of 2,000 men near there put *hors de combat.* Irwin's brigade of Smith's division, near Hancock, made one charge in the afternoon and went into those "West Woods," but then experienced the same trouble as the rest of us—it was striking in the dark; they also were forced to retreat.

Richardson's division after the arrival of Franklin was sent by McClellan to join our corps. After crossing the Antietam, Richardson directed his march on the Piper house, taking his cue from French's field, and soon was breasting the same deep roadway farther to the left. He did not attempt our formation but placed Meagher's brigade and Caldwell's abreast, Caldwell's on the left and Brooke's brigade considerably in the rear to watch his flanks. Thus he moved into close action. Once the Confederates were moving between Richardson and French, for there was free space enough. Brooke caught the glimmer of their rifles and

sent to his right a regiment to meet and stop them at the right moment.

Cross of the Fifth New Hampshire, aided by the Eighty-first Pennsylvania, did a like handsome thing for Caldwell's left flank. Cross in this successful move made a run for higher ground, while Brooke generously sent forward enough of his brigade to keep up Cross's connection with his proper front line. In these impulsive thrusts of subordinates, almost without orders, a part of that horrid "sunken road" was captured and passed, and Piper's house reached at last and held. Francis C. Barlow was given that day two regiments—the Sixty-first and Sixty-fourth New York. By quick maneuvering he caught and captured 300 prisoners in the deep road. General Richardson was mortally wounded near that place.

There was not much infantry engagement on our part of the field after one o'clock, but the artillery was unceasing all along the lines. Hancock was quickly sent to command Richardson's division. For one more trial Slocum's division under Franklin's instructions formed lines of attack. They made ready for another desperate charge through those "West Woods" and up to the Dunker Church. But Sumner just then hurried one of its brigades to the right and thus created a delay. In a few minutes after this Sumner took a fuller responsibility and ordered Franklin out again to attempt to carry those fatal woods.

Sumner shortly after this order to Franklin had planned a general advance. His adjutant general and aids had distributed the order to four corps, what were left of them, and had cavalry ready to help. All were to start simultaneously at a given signal. All were waiting—but there was an unexpected halt. Sumner

consulted with McClellan, and then concluded not to risk the offensive again, and so the work for September 17th for our center and right was substantially closed. Sumner's purpose and McClellan's plan for the early morning of this day, to have Hooker, Mansfield, Sumner, and, finally, Franklin go into battle in echelon by division from right to left as far as possible, was wise. We have seen how the scheme was marred simply in the execution. Hooker was exhausted before Mansfield began. Mansfield was displaced and had fallen when Sedgwick went singly into battle. I, replacing Sedgwick, was back on the defensive when French entered the lists far off to my left; while, in conjunction with French, Richardson alone touched the right spot at the right time. Franklin and the batteries were only in time and place to prevent disaster. Simultaneous action of divisions with a strong reserve would have won that portion of the field, but there was no simultaneous action.

Down by the Burnside bridge was a rise of ground on our side. The enemy there, after Lee had arranged his defense, consisted in the main of D. R. Jones's division and Toombs's brigade in support of abundant artillery. The guns, well placed, swept the road and other approaches. All the country behind them and to their left was favorable to prompt reënforcement. On our bank Burnside's officers of artillery posted a battery of twenty-pounder Parrotts and another of smaller guns, covering the highest knoll, hoping for unusual execution. Crook's brigade of Scammon's division stretched upstream to the right, with Sturgis's division formed in his rear. Rodman's division, with Hugh Ewing's brigade behind it, extended down the Antietam. Pleasonton, commanding and supporting

by cavalry several batteries, together with Sykes's division of Porter's corps, held all the ground between Burnside and Richardson. Our Willcox's division and the reserve artillery were kept back for emergencies. There was only the Ninth Corps on the left. Burnside with Hooker away simply commanded Cox. The Ninth Corps that day had virtually two heads, Burnside and Cox. At 7 A.M. of the 17th McClellan ordered Burnside to prepare to assault and take the bridge, but, when ready, to wait for his word. The troops were put in place. Every good spot was occupied by favoring cannon. McClellan at eight o'clock sent the *word.* Why, nobody knows, but Burnside, standing with Cox, did not receive the order till nine o'clock. He then directed Cox to execute it. Cox went to the front to watch for results, and in person set Crook's brigade, backed up by Sturgis's division, to charge and see if they could not force a crossing. Two columns of four abreast were to rush over under the raking fire and then divide right and left. Meanwhile Rodman's division, forcing the ford below, must charge Toombs's Confederates out from behind a stone wall.

Crook got ready, covered his front with skirmishers, and pushed for the river, reaching it above the bridge. The fire of cannon and musketry from beyond was so worrisome that his men halted and that assault failed.

Next, after some delay, Cox tried Sturgis's division. The Sixth New Hampshire and the Second Maryland were each put into column. They charged, but the enemy's sweeping fire broke them up.

The Fifty-first New York and Fifty-first Pennsylvania were next arranged for a forlorn hope. To help

them one of our batteries tried fast firing. It created smoke and noise and sent screeching shells to occupy Confederate attention, while the rush was made. At last a part of our men were over.

Following this lead the troops of Sturgis and Crook passed the bridge, and driving the enemy back formed with speed in good order on the west bank.

Rodman had been led off by false or ignorant guides down the Antietam. After search and experiment he discovered a ford, successfully made his crossing and came up on the other bank as ordered. The daring work was done, but it had taken four good hours to accomplish it, so it was already one o'clock. The hard contest all along our line northward was then substantially over; thus Lee was able to reënforce against Cox, and further, A. P. Hill's Confederate division, *en route* from Harper's Ferry, was not far from Sharpsburg.

Again, as if to favor Lee, Burnside had further delay. The excessive firing before and after crossing the Antietam had exhausted the ammunition of the leading division, so that Burnside had to send over Willcox's command to make replacement, which consumed another precious hour. Considering that the Confederate D. R. Jones had kept rifle shots and shells flying against Cox's lines, it was a difficult business, after so long halting, to form and send forward attacking and charging brigades.

As soon as ready, urged by repeated orders brought by McClellan's staff officers and forwarded by Burnside from his rise of ground, Cox went forward. Willcox and Crook, carrying Jones's front, made for the village; but Rodman, to the left, was delayed by Toombs; and Cox had to meet a strong re-

enforcement of A. P. Hill's corps, which had just arrived.

Sturgis, however, seized a hostile battery and marched on through the town, while Crook was giving him good support. A victory seemed already gained, but it was not secure. Rodman's check, of course, created separation and weakness in Cox's corps. At that very juncture, A. P. Hill deployed more and more of his strong force before Sturgis and Crook and commenced firing and advancing rapidly. He first recaptured the Confederate battery just taken, and caused Cox's right to leave the village and the important vantage ground he had so happily obtained. Rodman's division was in this way doubly checkmated, and he, one of our best New England men, once under my command with the Fourth Rhode Island, was slain. His troops, thus defeated, fell back in haste.

Nearer the river Cox took up a strong defensive position, re-formed his corps, and prevented further disaster.

Lee's generalship at Antietam could not be surpassed; but while McClellan's plans were excellent, the tactical execution was bad. Had all of the right column been on the spot where the work was to begin, Sumner, seizing Stuart's heights by the Potomac, could have accomplished the purpose of his heart—to drive everything before him through the village of Sharpsburg and on to Burnside's front. Of course, Burnside's move should have been vigorous and simultaneous with attacks on the right. McClellan so intended. We had, however, a technical victory, for Lee withdrew after one day's delay and recrossed the Potomac. Porter's corps, following closely, lost heavily at the Shepherdstown ford—so that every part of

our army except Couch's division, which after its late arrival was only exposed to artillery fire, suffered great loss at the battle of Antietam.

Longstreet says that Antietam was "the bloodiest single day of fighting of the war." The Confederate loss in Maryland was 12,601; while ours at Antietam alone, including prisoners, was 12,410.

While, with a view to avoid their mistakes in the future, we may study the *faults* and *omissions* of the brave men who here contended for the life of the Republic, let us not blame them, for there were often cogent reasons—hindrances and drawbacks which after many years no one can remember.

CHAPTER XX

GENERAL BURNSIDE ASSUMES COMMAND OF THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC

THE night of September 17th my headquarters were near the "East Woods." I slept on the ground under a large tree. Just as I lay down I saw several small groups stretched out and covered with blankets, face and all. They appeared like soldiers sleeping together, two and two, and three and three, as they often did. In the morning as the sun was rising and lighting up the treetops, I arose, and, noticing my companions still asleep, observed them more closely. Seeing that they were very still, I approached the nearest group, and found they were cold in death. The lot fell to my division, with some other troops, to remain behind on the sad field and assist in burying the dead. The most troublesome thing, and that which affected our health, was the atmosphere that arose from the swollen bodies of the dead horses. We tried the experiment of piling rails and loose limbs of trees upon them and setting the heap on fire. This, however, for a time, made matters worse, as the dreadful stench appeared to be only increased in volume, and there being no strong wind, it settled in the valley of the Antietam.

The 22d, our sad and sickening task being done, the men of my division moved out toward Harper's Ferry, and quickly took up the swinging gait as they tramped

along the hard roadway. As is usually the case after a military funeral, the quick march soon restored the spirits of the men. We crossed the Potomac and encamped with the remainder of our army corps on Bolivar Heights.

The main purpose which McClellan now had in view was to recruit his army, fill up the depleted regiments and batteries, and gather from the country, far and near, a sufficient number of horses to replace those killed in battle and worn out in service. The discouragements and homesickness that had attacked us at one time on the peninsula and at another time at Falmouth, had suddenly fallen upon Lee's army during the campaign. But on the Opequon, the thousands of half-sick, straying men, strolling along from Sharpsburg to Richmond, had been cheered and refreshed by the numerous zealous secession families along their route, so that soon the tide set back, and these, together with those who had recuperated from their wounds on previous fields, some 20,000 altogether, returned to give new heart and vigor to Lee's army.

In answer to McClellan's joyful dispatch, announcing that Maryland was entirely freed from the presence of the enemy, Halleck replied coldly: "We are still left entirely in the dark in regard to your own movements and those of the enemy."

McClellan, deeply chagrined that Halleck had no praise for our achievements, yet dispatched to him in detail with feeling the urgent wants of his army.

While such controversies were going on, from the battle of Antietam till October 26th, the main body of the army was located between Harper's Ferry and the mouth of the Monocacy. McClellan's headquarters were near Berlin. During our interval of rest I re-

member to have been placed upon courts of inquiry and upon courts-martial. One very interesting court on which I served was that demanded by General Caldwell, my successor after my wound and absence.

We looked into all the charges of misconduct and could find really nothing against this worthy officer.

About the same time, October 1st, President Lincoln came to see us. He was received everywhere with satisfaction, and at times with marked enthusiasm, as he reviewed the troops. At Harper's Ferry I saw him and heard him relate a few of his characteristic anecdotes. He noticed a small engine run out from the bridge, through the village of Harper's Ferry, below the bluff, which gave a peculiarly shrill and mournful whistle as its shadow fled rapidly around a hill and passed out of sight. Mr. Lincoln inquired what was the name of that little engine. When told the name, alluding to the panic and terror at the time of John Brown's visit to Harper's Ferry, he said that, in honor of the Virginians of that day, it might well have been named "The Skeered Virginian." He admired the horsemanship of Captain Whittlesey, and when some one said, "That officer was lately a parson," he looked pleasantly after him as he galloped off to carry some order, and remarked, as if to himself, "Parson? He looks more like a cavalier." Thus humorously, and with seldom a smile on his sad face, he moved around among us.

On October 6, 1862, after his return to Washington, President Lincoln directed our army to cross into Virginia and give battle to the enemy while the roads were good. He thought, as he always had before, that we might move along east of the Blue Ridge, and he prom-

ised a reënforcement of 30,000 men, provided this be done.

I had returned to the field, to encounter extraordinary excitement, exposure, and hardship, too soon after losing my arm; for just after the President's review I was taken ill with a slow fever; and, under medical advice, I obtained a twenty-days' sick leave and left Harper's Ferry for home. But by the time I reached Philadelphia my fever abated and my appetite returned—in fact, I was so thoroughly convalescent that I was almost disposed to turn back to the army, yet, judging by the past few weeks, I concluded that there would be no movement; so, to gather further strength from the change and the journey, I made a brief visit to my family in Maine, and then hastened back to my post. I reached Harper's Ferry November 5, 1862, about ten o'clock at night. My brigade surgeon, Dr. Palmer, being left behind in charge of the sick and wounded, gave welcome to Captain Whittlesey and myself, and kept us for the night.

The army had gone. McClellan had decided to take President Lincoln's suggestion and move east of the Blue Ridge.

