PAPERS

OF THE

MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MASSACHUSETTS

VOLUME I.

CAMPAIGNS IN VIRGINIA
1861–1862

THE MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MASSACHUSETTS proposes to publish the papers which have been read at its meetings in a series of volumes under the following titles: —

1. CAMPAIGNS IN VIRGINIA, 1861-1862.
   A new and enlarged edition of "The Peninsular Campaign of General McClellan in 1862," issued by the Society in 1881. (*Published.*)
2. THE VIRGINIA CAMPAIGN OF 1862 under General Pope. A new edition of the volume issued in 1886. (*Published.*)
3. ANTIETAM TO GETTYSBURG.
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10. CRITICAL SKETCHES OF SOME OF THE FEDERAL AND CONFEDERATE COMMANDERS.
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Pages 1–240 of the first edition are in this numbered 59–300.

CAMPAIGNS IN VIRGINIA

1861–1862

EDITED BY

THEODORE F. DWIGHT

ERRATA.

Page 251, note, for Frazier's Farm read Frayser's Farm, to accord with spelling given by authority in Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Vol. 2, page 396, note.

Pages 156, 158, 165, 166, 175, 179, 181, 183, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 199, 201, 220, 240, 248, for Kearney read Kearny.

Pages 311, 316, 320, 324, for Massanutten read Massanutton. The latter is the spelling vouched for by Captain Jedediah Hotchkiss, of Staunton, Shenandoah Valley.

Pages 15, 326, for Moorfield read Moorefield.

Pages 9, 22, 33, for Shepardstown read Shepherdstown.

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PREFACE.

THE original project of the Military Historical Society, as succinctly stated by its founder, Mr. Ropes, was for a "Society for the investigation of Military History, principally of our late war, but also of other wars, both of this and other nations;" and it was first formally presented to a party of ten gentlemen on Tuesday evening, January 20, 1876. Receiving their cordial approval and support, an organization was effected at a meeting on the 7th of February ensuing, which in all its essential characteristics continues until to-day unchanged; and on the 13th of March the sessions of the Society began.

The Founders, as the organization committee of February 7, 1876, may be called, were:

GENERAL GREELY S. CURTIS,
GENERAL CHARLES DEVENS,
PAYMASTER CHARLES FAIRCHILD,
GENERAL GEORGE H. GORDON,
MAJOR JOHN C. GRAY,
COLONEL FRANKLIN HAVEN,
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CAPTAIN HOWARD STOCKTON,
LIEUTENANT EDMUND L. ZALINSKI.

To themselves at this meeting they added fifteen others, and of the original twenty-eight, nineteen still continue in

the Society. Among those removed by death were the first three Presidents: Generals Gordon, Palfrey and Devens.

The officers chosen at the beginning for the management of the Society were, with but few changes in the Executive Committee, re-elected annually for eight years, when a change was caused by the resignation of the President, General Gordon, on account of enfeebled health. He was replaced, December 8, 1884, by General Francis W. Palfrey, who, for the same reason, was compelled after one year of service to retire. General Devens, who succeeded him January 11, 1886, held the office until his death on January 7, 1891. On the 13th of January of that year the present President, General Francis A. Walker, was first elected. Of the Secretaries of the Society, Captain Edward B. Robins, after a term of eight years, became Treasurer, a position he has ever since held. He was succeeded for four years by General Samuel M. Quincy; and on his death, the office was held for five years by Lieutenant Alpheus H. Hardy. The present Secretary, Lieutenant Charles H. Porter, was elected January 3, 1893. The Board of Government now, as at first, is the Executive Committee of three members.

From 1876 until the close of 1890, the Society steadily pursued its course, with gradually increasing membership, gaining strength and assurance of permanence. In 1891, further to ensure its perpetuity and enlarge its influence, Mr. Ropes conveyed to it, as a gift, his rich collections of military history and science, books, maps, relics, pictures and other works of art, chiefly relative to the late Civil War and to the First Napoleon, and on January 13, 1891, caused the Society to be incorporated under the laws of Massachusetts.

The construction of the Armory of the First Corps of Cadets, Massachusetts Volunteer Militia, offered a permanent home for the Society; and, ample provision having generously been made for its Library and collections by this organization, the Society entered into occupation and held its first meeting in its new and handsomely appointed rooms, January 1, 1895.

The Society, as now established, provides its members not only a meeting place, but a place for work in its Library during the hours when the Armory is open, and, to some extent also, for recreation, in the examination of its prints and other historical objects.

Under the original scheme for the conduct of the Society, the Executive Committee was expected to prescribe subjects for investigation by specially appointed committees, and the matter comprised in Volumes 1 and 2 of the Society's publications, as originally issued, was prepared according to this plan, and consists of papers or reports, quite exhaustive in treatment, of the McClellan and Pope Campaigns of 1862. While this system had its merits, in drawing out the expression of diverse opinions on vexed questions, its practice was not long continued. Members have been given all freedom in the selection of subjects; and, for the most part, they have presented papers giving their personal experiences in campaigns, operations, battles and engagements in which they actively shared.

In the 124 papers, which have been presented to the Society, a great variety of subjects have been treated; but because of the interest in the operations of the Army of the Potomac, in which the larger number of the soldiers of New England served, the papers concerning the war in Virginia exceed those on campaigns elsewhere.

It should be observed that no purpose was contemplated by the Society, of making in these papers a continuous or connected history, and that the larger number were prepared with no view to publication. Certain of them having been written for projected works, were read as extracts therefrom to the Society, and such, by Colonel Dodge, General Gordon and General Walker, have been specified in the List of Reports and Papers.

In 1881, the Society instituted a series of publications by issuing a volume under the title of "The Peninsular Campaign of General McClellan in 1862;" which was followed

five years later, 1886, by a second volume entitled "The Virginia Campaign of General Pope in 1862." Volume 1 has been long out of print. In determining a plan for continuing this series, so long interrupted, the Executive Committee considered the republication of the two volumes necessary, not only for the benefit of the members who have been elected since they were issued, but that they might be made to conform so far as possible to the scheme adopted for the editorial details of the succeeding volumes. When the papers comprised in them were written, and, largely, before they were compiled and printed, the publication of the Archives of the War Department relative to the Civil War had not been begun, or had not been carried far enough to permit references to be made to the official text of documents and papers which were cited. Consequently these two volumes have been greatly revised, with references to the War Records, and in a large number of instances newly annotated.

In these new editions the original electrotyped plates have been used and the volumes enlarged: Volume 1, at the beginning and the end, to preserve in some measure a chronological sequence, by the addition of Colonel Livermore's paper on General Patterson's operations in 1861, and of Major Huntington's recollections of the campaign against Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley in the early summer of 1862. Volume 2 has been enlarged by the addition of a paper by General Andrews, on Cedar Mountain, the first battle of General Pope's campaign.

An effort has been made to provide these volumes with clear and explicit maps. On the general map of the seat of war in Eastern Virginia few names appear which are not mentioned in the respective volumes. Particular care has been given to the compilation of the smaller maps, so that the operations to which they relate may be followed with reasonable certainty.

The projected volumes in continuation of this series, which will be issued with as much expedition as the work required

in editing will permit, are announced on a page opposite the title page of this volume. The papers concerning the operations in Virginia, as now contemplated, will altogether fill six volumes; a seventh will be devoted to the campaigns of 1862 and 1863 in Kentucky and Tennessee; an eighth to the Sherman campaign in Georgia, including General Thomas's operations in Tennessee; and a ninth to the operations in the Carolinas from 1861 to 1863. The tenth volume, "Critical Sketches of Some Federal and Confederate Commanders," which has been published, carries in its preface an explanation of the reason for its appearance, though the last in numerical order, as the first of, and to introduce, the Series.

In all cases, their living authors have been given the opportunity to revise and enlarge these papers, and those of the dead have been entrusted to the hands of their friends. In many cases the papers have gained value by revision, because of the larger means now afforded by the publication of so large a part of the War Records and of other historical works.

The scheme of annotation employed is explained in the list of books cited, which it is intended to prefix to the text of each volume. In addition to these bibliographies, it has been believed that the student will also be served by the lists of the published writings of the authors which preface their respective papers.

For friendly assistance rendered in the preparation of this volume, acknowledgment is gratefully made to Mr. John C. Ropes, to Major George B. Davis and Mr. Joseph W. Kirkley of the Board of the War Records Office; to General Casey, Chief of Engineers, U. S. Army, and to Mr. William J. Warren, Chief Clerk of the Office of Engineers; to Mr. Andrew H. Allen, Chief of the Bureau of Rolls and Library of the Department of State, and his colleague Mr. William McNeir; to Captain Jed. Hotchkiss of the Army of Northern Virginia; to Messrs. G. W. Stadly & Company, of Boston, for their painstaking care in the making of the maps.

In conclusion, it seems proper to acknowledge a vast debt

to the compilers of the "Official Records" of the War of the Rebellion. They have provided printed versions of these documents which display a care so exquisite and extraordinary as perfectly to establish a confidence in their accuracy.

THEODORE F. DWIGHT.

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THE MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MASSACHUSETTS.

OFFICERS, MEMBERS, AND PAPERS READ AT ITS MEETINGS.

THE ROOMS OF THE SOCIETY,

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Aide-de-Camp to the Major-General commanding the Army.

HENRY VAN NESS BOYNTON,

Brevet Brigadier-General, U. S. V.
Lieutenant-Colonel, Thirty-fifth Ohio Infantry.

JOHN RUTTER BROOKE,

Brigadier-General, U. S. A.
Brevet Major-General, U. S. V. Brigadier-General, U S V.

* HENRY ARMITT BROWN,

Died August 21, 1878.

CORNELIUS CADLE,

Brevet Colonel, U. S. V.
Lieutenant-Colonel and Assistant Adjutant-General, Seventeenth Army Corps.

JOSHUA LAWRENCE CHAMBERLAIN, LL. D.,

Brevet Major-General, U. S. V. Brigadier-General, U. S. V.
Governor of the State of Maine.
Formerly President of Bowdoin College.

WINFIELD SCOTT CHAPLIN,

Second Lieutenant, Fifth Artillery, U. S. A., 1870–1882.

SELDEN CONNOR,

Brigadier-General, U. S. V.
Colonel, Nineteenth Maine Infantry.

JACOB DOLSON COX,

Major-General, U. S. V.
Commandant, Twenty-third Army Corps.

HARRY COOKE CUSHING,

Brevet Major, U. S. A.
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Major and Judge Advocate, U. S. A.
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*EPHRAIM CUTLER DAWES,

Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel, U. S. V.
Major, Fifty-third Ohio Infantry. Died April 23, 1895.

GEORGE DEWEY,

Captain, U. S. N.

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Colonel, Thirteenth and Forty-ninth Virginia Infantry, C. S. A.

GEORGE BERNARD DRAKE,

Brevet Brigadier-General, U. S. V.
Lieutenant-Colonel and Assistant Adjutant General, U. S. V.
First Lieutenant, Sixth Infantry, U. S. A., 1864–1865.

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Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel, U. S. A.
Captain, Fifth Artillery, U. S. A., 1864–1875.

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Lieutenant-Commander, U. S. N.

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Colonel, Corps of Engineers, U. S. A.
Superintendent of the U. S. Military Academy, West Point, N. Y.

LUCIUS FAIRCHILD,

Brigadier-General, U. S. V.
Captain, Sixteenth Infantry, U. S. A., 1861–1863.
Governor of the State of Wisconsin, E. E. and M. P. of the United States to Spain, 1880–1882.

DANIEL WEBSTER FLAGLER,

Brigadier-General, U. S. A.
Chief of Ordnance Department, U. S. A.

CHARLES WILLIAM FOLSOM,

Brevet Colonel, U. S. V.
Captain and Assistant Quartermaster, U. S. V.

MANNING FERGUSON FORCE,

Brevet Major-General, U. S. V.
Brigadier-General, U. S. V.

* GUSTAVUS VASA FOX,

Captain, U. S. N.
Assistant Secretary, Navy Department, 1861–1866. Died October 29, 1883.

WILLIAM BUEL FRANKLIN,

Major-General, U. S. V.

* JAMES BARNET FRY,

Brevet Major-General, U. S. A.
Colonel and Assistant Adjutant-General, U. S. A. Died July 11, 1894.

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Lieutenant-Colonel and Assistant Adjutant-General, U. S. V.

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Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel, U. S. V.
Captain and Aide-de-Camp.

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Major, Twenty-ninth Maine Infantry, U. S. V.

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Commander, U. S. N.

GEORGE SEARS GREENE,
Brevet Major-General, U. S. V.
Brigadier-General, U. S. V.

EUGENE GRIFFIN,
Captain, Corps of Engineers, U. S. A., 1886–1889.

SIMON GOODELL GRIFFIN,
Brevet Major-General, U. S. V.
Brigadier-General, U. S. V.

* WINFIELD SCOTT HANCOCK,
Major-General, U. S. A. Died February 9, 1886.

ALFRED STEDMAN HARTWELL,
Brevet Brigadier-General, U. S. V.
Colonel Fifty-fifth Massachusetts Infantry.

HARRY LEROY HAWTHORNE,
First Lieutenant, First Artillery, U. S. A.

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Brevet Major, U. S. V.
Captain, First Massachusetts Cavalry.

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Captain, First Artillery, U. S. A.
Second Lieutenant Fortieth New York Infantry, U. S. V.

* ANDREW ATKINSON HUMPHREYS,

Brevet Major-General, U. S. A.
Chief of Engineers, U. S. A. Died December 27, 1883.

* HENRY JACKSON HUNT,

Brevet Major-General, U. S. A.
Chief of Artillery, Army of the Potomac.
Brigadier-General, U. S. V. Died February 11, 1889.

* ROBERT HUNTER,

Captain, Seventy-fourth Ohio Volunteers. Died December 2, 1894.

THOMAS WORCESTER HYDE,

Brevet Brigadier-General, U. S. V.
Colonel, First Maine Veteran Volunteers.

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Chaplain, Army of Northern Virginia, C. S. A.
Chaplain of the University of Virginia.

JOSEPH WILLIAM KIRKLEY,

War Department, Washington, D. C.

GILBERT CRAWFORD KNIFFIN,

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Captain and Commissary of Subsistence.

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WILLIAM ROSCOE LIVERMORE,

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STEPHEN BLEECKER LUCE,

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Brevet Brigadier-General, U. S. V. Assistant Adjutant-General, and Chief of Staff, Fourteenth Army Corps.

* IRVIN McDOWELL,

Major-General, U. S. A. Died May 4, 1885.

ALFRED THAYER MAHAN,

Captain, U. S. N.

WILLIAM MAHONE,

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Lieutenant-Colonel, C. S. A., Aide-de-Camp to General Robert E. Lee.

GEORGE MEADE,

Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel, U. S. V., Captain, U. S. V. Captain, U. S. A., 1866–1874.
Aide-de-Camp to Major-General George G. Meade.

* MONTGOMERY CUNNINGHAM MEIGS,

Brevet Major-General, U. S. A.
Quartermaster-General, U. S. A. Died January 2, 1892.

NELSON APPLETON MILES,

Major-General, U. S. A.

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Brevet Colonel, U. S. V.
Major and Aide-de-Camp, U. S. A.
Lieutenant-Colonel and Assistant Adjutant-General, U. S. V.

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Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel, U. S. V.
First Lieutenant, Twenty-eighth Pennsylvania Infantry.

* EMERSON OPDYCKE,

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Brigadier-General, U. S. V. Died April 25, 1884.

EPHRAIM ALLEN OTIS,

Captain and Assistant Adjutant-General, U. S. V.
Chief of Staff of Major-General Rousseau.

CARL FOLLEN PALFREY,

Captain, Corps of Engineers, U. S. A.

* LE COMTE DE PARIS,

Died September 8, 1894.

JOHN GRUBB PARKE,

Brevet Major-General, U. S. A.
Colonel, Corps of Engineers, U. S. A.

* FOXHALL ALEXANDER PARKER,

Commodore, U. S. N. Died June 10, 1879.

* LOUIS HENRY PELOUZE,

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Major and Assistant Adjutant-General, U. S. A. Died June 2, 1878.

WILLIAM BROOKE RAWLE,

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Captain, Third Pennsylvania Cavalry.

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ANDREW HOWLAND RUSSELL,

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WILLIAM FORSE SCOTT,

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THOMAS OLIVER SELFRIDGE,

Captain, U. S. N.

JAMES SHAW, JR.,

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Colonel, Seventh U. S. Colored Troops.

* WILLIAM TECUMSEH SHERMAN,

General, U. S. A. Died February 14, 1891.

WILLIAM FARRAR SMITH,

Brevet Major-General, U. S. A.
Major-General U. S. V.
Major, Corps of Engineers, U. S. A. Retired.

JAMES RUSSELL SOLEY,

Assistant Secretary of the Navy, 1890–1893.

GEORGE AUGUSTIN THAYER,

Captain, Second Massachusetts Infantry, U. S. V.

* EDWARD DAVIS TOWNSEND,

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Adjutant-General, U. S. A. Died May 10, 1893.

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Lieutenant-Colonel and Assistant Adjutant-General, C. S. A.

JOHN GRIMES WALKER,

Rear-Admiral, U. S. N.

* GOUVERNEUR KEMBLE WARREN,

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ALEXANDER STEWART WEBB, LL. D.

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Brigadier-General, U. S. V.
President of the College of the City of New York.

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   Colonel THOMAS L. LIVERMORE.

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   By Major JAMES F. HUNTINGTON.

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1. General McClellan's Plans for the Campaign of 1862, and the Alleged Interference of the Government with them.
   JOHN C. ROPES, Esq.

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   General JOHN C. PALFREY.

3. The Period which elapsed between the Fall of Yorktown and the Seven-Days' Battles.
   General FRANCIS W. PALFREY.

4. The Seven-Days' Battles: —
   Mechanicsville,
   Gaines's Mill,
   White Oak Swamp,
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   General FRANCIS W. PALFREY.

5. The Seven-Days' Battles: —
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   General FRANCIS W. PALFREY.

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   General CHARLES A. WHITTIER.

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1. The Character of General Halleck's Military Administration in the Summer of 1862; with Special Reference to the Removal, by his Order, of the Army of the Potomac from the Peninsula, and to the Share which belongs to him in the Campaign of General Pope.
General SAMUEL M. QUINCY.

THE OBJECTS AND GENERAL PLAN OF CAMPAIGN.

2. First Part, to the Nineteenth of August.
Lieutenant-Colonel CHARLES P. HORTON.

3. Second Part, to the Twenty-eighth of August.
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General GEORGE H. GORDON.

6. The Battle of Chantilly, First of September.
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Colonel WILLIAM ALLAN.

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9. The Conduct of General McClellan at Alexandria in August, 1862; the Nature and Extent of his Command; and his Alleged Neglect to Support the Army of General Pope.
Lieutenant-Colonel FRANKLIN HAVEN, Jun.

10. The Same Subject.
General STEPHEN M. WELD.

11. Review of the Reports of Colonel Haven and General Weld.
Colonel THEODORE LYMAN.

12. The Conduct of Generals McClellan and Halleck in August, 1862, and the Case of Fitz-John Porter.
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Lieutenant-Colonel WILLIAM ALLAN.

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General WILLIAM F. SMITH.

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1. The Disaster to the Eleventh Corps at Chancellorsville.
Colonel THEODORE A. DODGE.

2. The Fight of Sunday, May Third, at Chancellorsville.
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3. SEDGWICK AT CHANCELLORSVILLE.
COLONEL THEODORE A. DODGE.

4. THE BATTLE OF CHANCELLORSVILLE.
COLONEL THEODORE A. DODGE.

These papers, by Colonel Dodge, have been embodied in his book "The Campaign of Chancellorsville."

5. MEADE AT CHANCELLORSVILLE.
GENERAL ALEXANDER S. WEBB.

6. THE BATTLE OF CHANCELLORSVILLE. (Contributed, but not read by)
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GENERAL GREELY S. CURTIS.

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3. THE STRATEGY OF THE GETTYSBURG CAMPAIGN.
LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WILLIAM ALLAN.

4. THE LEFT ATTACK (EWELL'S) AT GETTYSBURG.
CAPTAIN EDWARD N. WHITTIER.

5. PICKETT'S CHARGE.
LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WILLIAM R. DRIVER.

6. THE REGULARS AT GETTYSBURG.
CAPTAIN RICHARD ROBINS.

7. THE BATTLE OF BRISTOE STATION.
GENERAL FRANCIS A. WALKER.
This paper has been printed in General Walker's "History of the Second Army Corps."

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JOHN C. ROPES, Esq.

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Lieutenant McHENRY HOWARD.

4. The Battle of the Wilderness.
Lieutenant-Colonel WILLIAM W. SWAN.

5. The Same Subject.
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6. The Sixth Corps in the Wilderness.
General HAZARD STEVENS.

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General CHARLES L. PEIRSON.

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General LEWIS A. GRANT.

10. The Capture of the Salient.
Lieutenant-Colonel WILLIAM R. DRIVER.

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Major WILLIAM P. SHREVE.

12. The Battle of Cold Harbor, June First to Third.
Captain CHARLES H. PORTER.

13. Same Subject.
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14. The Operations of the Army of the Potomac, from the Fifth to Fifteenth of June.
Colonel THEODORE LYMAN.

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16. THE SAME SUBJECT.
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CAPTAIN CHARLES H. PORTER.

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CAPTAIN CHARLES H. PORTER.

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LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WILLIAM R. DRIVER.

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GENERAL FRANCIS A. WALKER.

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GENERAL JAMES H. WILSON.

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LIEUTENANT L. W. V. KENNON.

28. THE BATTLE OF CEDAR CREEK, OCTOBER NINETEENTH.
GENERAL HAZARD STEVENS.

29. THE SAME SUBJECT.
COLONEL BENJAMIN W. CROWNINSHIELD.

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Colonel THEODORE LYMAN.

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General HAZARD STEVENS.

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General HAZARD STEVENS.

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General Rawlins.
General JAMES H. WILSON.

General George H. Thomas.
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General Thomas in the Record.
Colonel THOMAS L. LIVERMORE.

With the exception of General Wilson's paper on General Rawlins, these Sketches of Commanders have been printed in Volume 10 of the Society's publications.

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GEORGE H. LYMAN, M. D.

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THE BATTLE OF BUENA VISTA.
GENERAL WILLIAM B. FRANKLIN.

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THE BATTLES OF MOLINO DEL REY AND CHAPULTEPEC.
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THE FIRST CAMPAIGN OF BONAPARTE IN ITALY, 1796.
MAJOR WILLIAM R. LIVERMORE.

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JOHN C. ROPES, Esq.

BOOKS CITED OR MENTIONED IN THIS VOLUME, AND THE FORMS OF REFERENCE.

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BARNARD, J. G. The Peninsular Campaign and its antecedents, as developed by the Reports of Maj.-Gen. Geo. B. McClellan, and other published documents. By J. G. Barnard, Lieutenant-Colonel of Engineers and Brigadier-General of Volunteers, and Chief Engineer of the Army of the Potomac from its organization to the close of the Peninsular Campaign. New York: D. Van Nostrand. 1864. "Barnard's Peninsular Campaign."

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Until the publication of Vol. XXIV., Part I., the volumes bore only the particular series designations in Roman numerals. As the references to the earlier volumes have been made in this book by their serial numbers, a table harmonizing the same with their series designations is here given for the convenience of the student.

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PATTERSON'S SHENANDOAH CAMPAIGN.

By

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Read before the Society on Tuesday Evening, December 16, 1890.

PATTERSON'S SHENANDOAH CAMPAIGN.

WHEN, late in June, 1861, the authorities at Washington formed the plan of attacking the Confederate force at Manassas Junction with McDowell's army, Johnston, with a formidable force, lay in front of Winchester, within three days' march of Manassas Junction. McDowell suggested the possibility of Johnston joining Beauregard, and said that he was not in a condition to meet their combined force. General Scott replied, "If Johnston joins Beauregard he shall have Patterson on his heels."[1]

At this time Patterson, with an army superior to Johnston's, lay near Hagerstown, Maryland. Subsequently both he and Johnston were re-enforced, but, as will be shown, the preponderance remained with Patterson. Patterson, crossing the Potomac, and advancing to Bunker Hill, drew nearer to Johnston, and the latter retreated to Winchester. On the 17th of July McDowell, moving towards Manassas, reached Fairfax Court-House. On the same day Patterson withdrew

[1] 2 C. W., 36.

from Bunker Hill to Charlestown. Whereupon Johnston, on the 18th, marched for Manassas.

The Confederate army under Beauregard, confronting McDowell, was drawn up behind Bull Run, its main line extending from Union Mills to Lewis Ford, with a small brigade under Evans on the north of the Warrenton turnpike, covering or observing the Stone Bridge and a ford about a mile up the stream. McDowell marched from Centreville to attack Beauregard's left flank early in the morning of the 21st. He sent Tyler, with three of the four brigades of his division, down the Warrenton turnpike to demonstrate against the force near Stone Bridge, and despatched Hunter's and Heintzelman's divisions to Sudley Springs to cross Bull Run there, and march down on the enemy's left flank. He left Miles with his division, 6,200 strong, at Centreville, and Richardson's brigade of Tyler's division, about 3,000 strong, at Blackburn's Ford to oppose a movement by the road from Blackburn's Ford, which he feared Beauregard might undertake, with the design to turn his left flank. Johnston, according to his report,[1] arrived in person at Manassas on the 20th, and during the evening of that day it was determined between Beauregard and himself to attack McDowell before Patterson should join him, which Johnston expected he would do. The order for the attack, which was planned by Beauregard, was approved by Johnston at 4.30 on the morning of the 21st.[2] It directed a general advance of the whole line across Bull Run and an attack on Centreville, by the roads leading

[1] 2 W. R., 473. [2] Ib., 474, 480.

from Union Mills, Mitchell's Ford, and the Stone Bridge.[1] It probably would have been great good fortune for the Union army if some accident had made its movements a little less prompt that morning. Tyler's appearance in front of Bull Run at about sunrise, together with some delay in the arrival of some of Johnston's troops, prevented the execution of Beauregard's order until McDowell's movement was developed. If the Confederates, by attacking, had prevented McDowell's movement, they would have met a larger force than their own, on the defensive, and the result would probably have been a defeat for them. When the movement of Hunter's division across Bull Run at Sudley Springs was discovered, Bee's and Jackson's brigades of Johnston's army, which had arrived from Winchester and had been placed in reserve near Lewis and Ball's Fords, and Hampton's legion, were ordered to go to the left flank, where they confronted the column which came down from Sudley Springs, and prevented the advance from carrying the position at Stone Bridge and sweeping down on the left flank of their main body below the Warrenton turnpike. Later in the day, when success was almost achieved by the continued attack of McDowell's men, in the vicinity of the Warrenton turnpike, west of Bull Run, three regiments of Elzey's brigade, and the 6th North Carolina of Bee's brigade, all of Johnston's army, arriving on the field at 3 P.M., came up on the Confederate left, then "much endangered,"[2] as Beauregard's report said, and, followed by Early's brigade, attacked

[1] 2 W. R., 479. [2] Ib., 496.

McDowell's right flank and rear and turned the fortune of the day against the Union army.

According to Beauregard's report, his effective force on the field that day was 31,522, to which number Johnston's army contributed 8,334.[1]

The returns[2] of McDowell's army show 35,732 present for duty that day, but Runyon's division, 5,752 strong, was guarding the railroad seven miles in rear of Centreville. The force in the presence of Johnston and Beauregard was, therefore, 29,980, or 1,542 less than their own.

General Patterson was subjected to severe censure by the press for his failure to detain Johnston in his front, and both his zeal and his loyalty were impugned. In a letter to the Secretary of War, November 1, 1861,[3] referring to the charges made against him by the press, he asked for a court of inquiry. His request was refused, on the ground that there was "no precedent . . . for an investigation or trial of an officer's conduct after he has received an honorable discharge."[4] January 6, 1862, he testified[5] at length before the Committee on the Conduct of the War to justify his conduct, and a number of the leading officers of his command also testified, both in his favor and adversely to him. The committee came to the conclusion that "The principal cause of the defeat on that day [at Bull Run] was the failure of General Patterson to hold the forces of Johnston in the valley of the Shenandoah."[6] Its report was published in 1863. In

[1] 2 W. R., 487.
[2] Ib., 309.
[3] Ib., 175.
[4] Ib., 177.
[5] 2 C. W., 78–114.
[6] Ib., 5.

1865 General Patterson published his "Narrative of the Campaign in the Valley of the Shenandoah in 1861." In this narrative he refers[1] to the fact that in December, 1861, in response to the request of the Senate (in support of his petition) for the correspondence between General Scott and General Patterson, the Secretary of War had said that it was "not deemed compatible with the public interest"[2] to furnish it at that time, and says that he regarded this as debarring him from then publishing the correspondence and orders, but that he presumes himself to be at liberty to state his own case after the publication of the report of the committee, which he justly characterizes as entirely *ex parte* and non-judicial. In the "Narrative" he adds nothing to what he stated before the committee in justification of his conduct in July, 1861, but he incorporates in it and in an "Appendix," published in 1873, a number of letters from distinguished officers, in which they express opinions more or less in approval of his conduct. Although their opinions are nearly all based upon the statement of facts embodied in the "Narrative," which, as will be pointed out, is not without error, yet they cannot be ignored in a critical review of the campaign. The publication of the Official Records of the War Department now affords us the means of ascertaining the facts for ourselves.

In order to fully appreciate Patterson's relations with General Scott, as well as his attitude and position with relation to Johnston, immediately before the battle of Bull Run, it will be of service to review the course of

[1] Patterson's Narrative, 20. [2] 2 W. R., 177.

events in the Shenandoah Valley leading up to this time. Harper's Ferry became an object of desire with the Confederates as soon as hostilities had begun, both for the contents of the United States arsenal there, and for the command of a route into Maryland, which it was thought the possession of Harper's Ferry would give, and which seemed to be of much importance while it was yet hoped that Maryland could be carried into secession. As early as the 18th of April, the advance of a force of 2,000 Virginia militia, induced Lieutenant Roger Jones, then in command of the arsenal, to set fire to the buildings and retreat, in the night, with his small command to Carlisle barracks. The militia took possession, and on the 27th Colonel Thomas J. Jackson was ordered[1] there in command, with instructions to organize the State volunteers who were assembling in that vicinity. He wrote to Lee that he thought the place "should be defended with the spirit which actuated the defenders of Thermopylæ,"[2] because of the danger of losing with it the north-western part of the State, and so important was the place thought to be that on the 15th of May the newly created Confederate General Johnston, then at Montgomery, Alabama, was summoned there.[3]

General Patterson, who was in command of the Pennsylvania troops, which had been called out for service, was appointed by the Secretary of War to the command of the Department of Pennsylvania, April 27th.[4] He organized a force to reopen communication through

[1] 2 W. R., 784.
[2] May 7, Ib., 814.
[3] Ib., 844.
[4] Ib., 607.

Baltimore, but, that having been accomplished by General Butler, he turned his attention in another direction, under orders which were issued May 24th,[1] and which directed him to push his force forward towards Frederick, Hagerstown and Cumberland to threaten Harper's Ferry and support the Union sentiment in Western Virginia. June 1st, Scott telegraphed him, "If Harper's Ferry be your first object, you may neglect, meanwhile, Cumberland and intermediate points."[2] To this he replied on the same day, "Though looking to Cumberland, my plans have been mainly directed to turning Harper's Ferry, throwing across the river near Williamsport ample force (with support following and threatening Shepardstown) to push on and occupy Martinsburg, if I do not find the enemy too strong and moving to cut my line of march. His attitude and strength will then determine the course to be pursued, either to move direct upon him through Shepardstown or to cut off his retreat along the Winchester railroad and to harass his rear. I wish to place such a force on the Virginia shore as can hold every inch of ground gained, and, however slowly, to advance securely, after Harper's Ferry falls, upon Winchester."[3] This plan was approved. Patterson and Scott believed that a desperate resistance would be encountered at Harper's Ferry, and most careful preparations for the attack on the place was made by Patterson, with the approval of Scott. On the other hand, Johnston discovered that Harper's Ferry was untenable without a much larger force than he had. Davis and Lee were

[1] 2 W. R., 652. [2] Ib., 657. [3] Ib.

very reluctant to give up the place, but they at last gave way to Johnston's arguments, and, in anticipation of Patterson's approach by way of Williamsport and Shepardstown, Johnston abandoned Harper's Ferry, June 14, before Patterson had set his column in motion for the river. In the meantime, Lew Wallace, marching with his regiment from West Virginia, had occupied Cumberland, under Patterson's orders.[1] The abandonment of Harper's Ferry by Johnston ended what may be termed the first period of Patterson's campaign. It was during this period, and while both Scott and Patterson were using every means to strengthen the latter's army, which in the haste of raising levies, was receiving regiments without arms and cannon without harness, that Scott wrote to Patterson, June 8, "I think your expedition against Harper's Ferry well projected, and that success in it would be an important step in the war; but there must be no reverse. . . . This is not enough, a check or a drawn battle would be a victory to the enemy, filling his heart with joy, his ranks with men, and his magazines with voluntary contributions. Take your measures, therefore, circumspectly; make a good use of your engineers and other experienced staff officers and generals, and attempt nothing without a clear prospect of success, as you will find the enemy strongly posted and not inferior to you in numbers."[2] General Patterson cites this letter as establishing for him a rule of conduct five weeks later, when he was required, if possible, to defeat or detain Johnston, who was then in his front

[1] 2 W. R., 668. [2] Ib., 670.

at Winchester; but it is difficult to see how he is warranted in this, for the circumstances and the exigencies of the two periods were entirely different. When the letter was written, Patterson's and Johnston's armies were the most important ones in the East, and they alone were engaged in an actual campaign; but in the later period the two armies in front of Washington had become the strongest ones, — they were then in active hostilities, and it then seemed that the consequences of the defeat of McDowell would be much more serious than those of any reverse which Patterson might suffer in taking a bold line of action.

Another letter, two days later, will show the temper and disposition of Patterson at this time. He writes to the Secretary of War, June 10, urging him to order new regiments to him which have neglected his summons, and proceeds, "Remember, I beseech you, that Harper's Ferry is (as I have said from the first) the place where the first great battle will be fought, and the result will be decisive of the future. The insurgents are strongly intrenched, have an immense number of guns, and will contest every inch of ground. . . . Pardon me for pressing this subject. The importance of victory at Harper's Ferry cannot be estimated. I cannot sleep for thinking about it. Remember, my dear general, that my reputation and the reputation of our dear old State is at stake in this issue. I beseech you, therefore, by our ancient friendship, give me the means of success. You have the means; place them at my dis-

posal, and shoot me if I do not use them to advantage."[1] This letter reads like the letter of a loyal man, and all the letters of this period, between Patterson and Scott, impress one with the accord between the two generals, and with their cheerful and courageous spirit. They seem to breathe, too, with the spirit of patriotism, and even when read in cold blood thirty years after they were written, they stir the reader with the earnest desire of the writers to suppress the rebellion with hard blows, which pervades them.

Whatever judgment may be formed as to the wisdom of General Patterson's course in the later period, and however doubtful his zeal or patriotism may have seemed in the hour of disappointment and defeat, the impartial reader will say that his despatches in June, 1861, were such as would have been written by a loyal man and earnest soldier.

What may be termed the second period of Patterson's campaign now ensued. June 16, when the abandonment of Harper's Ferry by Johnston had become known, Scott inquired of Patterson, by telegraph, at Hagerstown, if he intended to pursue Johnston, saying that he recommended no pursuit specially, and calling for some of his troops, including the regulars, if no pursuit was intended.[2] Patterson replied by telegraph the same day: "Design no pursuit; cannot make it. The enemy is routed by fear. Cross the river to-day. If approved wish to make Harper's Ferry my depot, and can establish line of communication east and west and advance

[1] 2 W. R., 672. [2] Ib., 691.

on Winchester."[1] To this Scott, still by telegraph, replied: "Why a detachment upon Winchester? If strong enough the detachment would drive the enemy from Winchester to Strasburg and the Manassas Junction, or perhaps from Winchester *via* Staunton towards Richmond. What would be gained by driving the enemy on either of those places? And if your detachment be not strong it would be lost. Hence the detachment, if not bad, would be useless. The enemy is concentrating upon Arlington and Alexandria, and this is the line first to be looked to."[2]

In this connection it is to be observed, that General Scott's apprehension that the front at Alexandria and Arlington was threatened, was well founded, as appears by the letter of Davis to Beauregard, at Manassas, June 13, in which, concurring in Beauregard's views as to the effect of occupying Arlington and Alexandria, he says: "We hope soon to re-enforce you to an extent equal to the strength you require by the junction of General Johnston, and I cannot doubt but that you will agree with me that you would then be better circumstanced to advance upon Alexandria than if General Johnston, by withdrawing from the valley, had left the enemy the power to pass to your rear,"[3] and again by the letter of June 18, of Adjutant-General Cooper to Johnston, in which he says: "Since the date of my last letter to you re-enforcements have been steadily sent forward to the camp at Manassas Junction, and others will be added to that force and yours, as the current of events

[1] 2 W. R., 691. [2] Ib., 694. [3] Ib., 923.

may determine us to advance on one line or the other."[1]

In a letter of June 18, to the Secretary of War, the Honorable John Sherman, who was then serving on Patterson's staff, expressed the disappointment which was felt at the withdrawal of troops from Patterson's army at this time, and he said: "A large portion of General Cadwalader's division was across the river at Williamsport, and in two days would have been in a reasonably entrenched camp, occupying a bend on the Virginia side of the river, with a good ford well defended behind. The residue of this corps was within reach, and in a very short time would have occupied Sharpsburg, Maryland Heights, Harper's Ferry, Martinsburg, and would have been in good condition to strike at Winchester, or, by a temporary bridge at Harper's Ferry, to have advanced *via* Frederick or Leesburg to Washington."[2]

Patterson, in closing his despatch of June 16, above quoted, said: "I write by Colonel Sherman to-night,"[3] and we find in the "Record" a letter of his of the same date, in which he says: "To-day and to-morrow about 9,000 men cross to Virginia, there to await transportation, and to be sent forward in detachments well sustained," and proposes to transfer his base to Harper's Ferry, open the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, east and west, "hold at Harper's Ferry, Martinsburg, Charlestown, &c., a strong force, gradually and securely advancing as they are prepared, portions towards Winchester, Strasburg, [and Woodstock, and] re-enforce Cumberland

[1] 2 W. R., 934. [2] Ib., 702. [3] Ib., 692.

and move south to Romney, and [Moorefield,"] and he added: "We will thus force the enemy to retire, and recover, without a struggle, a conquered country."[1] On the 17th he telegraphed, "Let me know decision after receiving my letter by Colonel Sherman. May I advance to Harper's Ferry, where I can open communication with you, and send the regulars down by road in three days? Can repair bridge over Harper's Ferry; otherwise, if regulars are withdrawn, will withdraw."[2] General Scott repeated his call[3] for the troops, and Patterson recalled his troops across the river at Williamsport. In his petition to the Secretary of War for a court of inquiry, General Patterson alleged that at this time General Scott, by the withdrawal of the troops in question from him, compelled him to recall troops which, "confident of success," had crossed the river in the execution of "a plan which had been submitted to him [Scott] and had received his cordial approbation."[4] In his "Narrative" he states that on the 16th of June his forces "commenced crossing the Potomac *in pursuit;*"[5] but although he quotes Scott's despatch of June 16, inquiring if he intends a pursuit, he omits his reply that he did not intend any, and states that his letter of the 16th was the response, and that Scott's later despatch of the 16th was in reply to the letter; but it is hardly possible that the letter, which was written in the night of the 16th, and despatched by Colonel Sherman, was replied to by telegraph on the same day, and the most friendly reader

[1] 2 W. R., 693. [2] Ib., 696. [3] Ib. [4] Ib., 175. [5] Patterson's Narrative, 83.

of General Patterson's transcript of the correspondence must allow that by omissions and confusion in the order of the despatches and letters he obscures the fact that General Scott's action in recalling troops from him was taken only because he himself had stated that he could not pursue the enemy.