On the morning of the 6th, with a borrowed horse and an old ambulance, Whittlesey and I crossed the Shenandoah and pulled on with all the speed we could command after the army. We rode up the Catoctin Valley over an unguarded road. From the poor condition of our horse we had to be satisfied with thirty-five miles the first day. The next day, the 7th, getting an early start, we made Rectortown by 11 A.M. Owing to a severe snowstorm, that portion of the army near Rectortown and the general headquarters did not stir. Immediately upon my arrival I visited General Mc-

Clellan; found him and his adjutant general, Seth Williams, together in a comfortable tent. From them I received a cordial welcome. McClellan thought I must be a Jonah to bring such a storm and was half minded to order me back. He said that they were talking of me and were really glad to see me. I went thence to our corps, and was pleasantly welcomed by our new commander, General Couch, and very soon fell into the old place—the headquarters of the second division. Here, surrounded by my staff, I was in heart again, for it had been a great cross to arrive at Harper's Ferry and find the army several days ahead of me, and in the enemy's front, for the march had commenced the morning of October 26th. There had been slight changes in commanders—Couch having our corps (the Second) and Slocum the Twelfth; Sumner remaining in charge of the two. The Fifth and Sixth Corps retained the same chiefs, Porter and Franklin, each having been enlarged to three divisions. Willcox, taking the Ninth, had succeeded Reno (killed in battle), and John F. Reynolds had the First Corps in place of Hooker (wounded). These two (the First and Ninth) were still under Burnside's direction. The new troops promised from the defenses of the capital were commanded by Sigel, Heintzelman, and Bayard, the latter having only one division of cavalry. General Sumner's command was immediately divided. The Twelfth Corps was left behind to guard the fords of the Upper Potomac. When the army started, though the rain was falling in torrents, the main body, now brisk, hardy, and hopeful, had pressed on rapidly up the valley of the Catoctin, a valley situated between the Blue Ridge and the Bull Run range. Our corps, followed by the Fifth, had crossed the Shenandoah near its

mouth and passed directly into the little valley, which was to be the general route of the army. Pleasonton's cavalry was in advance, and occupied successively the gaps in the Blue Ridge. The different corps were kept within supporting distance of each other during the march, yet by the time the rear guard had crossed the Potomac, on November 2d, the head of column was already in the vicinity of Snicker's Gap. Mr. Lincoln's policy proved correct. General Lee, with Longstreet's wing, with very little cavalry, made a parallel march up the Shenandoah, so that by the time we had touched Snicker's Gap, two of the passes of the Blue Ridge farther up—Chester's and Thornton's—were even then in use by Lee passing the material and troops of the enemy to the vicinity of Culpeper.

Thus the army was quietly transferred to the vicinity of the Manassas Gap Railroad. Sigel's Eleventh Corps, and part of Heintzelman's, with Bayard's cavalry, had marched out from Washington and were holding Thoroughfare Gap, New Baltimore, and Warrenton Junction.

Reynolds's corps was at Warrenton, Willcox's at Waterloo; ours (the Second) at Rectortown, while Porter's and Franklin's were not far in the rear, toward Upperville—McClellan's headquarters being at Rectortown.

Whatever bold project was in Lee's or Jackson's mind, it certainly had been interrupted by McClellan's holding his main body so tenaciously west of the Bull Run range.

One may imagine my surprise and sincere regret when I heard, on arrival, that McClellan had been removed, and Burnside assigned to the command of the army.

The evening of the 6th, General Buckingham, an officer on duty in the War Office, had been made, by General Halleck and Secretary Stanton, the bearer of dispatches. Buckingham went during the 7th to Burnside to urge his acceptance of the command. Burnside at first made strenuous objections, claiming his pleasant relations with McClellan, and insisting on his own unfitness. But finding that McClellan would be relieved in any event, he finally, with considerable reluctance, yielded to Mr. Stanton's wish. The two then rode to Salem, and, taking the cars, were soon in Rectortown. Buckingham says: "About eleven o'clock we found him alone in his tent examining papers, and as we both entered together he received us in his kind and cordial manner."

Burnside betrayed more feeling than McClellan. The latter, after reading the dispatch, passed it to Burnside, and said simply: "You command the army."

In order to complete the concentration of the army in the vicinity of Warrentown, McClellan's orders, already prepared, were issued and executed. My command made a march of eight miles during November 8th; this brought us to the neighborhood of Warrenton, where we encamped in a ravine to shelter ourselves from a severe wind storm. The next morning I turned out my troops and drew them up beside the road to give a parting salute to General McClellan. He rode along the line, the tattered colors were lowered, the drums beat, and the men cheered him. Burnside rode quietly by his side. At my last interview McClellan said to me: "Burnside is a pure man and a man of integrity of purpose, and such a man can't go far astray."

One other remark I have preserved: "I have been

long enough in command of a large army to learn the utter insignificance of any man unless he depend on a Power above."

It is easy to see why the officers and soldiers were so much attached to McClellan.

Soon after this interview I met Burnside, who appeared sad and weary. He had been for two nights almost without sleep. He remarked in my presence that he had concluded to take the command of the army, but did not regard the subject as one for congratulation.

It is impossible to predict with certainty what a man will become under the weight of a new responsibility. Every officer of rank in our war doubtless had some thought beyond his immediate command, some plan of operations in mind based upon the circumstances of his surroundings; but the instant he had the whole authority put upon him he saw everything in a new light. His knowledge of the force to be used became more complete, and of the force to be opposed much enlarged; and the risks to be run presented themselves as practical questions, no longer as mere theories.

Thus when Burnside at Warrenton came to command the Army of the Potomac, then over 100,000 strong, his whole character appeared to undergo a change. A large, brave, prepossessing man, popular with his associates, he was accustomed to defer greatly to the judgment of his chosen friends.

When the proposal of command first met him he expressed a self-distrust and declined. Indeed, he was urged to shoulder the burden, and at last did so. When it became necessary to submit a plan of campaign to Washington without delay, he was forthwith astonish-

ingly decided. The obvious course mapped out by McClellan would not do for him—he rejected that. He then proposed ostensibly to maneuver toward Chester Gap and Culpeper as McClellan had been doing, but really to turn these maneuvers into feints. Under their cover, behind the blind of sundry marchings, skirmishes, and cavalry raids, he would transfer his army straightway to Falmouth, cross the Rappahannock to Fredericksburg, seize the heights beyond, and hold them preparatory to future movements. That was Burnside's plan of campaign. Who could say before the trial that it was not a good one?

To execute demanded prompt preparation. The docks near the Potomac at Aquia Creek needed rebuilding, and the railway thence to Falmouth must be repaired. Our pontoon bridges, left at Harper's Ferry and Berlin, must be transferred to the Rappahannock.

Halleck, after a visit to Burnside, promised, if his plan and method should be accepted, to look after docks, railway, and pontoon bridges. He then returned to the President. Mr. Lincoln said: "Adopt Burnside's plan; there is a chance of success if he moves quickly."

Burnside unwisely left two most important things to Halleck, one of which was vital: the repair of the railway and *forwarding his pontoon train.* Unless he could deceive Lee as to his intentions, the problem would reduce itself simply to a race of the two armies for the Fredericksburg Heights. Without the bridges, unless by some singular providence the river should be fordable at Falmouth on his arrival, a single day's delay for the means of crossing would be fatal to Burnside's enterprise, however swiftly he might move his columns.

On November 15, 1862, Burnside's march for Falmouth began. The right grand division of two corps under Sumner introduced the rapid movement. The first day, however, my division in the lead was permitted to make only thirteen miles, so necessary was it to get Sumner's command together and well in hand.

We were off early the next day, one division of our corps in the road and the other two abreast in the fields, mine on the left. The pioneers kept well ahead of the side columns to clear away the brush, cut the small trees, and throw down the fences. The road was dry and the weather fine.

Our march was to-day (Sunday, the 16th) more than the Hebrew Sabbath day's journey, for we made twenty miles and encamped at Spotted Tavern, only thirteen miles from Falmouth.

On the morrow our grand division, Sumner himself close to the front and full of his accustomed sanguine hope, pushed on to the Stafford Hills, and began to descend them near Falmouth, in plain sight of Fredericksburg. A small detachment of the enemy, with a few pieces of artillery, met our advance guard at the town and began firing upon us. A brigade of ours, with a single battery quickly ready, cleared the neighborhood. One solid shot from Fredericksburg opposite struck the wheel of an artillery carriage near me and broke it, but the fire from beyond the river was nervous and panicky, and the hostile defenders but few in number. Seeing our troops coming steadily on, the Confederates soon abandoned the shore line and fled, so that we quietly occupied the left bank and the town of Falmouth.

After the enemy's detachment had disappeared from our view behind the houses of Fredericksburg,

one of Sumner's officers saw a steer start from the south side and wade slowly across to the north bank of the Rappahannock. The commander of the leading brigade, Colonel Brooke, whose attention was called to the fact, went to the animal and measured the height the water had reached on his side; it did not exceed three feet. This being reported to Sumner, he dispatched a letter to Burnside, asking permission to cross immediately and seize the heights beyond the city. Burnside answered: "Wait till I come." When he came forward and looked at the broad river, the rough river bed and swift current, he decided that the risk of crossing before his bridges were in sight would be too great. "No, Sumner," he said; "wait for the pontoons."

The bridges were not there, and not likely to be at Falmouth for several days; but the ford was practicable, the town and heights but weakly occupied, and the ability of Sumner's command fully equal to the enterprise. Forty thousand men could have crossed before dark on that Monday, made a strong bridgehead on the lower plane of the right bank and, intrenching Marye Heights beyond the city against Lee's approach, have had within twelve hours rejoisted and replanked the denuded railway piers for use for supply or reënforcement from the Falmouth side.

The left grand division (Franklin's) encamped a few miles north of us at Stafford Court House; while the center grand division (Hooker's) was halted eight miles above us. Hooker, not to be outdone by Sumner, soon entreated Burnside to allow him to cross the river near his own bivouac, that he might move down and seize the Fredericksburg Heights. This request was too late. We had had a heavy rain and the river was

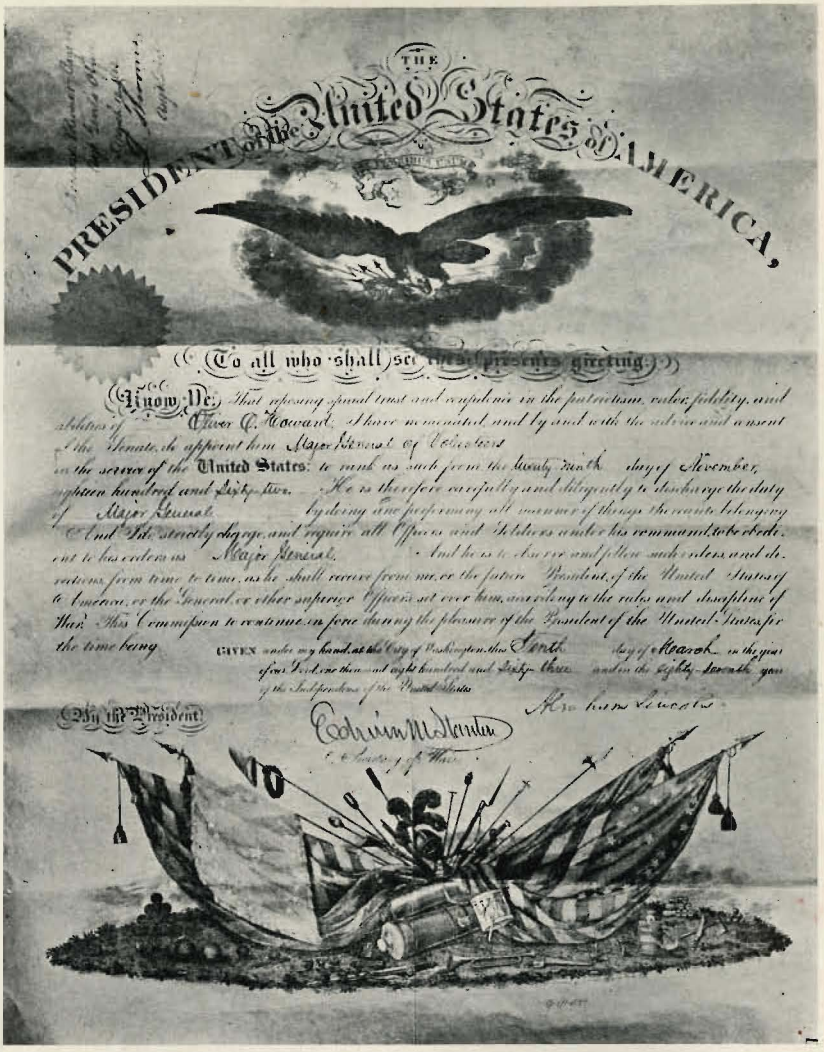
rising rapidly. Still, Hooker's project would have been better than the one we adopted.

The inhabitants of the country were too zealous for Confederate success to leave Lee long in ignorance of Burnside's doings. Even the skillful pretensions of our cavalry did not deceive him. He had word at once of our starting. Stuart, turning Pleasonton's right, made a reconnoissance in force, which confirmed the previous intelligence that the Army of the Potomac had changed its base from Warrenton Junction to Aquia Creek. Before Stuart's assurance came to Lee, he had dispatched troops to Marye Heights and vicinity. Cavalry, artillery, and two divisions of infantry, under McLaws and Ransom, with Longstreet in chief command, were hurried forward, arriving on the 18th and 19th. They reoccupied and fortified the best Fredericksburg positions, and with no little anxiety as they beheld our extension and preparations, waited for the arrival of their main body.

The story of the moving of the bridge train from Harper's Ferry and Berlin to our front at Falmouth is a strange one. It seems to indicate, judging by the uncalled-for delays, the misunderstandings, changes of orders, and going into depot for repairs near Washington, the uncertainty as to the route to be chosen, and final inadequacy of the transportation provided, that Halleck himself was playing a part, and possibly hoping to get Burnside well into winter quarters without anybody being particularly to blame.

The detail which fretted Burnside would be amusing, were it not so serious a matter.

Major Spaulding, in charge of the large pontoon train, took up his bridges at Harper's Ferry and vicinity fairly well; arrived with them at Washington, the



MAJOR GENERAL HOWARD'S COMMISSION FROM PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

19th, and reported to his chief (of the engineers), General Woodbury. Woodbury put him off a day; the next day when he came to the office Woodbury told him he must see Halleck first; that conference sent Spaulding into depot and camp near Anacostia. Burnside, the 15th, called for his promised bridges by a telegram to Halleck; Spaulding then received an order to send one train by land and forty boats by water; the boats which went by water were sent off to Belle Plain, but without wagons or mules. They were there helpless ten miles away from Burnside. Major Spaulding at Anacostia at last secured sufficient transportation, and the 19th in the afternoon started from Washington. Now heavy rains began and his roads were fearful; he then wisely took waterways for the whole, and arrived at Belle Plain the 24th. He now moved up in good shape and was handsomely in camp at evening on November 25th, close by Burnside's headquarters.

As it required thirteen days to do a piece of work which could easily have been done in three days, it would be a marvelous stretch of charity to impute it to mere bungling.

Had Woodbury and Spaulding in the outset been properly instructed by Halleck, those bridges would have been near at hand the 17th on our arrival. Spaulding would have reported to Sumner at once and in less than an hour would have been pushing out his boats from our front.

Of course it was now plain enough to Burnside that his primary plan had been defeated. Goaded by his disappointment and spurred by the popular expectation that he had awakened by his prompt marches, Burnside decided to move down the river fourteen miles, surprise his enemy, and effect a crossing at that

point, but Lee was too vigilant for that, or, indeed, for any crossing without sharp resistance. Too many eyes from the opposite shore beheld our reconnoitering parties; and as soon as preparations for bridging began at any place a strong force was immediately on hand to dispute the passage. Seeing this, Burnside's second project was necessarily abandoned.

Then, suddenly, our general took a new thought. It was to do as most great generals in history had done — after getting up sufficient supplies for use, present and prospective, then move straight forward upon the enemy's works. The chances in all such hardy enterprises were better where there was no river to be crossed, and when the works to be assailed were not so hopelessly strong as were those upon the Fredericksburg Heights.

Lee, who could hardly before this have dreamed of our crossing in his direct front, must have smiled at our folly. Burnside chose three points for his pontoons—one in front of my division near the Lacy house; another farther down, opposite the lower part of the city, and a third a mile below.

As the time drew near for laying the bridges I ascended the Stafford Hills, where General Hunt had placed Burnside's numerous cannon so as to cover the bridge approaches. The Confederate lines, of which I had glimpses here and there, appeared to be drawn up in a semicircle along the Fredericksburg Heights. The heights touched the Rappahannock a mile above the city and, going back, extended with their knolls, woods, and slopes southward all along my front, leaving between them and the wide river, besides the city, much undulating open ground. The Marye Hill was about the middle of the curve. South of the Marye

Hill the ridge ended; thence there stretched farther southward a wooded space of lower ground; again another abrupt height, the highest part of which was named Prospect Hill; then the high land gradually sloped off to the Massaponax, a tributary of the Rappahannock which, running easterly, bounded Lee's position and covered his right flank. After taking a good look at this suggestive landscape, I wrote a friend December 10th: "Before you get this letter you will have the news of a battle. I try to rely on the Saviour in these trying hours. . . . I have no forebodings of disaster, but I know the desperate nature of our undertaking." I was unusually sad in the prospect of that battlefield, sad for my men and for my personal staff. Experience had already taught me its lessons.

There was already murmuring among the officers in general and they were not overcareful in what they said. Some spoke against the administration, and sharply condemned the change of commanders, and openly expressed distrust of Burnside. Scraps of this adverse talk came to his ears. The night of the Monday in which I was surveying Lee's semicircle, Burnside called to him a number of us subordinates, field and staff. He addressed a roomful with very pertinent and pointed remarks, saying substantially: "I have heard your criticisms, gentlemen, and your complaints. You know how reluctantly I assumed the responsibility of command. I was conscious of what I lacked; but still I have been placed here where I am and will do my best. I rely on God for wisdom and strength. Your duty is not to throw cold water, but to aid me loyally with your advice and hearty service. . . ."

In noting at the time this conference, I said con-

cerning Burnside's address: "Solemn, noble, manly, and Christian were his remarks."

Burnside, thus pressed with the shafts of bitterness, having neither warm sympathy nor kindly advice, steeled himself to leave everything to the maze of battle and went on to prepare the way for the sacrifice.

Sumner's grand division broke camp and marched to convenient points for the bridges that were to lead into Fredericksburg, where the engineers proposed to push out the pontoons and plank them.

Hooker's grand division was held a little back of Sumner's for support; while Franklin moved his to the lower crossing.

At the early hour of three on the morning of December 11th, under the veil of a thick fog, the energetic engineer soldiers began their work. Some of our infantry under my eye was located close at hand to guard the working parties. The artillerymen on the heights behind me also contributed their portion as soon as they could see. One of Franklin's bridges was laid by 2.30 in the morning, and the other, close by, was finished at a later hour.

Our engineer battalion throwing out our bridge was not so successful. At about eight o'clock I detached Hall's whole brigade to assist it in every way possible. Putting in the boats one by one, the engineers had worked out their bridge about one-third of the way, when the fog thinned and the Confederate pickets, deeply intrenched on the other bank, began to fire upon our bridgemen with accuracy. The workers soon desisted, ran back, and abandoned their boats. Their officers commanded, went before them, and entreated, but all to no effect. There were just then few hopeful chances for bridgemen! Now the roar of our

artillery behind us became deafening. It poured shot and shell by concentrated firing upon those Confederate pickets and upon the sharpshooters in the edge of the town; but these active opponents were too well covered in houses, cellars, behind walls and buildings, and in deeply dug pits to be much disturbed. Neither musketry nor artillery, abundant as they were, lessened the enemy's galling fire.

Burnside came to our front in the afternoon and, noticing that the whole force in that vicinity was in waiting, sent for Woodbury and Hunt. Woodbury showed him the impossibility of getting any farther, now that the fog had cleared away and that his bridgemen had no cover from Confederate riflemen. Hunt mentioned the daring feat of crossing in separate boats. Burnside said: "Let us do that." I selected Hall's brigade of my division for the trial. The instant Colonel Hall in the presence of his men asked who would go ahead in the precarious enterprise, Lieutenant Colonel Baxter and his entire regiment, the Seventh Michigan, volunteered to fill the pontoons. Woodbury undertook to get the boats in readiness, but the poor workmen, unused to soldiering, made only abortive attempts. Two or three would get hold of a big boat and begin to move it, but as soon as a bullet struck it in any part they would run back. Finally, Baxter said that his men would put the boats into the water. His soldiers did that at command, filled them with men and shoved off so quickly that the enemy's fire became fitful and uncertain. In going across the river one man was killed and several wounded, including Baxter himself. For his bravery Baxter was made a brigadier general.

As the boats struck the opposite shore the men dis-

embarked without confusion and made a successful rush for the deep pits, trenches, and cellars. One company alone secured thirty-two prisoners.

The Seventh Michigan had hardly landed and seized the obstructions when the Nineteenth Massachusetts, by the same conveyance, followed in support—next, the Fifteenth Massachusetts and the Fifty-ninth New York in succession.

In this way brave soldiers made a bridgehead, and the engineer workmen, less nervous under such a screen from danger, soon finished their bridge across the Rappahannock.

My corps commander (Couch) next ordered me to take my entire division over and clear that part of the town near our advance of all Confederates, and so secure a safe transit for the remainder of our corps. Two regiments of Hall's and all of Owen's brigade crossed the bridge. With a small staff I went over with Owen. The hostile guns had found the range, so that shells burst uncomfortably near the moving column, but none on the bridge were hurt. A regimental band, to cheer us on, stood some fifty yards up river on the Falmouth side, and were just commencing to play when an explosive missile lodged in their midst. The bandsmen threw themselves upon their faces to avoid the immediate peril, and then ran to shelter. After that, our music was confined to cannon, musketry, and the shouts of the soldiers.

Hall pushed straight on; Owen rushed his men into the outskirts of the town to the left of Hall, while Sully reserved his brigade for the bridgehead nearer the river.

First, Hall's guide was killed; at the second street he met formidable resistance; he found persistency

and exposure of his men necessary to root out his worrisome opponents; now darkness was approaching and he feared too much massing and begged me to stop the crossing on the bridge. This I declined to do, and so we kept in motion till my division was over. With shots to meet from roofs, corners, alleyways, and from every conceivable cover, and heavy losses, our division succeeded at last in gaining the third street parallel with the river, and in securing some prisoners. Here I halted for the night and had the pickets carefully established.

Fredericksburg had been much damaged by Sumner's bombardment, yet many people remained in the city. Men, women, and children who had spent the day in cellars now ran to us for protection. There was some rioting; some soldiers for sport dressed themselves fantastically in all sorts of apparel, and some gave themselves to plunder; but no instance of personal abuse or violence to noncombatants came to my ears. Several mothers and their children were sent to Falmouth for safety. A few men, as usual, found the wine cellars and became intoxicated.

As I was making a night inspection I came upon a very hilarious group. Some were playing upon musical instruments, while others embellished the music with singing and dancing. I remarked to one of the group that this was an unusual preparation for battle —the battle that all were expecting on the morrow. "Ah, general, let us sing and dance to-night; we will fight the better for it to-morrow!"

The city bridge below ours had an experience like our own. The Eighty-ninth New York of Hawkins's brigade bravely crossed in bateaux, surprised and captured the Confederate pickets. Hawkins followed

up the Eighty-ninth with the rest of his regiments and cleared the lower part of the town.

Hall and I had our headquarters together in an old house which had been considerably knocked to pieces in the shelling. The situation was so peculiar that I did not sleep much. At three in the morning I went along the picket line. I found that the enemy had withdrawn from our immediate neighborhood. At dawn I had Owen and Sully enlarge our space. They opened like a fan till they had possession of the whole city and had their skirmishers beyond on the first ridge near the suburbs.

Thus far well. Sumner praised our action, giving us a handsome compliment for judicious dispositions, advancing steadily, sharp fighting, and success in driving back the Confederates so as to occupy and hold at daylight the entire town of Fredericksburg.

The remainder of Sumner's grand division (the Second and Ninth Corps) during December 12th crossed the river; the Second Corps held all the right half of the city, the Ninth the left, and connected with Franklin's grand division down river. Hooker's grand division kept that day to the Falmouth side for support and reënforcement.

During December 12th there was no actual battle; but there was considerable artillery practice and some brisk skirmishing.

CHAPTER XXI

BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG

IN the early morning of the 13th, about 3 A.M., I wrote a home letter for my children that is preserved:

"We are now in a house abandoned by Mr. Knox, and near the front line. One or two shells have passed clear through the house, but my room is in pretty good shape. Charles (Lieutenant Howard) is well and sleeping. So are Lieutenant Stinson, Captain Whittlesey, Lieutenants Steel and Atwood sleeping on the floor near me.

"I am sitting on this floor near a fireplace . . . writing on my lap, having an inkstand, candlestick, and paper on a large portfolio, with Tom, a little colored boy, holding up the outer edge. Tom drops to sleep now and then, when my candlestick with its light, and inkstand with its ink, slip down; but I wake Tom and it is soon all righted."

That very morning a little later a charming old lady saw my staff officers and myself at breakfast, and listened to the brief reading of Scripture and morning prayer. She seemed much moved. To a remark of hers I said that we should conquer in the end. She shook her head and rejoined with a look: "You will have a Stone wall to encounter, Hills to climb, and a Long street to tread before you can succeed." But, afterwards, seeing us depart with cheerfulness, like a

merchant going to business or a rested workman to his shop, as I said good morning, she replied: "Now I fear you more than ever, for I had understood that all of Lincoln's men were bad. What! So cheerful when going straight into battle?"

About eleven o'clock of December 11th Franklin reported to Burnside that the lower bridges were in readiness. The latter instructed him to keep his grand division where it then was for the present; but at four that afternoon he was directed to cross his whole command. The movement over the pontoons began. Before many men had reached the south shore Burnside changed his orders, sending over, only one brigade, Devens's, which deployed and held a position there as did Hawkins and I, a mile above.