He complains bitterly that his force was so much reduced that he could not strike a blow at the enemy, but the very deliberate operation which he proposed as a preliminary to sending a force into the valley of the Shenandoah, if it could be called a "pursuit," in view of his declaration on the 16th, that he did not design, and could not make pursuit, did not offer such immediate results as would have justified neglect in strengthening the army in front of Washington.

June 21st, Patterson, in compliance with request of Scott, reported a plan[1] for leaving a force to hold Harper's Ferry, absorbing Stone's column (then on the Potomac, opposite Leesburg), and, in co-operation with a column from the vicinity of Washington, driving the enemy from Leesburg towards Alexandria. June 24th, McDowell reported with reference to such a plan that, in his opinion, the two forces were too far apart to rely upon support from each other.[2] June 23d, Patterson wrote, giving the reports of deserters, that Johnston's force was 25,000. He stated that this force was between Williamsport and Winchester, and that the advance under Jackson was approaching Falling Waters, and announced that he should not avoid any contest they

[1] 2 W. R., 711. [2] Ib., 718.

might invite, and that, with General Scott's approval, he would, as soon as his battery harness arrived, advance and drive the enemy to Winchester.[1] On the 25th Scott wrote stating that he deemed it best for Patterson to remain in front of Johnston, and authorizing him to cross the river and offer battle, if equal or superior in number to the enemy.[2] This authority was, perhaps, given because the plan for attacking the force at Manassas had then been submitted by General McDowell. (It is suggested in the "Record" that this was done about June 24th.[3]) In this plan the desirability of keeping Johnston's force occupied is noted. Scott also said in his letter of the 25th, to Patterson, "A secondary object to which your attention is invited is a combined operation upon Leesburg between a portion of your troops and the column of Colonel Stone, at, and, (possibly) above the Point of Rocks, in order to occupy and to hold that village, the centre of a wealthy district, abounding in friends of the Union."[4] On the 27th Scott telegraphed that, under his letter of the 25th, he had expected Patterson's crossing the river in pursuit of the enemy.[5] On the same day Patterson directed General Cadwalader, commanding at Williamsport, to find where the enemy were, with a view to attack,[6] and on the 28th he wrote to General Scott that he had no harness for his battery, and was inferior in force to the enemy, and urged that re-enforcements be sent him in order that he might clear the valley in front.[7] On the

[1] 2 W. R., 717. [2] Ib., 725. [3] Ib., 719. [4] Ib., 725. [5] Ib., 727. [6] Ib. [7] Ib., 729.

29th he announced that he would cross the river July 1st,[1] and on the 30th he was informed that Stone's command, then at Poolesville, and a battery had been ordered to him.[2] The third period of Patterson's campaign may be said to have begun with the resumption of active operations against the enemy at this time. On the day before this, it was settled in a cabinet meeting, that the attack should be made on Manassas. July 1st, Assistant Adjutant-General Townsend wrote to Patterson, "The General-in-Chief directs me to inform you, in confidence, that he hopes to move a column of about 35,000 men early next week, towards the enemy's lines from Fairfax Court-House to Manassas Junction, for aggressive purposes."[3] July 2d, Patterson's force crossed the Potomac at Williamsport and took the road to Martinsburg. At Falling Waters it met a brigade under Colonel Thomas J. Jackson, who, on hearing of Patterson's approach, had moved forward with the enterprising intent of capturing Patterson's advance if it did not exceed a few hundred, and, if it were too large for that, of holding it while his own baggage got to the rear. He had one regiment and a gun in line, with two regiments in supporting distance. Abercrombie's brigade of two regiments and two guns attacked them in front, while a regiment of Thomas' brigade, with two guns, approached on their flank, and, after a short but spirited engagement, Jackson retired. He reported his loss as eleven wounded and nine missing. Patterson reported his as two killed and fourteen wounded Each side reported the loss of the other as

[1] 2 W. R., 732. [2] Ib., 734. [3] Ib., 157.

much larger. The conduct of the Union troops was excellent, and might well have given Patterson confidence in them. Continuing his march, he telegraphed from Martinsburg, July 3d, that he had passed through that place "in hot pursuit of the enemy,"[1] and that he estimated the force in front of him, with re-enforcements which had joined it, at 13,000 in all. On the 4th, he wrote that on the arrival of provisions on the next day, he should "advance to Winchester to drive the enemy from that place, if any remain," then move to Charlestown, whither he supposed Colonel Stone to be coming, and then if he found it "not hazardous, continue to Leesburg,"[2] and he telegraphed that Johnston was seven miles in advance (*i.e.*, between Martinsburg and Winchester), with 15,000 to 18,000 foot, 22 guns, and 650 horse.[3] His plan for going to Leesburg seems to have been in pursuance of Scott's suggestion on June 25th. In reply to this, Scott, July 5th, advised him that further re-enforcements had been ordered to him, and said, "Having defeated the enemy, if you can continue the pursuit without too great hazard, advance *via* Leesburg (or Strasburg) towards Alexandria; but consider the dangerous defiles, especially *via* Strasburg, and move with great caution, halting at Winchester and threatening a movement by Strasburg; or the passage of the Potomac twice, and coming down by Leesburg, may be the more advantageous movement."[4] Taken in connection with the advice which he had given to Patterson

[1] 2 W. R., 157.
[2] Ib.
[3] Ib., 158.
[4] Ib., 159.

in his despatch of July 1st, this could have been understood by Patterson only as an instruction that he was expected to co-operate with McDowell's movement, and that the mere attack on Leesburg was no longer a subject for consideration. On the 5th Patterson telegraphed that "large re-enforcements have come in from Manassas,"[1] and on the 6th, still at Martinsburg, he asked for the 69th New York, saying, "I know you will appreciate the motive which prompts me to urge this request, and pardon my importunity. The insurgents have unquestionably received large re-enforcements, and are said to have 26,000, with 24 guns, many rifled, and some of very large calibre. I hope in proper season to give you a good account of them."[2]

It appears by the abstract of the monthly report of Johnston's force for June 30, 1861,[3] that he then had present for duty 10,654 men, and General Johnston says in his "Narrative" that it was re-enforced only after it retired from Darkesville to Winchester, July 7th.[4] A force of 2,200 militia assembled at Winchester from June 24th to July 8th;[5] and this may have been the source of the report that Johnston had received large re-enforcements which Patterson repeated in his despatch. According to the returns for June 28th, Patterson had 14,344 men present for duty.[6]

General Sandford testified before the Committee on the Conduct of the War as follows concerning the attitude of the authorities at Washington towards Patterson at

[1] 2 W. R., 159. [2] Ib. [3] Ib., 187. [4] Johnston's Narrative, 30. [5] 2 W. R., 948, 967. [6] Ib., 187.

this time: "I was sent for by Governor Seward, who informed me that although a great deal of dissatisfaction had existed respecting the movements of General Patterson, the cabinet had decided not to remove him; but General Scott suggested, — to use Governor Seward's words, — 'that although General Patterson did not seem to be disposed to fight, he was satisfied that I was otherwise disposed; and that he had recommended that if I would go up and waive rank to General Patterson, I being a senior major-general to him, General Patterson would be glad to give me an opportunity to fight a battle and have the credit of a victory if I succeeded.'"[1] There is no evidence in the correspondence between General Scott and General Patterson up to the time of the affair at Falling Waters, July 2d, that there was any dissatisfaction with the latter, unless it was Scott's despatch of June 27th, in which he stated his expectation that Patterson would have crossed the river that day under his permission of the 25th,[2] but the language of this despatch falls short of an expression of dissatisfaction. It certainly was no unnecessary prudence in Patterson at that time to wait until his battery had harness, and the fact that afterwards he was largely re-enforced, indicated a continuance of confidence in him. It is possible that his delay of four days in Martinsburg after the enemy had fled before him, together with the daily growth of the enemy's force in his despatches, had excited distrust in him at Washington. The only other explanation of Secretary Seward's statement to General Sandford is to

[1] 2 C. W., 55. [2] 2 W. R., 727.

be found in a possible desire of the former to make it agreeable to a general commanding valuable regiments to take them to serve under his junior in the militia. On the 7th, Townsend wrote to Patterson, "The General desires me to add that, waiting for horses, we cannot yet say on what day we shall be able to attack the enemy in the direction of Manassas Junction. We hope, however, to be ready before the end of this week."[1]

July 8th Patterson issued an order for the advance of his whole army towards Winchester on the 9th.[2] In his "Narrative" he says that this order was countermanded about midnight, because of a report from Stone that some of his command, which had just arrived, needed rest before marching further or engaging with the enemy, and that, the next morning, finding that the opposition of some of his officers to advancing on Winchester was very strong, he was induced to call a council that day.[3] The minutes of this council[4] state that Generals Keim and Negley, Colonels Abercrombie, Thomas and Stone, and Captain John Newton of the engineers favored a flank movement to Charlestown, Negley and Newton recommending the route *via* Shepardstown and Harper's Ferry, and they, with Colonel Stone, stating specifically that the army should threaten Johnston. The minutes have it that General Cadwalader was "opposed to a forward movement;" but he testified, March 19, 1862, before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, that he expressed the opinion "that, as we

[1] 2 W. R., 161.
[2] Ib.
[3] Patterson's Narrative, 52.
[4] 2 W. R., 163.

were not holding Johnston at Winchester one moment longer than he chose to stay there, we ought to attack him and move in this direction [towards Washington] at once, and unite with the forces that we supposed were about to attack Manassas."[1]

Turning to the map, we see that by drawing a line along the roads from Martinsburg to Winchester and Shepardstown, and another from Berryville to Winchester and Shepardstown, we substantially describe a parallelogram, the short sides of which measure about ten miles each, and the long sides of which measure about twenty miles each, with Bunker Hill and Charlestown about midway, respectively, on the two long sides. From Charlestown to Winchester, through Berryville, it is about twenty miles, — about the distance from Martinsburg to Winchester. It would, therefore, have been quite as easy to strike Winchester from Martinsburg as from Charlestown; and, assuming that Johnston could have been held at Winchester by demonstrations on the part of Patterson's army, the demonstrations would have been just as effective by the road from Martinsburg as by the road from Charlestown, but the supplies of an army advancing from Charlestown, with its base at Harper's Ferry, would have been less liable to interruption by a movement of the enemy from Winchester round the flank, than they would have been in an advance from Martinsburg with the base at Hagerstown, because of the protection afforded to the former line of advance on the east by the Blue Ridge and the

[1] 2 C. W., 236.

Shenandoah River. It is also apparent that from this line of advance the army could have been more easily placed between the armies of Johnston and Beauregard, for as will be seen on the map, a march of ten or twelve miles from Charlestown to Berryville would place it across one road to Manassas, and five to seven miles further to Millwood would place it across the next road to Manassas (the road *via* Millwood, which Johnston finally took), and thirteen miles further, by Paris to Piedmont, would place it on the Manassas Gap Railroad in a position to bar the way from Strasburg. Furthermore, when, in the case supposed, the army had arrived at Charlestown, if it had become apparent that Johnston had gone towards Manassas, Patterson would have been in the very best position to reach McDowell *via* Keyes Ferry and Leesburg, or by Snicker's Gap. The advantages of Harper's Ferry as a base and Charlestown as a point of departure, were pointed out by the officers in the council, and that they were what weighed with Patterson is evident from his letter of the same day (July 9th)[1] to Scott, upon which Patterson afterwards laid so much stress in vindicating his actions. In this letter he said: "Since I last addressed you I have made no movements, in fact, have been prevented by the necessity of sending all my wagons to the rear to obtain provisions for a few days in advance and to bring up troops." . . . Owing to scant supply train "after three days' advance, I have to send back for provisions. The difficulty will increase as I advance. . . . Under these

[1] 2 W. R., 162.

circumstances I respectfully present to the General-in-Chief the following plan, which, with my present views, I desire to carry into operation so soon as I can do so with safety and the necessity of following Johnston ceases: I propose to move this force to Charlestown, from which point I can move easily, strike at Winchester, march to Leesburg when necessary, and open communication to a depot to be established at Harper's Ferry, and occupy the main avenue of supply to the enemy. . . . General Sandford informs me by letter that he has for me a letter from you. I hope it will inform me when you will put your column in motion against Manassas and when you wish me to strike. . . . As I have already stated, I cannot advance far, and if I could I think the movement very imprudent. When you make your attack I expect to advance and offer battle. If the enemy retires I shall not pursue. I am very desirous to know when the General-in-Chief wishes me to approach [Winchester]. If the notice does not come in any other way, I wish you would indicate the day by telegraph, thus: 'Let me hear of you on —.'" The "Official Record" has "Leesburg"[1] in place of "Winchester" in the closing paragraph of the letter *received*. Patterson, in his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War,[2] and in his "Narrative"[3] writes "Winchester" in the letter *sent*. If both are right, Scott, as will be shown later, had a right to expect prompter movement than Patterson supposed he was bound to make.[4]

[1] 2 W. R., 163. [2] 2 C. W., 86. [3] Patterson's Narrative, 68.

[4] The writer has corresponded with Major Davis, of the War Depart-

Taking this letter in connection with Patterson's prior letter of July 4th,[1] and Scott's of June 25th[2] and July 5th,[3] and in view of the despatch of re-enforcements to Patterson, it was clear that Scott expected him first to advance on Winchester and attack the enemy there, if he remained, and second to come *via* Leesburg towards Alexandria as soon as the enemy had retreated from Winchester with or without a battle, and it seems that Patterson so understood his orders, for in the statement which he made to the Council of War, he said, "This force . . . was directed to remain as long as Johnston remained in force in this vicinity. Threatening, as he was, either to move to the aid of the force attacking Washington, or annoying the frontier of Maryland, this army was permitted to cross the Potomac and offer battle. If accepted, so soon as Johnston was defeated, to return and approach Washington. . . . A force threatens Washington. If we abandon our present position Johnston will be available to aid. The command has been largely re-enforced to

ment, and General Porter (who was serving on Patterson's staff as Major and Assistant Adjutant-General) on the subject of this and other discrepancies between the "Record" and General Patterson's "Narrative," and he files their letters with this paper together with enclosures to General Porter on the subject, from Colonel Robert E. Patterson. Colonel Patterson, who was his father's amanuensis, entertains no doubt that the "Narrative" is correct. Major Davis believes the "Record" to be correct, and General Porter thinks that the "Narrative" is substantially correct, but that the "Record" places the despatches in their correct order. General Porter presents views favorable to General Patterson's conduct of the campaign, to which, in fairness, attention should be directed; but it will only be necessary to cite a part of them in this paper.

[1] 2 W. R., 157. [2] Ib., 725. [3] Ib., 158.

enable us to sustain our position, to clear the valley to Winchester, to defeat the enemy if he accepts battle, and to be in position to aid General McDowell, or to move upon Washington, Richmond or elsewhere, as the General-in-Chief may direct."[1]

His apparent care not to mention the contemplation of an attack by McDowell on Manassas, was perhaps due to the fact that the information of it had been given to him in confidence.

In his next despatch, which was by telegraph, July 12th, he said, "I ask permission and a little time to transfer my depot to Harper's Ferry, and my forces on line of operations through Charlestown over a good road. . . . I send to Hagerstown an officer to commence to-day the transfer, if assent be given, and I wish an answer to-day. . . . The enemy have retired beyond Winchester, and are said to be fortifying."[2] On the same day Scott, apparently in reply to this despatch, telegraphed him: "Go where you propose in your letter of the 9th instant. Should that movement cause the enemy to retreat upon Manassas *via* Strasburg, to follow him would seem at this distance hazardous, whereas the route from Charlestown, *via* Key's Ferry, Hillsborough, and Leesburg,

[1] 2 C. W., 85, cf. Patterson's Narrative, 53.

[2] 2 W. R., 164. This despatch acknowledged one of the 11th from Scott, which repeated without comment, other than that the author was known and believed it to be authentic, a plan for an attack by Johnston on Patterson after drawing the latter so far into the interior as to make retreat across the Potomac impossible. Patterson afterwards laid stress on this as being an expression of Scott's own fears or belief, but it will not bear this construction.

towards Alexandria, with the use of the canal on the other side of the river for heavy transportation, may be practicable. Consider this suggestion well, and, except in an extreme case, do not recross the Potomac with more than a sufficient detachment for your supplies on the canal. Let me hear of you on Tuesday [16th]. Write often when *en route*."[1] As will be noted farther on, Patterson laid stress on this despatch as authorizing him to go to Charlestown, when he did on the 17th; and it is not to be forgotten in this connection that it was based on his assurance that the enemy had retired beyond Winchester, which place was the objective point of his campaign.

Then follow two despatches of the 13th, from Patterson, alluding to the news of McClellan's victory in West Virginia, in which he also says, "My column must be preserved to insure to the country the fruits of this and other victories, which we hope will follow. My determination is not changed by this news. I would rather lose the chance of accomplishing something brilliant than, by hazarding this column, to destroy the fruits of the campaign to the country by defeat. If wrong, let me be instructed;" and again, "This force is the keystone of the combined movements, and injury to it would counteract the good effects of all victories elsewhere. Johnston is in position beyond Winchester, to be re-enforced, and his strength doubled just as I would reach him. My position is a strong one, but I must act cautiously whilst preparing to strike."[2]

This was a sad degeneration in tone for the veteran of

[1] 2 W. R., 165. [2] Ib.

three wars, who had at first asked to be shot if he did not fight his troops, and who, up to the fatal council, had thought only of striking the enemy. The column, which he now proposed to preserve for future use, was to be reduced to half its strength in two weeks, by expiration of term of service. The origin of this change of tone may be traced in the testimony of his friend and aide, Colonel Craig Biddle, before the Committee on the Conduct of the War. He says: "The discussion at Martinsburg was as to whether or not General Patterson should go on to Winchester. General Patterson was very full of that himself. He was determined to go to Winchester; but the opinions of all the regular officers who were with him were against it. The opinions of all the men in whose judgment I had any confidence were against it. They seemed to have the notion that General Patterson had got his Irish blood up by the fight we had had at Falling Waters, and was bound to go ahead. He decided upon going ahead against the remonstrances of General [then Major] Porter, who advised against it. He told me he considered he had done his duty, and said no more. The movement was delayed in consequence of General Stone's command not being able to move right away. It was then evident that there was so much opposition to it that the General was induced to call a council of the general officers in his command."[1] It seems that General Scott felt that there was not much disposition to fight left in Patterson, for he telegraphed on the 13th, the date of Patterson's despatches last men-

[1] 2 C. W., 195.

tioned: "I telegraphed to you yesterday, if not strong enough to beat the enemy early next week, make demonstrations so as to detain him in the valley of Winchester; but if he retreats in force towards Manassas, and it be too hazardous to follow him, then consider the route *via* Key's Ferry, Leesburg."[1]

General Patterson, in his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, places this despatch of Scott's before his own of the 13th, in which he says, "if wrong, let me be instructed,"[2] and says that no instructions were given in reply to this request; but the "Record" places Scott's despatch after this one of Patterson's, and it seems from its text to be a reply to Patterson's. But this is not of much, if any, consequence, for whether Patterson received this despatch of Scott's at one hour or another, from that hour he had the widest liberty of action. He was to attack, if strong enough, and if not, he was to demonstrate. If Johnston started for Manassas he was at liberty to follow him or to join McDowell as soon as possible, and he was free to select his route. He was bound to hold Johnston, if possible, by demonstrations, and his paramount duty was to approach him so closely and watch him so sharply, that as soon as he started for Manassas, he, Patterson, would find it out and at once march across the Blue Ridge. Furthermore, Patterson was at liberty to choose his route for approaching Winchester, his position for battle, and his method of delaying the enemy or bringing them into engagement, whether by attacking them in front or on

[1] 2 W. R., 166. [2] Ib., 165.

either flank, or by interposing his army between them and Manassas, so as to tempt them to attack. We shall see that Patterson urged that Scott's reply to his letter of July 9th[1] was a command to go to Charlestown, but there is no ground for this position. Scott's reply,[2] when taken in connection with the prior despatches, merely gave permission to Patterson to go there. And, moreover, it contemplated a movement to that point as a preliminary to moving towards Johnston, and not as a paramount destination, to reach which, he was to retire from the presence of the enemy as soon as he had come into contact with them, as he did on the 17th.

Stone's troops were rested by the 10th, and Sandford arrived with the last of the re-enforcements for Patterson on the 11th, but the latter made no movement until the 15th. No satisfactory explanation of his failure in the meantime to at least move to Charlestown, if he wished to go there, has been stated. He says in his "Narrative"[3] that Scott's despatch of the 13th gave him "the desired permission to go to Charlestown;" but no such permission was needed, and he was at liberty to go there even on the 9th, when he announced his proposition to go there, so long as he was *en route* for Winchester or Johnston's position, wherever it might be. He further says that he thought that any attempt to change his base "might send Johnston to Manassas at the very time the General-in-Chief desired him to be kept at Winchester, to wit, on the following Tuesday;" but in view of the statement in his despatch of the 12th, that he anticipated

[1] 2 W. R., 162. [2] Ib., 165. [3] Patterson's Narrative, 69.

"a determined opposition,"[1] and of his statement on the 13th that Johnston was in position to have his force doubled by re-enforcements just as he should be reached, and that his, Patterson's, column must be preserved by great caution, it hardly seems probable that he thought that before McDowell moved, Johnston would be frightened away by a mere movement to Charlestown, and if he had thought so it was his duty to advise General Scott to that effect.

Patterson further says in his "Narrative"[2] that to make demonstrations at the time indicated by Scott in his despatch of the 12th, (that is, on Tuesday the 16th) gave him no opportunity to change his base promptly, and that he therefore postponed his movement to Charlestown until after that day. It is in this passage that he broaches the theory that the movement to Charlestown was the chief and not the subsidiary object proposed by him and assented to by Scott, which, as has been pointed out, finds no justification in the correspondence or the situation. General Porter, in his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War,[3] said that after Scott's reply to Patterson's proposition to go to Charlestown was received, it was too late to do this and then threaten Johnston on Tuesday the 16th, because there were many supplies, and transportation was not abundant, and the movement of supplies from Martinsburg to Charlestown "had to be covered by an advance upon Bunker Hill." It is not clear that the army could not have established itself at Charlestown on the

[1] 2 W. R., 165. [2] Patterson's Narrative, 69. [3] 2 C. W., 154.

14th, as well as to have staid at Martinsburg until that day, whether it marched with the trains or not; and it does not seem that the safety of the trains required the march to Charlestown *via* Bunker Hill. Such trains as were to move from Hagerstown to Harper's Ferry could have gone down the left bank of the Potomac, and trains going from Martinsburg *via* Shepardstown to Charlestown or Harper's Ferry could have been more effectually protected against attack, if the enemy had been inclined to attempt one, by an army marching with them, than by one marching from Martinsburg *via* Bunker Hill.

July 14th Patterson, still at Martinsburg, wrote: "I have thus far succeeded in keeping in this vicinity the command under General Johnston, who is now pretending to be engaged in fortifying at Winchester, but prepared to retire beyond striking distance if I should advance far. To-morrow I advance to Bunker Hill, preparatory to the other movement. If an opportunity offers, I shall attack; but unless I can rout, shall be careful not to set him in full retreat upon Strasburg. I have arranged for the occupation of Harper's Ferry, opposite which point I have directed provisions to be sent. Many of the three months' volunteers are very restless at the prospect of being retained over their time. This fact will cause you to hear from me in the direction of Charlestown. Want of ample transportation for supplies and baggage has prevented my moving earlier in the direction I desired."[1] Here was a complete change of tone. There was no more talk of necessity of pre-

[1] 2 W. R., 166.

serving his own army for future operations. An attack was to be made if the chance for it came, and the only precaution was to be against driving the enemy too far. "The other movement," to which he referred, could not have been understood by General Scott to be other than a movement from Bunker Hill against the enemy, or to Alexandria to join McDowell. It would seem that General Patterson's combative nature had once more come in the ascendant.

At this time Patterson had not less than 18,200 men, and he probably had more. His returns, June 28th,[1] state his force present for duty at 14,344. After this ten and a half regiments, numbering probably over 8,000, were ordered to him (Townsend's letter, July 7th[2]). He testified before the Committee on the Conduct of the War[3] that his force did not exceed 19,000, that his own estimate was 18,200, and that he had to leave two regiments at Martinsburg, so that, deducting the sick, and rear and wagon guards, he could not have gone into action with more than 13,000 after he left there. Johnston's report for June 30th[4] shows 10,654 present for duty. He then had fifteen regiments, one battalion and four batteries, besides about 300 cavalry,[5] and three regiments and a battery were afterwards sent to him,[6] which, it is fair to assume, raised his force one-fifth, making about 13,000 men, besides about 2,000 militia.

Johnston says that on the 18th, the effective strength

[1] 2 W. R., 187. [2] 2 C. W., 82. [5] Johnston's Narrative, 27.
[3] Ib., 161. [4] 2 W. R., 187. [6] Ib., 33.

of the regiments of his army was not over 500,[1] and that on the 18th he sent away 1,700 sick.[2] This would make it seem that he had less than 12,000 effectives, besides the militia. Probably ten per cent. should be added to either estimate of his force to compare it with Patterson's, because of the custom of the Confederates not to reckon among those "present for duty" men on extra duty, or detail, or without arms. If Patterson had marched from Martinsburg with all his force, he would have outnumbered Johnston by 1,000 men or more. But each commander believed that the other greatly outnumbered him when the advance parties came in contact. Johnston said in his report: "Before the 15th of July the enemy's force, according to the best intelligence to be obtained, amounted to about 32,000. Ours had been increased by eight Southern regiments"[3] (*i.e.*, those which arrived after he retired from Darkesville, and which are included in the numbers above given[4]), and Patterson, in his despatch of July 18th,[5] 1.30 A.M., says that Johnston's is "the greatly superior force."

Patterson marched to Bunker Hill on the 15th, arriving there in the afternoon. Sandford, with his division of about 8,000 men, moved by roads east of the turnpike, and pressing back the enemy's skirmishers, placed his pickets on a creek about three miles ahead. On the right the enemy's cavalry were seen, and a few cannon shot were fired at them. The army halted in order of battle. On the 16th a reconnoissance was made down the

[1] Johnston's Narrative, 33. [2] Ib. [5] 2 W. R., 168.
[3] 2 W. R., 473. [4] Johnston's Narrative, 32, 33.

turnpike towards Winchester, four or five miles, to a point where some cavalry behind a barricade were encountered and put to flight. Sandford, that night, in anticipation of an advance the next morning, opened a road down to the Opequan Creek, within four or five miles of Winchester, which he afterwards testified[1] would have enabled him, in three hours, to have placed his force between Johnston and the Shenandoah, on the road between Winchester and Millwood, and this he said he would have started to do the next morning at four o'clock, if Patterson had not, that night, ordered him to march to Charlestown. Patterson, on the 17th, without further demonstration, marched to Smithfield, and there, turning abruptly to the left, marched to the rear to Charlestown, twenty miles from Winchester.[2] He indeed desired to go ahead from Bunker Hill, and directed the issue of an order for the advance, but he countermanded it. He testified before the Committee on the Conduct of the War: "My own desire was to go ahead, but I was opposed by all around me."[3] His advisers may have been moved by the information which he says was obtained from prisoners at Bunker Hill, that Johnston's force was 35,000 to 40,000.[4] He became so much impressed with the supposed superiority of Johnston, that on the 20th, when he learned that Johnston had left Winchester, he feared that the battle of Manassas had been fought and that Johnston was coming down the Shenandoah to cut him off.[5]

[1] 2 C. W., 56.
[2] Ib., 57–58.
[3] Ib., 101.
[4] Ib., 100.
[5] Ib., 109.

The most astonishing and inexplicable thing about Patterson's conduct in this period is that he gave no notice to Scott that he had moved from Martinsburg, that he had arrived in the presence of the enemy, or that he contemplated retreating, and that he retreated without asking, or waiting for, or receiving, information from Scott concerning the initiation or progress of the movement against Manassas.

It is true that he wrote to Assistant Adjutant-General Townsend from Bunker Hill on the 16th,[1] advising him of his intention to move to Charlestown, but the form of the communication, as printed in the "Record," indicates that it was a letter and not a telegram. It had not reached its destination at 9.30 in the evening of the 17th, for at that hour Scott telegraphed Patterson, "I have nothing official from you since Sunday [14th; referring, it seems, to Patterson's letter of that day from Martinsburg], but am glad to learn, through Philadelphia papers, that you have advanced. Do not let the enemy amuse and delay you with a small force in front, whilst he re-enforces the Junction with his main body. McDowell's first day's work has driven the enemy beyond Fairfax Court-House. The Junction will probably be carried to-morrow."[2] At this hour Patterson was well on his way backwards towards Charlestown, if not already there.[3] Patterson, in his letter of July 16th, said, "Telegrams will reach me *via* Hagerstown and also *via* Point of Rocks."[4] It was only about twenty-five miles to

[1] 2 W. R., 166.
[2] Ib., 167.
[3] 2 C. W., 50.
[4] 2 W. R., 167

either place from Bunker Hill. If Patterson, between the hours of one and two in the morning of the 17th, when he was promulgating the order to retreat to Charlestown,[1] had taken the precaution to send an aide to either of these telegraph stations, with a despatch to Scott, inquiring if McDowell had fought his battle, and saying that he contemplated leaving Johnston's front, a reply could have reached him early that day, and the retreat would not have been made; for with the reply which surely would have come from Scott, the old martial fire, flickering as it seemed to be in Patterson's soul, would have sprung up and animated him to do his part, and he would have pressed close to Johnston, or, if he feared to stay in his front, he would have marched with all his might for Centreville, in which event he would have been there as soon as Johnston was with Beauregard.

Let us now see what ensued with Johnston.

On the 17th of July, when McDowell's advance struck Beauregard's at Fairfax Court-House, Johnston was at once ordered to join the latter, if practicable.[2] On the 18th Johnston wrote to Adjutant-General Cooper:[3] "General Patterson, who had been at Bunker Hill since Monday, seems to have moved yesterday to Charlestown, twenty-three miles to the east of Winchester. Unless he prevents it, we shall move toward General Beauregard to-day." In his report[4] he said, "On the 17th he [Patterson] moved to his left to Smithfield. This created the impression that he intended to attack us on the south,

[1] 2 C. W., 191.
[2] 2 W. R., 478.
[3] Ib., 982.
[4] Ib., 473.

or was merely holding us in check while General Beauregard should be attacked at Manassas by General Scott," and that on receiving at about one o'clock on the morning of the 18th, the direction to go to Beauregard, he moved through Ashby's Gap to Piedmont on the Manassas Gap Railroad, whence the infantry were to go by railroad and the cavalry and artillery were to march to Manassas. He says in his "Narrative"[1] that the troops left their camps by noon, and, as we have seen, he, with the advance, reached Manassas on the 20th.

Patterson, after reaching Charlestown, and apparently before receiving Scott's despatch of that day above referred to, wrote on the 17th[2] to Scott that the term of the Pennsylvania regiments would expire within seven days, and that he must at once have three years' men, or else withdraw to Harper's Ferry, and asked if he should occupy that place or withdraw entirely, and at 1.30 the next morning he replied to Scott's despatch of the evening before, above quoted, as follows: "Telegram of to-night received. Mine gives the condition of my command. Some regiments have given warning not to serve an hour over time. To attack under such circumstances against the greatly superior force at Winchester is most hazardous. My letter of 16th gives you further information. Shall I attack?"[3] In his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War[4] Patterson said that Scott "evaded" the responsibility of an answer to this question, and he repeats this charge in his "Narra-

[1] Johnston's Narrative, 36.
[2] 2 W. R., 167.
[3] Ib., 168.
[4] 2 C. W., 94.

tive,"[1] and adds: "If the Commander-in-Chief, who was perfectly acquainted with my condition, desired me to attack, he here had an opportunity of directing it; with his order, I would cheerfully have advanced, let my force have been what it would and the result what it might. And if General Scott had desired me to join him at Manassas, an order to me at that time would have effected it, and I could have been there, if ordered on that day as soon or sooner than Johnston." An order to attack would have been futile at this time, because Patterson's army could not have marched the twenty miles between Charlestown and Winchester in time to bring Johnston to battle or to arrest his march. The truth of history, however, requires the facts involved in this charge of Patterson's to be examined. In the "Record," directly following Patterson's despatch, we find one from Scott bearing date July 18th, and directed to Patterson, at Charlestown, in these words: "I have certainly been expecting you to beat the enemy. If not, to hear that you had felt him strongly, or, at least, had occupied him by threats and demonstrations. You have been at least his equal, and, I suppose, superior, in numbers. Has he not stolen a march and sent re-enforcements towards Manassas Junction? A week is enough to win victories. The time of volunteers counts from the day of muster into the service of the United States. You must not retreat across the Potomac. If necessary, when abandoned by the short-term volunteers, entrench somewhere and wait for re-enforcements."[2] This cer-

[1] Patterson's Narrative, 74.

[2] 2 W. R., 168.

tainly seems in its terms to be a reply to Patterson's question, and a very spirited appeal to him to do his duty. It is to be read with the understanding that Scott had then no knowledge that Johnston had left Winchester, and that being entirely ignorant of the distance which Patterson had put between his and Johnston's armies, and of his means of knowing Johnston's whereabouts, he was obliged to leave it to Patterson to ascertain whether Johnston had gone, and to decide whether under his prior standing instructions, the time had come to march for McDowell's army. We shall presently see that Patterson informed Scott that Johnston had not gone, and thereby made it still more imperative for Scott to leave it to him to decide whether he should march for McDowell.[1]

In asserting that Scott never replied to his question, "Shall I attack?" Patterson in his testimony and his "Narrative" places this despatch before Scott's of the 18th above quoted, but if the text of the letter were not sufficient to establish it as a reply, the text of Patterson's, if correctly printed in the "Record," shows that it

[1] It appears in the letters filed with this paper, that General (then Captain) R. W. Johnston made a reconnoissance towards Winchester, from Bunker Hill, with eight companies of infantry and two companies of cavalry, and discovered and alarmed, as he reported, Johnston's whole force in camp, and reported it to Patterson at 8 P.M.; General Johnston supposes this was on the 18th, but as it was made before Patterson left Bunker Hill it must have been made before the 18th, and as it seems to be clear that Patterson's army had all left Bunker Hill during the morning of the 17th for Charlestown, this reconnoissance was probably made on the 16th, and perhaps it was that which has been before mentioned.

followed and acknowledged, not a despatch of the 18th but of the 17th, for it begins, "Telegram of *to-night* received," and as it is dated 1.30 A.M.,[1] July 18th, it must have referred to Scott's of the evening of the 17th, above quoted, beginning, "I have nothing official from you since Sunday,"[2] for no despatch written after midnight could have reached Patterson by 1.30 A.M.

But Patterson quotes his despatch of 1.30, July 18th, as beginning, "Telegram of *date* received,"[3] which would make it a reply to a despatch of the 18th. The conflict is irreconcilable. There can be no doubt that Patterson understood Scott's despatch to require an attack if he was strong enough to make one, for in a letter of the 18th Patterson wrote, "I have to acknowledge the receipt of two telegrams from the General-in-Chief of the 17th and 18th instants, *both looking to a movement and attack on Winchester.*"[4] It would seem to be decisive that Patterson's despatch was not in reply to Scott's of the 18th, that in reply to that despatch Patterson sent another despatch on the 18th, as follows: "Telegraph of to-day received. The enemy has stolen no march upon me. I have kept him actively employed, and by threats and reconnoissances in force caused him to be reenforced. I have accomplished in this report more than the General-in-Chief asked or could well be expected, in face of an enemy far superior in numbers, with no line of communication to protect."[5] He also sent another despatch, dated at 1 P.M. on the same day, which, in the

[1] 2 W. R., 168. [2] Ib., 167. [3] Patterson's Narrative, 73. [4] 2 W. R., 169. [5] Ib., 168.