On the 12th Franklin's two corps, Baldy Smith's and Reynolds's, completed their crossing before 1 P.M. Smith put out two divisions in line of battle, keeping one in the rear as a reserve; he then moved forward to the old Richmond road, which here was parallel with the river and a mile from it.

Reynolds formed his corps in the same style on Smith's left, but refused his line so that he made an angle, and rested his left on the Rappahannock.

Franklin for his entire grand division had far less opposition than we who were in the city. There was some skirmishing and random shots from Lee's artillery during this unfolding operation. Reynolds's front now looked directly toward the Massaponax, less than a mile away.

Thus Burnside's army faced that of Lee. During the 12th Burnside "visited the different commands with a view to determining as to future movements." During his visit to Franklin, Franklin strongly ad-

vised the use of his whole grand division of 30,000 men for assaulting the enemy's right, the assault to begin December 13th at daylight. Franklin asked, with a view to support, that two divisions of Hooker be sent him during the night. Burnside at that time appeared to favor this good advice. He promised as he left Franklin about dark to send his orders, whatever they might be, before midnight.

As the orders were not received at midnight, Franklin sent an aid-de-camp for them. The reply to the aid was that they would be ready soon and sent; but they did not reach Franklin until about seven o'clock of the 13th. Of course it was too late for an attack at dawn. The supporting divisions from Hooker never came, so that it is plain that Franklin's plan was not adopted. Strange as it may appear, Burnside was evidently relying on Sumner's grand division to make near the Marye Heights the main assault and so wanted Hooker's command held at the upper bridges to reënforce him.

Beck's Island is above the city. On the south shore, opposite this island, Dr. Taylor had his residence on high ground. The river road, running north, leaves the Rappahannock, opposite Beck's Island, and passes over Dr. Taylor's farm. Lee's left rested on this road. He crossed the heights thence southeasterly, one height being called Stanbury Hill; his lines next found a more level plateau named the Cemetery Hill; and then in order the Marye Heights, over which passed the Orange Court House road, perpendicular to the river, dividing Fredericksburg into halves. In the city it is Hanover Street.

Another roadway leaves the city three blocks lower, passes straight out parallel with the plank road

till it comes to the higher ground, then, turning to the right, courses along beside the Marye Heights and, finally, goes off into the country southwesterly. This is the telegraph road. There was a connecting street near Marye Heights which went from the plank road to the telegraph road. This street and a part of the telegraph road had a bank wall, the roadbed being a few feet below the crest of the wall. It was a Confederate infantry outwork already prepared.

Near the city the canal which started from the river above Beck's Island and ran along the base of the heights, continuing in front of the deep cross street which I have described, served for the most part as the broad ditch of a fortification—an obstacle to our approach in itself. The lower part of the canal was more like the rough outlet of a creek. On Marye Heights, a little back from the street, were dug by the Confederates and their slaves double intrenchments with works in the form of redoubts on the summits behind them. The lower ground down river, as we have seen, was generally undulating, and wooded to a considerable extent. Lee had a new road constructed behind his lines so that his troops could be readily moved from one point to another. The strong point of his right was "Prospect Hill." Along the foot of this ran the Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad which, from a point called Hamilton's Crossing, continues northward, parallel to the river, and enters the city on its south side. The old Richmond wagon road which Franklin had seized with his leading divisions was also parallel to the river and about halfway between it and the railway. These two roads each made a right angle with the Massaponax. Lee's permanent right flank was established upon the Massaponax so that the gen-

eral form of his entire line was that of a sickle; the high ground forming the handle and the low ground occupied in front of the new road and over Prospect Hill and on to the bend of the Massaponax forming the blade, having the concave edge toward the Rappahannock.

Our own lines, more than half enveloped and facing Lee's peculiar formation, were straight and parallel with the river excepting Reynolds's corps, which on the extreme left faced almost south and was nearly at right angles with our main line.

The Fredericksburg plateau west and southwest of the city is divided into three parts by two streams, the Hazel and the Deep Run, each of which has numerous branches. Hazel Run enters the Rappahannock close to the city. One branch from behind Marye Heights affords an extended, sheltered position in its valley; the other stream, the Deep Run, drains the high ground about Prospect Hill and enters the Rappahannock some distance south of the city.

Before the arrival of Jackson, Longstreet had posted the troops, Anderson's division from Taylor's Hill eastward, to include the cemetery; Ransom's holding all the lines and works on Marye Heights; McLaws's division, coming next, covered all the low ground from Hazel Run to Harrison's place. Pickett, with his division's irregular formation, held some knolls from which he could sweep all the *terrain* between his front and Deep Run. Hood at first rested his left on the heights and extended his division as far as the Fredericksburg Railroad, in front of Prospect Hill, where were the notable "Walker Batteries." Stuart with his cavalry and some artillery watched the remainder of the front to the Massaponax.

As soon as Jackson's forces arrived the morning of December 13th, he put A. P. Hill's division into Hood's place, arranged so as to form substantially two lines, while Early's and Taliaferro's divisions made a third line. The division of D. H. Hill, being wearied with a night march, was placed farther back, as a general reserve. The general facing of Stonewall Jackson's concentrated command was toward the north and the northwest, overlooking every approach from the direction of Fredericksburg. Hood, as soon as relieved by Jackson, changed position to the north side of Deep Run and held his forces for use in any direction.

Longstreet, referring to the long front which he commanded, says: "In addition to the natural strength of the position, ditches, stone fences, and road cuts formed along different portions of the line, and parts of General McLaws's lines were farther strengthened by rifle trenches and abatis."

Burnside's orders to Franklin, which he received at so late an hour, were dated 5.50 A.M. General Hardie of his staff came to carry the message and remain with Franklin. Burnside now directed that the whole grand division be held for a rapid movement down the old Richmond road. Franklin was to send out at once a division to pass below Smithfield, to seize, if possible, the heights near Hamilton; crossing the Massaponax, the division to be well supported, and to keep open the line of retreat. Burnside informed Franklin that another column from Sumner's grand division would move up the plank road to its intersection with the telegraph road, where the troops were to divide and seize the heights on both sides of these roads. Burnside thought that holding the two heights with the one near Hamilton's Crossing would compel the Confeder-

ates to evacuate the whole ridge between these points. Burnside further said that Hooker's command would be in support at the bridges. The division of Franklin must move as soon as the fog lifted; the watchword for the battle to be given to every company was *Scott*. The special instructions to Sumner were dated at 6 A.M. First: Extend to Deep Run and connect with Franklin; push a second column of one division or more along the plank and telegraph roads with a view of seizing the heights in rear of the town. Sumner's movement was not to commence until further orders.

Hooker's instructions were dated at 7 A.M. Hooker was to place Butterfield's corps and Whipple's division so as to cross the river at a moment's notice, using the three upper bridges. These forces were to be in support of Sumner's grand division; the two remaining divisions of Stoneman's corps were to be in readiness to cross at the lower bridges in support of Franklin.

To obey his instructions Franklin chose the corps of John F. Reynolds, which was made up of three divisions: 1st, Doubleday's; 2d, Gibbon's; 3d, Meade's. Franklin believed, as anybody would, that this fine corps was sufficient to carry out the letter and spirit of Burnside's new order. Meade's division was taken for the assault, and was to be supported on its left by Doubleday and on its right by Gibbon. In order to give an additional confidence, two divisions of Stoneman's corps were brought up from the bridges and made a reserve to Reynolds.

Meade started southward as if to cross the Massaponax, moved seven or eight hundred yards, and then changed face squarely to the right, and directed his march upon the "heights" mentioned in his orders.

The point which was coveted near the Massaponax was also not far from Prospect Hill. It was, indeed, on Lee's new road and actually behind A. P. Hill's advance lines.

Meade kept on under increased artillery fire from right, left, and front, well across the old Richmond road. Here his men were delayed in destroying hedges and in constructing bridges for his artillery over the deep side ditches.

Meade had a column of two deployed brigades, followed by another in fours ready to deploy. His formation, to start with, had skirmishers and flankers in plenty. Having gone somewhat farther, a Confederate battery from Stuart's front opened a troublesome fire upon Meade's left. Soon Union artillery ran to the place and replied shot for shot. Then a heavy line of Confederate skirmishers sprang from the troublesome quarter. The brigade, in fours, faced that way, and by rapid firing cleared the field. As soon as Meade was rid of that left flank annoyance he advanced this third brigade to his left front and brought up three batteries to his advanced position.

Again his command moved forward to encounter more hostile cannon now coming from his left front. The three Union batteries were turned upon this new enemy, and in a short time had exploded two of the Confederate caissons and driven their battery men from their guns. Success at that time cheered Meade and the men of his division.

Meade was now near what appeared to be a gap in the Confederate lines. His men, under his orders, rushed forward, first over a cleared field, rapidly driving in the enemy's skirmishers; next succeeded in getting possession of a piece of woods which jutted out

between him and the railroad, and soon his men cleared the whole front as far as that railroad. But in the neighborhood, taking advantage of embankments, ditches, and other cover, the Confederate soldiers in solid line were waiting for Meade's approach. Yet, with hardly delay enough to take breath, the leading Union brigade threw itself upon these strong lines, broke them up, and forced them back upon the heights. Having already passed A. P. Hill's front, Meade began to feel artillery and infantry fire from his right, so that while his first brigade sped onward the second brigade was delayed by changing front and meeting the new danger. But this was done.

Thus Meade worked his way along with delays and hard fighting with artillery and infantry to the left of him, to the right of him, and finally to the front. At one time Meade sent Lieutenant Dehon with instructions to the commander of the third brigade (our General Jackson) to capture an annoying battery. Dehon was killed just as he came to the commander and a few minutes later Jackson himself fell. It was a great loss, for our brave Jackson had, a few minutes before, seized the desired point for which Meade had been advancing and contending. The brigade, without its commander, subject to an increasing fire, gave back little by little and so lost its important hold. Meade took more than three hundred prisoners and many battle flags. When he most needed it he found small support on his right and none on his left, and there was none very close in his rear. Feeling that the opposition was too strong to be met by but one division, he began his retreat, which was executed under fire and without confusion.

When back as far as the edge of the woods near the

railroad, he found a brigade of Birney's division supporting some of his batteries, which gave him some relief.

Gibbon had separated from Meade while advancing in the woods. He had a sharp encounter of his own to meet and was now in position to succor, more thoroughly than Birney, Meade's breaking and retiring lines. Sinclair, who commanded Meade's first brigade, was badly wounded, and he lost in the action 22 officers and 496 men. The second brigade aggregated a loss of 22 officers and 718 men, while our Jackson's brigade suffered a loss of 28 officers and 525 men. Meade's artillery lost 5 officers and 25 men. These figures indicate the severity of the engagement.

General Gibbon, wounded during the day, had with his division done his utmost to give Meade a flank support. He faced a strip of woods strongly occupied by Pender's deployed lines. Gibbon endeavored to rush Taylor's brigade across an open field into the woods. The men got about halfway, when the Confederate artillery fire from different directions became so severe that the troops took cover by lying down behind a slight rise of ground. Now when Meade made his last advance, Gibbon, perceiving the effort, sent Taylor forward again. The Confederates were behind a railroad embankment to stop him. The other brigades of Gibbon's division came into line to the left of Taylor. The whole Union force in that quarter was at first repulsed; but now fully aroused, Gibbon gathered as many as he could from his reliable regiments and made a bayonet charge. This was done with tremendous energy and spirit, and the railway was taken with 180 prisoners. Gibbon, bleeding, was obliged to leave the front and Taylor succeeded to his command.

Doubleday, to the left of Meade, with his division had been occupied all day by the batteries of Walker and Stuart, who had other Confederates of all arms to support them. This occupation had prevented Meade from having any effective help upon his left flank, or any reënforcement from that division.

Meade retired after the hard day to the position from which he had set out in the morning.

The part which our grand division played in this battle affords a sorrowful picture. There is nothing to relieve its gloom but the excellent conduct of the troops under appalling circumstances.

Ransom, whose Confederate division divided the ground with that of McLaws, and held the deep suburban street and the telegraph road at the base of Marye Heights, uses strong language when he speaks of our successive efforts to get near his position on that deplorable day: "The Yankee line advanced with the utmost determination; moved, almost massed, to the charge heroically; met the withering fire of our Confederate artillery and small arms with wonderful stanchness!" Those attacks would not permit him to despise our courage or our hardihood.

So much for our *amour propre*. Burnside having heard from Franklin and from his own staff officer, Hardie, that Meade was gaining important advantage on Stonewall Jackson's front, thought that the fullness of time had come for Sumner to coöperate. He gave the old general the order for which he had been all the morning waiting: "Advance and attack!"

The Second Corps (Couch's), to which my division belonged, was to lead; to direct the main assault between the plank and the telegraph roads; to ascend the Marye Heights from that base; and break through the

Confederate lines, forcing the enemy back and capturing his batteries. It was a task easy to set but difficult even to begin.

General Sumner prescribed to Couch his favorite method: after covering the front with skirmishers, to get into action in a column of brigades. The simple way was for one brigade to form a long line two ranks deep, facing Marye Heights; follow that brigade by a second brigade line, leaving 150 yards' space between them; then send on the third brigade, preserving the same distance.

French's division thus formed was to have the advance; Hancock's to follow, and after Hancock's, my division was to complete the fighting column.

Close to the Second Corps on our left Willcox's Ninth Corps was instructed to move up abreast, to keep our left flank clear of any too enterprising Confederates, and to keep up connection with Franklin, occupying all the ground between Hazel and Deep Run. As we have seen, the Second and Ninth Corps were already over the Rappahannock. The instructions were clear and well understood. My division, having led in taking the town, must now fall to the rear, and let another have the post of honor.

Troops in regiments, brigades, divisions, or corps, after some service, show to some extent the characteristics of their commanders—their courage, steadfastness, self-reliance, or their impulsiveness, energy, and tenacity of purpose, and, of course, when such defects exist, the opposite qualities, nervousness and unreliability.

French, who was to lead, very soon gained an ascendency over all officers who were under him, and secured from them prompt obedience and hard work.

He was often imperious and impatient, but no one ever saw his troops, without stragglers, go into action without a thrill of admiration for him and his command.

A strong skirmish line was first organized. It consisted of three regiments—one by the flank in column of twos went quickly out Hanover Street, crossed the canal, and deployed to the left; the other two in similar order crossed the bridge in Princess Ann Street near the railway depot, and deployed to the right till their open line met the other. As soon as the columns had appeared at the bridge the Confederate batteries, whose guns were trained on the streets, opened a fearful discharge. Many of our men were killed or wounded before getting into line, but the remainder did not falter. They went into place at a run. The enemy's skirmish line now interposed its rapid fire. Our men set in motion those skirmishers and drove them, following them up for at least 400 yards, breaking down fences as they went forward, and traversing muddy ground till they struck an abrupt slope and lay down behind its crest. It was to them like a great rock in a weary land. It afforded such shelter from a terrible fire that the temptation was great to remain there while shells were bursting over their heads, round shot plowing the ground in their front, and musketry peppering every yard of the slopes beyond them.

The next brigade, Kimball's, let no time run to waste. It was drawn out in line on Caroline Street parallel with the river. Mason, who commanded the skirmishers, had just left Princess Ann Street when Kimball's brigade came on by the flank, passed the depot, crossed the canal bridge, and formed line of bat-

tle behind the skirmish line near the canal bank. The enemy's fire during these movements was murderous. Shells burst in their ranks, destroying many men at each shot; but there was no panic and no disorder. Gaps made by wounds and death were quickly filled by comrades of battle. The men at command now bounded forward and cleared the open space beneath increasing volleys till French's line of battle stretched from road to road.

Kimball's main line was at last not more than 600 yards from the perfectly protected Confederate brigade of General Cobb, which, with other men from Ransom's and McLaws's divisions, filled the deep roadway. The hostile skirmishers had been withdrawn. Every man in the roadway had loaded his rifle. The wall or the banks of fresh earth kept them from Kimball's sight. As our men moved up the gentle acclivity, who can describe what followed? More artillery than before was detected by the puffs of smoke, to the right, to the left, and all along the high ground. How rapid, how awful that series of discharges and those death-dealing missiles! Still this long, handsome line with bayonets fixed and flags flying were steadily moving forward without firing a shot. They overtook their own skirmishers and went on. The worst was yet to come. As soon as the Confederates' abandoned skirmish rifle pits were reached by our men, the waiting enemy, as if by a simultaneous impulse, gave them volleys of leaden hail which extended from the plank road to the east of Marye Heights, against which no line of men could move or stand. Kimball's rapid advance had secured a little hamlet whose straggling buildings gave some protection from the Confederate fire. There Kimball rested his right. As the

line could not advance farther, the men covered themselves as well as they could by the buildings and incidents of the ground, with a purpose to hold what they had gained and wait for help. It was here that their commander fell with a severe wound in his thigh. The next brigade (Andrews's) having but three regiments, the fourth being in the skirmish line, followed in the same manner according to the order. At the depot and the canal it took its turn and received the same dreadful baptism of fire. It pushed on with the same experience over the muddy ground and up the slopes, and was stopped at about the same point of advance. All the colonels present were disabled by wounds, so that a lieutenant colonel (Marshall) came to command the brigade. The last of French's brigades having also but three regiments, Palmer commanding, was deployed in the street and then followed the same path as the others without different results. It appeared at the canal; crossing that, the Confederate cannon had attained the exact range of the passage, and Palmer commends the firmness and bravery of his troops in dashing across that barrier.

To our field glasses French's brave division had almost disappeared.

Hancock's division came next. He sent up two regiments to replace two of French's. It was a way of renewing ammunition, for it was next to impossible to carry it up and distribute it in the ordinary way. Zook's brigade led Hancock's division. He deployed at the canal, then advanced with great speed, so that many of his men gained points beyond former troops along the ridge and at the hamlet.

Some of French's men in rear sprang up and joined in the brisk movement. Still they failed to take the

stone wall, although our dead were left within twenty-five paces of it.

Meagher's brigade line followed next and suffered like the preceding from the continuous and murderous discharges, but really gained nothing.

Caldwell commanded the next brigade. With great zest and spirit his men went forward and rushed to the front, but they accomplished no more than those who had preceded them. These had been my troops at Fair Oaks. Their loss on this Fredericksburg front was 62 commissioned officers and 932 enlisted men. The brigade commander was himself wounded. Colonel Cross, who subsequently commanded the brigade, was also wounded.

Colonel Nelson A. Miles, having been promoted, had left my staff and was commanding two regiments in this battle. He received, during the advance, a severe wound in the neck. Seated on a stretcher and holding the lips of the wound together, he pluckily had himself brought to me to show me where he thought I could put my troops into action to advantage so as to make some impression on the enemy's line. I had just before that taken my position on a prominent knoll, and had seen the havoc among the two divisions preceding mine. From the sunken roadway came an increasing storm, bullets flying swift and sure, dealing death and wounds to our brave fellows almost without a return fire.

All this the officers of my division fully apprehended, yet, without faltering, that division, in its turn, swept forward. Owen's brigade went first and Hall's next. I kept Sully's for a time in the edge of the town for a reserve, but was soon obliged to send forward one regiment after another as Hall and Owen called for

help. My regiments began to fire when each in its turn reached the general line of battle, so that the rattle of musketry for hours was unceasing.

To help us Hazard's Rhode Island battery came up at a trot, crossed the canal, and unlimbered in the open ground in the rear of Owen's troops and for a time fired with wondrous rapidity. The battery lost so many men in a short time that it was ordered back. Frank's New York battery followed Hazard's example and endeavored by rapid fire to open the way to our infantry for a front attack. But our attempts were futile, as had been those of the other divisions. We continued, however, to make sundry experiments, hoping almost against hope to make a lodgment along the enemy's front.

At last Hooker's grand division made its appearance in our rear. Hooker, himself on the field where he could take in the situation, stationed with his field glass just north of the canal, sat quietly on his horse. I wondered that he was not shot. He pushed in Humphrey's excellent division in the same manner as the rest. As we ceased firing Humphrey made a charge, leading his men in person amid the leaden rain. They reached my front line and passed it a short distance, where they met a tremendous volley of artillery and musketry and, like all the others who had ventured near the base of Marye Heights, were broken up and forced back.

Some more efforts were put forth by Hooker's troops and by ours, but all in vain, until darkness put an end to the hopeless sacrifice.

My division being the last of the Second Corps to go under fire on this fatal day, remained up there in close proximity to the foe till far into the night, but at

last fresh men from Hooker's command let us return to town, one brigade coming in as late as 2 A.M. the next day. The loss in my division aggregated 64 officers and 813 men.

All the aids-de-camp had an unusually hard time in this conflict. I had a feeling akin to terror when I sent an aid or mounted man to carry an order. Lieutenant H. M. Stinson, one of my aids, showed such fearlessness under musketry fire that several commanders noticed him and mentioned him in their reports; so they did Lieutenant A. J. Atwood of my staff. Once my brother and aid, Lieutenant Howard, leaving me with an order, was obliged to cross the most exposed street. On his return he exclaimed, as he rode up, "Oh, general, they fired a volley at me, but it passed over my head!"

The other corps (the Ninth) of our grand division was commanded by O. B. Willcox. Through Sumner, Willcox was required to give support to the Second Corps (Couch's) on his right hand and to the First Corps (Reynolds's) on his left. The word "support" is an uncertain one, and often a very unsatisfactory one in a battle. The front of the Ninth Corps extended from our flank to the left across Hazel to Deep Run. Sturgis's division left the city limits, came under a direct fire almost immediately from artillery and infantry, marched across a rough ascending slope, and attained a crest, a close position to the Confederates' sheltered line. The division remained there till after dark. Once the Confederates attempted to move out and turn one of Couch's divisions, when our Ferrero's brigade "drove them back to their cover of stone walls and rifle pits." Many valuable lives were lost in that sharp work.

At 3 P.M. W. W. Burns's division crossed Deep Run and tried at Franklin's request to give what help it could.

By four o'clock Willcox, while the fire was at its height, thought he might create some diversion for my men who were plainly seen from his point of observation, standing near their rough shelter or lying behind a slight rise in a crest of the upper slope. He advanced Getty's division from the shelter of the town. Each regiment set out by the flank, went forward, marched to open ground, and then deployed into brigade lines much as we had done; then rushed over a plowed field, across the railway cut, the old canal ditch and marshy ground. The brigade kept on under the usual artillery explosions till within close musketry range of the Confederate rifles. Then they underwent the same rough handling which our men met farther to the right earlier in the day. Getty's brigade was forced back to a poor sort of shelter near the canal. Willcox's losses aggregated 1,328 officers and men.

At first, Burnside, saddened by the repulse of his attacks in every part of his lines, planned another battle for the 14th. His heart naturally went out to the old Ninth Corps that he had but lately commanded.

Willcox brought back Burns's division from Franklin and prepared the Ninth Corps to make the next main assault. Positions for six batteries of artillery had been carefully selected to break the way for the first infantry charge and support it by strong cannon firing. But the order for a renewal of the strife was first suspended and later countermanded.

On the 14th, while matters were in suspense, I went up into a church tower with Couch, my corps commander, and had a plain view of all the slope where

the severest losses of the preceding day had occurred. We looked clear up to the suburban street or deep roadway and saw the ground literally strewn with the blue uniforms of our dead.

Burnside closed this remarkable tragedy by deciding to move the night of December 15, 1862, his brave but beaten army to the north side of the Rappahannock. That work of removal was accomplished without further loss of men or material.

ond battle of Bull Run, the incompleteness of Antietam, and the fatal consequences of Fredericksburg did not make the horizon of our dawning future very luminous. We had suffered desertions by the thousands. I brought two commissioned officers about that time to trial for disloyal language, directed against the President and the general commanding. Mouths were stopped, but discontent had taken deep root. Hooker, however, by his prompt and energetic measures, soon changed the whole tone of the army for the better. Desertions were diminished, and outpost duty was systematized. The general showed himself frequently to his troops at reviews and inspections, and caused the construction of field works and intrenchments, which, with the drills, occupied the time and the minds of the soldiers. The cavalry became a corps, and Stoneman was put in command of it. The artillery reserve, given to General Hunt, was brought to a high degree of efficiency.

In truth, during February, March, and April, the old cheerful, hopeful, trustful spirit which had carried us through so many dark days, through so many bloody fields and trying defeats, returned to the Army of the Potomac; and Hooker's success as a division and corps commander was kept constantly in mind as an earnest of a grand future. As soon as General Sickles, who was then my junior in rank, was assigned to the Third Corps, feeling that I had been overlooked, I wrote a brief letter to General Hooker, asking to be assigned according to my rank. Immediately I was ordered to take command of the Eleventh Army Corps, which General Sigel had just left. I assumed command at Stafford Court House, where General Carl Schurz was in charge. My coming sent Schurz back to

his division and Schimmelfennig back to his brigade. The corps was then, in round numbers, 13,000 strong. It had about 5,000 Germans and 8,000 Americans. Two divisions were under the German commanders, Von Steinwehr and Carl Schurz, and one under Devens. One of Devens's brigades was commanded by Colonel Von Gilsa, a German officer, who at drills and reviews made a fine soldierly appearance. Outwardly I met a cordial reception, but I soon found that my past record was not known here; that there was much complaint in the German language at the removal of Sigel, who merely wanted to have his command properly increased, and that I was not at first getting the earnest and loyal support of the entire command. But for me there was no turning back. I brought to the corps several tried officers: for example, General Barlow, to command one brigade in Von Steinwehr's division, and General Adelbert Ames to take a brigade. I had the command drilled and reviewed as much as could be done in a few weeks.