"Record," follows that above quoted, and is as follows: "I have succeeded, in accordance with the wishes of the General-in-Chief, in keeping General Johnston's force at Winchester. A reconnoissance in force on Tuesday [16th] caused him to be largely re-enforced from Strasburg. With the existing feeling and determination of the three months' men to return home, it would be ruinous to advance, or even to stay here, without immediate increase of force to replace them. They will not remain. I have ordered the brigades to assemble this afternoon, and shall make a personal appeal to the troops to stay a few days until I can be re-enforced. Many of the regiments are without shoes; the Government refuses to furnish them; the men have received no pay, and neither officers nor soldiers have money to purchase with. Under these circumstances, I cannot ask or expect the three months' volunteers to stay longer than one week. Two companies of Pennsylvania volunteers were discharged to-day and ordered home. I to-day place additional force at Harper's Ferry, and establish communication with Maryland. I send Captain Newton to prepare for its defence."[1] It is to be remembered that Johnston had already started for Manassas at the time this despatch was penned. The assurance with which Patterson telegraphed that Johnston was still at Winchester seems incomprehensible.

If Patterson, even at this hour, had simply telegraphed that his army was at Charlestown, and that he did not know whether Johnston was still at Winchester

[1] 2 W. R., 168.

or not, Scott might, and probably would, have ordered him to march at once for Centreville *via* Key's Ferry, Hillsborough, and Leesburg, which indeed it would seem he ought to have done without further orders, and if he had marched, he could have arrived on the battle-field by the morning of the 21st, with a considerable portion, if not the whole, of his force, for by going directly from Leesburg to Centreville, he could have made the march to the field in forty-four miles, and by diverging at Gum Springs to Groveton, he could have arrived on the left flank of the enemy in forty miles.[1] The seventy-two hours which were then yet to elapse before the tide was turned against McDowell at Bull Run would have sufficed to carry even green volunteers over this distance. One performance of Stone's column (in which the writer marched) shows what they could do. This command, less than two weeks before, had marched from Sandy Hook, opposite Harper's Ferry, through Sharpsburg and Williamsport to Martinsburg, a distance of thirty miles, fording the Potomac *en route*, in forty-one hours, and this with the thermometer reaching 103 in the shade at times.[2]

[1] The fact that on the 17th and 18th Patterson's despatches were dated at Charlestown, and that Scott's despatch of the 18th was addressed to him there, does not prove that Scott supposed or ought to have supposed that Patterson's army was there; for in these very despatches Patterson asserted that he had kept the enemy "actively employed," that they had not stolen a march on him, and that they were still at Winchester; and from this Scott must have assumed that Patterson's army was still in the presence of the enemy at Winchester, and could assume nothing else.

[2] Report of Adjutant-General of New Hampshire, 1865, Vol. 1, 47–48.

General Porter says that on the 18th Patterson, "with his serviceable troops," "could have moved towards Manassas *via* Snicker's Gap, but General Scott's despatch of July 18th advised against the latter."[1] This can refer to no other than the closing paragraph of Scott's despatch as follows: "You must not retreat across the Potomac. If necessary, when abandoned by the short-term volunteers, entrench somewhere and wait for re-enforcements."[2] This was in reply to Patterson's of the 17th, saying that "The term of service of the Pennsylvania troops (eighteen regiments) expires within seven days, commencing to-morrow. Can rely on none of them renewing service. I must be at once provided with efficient three years' men or withdraw to Harper's Ferry. Shall I reoccupy permanently Harper's Ferry or withdraw entirely?"[3] Scott's inhibition against retreating across the Potomac had no reference to marching to McDowell's support, and he left it to Patterson to determine whether he must entrench, to stay on the south side of the Potomac.

Patterson continued to mislead Scott. On the 19th he again telegraphed, "The enemy, from last information, are still at Winchester, and being re-enforced every night."[4] On the 20th he gave the first notice that Johnston had moved, as follows, "With a portion of his force Johnston left Winchester by the road to Millwood on the afternoon of the 18th. His whole force was about 35,200,"[5] and on the 21st he announced his own

[1] Letter to author. [2] 2 W. R., 168. [3] Ib., 167. [4] Ib., 171. [5] Ib., 172.

arrival at Harper's Ferry, and said, "Johnston left for Millwood to operate on McDowell's right and to turn through Loudoun upon me. I could not follow."[1] Johnston said in his report[2] that he reached Manassas about noon of the 20th with two regiments and two companies, and preceded by seven regiments, and that he regarded the arrival of the remainder of his army during the night as certain. The result of the arrival of Johnston's troops was, as we have seen, that the fortune of the day was turned against us at Bull Run.

Let us now examine the grounds on which General Patterson justified his course, which have not been discussed above. In his letter to the Secretary of War, November 1, 1861,[3] he alleged that General Scott did not divulge a wish for him to "do more than threaten the enemy at Winchester," that he informed him that the attack on Manassas would be made July 16, and directed him to make on that day such demonstrations on Winchester as to keep the enemy at that place, that he made them, that the enemy was superior to him in artillery, and that an attack would have demoralized his army and brought defeat upon it.[4] This interpretation of his instructions was apparently based upon his reversal of the order of the despatches of July 13th between himself and General Scott, which has been noted above. Unless the conclusion that he reversed them is incorrect, his instructions were clearly first to beat the enemy if he could; second, if he could not do this to detain him in

[1] 2 W. R., 172.
[2] Ib., 173.
[3] Ib., 175.
[4] Ib., 176.

the valley by demonstrations; third, if the enemy retreated towards Manassas, to march for Alexandria.

His assumption that July 16th was fixed as the day for the attack on Manassas, and that his duty was fulfilled by making demonstrations on that day, was based on the request in his letter of July 9th, "When you make your attack I expect to advance and offer battle. . . . I am very desirous to know when the General-in-Chief wishes me to approach Leesburg [Winchester]. If the notice does not come in any other way, I wish you would indicate the day by telegraph, thus: 'Let me hear from you on —,'"[1] and on Scott's message of July 12th, "Let me hear of you on Tuesday[2] [the 16th]."

Scott's command that he should approach Winchester could not be interpreted as a statement that the battle was to be fought on that day without fail, and, as an experienced soldier, Patterson knew that no general could predict with certainty that his intention to bring on a battle could be fulfilled to the hour or day. Even under his own interpretation of the despatches, Patterson was not excusable in retiring to Charlestown before he had heard whether McDowell's battle had been fought. Furthermore, Patterson never offered battle. He did not get within six miles of Johnston's army, and he encountered nothing but outposts several miles in advance.[3]

This idea that Scott's despatch fixed July 16th as the day, and the only day, for demonstrations seems to have

[1] 2 W. R., 163. [2] Ib., 165.
[3] Porter's testimony, 2 C. W., 153.

been an afterthought, for there is no suggestion of it in the despatches which Patterson sent from Charlestown in explanation of his retreat.

As before stated, the "Record" has "Leesburg" instead of "Winchester" as in Patterson's letter of July 9th.[1] If this is what Patterson wrote, then he could not have justly interpreted the instruction given by Scott to him in reply, to be anything but an order to do everything he could do against the enemy and start for Leesburg by the 16th, which he was far from doing. Research made by the War Department, at the writer's request, has failed to find the original letter for comparison with the text of the "Record." It is not impossible that General Patterson's draft was erroneously copied for the mail, which would account for the discrepancy between the copy retained by him and that on file in the War Department.

As before stated, Patterson also says that he was ordered to go to Charlestown and stay there. In this he refers to the assent of Scott, in his despatch of July 12th, to his own proposition in his letter of July 9th, to go to Charlestown as a point from which to strike at Winchester or move to Leesburg. This was far from a direction to relinquish the advance on Winchester to go to Charlestown, and Patterson's interpretation of the order is inconsistent with his statement before the Committee on the Conduct of the War,[2] that at Bunker Hill he discussed the plan of going to Smithfield, and thence striking off towards the Manassas Railroad, and that at

[1] 2 W. R., 163. [2] 2 C. W., 111.

the same place, on the night of the 16th, he prepared orders for the advance on Winchester, but countermanded[1] them because, although his own "desire was to go ahead," he was opposed by all around him.[2]

He also says that Scott, knowing before he advanced to Bunker Hill that he could not beat Johnston, ought to have ordered him to McDowell, and that it was Scott's duty to have informed him both at Bunker Hill and Charlestown of the fact that McDowell's battle had not been fought on the 16th. As has been shown, Scott gave him the fullest directions to move towards Alexandria when he found that he could neither beat nor hold Johnston. It seems like reversing military duties to require the Commander-in-Chief to keep his subordinates up to the mark by informing them of what is going on out of their field, but if this had been Scott's duty, he fulfilled it in his despatch of the 17th, before he received advices from Patterson of his movement from Martinsburg. It is urged that it was not intended by Scott that Patterson's army should fight, but that it should merely attract the attention of the enemy; but this position cannot receive unqualified assent, because the despatches between Scott and Patterson which have been quoted, explicitly arrange for an attack if Johnston is not found to be superior in force. Patterson stated this to his council of war as one contingency, and the 8,000 re-enforcements could not have been sent to him away from Washington with any other view.

At first Patterson seemed inclined to excuse himself

[1] 2 C. W., 100, 112. [2] Ib., 101.

for not doing more than he did, by, some supposed unwillingness of the volunteers to go forward, but his own testimony and that of his officers, before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, cleared them from this ungenerous charge. The only thing that the least zealous of them asked for, was that they should be discharged when their term expired, the earliest of which did not expire until after the army arrived at Charlestown. Fervid patriotism was the animating spirit of that army, composed, as it was, of young men who had enrolled themselves under their country's flag, under the first great impulse which moved the North, when neither ambition, pecuniary reward, nor any motive less noble than patriotism could be attributed to them. They were but little encouraged in their desire to strike a blow for their country by the delays to which they were subjected, but General Patterson himself, in his testimony (albeit somewhat tardily), said of them: "I am satisfied there was a great desire, on the part of all, to have a fight. There is no doubt about that." But they were unwilling to serve beyond their term.[1]

Finally, Patterson says that the defeat at Bull Run was due to delay in fighting the battle, failure to put in the reserves, and misconduct on the part of the troops engaged, rather than to his conduct. It is not within the scope of this paper to discuss the wisdom of McDowell's actions or the behavior of his troops. It is enough to say that the troops carried the day until they met the last of Johnston's re-enforcements, and the alleged delays

[1] 2 C. W., 113.

or failures on the part of McDowell would have been cured if Patterson had done what was expected of him. He further says that his despatch of the 20th informed General Scott of Johnston's departure in ample time to abstain from delivering battle if he had desired to do so.[1] General Scott says that it was too late to call off the troops, although he impliedly admits that he was too sanguine of success to wish to call them off.[2] Certainly, General Scott's opinion cannot be outweighed by General Patterson's on this point.

General Patterson published, with his "Narrative," letters from Generals Thomas and Gordon. The former expressed the opinion that the management of the campaign was "able and judicious."[3] The writer can only suggest that General Thomas was not in possession of all the facts when he expressed this opinion. General Gordon approves General Patterson's course in a conditional manner, premising that his information of the facts is not sufficient for a positive one.

General Patterson also published letters written in the light of his "Narrative" by Generals Franklin, French, Meade, Humphreys, Devens, Porter and Cox, as well as others less eminent as military men, which express commendation of his conduct or confidence in his motives in more or less positive terms. But the errors in this "Narrative" seem to be so material that their opinions, based upon it, as they are, cannot have the weight which they would have if based upon the Records of the War Department now before us, and it probably would be

[1] Patterson's Narrative, 78. [2] 2 C.W., 242. [3] Patterson's Narrative, 107.

neither profitable nor fair to test them in the light of these "Records."

General Patterson's conduct is to be tried in the light of what he believed, or ought to have believed, to be the number and character of Johnston's troops, and, if at Bunker Hill he had good reason to believe Johnston had 35,000 men, certainly he ought not to have attacked them in their position at Winchester, where they had thrown up earthworks. But even this disparity of numbers would not have warranted his failure to even come into their presence, or his withdrawal out of striking distance, while the duty was yet upon him to hold Johnston in the valley, if possible. It would have been less of a calamity to be driven off, or even routed, by Johnston, than to have the main army of the Republic under McDowell, defeated. Whatever ground Patterson had for believing that Johnston outnumbered him, he had no reason to suppose that Johnston's troops were of any better quality than his own, or that Johnston would feel any greater confidence in their reliability for delivering and sustaining an attack than he felt with reference to his own troops.

It is highly probable that Johnston would not have attacked, and it is probable that he would not have even ventured to leave Patterson's front if the latter had pressed up close to him, if we may judge from the actual events; for while he says in his report[1] that he received orders at one o'clock on the morning of the 18th to join Beauregard, if practicable, he replied that he would

[1] 2 W. R., 473.

move that day unless Patterson, who seemed to have gone to Charlestown, prevented it,[1] and as he says in his "Narrative," he did not move until noon. The theory of the art of war in those days made it a very hazardous thing to retreat out of the immediate presence of the enemy, even at night, and enlarged as it was later in the war, the theory still remained that it was hazardous to do this by daylight, and the chances are that Johnston would not have risked either hazard if Patterson had been in contact with him. But it was not even necessary for Patterson to appear in front of Winchester. Jefferson Davis, in a letter of July 13th to Johnston, said, "I recollect but imperfectly the country about Winchester, and have feared that the position had but little natural strength if the enemy can turn it. He will not hazard an attack upon your entrenchments if he has the little sagacity which would be necessary to show him the advantage of pressing to the rear to seize the Manassas Railroad, and occupy the strong places in the mountains through which it passes,"[2] and General Sandford, who commanded on the left at Bunker Hill, testified before the Committee on the Conduct of the War[3] that his pickets were on the Opequan, within five miles of Winchester, and that with his 8,000 men and Doubleday's battery and a Rhode Island battery, which he had, he was willing to take the risk, whether General Patterson followed him up or not, of placing himself between Johnston and the Shenandoah River, rather than let Johnston escape, and that at four o'clock on the morning of the

[1] 2 W. R., 982. [2] Ib., 977. [3] 2 C. W., 56–57.

17th he should have moved out for that purpose if he had had no further orders. This would have placed him on the Millwood road, which Johnston afterwards took. Johnston would have hardly ventured an attack, but would have tried to reach Manassas by way of Strasburg, which might have kept him back too long to be of aid to Beauregard.

It is certain it was the opinion of Scott and Patterson and the subordinate commanders that the army could be handled so as to prevent Johnston from leaving, for this was the constant theme of the despatches, and it was the object of the movements advised by the Council of War. General Thomas says in his letter to General Patterson above referred to, dated August 8, 1864: "In the council of war at Martinsburg, I in substance advised an advance towards Winchester, at least as far as Bunker Hill, and if your information, after the army reached Bunker Hill, led you to believe that Johnston still occupied Winchester in force, then to shift our troops over to Charlestown, as that move would place our communications with our depot of supplies in safety, and still threaten and hold Johnston at Winchester, which I understand was all that you were expected or required to do."[1] If General Thomas expected that the army by staying in Charlestown could hold Johnston at Winchester the event proved that he was wrong. His language makes it certain that he thought that Johnston could be held by demonstrations, and it is possible that his view was that

[1] Patterson's Narrative, 106.

Charlestown should merely be the base from which to make them.

If Patterson had placed his whole army in position across the road to Millwood and Johnston had attacked, the chances are that the latter would have been defeated. Patterson had a large number of officers of experience, and some of ability, which made them eminent later in the war. On his own staff were Porter and Newton, Simpson and Babcock, of the Engineers; Generals Cadwalader and Sandford commanded his divisions; Colonels Thomas, Stone and Abercrombie, Generals Negley and Wynkoop commanded the brigades. Among the field officers were Colonel Gordon and Colonel Andrews, of the 2d Massachusetts; Colonel Lew Wallace, of the 11th Indiana, and Colonel Starkweather, of the 1st Wisconsin, all of whom were afterwards generals. Abercrombie's brigade, composed of the 1st Wisconsin, 11th Pennsylvania, the patrician City Troops of Philadelphia, and a section of Battery F, of the 4th Artillery, less than two weeks before at Falling Waters had behaved very well in the attack on Jackson's force, and Colonel Thomas reported of his own brigade, which operated on the flank under fire, that "the troops behaved with the utmost coolness and precision during the engagement."[1]

The 2d Massachusetts Volunteers, then with full ranks, had already acquired a high degree of discipline, and skill in tactics, and there can be no doubt that with the large number of high-spirited and accomplished

[1] 2 W. R., 180.

officers then serving with it, it would have distinguished itself under fire even at that early day.

The temper of Colonel Lew Wallace's regiment may be seen in two extracts from his letters of June 11th and June 18th while he was at Cumberland, Maryland, and before he was ordered to join Patterson's column. In the first, which was to Patterson, he said, "Through special favor of General Scott (God bless him) we are in the East and under your command, probably the only stranger regiment in a division of gallant soldiers. I hail from a State which, since Buena Vista, has been under a cloud of slander. Do not, I beg of you, withhold from us the only chance we may ever have to show the people of the East that Indiana has as much courage as loyalty, and can and will fight to the last man to crush out treason and vindicate her lost honor."[1] In the next to Colonel Porter, he said, "Beg the general for God's sake not to leave me behind when he marches. I want to show him how we can fight. Can't we get one of the idle Indiana or Ohio regiments here?"[2]

The 9th New York Militia, afterwards, as a volunteer regiment, served with distinction for three years or more. The 1st New Hampshire Volunteers was composed of the best men which the State had to send to the war, the spirit and quality of whom may be gauged by the fact that over four hundred and fifty of its number, after the expiration of its term of service, served in the army and navy — nearly a hundred of them sometime as commissioned officers.

[1] 2 W. R., 676. [2] Ib., 704.

Patterson had also two batteries and two troops of cavalry of the regular army. The rest of the army was made up of two New York militia regiments, seventeen and a half regiments of Pennsylvania volunteers and two regiments of New York volunteers, all three months' men. The data are not at hand for ascertaining what the *personnel* of these troops was, but it is highly probable that they were of the best and most patriotic young men of their States. June 1, General Patterson wrote of his Pennsylvania regiments: "All the troops are anxious to be on the move and to see their foe — a desire which shall soon be gratified."[1] On the 3d, he issued an address to his troops which began as follows: "The restraint which has necessarily been imposed upon you, impatient to overcome those who have raised their parricidal hands against our country, is about to be removed. You will soon meet the insurgents."[2]

It would have been far better for Patterson to have lost many men by placing his army across Johnston's path, and so preventing his junction with Beauregard, than to cause McDowell to lose the men he lost, together with the battle at Bull Run, by allowing Johnston to appear there, and if Patterson's army had burnt its wagons, and started out for Bull Run with what it could carry in knapsacks and haversacks, at the risk of a day or two of hunger, it would have been far better than to have been absent from the battle. It would, at the least, have set the key for bolder and more enterprising conduct in our generals in subsequent campaigns, instead

[1] 2 W. R., 658. [2] Ib., 661.

of for the super-cautious, slow and half-hearted method of making war so often characteristic of them, which was more fertile in excuses than in expedients, as wasteful of lives as of opportunities, and less careful of the fortunes of the country than of commanders, — a method which prolonged the war to the very verge of the national patience, and which served only one good end, — and that without design, — the utter exhaustion of the South, without which no lasting peace was possible. It is in the reflection that a sweeping victory at Bull Run might have resulted in a peace of mere compromises that we find the only consolation for the failure to try the metal of the army which, on that bright summer day, drawn up in line of battle at Bunker Hill, saw the white-haired soldier of three wars, who commanded them, ride down the lines as if to see that they were ready for battle, while his men, inspired by the martial array, the many fluttering banners, the career of horsemen, and the consciousness that the eyes of the country and the world were upon them, in happy ignorance of the actualities of battle, were preparing themselves for the clash of bayonets. Never was an army more willing to fight, and never was one more disappointed and dispirited by the refusal of the opportunity.

THE PENINSULAR CAMPAIGN.

I.

GENERAL McCLELLAN'S PLANS FOR THE CAMPAIGN OF 1862, AND THE ALLEGED INTERFERENCE OF THE GOVERNMENT WITH THEM.

By JOHN C. ROPES, Esq.

COMMITTEE.

JOHN C. ROPES, Esq.
Bvt. Brig.-Gen. JOHN C. PALFREY.
Capt. WILLIAM E. PERKINS.

Read before the Society on Monday evening, Nov. 13, 1876.

The following is a list of the published writings by Mr. Ropes, concerning the Civil War: —

LIFE OF JAMES AMORY PERKINS. In Harvard Memorial Biographies. 1866. Vol. 1, pp. 395 to 403.

THE ARMY UNDER POPE. Campaigns of the Civil War. IV. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1881.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT SECESSION. Harvard Monthly, May, 1887.

MEMOIR OF CHARLES DEVENS. [In] General Devens' Orations and Addresses. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1891.

THE STORY OF THE CIVIL WAR: A Concise Account of the War in the United States of America between 1861 and 1865. Part I. To the Opening of the Campaign of 1862. New York: George P. Putnam's Sons. 1894.

GENERAL BEAUREGARD: A Review of the Military Operations of General Beauregard by Alfred Roman. Atlantic Monthly, April, 1884.

GENERAL McCLELLAN: A Review of McClellan's Own Story. Atlantic Monthly, April, 1887.

GENERAL SHERMAN. Atlantic Monthly, August, 1891.

GENERAL STUART: A Review of the Life and Campaigns of Major-General J. E. B. Stuart, by H. B. McClellan. Atlantic Monthly, March, 1886.

THE WAR AS WE SEE IT NOW. Scribner's Magazine, June, 1891.

The foregoing five magazine articles have been reprinted in the Papers of the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, Vol. 10, Critical Sketches of some of the Federal and Confederate Commanders.

See List of Papers read before the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts at the end of this volume.

GEN. McCLELLAN'S PLANS.

THE committee to whom was referred the following subject of inquiry, namely, "Gen. McClellan's plans for the campaign of 1862, and the alleged interference of the Government with them," have the honor to report as follows: —

Late in the autumn of 1861, Gen. McClellan seems to have definitely renounced whatever plan he had before entertained of an advance upon the enemy's positions at and near Manassas Junction, and to have begun to entertain the plan of a movement of the bulk of the Army of the Potomac down Chesapeake Bay, and of operating upon the communications of the rebels with Richmond. Your committee will consider, —

1. What his plans actually were;

2. What, in the judgment of your committee, were their merits and defects;

3. What authority Gen. McClellan had to carry them out; and

4. The alleged interference of the Government with them.

First, then, what were his plans for opening the campaign of 1862?

On Feb. 3, 1862, Gen. McClellan addressed a letter to the Secretary of War, in which he advocates landing at Urbana on the Lower Rappahannock,[1] which is, he says, "but one march from West Point, the key of that region, and thence but two marches to Richmond. A rapid movement from Urbana," he goes on to state, "would probably cut off Magruder in the Peninsula, and enable us to occupy Richmond before it could be strongly re-enforced. Should we fail in that, we could, with the co-operation of the navy, cross the James, and throw ourselves in the rear of Richmond, thus forcing the enemy to come out and attack us."

In this plan we observe two things: —

1. That Gen. McClellan expected to strike the enemy's communications with Richmond. Not only was Magruder to be cut off, but Richmond itself was to be occupied before the army at Manassas Junction could fall back to cover it.

2. That crossing the James was a contingency regarded as possible.[2]

In this letter of Feb. 3, 1862, he also says, "The worst

[1] 5 W.R., 45.

[2] It is reasonable to suppose that this possibility would have entered into and formed a part of his subsequent plan, had not the rebel iron-clad Merrimac closed the James River to our forces at the time his second plan was formed.

Crossing the James is, however, suggested in Gen. McClellan's letter to Mr. Stanton of March 19, 1862, after the Merrimac had come out. 5 W.R., 58.

coming to the worst, we can take Fort Monroe as a base, and operate with complete security, although with less celerity and brilliancy of results, up the Peninsula."

For reasons not stated in his Report, but which Mr. Swinton[1] considers satisfactory, and due entirely to the falling-back of the rebel army behind the Rappahannock, the plan of going to Urbana was abandoned, and the plan of taking Fort Monroe as a base was definitely adopted.

This plan was stated in some detail in a letter from Gen. McClellan to the Secretary of War.[2]

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, VA., March 19, 1862.

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following notes on the proposed operations of the active portion of the Army of the Potomac.

The proposed plan of campaign is to assume Fort Monroe as the first base of operations, taking the line of Yorktown and West Point upon Richmond as the line of operations, Richmond being the objective point. It is assumed that the fall of Richmond involves that of Norfolk and the whole of Virginia; also, that we shall fight a decisive battle between West Point and Richmond, to give which battle the rebels will concentrate all their available forces, understanding, as they will, that it involves the fate of their cause.

It therefore follows —

1st. That we should collect all our available forces and operate upon adjacent lines, maintaining perfect communication between our columns.

[1] Swinton, 90, 91.
[2] 5 W.R., 57.

2d. That no time should be lost in reaching the field of battle.

The advantages of the peninsula between York and James Rivers are too obvious to need explanation. It is also clear that West Point should as soon as possible be reached and used as our main depot, that we may have the shortest line of land transportation for our supplies and the use of the York River.

There are two methods of reaching this point:

1st. By moving directly from Fort Monroe as a base, and trusting to the roads for our supplies, at the same time landing a strong corps as near Yorktown as possible, in order to turn the rebel lines of defence south of Yorktown; then to reduce Yorktown and Gloucester by a siege, in all probability involving a delay of weeks, perhaps.

2d. To make a combined naval and land attack upon Yorktown the first object of the campaign. This leads to the most rapid and decisive results. To accomplish this, the Navy should at once concentrate upon the York River all their available and most powerful batteries. Its reduction should not, in that case, require many hours. A strong corps would be pushed up the York, under cover of the Navy, directly upon West Point, immediately upon the fall of Yorktown, and we could at once establish our new base of operations at a distance of some twenty-five miles from Richmond, with every facility for developing and bringing into play the whole of our available force on either or both banks of the James.

It is impossible to urge too strongly the absolute necessity of the full coöperation of the Navy as a part of this programme. Without it the operations may be prolonged for many weeks, and we may be forced to carry in front several strong positions, which, by their aid, could be turned without serious loss to either time or men.

It is also of first importance to bear in mind the fact, already alluded to, that the capture of Richmond necessarily involves the prompt fall of Norfolk, while an operation against Norfolk, if successful, as the beginning of the campaign, facilitates the reduction of Richmond merely by the demoralization of the rebel troops involved, and that, after the fall of Norfolk we should be obliged to undertake the capture of Richmond by the same means which would have accomplished it in the beginning, having meanwhile afforded the rebels ample time to perfect their defensive arrangements; for they would well know, from the moment the Army of the Potomac changed its base to Fort Monroe, that Richmond must be its ultimate object.

It may be summed up in a few words, that for the prompt success of this campaign it is absolutely necessary that the Navy should at once throw its whole available force, its most powerful vessels, against Yorktown. There is the most important point — there the knot to be cut. An immediate decision upon the subject-matter of this communication is highly desirable, and seems called for by the exigencies of the occasion.

I am, sir, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE B. McCLELLAN,

Major-General.

HON. E. M. STANTON,
Secretary of War.

Three things are to be especially noted in this letter: —

1. That the principal idea of this campaign was *not* that of operating on the enemy's *communications*. The rebels will concentrate all their available forces between West Point and Richmond, where the decisive battle will be fought.

2. That the plan would, in Gen. McClellan's judgment, require in all probability many weeks for its accomplishment, and great and unnecessary loss of life, unless the co-operation of the navy was to be made in great force. The danger of a delay before Yorktown, if no combined operations should be attempted against it, seems to have been foreseen.

3. That Gen. McClellan expected altogether too much from the efforts of the navy. Your committee are of opinion, that, while the ships of war might have run past the enemy's works at Yorktown and Gloucester, they could not have assisted materially in reducing them.

Second, what were the merits and defects of these plans?

For a masterly sketch of the situation in which the young officer, who then commanded the armies of the United States (Gen. McClellan was only thirty-five years of age in December, 1861), found himself in the spring of the year 1862, your committee would refer to Mr. Swinton's chapter entitled "Plans of Campaigns," in his excellent work on the Army of the Potomac.[1] Nothing can be added to what is there said of the peculiar difficulties of an army-commander under a popular government; of the necessity of his recognizing the need of a perfect understanding with his political superiors; of his being something, at any rate, of a statesman; of the folly of his not accepting the situation heartily, and making the best of it. Nor can your committee do otherwise

[1] Swinton, 68.

than concur in Mr. Swinton's estimate of Gen. McClellan's character and capacity in these respects.

Passing, then, from this aspect of the subject before us, let us consider the plans in themselves. We need not dwell on the first, or Urbana, plan (for it was never carried out), further than to say, that in the opinion of your committee it would have been a very hazardous undertaking to land an army of a hundred thousand men or more on such an entirely unprepared place as Urbana was. So large an army could not have been transported there in less than two or three weeks, and great difficulty would have been experienced in providing for the troops which arrived first. Moreover, the Comte de Paris remarks[1] on the difficulty of crossing the Dragon Swamp between Urbana and the York River, and, what is more important, on the impossibility, while Yorktown remained in possession of the enemy, of getting a new base of supplies at West Point. Gen. Barnard[2] also remarks, that between Urbana and Richmond are the Mattapony and Pamunkey Rivers, besides the Dragon Swamp; and furthermore, that Urbana is fifty miles from Richmond, while Fredericksburg is in a straight line hardly more, and Manassas Junction only eighty miles in a straight line, and only a hundred and twenty by rail. From these considerations Gen. Barnard deems it highly improbable that Gen. McClellan could have succeeded in reaching Richmond or its vicinity before the army of Gen. Johnston could have covered it; and in this opinion

[1] Comte de Paris, 580.

[2] Peninsular Campaign, 94.

your committee, having in mind the three weeks at least (Gen. McClellan[1] says six weeks) which were required for the transportation of the army from Washington to Fort Monroe, and the peculiar difficulties of marching on the Peninsula, are entirely disposed to concur. It is true that Gen. McClellan himself, in his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War,[2] was of a different opinion. He "hoped," he says, "if proper secrecy was observed, to reach the vicinity of Richmond before they could concentrate all their troops there; that they could not get all their troops down from Manassas, etc., before we get there." No doubt this idea of striking the communications, and capturing the base of supplies, of the rebel army which was quietly observing Washington, was a fascinating idea, and quite in accordance with the laws of strategy, so far as concerned the object of the movement. But strategy is concerned only with possible things; and your committee are entirely of the opinion, that to suppose that Gen. Johnston would have been ignorant of the transportation of the army to Urbana, or, knowing it, would have so delayed falling back that Gen. McClellan could have got between him and Richmond, was absurd.

The second plan, which took Fort Monroe for the base of operations, did not hold out any hope of operating on the enemy's communications. Gen. McClellan's language on this point is quite plain; and we shall quote it again, for we believe that an opposite idea has widely prevailed.

[1] 12 W.R., 88.
[2] 1 C.W., 425.

He says in his official letter to Mr. Stanton, of March 19, 1862,[1] "It is assumed . . . that we shall fight a decisive battle between West Point and Richmond, to give which battle the rebels will concentrate all their available forces, understanding, as they will, that it involves the fate of their cause."

In this opinion Gen. McClellan was perfectly correct, no doubt. In reading Gen. Johnston's Narrative,[2] we find no suggestion of the existence of any difficulty in bringing his army from the Rapidan to Richmond in time for the defence of the capital. Gen. Johnston, in fact, urged upon Mr. Davis the desirability of bringing up from the Carolinas all the troops of the Confederacy, in order that the army of Gen. McClellan might be attacked by an overwhelming force; thereby showing that he had no doubt of his ability to delay for a considerable time the advance of our forces up the Peninsula.

Now, bearing this in mind, that the plan of the Peninsular campaign of Gen. McClellan, *as conceived by himself*, embraced a conflict with the entire rebel army before Richmond, or somewhere on the Peninsula, your committee are unable to find any great advantage in this plan over that of a campaign on the Rapidan or Rappahannock, except such as may perhaps result from the nature of the ground. It being, in round numbers, as far from Fort Monroe to Richmond as it is from Fredericksburg to Richmond; and it being admitted, that, although the enemy may be on the Rappahannock when our army is landing at Fort Monroe, they can get back to Richmond before a

[1] 5 W.R., 57. [2] Johnston's Narrative, 108, *et seq.*

force marching from Fort Monroe can get there, — where is the advantage of starting from one place rather than from the other? The facility for communication possessed by the enemy in the Virginia Central, Orange and Alexandria, and Richmond and Fredericksburg Railroads, taken in connection with the length of time required to carry our army to the Peninsula, rendered the military situation, for all practical purposes, precisely the same as if the rebel army had been encamped in the vicinity of Richmond, where it could of course have formed line on the northern or on the eastern side of the city with equal facility, — *unless*, we repeat, there were natural defences available for the rebel army, or obstacles to be met by our army, existing to a greater extent on one line than on the other. We all remember the strength of the enemy's lines at Fredericksburg and at Spottsylvania, and the almost impenetrable thickets of the Wilderness; but we may well hesitate to pronounce that these were more to be feared than were the swamps of the Chickahominy. Of course there is room here for a difference of opinion; but, in the judgment of your committee, the great recommendation of the Peninsular plan in the eyes of Gen. McClellan and of most of those critics who have followed him, has been that it had the semblance of a movement aimed at the base and at the communications of an army on the Rapidan or Rappahannock; whereas, not only is it impossible for an army to leave Washington by water, arrive at Fort Monroe, and march up the Peninsula towards Richmond in season to forestall the army which had been on the Rappahannock or the Rapidan, but Gen.

McClellan himself, as we have seen, never really expected that his army could accomplish this task. There was, however, this advantage in a movement up the Peninsula: that the flanks and rear of the army would be entirely secure until the vicinity of Richmond was reached. This, of course, would not be true of a movement from Culpepper or Fredericksburg. Yet the maintenance of McClellan's communications with White House on the Pamunkey was always felt to be a difficult matter, and it was by breaking them that the enemy rendered necessary the retreat to the James River.

Your committee wish, however, distinctly to point out, that, had not the Merrimac closed the James River on March 9, 1862, when the Peninsular campaign was undertaken, the plan would have possessed an element of great strength, which in the then existing condition of things it lacked. To operate against Richmond directly, and to meet and overcome the entire rebel army in the course of the operation, seems to your committee nearly as difficult a matter when undertaken from the east as when undertaken from the north, leaving out of view the advantages which the nature of the country to be traversed in one direction may possess over the nature of the country to be traversed in the other. But to operate against the communications of Richmond with the south, by a movement on the south side of the James, — this is certainly a different matter in many respects. Success in such an operation would accomplish more. But we do not feel ourselves obliged to go a length into this question, because the position of affairs was such in March, 1862,

that such a movement was out of the question. We will add, that when by the destruction of the Merrimac on May 11, 1862, this movement became possible, it was for some reason not undertaken.

Your committee have hitherto confined themselves to the consideration of the plan of the Peninsular campaign as respects its advantages and disadvantages in beating the enemy in the field. But there are three other aspects of the plan on which it is necessary to say a few words.

First, then, this plan either uncovered Washington or divided the army. For Washington required a garrison of forty thousand men, according to Gen. Barry, Chief of Artillery, "to securely hold the defenses."[1] Gen. Sumner was of opinion that forty thousand men were required for the defence of the city. Gens. Keyes, Heintzelman, and McDowell were of opinion that the forts on the right bank should be fully garrisoned, those on the left bank occupied, and that there should be besides this a covering force in front of the city, of twenty-five thousand men. This could hardly require less than forty thousand men in all.[2] Now, on March 1, 1862, there were present for duty in the Army of the Potomac, including of course Blenker's division, afterwards withdrawn, and all the city guard, and the troops in Baltimore and its dependencies and in Delaware, 193,142 men.[3] It would not perhaps be making too large a deduction if

[1] Barnard's Defences of Washington, 103.
[2] 5 W.R., 56.
[3] 5 W.R., 12.

we should take off 23,142 for troops required in Maryland, etc., and on the railways: this would leave one hundred and seventy thousand; from which if we deduct forty thousand, we have one hundred and thirty thousand only, at the outside, for the expedition to the Peninsula, and for the defence of the Shenandoah Valley. With a capital so near the frontier as Washington unfortunately was, and with the necessity of protecting efficiently the Valley of the Shenandoah, we had hardly men enough, as it seems to your committee, to afford safely to divide the army.

Secondly, the Peninsular plan necessarily involved a serious opposition from the President and Cabinet. It could not be otherwise. Situated as they were on the very frontier, having seen the enemy's pickets all the summer and fall of 1861, with the Potomac blockaded by the rebel batteries, their solicitude for the safety of Washington was not only natural, but perfectly justifiable. No one can exaggerate the evil effects which the loss of the capital would have brought upon our cause. We cannot blame the Administration for urging upon Gen. McClellan these considerations. We consider the existence of this apprehension on the part of the Government a very grave objection to the whole plan of removing the army to the Peninsula.

Thirdly, it must be remembered that at the time the movement to Fort Monroe was planned and undertaken, the Merrimac had made her appearance, and had closed the river James to our fleets and transports.

We have alluded to this before. Still, Gen. McClellan expected, he tells us, that the navy would be able to

reduce Yorktown and Gloucester in a few hours.[1] We have before expressed the opinion that he expected more from the navy than could possibly be accomplished, even had the navy been free to undertake the task. But it was not free to undertake the task. All that was promised by Admiral Goldsborough and Assistant Secretary Fox was, that the Merrimac should be *neutralized*, that she should *not go up York River*.[2] Gen. Keyes, it is true, states[3] that the Navy Department promised effective co-operation with the army against Yorktown and Gloucester; but there is no other evidence of this that has come to our knowledge, except Gen. McClellan's statement.[4]

Now, in view of the fact, that in Gen. McClellan's view of the campaign it was essential that the navy should vigorously attack Yorktown and Gloucester, and carry these posts, it is certainly a peculiar circumstance that he should not have received definite assurances from the Navy Department that this could be done, before undertaking his campaign. If he did, as he intimates, receive definite assurances from the Navy Department to this effect, too much blame cannot be thrown upon that department. If, however, as your committee are inclined to suspect was the fact, Gen. McClellan was satisfied with assurances that the Merrimac should be neutralized, and with other promises of a general nature, he certainly did not insist upon the existence of all the conditions of his programme.

[1] 5 W.R., 58, 64; 12 W.R., 5, 8.
[2] 5 W.R., 64.
[3] 5 W.R., 64; 12 W.R., 13.
[4] 12 W.R., 8.

Third, what authority had Gen. McClellan to carry his plans out?

By an order dated March 8, 1862,[1] the President "ordered, that no change of the base of operations of the Army of the Potomac shall be made without leaving in and about Washington such a force as, in the opinion of the general-in-chief and the commanders of army corps, shall leave said city entirely secure."

On the 13th of March[2] a council of war was assembled, which decided "that the force to be left to cover Washington shall be such as to give an entire feeling of security for its safety from menace.

"N.B. That with the forts on the right bank of the Potomac fully garrisoned and those on the left bank occupied a covering force in front of the Virginia line of twenty-five thousand men, would suffice."[3] "A total of forty thousand men for the defence of the city would suffice."[4]

"This," says Gen. McClellan,[5] "was assented to by myself and immediately communicated to the War Department. The following reply was received the same day:

WAR DEPARTMENT, March 13, 1862.

The President having considered the plan of operations agreed upon by yourself and the commanders of army corps, makes no objection to the same, but gives the following directions as to its execution:

[1] 5 W.R., 50.
[2] *Ib.*, 55–56.
[3] Opinion of Keyes, Heintzelman and McDowell.
[4] Sumner's opinion.
[5] *Ib.*, 56.

1. Leave such force at Manassas Junction as shall make it entirely certain that the enemy shall not repossess himself of that position and line of communication.

2. Leave Washington entirely secure.

3. Move the remainder of the force, [etc.]

EDWIN M. STANTON,
Secretary of War."

These were the orders by which Gen. McClellan's authority to carry out his plans was limited. "My preparations," he says, "were at once begun in accordance with these directions."[1] We will postpone any examination of the meaning of these orders, until we come to the consideration of the last subdivision of our subject; namely, —

Fourthly, the alleged interference of the Government with these plans.

We do not understand that it is our duty simply to inquire whether the Government allowed Gen. McClellan to have his own way in every thing, or not: there can be but one answer to this question, of course; nor whether it would, or would not, have been better if the Government had allowed him to have his own way in every thing; but simply this, — whether the Government interfered with the execution of plans which they had given Gen. McClellan authority to carry out.

There can be no doubt that the Government had behaved towards Gen. McClellan, for some months before the campaign opened, in a manner which your committee

[1] 5 W.R., 56.

consider alike unjust to him, injurious to the morale of his army, and detrimental to the success of our arms. Few men at the head of affairs during a great war have ever given such evidence of an entire unfitness to have any general direction over military men as Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Stanton. And this inaptitude for war the former retained to the end of his life. Mr. Stanton, however, without ever gaining the slightest knowledge of war, made himself, by his diligence and pluck, a useful member of the Cabinet. But to return to the spring of 1862. We find Mr. Lincoln ordering a general forward movement on Washington's Birthday, and issuing it without consultation with Gen. McClellan, who commanded all the armies of the United States. Surely a more puerile piece of impatience, and a more discreditable mode of showing want of confidence, can hardly be conceived of. Of course this order was not carried out. Again, the President issued another order, for the seizure of some point on the railroad south-west of Manassas Junction, — doubtless a very desirable point to seize, but one which it was well-nigh impossible to reach before having, either first defeated the enemy at Manassas Junction, or landed a force on the Lower Chesapeake, to which Mr. Lincoln was always averse. Again, on the 8th of March, 1862, Mr. Lincoln perpetrated another slight upon McClellan, by appointing all the corps commanders of his army without any consultation with him. Again, on March 31, 1862, the President, after having given assurances to the contrary, withdrew Blenker's division from McClellan's army, yielding to what he called "pressure,"

and sent it to Fremont, whose political claims the President, it seems, thought should be acknowledged by giving him a respectable show in the coming campaign. This utter want of a comprehension of military things led Mr. Lincoln into the impropriety of secretly conferring with Gens. McDowell and Franklin in January, 1862, during McClellan's sickness,[1] regarding the plans for the ensuing campaign.

Nor was this all. Besides the resentment or distrust which these things naturally engendered, there was something excessively irritating in the sort of talk which was indulged in by the President and his Secretary of War. Thus, in the order which directs the Army of the Potomac, the army at Mumfordsville, Ky., and some other armies, to make a forward movement on Washington's Birthday, we find the following instructive sentence: "That all other forces, both land and naval, *with their respective commanders*,[2] obey existing orders for the time, and be ready to obey additional orders when duly given"![3] What ridiculous rubbish is this! Mr. Stanton, too, who kept up the spirits of the President, actually published on Feb. 20, 1862, in the New-York Tribune, a letter in which the following occurs: "Much has been recently said of military combinations and organizing victory. I hear such phrases with apprehension. They commenced in infidel France with the Italian campaign, and resulted in Waterloo. Who can organize victory? Who can

[1] Swinton, 79, *et seq.*

[2] The Italics are ours.

[3] 5 W.R., 41.

combine the elements of success on the battle-field? We owe our recent victories to the Spirit of the Lord, that moved our soldiers to dash into battle, and filled the hearts of our enemies with terror and dismay;" with more to the same effect. Such stupendous and solemn folly in the Cabinet could not inspire confidence, not to speak of the outrageous slur on the general commanding the army which it implied. Nor, on the other hand, could the frequent and rather unmanly despondency of the President, talking as he did about the "bottom dropping out of the whole affair," because the army could not move in the middle of winter, help matters much. Much more could we say on this part of our subject, but this is enough for our present purposes.

Under this state of things McClellan undertakes to carry out his plans for his Peninsular campaign in obedience to the orders of the President. What were those orders?

By the President's General War Order, No. 3, dated March 8, 1862,[1] it was ordered that "no change of the base of operations of the Army of the Potomac shall be made without leaving in and about Washington such a force as, in the opinion of the general-in-chief and the commanders of army corps, shall leave said city entirely secure."

By the council of war, held on March 13, 1862,[2] it was determined, as may be recollected, by Gens. Keyes, Heintzelman, and McDowell, that "with the forts on the right bank of the Potomac fully garrisoned, and those on the

[1] 5 W.R., 50. [2] *Ib.*, 56.

left bank occupied, a covering-force in front of the Virginia line, of twenty-five thousand men, would suffice;" and by Gen. Sumner, that "a total of forty thousand men for the defence of the city would suffice." We may say, generally, that they all agreed in requiring about forty thousand men; and it is to be observed that this number of men was required in order that the city might be left entirely secure, and not for any other purpose. The President, in other words, had asked them how many men were needed to make the city entirely secure; and they had answered, forty thousand.

Now, the President ought, no doubt, to have been content with this; but he was not. On receiving this answer from the corps-commanders, he sends through the Secretary of War to Gen. McClellan another order, dated March 13, 1862,[1] which, besides telling him to leave Washington entirely secure, orders him also to "leave such force at Manassas Junction as shall make it entirely certain that the enemy shall not repossess himself of that position and line of communication." How many men would be required for this additional duty, it would no doubt be difficult to say; still, as Gen. McClellan seems not to have overlooked this branch of the orders under which he was to act, we have, we may suppose, his own estimate of the number of men required for Manassas.

Gen. McClellan postponed with singular fatuity, as we cannot help remarking, officially notifying the Government of the manner in which he proposed to comply with his orders in regard to Washington and Manassas, until

[1] 5 W.R., 56.

he was on board of the steamer Commodore, ready to start for the Peninsula. He did, indeed, send his chief of staff[1] to Gen. Hitchcock, "just previous to" his "departure;" but that officer (Hitchcock) "declined to give any other expression of opinion at that time." Knowing, as McClellan did perfectly well, the opposition of the Administration to his favorite scheme, and the certainty that they would insist rigorously on his compliance with the orders about the defence of Washington, and knowing well also that it might very possibly happen that he and the President might take different views of the same military question, he actually fails to notify the Government of his arrangements until he is on the point of starting. Foolish, however, as this was, it is nothing more. Let us see what his arrangements actually were. He tells us in this very letter, which is addressed to the Adjutant-General of the Army, dated April 1, 1862, and is dated on board the steamer Commodore.[2]

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
STEAMER COMMODORE, April 1, 1862.

GENERAL: I have to request that you will lay the following communication before the Honorable Secretary of War:

The approximate numbers and positions of the troops left near and in rear of the Potomac are as follows:

General Dix has, after guarding the railroads under his charge, sufficient to give him five thousand for the defense of Baltimore, and 1,988 available for the Eastern Shore, Annapolis, etc. Fort Delaware is very well garrisoned by about four hundred men.

[1] 5 W.R., 63.
[2] *Ib.*, 60.

The garrisons of the forts around Washington amount to 10,600 men; other disposable troops now with General Wadsworth about 11,400 men.

The troops employed in guarding the various railways in Maryland amount to some 3,359 men. These it is designed to relieve, being old regiments, by dismounted cavalry, and to send forward to Manassas.

General Abercrombie occupies Warrenton with a force which, including Colonel Geary at White Plains and the cavalry to be at his disposal, will amount to some 7,780 men,[1] with twelve pieces of artillery.

I have the honor to request that all the troops organized for service in Pennsylvania and New York and in any of the Eastern States may be ordered to Washington. I learn from Governor Curtin that there are some 3,500 men now ready in Pennsylvania. This force I should be glad to have sent to Manassas. Four thousand men from General Wadsworth I desire to be ordered to Manassas. These troops, with the railroad guards above alluded to, will make up a force under the command of General Abercrombie of something like 18,639 men.

It is my design to push General Blenker's division from Warrenton upon Strasburg. He should remain at Strasburg long enough to allow matters to assume a definite form in that region before proceeding to his ultimate destination.

The troops in the valley of the Shenandoah will thus,

[1] The 7,780 men under Abercrombie and Geary, and the cavalry with them, belonged to Banks's corps; but in his letter of April 6, 1862, to the Adjutant-General, he estimated the force as numbering only 6,300; and he stated in the same letter that his entire strength was "about 23,000 men." McClellan claimed that Banks's corps numbered 23,339. The forces of Abercrombie and Geary were comprised in his estimate; therefore, he counted the 7,780 men twice. This was a misstatement due to carelessness only. See Ropes: Story of the Civil War, 1, 264.

including Blenker's division, 10,028 strong, with twenty-four pieces of artillery; Banks's Fifth Corps, which embraces the command of General Shields, 19,687[1] strong, with forty-one guns; some 3,652 disposable cavalry and the railroad guards, about 2,100 men, amount to about 35,467 men.

It is designed to relieve General Hooker by one regiment, say 850 men, being, with some 500 cavalry, 1,350 men on the lower Potomac.

To recapitulate —

	MEN.
At Warrenton there is to be	7,780
At Manassas, say	10,859
In the Valley of the Shenandoah	35,467
On the Lower Potomac	1,350
In all	55,456

There would thus be left for the garrisons and the front of Washington, under General Wadsworth, some eighteen thousand, inclusive of the batteries under instruction. The troops organizing or ready for service in New York, I learn, will probably number more than four thousand. These should be assembled at Washington, subject to disposition where their services may be most required.

I am, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

GEO. B. MCCLELLAN,

Major-General, Commanding.

BRIG.-GEN. L. THOMAS, *Adjutant-General, U.S. Army.*

He proposes in this letter: —

	MEN.
To leave at Washington, under command of Gen. Wadsworth	18,000
To leave at Manassas and Warrenton	18,639
To leave on the lower Potomac	1,350
To leave in the Shenandoah Valley	35,467
Making in all	73,456

[1] *Vide* note on opposite page.

Brought forward	73,456
Of these, Blenker's division he had a right to command only for a time; deducting it . . .	10,028
We have left	63,428
We ought also to deduct the troops not yet raised .	3,500
We have left now	59,928
Of these there were in the Shenandoah, after deducting Blenker's division	25,439
Leaving at Washington, Manassas, and Warrenton .	34,489

This force of 34,489 men was to be thus distributed:—

	MEN.
At Washington	18,000
At Warrenton and Manassas	15,139
On the Lower Potomac	1,350
	34,489

As soon as Gen. McClellan had gone, Gen. Wadsworth sends in his statement to the War Department[1] that he has in all 20,477 men, of whom 19,022 were present for duty; that from this force he is ordered to forward[2] four thousand men to Manassas:

	MEN.
Leaving in Washington only	15,022
From these troops, three regiments, say . . .	1,500
Were under orders for the Peninsula, leaving him with only	13,522

These troops, he says, were mostly undisciplined, etc.;

[1] 1 C.W., 251.

[2] *Ante*, p. 82.

and from this force he is ordered to detail one regiment for service at Budd's Ferry, on the Lower Potomac. He had, therefore, *to rely upon*, not more than thirteen thousand men, and those were undisciplined troops. It is true that there would be, on the arrival of the four thousand men mentioned above, about 15,139 men at Warrenton and Manassas, making in all 28,139 men at Washington, Manassas, and Warrenton; but this was all; unless the army of Gen. Banks in the Shenandoah Valley ought to be counted as a part of the force left to cover Washington. And this is really the question at issue between Gen. McClellan and the President.

This question has presented no serious difficulty to your committee. They have felt that the point to be considered was not, whether an army in the Shenandoah Valley would not be of use in some way or other in defending Washington, but whether an army in the Shenandoah could be considered (to use the language of the President's order of March 8, 1862) as being "*in and about* Washington," or, to use the language of Gens. Keyes, Heintzelman, and McDowell, whether it could properly be called "a covering force in front of the Virginia line;" and we are clearly of the opinion that it could not. "In and about Washington" assuredly did not mean anywhere in the valley from Winchester to Staunton; nor can there be any question that the three corps commanders above mentioned meant by the "Virginia line" the fortifications covering Washington on the Virginia side of the Potomac. In his Report,[1] Gen. Mc-

[1] 5 W.R., 63.

Clellan, without arguing the question, merely expresses the opinion that "Banks, occupying the Shenandoah Valley, was in the best position to defend, not only that approach to Washington, but the road to Harper's Ferry and above." This remark appears to your committee to be not so much aimed at showing that he complied with the requisitions of the President, as at showing that he could compass the end the President had in view in a much better way; which, whether true or not, is not to the purpose in this inquiry.

Your committee regard it, then, as established beyond question that Gen. McClellan did not propose to comply with the requirements of the President; and they cannot regard the detention of Gen. McDowell's corps at Washington as an interference with any plans which Gen. McClellan had been authorized by the President to carry out.

Nor can we avoid the impression that this failure to comply with his orders was not due to an honest misunderstanding of those orders on the part of Gen. McClellan, but rather to a profound contempt for the Washington authorities, and a determination to get his army on the Peninsula without weakening it by what he considered unnecessary detachments. The fact was, we presume, that the unexpected raid of Jackson in the valley had disarranged his calculations: he was obliged to strengthen the force there, and he felt obliged to leave a tolerable force at Warrenton and Manassas. He could not therefore leave forty thousand men at Washington, and have enough left for his campaign. He had made up his mind that he could not further weaken his main army;

and believing, as he did, that the forces which he was to leave in Northern Virginia would suffice for the defence of Washington, he persuaded himself that he had complied with the President's orders, which he certainly had not done.

II.

THE SIEGE OF YORKTOWN.

By

JOHN C. PALFREY,

Brevet Brigadier-General, U.S.A.

Read before the Society on Monday evening, Jan. 14, 1878.

THE SIEGE OF YORKTOWN.

THE siege of Yorktown, as it is popularly called, was the first step in the career of the Army of the Potomac after changing its base from the Potomac before Washington to the Peninsula. The course which Gen. McClellan promised himself is indicated by the correspondence and discussion that preceded this change. He urges the adoption of the Lower Chesapeake Bay as a new base of operations, enumerates its advantages, gives special importance to the fact that[1] "the roads in that region are passable at all seasons of the year," and states "that in all projects offered time will probably be the most valuable consideration."[2] As a consequence of this movement, with no reference to any possible check to himself or any of his generals, he describes with some minuteness his army, sweeping, like the shadow of a summer-cloud, over river and mountain, till the rebellion, gliding before it, fades from view in the remote and indefinite South-west. These rose-tinted pictures of his fancy form a sad contrast to the real future before his army. Afterwards he states more particularly,[2] "The

[1] 5 W.R., 44.

[2] Ib., 45.

point of landing which promises the most brilliant result is Urbana, on the lower Rappahannock. . . . Should circumstances render it not advisable to land at Urbana, we can use Mobjack Bay; or, the worst coming to the worst, we can take Fort Monroe as a base, and operate with complete security, although with less celerity and brilliancy of results, up to the Peninsula."[1] This was under date of Feb. 3.

In his Report he says, . . . "The appearance of the Merrimac off Old Point Comfort, and the encounter with the United States squadron on the 8th of March, threatened serious derangement of the plan for the Peninsular movement. But the engagement between the Monitor and Merrimac on the 9th of March demonstrated so satisfactorily the power of the former, and the other naval preparations were so extensive and formidable, that the security of Fort Monroe as a base of operations was placed beyond a doubt, and although the James River was closed to us, the York River with its tributaries was still open as a line of water communication with the Fortress. The general plan, therefore, remained undisturbed, although less promising in its details than when the James River was in our control."[2]

On the 19th March, in a letter to the Secretary of War, he is still more explicit. . . . "The proposed plan of campaign is to assume Fort Monroe as the first base of operations, taking the line of Yorktown and West Point

[1] 5 W.R., 45.

[2] Ib., 50. In a letter dated March 14 he speaks of the Fort Monroe movement as already decided on.

upon Richmond as the line of operations, Richmond being the objective point. It is assumed that the fall of Richmond involves that of Norfolk and the whole of Virginia; also that we shall fight a decisive battle between West Point and Richmond, to give which battle the rebels will concentrate all their available forces, understanding, as they will, that it involves the fate of their cause. It therefore follows —

"1st. That we should collect all our available forces and operate upon adjacent lines, maintaining perfect communication between our columns.

"2d. That no time should be lost in reaching the field of battle.

"The advantages of the peninsula between the York and James Rivers are too obvious to need explanation. It is also clear that West Point should as soon as possible be reached and used as our main depot, that we may have the shortest line of land transportation for our supplies and the use of the York River.

"There are two methods of reaching this point:

"1st: By moving directly from Fort Monroe as a base, and trusting to the roads for supplies, at the same time landing a strong corps as near Yorktown as possible, in order to turn the rebel lines of defense south of Yorktown; then to reduce Yorktown and Gloucester by a siege, in all probability involving a delay of weeks, perhaps.

"2d. To make a combined naval and land attack upon Yorktown the first object of the campaign. This leads to the most rapid and decisive results. To accomplish this,

the Navy should at once concentrate upon the York River all their available and most powerful batteries. Its reduction should not in that case require many hours. A strong corps would be pushed up the York, under cover of the Navy, directly upon West Point, immediately upon the fall of Yorktown, and we could at once establish our new base of operations at a distance of some twenty five miles from Richmond, with every facility for developing and bringing into play the whole of our available force on either or both banks of the James.

"It is impossible to urge too strongly the absolute necessity of the full co-operation of the Navy as a part of this programme. Without it the operations may be prolonged for many weeks, and we may be forced to carry in front several strong positions, which by their aid could be turned without serious loss of either time or men.

. . . . . .

"It may be summed up in a few words that for the prompt success of this campaign it is absolutely necessary that the Navy should at once throw its whole available force, its most powerful vessels, against Yorktown. There is the most important point — there the knot to be cut. An immediate decision upon the subject-matter of this communication is highly desirable, and seems called for by the exigencies of the occasion."[1]

Gen. McClellan then expected to attack Yorktown, and hoped for great assistance from the navy, with or without reason, in so doing.

In his letter to Mr. Stanton, of Feb. 3, he says, "The

[1] 5 W.R., 57.

total force to be thrown upon the new line would be, according to circumstances, from one hundred and ten thousand to one hundred and forty thousand [men]."[1] Mr. Tucker, Assistant Secretary of War, says in his statement, that, in thirty-seven days from the time he received the order in Washington, the vessels employed transported to Fort Monroe 121,500 men.[2] Franklin's division of twelve regiments of infantry, besides artillery, was transported after this. The President on the 6th of April wrote to Gen. McClellan that he had a statement from the Secretary of War, made up from Gen. McClellan's returns, that he had in hand, or on the way, one hundred and eight thousand men, apparently without Franklin and Blenker. Gen. McClellan in his Report says, that, by orders of March 31 and April 3 and 4, nearly sixty thousand men were removed from his command. In a despatch[3] to the President, of April 7, and again in a letter of the same date, he says, "When my present command all join I shall have about eighty-five thousand men for duty."[4] On the 22d Franklin's division arrived; and Gen. McClellan's return in the Adjutant-General's office shows, that, on April 30, he had present for duty 112,392 men.

Information obtained from Gen. Wool at Fort Monroe made the Confederate force under Gen. J. B. Magruder, for the defense of the Peninsula against an advance from Fort Monroe, about fifteen thousand men. Information collected during the winter by Gen. McClellan placed Gen. Magruder's command at from fifteen thousand to twenty thousand men, independent of Gen. Huger's force

[1] 5 W.R., 45. [2] Ib., 46 [3] 12 W.R., 11. [4] Ib.

at Norfolk, estimated at about fifteen thousand. In his letter to the President, of April 7, he says, "All the prisoners state that Gen. J. E. Johnston arrived at Yorktown yesterday with strong re-enforcements. It seems clear that I shall have the whole force of the enemy on my hands — probably not less than one hundred thousand men, and probably more. In consequence of the loss of Blenker's division and the First Corps my force is possibly less than that of the enemy, while they have all the advantage of position."[1] It is in this letter that he gives his own force as about eighty-five thousand men. Swinton gives Magruder's force, when the Army of the Potomac landed at Fort Monroe, as about eleven thousand men, besides an independent body at Norfolk, under Gen. Huger, of about eight thousand more. Gen. Magruder himself says his force was eleven thousand men, of whom six thousand made the fixed garrisons at Gloucester Point, Yorktown, and Mulberry Island, and five thousand held the line of the Warwick.

The Army of the Potomac had been growing and taking form for weary months. It was now perfectly supplied and appointed. The quality of its men was probably the best it ever knew. Its education had been carried as far as was desirable before the lessons of active operations in the field. It was full of hope and ambition, and eager to show its strength.

The respite had given time for the Confederacy also to muster its strength. The North saw its unimpeded growth with apprehension, and began to show itself impatient and suspicious at the delay. Mr. Swinton says Gen.

[1] 12 W.R., 11.

McClellan "had already put the patience of the public and the Administration to a severe strain by his six-months inactivity."[1] In a letter of April 9, to Gen. McClellan, the President writes, "I suppose the whole force which has gone forward for you is with you by this time, and, if so, I think it is the precise time for you to strike a blow. By delay the enemy will relatively gain upon you — that is, he will gain faster by *fortifications and re-enforcements* than you can by re-enforcements alone. And once more let me tell you it is indispensable to you that you strike a blow. . . . The country will not fail to note, it is now noting, that the present hesitation to move upon an intrenched enemy is but the story of Manassas repeated."[2] Every consideration, public and personal, called for prompt, resolute, energetic action.

Under these circumstances, Gen. McClellan landed at Fort Monroe, on the afternoon of April 2. He found there fifty-eight thousand men, of infantry, artillery, and cavalry, and one hundred guns. As the rest of his force was arriving as fast as he could dispose of it, orders were issued on the 3d for the movement of the above force on the 4th. Gen. Keyes with the Fourth Corps formed the left, and marched by the Newport News and Williamsburg road, intending to take up a position between Williamsburg and Yorktown. Gen. Heintzelman, with the Third Corps, and Sedgwick's division of the Second Corps, was on the right, moving direct from Fort Monroe towards Yorktown. Before these columns started, as soon as he landed at Fort Monroe, Gen. McClellan's troubles began. In his Report he says, —

[1] Swinton, 97. [2] 12 W.R., 15.

"On my arrival at Fort Monroe the James River was declared by the naval authorities closed to the operations of their vessels by the combined influence of the enemy's batteries on its banks and the Confederate steamers Merrimac, Yorktown, Jamestown, and Teazer. Flag-Officer Goldsborough, then in command of the United States squadron in Hampton Roads, regarded it (and no doubt justly) as his highest and most imperative duty to watch and neutralize the Merrimac, and as he designed using his most powerful vessels in a contest with her, he did not feel able to detach to the assistance of the army a suitable force to attack the water batteries at Yorktown and Gloucester. All this was contrary to what had been previously stated to me and materially affected my plans.

"At no time during the operations against Yorktown was the Navy prepared to lend us any material assistance in its reduction until after our land batteries had partially silenced the works.

"I had hoped, let me say, by rapid movements to drive before me or capture the enemy on the Peninsula, open the James River, and press on to Richmond before he should be materially re-enforced from other portions of his territory. As the narrative proceeds the causes will be developed which frustrated these apparently well-grounded expectations.

. . . . . .

"I designed, should the works at Yorktown and Williamsburg offer a serious resistance, to land the First Corps, re-enforced, if necessary, on the left bank of the York or on the Severn, to move it on Gloucester and

West Point, in order to take in reverse whatever force the enemy might have on the Peninsula, and compel him to abandon his positions.

"In the commencement of the movement from Fort Monroe serious difficulties were encountered from the want of precise topographical information as to the country, in advance."[1]

One or two things in this passage and the context call for comment. In the first place, considerable stress is laid on the want or inaccuracy of topographical knowledge of the Peninsula, as if it were a peculiar misfortune, if not a grievance. Gen. McClellan mentions the officers of the garrison at Fort Monroe, as his principal sources of information. It was, of course, natural and proper for him to use every means open to him for obtaining the knowledge he needed. But the proper channel for it, outside of the army in the field, would have been the Bureau of Topographical Engineers at Washington. The occasion was one for its utmost exertions and resources. Doubtless he applied to it; but it is not unreasonable to suppose that it was powerless to furnish much accurate information. Accurate topographical maps on a large scale are necessarily confined to thickly-inhabited, rich countries, or to those that have been examined in time of peace, with a view to future military operations. The peninsula was in neither of these conditions. Probably no such survey had ever been made of it; and it was impossible to make such an one without detection, now that it was occupied by troops. Under these circumstances the result was not surprising.

[1] 12 W.R., 8.

Moreover, was the want of maps a peculiarity of this campaign? Is it not true that it is the rule, and not the exception, for all detailed knowledge of positions in advance to be obtained in general from spies, deserters, and travellers, and more particularly from outposts, personal inspection, and reconnoissances, forced if necessary? From the time of Alexander and Hannibal to the last battles in the Balkans or the Caucasus, most victories have been won by a prompt perception and improvement of advantages and defects of position, disposition, and circumstance, on the ground, and not in the study. This was particularly true in our last war. At Corinth, as our lines were drawn closer and closer, for days the staff officers could not discover the direction of the town, even from the highest trees. At Perryville the battle began with Col. Daniel McCook's brigade groping forward in the dark to secure a stream of water to drink. At Murfreesboro' each army unwittingly overlapped the right flank of the other. The bloody battle of Chickamauga was prematurely opened by an attempt to take prisoner part of the Confederate line, supposed to be an isolated brigade. Even in such comparatively open and cultivated country as the battle-grounds of Antietam and Gettysburg, there can be little doubt that positions were taken up on both sides from examination on the spot, rather than from surveys, maps, or descriptive memoirs previously obtained. Gen. McClellan had the usual means of getting information and forming his judgment. If he failed in their use, the fault was his own.

In the second place: In his letter to the Secretary of

War, of the 19th of March[1] already quoted, he expresses his desire that the navy should take Yorktown for him off-hand, and reduce in a few hours from the water what required the utmost exertions of his army for a month to take. He now says that Flag-Officer Goldsborough's inability to do this was contrary to what had been previously stated to him, and materially affected his plans. This is an explicit statement, and entitled to due weight. Moreover, it is hardly conceivable that the reliance on another to perform so momentous a duty should have been assumed and taken upon trust. Still there are considerations that tend to show that such was the case. The naval force, though directed to co-operate with him, was not under his command, or even that of the War Department. He had indicated his wish that it should do this work for him to the Secretary of War, the proper channel. He had no right to assume that his request would be granted without an explicit statement that the President or Secretary of the Navy had so decided. In the council of generals by whose advice the change of base to the Peninsula was sanctioned, this advice was based on several conditions: among which were, "That the enemy's vessel, Merrimac, can be neutralized;" and "that a naval auxiliary force can be had to silence, or aid in silencing, the enemy's batteries on the York River."[2] The council could not order steps taken to fulfil these conditions. The President, to whom the report was made, could. As he ordered the movement based on these conditions, Gen. McClellan perhaps had some right to expect that the conditions which were out of his own

[1] 5 W.R., 58. [2] Ib., 55.

domain would be attended to for him. What assurance had he that the two above quoted were satisfied?

In the first place: Was the Merrimac neutralized? She could only be neutralized by being deprived of her power for injury; and this could only be by the constant presence of a superior force. What force that required, was a matter of conjecture. In her first day's career she had easily destroyed the frigate Congress and sloop Cumberland, and probably would have also ruined the frigate Minnesota, if the shallowness of the water had not kept her at a distance. The next day she had a four-hours' fight with the Monitor, at the end of which she returned to Norfolk at her leisure, unassailed, but apparently somewhat damaged. Thereupon Gen. McClellan applied to the Navy Department to know if the Monitor could be relied on as a check to the Merrimac, so that he could use Fort Monroe as his base. To this the Assistant Secretary of the Navy replied in a despatch of March 13, 1862, "The Monitor is more than a match for the Merrimac, but she might be disabled in the next encounter. I cannot advise so great dependence upon her. . . . The Monitor may, and I think will, destroy the Merrimac in the next fight, but this is hope, not certainty. The Merrimac must dock for repairs."[1] With an abrupt decision, to which he seems to have been more prone in his plans than in his actions, Gen. McClellan replied to this well-weighed opinion in a private note the next day, "From all accounts received I have such a living faith in the gallant little Monitor, that I feel that we can trust her; so I have determined on the Fort Monroe move-

[1] 5 W.R., 753.

ment."[1] The Assistant Secretary of the Navy goes on to testify, "That is all the correspondence there was with the Navy Department upon that subject."[2] The Navy Department, however, at once took extraordinary measures, and used every precaution to support the Monitor, and make good its pledges with reference to the Merrimac. With respect to the endurance of the Monitor, on which such a stupendous stake was laid, her captain, Lieut.-Commander William N. Jeffers, reports among other defects: "Either in action or at sea, the loss of the vessel might readily be caused by the failure of a leather belt"[3] (the belt driving the blowers of the boilers). In the first attack on Fort Sumter, April 7, 1863, five out of the eight Monitors engaged sustained injuries that prevented their turrets from revolving for several hours. There is considerable probability that a temporary disability might have happened to the Monitor earlier than to the Merrimac, in which case the Merrimac might have caused great destruction.

In the second place: Was a naval auxiliary force to be had to silence, or aid in silencing, the enemy's batteries on the York River? The Assistant Secretary testified: [Between the 9th and 12th of March] "it was determined that the army should go by way of Fort Monroe. The Navy Department never was consulted at all, to my knowledge, in regard to any thing connected with the matter. . . . Admiral Goldsborough was put in communication with Gen. McClellan, and directed to co-operate with him; and all the force we had available was placed at the disposal of the admiral. I have no knowl-

[1] 1 C.W., 629.

[2] Ib.

[3] House Ex. Doc. No. 69, p. 28, 38th Cong., 1st Sess.

edge that any thing that Gen. McClellan wanted in the way of attack or defence was ever neglected by our people. No complaint was ever made to the Navy Department. There was never any plan devised by the War Department that I know of, that required the navy to operate. The Secretary simply ordered the ships there to do what they could as the exigencies arose. In the private letter from which I have read, Gen. McClellan speaks of operations against Yorktown and Gloucester. But I do not think any of the army officers expected those places to be attacked by ships. Yorktown is sixty or seventy feet above the water; the vessels could not reach the batteries on the crest of the hill, and therefore they would be exposed to destruction without being able to return the fire. Admiral Goldsborough was in constant communication with Gen. McClellan; and they were very well disposed towards each other to the last moment, so far as I ever knew. . . . So far as I know, all the vessels that Gen. McClellan required in his operations against Yorktown, were placed at his disposal by Admiral Goldsborough. . . . Gen. McClellan expected the navy to neutralize the Merrimac, and I promised that it should be done, and that she should never pass Hampton Roads."[1]

Admiral Goldsborough testifies to the same effect: "With regard to that campaign, no naval authority whatever, to my knowledge, was ever consulted until after a considerable part of the army got down there. The whole matter was arranged here in Washington by officers of the army, as I understood. I believe they never said a word, even to the Secretary of the Navy. Certainly

[1] 1 C.W., 630.

nothing was ever said to me till the eleventh hour. Then it was that I heard that they expected the navy to co-operate with them. . . . I told Mr. Watson [Assistant Secretary of War] that the President might make his mind perfectly easy about the Merrimac going up the York River; that she never could get there, for I had ample means to prevent that. This was in the latter part of March, 1862. The army at that time was about assembling at Old Point Comfort. Gen. McClellan had not then arrived."[1] The Admiral denied that he was ever requested by Gen. McClellan to perform any naval service in connection with the operations of the army, that he did not perform.[2] "I was requested to perform services in connection with the army, and everything was done that was asked."[3]

From this it would seem that Gen. McClellan was guilty of great carelessness and negligence in proceeding on the assumption that the navy would take, or silence, Yorktown or Gloucester Point. At all events, the knowledge that this could not be expected of the navy must have given him a very sobering feeling of responsibility, and of the necessity for self-reliance, and basing his plans in future on means of execution in his own power.

On the 5th of April a heavy rain overtook the two columns that started the day before, and the roads which Gen. McClellan had stated to be "passable at all seasons of the year" immediately became almost impassable to the infantry of the left column, and entirely so to all but a small portion of the artillery; while the ammunition, provisions, and forage could not be brought up at all. In the afternoon of that day, after a toilsome march, each

[1] 1 C.W., 630. [2] 1 Ib., 630–631. [3] Ib., 631.

column found itself stopped by the presence of the enemy; the right column in front of Yorktown, the left at Lee Mill, where the road from Newport News to Williamsburg crosses Warwick River.

Gen. McClellan writes: "During the afternoon of the 4th Gen. Keyes obtained information of the presence of some five thousand to eight thousand of the enemy in a strong position at Lee's Mill. The nature of that position in relation to the Warwick not being at that time understood, I instructed Gen. Keyes to attack and carry this position upon coming in front of it. . . . When Gen. Keyes approached Lee's Mill, his left flank was exposed to a sharp artillery fire from the farther bank of the Warwick, and upon reaching the vicinity of the mill he found it altogether stronger than was expected, unapproachable by reason of the Warwick River and incapable of being carried by assault. The troops composing the advance of each column were during the afternoon under a warm artillery fire, the sharpshooters even of the right column being engaged when covering reconnoissances."[1] Gen. Keyes testifies: "The works at Lee's Mill were, apparently, very strong. The force of the enemy was entirely unknown, owing to the difficulty of approach. I did not see any propriety in ordering an assault against such very strong works, and my want of knowledge of the line to the right and left was such that I did not know where to strike until I had been there for some time.[2] . . . The reasons he [Gen. McClellan] had for not pressing forward and making the attempt to carry those works [immediately on the arrival of the army in full force upon the Penin-

[1] 12 W.R., 9-10. [2] 1 C.W., 598.

sula] I am not able to state; nor was I sufficiently acquainted with the whole extent of the lines to know whether that would have been good policy. My impression now is, that, if the whole army had been pressed forward, we should have found a point to break through. But I give that simply as my impression."[1] Subsequent events prove the justice of Gen. Keyes's opinion. Moreover they indicate that the points the army would have found to break through were those in his own front which he had been ordered to carry when he first approached them, but which he had regarded as too formidable to attempt. The army, in fact, was brought to a halt. The 6th and 7th were spent in examining the enemy's positions. All idea of assaulting them was then abandoned. Gen. McClellan writes that he then became convinced "that it was best to prepare for an assault by the preliminary employment of heavy guns and some siege operations. Instant assault would have been simple folly."[2]

The examinations showed that the defences of the enemy covered the line running obliquely across the Peninsula from north-east to south-west, from Yorktown on the York River, along Warwick River to the James River. To the west and north of Yorktown was a precipitous ravine with marshy bottom, through which a short creek ran in a north-easterly direction into the York River. About twelve hundred yards from the head of this ravine in a straight line, the ground fell off on the west to the marshy wood, in which a rivulet formed the source of the Warwick River, which ran in a south-west direction to the James River. Both banks of the War-

[1] 1 C.W., 600. [2] 12 W.R., 11.

wick were densely wooded, with a few clearings. The ground was marshy, and the roads in the frequent heavy rains impassable, except when corduroyed by our men. The river was crossed by five dams, two for mills, and three constructed by Magruder to flood the banks. The lowest dam was at Lee's Mills. To this place the tide came up from the James River, through salt-marshes two hundred or three hundred yards wide, bordered by bluffs thirty or forty feet high.