On April 8th the corps of Couch, Sickles, Meade, and Sedgwick were reviewed by President Lincoln, accompanied by General Hooker. There was a column of about 70,000 men, and it must have taken over two hours and a half for them to pass the President. It was the largest procession until the last review before President Andrew Johnson in 1865. Mrs. Lincoln came down from Washington, and the President's two sons were at the grand review. The smaller, Tad, rode a beautiful pony, and was noticeable for his ability to manage him.

On the 10th Mr. Lincoln came to review my corps. The German pioneers had fixed up my tent and its surroundings with everything that ever-

greens and trees could do to make them cheerful. Of all this Mr. Lincoln took special notice and expressed his admiration. My salute and review were satisfactory.

Up to April 25th General Hooker had managed to keep his plans in his own bosom. True, inferences were drawn by everybody from the partial movements that were made up and down the river. For example, April 13th, Stoneman, started up the Rappahannock with his cavalry corps, except Pleasonton's brigade, ostensibly to go to the Shenandoah Valley. It was my part to send Bushbeck's infantry brigade of Von Steinwehr's division in his support as far as Kelly's Ford. But the flooding rains again began, and had the effect of detaining the whole of Stoneman's force for some days in that neighborhood. Just what he was to do we did not then know.

April 21st, Doubleday, of Reynolds's (First) Corps, also started down the river, and went as far as Port Conway. He here made sundry demonstrations which indicated a purpose to try and effect a crossing. Colonel Henry A. Morrow with his Michigan regiment (Twenty-fourth) made another display near Port Royal. The Confederate commanders believed them to be but feints. These demonstrations had, however, the effect of causing Lee to send troops down the river to watch our proceedings. Jackson went thither in command.

On April 25th I was instructed to send knapsacks and other supplies to Bushbeck at Kelly's Ford, and to see that his men had on hand eight days' rations in knapsacks and haversacks. The instruction ended with this sentence: "I am directed to inform you confidentially, for your own information and not for pub-

lication, that your whole corps will probably move in that direction as early as Monday A.M."

Our army at that time numbered for duty about 130,000 — First Corps, Reynolds; Second, Couch; Third, Sickles; Fifth, Meade; Sixth, Sedgwick; Eleventh, Howard; Twelfth, Slocum; cavalry corps, Stoneman; reserve artillery, Hunt.

The Confederate army opposite numbered about 60,000: four divisions under Stonewall Jackson, two (Anderson's and McLaws's) acting separately, and Stuart's cavalry. General Pendleton brought the reserve artillery under one head. Anderson's and McLaws's belonged to Longstreet's corps, but the remainder over and above these two divisions was at this time absent from the Army of Northern Virginia. Lee's forces occupied the Fredericksburg Heights and guarded all approaches. His cavalry, with headquarters at Culpeper, watched his left flank from his position to the Shenandoah Valley.

The plan of operation determined upon by General Hooker, which began to be revealed to his corps commanders little by little in confidential notes, was, first, to send his whole cavalry corps, except one division, to raid around by our right upon Lee's communications; second, to make a crossing, a feint, and possibly an attack, by his left wing at and below Fredericksburg; third, to start the right wing up the Rappahannock to the upper fords, cross them, and push rapidly to and over the Rapidan via Chancellorsville to the heights near Banks's Ford; fourth, to follow up this movement with his center; to throw bridges across and below the mouth of the Rapidan at the United States Ford, or wherever convenient, and reënforce his right wing. The plan was well conceived, except the send-

ing off of his entire cavalry force. But for that there is little doubt that, humanly speaking, Lee would have been defeated. Stoneman would have curtained our movements, occupied the attention of Stuart, guarded our right flank, and let General Hooker and his corps commanders know what maneuvers of Lee were in progress before the wilderness and its deceptive wilds had been reached. But at the outset we were divorced from this potential helpmate. Pleasonton's brigade, which was left to Hooker, was too small to subdivide, so that we were usually left to skirmishers, scouts, and reconnoissance from the infantry arm to ascertain what the enemy was about. From this one mistake arose a dozen others, which contributed to our final discomfiture.

The orders of April 27th made the left wing to consist of the First, Third, and Sixth Corps, Sedgwick to command.

According to instructions, Reynolds took his command (the First Corps) to the lower place, near Pollock's Mills Creek. The Sixth Corps undertook Franklin's old crossing just below the mouth of the Deep Run. With some little delay and after overcoming the enemy's pickets, Wadsworth's division of Reynolds's corps was firmly established on the other shore, and the remainder of that corps held at hand.

The Sixth Corps was equally successful, and Brooks's division, aided by a battery, held a stone bridgehead below Fredericksburg and kept the way open for his corps. The preliminaries to all this work —Hunt planting the helpful artillery and Benham bringing up his bridges, and the concentration of the troops—were thoroughly provided for and executed with secrecy and dispatch; yet General Lee's watchful

assistants soon let him know what was going forward. He got ready for a possible attack, but when Wednesday passed away and then Thursday with no further effort on Sedgwick's part beyond the preparations which I have named, Lee rightly concluded that Hooker's main attack was not to be undertaken at that point. The right wing, which at the time most concerned me in these movements, was to be constituted from the Eleventh, Twelfth, and Fifth Corps.

Monday morning at 5.30, April 27th, my command left its camp near Brooke's Station, on the Aquia Creek Railroad, and took the most direct road by the way of Hartwood Church toward Kelly's Ford. We made a fair march (fourteen miles) the first day, and went into camp a little beyond that church. Everything was then in good order, the men in fine health and spirits, glad of any change which relieved the monotony and tedium of their winter quarters. Our orders were very strict to keep down the trains to the smallest number for ammunition and forage only. I found that on that march several of my subordinate commanders had been very careless in not carrying out these instructions to the letter. General Hooker and his staff passed my trains during the march, and said to me: "General Meade has done better than you." Of course I had issued the orders, but field officers would here and there slip in an extra wagon till there were many; for where were they to get their meals if ration wagons were all left behind? This condition I quickly corrected, but it was my first mortification in this campaign. Some of the American officers were as careless as some of the foreign in the matter of orders—glorious in eye service, but conscienceless when out of sight. Our main trains were

parked not far from Banks's Ford. My corps was followed by Slocum's, and his by Meade's.

The next day (Tuesday) we were on the road by 4 A.M., and accomplished our march to the neighborhood of Kelly's Ford by four in the afternoon; trains as well as troops were closed up and all encamped by that early hour.

I had hastened on ahead of my command to visit General Hooker, who had transferred his headquarters to Morrisville, a hamlet some five or six miles north of Kelly's Ford. Here he received me pleasantly, gave specific instructions, and carefully explained his proposed plan of attack. After this interview I returned to my troops and began to execute my part. Captain Comstock, of the engineers, who had graduated from West Point in the class following mine, was on hand to lay a bridge, for this ford was too deep for practical use. By 6 P.M. the bridge was commenced. The bridge layers were detailed mainly from my corps. Four hundred of Bushbeck's brigade seized the boats, which they put together, put them into the stream, and pushed for the south bank. The enemy's pickets stopped to fire one wild volley and fled. There was then quick work. The bridge was done before ten o'clock and the crossing well covered by picket posts far out. Immediately I broke camp and took my command over the bridge. Colonel Kellogg, with the Seventeenth Pennsylvania Cavalry, reported to me for temporary duty. With his force we extended our outposts and patrolled the country around our new bivouac, but owing to the ignorance of our guides of the character of the country and to the pitchy darkness, the troops were not in position until near daylight. Still, as Slocum was now to lead the column, we had

time for a short rest before resuming the march. Soon after getting upon the road to Germania Ford we could hear firing on Slocum's front, and before long shells began to burst over our heads and uncomfortably near to the marching men. Colonel Kellogg made some attempts to stop this; but as there were with the enemy two field pieces supported by cavalry, it proved too difficult a task. Just then a brigade of Stoneman's corps swept along southward in that neighborhood and rid us of the annoyance.

General Slocum had cleared the Rapidan, so that by eleven at night of this day (Wednesday, April 29th) my command began to cross the river. Slocum had here no bridge at first and could not wait for one. Part of his men, supporting each other and cheering, waded the current from shore to shore. The old bridge, however, was soon repaired and I used it. By four in the morning of Thursday my men were again in camp, except those with the train, including its guard.

On this day (Thursday) we did not delay for rest, but marched at seven o'clock, following Slocum, coming up abreast of his corps near Dowdall's tavern. As soon as my head of column came to this place—a small opening in the wilderness, within which are a few houses and a church—it was halted and I rode over to the Chancellor House, or Chancellorsville. Meade's command was already there. Here I met General Slocum, who was to give me instructions. His orders were to occupy the right, by Dowdall's tavern, resting my extreme right flank at a mill, marked as on Hunting Creek, or a tributary. He promised me to cover the whole ground from Chancellorsville to Dowdall's tavern. I went back at once and in person reconnoitered

the right, riding through the woods and small glade-like openings. I could find no mill in that neighborhood, but I posted the command as directed, drawing back my right across the pike, and having considerable reserve. I had hardly got into position before I found three-quarters of a mile more of space between me and Slocum's nearest division, and I was obliged, to my sorrow, to use up most of my reserve to fill this vacancy. At this time, though there was an interval on my right, Pleasonton's cavalry, with some artillery, remained at the place where the Ely Ford road crosses Hunting Creek, and I sent him two companies of infantry for support; this, with such cavalry pickets as Pleasonton would naturally throw out on all the roads which led to him, afforded me a good outpost of warning to my right rear. But there was no cavalry placed on the Orange plank road, nor on the old turnpike, which near Dowdall's tavern passes off to the north of west, making a considerable angle with the plank road.

As soon as Meade had crossed the Rapidan, Anderson's two Confederate brigades were drawn back from the United States Ford; the bridges were immediately laid and all but Gibbon's division of the Second Corps (Couch's) came to join us at Chancellorsville. Sickles, too, with the Third, had been taken from Sedgwick and was (Thursday night) in bivouac near the United States Ford, just across the river.

General Hooker, with a portion of his staff, had already come up and taken his headquarters at Chancellorsville. Our troops had skirmished all along with Stuart's cavalry, and exchanged some shots with Anderson's division in front of Slocum's center and left, yet thus far everything had worked well. We had en-

tered upon a vigorous offensive campaign. We had reached the enemy's vicinage, and were but a few miles from his left flank, with no natural or artificial obstruction in our way. Such was the situation Thursday evening.

Friday morning at dawn Sickles completed his march and joined us on the front line. He took post on my left, relieving some of Slocum's thin line and some of Steinwehr's, near Dowdall's tavern. I thus obtained Barlow's excellent brigade for my general corps reserve. These, with a few reserve batteries, were held in hand, in echelon, to cover my extreme right flank in case of such need.

Let us notice again, on that Thursday night, how favorable matters looked, when General Hooker was so jubilant and confident and full of the purpose of pushing on to the heights near Banks's Ford. He had then 50,000 men well concentrated at Chancellorsville and more within easy support. His left wing, under Sedgwick, had thus far occupied enough the attention of the Confederates to keep them in its front at Fredericksburg. It was not, then, strange that the sanguine Hooker caused to be issued and sent to us that night, to be read at our camp fires and to be published to our commands, as speedily as possible, a congratulatory order. (For full order, see Appendix.)

General Hooker intended to push for Lee's left flank and assail him there in position. Should Lee move upon Sedgwick with all the force which he could make available for that purpose, he would probably no more than get well at work before Hooker's right wing would be upon him.

The alternative for Lee was to leave as small a force in his works before Sedgwick as possible, with

instructions to keep Sedgwick back, while he himself, with the main Confederate army, Napoleonlike, hurried to join Anderson beyond Salem Church, whose skirmish line boldly fronted Hooker's at Chancellorsville, and promptly gave battle. This plan had been matured from the first, and was already well understood by all the Confederate brigade and division commanders. Their brigades were large and corresponded very well to our divisions—for they made no mistake in consolidating their troops. However much of a disturbance or panic in the rear our cavalry under Stoneman was creating, Lee did not send his cavalry force under Stuart to try and head us off, but simply let his son, General W. H. F. Lee, with his small cavalry division, watch, follow, fight, or do whatever he could, while he retained Stuart with two-thirds of that corps with himself. His 1,800 cavalrymen, with some horse artillery, were never better employed.

Early's division of Stonewall Jackson's corps and Barksdale's brigade, with a part of the reserve artillery, to be commanded by Pendleton, were selected for the defense of the works in front of Sedgwick at Fredericksburg. Anderson already had in our front at Chancellorsville five infantry brigades, in all nearly 11,000 men. At midnight of Thursday, while we were sleeping near Chancellorsville, in that wilderness, McLaws's division joined Anderson with some 6,000 men. On Friday morning at dawn Stonewall Jackson (who was now at Fredericksburg) with all his command, except Early, followed McLaws. Jackson had three divisions, numbering about 26,000 men, besides 170 pieces of artillery. He reached Anderson's lines by eight o'clock Friday morning (May 1st) and, as was his wont, took command and prepared to advance. It was

a goodly force—upward of 43,000 men of all arms, well organized, well drilled and disciplined, and under that best of Southern leaders, the redoubtable Stonewall Jackson. The troops fell into position on their arrival. McLaws went to the right of Anderson and put his forces on high ground in front of a country road which crosses from the river road to the "Old Mine" road. Anderson crossed the Old Mine road and the turnpike, while Jackson's men were upon the plank roadway and the new railway route. Owens's regiment of Confederate cavalry made the first reconnoissance, and by 11 A.M. this movement was followed up by other forces.