About one mile above Lee's Mills, in a sharp turn in the river, was the lowest temporary dam; and, two-thirds of a mile higher up the stream, another, at Garrow's Place. Winn's Mills dam was a little over a mile by the river above Garrow's; and about half a mile above Winn's Mills was the first temporary or easterly dam. Below Lee's Mills the approach to the creek was made impossible by deep mud, tangled reeds, and marshy thickets. Above Lee's Mills Pond, the stream was reported to be naturally fifteen feet wide and two feet deep, with soft, boggy sides. It was now by the flooding about fifty feet wide, and said not to be fordable anywhere. The dams were all commanded by more or less earthworks, and were apparently the only practicable passages across the stream.

The left of this line on York River was held by the fortifications of Yorktown. The town was surrounded by a continuous bastioned line of the simplest character, without outworks, but of a profile of moderate strength. The fronts towards our approach had parapets fifteen feet thick, and ditches eight to ten feet deep, and at least fifteen feet wide at top of counterscarp, and generally

much wider. The remaining fronts, constructed later, and the water-batteries, had parapets of eighteen feet, and ditches generally ten feet deep. When first seen they contained very few guns, and those mostly field and siege guns on travelling carriages. All these works were carefully constructed, but revetted with sods only. In May they had positions for ninety-four guns, but only fifty-three serviceable guns, and three others burst, or fifty-six in all were left in the line when evacuated. Probably many light guns had been removed. Among the guns found by us were one ten-inch Columbiad, four nine-inch Dahlgrens, one sixty-four pounder, sixteen eight-inch Columbiads, and various smaller calibres, down to twelve-pounders. There were numerous traverses between guns and ample magazines. The guns *en barbette* were without other protection than traverses and parapet. The guns on siege and ship carriages were insufficiently protected by sodded merlons, or sand-bags and cotton-bales. No doubt necessary protection was to have been constructed after the direction of the attack was indicated. The guns against the water were partly in low water-batteries, but mostly in groups of three or four, well separated, on bluffs or hills about eighty feet above the water.

Just across the deep ravine, west of Yorktown and about half way from the fortifications of Yorktown towards the source of Warwick River, was the White Redoubt, or Fort Magruder. This was an ordinary lunette of moderate strength, with stockaded gorge, seen in reverse, though very obliquely, by ground subsequently occupied by us. In it were found one nine-inch Dahlgren,

one four and a half-inch rifle (burst), and one eight-inch siege-howitzer.

Half-way from this to the source of the Warwick, or at a distance of about five hundred yards, was the Red Redoubt, a still slighter square redoubt, on lower ground, with barbettes for field-guns only. The connection between these redoubts, when first encountered, was a mere rifle-pit without exterior ditch. Between the Red Redoubt and the source of the Warwick, there was no cover whatever.

The ground between and behind these two redoubts was open and well seen from our approach. During our delay before Yorktown, the rifle-pit connecting these redoubts was changed into an infantry parapet, with exterior ditch, and was extended beyond the Red Redoubt to the source of the Warwick; also, midway between the two redoubts a small redan was constructed, and fitted for four field-pieces. The line so constructed threw the ground, over which approaches to Yorktown must run, into a strong re-entering angle.

The distance across the mouth of York River, from Yorktown to Gloucester Point, is about one thousand yards. On this point was a pentagonal bastioned work of similar character and strength to Yorktown, but with no peculiar strength of position. It stood about forty feet above the water, and was arranged for about fifteen barbette guns. Between it and the shore was a water-battery on low ground, with embrasures for twelve heavy guns and one barbette. It was well supplied with bomb-proofs for its gunners.

Such were the position and the preparations that stopped Gen. McClellan in his advance, and thereby compelled him to abandon all hope of investing the fort he had hoped to besiege. The army went zealously to work establishing and improving its communications; the engineers with great bravery and industry reconnoitred the lines on both sides; and the general of the army studied his plans for the future.

It was clear that the hostile line would fall if it could be broken through at any point or turned by water on either flank. The James River, till the destruction of the Merrimac, and evacuation of Norfolk, May 12, was in the hands of the Confederates, and covered their right.

The plans considered by Gen. McClellan seem to have been:—

1st, For the navy to reduce Yorktown.

2d, To land a force on the left bank of the York, take the fort on Gloucester Point, and, with the aid of the navy, take the Yorktown lines in rear.

3d, To carry some point of the line by open assault.

4th, To lay siege to Yorktown.

These plans will be considered in order.

We have already seen that the navy had never engaged to carry the fort at Yorktown. But was Gen. McClellan right in supposing it could, if it would? Swinton says this view was shared by Gen. Johnston, whose opinion is entitled to great respect. (It may be remarked that it might be proper for a general on the defensive to guard against movements which it would be rash to attempt, but which, nevertheless, might have success.) I think, how

ever, the opinion of these two generals was against the received engineering maxims, and disproved by the experiences of the war. It was the old question of forts against ships, with slightly modified conditions. Only one Monitor was then afloat, and she was absorbed in watching the Merrimac, so that the problem was confined to wooden ships. The only considerable change from former wars was in the increased calibres of shell-guns. The navy was fully supplied with these; and its guns were mostly nine and eleven inch Dahlgren guns, with some one-hundred and two-hundred pounder rifles. If the new calibres had been supplied to all our forts before they were abandoned to the Confederacy, the modern artillery would have been greatly to the advantage of the forts. This, however, had only been done to a very limited extent, and the navy seldom or never attacked without a great superiority in weight of metal as well as number of guns.

In a report on a system of defence of the seaboard, made to Mr. Poinsett, Secretary of War, in 1840, by Gen. Totten, Chief Engineer of the Army, the whole subject was thoroughly discussed.[1] He begins with the famous defence of the round tower in the Bay of Martello in Corsica, where one gun beat off one or two British ships of war; and a similar action at Cape Licosa, where a battery of two guns, one of which destroyed its carriage at the first shot, beat off a British eighty-gun ship and two frigates, one of which carried thirty-eight guns, anchored at a distance from the battery of eight hundred yards. He reviews the most noted contests between forts

[1] House Ex. Doc. No. 206, 26th Cong., 1st Sess.; Reprinted, House Ex. Doc. No. 92, 37th Cong., 2d Sess., pages 81–139.

and ships, showing the existence of peculiar disadvantages of management or construction where the forts failed in their service. In two examples given: it appears that in the Battle of the Nile, the proportion was ten French guns afloat to less than eight Englishmen killed and wounded; in the battle of Trafalgar, ten French guns afloat to less than six Englishmen killed and wounded. In the victory of the English fleet at Algiers, the proportion was ten Algerine guns on shore to forty-four men killed and wounded; and, in the attack by Sir Peter Parker on Fort Moultrie in 1776, the proportion was ten guns on shore to sixty-eight men killed and wounded. These examples indicate that one gun ashore is as fatal as about eight afloat.

From this review[1] he makes the deduction "that fixed batteries upon the shore are capable of resisting the attacks of ships, even when the armament of the latter is by far the most numerous and heavy.[1]

"There are several reasons for this capacity in batteries, of which the principal may be thus stated; and these reasons apply to vessels of every size and every sort, to small or large, to vessels moved by wind or steam. The ship is everywhere equally vulnerable; and, large as is her hull, the men and the guns are very much concentrated within her: on the other hand, in the properly constructed battery, it is only the gun itself, a small part of the carriage, and now and then a head or an arm raised above the parapet, that can be hurt: the ratio of the exposed surfaces being not less than fifteen or twenty

[1] Ibid., Doc. No. 206, 28; Doc. No. 92, 102.

to one. Next, there is always more or less motion in the water, so that the ship gun, although it may have been pointed accurately at one moment, at the next will be thrown entirely away from the object, even when the motion in the vessel is too small to be otherwise noticed; whereas, in the battery, the gun will be fired just as it is pointed, and the motion of the ship will merely vary to the extent of a few inches, or at most two or three feet, the spot in which the shot is to be received. In the ship there are, besides, many points exposed that may be called vital points. By losing her rudder, or portions of her rigging or of her spars, she may become unmanageable, and unable to use her strength; she may receive shots under water, and be liable to sink; she may receive hot shot, and be set on fire; and these damages are in addition to those of having her guns dismounted, and her people killed, by the shot which pierce her sides and scatter splinters from her timbers; while the risks of the battery are confined to those mentioned above, namely, the risk that the gun, the carriage, or the men may be struck."[1]

He maintains that the introduction of horizontal shells will add greatly to the superiority of guns on shore over ships; that this will be more and more the case as the shells increase in size; that horizontal shells are much less effective against masonry and guns and carriages than solid shot; that the best missiles for ships at long range are, therefore, solid shot, and, at short range, grape; that the best way of using shells against forts is in vertical fire from mortars from vessels properly fitted for

[1] Ibid., Doc. No. 206, 28–29; Doc. No. 92, 102.

them. He admits that a fleet may possibly pass through an unobstructed channel under sail with a leading wind and tide.

These opinions were generally admitted to be just; and the permanent defences of our own and all civilized coasts are based on them. I think no modern experiences have disproved or weakened any of them, except the belief that horizontal shells would always break against masonry, and explode without doing much damage. The penetration of the cylindrical shells of modern rifles, especially in brick masonry, is great, and the destruction very formidable. It seems probable also, that Gen. Totten under-estimated the effect of the descending fragments of horizontal shells bursting just above and before a parapet.

In our war there were many instructive engagements between guns afloat, often in perfectly smooth water, and guns on shore.

May 15, 1862, just after the evacuation of Yorktown and Norfolk, the iron-clads Galena and Naugatuck, with the Monitor, supported by the gunboats Port Royal and Aroostook, moved up James River, and attacked Fort Darling. The Galena expended nearly all her ammunition, and was considerably injured; the Naugatuck was disabled by the bursting of her one-hundred-pounder Parrott gun. The ships were most skilfully handled as well as gallantly fought. No effect was discernible on the fort. Lieut.-Commander Jeffers of the Monitor concludes his report: "The action was fought with the usual effect against earthworks: so long as our vessels kept up a

rapid fire they rarely fired in return, but the moment our fire slackened they remanned their guns. It was impossible to reduce such works, except with the aid of a land force."

Previous to this, Nov. 7, 1861, Admiral Dupont had taken the forts at Hilton Head with his fleet. The entrance to Beaufort is about two and a half miles wide, and was defended on the right by Fort Walker, a well-constructed but cramped fort mounting twenty-three guns of heavy calibre; and on the left by two earthworks, called Fort Beauregard, mounting nineteen guns: in all forty-two guns, manned by volunteers. There was little or no protection of traverses or bomb-proofs. The attacking fleet consisted of the Wabash, frigate, forty-eight guns; the Susquehanna, side-wheel steamer, eighteen guns; Bienville, side-wheel steamer, eleven guns; and the screw sloops, — Pawnee, eleven guns; Mohican, seven guns; Seminole, six guns; Pocahontas, six guns. Besides these were the Unadilla, Ottawa, Seneca, Pembina, Augusta, Curlew, and Penguin, making a total of a hundred and forty-nine heavy guns. After a bombardment of nearly five hours the forts were abandoned by their garrisons. The casualties in the fleet were eight men killed and twenty-three wounded, of whom seventeen were slightly wounded. This fact is significant, both of the quality of the artillerists in the forts, and of the energy of the attack. Gen. Sherman in his report says, "Much slaughter had evidently been made there [Fort Walker], many bodies having been buried in the fort, and some twenty or thirty were found some half a mile distant. . . .

Many of the guns were dismounted."[1] The Charleston Mercury in its account of the affair says, "Most of the guns in Fort Walker were dismounted, and the dead and dying were to be seen on every side;" but that in Fort Beauregard no one was killed, and only five wounded, two of these through carelessness in loading hot shot. It adds, "It is very remarkable how few were killed or wounded among our troops. How so many cannon could have been dismounted and rendered useless, and yet so few of those who worked them injured, seems very marvellous." The fleet slowly passed and re-passed the forts, coming at the nearest within about six hundred yards. Towards the end of the fight some vessels took up positions on either side of Hilton Head to enfilade Fort Walker, while others cannonaded it in front. This course, according to the Charleston Mercury, injured the fort more than the previous running fight had done.

This splendid and comparatively bloodless victory seems to have been principally due to the concentration of the guns of the defence in two small works on low ground, which the fleet could approach very close to. With reference to this action Gen. Gillmore says,[2] "A striking example of the fatal consequences that may issue from an undue accumulation of artillery for harbor defence in small earthworks is to be found in the attempted defence of Port Royal Harbor by the enemy in November, 1861. All his artillery on that occasion was collected in two small forts, one on each side of the harbor. Into these our fleet in its circuits

[1] 6 W.R., 4. [2] 46 W.R., 37.

within the harbor poured successively an overwhelming and concentric fire, and drove the enemy from them by sheer weight of metal, before the works themselves had sustained any material injury. There were no bomb-proof shelters for the men in either work. Had the enemy's artillery been distributed along the opposite shores, . . . in batteries of one or two pieces each, the result, viewing the action as one between land and naval batteries simply, might have been quite different."

Admiral Dupont had won great fame by this brilliant success, and was placed in command of the naval operations in Charleston Harbor the following spring. He had insurmountable misgivings about the reliableness of the Monitors in his fleet, accomplished little, and finally was replaced by Admiral Dahlgren in some disfavor. As his experience at Port Royal would naturally have led him to underrate forts, his testimony is important.

On the 7th of April, 1863, he moved against Fort Sumter with the magnificent harbor fleet of the new Ironsides and eight Monitors, intending to pass the fort, and commence action on the inner side. He says, "The heavy fire we received from it and Fort Moultrie, and the nature of the obstructions, compelled the attack from the outside. . . . Owing to the condition of the tide and unavoidable accident, I had been compelled to delay action until late in the afternoon, and toward evening, finding no impression made upon the fort, I made the signal to withdraw the ships, intending to renew the attack this [April 8] morning."[1] The ships took positions from five

[1] House Ex. Doc. No. 69, 55, 38th Cong., 1st Sess.

hundred and fifty to a thousand yards from the fort. He reports further, "No ship had been exposed to the severest fire of the enemy over forty minutes, and yet in that brief period, . . . five of the [eight Monitors] iron-clads were wholly or partially disabled. I soon became convinced of the utter impracticability of taking the city of Charleston by the force under my command;"[1] and that it "cannot be taken by a purely naval attack."[2]

With special reference to Monitors and their comparatively small power of inflicting injury compared with their endurance, he says that he was convinced that this defect "is fatal to their attempts against fortifications having outlying obstructions, as at the Ogeechee and at Charleston, or against other fortifications upon elevations, as at Fort Darling, or against any modern fortifications before which they must anchor or lie at rest, and receive much more than they can return."[3]

The fort on the Ogeechee, here referred to, is Fort McAllister, described by Commander Worden, of the Montauk, as "a very formidable casemated earthwork, with bomb-proofs, mounting nine guns, the firing from which was excellent." Admiral Dupont reports: "The results here were most discouraging. Two attacks successively made by one Monitor with gunboats and a mortar-vessel, had no effect. . . . This was followed by a bombardment of eight hours, with three Monitors, with the gunboats, and three mortar-vessels, . . . with a like result. The injuries to the Monitors were extensive, and their offensive powers found to be feeble in dealing with forts, particularly earthworks."[4] Capt. Percival Drayton, com-

[1] Ibid., 58. [2] Ib., 55. [3] Ib., 102. [4] Ib., 103.

manding the iron-clad Passaic, in his report of the same engagement says, "My vessel was under fire just eight hours. I was directly in front of the fort, the guns being, as we looked at them, in the centre between high traverses of earth which were on each side. These, however, as we were placed, had no effect in protecting either guns or men. The latter never exposed themselves to our fire, usually discharging their pieces either while we were loading, or just as our port came in line, and before the guns were quite ready." One gun was, "I think, destroyed; the others used until we were out of range. Immense holes were cut into the earth, the traverses and face much cut away, but still no injury done which I think a good night's work would not repair, and I do not believe that it can be made untenable by any number of iron-clads which the shallow water and narrow channel will permit to be brought in position against it."[1]

Admiral Dahlgren cannot be accused of any prejudices against Monitors. In his report of the attack on Fort Wagner, of July 10, 1863, he says, Fort Wagner "is an open sandwork. . . . The number of cannon mounted, I am unable to state precisely. There may be ten or a dozen in all, looking seaward and landward."[2] The number afterwards proved to be nineteen, of which not over six bore on the channel. On the 18th of July another combined attack was made by the army and navy. Admiral Dahlgren moved in with six iron-clads, and first took position at twelve hundred yards; when the tide turned, he closed in at four P.M. to three hundred yards, while five other gunboats were using their long range guns against

[1] Ibid., 186, 187. [2] Ib., 216, 217.

the fort. After this the fort was silent, "so that for this day, not a shot was fired afterwards at the vessels, nor was a man to be seen about it. . . . The vessels did all that was intended or could be expected from them; they silenced the fort, and forced the garrison to keep under shelter."[1] Fort Wagner, however, is reported firing on the fleet as usual directly after this attack; and, far from being reduced by this tremendous cannonade almost at the muzzle of the guns, it needed seven weeks more of bombarding and open trenches with heavy loss to make it untenable.

Another famous engagement between guns ashore and afloat was in the combined attack on Fort Fisher. This is an unenclosed earthwork on a narrow, low point of sand at the mouth of the Cape Fear River. It consisted essentially of a straight parapet, extending north and south for about half a mile along the outer beach, joining at the inland end at the north another line at right angles, of about thirteen hundred feet in length, running across the point to the inner shore in a very weak bastion front. The shore front mounted about twenty-one very heavy guns at considerable intervals, well protected by traverses, and with sufficient bomb-proofs and magazines. The two guns at its open extremity, to the south, were in what was called the Mound Battery. Still farther south, at the end of the point, was Fort Buchanan, a detached battery with four heavy guns, of which only one bore on the position taken by the fleet for the attack. The land front mounted twenty-one quite heavy guns set very close and almost in a straight line. There was a large high sand

[1] Ibid., 221-222.

traverse for every one, or at most two, of these guns, and other traverses parallel to the parapet to protect these guns in rear from shot coming obliquely over the shore front. The slopes were all gentle and apparently unrevetted. Before the shallow ditch of the land front was a good palisade, also in a straight line; and on the low glacis, or rather approach to the fort, an elaborate system of torpedoes or mines to explode from the fort with electric wires.

The garrison of the fort at the first attack was six hundred and sixty-seven men; at the second attack, nearly twice as many. The expedition fitted out for this service comprised sixty-five hundred infantry, two batteries of artillery, and a few cavalry, for the first attack; and for the second about eighty-five hundred men all told, assisted by sixteen hundred sailors and four hundred marines landed from the fleet. The fleet was probably the most powerful ever collected on this hemisphere, except when Nelson followed the combined French and Spanish fleets to the West Indies in the summer of 1805. It included over fifty vessels, carrying about four hundred and seventy guns of the largest calibres known. In it were three frigates, five or six of the largest sloops, the new Ironsides, and five or six Monitors.

The first attack was preceded by the explosion of four hundred tons of powder within a few hundred yards of the fort at 1.40 A.M. of the 24th of December, 1864, with no result. Different opinions had been previously entertained of the probable effect of this measure. Col. Comstock reported that it would do no damage.[1] Gen.

[1] 2 C.W., 1865, Fort Fisher, 51.

Delafield, Chief Engineer, thought it would have the same effect on the fort as firing feathers from muskets would on the enemy.[1] Gen. Butler showed Admiral Porter some calculations he had made, which proved that the explosion would create a pressure of twenty-two tons to the square inch.[2] As this is one hundred and thirty thousand times the pressure of the most violent tornadoes, which carry men, houses, and trees into the air, it is evident there was some mistake in the calculations.

The morning after the explosion, at daylight, the order was given for the fleet to stand in, in line of battle, and at 11.30 to engage the fort. Fleet-Capt. Breese testified: "The fire of the fleet was very severe; that when even three frigates and the iron-clads opened on it briskly, . . . it completely silenced the fort."[3]

Admiral Porter reports: "By the time the last of the large vessels anchored and got their batteries into play, but one or two guns of the enemy were fired, the '*feu d'enfer*' driving them all to their bomb-proofs. . . . In one hour and fifteen minutes after the first shot was fired not a shot came from the fort. Two magazines had been blown up by our shells, and the fort set on fire in several places." (The fort proper, it may be remarked by the way, was no more combustible than the sand of the sea-beach, of which it was made.) "Such a torrent of missiles [one hundred and fifteen per minute] was falling into and bursting over it that it was impossible for any thing human to stand it."[4] This fire was sustained for five hours. At sunset the signal to retire was given.

Gen. Whiting, of the Confederate army, formerly of

[1] 2 C. W., 1865, Fort Fisher, 51. [2] Ib., 89. [3] Ib., 113. [4] Ib., 123.

the United-States Engineers, was captured in the fort when it was taken, and soon died of his wounds. Before his death he rendered full answers to questions sent him by Gen. Butler in reference to the defence of the fort. From this it appears that the result of this cannonade was, that twenty-three men were hit in the fort, — one mortally, three severely, and nineteen slightly, and no one was killed; and that five gun-carriages were disabled.[1] In the fleet the casualties from the enemy's guns were few. About forty-five men were killed or wounded by the bursting of their own guns, among whom were four officers, killed. "The Mackinaw had her boiler perforated with a shell, and ten or twelve persons were badly scalded. The Osceola was struck with a shell near her magazine, and was at one time in a sinking condition; . . . the Yantic was the only vessel that left the line to report damages." The Sassacus had both rudders disabled.[2]

On the next morning, Christmas, the 25th, at seven A.M., the signal was made to get under way, and form in line of battle,[3] and was followed by the order to attack. "All the vessels . . . took position without a shot being fired at them, excepting a few shots fired at the four last vessels that got into line."[4] In this bombardment the men were engaged firing slowly for seven hours. As the ammunition gave out, the vessels retired from action; and the iron-clads and Minnesota, Colorado, and Susquehanna (frigates) "were ordered to open rapidly, which they did with such effect that it seemed to tear the works to pieces. We drew off at sunset, leaving the iron-clads to fire through the night."[5] In this two-days

[1] 87 W.R., 979; also, 2 C.W., 1865, Fort Fisher, 107.

[2] 2 C.W., 1865, Fort Fisher, 124. [3] Ib., 125. [4] Ib. [5] Ib.

firing, the navy threw into the fort about twenty-five thousand rounds, or in round numbers about one million six hundred thousand pounds of iron. Gen. Weitzel testifies that he and Col. Comstock "were of the opinion that so far from the guns of the fort being silenced, the commanding officer of the fort had but followed the rule that both of us had learned for the defence of a work in such cases; that, being entirely overpowered or overmatched by our fire his garrison was ordered into their bomb-proofs for the purpose of saving life and ammunition, there to await either the attempt by the fleet to pass by the fort, or the final assault."[1] Gen. Weitzel landed during the day, and pushed his skirmishers well up to the palisades of the fort, and made a deliberative examination of its condition, confirmed by the opinion of Col. Comstock. Based on this, he reported to Gen. Butler that the fort was, as a defensive work, uninjured; that all but one of the guns of the fort were all mounted on the land face; and that there were seventeen guns bearing up the beach.[2] Gen. Whiting says, that in the second day three men were killed, and forty-three wounded. Damage very slight; four gun-carriages and one gun disabled, damage repaired at night. "The garrison was in no instance driven from its guns, and fired in return, according to orders, slowly and deliberately, six hundred and sixty-two shot and shells. . . . The guns and defences on the land front were in perfect order at the time referred to, except two disabled guns on the left; nineteen guns in position; palisade in perfect order, and the mines the same, the wires not having been cut."[3]

[1] 2 C.W., 1865, Fort Fisher, 71. [2] Ib., 72. [3] Ib., 107.

Consequently the attack was abandoned, and the troops on land re-embarked. While this was in progress, Gen. Butler testifies: "The fire of the navy ceased; instantly the guns of the fort were fully manned, and a sharp fire of musketry, grape and canister swept the plain by which the column must have advanced, and [over] which the skirmish-line was returning."[1]

The fleet began the second attack in the afternoon of the 14th of January, 1865, all the eleven-inch guns being at work. Admiral Porter reports: "By sunset the fort was reduced to a pulp; every gun was silenced, by being injured or covered up with earth, so that they would not work."[2] A steady but slower fire was kept up on the land front all night. The next day, the 15th of January, the bombardment recommenced at daylight, and the full power of the fleet was put forth till three P.M., when the assault began. By this time the navy had thrown into the fort in all (including the first attack) forty-five thousand rounds, or in round numbers over three million pounds of iron. By it the fort was now seriously injured. The fire for two days had been systematically directed in enfilade and reverse against the land front. The slope of the north-east salient had been made practicable for assault; not a gun remained in position on the approaches; the whole palisade was demolished; the wires connecting with the mines were broken; and the men were unable to stand to the parapets during the fire. In fact, the great superiority of artillery, though afloat, had asserted itself, as usual on land, by destroying the artillery defence of the land front. On the sea front Fleet-

[1] 2 C.W., 1865, Fort Fisher, 38. [2] Ib., 182.

Capt. Breese testifies that he thinks not over one or two of its guns were disabled.[1] He led the attack on it with sixteen hundred sailors and four hundred marines. It was still in good enough condition to repulse this attack finally with great loss in fifteen minutes. The casualties in this number of men were nearly three hundred, or fifteen per cent. The land front, in spite of its defects of trace and the sacrifices that had been made to the artillery defence by occupying nearly half of its interior crest with traverses, held out seven hours against a vigorous assault, inflicting a loss of about seven hundred, or one-half the number of its garrison, on its assailants.

It seems probable that too little reliance was placed on distant fire in this defence, and that greater efforts should have been made against the ships while taking position. The relief of the work was considerable for an earthwork, but its site was so low that it was probably commanded by the spar-deck guns of the great frigates. The position of the channel also kept the ships at some distance, which necessitated a curved trajectory very suitable for enfilade fire in destroying guns and traverses.

A peculiarity of the affair was that the navy was able to act directly against the land front, and destroy an important part of its defences.

The most famous passages of forts in this war were led by Admiral Farragut. His great success seems fully earned by careful consideration, thorough preparation, and gallant, resolute action.

His first attack was on Forts Jackson and St. Philip on the Mississippi River. The first of these, on the right

[1] 2 C.W., 1865, Fort Fisher, 117.

bank, is a regular bastioned work of the first order, with masonry scarp and wet ditches. It mounted over two hundred guns in one tier of casemates and in barbette. The former were mostly old guns of ordinary calibres, the latter had a fair proportion of Columbiads and rifles. Its interior was provided with a large high brick barracks for the garrison. Fort St. Philip, on the left bank, was of less importance. It had wet ditches and masonry scarp. Its guns were *en barbette*, but mostly disposed in low exterior batteries along the river: I think they were nearly all twenty-four and thirty-two pounders. The fleet comprised four or five first-class sloops, fifteen or sixteen gunboats, and twenty-one schooners, each of the latter carrying one thirteen-inch seacoast mortar, and one or two other guns.

From April 13, 1862, there was increasing action on the part of the fleet against the forts, a few gunboats at a time shelling Fort Jackson, and then retiring out of range. On the 18th, the mortar-fleet opened, and rained in a hail of thirteen-inch shell, weighing two hundred pounds apiece, for a week, day and night. Over twenty-five thousand shell were thrown, of which about one-third fell in the fort and its outworks, or about one million seven hundred thousand pounds of iron. The river was remarkably high, and the levees were broken. The parade and floors of casemates were submerged from three to eighteen inches. As the officers and men had to live in the latter, they were constantly wet and in great discomfort. They tried to rest and sleep in the incessant explosion of shells, perched on gun-carriages or in the throats

of the embrasures. It required constant pumping day and night, to keep the magazines dry. Latterly, the blood and flesh falling into the water made a stench, especially in casemates used for hospitals, that was nauseating.

The first day of the mortar-practice, the barracks were set on fire and burned down with most of the bedding and clothes of the officers and men of the garrison, adding greatly to their hardships. Gen. Duncan, commanding the fort, says, "The mortar-fire was accurate and terrible, . . . disabling some of our best guns." [1] Much damage was done to the earthwork of the fort, and some to the casemates, which had been constructed with a view to only siege, and not seacoast mortars. In the second day's firing, seven guns in the fort are reported disabled, and the second day after several more. Gen. Duncan's journal of siege says, "Disabled guns were repaired as far as practicable as often as accidents happened to them or their platforms." [2] At midnight of the 20th–21st, under cover of the heaviest shelling during the bombardment, a gunboat ran up to the chain with rafts which closed the river, and succeeded in so far opening it that its usefulness for the defence was gone.

On the 24th, at 3.30 A.M., the admiral started up the river, and before daybreak he came to anchor at Quarantine, six miles above the forts. There was a want of co-operation on the part of the Confederate navy, to which had been intrusted the important duty of keeping the river lighted by fire-ships at need. This was entirely neglected, and this "criminal negligence" [3] is stated by Gen.

[1] 6 W.R., 525. [2] Ib., 526. [3] Ib., 528, 534.

Duncan to have been one of the great causes of the success of the attempt.

In his Report he says: At the beginning of the passage, "the mortar fire upon Fort Jackson was furiously increased, and in dashing by each vessel delivered broadside after broadside of shot, shell, grape, canister, and spherical case to drive the men from our guns.

"Both the officers and men stood up manfully under this galling and fearful hail, and the batteries of both forts were promptly opened at their longest range with shot, shell, hot shot, and a little grape, and most gallantly and rapidly fought until the enemy succeeded in getting above and beyond our range.

"The absence of light on the river, together with the smoke of the guns, made the obscurity so intense that scarcely a vessel was visible, and in consequence the gunners were obliged to govern their firing entirely by the flashes of the enemy's guns." [1]

The exhaustion of the garrison, the darkness, the concentration of the guns of the fort, their want of command, and the severe vertical fire of the mortar-boats, seem to have been the principal elements of success in this affair.

The damage to the fleet was not serious. One gunboat, The Varuna, was sunk by the Confederate gunboats just above the forts. The success of the fleet gave us command of the river, and of all the water approaches to the forts. It was easy for the army to join the fleet across the narrow strip of delta. A small force would have been sufficient to observe the forts, and take their garri-

[1] 6 W.R., 528.

sons prisoners whenever they concluded to abandon their uncomfortable quarters. The officer in command was resolute to hold out; but the men, with a better appreciation of the circumstances, with much good sense mutinied and disbanded.

The forts passed into our hands without further damage, and a good opportunity was afforded to see the injury they had sustained in their defence. Few or none of the casemate guns were injured, very few of the barbette guns or carriages were destroyed; less than ten per cent of them were unserviceable, and most of those which were only needed repairs of their traverse circles, which could have been made by the garrison. The flanking defences were perfect; the parapets were little injured, especially on the land fronts; the masonry scarp was practically unharmed; and the wet ditches as formidable as ever. In fact, if attacked by a land force, it is probable that the duration of the siege would not have been shortened one day by the injuries inflicted by the fleet, mortar-boats included.

The passage of the Mobile forts has so lately[1] been considered, that I need only refer to it. Fort Morgan, the principal fort, was a regular bastioned work, with masonry scarp and counter-scarp walls, dry ditches, well flanked, with one tier of guns in casemates and one in barbette. The masonry was inferior, and around the embrasures too thin to resist heavy modern projectiles. For this reason,

[1] In Commodore Foxhall A. Parker's paper on The Battle of Mobile Bay, and Capture of Forts Morgan, Gaines, and Powell, read before the Society on Dec. 10, 1877, and since published by A. Williams & Co., Boston.

probably, the sea-fronts were masked by the Confederates by heavy covers of sand protecting the masonry and casemates, but at the same time robbing the fort of half of its fire. Guns were mounted *en barbette* in the covered ways; but these were commanded by the guns of the fleet, and kept well under.

The attack was made at six A.M., Aug. 5, 1864, in broad daylight and with the greatest energy and resolution. The vessels passed within six hundred yards of the fort, and fired with such rapidity that the effect and accuracy of the barbette guns of the fort in reply were much lessened. In consequence of the success of the fleet Fort Powell was at once evacuated, and Fort Gaines surrendered three days later, Aug. 8. This opened a passage from Mississippi Sound to Mobile Bay; and the army at once invested Fort Morgan by land, got twenty-one siege-guns and sixteen siege-mortars into position, and, together with the fleet, opened fire on Fort Morgan on the morning of Aug. 22, 1864. A barracks, like the one in Fort Jackson, was set on fire at the close of the first day, to the great peril of the magazines. Our sharpshooters, well covered under sand-hills, were so close up to the fort that its guns could not be used towards the land, and the fire of the fleet was almost unanswered. On the next morning, the 23d, the fort surrendered.

There is no means of separating the injuries inflicted by the fleet from those due to the forces on land; but, even allowing that all the injury was due to the fleet, still that injury had not seriously impaired the efficiency of the fort against an attack by infantry or escalade. Its artil-

lery was entirely kept under by our batteries. But its counter scarp was uninjured; its scarp, though much defaced in places, was not breached; its parapet was out of shape, but still giving its former protection against all shot; and its flanking arrangements were still perfect. The scarp wall at the north-east salient, however, was badly shaken, and would probably have been partially breached by another day's fire. The condition and circumstances of this fort were very similar to those of Fort Jackson, after the fleet had passed. Its use was gone, its garrison was a certain prize, and there was nothing to gain by further exposure and suffering.

Between these two famous victories Admiral Farragut had had some experience with batteries on the Mississippi, constructed by officers formerly in the United States Engineers to meet the exigencies of the war, and probably the most perfect system ever used against vessels. At Port Hudson and at Vicksburg the river makes a sharp bend against abrupt bluffs from a hundred to two hundred feet high, and several miles long. Along the brow of these bluffs, at wide intervals, single guns of large calibre were planted with earthen parapets thick enough to defy any artillery yet cast, and several feet higher than the gun, which fired through an embrasure, of flare suited to the field of fire desired. These guns usually had a bomb-proof and magazine, safe against the thirteen-inch seacoast mortar-shells. Each gun was so small a mark that it was in little danger of being injured; its cannoneers could never be hit, except when they were in the embrasure; its elevation protected the

gun from any fire at short range, and added greatly to the effect of its own shots; and the curve of the shore gave a concentric fire on any thing passing. The eddies and currents made it hazardous to run by these batteries in the dark.

After the fall of Fort Jackson, both Vicksburg and Port Hudson were strongly fortified by the Confederates towards the land and towards the river. Between these points the Red River flows into the Mississippi, and was pouring large supplies into each of these posts, and all the eastern shores of the Mississippi. Through the latter part of 1862, Admiral Farragut contented himself with enforcing the blockade of his department. Towards the end of the winter of 1862–63 it became important to communicate with Admiral Porter and Gen. Grant at Vicksburg, and close the mouth of the Red River. For this it was necessary to pass the guns at Port Hudson. The admiral made his dispositions accordingly, and in March moved up the Mississippi River from Baton Rouge in strong force.

As before, he lashed the ships together in pairs, his flagship, the Hartford, being joined to the Albatross. The side-wheel sloop Mississippi was left without a consort, for good reasons. When all was ready, the order to weigh was given at nine P.M., March 14, 1863; and at ten the tug Reliance was sent down to some ships, which seemed to be slow, with the order to close up. At 11.20 the first battery opened on the Hartford. The passage was slow and perilous, from the strong currents and eddies at the sharp bend in the river, and from the dark-

ness, which was increased by the smoke of the guns. At the end of a few hours the admiral found himself safe above the batteries. His next observation was that he was all by himself. The train that he supposed he was leading up the river had uncoupled, and all the rest had disappeared. He had no means of knowing the condition of his fleet, but the light and explosion of the burning Mississippi gave him some conjecture.

In his report he says, "This ship (the Hartford) moved up the river in good style, Capt. Palmer governing with excellent judgment the fire according to circumstances, stopping when the smoke became too dense to see, and re-opening whenever a fresh battery fired upon us; but we always silenced their battery when we fired. . . . To the good firing of the ship we owe most of our safety; for, according to my theory, the best way to save yourself is to injure your adversary; and, although we received some ugly wounds, our casualties were small, as we only lost one man killed, and two slightly wounded."

Subsequent reports show that the unfortunate Mississippi grounded, and suffered from a galling fire from the batteries. After nearly an hour's vigorous work all hope of getting her off was over; she was set on fire twice in several places, and abandoned. She afterwards floated free, drifted down the river, and blew up. The Richmond had her steam-pipe shot away while engaging the last battery, and fell back, towed by the Genesee. She lost three killed and twelve wounded. The Monongahela first got aground, and was towed off by her mate, the Kineo. Then she heated her crank-pin, and fell back out

of range. She had six killed and twenty-one wounded. The Kineo had no casualties, but left the fight with her larger consort, the Monongahela. The Essex was active in picking up the crew of the Mississippi, and narrowly escaped collision with her while she was burning. She continued firing from below till 1.30 A.M. The Sachem was struck by a raft that fouled her propeller, and had to come to anchor. Then she slipped her anchor to avoid the burning Mississippi, and busied herself till four A.M. in picking up her men.

The admiral kept on to Vicksburg, as we shall see, got the Switzerland from Admiral Porter, or rather Gen. Ellet, and closed the Red River till this duty was assumed by Admiral Porter. To rejoin his fleet he had to leave his flag-ship, the Hartford, above Port Hudson, and return below by way of the Atchafalaya.

Admiral Porter also before his victory at Fort Fisher had been sorely tried by these river-defences at Vicksburg. He reports to the Secretary of the Navy, Feb. 7, 1863:[1] "The people in Vicksburg are the only ones who have, as yet, hit upon the method of defending themselves against our gunboats, — viz : not erecting water batteries, and placing the guns some distance back from the water, where they can throw a plunging shot which none of our iron-clads could stand."[2] "A better system of defence was never devised. Vicksburg was by nature the strongest place on the river, but art has made it impregnable against floating batteries — not that the number of guns is formidable, but the rebels have placed them out of

[1] House Ex. Doc. No. 69, 447, 38th Cong., 1st Sess. [2] Ib., 446.

our reach, and can shift them from place to place, in case we should happen to annoy them (the most we can do) in their earthworks."[1] "I mention these facts to show the department that there is no possible hope of any success against Vicksburg by a gunboat attack, or without an investment in the rear of the city by a large army."[2]

When Admiral Farragut had taken the Hartford by Port Hudson, and all his fleet was beaten back except the tender Albatross, he mentioned his wish for boats to close the Red River, to Gen. Ellet, commanding the Mississippi Marine Brigade. Without orders from Admiral Porter, Gen. Ellet ordered the Lancaster and Switzerland to run the batteries at Vicksburg before dawn of March 25, to relieve Admiral Farragut. The result was, that, among other injuries, each had its boiler exploded by shot. The Lancaster went to pieces, and sunk immediately. The Switzerland was less (though extensively) injured, and was saved.