As revealed in his orders to Sedgwick Thursday evening, General Hooker's confident purpose still was to push on from Chancellorsville, drive back Anderson, and seize and occupy the high ground near Banks's Ford. But for the delay of Chancellorsville, as if that was our real destination, Hooker would have easily gained his point. Probably he waited first for Couch, and afterwards for Sickles. Still, after a personal scout of observation and examination of his front, Hooker issued his instructions for the execution of his proposed plan: First, Meade, using two divisions, was to take the river road and get to a designated position opposite Banks's Ford by 2 P.M.; second, Sykes, supported by Hancock from Couch's corps, was to take the same direction on the old Fredericksburg turnpike, move up abreast of Meade, both columns having deployed their skirmishers and lines so as to connect, and to fight any enemy that might be found there; third, Slocum, with the Twelfth Corps, was to march out on the plank road eastward to Tabernacle Church and mass his corps there. It was a point on the same general line as those to be attained

by Meade and Sykes. I, with the Eleventh, was to follow Slocum and post my command a mile in rear of him. All these movements were so regulated as to be completed by two in the afternoon.

As a grand support to our whole wing, Sedgwick, below Fredericksburg, was directed to make a demonstration in force against the enemy's intrenchments at Hamilton's Crossing. This was ordered to be undertaken at 1 P.M. But Sedgwick did not get the orders till four hours later. As Hooker's chief of staff was at Falmouth, and had constant telegraphic communication with him, the wretched failures in the transmission of orders and messages between Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg have never been understood.

The other columns lost no time. They started out on their respective roads. True, there was some clogging at the Chancellorsville crossroads, for many troops passed that one point, and the result of this clogging was that Sykes got considerably ahead of Hancock, and Slocum's appearance at Tabernacle Church was delayed—still, Slocum came forward and I, with my corps, supported him. Meade reached his point in fine style, but did not succeed in connecting with Sykes on his right; neither did Slocum reach out far enough to touch Sykes's right flank. Yet very soon Hancock was on hand in his rear for support.

Both of the armies were now in rapid motion in comparatively open ground. Jackson had a shorter front than we, and produced unity by commanding the whole line. We had four detached columns—those of Meade, Sykes, Slocum, and French—feeling out experimentally for a line of connection beyond the ground already passed by Jackson; and our common

commander unfortunately was not, like Jackson, at the front, where he could make the corrections now of vital importance. Meade's skirmishers occupied the heights in sight of the coveted Banks's Ford. Sykes beheld McLaws with deployed troops on the very hills he was directed to occupy. He did not hesitate an instant, but moved forward at double quick and attacked with all his might, driving back the brigades before him, and seized the strong position.

This position Sykes continued to hold. He was outflanked; but, with General Hancock close at hand, Sykes did not propose to retire nor fear to hold his ground. It was just the instant to reënforce him. Behind Hancock was all of Sickles's corps. But, to everybody's sorrow, our commander had *changed his mind* at that moment, and the orders of Hooker came to Sykes to return to Chancellorsville at once and take the old position. Slocum had encountered the brigades of Wright and Posey, but the action had hardly begun when the same orders came to him; the same also to Meade, as he was getting ready to give Sykes a strong support on his left. My command had gotten in readiness and gone out two miles, and a brigade of Sickles's had come to watch at Dowdall's toward the west, as French was doing toward the south at Todd's tavern. We all received the orders of retreat with astonishment: "Go back to the old position!"

It gave to our whole army the impression of a check, a failure, a defeat. It was a sudden change from a vigorous offensive to the defensive, into a position not good at all to resist a front attack, and one easily turned; for our right had no river or swamp or other natural obstacle on which to rest, and the whole position was enveloped in a vast and difficult forest, of

which we knew little. Such maps of the roads as we had we subsequently found to be wholly incorrect.

During the confusion of the changes of troops at Dowdall's tavern some female members of a family there, taking a basket of provisions with them, escaped from our lines and informed some Confederate officer of the situation, carrying accurate information of how we occupied that position.

On the other hand, our retreat was counted a great victory for the Confederates. They gained the *morale* which we had lost. They became jubilant and were confident of our final defeat. Hooker in motion was a great lion in their way, but now he had decided to lie still, and they, anticipating his fatal spring, would creep upon him and slay him.

Had General Hooker been at the front with Sykes or with Hancock at the time of Sykes's attack, he would have seen that his ability to concentrate there was greater than he dreamed. Meade, Couch, and Slocum were already out of the forest and my corps was just emerging from it when he ordered us to retire.

The old position which we resumed was as follows: A stream called Mineral Spring Run, rising perhaps a half mile west of Chancellorsville, runs northeast and joins the Rappahannock at right angles. Meade stretched his command along the western crest of this run, and, resting his left not far from the Rappahannock, faced toward Fredericksburg. The whole of Meade's line ran through an unbroken forest; its extent was about three miles. Couch continued the line, but was obliged to bulge out for a half mile to cover the Chancellorsville house and knoll. Hancock's division of this corps made a right angle, the apex being on the

old turnpike. French's division covered the space between Hancock and Meade, being substantially in reserve. Slocum's corps was next. Geary's and Williams's divisions, abreast of Hancock's foremost men, carried the line along some high ground to a second knoll, called Hazel Grove. Sickles, making an obtuse angle with Slocum's front, filled the space between Slocum's right flank and the small open field which embraces Dowdall's tavern. This he did with Birney's division; the remainder of his corps was in reserve, located between Dowdall's and Chancellorsville.

My own corps (the Eleventh) occupied the extreme right. As this position became subsequently of special interest, I will describe it. First, the old plank road and the old turnpike coming from the east are one and the same from Chancellorsville to and across Dowdall's opening; there the road forked, the plank continuing west, making an angle of some twenty degrees with the pike. North of the plank, in the Dowdall's opening, is the Wilderness Church; Hawkins's house is in the small gladelike space, about a quarter of a mile north of the church, and Dowdall's tavern, where Melzie Chancellor's family lived, was southeast of the church and also south of the main road. Here were my headquarters and Steinwehr's before the battle of Saturday. The next opening to Dowdall's, westward, situated between the forks—i. e., between the plank road and the turnpike—was called Tally Farm. The highest ground was at Tally's, near the pike, and at Hawkins's house; there was only a small rise at Dowdall's. These elevations were but slight, hardly as high as Hazel Grove or Chancellorsville. Except the small openings, the forest was continuous and nearly enveloping. Generally the trees were near together,

with abundant entanglements of undergrowth. Now, beginning with Sickles's right and facing south, General Steinwehr, commanding my second division, deployed two regiments of Bushbeck's brigade, some 100 yards, more or less, south of the plank road; the remainder of that brigade he deployed or held as a reserve north of the road—holding all of the ground to the Wilderness Church and to the forks of the roads. General Schurz, in charge of the 3d division, took up the line and carried it to a crossroad, and then, making a right angle, ran back along this crossroad to the turnpike, and thence farther, just south of and parallel with the pike. He kept about half of the brigades of Krzyzanowski and Schimmelfennig in reserve, holding his reserves in the Dowdall's opening north of the church. The next division (the first) under General Devens, was deployed in the extension of Schurz's line, first along the turnpike westward, with similar reserves. He drew back one brigade, Colonel Von Gilsa's, and a small part of another, nearly at right angles to the turnpike, and extended this line well out into the woods, facing it toward the northwest. There was a country road behind him, so that he could easily reënforce any part of his line. The artillery was distributed along the lines in favorable positions—two pieces near Devens's right, the remainder of Heckman's battery on Devens's left; Dilger's fine battery of six guns at the crossroads, and Wiedrich's four guns at Steinwehr's right and three at his left. Besides, I had three batteries in reserve. I had a line of intrenchments made off against the little church, extending across the opening into the woods, and facing toward our extreme right and rear. I put the reserve heavy guns in position there to protect that

flank, and supported them by my general reserve of infantry, viz., Barlow's large brigade. My whole front was covered with rifle pits or barricades, constructed under the constant inspection of Major Hoffman, the chief engineer. Early Saturday (May 2d) General Hooker, with Colonel Comstock, his engineer officer, visited my corps and rode with me along my front line. He frequently exclaimed: "How strong!" and made no criticism. At one point a regiment was not deployed, and at another was an unfilled gap in the thick forest. Comstock advised me to keep these spaces filled, even if I had to shorten my front. I made the changes suggested. Further, the whole command was covered with a good line of skirmishers.

The first commotion in my front occurred Friday evening. It was apparently a force of infantry with a battery of artillery, sent by General Lee and moving along the lines from our left toward our right. The force went no farther than Schimmelfennig's brigade. He had marched out a battalion, had suddenly assailed the reconnoiterers, and driven them off.

During the next day frequent reconnoissances were made from my front. Individual scouts pushed out under the cover of the woods, and at one time a company of Pennsylvania cavalry undertook to patrol the various roads outward from the vicinity of my command.

During the morning of this Saturday it was evident to us that the enemy was doing something—most probably preparing for a general attack. Hancock's angle, or that between Slocum and Sickles, were most favorable points. I sent out my chief of staff more than once to see if my line was in shape and to order the command, through the division commanders, to keep

on the alert. Once my staff officer, Major Whittlesey, rode over the entire picket line to see that the front was well covered with skirmishers. He went from the left to the extreme right and made his report. I speak of this to show what unusual precautions I took because of the forest and of the uncertainty of the enemy's movements. Doubtless other corps commanders did the same. The officers, during Saturday, frequently discussed the situation at my headquarters. Every iota of information which I received I sent at once by mounted orderlies to General Hooker. I did not think General Lee would be likely to move around our right, because our whole force was much larger than his. He had already been compelled to divide his army in order to hold back Sedgwick and come against us. He could not afford to divide again, for, should he attempt that, certainly Hooker would attack his separate bodies and conquer him in detail. So I reasoned, and so did others. Again, if my flank should be turned, it appeared plain, from the roads on our maps, that Lee would have to make a large detour. To withstand this, Reynolds's corps, recently come up from Falmouth, was on hand, besides the artillery and the reserves of the other corps stationed near Chancellorsville. Further, should an attack by any possibility reach us, Devens was to hold on as long as he could, using his reserves to support the points most threatened; Schurz was to hold his regiments that were free from the line, ready to protect the right flank. He preferred, he said, to hold them *en masse*, so as to charge in column. And last, as I have said, I put my reserve artillery in position and supported it by Barlow's men, facing the right, so that, should the troops of the right be dislodged, they could be drawn back beyond his line,

and still the fight continue till help came. Was not Sickles's whole corps at hand? Would not he simply face about and reënforce me? Once in the West, a year later, with the Fourth Corps, I was situated in the same manner, but by using all corps reserves and reënforcements that I sent for, the enemy's brigades were met in time and driven back with great loss.

General Lee says: "Early on the next morning of the 2d (Saturday, May 2, 1863), General Jackson marched by the Furnace and Brock's road; his movement being effectually covered by Fitz Lee's cavalry under Stuart in person." This direction was nearly parallel with our front line from east to west till, opposite Sickles, the road which Jackson took turned suddenly toward the south and kept on for several miles away from us toward Spottsylvania. Then, intersecting a road running northwest, the column turned up that one and kept on to the plank beyond, and massed under the cover of the thick forest. This march took nearly all day. General Lee, as he knew how to do, with McLaws and Anderson, kept Meade, Couch, and Slocum busy—and Sickles busier still near the Furnace as soon as Jackson's guns were heard.

There was a point at the Furnace clearing where the moving troops of Jackson were seen by some of Sickles's skirmishers. This was reported to Sickles, and by him to General Hooker. A strong reconnoissance was made. Clark's battery, well supported, was put in position, and fired upon the Confederate column. This firing forced the enemy to abandon the road, and the whole force appeared at first to retire rapidly eastward and southward toward Spottsylvania.

The Twenty-third Georgia Regiment, left behind, deployed toward Sickles to hold the corner where

the road changed direction. This resistance caused Sickles, with Hooker's consent, to send forward two and a half miles Birney's entire division, supporting it by other troops. This command worked along slowly through the woods, bridging streams, sending out Berdan's sharpshooters as skirmishers, and pressing forward. Considerable resistance was encountered, but the Twenty-third Georgia was, after a while, captured by the sharpshooters.

In brief, the circumstances seemed to warrant the conclusion that Lee was moving off—probably to Orange Court House—in retreat. Assuming this to be the case, Hooker directed Slocum to support Sickles's left, and I received orders by Captain Moore, of Hooker's staff, to support Sickles's right with my reserve troops, while he vigorously attacked the flank or rear of Stonewall Jackson.