Before midnight of April 16, Admiral Porter in the Benton, with seven other iron-clads and their army transports, ran the batteries most successfully. No one in the gunboats was killed, and but twelve wounded. The vessels themselves sustained little damage. "The firing was heavy on both sides, but slackened perceptibly" on land "as the fleet got its guns to bear," after which the aim of the enemy was not as good as usual. Of the three transports, protected as they were for the passage, one was set on fire and sunk, and another was temporarily disabled. The enemy lighted up the river on both sides.

[1] Ib., 446. [2] Ib., 447.

To show how little injury had been done to the batteries on shore, six weeks after this, on May 27, at the request of Gen. Sherman, the Cincinnati, iron-clad, attacked the enemy's batteries opposite the left flank of our investing lines, under the mistaken impression that the enemy had removed his guns to his land defence. While rounding to, before getting her position, she was so hit as to begin to fill rapidly. She immediately moved off with all steam, under a heavy fire, and sank in three fathoms of water.

There was another series of remarkable engagements in the war; but, as they relied mostly or entirely on iron-clads, they are not to my purpose. Still they deserve mention. I mean the attacks of Admiral Foote on batteries at the West. This remarkable man saw the hardest service in the navy as long as he lived; and the bravery, skill, and success belonging to him indicated a formidable rival to the pre-eminence of Admiral Farragut.

The Western iron-clads of the class of the Benton and Essex were clumsy in appearance and motion, and of no great strength in most places. In their bows, however, they were invulnerable. Admiral Porter writes he never knew a shot received there to injure one, or do more than dent the plating. Accordingly they always engaged batteries bow on, and fought in as close as they could get. They carried from seven to thirteen heavy guns each. As we have seen, their effect was small against the elevated, scattered guns of Vicksburg; but in other situations they were more fortunate.

At Fort Henry, Feb. 6, 1862, four of these iron-clads

were engaged, supported by three wooden gunboats. Fire was opened at seventeen hundred yards, the iron-clads steaming up slowly to six hundred yards. The Essex received a shot through her boilers, scalding twenty-nine officers and men, including Commander W. D. Porter, disabling her, and obliging her to drop out of line. After a severe and closely contested action of one hour and fifteen minutes, the fort was surrendered. The commandant, Gen. Tilghman, stated that the fort mounted eleven heavy guns, of which seven had been made unserviceable by the fleet.

A week later Admiral Foote attacked Fort Donelson with a different result. He reports Feb. 15, 1862,[1] to the Secretary of the Navy: —

"Sir, — I have the honor to report to the Department that, at the urgent request of Major-Gen. Halleck and Gen. Grant, who regarded the movement as a military necessity, although not, in my opinion, properly prepared, I made an attack on Fort Donelson yesterday, the 14th inst., at three o'clock P.M., with four iron-clad and two wooden gunboats, — the St. Louis, Carondelet, Louisville, and Pittsburg, and the Tyler and Conestoga. After a severe fight of an hour and a half, being in the latter part of the action less than four hundred yards from the fort, the wheel of this vessel [St. Louis] by a shot through her pilot-house, was carried away, the tiller-ropes of the Louisville were also disabled by a shot; which rendered the two boats wholly unmanageable, and they drifted down the river, the relieving tackles not being able to steer or control them in the rapid current. The two remaining boats, the Pittsburg and

[1] House Ex. Doc. No. 69, 359, 38th Cong., 1st Sess.

Carondelet, were also greatly damaged between wind and water, and soon followed us as the enemy rapidly renewed the fire as we drifted helplessly down the river. This vessel, the St. Louis, alone received fifty-nine shots, four of them between wind and water; one in the pilot-house, mortally wounding the pilot and others, requiring some time to put her in repair. There were fifty-four killed and wounded in this attack, which, notwithstanding our disadvantages, we have every reason to suppose would, in fifteen minutes more, could the action have been continued, have resulted in the capture of the two forts bearing upon us. The enemy's fire had materially slackened, and he was running from his batteries, when the two gunboats helplessly drifted down the river from disabled steering apparatus, as the relieving tackles could not control the helm in the strong current, when the fleeing enemy returned to their guns and again re-opened fire upon us from the river batteries which we had silenced.

"The enemy must have brought over twenty heavy guns to bear upon our boats from the water batteries and the main fort on the side of the hill, while we could only return the fire with twelve bow-guns from the four boats. One rifle gun aboard the Carondelet burst during the action."

In this action he received a troublesome wound in the ankle, of which no mention is made in his report other than the insertion of his name in the list of wounded at the end. After incessant labor at Columbus and Island No. 10, the latter surrended to the navy in consequence of the combined action of it and the army. Admiral Foote says, "These works, erected with the highest engineering skill, are of great strength, and with their natu-

ral advantages would have been impregnable if defended by men fighting in a better cause."

At the pressing instance of Gen. Pope, Admiral Foote had ordered two of his boats to pass these batteries in a stormy night, which they did in perfect safety, aiding greatly in the dispositions of the army which brought about the surrender.

The teaching of this superficial review of some of the most famous actions of our war between ships and batteries is, that, where the guns on shore were well protected by earth, well elevated, and separated, they never failed to get the advantage over the ships; and that, where they did fail, this came from the forts not answering one of the above three conditions. This is illustrated by the fact that Admirals Farragut, Dupont, and Porter, who won the most distinguished victories over forts not filling these conditions, themselves failed before forts which filled them, and stated that success was beyond their power under such circumstances. Also it appears that, as Gen. Totten conceded, a fleet under favorable circumstances can run by a fortified position without very great risk.

To apply these results to Yorktown: —

Its guns, as already stated, were most of them eighty feet above the water-level, well protected, and in small groups, well separated. There is no reason to suppose the fleet could have silenced, much less disabled, these guns. It probably could have passed them with trifling loss at night. It would have been very rash for transports, crowded with troops, to try to pass with it, as was shown by the fate of Gen. Ellet's river-steamers and

Admiral Porter's transports at Vicksburg. If the fleet had passed without a convoy of troops, it could in no respect have weakened Magruder's position. It seems, then, that the navy was right in not attacking Yorktown, and that Gen. McClellan's opinion that it might have reduced it was ill-judged.

The second plan was to carry the works at Gloucester Point by a detachment landed in Severn River. Gen. McDowell's corps had been thought of for this service, and Gen. McClellan was unwilling to attempt the movement with a smaller force. When Gen. Franklin's division of that corps joined on the 22d of April, it was kept afloat with the intention of carrying out this plan by landing it under protection of the gunboats on the left bank of the York River.

Now, in the first place, if this plan was wise, Gen. McClellan at all times could have spared as many men as McDowell had for it. The same line that was stopping him afforded him a defensive position almost as strong as the enemy's, in case he had been attacked while he was weakened by detachments. Certainly, if Gen. Magruder with ten thousand men could hold in check our army of eighty-five thousand, Gen. McClellan could have held his own against Gen. Magruder in such a position with equal numbers, or ten thousand out of his eighty-five thousand, leaving men enough for large detachments before Franklin's division reached him.

In the second place, it is difficult to see how such a movement could have been justified. Gen. McClellan had stated that the Confederate army, of numbers equal

or superior to his own, was before him; and in fact it was between him and Richmond. The mouth of the York River was closed to his transports, and had not been passed by the fleet. These facts would not be affected, if Gloucester was abandoned to him. Its fall would have given him its garrison and guns, and made the passage of Yorktown easier for the fleet; it would not have opened York River to his transports, or turned the lines of Yorktown. The river being free to them, it would have been proper for the enemy to support Gloucester by a superior force, and drive our detachment back on the ships, or capture or destroy it. The force so engaged could have regained White House by the left bank of the York through a friendly country, even if the fleet had succeeded in passing Yorktown to cut it off. If the fleet had passed Yorktown, and Gloucester been surrendered (the best Gen. McClellan could have hoped for), the fleet might have taken the detachment across to the right bank of the York, but then it must have been left to itself. On whichever bank it operated, its only objects could have been Richmond or Yorktown. By leaving a sufficient force in Richmond to hold it against a surprise, it ought to have been easy for Gen. Johnston to place himself in relations with Gen. Magruder, and to bring the bulk of his army on the detachment under conditions of time and place that would have made his complete success certain. In short, any movement against Gloucester, followed up, would have divided our army into detachments, and given the enemy necessarily the advantage of interior lines.

The third plan, and without doubt the true one, was to break through the line without delay by assault. As we have seen, the Confederate extreme left was held by the regular fortifications of Yorktown with a considerable garrison. It would have been hazardous to attempt this by assault; and the attempt, whether successful or not, would have certainly been attended with great loss.

From Yorktown to its right, as far as the source of Warwick Creek, the line was everywhere weak, and for about five hundred yards there was no parapet whatever. The ground before and behind this line was rolling, open, and well seen from ground occupied by us. The line was defended by three heavy pieces in position and a few field-pieces. To silence these would have been no great affair for our artillery. An attack against this line would not have come within two-thirds of a mile of Yorktown, from the fire of which the undulations of the ground would have afforded much cover. These were circumstances which might have been quickly recognized and established on the ground. In these, an attack by a force six times more numerous than the defenders ought not to have been doubtful.

Lower down, at Winn's Mills, Garrow's and Lee's Mills, were practicable passages across the river on dams, all fortified, but not desperate. The weakest defence was at Garrow's, which was defended by three guns and slight intrenchments. In spite of the reports to the contrary, the stream here was fordable, — a fact, one would think, which should have been discovered the first night. Moreover, the stream might have been reduced from fifty yards

wide to its natural width of fifteen feet, by breaking away the temporary dams, which action Lieut. Comstock of the Engineers recommended under date of April 12. At the same time he intimates his opinion that men could cross at Garrow's by wading.

Here, then, were a favorable piece of open country, three separate roads and bridges, and a ford, all feasible for attack. These positions occupied a line more than five miles long from one end to the other, and were too far separated to mutually support each other. They were defended by five thousand men, exclusive of the force in Yorktown. The average force for the defence of each, therefore, reserves included, was one thousand men. Against these at each point Gen. McClellan might easily have put ten times that number.

The only element which could not be known without engaging seriously was the force of the enemy. The nature of the position took away all fear of offensive returns. It was particularly favorable to masking dispositions for attack. In these circumstances a skilful master of tactics might have hoped to force a passage in the face of an equal force. The practicable passages were as numerous, for instance, as the French had from the west at Magenta. As it was, Gen. McClellan had no need of generalship. If he had divided his army into two or three principal attacks, there can be no doubt that one of them would have been successful, which would have assured the success of all.

That this is not mere conjecture, is proved by the action of April 16. This was preceded by a general cannonade

along the line. Gen. Ayres put twenty-two guns in battery against the defences at Garrow's, in a position where he could sweep the clearing on the other side of the river. He disabled two out of the three guns against him. There was delay after this in ordering the attack; the effect of which, after exciting Magruder's attention, was to give him time to re-enforce those points where alone an attack was possible. Finally, about four P.M. four companies of the Third Vermont, crossing the creek below the dam by wading through water up to their waists, drove the Fifteenth North Carolina and Sixteenth Georgia regiments out of the epaulements before them, and established themselves therein. More than an hour they maintained themselves there, desperately keeping the advantage they had won, till the rest of the army should secure the vital success they were offering it. They received no re-enforcements but five hundred or six hundred men of the Fourth and Sixth Vermont. In the mean time wounded men and their assistants were coming and going freely across the ford. The enemy were concentrating all their available force against them; and finally pressed by two divisions, they were forced to retreat with a loss of more than two hundred killed and wounded. They showed the creek at this point to be easily passable. They had overcome the main difficulty of the crossing; while they held the head of it, nothing remained but to throw steadily over all the troops in the vicinity, and carry the redoubt in front. This would have broken the line, turned the position, and opened the way to invest or observe Yorktown. The rest of the army would have been free to press on against

Richmond with the control of the left bank of James River from which to draw its supplies, avoiding the obstacle of the Chickahominy. The failure to secure this advantage shows neither military genius nor common sense. Gen. Barnard says the object of this attack was merely to prevent the further construction of works, and to feel the strength of the position.[1] It was a curious way to gain the first object; and, as was natural, it led to further strengthening the position.

The attack was made by Gen. W. F. Smith's division of Gen. Keyes's corps. Gen. Keyes testifies that the attack was made without his knowledge, and against his orders. On demanding the reasons for making it, he learned from Gen. Smith that it was ordered by Gen. McClellan in person, whom he met with Gen. Smith shortly before the the attack began.[2] If the general commanding the corps had been notified of the intended movement, he would naturally have had his command prepared, and watched the progress of the attempt. A single order would then have been sufficient from Gen. McClellan to follow up and establish the success gained in the surprise. As it was, the attempt failed; and Gen. McClellan fell back on the fourth plan considered, — of proceeding against Yorktown by regular siege.

The ordinary stages of a siege are: the investment; the overpowering of the artillery of the defence by that of the attack; and the constructing of a safe road for the assaulting party to the work, and removing the physical obstacles it offers to an assault. In this case the investment was out of the question. In consequence, the

[1] 12 W.R., 318. [2] 1 C.W., 599, 600.

garrison could receive unlimited assistance in men, munitions, and provisions, and could retire whenever it saw fit after causing a necessary delay, or inflicting a sufficient loss.

The second stage — for the reduction of the artillery of the work — was begun. Calibres of unusual size, unmanageable except near water-carriage, were used at very long range. The labor in making these batteries, bringing up and mounting their armament, and supplying them with ammunition over the miry roads, was very severe. This, added to the ordinary picket and camp duty, and the toil of supplying the daily wants of the army, made a period of great exertion and fatigue.

April 20, fire was opened at Yorktown wharf, at a range of 4,820 yards or two and three-fourths miles, to prevent its use by vessels. This firing was continued every day afterwards. Every thing was ready for opening on Yorktown on the 5th of May. The enemy, however, had evacuated it the night of the 3d, and our army took possession at daylight of the 4th.

Comparing the progress made with a model theoretical siege, the attack had really reached the completion of the second parallel and its batteries, or six days out of about twenty needed to take a place without outworks. After this usually comes the most dangerous and slow portion of the siege, when the attack loses the advantage of greater development than the defence, and when the advance is soon reduced to the slow progress of the full, and then the double, sap. At Yorktown, the position of the connected redoubts on the south-west, with the

facilities for using field-artillery suddenly and then retiring it behind cover, would have compelled an extraordinary use of double sap, and corresponding delay and loss.

Gen. Barry had such faith in his guns that he was satisfied that they "would have compelled the enemy to surrender or abandon his works in less than twelve hours."[1]

Gen. Barnard thinks "it will be admitted . . . that the enemy's position had become untenable; that he could not have endured our fire for six hours."[2] Further experience in the war, however, showed how quickly garrisons learned that their security against artillery lay in hugging the interior slope of their parapets; and in such sieges as Vicksburg and Port Hudson, where they became quite at home under shelling, both vertical and horizontal, they burrowed along the interior slope, below the natural surface, where no horizontal shot could reach, and no vertical shell or fragment, unless it entered the mouth of their burrow in a reverse direction. At the West they called these impromptu bomb-proofs "gopher-holes," from a kind of prairie-squirrel.

The nearest mortar battery was at a distance of 1,580 yards (or nine-tenths of a mile), and the others from two thousand to four thousand yards, all extreme ranges for accuracy, and too great to hope to drop shells near enough to the parapets to be very effective. The other batteries were at similar distances, instead of three hundred yards, as formerly laid down in the books. There is no doubt the guns would carry these distances easily; but it is not

[1] 12 W.R., 348. [2] Ib., 320.

so certain that the eyesight of the gunners in aiming or watching their shots would be so sure at them, or that their tremendous direct projectiles would knock over the artillery in the work so surely and quickly as the old, deliberate, short-range, ricochet, solid shots. Moreover, if modern artillery was for the advantage of the attack, modern rifles, with their accuracy and long range, were still more for the advantage of the defence. If the guns of the fort were all destroyed, and the parapets a shapeless mound of earth, still the attack must have been made for half a mile, under the fire of these rifles, in the hands of men as well covered as when the lines of their parapets were still straight and sharp, and the grass fresh and green. Moreover, what adds greatly to the vigor of a defence, they had a good road open for retreat, except so far as the navy could have covered it, with good defensive positions along it.

The siege of Fort Wagner presented some of the same features. This fort was much smaller (its greatest dimensions being only two hundred and seventy yards by eighty yards), but it was in many respects stronger. It made part of a system by which it was strongly supported. It was constructed of quartz-sand, which resists the penetration of shot better than ordinary earth of a different quality. It was first attempted to silence the artillery of this fort, and carry it by assault. We have already seen how severely it was cannonaded by the navy. The army on shore did its part equally faithfully. The fort, however, repulsed two assaults with such decision that nothing remained but regular approaches. These were begun

directly after the second repulse of July 18, 1863. On Aug. 10, the fire of the supporting forts, and especially the fire of the sharpshooters of Fort Wagner, had become so galling, that further advance was almost despaired of, and a secondary bombardment of Fort Sumter became necessary to diminish this fire. On Aug. 27, the head of sap was one hundred yards from the ditch, and further progress seemed hopeless. The daily losses were increasing. Despondency settled down on the command, and matters were at a standstill. In these circumstances a steady bombardment of all the guns, and especially mortars, on shore, joined in by the navy, was begun over the heads of the workmen, and continued forty-two hours. At the end of this time the ditch was reached by the sap; and as the fort was not safe from escalade, and the assault could be made throughout the ditch, it was proper to surrender the place. This the garrison did by retreating, losing only about seventy men, taken prisoners.

The fort had held out seven weeks since the last assault. The army had thrown into it in the last two days 150,000 pounds of iron, and since the 26th of July about three times as much, or 450,000 pounds. The average effect was three and a fourth pounds of sand taken off the parapet by one pound of iron. The navy had expended against Morris Island, including Forts Sumter and McAllister, 653½ tons of projectiles, or about 1,300,000 pounds of iron. Probably in all, from land and sea, Fort Wagner received 1,500,000 pounds of iron to bring about its reduction, even after so long delay.

Judging by this, Yorktown might have held out another

month, and caused considerable further loss of life and time and labor and property. But it had served its purpose in great measure, and the purchase was worth the price. Norfolk was abandoned, its garrison safe, its navy-yard and property largely disposed of, though the Merrimac was lost by bad management. Gen. Johnston's army was brought around Richmond to positions of his choosing. Our bloodless victory, so long in winning, brought us nothing but disadvantage. In its loss of men, time, and money, it was more like a defeat.

It is a curious speculation, what the effect would have been if Gen. Johnston had determined to hold Gen. Magruder's line in force, and the experiences of Petersburg had been anticipated with no ground for flank movements or prolongations.

III.

THE PERIOD WHICH ELAPSED BETWEEN THE FALL OF YORKTOWN AND THE BEGINNING OF THE SEVEN DAYS' BATTLES.

By

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Late Brevet Brigadier-General, U.S. V.

Read before the Society on Monday evening, March 8, 1880.

The following are the titles of contributions to the history of the Civil War by General Palfrey: —

ANTIETAM AND FREDERICKSBURG. Campaigns of the Civil War. V. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

HENRY LIVERMORE ABBOTT. [A memoir.] In Harvard Memorial Biographies. Vol. 2, pages 97–111.

MEMOIR OF WILLIAM FRANCIS BARTLETT. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company. 1878.

See List of Papers read before the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, *ante*.

AFTER THE FALL OF YORKTOWN.

EARLY in the afternoon of the 5th of April, 1862, the advance of the Army of the Potomac, under Gen. McClellan, was brought to a halt in front of Yorktown, and before the enemy's works at Lee's Mills.

During the following four weeks McClellan occupied himself busily with the erection of siege-works; and on the 3d of May his army of about one hundred thousand men had constructed some fourteen batteries and several redoubts, and had armed them with about ninety guns and mortars of very heavy calibre.

His "batteries would have been ready to open on the morning of the 6th May at latest."[1] The action of the enemy, however, almost always disappointed McClellan; and "on the morning of the 4th it was discovered that the enemy had already been compelled to evacuate his position during the night."

The enemy fired heavily during the night of May 3. They were not accustomed to waste ammunition, and their firing was probably intended to make McClellan

[1] 12 W.R., 18.

believe that they meant to stay where they were, and the ruse seems to have had its effect.[1]

As the enemy had abandoned his position at Yorktown, McClellan's first business was to pursue him. From this position two principal roads lead up the Peninsula towards Williamsburg: one on the north, running from Yorktown nearly west by the Halfway House to a church; and another to the south and west, running nearly north-west from Lee's Mill by Lebanon Church to the church: the point of junction being a short distance on our side of Fort Magruder and its line of detached works constructed by the enemy in front of Williamsburg.

Curiously enough, there was almost always something for McClellan to do more important than to fight his own battles. So, early in the morning of the 4th of May, he ordered all the available cavalry force, with four batteries of horse-artillery, under Stoneman, in immediate pursuit by the Yorktown and Williamsburg road, with orders to harass the enemy's rear, and to try to cut off such of his forces as had taken the Lee's Mill and Williamsburg road. Hooker's and Kearney's divisions of Heintzelman's (Third) corps were ordered forward in support on the former road, and Smith's, Couch's, and Casey's on the latter. Gen. Sumner was ordered to proceed to the front, and take immediate charge of operations till the commander-in-chief's arrival.

[1] "The Confederate leader [Johnston] did not expect to hold the Peninsula; for both he and Gen. Lee, who then held the position of chief of staff to Mr. Davis, pronounced it untenable." (SWINTON, 102 *et seq.*) During this delay before Yorktown, the Confederate Congress passed the first Conscription Act. (Ib., 111.)

McClellan's staff was numerous, and he pronounces it efficient. It included a chief of staff, an adjutant-general, a chief quartermaster, a chief engineer, a chief of topographical engineers, a chief commissary, a chief of the ordnance department, a provost-marshal, etc., besides almost countless assistants and aides; but yet it seems to have been his opinion that putting troops on shipboard was a more difficult and delicate matter than pursuing and fighting the enemy; and he "remained at Yorktown to complete the preparations for the departure of Gen. Franklin's and other troops to West Point by water and to make the necessary arrangements with the naval commander for his co-operation,"[1] while the good old cavalry colonel[2] was sent on the track of Gen. Joe Johnston.

Johnston says he had fifty-three thousand men, in the divisions of Longstreet, Magruder, G. W. Smith, and D. H. Hill.[3] Their retreat began at midnight of the 3d, the rearguard of cavalry following at daybreak. Smith and Hill retired by the road from Yorktown, Longstreet and Magruder by the road from Lee's Mill. The four divisions were assembled at Williamsburg about noon of the 4th.[4]

Nothing of moment was done by our troops on the 4th. There was a little skirmishing and some artillery-fire, and Stoneman lost one gun in the mud. Smith's (Union) division was diverted from the Lee's Mill road by the burning of a bridge; and Hooker found a cross-road farther towards Williamsburg, and crossed on it to the Lee's Mill road, thus changing places with Smith. Gen.

[1] 12 W.R., 22. [2] Sumner. [3] Johnston's Narrative, 117. [4] Ib., 119.

Sumner reached the front at 5.30 P.M., and assumed command. Heavy rain fell during the night, making the roads, already in very bad condition, almost impassable.

At or before 7.30 A.M. of the 5th, Hooker attacked in front of Fort Magruder, with some success at first, encountering only Anderson's brigade. The enemy was re-enforced at ten A.M. by the brigades of Wilcox and A. P. Hill, and later by those of Pickett and Colston. It is probable that the enemy outnumbered us, at least for a while, on our left, where Hooker was fighting. At any rate, we lost five guns; but our men fought so well that at noon Longstreet and Stuart made such reports to Johnston of the sharpness of the fighting, that he ordered D. H. Hill's division, which had marched several miles, back to Williamsburg, and returned himself; "for [he says] at ten o'clock, when the action had lasted more than four hours, there seemed to be so little vigor in the enemy's conduct, that I became convinced that it was a mere demonstration, intended to delay our march — that the Federal army might pass us by water — and had ridden forward to join the leading troops."[1]

Between three and four Kearney came up, attacked at once, and relieved Hooker; while, or perhaps a little before Kearney's arrival, Peck's brigade of Couch's division was deployed on Hooker's right.

This substantially finished the important part of the fighting. McClellan claims that Kearney "drove the enemy back at every point,"[2] while Johnston claims that Longstreet drove the enemy before him out of the open ground into the forest. It is not of much consequence

[1] Johnston's Narrative, 120. [2] 12 W.R., 21.

which is right. The enemy got the time they wanted, and punished us severely for our attempt to interfere with them. We lost in killed 456, wounded 1,400, missing 372, total 2,228. Gen. Johnston reports that he lost about 1,200. He says that he took from us twelve guns, but had only the means of carrying off five,[1] the precise number the loss of which McClellan admits. The only really satisfactory part of the affair was an operation extremely well conducted by Hancock on our right, in which he defeated Early with a loss of some 400 men, Johnston says;[2]— 500 to 600, McClellan says.[3]

There seems to be much to criticise in the matter of the battle of Williamsburg, and little to praise except the tenacity of the troops and the brilliant action of Hancock, who was then only a brigade-commander.

Unless the enemy was to be allowed to retire, either unmolested, or simply harassed in his retreat by our advance-guard, two courses were open to McClellan. These were, to follow the enemy, and force him to battle, with the hope of crushing him, or to turn his flank by the water route afforded by the York River, and get in his rear perhaps, at any rate make him fight at a disadvantage for his communications. McClellan's force was so large that he might probably have divided it into two armies, each sufficient for one of these enterprises if properly handled. As a matter of fact he did neither with effect. He did neither personally. His pursuit was feeble and disconnected, and resulted in about double the loss to himself which he inflicted on the enemy. His turning movement by West Point was so ineffective that it hardly deserves mention.

[1] Johnston's Narrative, 122–123. [2] Ib., 122. [3] 12 W.R., 22.

To go a little more into detail: McClellan knew that "there were strong defensive works at or near Williamsburg."[1] That town was on the direct line of the enemy's retreat. It was therefore probable, almost to the point of certainty, that a battle would occur there if we pursued. McClellan recognized this probability; for he sent forward all his available cavalry by the land route, five of his nine or ten[2] divisions of infantry, and a quantity of artillery. Yet he did not go with this important force himself. To account for his absence, he says that "by pushing Gen. Franklin, well supported by water, to the right bank of the Pamunkey, opposite West Point, it was hoped to force the enemy to abandon whatever works he might have on the Peninsula below that point or be cut off. It was of paramount importance that the arrangements to this end should be promptly made at an early hour of the morning. I had sent two of my aides . . . to observe the operations in front, with instructions to report to me every thing of importance that might occur. I received no information from them leading me to suppose that there was any thing occurring of more importance than a simple affair of a rearguard, until about 1 P.M."[3]

Even then he does not seem to have hastened much; for he says that, "completing the necessary arrangements, I returned to my camp without delay, rode rapidly to the front, a distance of some fourteen miles, through roads much obstructed by troops and wagons, and reached the field between four and five P.M."[4] Judging from the map

[1] 12 W.R., 7.

[2] He had the divisions of Casey, Couch, Franklin, Hooker, Kearney, Porter, Richardson, Sedgwick, Smith, and perhaps Sykes.

[3] 12 W.R., 22. [4] Ib.

fourteen miles is a very liberal estimate;[1] but, assuming it to be correct, three to four hours is a long time for a soldier to take to reach a field on which he learns his maiden battle is going against him. He got there too late, apparently, to do any thing; at any rate, he does not claim to have done any thing; and "night put an end to the operations here."[2] Two more divisions had been ordered up, but they were now ordered back to Yorktown. Thus we have a commander-in-chief absent from the field where a battle, and that his first battle, was almost certain to occur, where it did occur, where the business was likely enough to be serious to cause him to send one-half of his infantry and all his cavalry to attend to it, where it proved so serious that he ordered up two more of his remaining divisions of infantry; and where he lost heavily in killed, wounded, prisoners, guns, and colors, and did not interfere in the least with the execution of the programme of the enemy.

Gen. Johnston says,[3] "We fought for no other purpose than to hold the ground long enough to enable our baggage-trains to get out of the way of the troops. This object was accomplished without difficulty. There was no time during the day when the slightest uncertainty appeared." He also says that Longstreet's and Hill's divisions slept on the field;[4] that what deserves to be called fighting, ceased two hours before dark, yet the Confederates held the field until the next morning, when they resumed their march; that, though they marched

[1] Gen. Barnard says, "only twelve miles distant." [2] 12 W.R., 23.
[3] Johnston's Narrative, 124. [4] Ib., 122.

but twelve miles the day after the action, and only thirty-seven miles in the ten days following the battle, they were unmolested by McClellan, except at West Point; that they inflicted a loss twice as great as that which they suffered.

There may be a little rose-color about these statements, but the substantial facts seem to be accurately stated.

It remains to consider how much and how little the turning movement amounted to, the paramount importance of which kept McClellan away from his army on their first day of battle.

On the 5th of May, while so large a part of the army was in front of Williamsburg, the divisions of Franklin, Porter, Richardson, Sedgwick, and Sykes,[1] were at and near Yorktown. A part of our occupation, in which I personally was engaged for some time, was the burying of large percussion-shells, which were thickly planted on the glacis of Yorktown.

This was the best part of the time we spent there, however, for in the evening somebody blundered, probably; for a large force, of which the Twentieth Massachusetts Infantry formed part, was kept on foot in the rain and mud from about 6.15 P.M. to three A.M., during which time it advanced perhaps a mile and a half.

On the 6th of May little progress was made, and we of Sedgwick's division slept on board of shipping on the York River.

[1] I find, however, no mention of Sykes's *division* as with the army till the 15th. I know his *brigade* of regular infantry was with us before we reached Yorktown.

The divisions last named moved by water to the right bank of the Pamunkey, near West Point. Early on the morning of the 7th, Gen. Franklin had completed the disembarkation of his division, and placed it in position. The Third Brigade of Sedgwick's division arrived during the morning. The weather was beautiful, the sight extremely picturesque and imposing, and the fighting not severe enough to seriously interfere with the enjoyment of the day. Though we were the invaders, the flanking force, the turning column, the commander-in-chief was not with us, and we did not offer any rude interruption to the enemy's march. On the contrary, they attacked us between ten and eleven A.M.; and "the action continued till three P.M., when the enemy [under Whiting] retired, all his attacks having been repulsed."[1] Our loss was a hundred and ninety-four. Gen. Johnston says airily that, "General Smith [G. W.] had ascertained that the enemy was occupying a thick wood between the New Kent Road and Eltham's Landing. The security of our march required that he should be dislodged, and General Smith was intrusted with this service. He performed it very handsomely with Hampton's and Hood's brigades, under Whiting, driving the enemy, in about two hours, a mile and a half through the wood, to the protection of their vessels-of-war. General Smith's two brigades sustained a trifling loss in killed and wounded."[2] From what I saw of the way in which Franklin's men came out of the wood to the rear, and from the general result, I believe this account to be accurate. So ended the great turning

[1] 12 W.R., 24. [2] Johnston's Narrative, 126.

movement. Gen. McClellan made no pursuit after Williamsburg, for reasons which he who will may find stated in his Report; and we may pass on with the single additional remark that the battle of Williamsburg was unnecessary, for the position might have been turned by a movement by our right. This was actually accomplished by Hancock, after Hooker had met with all his heavy loss; and it might as well have been done before as after.

On the 6th of May, Magruder was at Diascund Bridge, G. W. Smith at Barhamsville, and Longstreet and D. H. Hill marched to the Burnt Ordinary, twelve miles from Williamsburg, and encamped there. On the 7th, the Confederate army was concentrated near Barhamsville, and the failure of our movement by West Point left their way clear for them.

The three weeks which followed the battle of Williamsburg were so devoid of incident that it seems to be sufficient to say that the Confederates moved up the Peninsula in two columns. The right column, composed of the divisions of Smith and Magruder, followed the road by New Kent Court House, and in three marches reached the Baltimore Cross Roads, nineteen miles from Barhamsville. The left column, composed of the divisions of Longstreet and D. H. Hill, reached in the same number of marches the Long Bridges. The army remained five days in this position, facing to the east, Longstreet's right covering the Long Bridges, and Magruder's left the York River Railroad.

The iron-clad Virginia[1] was destroyed on, or just be-

[1] Formerly the United States ship Merrimac.

fore, the 14th May. This event opened the James River to our navy; and, to be ready to meet an advance up that river as well as from the direction of West Point, the Confederate forces were ordered to cross the Chickahominy on the 15th May. On the 17th their army encamped about three miles from Richmond, in front of the line of redoubts constructed in 1861. D. H. Hill's division, in the centre, formed across the Williamsburg road; Longstreet's, on the right, covering the river road; Magruder's, on the left, crossing the Nine-Mile road; and Smith's in reserve, behind Hill's left and Magruder's right.

During this period the weather was generally fine, cool and breezy, but gradually tending towards heat. Some rain fell on the 14th, and much on the 15th, and by the 17th it became really hot.

McClellan sent out cavalry reconnoissances from Williamsburg on the 5th and 7th May, and on the 8th an advance-guard of the three arms to open communication with Franklin. The advance of the main body began on the 8th; and on the 10th headquarters were at Roper's Church, nineteen miles from Williamsburg, with all the troops which had arrived by land, except Hooker's, in the vicinity of that place.

By the 15th headquarters, and the divisions of Franklin, Porter, Sykes, and Smith, reached Cumberland on the Pamunkey; Couch and Casey were near New Kent Court House; Hooker and Kearney were near Roper's Church; and Richardson and Sedgwick near Eltham, or between Eltham and Cumberland.

By the 16th, the divisions of Franklin, Smith, and Porter, and headquarters, reached White House, five miles in advance of Cumberland, and on the Pamunkey River, at the point where the York River Railroad crosses that stream. A permanent dépôt was established there.

About this time two additional corps were formed from the troops then on the Peninsula; and the Army of the Potomac took the shape which it retained without alteration (except the addition of McCall's division, taken from the First Corps, to the Fifth Corps), for the remainder of the Peninsula campaign: viz., —

Second Corps — Sumner: divisions of Richardson and Sedgwick.

Third Corps — Heintzelman: divisions of Hooker and Kearney.

Fourth Corps — Keyes: divisions of Couch and Casey.

Fifth Corps — Porter: divisions of Porter and Sykes, and the reserve artillery.

Sixth Corps — Franklin: divisions of Franklin (afterwards Slocum) and W. F. Smith.

On the 19th of May, headquarters and the corps of Porter and Franklin moved to Tunstall's Station on the railroad, five miles from White House.

On the 20th, Casey's division forded the Chickahominy, where Bottom's Bridge had been, and occupied the opposite heights. Bottom's Bridge was immediately rebuilt.

On the 21st, Stoneman's advance-guard was one mile from New Bridge; Franklin's corps, three miles from New Bridge, with Porter's corps at supporting distance in its rear; Sumner's corps on the railroad, about three

miles from the Chickahominy, connecting the right with the left; Couch's division of Keyes's corps on New Kent Road, near Bottom's Bridge, with Heintzelman's corps at supporting distance in the rear.

On the 22d, headquarters moved to Cold Harbor.

On the 24th, we carried the village of Mechanicsville, but the enemy destroyed the bridge on which the Mechanicsville Turnpike crossed the river. On the same day our left advance secured a position at Seven Pines, the point of junction of the Nine-Mile road with the Williamsburg road, which last road crosses the Chickahominy at Bottom's Bridge.

On the 26th, the railroad was in operation as far as the Chickahominy, and the railroad-bridge across the stream nearly completed.

During the last period, from the 17th to the 26th, it was often very hot and sultry, and sometimes dusty, but rain fell more than once.

It is difficult to account for, or justify, the slowness of McClellan's march. The distance from Williamsburg to the middle of a line drawn from Bottom's Bridge to Cold Harbor, measuring by the road, is about forty miles. That from West Point to the same point, measuring in the same way, is considerably less. One might almost say that, in the three weeks which McClellan took to accomplish this distance, he might have marched his army all the way in order of battle, bridging streams, felling trees, making roads, and supplying his army as he advanced. "I had hoped," he says, "by rapid movements to drive before me, or capture the enemy on the Penin-

sula, open the James River, and press on to Richmond before he should be materially re-enforced."[1] What was there to hinder his making the attempt? Instead of that, he followed him at the average rate of rather less than two miles a day. Had he any right or reason to expect that delay would make him proportionally stronger? The burden is on him to show that his advance was not culpably slow. Even his admirers cannot but admit that it was certainly lacking in audacity.

One critic of McClellan has said, "With him it was far more safe to fight the whole of Lee's army with the whole of his own, than to fight less than one-half of that army with two-thirds of his own." There is something in McClellan's history, a sort of incapacity of doing any thing till an ideal completeness of preparation was reached, which cannot fail to engage the attention of those who study his campaigns.

Having reached this point, with the Confederate army under Johnston encamped in front of Richmond and about three miles from it, and the Army of the Potomac under McClellan encamped on a line a short distance from the Confederate front, curving round from Mechanicsville, nearly north-east of the city, and about six miles from its centre, to Seven Pines, east of the southern part of the city and about seven miles from its centre, — it is a proper time to attempt to state the strength of the opposing forces. As Swinton well says, "McClellan's offensive movement . . . really ended with the establishment of his army on the Chickahominy;"[2] and he had not been a week in the position which I have sketched, before Johnston fell upon him.