As an attack in that direction was to be made by our troops and by those near me, and as my general reserve was taken away to support it, I deemed it of sufficient importance to go myself and see what further should be done. General Steinwehr accompanied me. We saw our men in position on the right of Sickles, over two miles south of us, but not finding the engagement very active in that quarter we hastened back to my headquarters at Dowdall's Clearing. We were again at the tavern. Our horses had been unsaddled for their evening meal. There was no news for me, except what the scouts brought and what General Devens had frequently reported, that Lee's column had been crossing the plank road obliquely between two and three miles ahead, and apparently aiming toward Orange Court House. Had I then been familiar with the routes as I am now I should have distrusted the

conclusion. General Hooker, who had more sources of information than I, thought Lee was retreating. He so telegraphed to Sedgwick about the time of Sickles's attack. He ordered all the troops toward the Furnace in that belief. I had then the same conviction.

When Stonewall Jackson began his march, Anderson watched us closely. He reported: "At midday Sickles's corps, Birney's division, appeared in some force at the Furnace. Posey's brigade was sent to dislodge him and was soon engaged in a warm skirmish with him." This combat became so lively and Posey was so hard pressed that he called for help. Then Anderson took Wright's brigade from the line and sent it to the support of Posey. Further, Major Hardaway's artillery was added to that of Lieutenant Colonel Brown. Both of these large brigades of Posey and Wright with artillery were here, deployed in as long a line as possible; they fought by increasing their skirmishers till night, and intrenched as soon as they could.

This all shows that Hooker's attack upon Stonewall Jackson's flank at the Furnace was not really made. It was General Lee himself, who, during Jackson's wonderful march, by means of Anderson and McLaws and part of his artillery, took care of Sickles's whole line. Thus, Hooker's movement toward the Furnace carried away from my flank all immediate support to be expected from Barlow, Sickles, and Slocum; and, further, these troops were looking, moving, and fighting in an opposite direction. They were engaged, not as Hooker telegraphed, with Lee in full retreat, but with Lee himself staying behind after Jackson's departure. He was then controlling the smaller wing of his army. Lee took great risks as he did at Gaines's

Mill before Richmond, where 25,000 men only held in check the whole of McClellan's army, while he himself crossed the river and defeated Porter and all the supports that McClellan dared send him. This time Lee took the smaller force himself.

Stonewall Jackson continued his march until he ordered a temporary halt. At this halt Fitzhugh Lee, who from a wooded knoll had discovered my flank, returned to Jackson and asked him to go and see. The two generals then rode to the wooded knoll. Jackson took a good look at our right flank and then, without a word, went back and marched his command still farther, at least half a mile beyond the "Old Turnpike." The lines of battle were there formed about 4 P.M. The divisions were in line 100 yards apart. Should they preserve the order of arrangement indicated, Jackson's flank would be beyond our General Devens's waiting line of battle—beyond his right battery and Von Gilsa's supporting brigade. Still, with ten minutes' notice or fifteen minutes' hard fighting, Devens could have held or extended his line.

It was already six o'clock. Hearing the sound of a skirmish toward Devens's position, I mounted with my staff and rode toward a high ridge not far from my reserve batteries. With a little more than 8,000 men at hand and with no other troops now nearer than Chancellorsville, I heard the first murmuring of a coming storm—a little quick firing on the picket line, the wild rushing of frightened game into our very camps, and almost sooner than it can be told the bursting of thousands of Confederates through the almost impenetrable thickets of the wilderness and then the wilder, noisier conflict which ensued. It was a terrible gale! the rush, the rattle, the quick lightning from a hundred

points at once; the roar, redoubled by echoes through the forest; the panic, the dead and dying in sight and the wounded straggling along; the frantic efforts of the brave and patriotic to stay the angry storm! One may live through and remember impressions of those fatal moments, but no pen or picture can catch and give the whole.

A few words of detail will make clearer to the reader the situation. General Dole said that at 5 P.M. the order was given the Confederates to advance. If his time was right it must have taken him an hour to work forward "through the very thick woods." He first encountered our skirmishers who were so obstinate that it required his main line to drive them back; then his men were "subjected to a very heavy musket fire, with grape, canister, and shell." Immediately his line assailed our barricades and intrenchments, drove our defenders off, and seized our batteries. Von Gilsa's Union brigade was supporting two guns; Dole's left regiment broke through the interval between Von Gilsa and the remainder of Devens's division, while Rodes's brigade faced Von Gilsa in front and so the greater part of Iverson's long line reached beyond Von Gilsa's position. Von Gilsa and the troops to his immediate left were quickly driven from their intrenchments, and they rolled along down Devens's line and created a panic in all that front. But there was another line to encounter after the first real resistance made by Devens's reserve regiments and part of Schurz's division, which was on a side hill in an open field east of Hawkins's house. Against this line the Confederates had come and succeeded in dislodging it, capturing one rifle gun; then they pushed on rapidly 300 yards more over an open field. During this move-

ment they faced another severe fire from musketry and batteries on the crest of a hill which commanded their field of approach. Our infantry was there in considerable force and protected by rifle intrenchments. We had filled these intrenchments, which had been prepared for Barlow's brigade, with fragments of regiments and individual men in retreat, who had volunteered to stay and help.

In the outset of the conflict I instantly sent a staff officer (Colonel Asmussen) to see that all was right in the direction of the firing. After Colonel Asmussen left me I had proceeded some 200 yards toward my reserve batteries, when the louder firing reached my ears and I saw Von Gilsa's men running back from their position. Immediately I made an effort to change the front of part of Devens's and all of Schurz's division. The rush of the enemy made this impossible. To render matters worse for me personally my horse got crazy, like some of the panic-stricken men, and plunged and reared and left me on the ground. Of course, I was soon mounted, but this hindered and delayed my personal work.

Steinwehr, who was always at hand, at this juncture brought me two regiments. For a time the reserve artillery at that point fired steadily and did well. It took the Confederates twenty minutes to take that place. It was taken too soon, because the instant that the fire became severe our men, who were separate from their companies, ran back in panic and four cannon were captured, but some of the batteries were withdrawn in good order. Dilger's, for example, kept up its fire all along the Chancellorsville road. Behind the reserve batteries near Dowdall's tavern Steinwehr had his men spring over their breastworks and hold

on, firing as soon as they could. One brigade of his (Bushbeck's) was kept quite entire and faced the enemy through the whole retreat.

Schimmelfennig's and a part of Krzyzanowski's brigades moved gradually back to the north of the plank road and into the eastern border of Dowdall's opening. They, too, kept up their fire. The whole center, as well as Devens's right, seem to have been seized with a blind indescribable panic. Several staff officers were near me and one of General Hooker's staff—Colonel Dickinson. We worked hard to stay the panic-stricken —officers as well as men.

"It's of no use," they would sing out. One colonel said: "I have done what I could!" and continued his flight. What artillery we kept was for a time well served, but we could only fight for time.

The next stand I attempted was at the forest's edge, but when that position was outflanked by Jackson, I rode back to the first high plateau to which we came on the Chancellorsville route. Here I met General Hiram G. Berry, of Maine. He said: "Well, general, where now?" I replied: "You take the right (north) of this road and I will take the left and try to defend it." All of my batteries were joined to others already there and placed on the brow of the plateau. I here brought all the troops of the Eleventh Corps which I could collect and faced them to the rear in support of the batteries. The enemy reached us with his fire. Some of our officers misbehaved even here, so much had our defeat disheartened them; but many were still resolute and helpful. Berry, of the Third Corps, put his men into line and marched off to hold back the advancing masses, till he fell mortally wounded. Pleasonton, returning from Hooker's Fur-

nace movement, used his troops and some batteries effectively from the opening at Hazel Grove, southeast of Dowdall's, and succeeded in stopping some troops of Jackson's which were pursuing beyond our now left flank the fugitives who had taken that direction in their flight. Soon, with Berry's division, the cannon on our hill, Pleasonton's help and that of various other detachments swinging into a line perpendicular to the one thoroughfare—the plank road—we were able to check Jackson's advance.

What a roar of cannon pouring their volleys into the forest, now black with the growing night! It was in that forest that the brave, energetic, and successful Southern leader fell. Jackson's death was more injurious to the Confederate cause than would have been that of 10,000 other soldiers, so great was the confidence he had won, so deep was the reverence of citizen and soldier for his character and ability!

It has been customary to blame me and my corps for the disaster. The imputations of neglect to obey orders; of extraordinary self-confidence; of fanatical reliance upon the God of battles; of not sending out reconnoissances; of not intrenching; of not strengthening the right flank by keeping proper reserves; of having no pickets and skirmishers; of not sending information to General Hooker, etc., etc., are far from true. My command was by positive orders riveted to that position. Though constantly threatened and made aware of hostile columns in motion, yet the woods were so dense that Stonewall Jackson was able to mass a large force a few miles off, whose exact whereabouts neither patrols, reconnoissances, nor scouts ascertained. The enemy crossing the plank road, two and a half miles off, we all saw. So the turn-

ing at the Furnace was seen by hundreds of our people; but the interpretation of these movements was certainly wrong. Yet, wherein did we neglect any precaution? It will be found that Devens kept his subordinates constantly on the *qui vive*; so did Schurz. Their actions and mine were identical. The Eleventh Corps detained Jackson for over an hour; part of my force was away by Hooker's orders; part of each division fought hard, as our Confederate enemies clearly show; part of it became wild with panic, like the Belgians at Waterloo, like most of our troops at Bull Run, and the Confederates, the second day, at Fair Oaks.

I may leave the whole matter to the considerate judgment of my companions in arms, simply asserting that on the terrible day of May 2, 1863, I did all which could have been done by a corps commander in the presence of that panic of men largely caused by the overwhelming attack of Jackson's 26,000 men against my isolated corps of 8,000 without its reserve—thus outnumbering me 3 to 1.

There is always a theory in war which will forestall the imputation of blame to those who do not deserve it. It is to impute the credit of one's great defeat to his enemy. I think in our hearts, as we take a candid review of everything that took place under General Hooker in the blind wilderness country around Chancellorsville, we do, indeed, impute our primary defeat to the successful effort of Stonewall Jackson, and our other checks to General Robert E. Lee. Certainly those are wrong who claim that I had no skirmishers out at Chancellorsville, for every report shows that the whole front was covered with them, and they are wrong who declare that there were no scouts or reconnoissances—for scouts, both cavalry and infantry, were constantly

sent out, some of whom reported back to Devens, to me, and to General Hooker. The reconnoissance made by Schimmelfennig's brigade was as bold and as effective as it could be in such a forest. Or again, that there were no intrenchments; for under Major Hoffman, the faithful engineer officer, the front and the batteries were fairly covered; and the woods, in places barricaded and obstructed, occupied by the right brigade of the corps, and afforded also a natural protection.

The extraordinary precaution of a cross intrenchment extending over the open ground and into the woods in rear of our right where were all the reserve artillery and Barlow's division to support it, should not be forgotten. If there were any axes, picks, or shovels obtainable which were not used, then I was misinformed. The order from the commanding general addressed to General Slocum and myself jointly, cautioning me to look to my right flank, etc., must have been made prior to the visit of Generals Hooker and Comstock, for General Sickles's corps had already replaced General Slocum's on my left and certainly General Hooker would not have sent away all of Sickles's corps and all of my general reserve on the very day of the battle, if he had deemed those masses necessary for the strengthening of his right flank.

Neither the commander, the War Department, nor Congress ever saw fit, by any communication to me, to hold me accountable for the dislodgment of the Eleventh Corps at Chancellorsville. That General Hooker should have believed General Lee to have been in full retreat, as he telegraphed to Sedgwick, was not unnatural or confined to him alone; upon that theory the move he made of Sickles, Slocum, and Barlow during Saturday was not bad. And, indeed, my conduct

in this battle was in no respect different from that in other engagements.

The Eleventh Corps was soon reorganized and marched to relieve the Fifth Corps, under General Meade, on our extreme left. Here it held an intrenched or barricaded line till the end of the Chancellorsville campaign.

For the operations of the next day; the work of Sedgwick's command at Fredericksburg; his fighting near and crossing the Rappahannock; the unjust aspersions cast upon him by pretentious writers; the grand council of war, where, mostly, the general officers voted to fight, and the final withdrawal, I wish to call attention to the good accounts of the Comte de Paris and to the more exhaustive handling of Chancellorsville by a brother officer—Major Theodore A. Dodge.

Chancellorsville was a dreadful field. The dead were strewn through forest and open farms. The wounded had often to wait for days before succor came. Sometimes it never came. One officer on my personal staff, Captain F. Dessaur, was killed while near me beside Barlow's intrenchments, endeavoring to rally the panic-stricken men. His young wife had besought him to resign and come home to Brooklyn, N. Y., before this battle commenced. He tendered his resignation, explaining the peculiar circumstances of the case. But we were before the enemy, and soon to be engaged in battle, so that I wrote my disapproval upon his application. Poor fellow, he was slain, and my heart was deeply pained at his loss and in sympathy with his stricken family. Dessaur is an example of that dreadful sacrifice made in the cause of our national unity and of human liberty.