[1] 12 W.R., 8. [2] Swinton, 121.

The following figures are taken from McClellan's Report: [1]

1862.	April 30.	Aggregate present and absent .	126,387
		Aggregate present	115,350
		Aggregate present for duty, omitting those sick and in arrest .	109,335

These figures included Franklin's division.

Mr. Tucker, the Assistant Secretary of War, testified before the Committee on the Conduct of the War that he knew from statements made to him by the quartermasters who were attending to the details, that 121,500 men embarked for the Peninsula prior to April 5, and shortly after that, Franklin's division of 12,000 men.[2] These figures are probably somewhat in excess of the truth; though, no doubt, death and discharge would account for a good deal of the discrepancy between his 133,500 and McClellan's 126,387. But McClellan's figures are to be preferred.

As the siege of Yorktown ended three days after the date at which McClellan reports his total present for duty at 109,335, and as many of those wounded at Williamsburg must have returned to duty by May 26, it seems to be fair to assume that McClellan had at that date present for duty between 100,000 and 110,000 men. This force (not to go into details as to special exceptions) was divided into five corps; each corps was composed of two divisions; and each division, of three brigades.

Gen. Johnston says [3] that on the day of Seven Pines he had altogether twenty-seven brigades. In a published

[1] 5 W.R., 13. [2] 1 C.W., 295. [3] Johnston's Narrative, 132.

letter he says that the average strength of a Confederate brigade before Seven Pines was 2,500 men. This would give him at that date 67,500 men.

In the Army of Northern Virginia Memorial Volume, Richmond, 1880, it is stated[1] that in the Seven-Days' Battles Lee had effectives present 80,054

In an elaborate article by Gen. Early, published in the Southern Historical Society Papers, he says that there came to Lee after the battles of Fair Oaks and Seven Pines as follows: —[2]

Brigades of Ripley		2,366	
Lawton		3,500	
Holmes	Ransom, J. G. Walker, Daniel, Wise,	10,257	
Jackson	Taliaferro, Winder, Jones,	8,000	24,123
Ewell	Elzey, Taylor, Trimble,		
Leaving to Johnston at Seven Pines			55,931

But Johnston says[3] that his command on the Peninsula was, on or about April 17, 1862 . . 53,000

Huger joined him, on or soon after May 10, with the whole or part of his force of 8,000

Assuming that he joined him with the whole force which he had commanded at Norfolk, this would raise his force to 61,000

[1] Page 343. [2] Vol. 1, 417–418. [3] Johnston's Narrative, 117.

i.e., if we assume that convalescents returning had practically made up his loss at Williamsburg; but when it is remembered that from the 17th of May he was quiet in front of Richmond, and only three miles from it, it seems easy to believe that his army grew rapidly.

Barnard says[1] that the Richmond papers, describing the battle of June 27, gave Lee's force as 65,000

And that Gen. Magruder in his official report gives as the number between McClellan and Richmond during the Gaines Mills fight[2] 25,000

90,000

Deduct from this total Early's total of arrivals after Seven Pines, viz. 24,123

And we have 65,877

As Johnston's force *after* Seven Pines.

Add to this his losses, say 5,000; and we have for his forces when he attacked, May 31, say 71,000 men.

The material at my command does not dispose me to make any positive assertion as to this matter of relative numbers; but I incline to the opinion that McClellan on the Chickahominy outnumbered Johnston in the ratio of three to two.

The limits of a single paper upon the subject assigned to me forbid my discussing the question of the wisdom or unwisdom of McClellan's plan for a movement by the Peninsula; and I shall also say no more about the with-

[1] Barnard's Peninsular Campaign, published 1864, 39. 13 W.R., 662.

drawal of McDowell, than that it was, in my opinion, in the highest degree unwise. I shall also refrain from discussing the wisdom of McClellan's decision to advance by the York instead of by the James,[1] and confine myself, for the most part, to a narrative of what was done, and left undone, in the execution of the plan adopted.

McClellan decided to advance, and did advance, by the York and Pamunkey side of the Peninsula, and did count upon the co-operation of McDowell.

McDowell was at Fredericksburg, with a little over 40,000 men and about one hundred pieces of artillery. It was about sixty-five miles from Fredericksburg to Richmond; but McClellan's right wing was, or was expected to be, about fifteen miles north of Richmond, thus reducing the distance between them to fifty miles. McDowell proposed to march by an almost due south line, by Bowling Green on the telegraph-road, to, or through, Hanover Court House. His men were furnished with two days' rations in their haversacks, and five days' subsistence besides was ready. The roads were very good, and he had been over a large part of them with his scouting-parties. He had a pontoon-train. It was an easy four days' march, — a march that could be made in three days or even less. The movement was to commence on Monday the 26th; but on the 25th McClellan learned that a large part of McDowell's force had been put in

[1] McClellan seems to attribute his decision to the Secretary of War's order of May 18, and the necessity of providing for a junction with McDowell. Barnard denies this, and says that "the great mistake of not taking the James River route was made eight days previous to the date of this order," when McClellan's army was at Roper's Church.

motion for Front Royal, to endeavor to intercept Jackson.[1]

On the 26th of May, after a panic in Washington, caused by Jackson's movements against Banks, etc., — and much consequent interruption of McClellan's plans, — McDowell's advance was still eight miles south of the Rappahannock. McClellan learned on the same day that a considerable force of the enemy was near Hanover Court House, between him and McDowell's men; and he directed Gen. Porter to brush them away.[2] Porter moved early on the 27th, after a rainy night, and had a brisk action with Branch, killing and wounding many of the enemy, and capturing over seven hundred men and one gun. Johnston admits that Branch "suffered severely in the encounter."[3] Gen. Barnard calls this a "really useless expedition;"[4] but I cannot agree with him, unless it be shown, as I do not think it can be, that McClellan knew that McDowell's movement to join him was not only suspended, but definitively given up. However this may have been, it is sufficient here to say that this was the last of the proposed co-operation of McDowell, except that one of his divisions, under McCall, was sent to McClellan a fortnight or so later.

There may be room for difference of opinion upon the question whether McClellan's advance to the Chickahominy was culpably slow. In my judgment, there is no room for difference of opinion upon the question whether he ought to have attacked before the 31st of May. The weather was fine from the 24th to the afternoon of the 30th, except that there was rain on the night of the 26th.

[1] 12 W.R., 31. [2] Ib., 33. [3] Johnston's Narrative, 130.
[4] Barnard's Peninsular Campaign, published 1864, 27.

The President's telegraphic despatches of May 24 and 25, informing him of the lively times that Banks and Fremont and so forth were having at Front Royal and Winchester, acquainted him with the fact that a considerable force, reported at the War Department as from 27,000 to 30,000 men, was operating in that distant region;[1] and he must have known, or at least had strong reason to believe, that Johnston was to some extent the weaker from this cause. This was a time for him to strike. He was the invader, his movement was offensive, and it was highly advantageous to him to take the initiative. By a strong movement by his right he could in a great measure avoid the obstacle of the Chickahominy; and every step he took in that direction tended to bring back the enemy's forces from the valley, to protect Washington, and to bring him nearer to the troops at Fredericksburg.

He did nothing of the kind, and it remains to tell what he did do. He busied himself with building bridges, eleven in number, between Bottom's Bridge and Mechanicsville, "all long and difficult, with extensive log-way approaches."[2]

On the 30th May there was a very heavy thunder-storm in the afternoon and evening, with floods of rain.

Saturday, the 31st, was very warm and cloudy. By that time Casey's division of Keyes's corps was some three-fourths of a mile in front of Seven Pines, on the right of the Williamsburg road, and at right angles to it, and Couch's division of the same corps at Seven Pines. The position was strengthened by rifle-pits, abatis, and a

[1] 12 W.R., 30, 31. [2] Ib., 30.

small redoubt for six field-guns. Heintzelman with his whole corps was two miles in advance of Bottom's Bridge, supporting Keyes, watching the crossing of White Oak Swamp, and covering the left and rear of the left wing. Of his own force, Kearney's division was on the railroad, from near Savage's Station toward the bridge, and Hooker's division was on the borders of White Oak Swamp.

Sumner's corps was encamped on the north side (left bank) of the Chickahominy, at Tyler's house, some six miles above Bottom's Bridge. Each of his divisions had thrown, or had, a bridge[1] over the stream opposite to its own position. The other corps of the army were on its left bank, and farther up the river.

Gen. Johnston had been watching the advance of our left wing in the hope that it would give him an opportunity to make a successful attack by increasing the interval between it and the larger force remaining beyond the river. With this view he studiously delayed his attack till, on learning that McDowell's troops were marching southward, he determined to attack the Army of the Potomac before it could receive so great an accession. But he presently learned that the troops which had been marching southward from Fredericksburg had returned; and this intelligence induced him to abandon the intention of a general attack, and made him fall back upon his first design, viz., to attack the left wing as soon as, by advan-

[1] Keyes claims that the Eleventh Maine, of Casey's division, built the Grape-Vine Bridge on which Sumner crossed his men May 31. 1 C.W., 606.

cing, they should sufficiently increase the interval between themselves and the three corps beyond the river. Such an opportunity, he says, was soon offered.

To those who are familiar with the configuration of the country, the danger of McClellan's position cannot fail to be apparent. It was not simply the case of an army of which one part is divided from another by a stream. There are objections to such a position; but where one force is in front of the other, and the communications are good, they are not, or may not be, very serious. But in the case before us the left wing, of two corps, was on the enemy's side of the river, while the right wing, of three corps, was stretched out along a line ten or twelve miles long, with the river running along its front from north-west to south-east, and that river the treacherous Chickahominy, of which it was hard to say at the best of times where its banks were, and of which no man could say to-day where its banks would be to-morrow.

Gen. Johnston's reconnoissances, made on the 30th May, satisfied him that a corps at least of our army was at, or west of, Seven Pines. He gave orders at once for the concentration of twenty-three of his twenty-seven brigades against our left wing, leaving the four others to observe the river from New Bridge up to Meadow Bridge. Longstreet and Huger were directed to conduct their commands as early as they could the next morning to D. H. Hill's position on the Williamsburg road. G. W. Smith was to march with his to the point of meeting of the New Bridge and Nine-Mile roads, near which Magruder had five brigades. Longstreet was to conduct the main attack,

which was to be made along the Williamsburg road by his own and D. H. Hill's divisions. G. W. Smith was to engage any troops that might cross the river to assist the Federal left wing, or, if none came, to fall on the right flank of that force. Huger's division was to march out on the Charles City road, by the right flank, to fall upon the Federal left as soon as the troops became engaged in front. Such earth-works or abatis as might be encountered were to be turned.

A deluge of rain fell, as has been said, in the afternoon and evening of the 30th; but the rest of the night was quiet. Saturday, the 31st, was cloudy, and very warm and still. The ground of course was heavy from the rain. A letter dated Richmond, June 3, 1862, speaks of the roads as so inconceivably heavy, and ponds of water as so frequent and deep, as to make the progress of the Confederate troops slow and irksome.

Johnston had such confidence in the success of his main attack, from the force detailed for it and his knowledge of the wide intervals between the lines of our left wing, that he left the management of it to Longstreet and D. H. Hill, the former being the ranking officer, and placed himself on the left, where he could soonest learn of the approach of Federal re-enforcements from beyond the river. He sent out scouts and reconnoitring parties to watch for such.[1]

The division of D. H. Hill was formed in two lines, at right angles to the Williamsburg road, with its centre on that road. There was a brigade on each side of the road,

[1] Johnston's Narrative, 133–134.

each supported by a brigade from the same division, and each preceded by a regiment of skirmishers. Three of Longstreet's brigades followed; and, of his remaining three brigades, two were to advance on the Charles-City road on the right, and one along the railroad on the left.[1]

Gen. Keyes's testimony and the copies of letters and despatches which he embodies in it seem to prove conclusively that he apprehended an attack for some time before it was made, and so notified headquarters; and that he felt much uneasiness in regard to his advanced and exposed position. After a thorough examination of his whole position, he discovered, he says, that the enemy was, in greater or less force, closed upon the whole circumference of a semicircle described from his headquarters near Seven Pines with a radius of two miles.[2]

He says that Casey was so far forward, and the country so thickly wooded, that there was no moment in which his troops might not have been attacked by masses of the enemy, who could have reached his lines in about fifteen minutes from the time when they first showed themselves; that Casey's pickets were only about one thousand yards in advance of his line of battle, and that he had decided,

[1] I *suppose* that Hill had in this action the brigades of Rodes, Rains, G. B. Anderson, and Garland, and that Longstreet had the brigades of R. H. Anderson, Wilcox, Kemper, Pryor, Pickett, and Featherston, the last commanded by a Col. Anderson. Johnston says (Narrative, pp. 132, 141) that of the twenty-three brigades concentrated for the attack, there were thirteen on the Williamsburg road, and that Magruder and G. W. Smith had ten on the left. This leaves three for Huger. The usual difficulty of identifying brigades, when designated by the names of their commanders, is increased here from the fact that there were at this time in Johnston's army no less than four brigade commanders of the name of Anderson.

[2] 1 C.W., 606.

after a personal inspection made in company with Casey, that they could go no farther, as they were stopped by the enemy in force.[1]

On the day of the battle Casey's division was about half a mile in advance of Seven Pines, with Wessell's brigade in the centre, Palmer's on the left, and Naglee's on the right, with two regiments beyond the railroad. There was an abatis in rear of a part of this division,[2] continuing on a curve to the right and rear, across the Nine-Mile road. Casey also had a small redoubt for six pieces, and some rifle-pits. Couch's division was on the right and left of the Williamsburg road, near Seven Pines, and along the Nine-Mile road. Peck was on the left, Devens in the centre, and Abercombie on the right, with two regiments and Brady's battery across the railroad near Fair Oaks.

The divisions of Kearney and Hooker were posted as heretofore stated: i.e., Kearney on the railroad between Savage's Station and the bridge, and Hooker near White Oak Swamp.

Gen. Keyes says that his suspicions of a coming attack were strengthened by the capture, at ten A.M. of the 31st, of one of Gen. Johnston's aides near his lines; that on this day the firing commenced gradually, that the troops of both his divisions were under arms by eleven A.M, and all the artillery-horses (except those belonging to the battery in the redoubt) were harnessed; and that he himself was on horseback an hour and a half, riding along his

[1] 1 C.W., 607.

[2] That is to say, in rear of some troops of this division, which had been thrown forward as an advanced post.

lines, before he considered the action serious, which was at about half-past twelve.[1]

All the Confederate troops, except Huger's, were in position seasonably. Johnston says[2] that, after waiting in vain for this division till two o'clock, Longstreet put Hill's and his own men in motion towards the Federal position in order of battle. The orders were that the skirmishers should advance by the flank through fields; and, the woods in front once in Confederate possession, the brigades were to advance rapidly and move steadily forward, except that, as above stated, abatis and intrenchments were to be flanked, the supports taking the place of the leading brigades while the turning movements were proceeding.

It is evident that Johnston is mistaken in his statement of time. Heintzelman testified before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, that the battle commenced about one;[3] and his report names the same hour as the time when he first heard firing, and in it he says that he then sent forward two of his aides to learn what it was. At two P.M., he got a note from Keyes, asking for two brigades. At 2.30, his aides returned, reporting that the first line was being driven in. At the same time the road from the front was filled with fugitives. Naglee says that at twelve M., two shells, thrown into his camp, first announced the hostile intentions of the enemy.[4] Casey says,[5] "The enemy attacked me twenty minutes of one o'clock." Couch says, Between 12.30 and one P.M., two or three cannon-shot came into my camp, thrown over Casey's

[1] 1 C.W., 607. [2] Johnston's Narrative, 134. [3] Ib., 351.
[4] 12 W.R., 921. [5] C.W., 444.

line. Musketry-firing soon after began on his line, and in half an hour the action seemed to be general in that division.[1] Peck reports that at a little after eleven A.M. heavy picket-firing was heard in front, and several shells fell in the vicinity of his headquarters.[2] Keyes, that at 12.30 it became suddenly apparent that the attack was real and in great force.[3] A mounted vidette was sent in to Casey from the advanced picket, between eleven and twelve, to report that a body of the enemy was in sight, approaching on the main road. Soon after, a second vidette reported that the enemy was advancing in force. About the same time two shells were thrown over his camp. The correspondent of the Cincinnati Commercial heard the volleys of musketry at about one P.M. A correspondent of the New York Tribune reported that the picket-firing began between eleven and twelve. The Richmond Despatch of June 2 stated that skirmishers were deployed between eleven and twelve, and began the advance without much opposition. Another account, dated Richmond, June 2, says that the attack began at ten or eleven. The Memphis Appeal account, dated Richmond, June 3, speaks of Hill as bearing the brunt of the fight alone from twelve till half-past two, and says that the fight at about three P.M. was terrific. Naglee abandoned the advanced line at about three. At three Heintzelman ordered Kearney to send a brigade up the railroad. McClellan's report says that at one o'clock Gen. Sumner moved his two divisions to their respective bridges. This I know to be incorrect; but I also remember that it was reasonably early in the afternoon, probably not later than

[1] 12 W.R., 879. [2] Ib., 888. [3] Ib., 873.

three, that we were ordered to get under arms. To complete the contradictions of this matter, Longstreet's report says that he waited six hours, and then moved D. H. Hill at about two. He also says that Hill's entire division was engaged by three. These singular variations are interesting rather than important. I feel sure that Johnston and Longstreet are, to some extent, wrong; but it may be sufficient to say, that the engagement began at some time between twelve and three, and nearer twelve than three.

This battle of May 31 seems to me to show two things: first, the prevalence of the *commander-in-chief idea;* and, second, the imperfectness of the armies, Federal and Confederate, as instruments, at that early stage of the war.

The idea I speak of was always, in my judgment, pernicious to McClellan. He never, from first to last, made his presence felt on the battle-field. As Heintzelman told the Committee: "He was the most extraordinary man I ever saw. I do not see how any man could leave so much to others; and be so confident that every thing would go just right."[1] I find the same fault with Johnston's conduct on this occasion. After devising a truly admirable plan, he omitted to see personally to its execution. With all the troops he had in hand, it was little matter whether Huger, with his "garrison troops" from Norfolk, was punctual or not. The distances were short; and he should have gone himself to his right, set Hill and Longstreet to work early in the day, and then he might have gone to his left, to watch for the approach of Union

[1] 1 C.W., 359.

troops from beyond the river. But if the armies had been what they afterwards became, the Confederate attack would have been made both earlier and more rapidly, and the Federal Third Corps would not have failed so nearly totally as it did, to re-enforce the Fourth Corps.

For reasons which I shall give presently, I shall not go much into detail in my account of the main battle of the 31st of May. We have seen that there were thirteen Confederate brigades told off for the work, which, according to Johnston's own estimate, should amount to 32,500 men. These were opposed to three Federal divisions. Keyes put the total of his corps, actually engaged, at 12,000; and Heintzelman gave the total engaged, in his report, at 16,200, that being his estimate of the total of the divisions of Casey and Couch, and the brigades of Berry and Jameson, of Kearney's division. Birney's, the third of the last division, was halted short of the field, in consequence of which its commander was court-martialled, but acquitted.

This agrees very well with the estimate of the Richmond Despatch account dated June 2,[1] which states that their scouts reported 17,000 of the enemy between the railroad and the Williamsburg road, and that this strength was not much of an over-estimate, judging from the fact that they took prisoners from nineteen regiments.[2] Moreover, Naglee reported that he took in 1,753 officers and men, and Peck 2,000. As Casey had an extended picket-

[1] 5 Rebellion Record, 101.

[2] In my opinion, the Confederates took into action habitually a much larger percentage of the nominal strength of each battalion, than we did.

line, it is probable that his brigades were smaller than the others engaged; but, taking Peck's 2,000 as an average, the eight Federal brigades engaged would make 16,000 men.

Of the fighting, it seems to be sufficient to say, that upon the whole we were driven back steadily, though the Richmond Despatch account, dated June 2, says, "After two hours fighting, our men drove the enemy from his camps," and speaks of the Yankees' "obstinate resistance," and the Confederate "heavy losses." One of the most important and decisive movements, Longstreet says, was made by Rodes, whose brigade belonged to D. H. Hill's division. Moving by his right, he turned and drove in the Federal left. The attacking-force was not re-enforced, except by Longstreet's own brigades from the second line. G. B. Anderson, R. H. Anderson, Wilcox, Garland, and Kemper seem to have advanced by or near the Williamsburg road; Rodes, Rains, Colston, and Pryor, by the right; but Pryor hardly effected any thing, being behind time. Pickett was in reserve.

There has been much controversy about the behavior of our troops, especially of Casey's. It is within my personal knowledge, that it was stated at the time and on the ground (that is, within the days immediately succeeding the action), that discipline was slack in Casey's division; and that, when the pickets were driven in, as many as a thousand of them were straying to the front, without arms and equipments, "prospecting" and amusing themselves generally, and that their rush back to camp, when the first shots were fired, had a very confusing and de-

moralizing effect. The Cincinnati Commercial account of the battle[1] says that Casey's troops "were the greenest troops in the army, commanded by a superannuated general," and that "too many of their field and line officers exhibited gross cowardice." Heintzelman, in his Report,[2] speaks of them as "raw troops," in which, before the battle, he had not entire confidence. He says, in another place, that "the artillery was well served, and some of the regiments fought gallantly till overwhelmed by numbers. After they were once broken, however, they could not be rallied. The road was filled with fugitives (not all from this [Casey's] division) as far as Bottom's Bridge. . . . A guard placed at Bottom's Bridge stopped over a thousand men."[3] He speaks of the "great gallantry" of Kearney, his officers and men, and the steadiness of most of Couch's division. The story that he repeats of an officer telling him that he visited Casey's camp after we recovered possession of our advanced line, and "found more men bayoneted and shot within their shelter-tents than outside of them,"[4] I incline to regard as fanciful. The official report of 922 missing from the Fourth Corps after May 31 and June 1, on the second of which days the corps was not engaged, does not look well. Naglee admits, that near dark the Union forces made one general, simultaneous movement to the rear, with little regard to organization.[5] Johnston's language in regard to the behavior of Casey's division is decidedly complimentary. He says the division "occupied a line of rifle-pits, strengthened by a redoubt, and

[1] 5 Rebellion Record, 90. [2] 12 W.R., 812. [3] Ib., 815.
[4] Ib., 816. [5] Ib., 923.

covered by abatis. Here the resistance was obstinate; for the Federal troops, commanded by an officer of tried courage, fought as soldiers usually do under good leaders." It is to be remembered that Johnston did not see this fighting himself. The truth I take to have been, that there was much bad behavior in Casey's division, and some good, especially in the artillery, and in Naglee's brigade; and that the conduct of Couch's men and Kearney's two brigades was generally good. It may be mentioned in this connection, as a striking illustration of the safety that attends some regiments, even in bloody battles, that the Seventh Massachusetts Regiment, Couch's own regiment, and in his division, had this day one sergeant and three privates wounded.

Night put an end to the fighting. The Confederates had gained some ground, had taken a good many prisoners, eight guns (of which one was recaptured the next day), and several colors, with a loss of about 4,500 men, including several colonels killed. On our side, Heintzelman's report[1] gives the losses in the Third and Fourth Corps as 3,842 officers and men killed, wounded, and missing. Naglee reported that he carried into action 84 officers and 1,669 men, and lost 35 officers and 603 men.[2] These figures look like very hard fighting. Peck reports that he lost 344 out of 2,000.[3]

I have found myself unable to form a perfectly clear idea of what the Confederates claim as to the point which they reached at the close of this engagement; but I understand them to claim that when, night being near, Hill

[1] 12 W.R., 759–762. [2] Ib., 925.

[3] Ib., 889 (according to revised statement, 347, Ib., 761).

gathered his troops, and re-formed them, facing to the east, as they had been fighting, at right angles to the Williamsburg road, but with the left thrown back to face Sumner's men at Fair Oaks, their main line was more than a mile east of Seven Pines, and about a mile to the west of Heintzelman's intrenched line between Savage's Station and Seven Pines, — that is to say, about half way between the two.

I think that this is not very far from the truth; for we know that in the night which followed, the division of Sedgwick, facing west, rested its left at Fair Oaks Station; and that the right of Richardson, who was formed along the railroad facing south, was near the same station. McClellan says that there was a wide interval that night between Richardson and Kearney, and that it was closed the next morning.[1] Richardson says, on the other hand, that his division came up on the left of Sedgwick, and connected with Birney's brigade of Heintzelman's corps on his left.[2] We also know that in the battle of the following day Richardson's first line was composed of a brigade, a regiment, and a battery. I infer, therefore, that the main line of the Confederates rested that night at something less than a mile east of Seven Pines.

My reasons for not going into more detail as to the main battle of May 31 are two. In the first place, there is little of interest in the execution of the plan. In the second place, the accounts of the main battle are to a large extent the accounts of commanders who were not present, as was the case with Johnston and McClellan, or of the commanders of beaten troops, like Keyes and

[1] 12 W.R., 41. [2] Ib., 764.

Casey. Experience has taught me to distrust extremely the reports of fighting made by officers who have been defeated; and, as both Keyes and Casey practically disappeared from the field shortly after the events I am describing, it is a question whether their superiors believed they did as well as they said they did. Heintzelman, too, was on the defensive when he wrote his report; for he was not only the ranking officer on his side of the river, but the commanding officer. His official report, dated June 7, 1862, commences: "I have the honor to report the operations of the Third and Fourth Army Corps, under my command, during the engagement of the 31st May and the 1st of June."[1] He knew what the position was, he knew that Casey's defensive works were poor, he had not entire confidence in Casey's troops; and yet, when the attack came, he totally failed to enable him or Keyes to hold their positions. It must, however, be stated, in justice to him, that he was somewhat hampered by his instructions, which, while they directed him to hold the Seven Pines at all hazards, forbade him "to move the troops guarding the approaches of Bottom's Bridge and crossing of the White Oak Swamp, unless it became absolutely necessary to hold the position in front at the Seven Pines."[2] As for Kearney, I saw him myself that day, as I returned to my camp from dining with Gen. Sumner near Tyler's house. I think I saw him as late as two o'clock; and as he was then riding east, away from the river, I think he probably made the circuit, and crossed the river by the railroad-bridge or at Bottom's Bridge, and so was late in getting his men forward. There is little that is valuable to be

[1] 12 W.R., 812. [2] Ib., 813.

gained from the letters and report of this singular man. They are confused and obscure to the point of incomprehensibility, boastful beyond expression, passionate and hysterical. Couch's report tells but little, because it so happened that he did but little; and Hooker was not in the action.

I pass now from the Williamsburg road and its immediate neighborhood to the ground near Fair Oaks Station.

It will be remembered that Johnston had ordered G. W. Smith to march with his brigades early on the 31st May to the point of meeting of the New Bridge and Nine-Mile roads, near which Magruder had five brigades; that Smith had obeyed this order; and that Johnston had placed himself with these troops. The point of meeting was about two miles north-west of Fair Oaks Station. Smith, as well as Magruder, had five brigades, according to Johnston's narrative.[1] It will also be remembered that Couch's line extended across the railroad, with two regiments and Brady's battery near Fair Oaks Station. These regiments were the First United-States Chasseurs, Col. Cochrane, and the Thirty-first Pennsylvania, Col. Williams, afterwards known as the Eighty-second.

Johnston says that at about four P.M. he decided not to keep Smith any longer out of action for a contingency so remote as the coming of re-enforcements from the Federal right, and desired him to direct his division against the right flank of Longstreet's adversaries. He thought it prudent, however, to leave Magruder's division in reserve. Gen. Smith accordingly moved promptly along the Nine-

[1] Johnston's Narrative, 133 *et seq.*

Mile road. His leading regiment soon became engaged with the Federal skirmishers and their reserves, and in a few minutes drove them off entirely. On his way to Longstreet's left, to combine the action of his two wings, Johnston passed the head of Smith's column near Fair Oaks, and saw the camp of a body of infantry, of the strength of three or four regiments apparently, in the northern angle between the railroad and the Nine-Mile road, and the rear of a body of infantry moving in quick time from that point towards the river by the road to the Grape-Vine Ford. A few minutes after this, a battery, at the point where this infantry had disappeared, opened its fire upon the head of the Confederate column. A regiment sent against it was received with a volley of musketry, as well as canister, and recoiled.

The leading brigade, commanded by Col. Law, then advanced; and so much strength was developed by the enemy, that Gen. Smith formed his other brigades, and brought them into battle on the left of Law. An obstinate contest began, and was maintained on equal terms. Not doubting that Smith was quite strong enough to cope with the enemy before him (and confessedly not suspecting the arrival of re-enforcements), Johnston directed Hood to go forward, and, connecting his right with Longstreet's left, to fall upon the right flank of Longstreet's opponents. The increase of the fire at Fair Oaks led Johnston to ride back to that field, "still unconvinced, however, that Smith was fighting more than a brigade, and thinking it injudicious to engage Magruder's division, as it was the only reserve." The contest on the left was

continued with equal determination by both parties, each holding the ground on which it had begun to fight. This condition of affairs existed on the left at half-past six P.M., and it was evident that the battle would not be terminated that day. So he announced to his staff-officers that each regiment must sleep where it might be standing when the contest ceased for the night, to be ready to renew it at dawn next morning.

About seven o'clock he was severely wounded. "The firing ceased, terminated by *darkness only*, before I had been carried a mile from the field."[1]

I propose to interpret, amplify, correct, and criticise this narrative.

I suppose that the camp of three or four regiments, which Johnston saw in the northern angle of the railroad and the Nine-Mile road, was the camp of the two right regiments of Couch's division, and of Brady's battery; and there can be no doubt that the rear of the moving body of infantry which he saw was four regiments with which Couch had endeavored to advance to relieve the pressure upon Casey's right, and with which and a battery (no doubt Brady's) he was cut off from his division.[2] McClellan says that with these four regiments and one battery Couch fell back about half a mile towards the Grape-Vine Bridge, where, hearing that Sumner had crossed, he formed line of battle, and prepared to hold the position.[3]

[1] Johnston's Narrative, 137–139.

[2] First United States Chasseurs, Thirty-first (afterwards Eighty-second) Pennsylvania, Seventh Massachusetts, Sixty-second New York, Brady's Battery H, First Pennsylvania Artillery.

[3] 12 W.R., 40.

Early in the afternoon of this day, Gen. Sumner, commanding the Second Corps, received orders to hold his command in readiness to cross the river. Instead of doing this and nothing more, he moved out with his two divisions till the leading company of each reached the bridges. In this way he saved at least an hour. When the order to advance came, we of Sedgwick's division crossed on the upper bridge comfortably enough, officers and mounted men dismounting, but no other precautions being taken that I remember. I was near the rear of the column, it is true; and probably our own weight held down and steadied the bridge. Richardson's division of our corps found its bridge so nearly afloat that only one of its brigades crossed by it. The other two crossed by ours, but all three were much delayed.

We left the Nineteenth Massachusetts Regiment of our brigade (the Third) at the western end of the bridge; and in a creek which we had to pass soon after, one of the guns of Kirby's battery (I, of the First Artillery) got stalled, and we left the Forty-second New York, also of our brigade, to help get the guns across. None of the guns of our division got up in time to take part in the fighting of this day, except the five light twelves of Kirby's battery. We took the way by Trent's house, where my regiment halted to load.

Thus Sumner was able to take on to the field of Fair Oaks only a part of the Second Division: viz., the First Brigade, composed of the First Minnesota, the Fifteenth Massachusetts, and the Thirty-fourth and Eighty-second New York; the Second Brigade, of four Pennsylvania

regiments; and, of the Third Brigade, only the Twentieth Massachusetts and the Seventh Michigan; with five guns.

We arrived on the field at about six o'clock. The first object that attracted the attention was Kirby's five guns, in battery to the right of Courtney's house, and firing with astonishing rapidity. I saw another battery standing, apparently abandoned, in the rear of the same house. I am confident I saw no men or horses with the guns. It was, no doubt, Brady's battery.[1] There was infantry to the right of the guns, but it did not seem to be actively engaged. I know that it was all (or most) of Couch's four regiments, the Pennsylvania brigade of the Second division of the Second Corps, and, perhaps, the First Minnesota. I cannot speak from personal knowledge of their formation; but I understand from the reports that all this force was to the right of the guns, and that part of it was at right angles to the line presently formed by the guns and the troops to their left. The First and Third brigades of Sedgwick's division, what there was of them, moved up toward the guns, and formed line to the left of them. The Twentieth Massachusetts, in which I was, was the last regiment but one, the Seventh Michigan being the last. I had just faced my men to their proper front, and the wheels were beginning, when one of Sumner's aides directed me to form line by the movement then

[1] Since I wrote thus far, I have procured a copy of Couch's report. [12 W.R., 879.] It is hard to understand, but he seems to say that two sections of his battery were used. In the State history of the battery it is said that it had this day one man killed and five wounded. I still believe that I saw some guns standing neglected behind Courtney's house, and that they belonged to this battery.

known as "on the right by files into line," and to see that the men commenced firing by file as soon as they got into their places. The movement was promptly executed, and, as our line developed, the hostile fire became quite warm. The enemy seemed, for the most part, to be lining the front of the woods beyond a little road that ran nearly north and south, to Fair Oaks Station. Soon there came an order to gain ground to the left; and we ceased firing, faced to the left, marched a moderate distance, faced to the front again, and re-opened our fire. Soon cheering began, and ran down the line vigorously. Then we were ordered to charge; and we double-quicked to the front, and crossed the road, the enemy retreating before us. We were not much more molested by fire from the front; but presently a brisk flank fire was opened on our left from a piece of woods near the station, and west of the road I have mentioned. The fire of the Twentieth Massachusetts and the Seventh Michigan soon put a stop to this, and that was about the last of it. We took prisoners in very considerable numbers. We gained ground so rapidly in the last fifteen or twenty minutes that the enemy's wounded in our rear were numerous, and the field in our immediate front, and the woods to our right and left front, contained not a few. We sometimes, and not seldom, found a knot of them twined together like snakes behind stumps. They seemed bewildered, and begged for mercy. We of the Twentieth Regiment alone took prisoners from North and South Carolina, Virginia, Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Tennessee, and Texas, including several men of the Hampton

Legion, the lieutenant-colonel and color-sergeant of a Georgia regiment, and Gen. Pettigrew.

We have Gen. Johnston's authority for the statement that G. W. Smith brought all his five brigades into battle against us. I know that Sumner had of his own men two brigades and a half, i.e., ten regiments and no more, and five guns; and of Couch's men three or four regiments and a battery. I say three or four, because McClellan's Report states, that, after Sumner's arrival, one of Couch's regiments was sent to open communication with Heintzelman.[1] As for the Fourth Corps guns, I know they were not all in battery when we arrived, and the evidence leaves it doubtful whether they were all used at any time this afternoon. At the outside, then, we had fourteen regiments, or three brigades and a half, to oppose to Smith's five brigades; and one battery and five guns to oppose to the artillery of his division. When Gen. Johnston says that the obstinate contest between us was continued on equal terms and with equal determination by both parties, each holding the ground on which it had begun to fight, he says what may have been true at half-past six, but was not true at seven, the hour when he says he was wounded. I do not claim any great victory for Sedgwick's division that day. I know that we did not gain a great deal of ground. I know that our so-called charge was only a rapid and spirited advance. I do not believe that a man in the five or six regiments[2] which took part in it used the bayonet; but I also know that

[1] 12 W.R., 40.

[2] I say five or six, because I incline to the belief that the First Minnesota was not sent forward with us.

the movement was absolutely successful; that it cleared our front so completely that we established our pickets in advance without interference; that we gathered numerous prisoners, wounded and unwounded, in our front, and that the manhood seemed to be quite taken out of many of them; that it appeared to completely relieve our guns and our right of all pressure; and that we passed the night entirely unmolested. Gen. Johnston also says that the firing ceased, terminated by *darkness only*, before he had been carried a mile from the field.[1] I suppose the darkness had something to do with it, but that a principal reason was that Smith's men were surprised and scared. It was not *very* dark in Virginia on the 31st of May, at about 7.15 P.M., when the firing ceased. Gen. Johnston's statements, in his Report, that Smith's division "bivouacked, on the night of the 31st, within musket-shot of the intrenchments which they were attacking, when darkness stayed the conflict,"[2] and that Smith was prevented from renewing his attack next morning by the discovery of strong intrenchments not seen on the previous evening, — are purely visionary. There were no intrenchments there to attack, or to see, or fail to see. It was virgin soil to us, and we went to fighting as soon as we set foot on it; and the first digging we did was to bury the dead.

Smith reported a loss of 1,233. I do not find any statement of our loss at Fair Oaks that day, but I think it was a little over 300. McClellan[3] gives the total loss in Sumner's corps in the two days as 1,223; and Rich-

[1] Johnston's Narrative, 139. [2] 12 W.R., 935. [3] Ib., 42.

ardson gives his loss, June 1, as 900.[1] The Twentieth Massachusetts lost 31 or 32, of whom 4 (I believe) were killed.[2]

The more I study Johnston's writings, the more cause I find to distrust them. I like to believe in him; but I cannot do so absolutely, for I find that he permits himself great freedom in asserting what he does not know to be true, and what proves with fuller knowledge not to be true. Thus he asserts that Magruder's men were his only reserve on Saturday;[3] and yet he asserts that five of his thirteen brigades on the Williamsburg road defeated us there,[4] which would give him a reserve of eight brigades there. On the other hand, I have shown that, instead of five brigades engaged on that road, nine were engaged, leaving out Pickett (who was confessedly in reserve) and the three brigades of Huger. Moreover, Johnston says that he himself put in Hood, from his left wing, on Longstreet's left, which would made ten brigades engaged on the Williamsburg road. I doubt the accuracy of this statement, however; for we of the Twentieth Massachusetts Regiment took prisoners from the Hampton Legion and some Texans; and the Confederate roster of June 26, 1862, gives the Hampton Legion and four Texas regiments to Hood's brigade, and shows no other Texans as then in the Confederate army of Northern Virginia. His comments on this battle are full of errors, which it is not worth while to follow in detail.

Of losses in this battle it may be said, that the Second (Pennsylvania) Brigade of Sedgwick's division had 5

[1] 12 W.R., 766, according to revised returns, 838. Ib., 757.

[2] According to revised returns, 2 killed, 18 wounded. Ib.

[3] Johnston's Narrative, 138. [4] Ib., 141.

men killed and 25 wounded.[1] Of Couch's force with Sumner, the Eighty-second Pennsylvania lost 5 killed and 25 wounded;[2] Col. Riker of the Sixty-second New York was killed. The Richmond Despatch account, dated June 2, stated that "Hampton's Legion lost, in killed and wounded, a slight fraction over one-half its members," and says, "The enemy (Sedgwick's division, that is) of course fought with great bravery."[3]

Without going into tedious particulars, I may state here that G. W. Smith, whose name presently disappears from history, seems to have commanded at Fair Oaks troops which a few weeks after formed the whole of Whiting's division, and the greater part of A. P. Hill's.

I suppose it may fairly be claimed that Sedgwick's division got across the river and to the Fair Oaks neighborhood just in the very nick of time. There was nothing north of the railroad to oppose the ten brigades of the Confederate left wing, except Couch's four regiments and one battery. If we had been fifteen minutes later, the enemy might have occupied some heights commanding the western end of our bridge, and on the level of the tops of the trees in the bed of the river. A single battery there would have effectively stopped our advance, and made the bridge useless to us. It would seem, that, if this had happened, the twenty-three brigades of the Confederates would have had the twelve brigades of Keyes and Heintzelman at their mercy.

I have never been able to quite make up my mind what course McClellan ought to have pursued after this battle. It is easy to be wise after the event; but the only question

[1] 12 W.R., 758. [2] Ib., 761. [3] 5 Rebellion Record, 101.

of real interest is, what he ought to have known and ought to have done *then*. I am clear that he ought to have come upon the ground, and fought his own battle. He did not do this. I am clear that after the battle he ought to have come to the front, and seen Heintzelman and Sumner, seen the troops, cheered them by his presence, formed his own conclusions, and given orders accordingly. He did not do this, but sent for Heintzelman to leave his troops, cross to the other side of the Chickahominy, and meet him. Richardson's division got on to the ground that evening, and all the batteries of the Second Corps during the night. Thus there were disposable the next morning, of troops that were fresh, or practically so, Hooker's three brigades, Birney's brigade of Kearney's division, Richardson's three brigades, the second brigade of Sedgwick's division, which had only lost thirty-three men, and Couch's four regiments, which had been pushed out of the fight early, — say nine brigades. It was a fair assumption for McClellan, that Johnston had struck with all his force. He had received punishment, especially in attacking the intrenchments on the Williamsburg road, and was probably much weakened. With Keyes's five brigades and Kearney's two on the Williamsburg road, and Sumner's two on the north of the railroad, and all the fresh troops specified above, my impression is that McClellan ought to have ordered the bulk of his forces to take up strong positions for fighting a defensive battle and to hold the enemy in check, and ordered a force of four or six brigades under an enterprising officer to make a strong push for New

Bridge.[1] The approaches to that uncovered, as many men as he wished from the Fifth and Sixth Corps might have crossed, and he would have had a great chance of beating the enemy, and entering Richmond. It is not worth while to invade a country, and approach its capital, and move close up to the army covering it, to then find excuses for doing nothing more; and when we find an invader directing the commander of his advanced forces to hold his position, as Heintzelman says McClellan did that night, we are not surprised that the invasion comes to nought.

The night following the battle was damp and cold. The morning broke gray and misty. We stood to arms at three A.M. The growing light showed us the Confederate dead lying to the rear, right, and front of us, and especially in the little wood to our left front, from which the flank fire was opened on the left of Sedgwick's division at sunset of the preceding day. The same growing light showed us that many of our comrades had arrived. The Second Corps, with its eight batteries, was now united. There was desultory firing of cannon and rifles from dawn. We could see the enemy in the edge of some timber to the west of us, some three-eighths of a mile away, but the fire of one of our batteries soon caused them to disappear. By or before seven A.M., Sedgwick's division of the Second Corps was in position facing west, in a north and south line, along the road I have mentioned, with its left near Fair Oaks Station. The

[1] Gen. Barnard says that New Bridge was passable at 8.15 A.M., on June 1. Peninsular Campaign, 1864, 28.

Nine-Mile road crossed the railroad, on its way to Seven Pines, just in front of Fair Oaks Station. Richardson's division was formed in three lines, facing south, with its right not far from Fair Oaks Station. His first line was composed of French's brigade, a regiment of Howard's, and a battery of Parrott guns; Howard's three remaining regiments formed the second line; and Meagher's brigade, with eighteen guns, the third line. The first line was across, i.e., to the south of, the railroad, and seems to have connected on its left with Birney's brigade of Kearney's division. I understand that Couch's four (or three) regiments were where they were when the fight of Saturday ceased, and that Keyes's other men and all Heintzelman's were at, and in rear of, the latter's intrenched lines. Thus the Federal troops were in a broken line of two north and south lines, connected by an east and west line; and the Confederates were partly opposite the northernmost of these three lines, and partly in the angle formed by the central and southernmost lines. The Twentieth Massachusetts Infantry seemed to be used all day as a connecting link between Sedgwick's and Richardson's divisions.

With troops so placed, it was reasonably certain that a collision would occur, and accordingly it did occur.[1] It was not a large or a long battle, but it was a very intense one. It never fell to my lot to hear such musketry-fire as I heard then. Next to no artillery was used. The troops engaged were, of the Federals, Richardson's entire

[1] Sumner said: "It is not exactly certain which party fired first." 1 C.W., 363.

division of Sumner's Second Corps, five regiments of the Third Corps (the Fifth and Sixth New Jersey, the Third Maine, and the Thirty-eighth and Fortieth New York), pushed forward along the railroad by Hooker, and Sickles's brigade, which advanced to the left and right of the Williamsburg road. Richardson says that his force brought into action amounted to seven thousand men.[1] Sickles's brigade and the five regiments used by Hooker may have raised our force engaged to ten or twelve thousand men.

Richardson says that the enemy's principal attack was made on his left, by two wood roads, along which they pushed columns of attack in mass, supported on both flanks by deployed infantry battalions; that a second attack caused him to throw forward Meagher's brigade; that the action lasted from two hours to two hours and a half, until the enemy fell back.[2] This entirely agrees with my recollection of what I saw and heard.

Johnston, in his Narrative, treats the whole affair very lightly. He says that Pickett, on the left of the line of Longstreet and Hill, attacked a strong body of Federals, and drove them off; that the Federals, being apparently re-enforced, resumed the offensive; but that Pickett, being re-enforced by two regiments from Colston's brigade, repulsed the attack.[3] In his report, dated June 24, 1862, he says that the Federal attack was vigorously repelled by the two brigades of Pickett and Pryor, the brunt of the fight falling on Gen. Pickett.[4] This will not do, however. Longstreet says, Pickett and Pryor "shared in repulsing a serious attack upon our position."[5]

[1] 12 W.R., 766. [2] Ib., 765. [3] Johnston's Narrative, 139.
[4] 12 W.R., 935. [5] Ib., 940.

The Confederate Gen. Wilcox says that Longstreet's men, engaged on the 1st of June, were not limited to Pickett's brigade and Pryor's; that the firing began early June 1 on his own (Wilcox's) front, and extended to the left, covering Pryor's entire front; that these brigades were in line on their left, parallel with the Williamsburg road, facing north, the right of Wilcox's brigade being over a mile to the east of the captured works of the Federals (the Nineteenth Mississippi of Wilcox's brigade having been thrown, on the evening of May 31, three or four hundred yards to the east on the Williamsburg road on picket, and occupying the most advanced point reached by the Confederates May 31); that Wilcox and Pryor did not lose heavily, not being long under fire, being ordered to retire,[1] and re-form on the right of the road near the captured works of the Federals; and that a part of Armistead's brigade, of Huger's division, and also Mahone's brigade of the same division, were engaged a short time on the left of Pryor. The Richmond Despatch account, dated June 2, speaks of heavy losses in this engagement, the Third Alabama losing its colonel, adjutant, two captains, and a lieutenant, killed, and five officers wounded. It also says that the slaughter among the men, particularly of the Third Alabama and Twelfth Virginia, was "terrific;" the Third Alabama losing, in killed and wounded, 190 men, and Pryor's brigade losing ten per cent of its strength, principally in the Sixth and Fourteenth Alabama.

[1] This order to retire looks like defeat.

The truth is, that this was a small, short, sharp, infantry fight, between a little more than five brigades of Federals and about five brigades of Confederates. The musketry was intense while it lasted. There were few changes of position. The rebels yelled tremendously. We certainly re-enforced our original front line, and the Confederates undoubtedly re-enforced theirs. It was a hot, cloudless, long, trying forenoon. Whether they really tried to pierce our line, we shall probably never know. Smith was in chief command; and, so far as I can remember, he never was heard of again. We certainly did not draw off, and they certainly did. If they were trying to pierce our line, they failed. If they were trying to get away, they succeeded.

McClellan appeared on the field shortly after the firing ceased, and was received with as hearty cheers as if he had done the fighting. Our faith in our commander was then absolute, and our admiration for him unlimited. He did nothing,[1] for reasons which he states in his Report, and which will be judged good or bad according as one may think as to the possibility and propriety of vigorous action at that time. In my judgment, the reasons suggested for offensive action on the morning of this day were more cogent at noon, when almost all the troops but Richardson's had had some eighteen hours rest, when there were eight hours of daylight remaining, and when the commander-in-chief was, for once, on the field, and in

[1] Sumner: "I asked him at once if he had any orders to give. He said, no; that he had no changes to make; that he was satisfied with what had been done." 1 C.W., 363.

a position to avail himself of the magnificent enthusiasm which his troops felt for him.

On the other hand, it must be said that the glib statements made subsequently by high officers of their then eagerness to advance are not in accordance with my recollections of the time, and with the statements contained in my letters then written. I know that the 1st of June was with us a most anxious day; I know that the persistency (as we thought it) of the Confederates made us fear a complete concentration of their whole forces upon us; I believed that I *knew* that day that Sumner was "gravely anxious." If this was true of us, who had been successful, and of Sumner, who was courage incarnate, it is fair to presume that the spirit of the corps of Keyes and Heintzelman was not higher.

In the afternoon of June 1, Gen. Sumner received information from General Headquarters that a very large force had been perceived from the balloon moving down upon him from Richmond. This proved to be a mistake, and no further attack was made that day. There were also, as was believed, most threatening indications of a night attack, and dispositions were made accordingly. As night came down the scene was beautiful, the trees and fields and batteries and battalions dimly seen by the light of the young June moon. There was one alarm, and a little firing, but nothing more. We could hear the Confederate officers giving orders and marching their men all night. As the hours wore on more liberty was allowed, and probably all but the guards and pickets got some good sleep. The next day was fine, and we stood to arms

at the first streak of dawn; but we soon heard that the Confederates had retired.

McClellan reported to the Secretary of War that the Federal losses, May 31 and June 1, were as follows: —[1]

Corps.	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.	Total.
Sumner's Second Corps . .	183	894	146	1,223
Heintzelman's Third Corps . .	259	980	155	1,394
Keyes's Fourth Corps . . .	448	1,753	921	3,122
	890	3,627	1,222	5,739

The Confederate admitted loss seems to have been: —

	Loss.
Longstreet's wing, Longstreet and D. H. Hill . . .	4,851
Smith's wing, Smith (Magruder not engaged) . . .	1,233
Total.	6,084

There was no more fighting after this for more than three weeks; but the forces were so close that firing was incessant, — so close that the bullets of the sharpshooters repeatedly reached the main body of the Twentieth Massachusetts, far within the picket-line. Losses from this fire were of daily occurrence. There was much wet and cold weather. Our proximity to the enemy was such that for nine days I was unable to take off my clothes, and change my flannels. We of the Twentieth Regiment were near the point where the Nine-Mile road crossed the rail-

[1] 12 W.R., 754.

road. The ground was swampy; it rained more than half the time; we had no shelters, and scanty food; we had not even blankets for some time, and such food as we had was brought to us from the rear. The 4th of June was, perhaps, the bluest day. The flooding of the river made our bridge impassable, and carried away a part of the railroad. Ammunition was damp, and men hungry; but things began to mend by the 6th.

As the enemy retired, our left wing re-occupied its lost ground. The engineer went to work. The trenching-tool took turns with the rifle. A long line of intrenchments went up as if by magic; and by the 10th, the left piece of a sixteen-gun battery almost closed the front of my shelter-tent, and acres of slashings extended before us. We constructed six redoubts, mounting forty guns, from White Oak Swamp to Golding's, connected by rifle-pits, and four batteries (of six guns each) on the left bank of the Chickahominy. The lines on the Richmond side were three miles long. These works, McClellan says,[1] protected the troops while the bridges were building, gave security to the trains, liberated a larger fighting force, and offered a safer retreat in the event of disaster. By the 20th, our bridges, or the most important bridges, were finished.

On the 7th of June, McClellan sent a telegram to the Secretary of War, which contained these words: "I shall be in perfect readiness to move forward and take Richmond the moment McCall reaches here and the ground will admit the passage of artillery."[2] McCall arrived on

[1] 12 W.R., 44. [2] Ib., 46.

the 12th or 13th, with 9,514 men for duty. About the same time some 11,000 men (11,514 for duty) came from Baltimore and Fortress Monroe, of which Heintzelman got about 5,000, including the Sixteenth Massachusetts Infantry. With these additions the Army of the Potomac had for duty, June 26, 1862, 115,102 men,[1] with 6 batteries and 343 guns.

On the 12th, McClellan moved headquarters across the river, and his camp was established near Trent's house. On the 18th, Smith of Franklin's (Sixth) corps crossed, and a few days after him the other division of that corps, under Slocum. These troops prolonged our line on the Richmond side of the river north to Golding's. The weather from the 10th to the beginning of the Seven Days was generally fine, and as often cool, or only warm, as hot. Scurvy began to appear as early as the 15th. The lowering of the *moral* of the army by their stay in this unhealthy country is shown, in my judgment, by a memorandum made by me, June 13, to the effect of our feeling absolute confidence of defeating the enemy, and entering Richmond, "if they attack us." On the 18th, I wrote, "Jackson believed to have eluded Fremont," etc. On the 21st, "My impression is that the most serious business, at first at any rate, will be on our right at a considerable distance." The firing increased in frequency and continuousness from the 18th. Flies were troublesome by the 22d. Mortars arrived that day, rather confirming my idea, long ago entertained, that we were engaged in a siege, rather than as an advancing army

[1] Swinton, 142.

Water began to grow scarce, and it was dusty. On the 19th, McCall's troops were moved, one brigade (Meade's) to a point in front of Gaines's farm, and those of Reynolds and Seymour to Beaver Dam Creek, with a regiment and a battery thrown forward to the heights above Mechanicsville.

On the 25th of June I wrote, "Perfection of weather. Startling news that general advance of our whole line has commenced." McClellan says, "On the 25th, our bridges and intrenchments being at last completed, an advance of our picket-line of the left was ordered, preparatory to a general forward movement," and that his object was "to ascertain the nature of the ground and to place Gens. Heintzelman and Sumner in position to support the attack intended to be made on the Old Tavern on the 26th or 27th by Gen. Franklin, by assailing that position in the rear." He claims to have accomplished his object, with a loss of 516 men.[1] Gen. Lee, on the other hand, says, "The effort was successfully resisted, and our line maintained."[2] I have made a careful examination of all the material relating to this affair which I have been able to find, and I believe Gen. McClellan's statement to be more accurate than Gen. Lee's, and that we did advance our pickets a considerable distance; that is to say, from the eastern to the western edge of a deep wood through which the Williamsburg road ran, — somewhere from half a mile to a mile. The movement was attended with considerable loss to both sides, both in officers and men; but as in the sequel it proved to be unimportant, I shall limit myself to saying that many

[1] 12 W.R., 49. [2] 13 W.R., 490.

details in relation to it may be found in the fifth volume of the Rebellion Record, under the title "Fair Oaks Farm."[1]

The movement proved unimportant, because, instead of our attacking on the 26th or 27th, Lee attacked us on the 26th, when the Seven Days' Battles began. At this point, therefore, the narrative portion of the present paper ends.

McClellan's force at this date was what has been already stated, with the addition of about 5,000 men from Shields's command, which joined him about the end of June. The Confederate roster, published in the Army of Northern Virginia Memorial Volume, gives the organization of Lee's army at that time.[2] My own belief is that Lee attacked with about 65,000 or 70,000 men, leaving Magruder with 25,000 to hold the lines before Richmond. It will be remembered that he had thirty-nine brigades, while Johnston had but twenty-seven.

I do not propose now to speak of the conduct of the movement to the James River; but some remarks upon the events which attended the dislodgement of the Federal army from its position threatening Richmond are in place here. It is to be remembered that McClellan commanded a large invading army, that his purpose was to defeat the Confederate army and to capture Richmond, and that he had established himself very near that place. He had announced, as early as June 7, that he should be in perfect readiness to move forward, and take Richmond, the moment McCall reached him, and the ground would

[1] 5 Rebellion Record, Documents, 231. [2] Pages 338–342.

admit the passage of artillery. McCall was with him by the 13th; and on the 25th his bridges and intrenchments were completed, and the ground was in good condition. These intrenchments had been constructed with the express purpose (among others) of "liberating a larger fighting force." On the 25th, in one of his telegrams to the Secretary, he promised to do all that a general could do with his splendid army, and, if it were destroyed by overwhelming numbers, he said, he could at least die with it, and share its fate.[1] He was not taken by surprise by the attack; but he made a farcical over-estimate of the Confederate force, putting it at from 180,000 to 200,000 men. As an engineer officer, as well as commander-in-chief, he was specially competent to decide what force was adequate to hold his lines, and he ought to have decided that question for himself. Instead of that, having ordered his corps commanders on the right bank on the 26th to be prepared to send as many troops as they could spare on the following day to the left bank, and inquired of them the same day how many troops could be spared to re-enforce Porter, — when the shock came, he ordered up Slocum's division, a brigade from Couch, and asked Sumner and Franklin if they could spare any more; and, after receiving their replies, ordered up Meagher's brigade, and French with three regiments. Thus, as I understand, of his thirty-two brigades he ordered about fifteen in all to meet the grand attack, and left about seventeen to hold his strong lines. I pay little attention to what Barnard says on this point; viz., that our defensive works could have been held by 20,000 men

[1] 12 W.R., 51.

against 100,000.[1] That may or may not be true; but that dyspeptic critic does not seem to see that it is a poor rule which does not work both ways, and that, if our longer lines could be held by 20,000 against 100,000, the shorter Confederate lines might be held yet more securely by Magruder with his 25,000. I do not myself believe in the impossibility of carrying lines of field-works where the attacking force largely outnumbers the other, and where the attacking force is ably commanded, ably directed, and gallantly led. If a line is formed against field-works, and the attack is made in the parallel order, disastrous failure is pretty sure to follow; but, where several strong columns are resolutely and simultaneously driven forward, I believe a different result may be anticipated. But, not to enter into that discussion, the fault I find with McClellan is that he let himself be beaten unnecessarily. He derived substantially no advantage from his defensive works. It seems to me clear that he committed a grave error on the 27th. I think he should have used more troops. I believe that a determined advance on Franklin's or Sumner's front, or both, would have been sufficient to paralyze Lee's attack on Porter; and that perhaps a better plan would have been to cross a strong column by Duane's and Woodbury's bridges, or even a part by Sumner's upper bridge, to attack Lee's right, and at the same time protect his own communications. If any dependence is to be placed on McClellan's own statements of his numbers present for duty, he had some 65,000 men on the right bank, after ordering re-enforcements to Porter to make his total

[1] Barnard's Peninsular Campaign, 1864, 39.

force fifteen brigades.[1] If he had left of these 25,000 men to hold his lines, and sent to the left bank 40,000 to flank the flanking Jackson by Cold Harbor, who can doubt that the result of the battle of Gaines's Mills would have been different? In war something must be risked; and, even if Magruder had performed the improbable and difficult part of forcing our lines during the absence of this column, the very pressure of defeat would have concentrated our army on its own line of communication and supply. I very much fear that Lee had weighed our commander in the balance, and found him wanting, and that his action here, as two years after at Chancellorsville, was based, not upon his knowledge of what his adversary could do, but upon his belief of what he would do.

As for the attacks which were made on the Federal troops on the right bank while Lee was attacking on the left bank, they were so likely to be feints, to keep away re-enforcements from the point to be seriously attacked, and in such strict accordance with familiar military principles, that it seems surprising they were not seen through at once by the Federal generals.

It may also be remarked, that, if Gen. McClellan really believed that Lee had such a vast army as he names in his Report, it is surprising that he could have had any idea of being able to proceed with his enterprise. There was

[1] I almost despair, however, of ever arriving at the truth as to McClellan's disposable force. A beaten commander is not likely to exaggerate his numbers; and yet if we divide McClellan's total present for duty by the number of his brigades, which we know accurately, the result is far beyond the average strength of such brigades as I knew of.

nothing in the history of the Peninsular campaign, nothing in what happened at Williamsburg, West Point, and Seven Pines, to authorize him to believe that he could fight the Confederates two to three, and beat them, or to believe that they did not understand and practise, at least as well as he, the principle of being the stronger at the decisive point, whatever might be the total forces of each army. But it is impossible that he could have believed that they possessed such numbers. If they had, they could have confronted him along his whole line with 100,000 men, and placed 80,000 on his right flank and rear. If they had had such forces, instead of the moderate defeat of Gaines's Mills, Königgrätz would have been anticipated by four years, and there would have been less left of the Army of the Potomac than there was left of Benedek's army.

I have said enough to show that I regard McClellan as a failure. He was not only a disappointment, but his "tall talk" made him an aggravating disappointment. If the grave and taciturn Thomas had been beaten by Hood at Nashville, our feelings toward him would have been much kinder than they are towards McClellan after all his talk about his perfect readiness to take Richmond, of dying with his army, etc., and his inadequate performance of his part even in a defensive battle, and his almost invariable absence from the battle-field.

And yet we ought not to regard McClellan with anger or with contempt. Sorrow is the true feeling. He was in many respects a useful officer. Under him the "uprising of a great people" became a powerful military engine.

His forces were never routed or decisively beaten by the enemy. They never came in contact with the enemy without inflicting a heavy loss upon him. He never knocked his head against a wall, as Burnside did at Fredericksburg; he never drew back his hand when victory was within his grasp, as Hooker did at Chancellorsville; he never spilt blood vainly by a parallel attack upon gallantly defended field-works, as Grant did at Cold Harbor. He took too good care of his army. He was so much afraid of hurting them that he did not hurt his opponents so much as he might. His general management of the move from the lines before Richmond to the James was wise and successful; though, if he had been a fighter instead of a planner only, and had been oftener among his troops, the movement might have been, as it ought to have been, attended with vastly greater proportional loss to the Confederates, and perhaps have been concluded by a crushing defeat at Malvern Hill. It is not likely that he will have a place in history. His name could only find a place low down among the soldiers of all time. We must class him with the multitude, with the *fortemque Gyan, fortemque Cloanthum*, and not among great commanders, even of the second class.

IV.

THE SEVEN DAYS' BATTLES TO MALVERN HILL.

By

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Late Brevet Brigadier-General, U.S.V.

COMMITTEE.

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Brev. Major HERBERT C. MASON.

Read before the Society on Monday evening, Dec. 11, 1876.

THE SEVEN DAYS' BATTLES.

1862.

JUNE 25, WEDNESDAY.	Oak Grove. King's School-House. French's Field, or The Orchard.
26, THURSDAY.	Hanover Court-House. Meadow Bridge, near Mechanicsville. Mechanicsville. Beaver Dam Creek, or Ellerson's Mill.
27, FRIDAY.	Gaines' Mill. Cold Harbor, or The Chickahominy.
27, 28, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY.	Garnett's and Golding's Farms. White House Landing.
29, SUNDAY.	Peach Orchard, or Allen's Farm. Savage Station. James River Road.
30, MONDAY.	Glendale. Nelson's Farm. Charles City Cross Roads. New Market Road. Frayser's Farm, or Willis Church.
JULY 1, TUESDAY.	Malvern Hill. Crew's, or Poindexter's Farms.

THE SEVEN DAYS' BATTLES.

THE limits of a single paper are such that your committee have judged it inexpedient to consider the questions of the wisdom or unwisdom of Gen. McClellan's plan for the Peninsula campaign, and whether and how far the execution of that plan was interfered with by orders from Washington. It is therefore proposed to begin the narrative with Wednesday, June 25, 1862, the first of the Seven Days as your committee understand them.

On the 7th of June, McClellan telegraphed the Secretary of War,[1] "I shall be in perfect readiness to move forward and take Richmond the moment McCall reaches here and the ground will admit the passage of artillery." On the 12th and 13th of June, McCall's division arrived.[2]

The army under the command of McClellan was then, or by June 25, organized as follows: —[3]

2d Corps, Sumner.	1st Division, Richardson	1st Brigade,	Caldwell.
		2d "	Meagher.
		3d "	French.
	2d Division, Sedgwick	1st "	Sully.
		2d "	Burns.
		3d "	Dana.

[1] 12 W.R., 46. [2] Ib., 47. [3] 13 W.R., 24–37.

3d Corps, Heintzelman.	2d Division, Hooker	1st Brigade,		Grover.
		2d	"	Sickles.
		3d	"	Carr.
	3d Division, Kearney	1st	"	Robinson.
		2d	"	Birney.
		3d	"	Berry.
4th Corps, Keyes.	1st Division, Couch	1st	"	Howe.
		2d	"	Abercrombie.
		3d	"	Palmer.
	2d Division, Peck	1st	"	Naglee.
		2d	"	Wessels.
5th Corps, Porter.	1st Division, Morell	1st	"	Martindale.
		2d	"	Griffin.
		3d	"	Butterfield.
	2d Division, Sykes	1st	"	Buchanan.
		2d	"	Lovell.
		3d	"	Warren.
	3d Division,[1] McCall	1st	"	Reynolds.
		2d	"	Meade.
		3d	"	Seymour.
6th Corps, Franklin.	1st Division, Slocum	1st	"	Taylor.
		2d	"	Bartlett.
		3d	"	Newton.
	2d Division, Smith	1st	"	Hancock.
		2d	"	Brooks.
		3d	"	Davidson.

The Fifth and Sixth Corps were formed later than some of the others. Thus at the time the army embarked for the Peninsula, Gen. Smith commanded a division[2] in Keyes's corps; and shortly after the battle of West Point his division was joined to Franklin's,[3] and the two formed the Sixth Corps. The above general statement is accurate for the date of June 25; but in the command of brigades, the fortune of war would naturally make more frequent changes than in commands of larger extent.

[1] McCall's Division had belonged to the First Corps, and numbered, early in June, about 10,000 men: 1 C.W., 27.

[2] 9,000 men, June 27, 1862: Ib., 623.

[3] About 12,000 in April, 1862: Ib., 27.

The total of field-artillery with this army on the Peninsula was sixty batteries with 343 guns.[1]

No particulars as to the amount of cavalry with this army have fallen under the notice of your committee; and no instance in which it was employed during the Seven Days is known to them, except Gen. Philip St. George Cooke's disastrous charge at Gaines's Mills.

The Union army appears to have numbered on the 20th of June, 1862, 115,102 men present for duty, excluding those on special duty, sick, absent, and in arrest.[2]

Swinton[3] adopts this estimate, but gives the date as June 26, 1862. But it is hardly necessary to remind a body of men who have seen service, that the aggregate present for duty, as stated in the morning report, is always much larger than the number that can be taken into action the same day.

The Army of Northern Virginia, since Johnston was wounded on the 31st of May, 1862, at Fair Oaks, had been under the command of Gen. Lee. It is difficult to speak with precision of the way in which the Confederate army was officered under him, because much looseness of language prevails in the headings and signatures of the reports of his principal subordinates.

Gen. Jackson appears to have had under his command, his own division and the divisions of D. H. Hill, Ewell, and Whiting. Gen. A. P. Hill commanded the Light

[1] 5 W.R., 69.

[2] 1 C.W., 345. McClellan's Report makes the number about 10,000 less. 5 W.R., 13.

[3] Swinton, 142, note.

Division, so called; Gen. Longstreet had a division; Gen. Magruder commanded a force made up of the divisions or brigades of McLaws, Kershaw, Semmes, and D. R. Jones; while Gen. Holmes joined in the operations in front of Richmond with a small force brought from the Petersburg side of the James. Gen. Huger also had a division, the composition and force of which it is not easy to ascertain.

Your committee have discovered no general statement of the aggregate amount of the Confederate artillery and cavalry; but the freedom with which they used the former on the Peninsula, and Gen. Stuart's daring raid round our army with fifteen hundred of the latter, seem to show that they were adequately supplied with both.

In determining the total of the Confederate army, we must begin with rejecting McClellan's preposterous estimate of 200,000, reported to the Secretary of War, June 25, 1862,[1] and the more deliberate estimate of his report that they numbered, June 26, 180,000.[2] Upon the whole, it seems probable that they had rather less, than more, than 100,000. Swinton[3] says, "near 100,000 men;" although he speaks later of their having only 25,000 men between our lines and Richmond, while Lee was operating beyond the Chickahominy with 60,000.[4] And again, he speaks of our force at Gaines's Mills as "assailed by 70,000 Confederates."[5] Barnard says that the Richmond

[1] 12 W.R., 51. [2] Ib. [3] Swinton, 143.
[4] Ib., 147–148. [5] Ib., 151.

papers of that date stated that the Confederate forces employed at Gaines's Mills numbered 65,000 men, and he inclines to accept that estimate;[1] and he repeats what Gen. Magruder says in his report, that "there were but 25,000 men between his [McClellan's] army of 100,000, and Richmond."[2] These were Magruder's own command of 13,000 men, and Huger's of (apparently) 12,000.

For comparatively contemporaneous estimates of the numbers of the enemy, we may cite our Gen. McCall, who says that "the divisions of Longstreet and A. P. Hill considered two of the strongest . . . of the Confederate army, numbering that day [Monday, June 30] 18,000 or 20,000 men."[3] If we take the lower estimate, and allow the two divisions 9,000 each, and remember that according to Swinton ten divisions took part in these operations, and that Longstreet and A. P. Hill had both been engaged with heavy loss at Gaines's Mills, it would seem that the number of 100,000 at the commencement was not a very excessive estimate.

Gen. Reynolds thinks that at Gaines's Mills the enemy were about 60,000 strong.[4] He adds, "I think they must have had that number from their line and the troops I saw." He was a good soldier, and his opinion is of weight; but as the Confederates were badly put into action there, and many of them did little or nothing, he may have placed the number too low. He was taken prisoner at the close of the day, but he does not say that

[1] Barnard's Peninsular Campaign, 89, 83.

[2] Ib., and 13 W.R., 662.

[3] Ib., 391.

[4] 1 C.W., 594.

he derived any information as to the numbers of the enemy from them. Gen. Franklin thinks "Gen. Porter had about 23,000 men," and, "from what I have heard, I judge there were about 50,000 of the enemy there."[1]

To return for a moment to estimates from the Southern side, we may add, that Barnard[2] says that Pollard says A. P. Hill's corps numbered at Gaines's Mills "about 14,000 men;" and[3] that "the rebel Gen. Stuart, . . . a few weeks after these events, *pledged his honor* that the Confederate force did not exceed 90,000 men."

Of the position of the army of Lee at the commencement of the Seven Days, it is sufficient to say at the outset that it was massing on its own left near Richmond for an attack on our right beyond the Chickahominy, while a force of 25,000 men was so disposed as to defend, with the aid of such works as had been constructed, the approaches to Richmond from the east. McClellan's army was posted as follows: On the southwest (right) bank of the Chickahominy, behind defensive lines over three miles long, extending from White Oak Swamp on the south to the neighborhood of Golding's house near the Chickahominy on the north, were the corps of Keyes, Heintzelman, Sumner, and Franklin, posted in the order named from left to right. These lines were made up of four redoubts, or enclosed works, and of a

[1] 1 C.W., 624.
[2] Barnard's Peninsular Campaign, 1864, 83.
[3] Ib., 39.

lunette and redan, each with open gorge, and mounted in all forty guns.[1] They "were connected by rifle-pits or barricades,"[2] with frequent emplacements for artillery. The woods in front were extensively slashed. Upon the north-east (left) bank of the Chickahominy were the corps of Porter and the division of McCall, protecting our communications with White House, our base of supplies on the York River, where the Richmond and York River Railroad crossed that stream. Four batteries, mounting twenty-four guns, some of them heavy, were constructed on this side of the stream, "either to operate upon the enemy's positions and batteries opposite or to defend our bridges."[3]

Of the character of the Chickahominy as a military obstacle, it is assumed that it is unnecessary to speak to this society. Communication between the two wings and with the rear was maintained by the Foot Bridge, Duane's Bridge, Woodbury's Infantry Bridge, Woodbury and Alexander's Bridge, Sumner's Upper (or Grape-Vine) Bridge, the Railroad Bridge, and Bottom's Bridge. In case of a successful advance of our right, the Upper Trestle Bridge, New Bridge, and Lower Trestle Bridge, would also have become available. At this time the enemy held the approaches of all three.[4]

The only advanced force of our army was Gen. McCall's division, which was on Beaver Dam Creek, with a regiment and a battery thrown forward to the heights overlooking Mechanicsville, and a line of pickets up the

[1] 1 C.W., 403.
[2] Ib., 404.
[3] Ib.
[4] Barnard's Report, 12 W.R., 115.

river as far as Meadow Bridge, where it was crossed by the Virginia Central Railroad.

On Wednesday, the 25th of June, 1862, the first of the Seven Days, McClellan intended, or thought he intended, to begin "to move forward, and take Richmond." Accordingly he ordered "an advance of our picket line of the left, preparatory to a general forward movement."[1] The troops engaged were mainly from the Third Corps, with Palmer's brigade of Couch's division of Keyes's corps, and some troops, the Nineteenth Massachusetts at any rate, which lost rather seriously, from Sumner's corps. The object of the movement was to gain ground to the front, to place Heintzelman and Sumner in position to support the attack to be made on Old Tavern on the 26th or 27th by Gen. Franklin, by assailing that position in the rear. We lost over five hundred men in the affair, but McClellan states that he gained his point fully. Gen. Huger, who commanded the Confederate forces engaged in this action, asserts on the contrary[2] that by evening they fully recovered their original picket-line. Gen. Lee declares,[3] "The effort was successfully resisted and our line maintained." As subsequent events took shape, the question which told the truth becomes one of minor importance.

At this point your committee think it well to state that in the sequel they have made some use of an account of the Seven Days, prepared carefully by their chairman in 1864, for Hillard's Life and Campaigns of McClellan.

[1] 12 W.R., 49.
[2] 18 W.R., 787. [3] Ib., 490.

By sundown of the 25th, McClellan had received information that Jackson was at or near Hanover Court House, and was preparing to attack his right and rear, and would probably do so the following day; and he reported to the Secretary of War, "I now go to the other [i.e., north-east] side of the Chickahominy to arrange for the defence on that side."[1] He does not tell us what arrangements he made, or that he made any; but he says that "on the 26th, the day upon which I had decided as the time for our final advance, the enemy attacked our right in strong force, and turned my attention to the protection of our communications and depots of supply."[2] In this single sentence your committee seem to see the inherent and vital defect in the character of McClellan as a soldier.

"At noon on the 26th" of June, 1862, Thursday, "the approach of the enemy, who had crossed above Meadow Bridge, was discovered by the advanced pickets at that point, and at 12.30 P.M., they were attacked and driven in. All the pickets were now called in, and the regiment and battery at Mechanicsville withdrawn."[3] A strong position was taken by our troops to resist the threatened attack. It extended along the left bank of Beaver Dam Creek, a slender tributary of the Chickahominy, which runs nearly north and south. The line was composed of McCall's division, Seymour's brigade on the left, Reynolds's on the right, and Meade's in reserve. The left of the line was covered by the river,

[1] 12 W.P., 51.
[2] Ib. [3] Ib., 54.

the right by two brigades of Morell's division, Martindale's and Griffin's, deployed for the purpose of protecting that flank, but at no time warmly engaged. The position had been carefully prepared, and materially strengthened by slashings and rifle-pits. The creek in front was crossed by only two roads practicable for artillery. It was to force these roads that the enemy made special efforts. The Confederate troops engaged were mainly of A. P. Hill's division. Lee expected Jackson to pass Beaver Dam above, and turn our right; but he was delayed, and failed to carry out this part of the programme.[1] The enemy attacked at three P.M., along the whole line, and at the same time made a determined attempt to carry the upper road. Gen. Reynolds successfully resisted this attempt, and the enemy fell back for a while; and our troops had a breathing-space for a couple of hours, though the fire of the artillery and of the skirmishers did not cease. The passage of the lower road was then attempted, but here also our troops under Gen. Seymour were successful. The firing ceased at nine P.M., and the news of the success ran like wildfire through our camps. Swinton[2] says that Longstreet told him that the Confederate loss in this affair was between three and four thousand men; and he says, what McClellan does not say, but which is probably true, that our loss was quite inconsiderable.

This slight affair of the outposts, for it was hardly more than that, appears to have satisfied Gen. McClellan

[1] 18 W.R., 491.
[2] Swinton, 145.

that his Peninsula campaign was a failure. He knew about as certainly before the battle as after, that Jackson was threatening his right and rear. He was nearer Richmond than he was likely to be when he should reach the James; and he did not expect, and had no reason to expect, any considerable re-enforcement there. Yet the enemy had scarcely desisted from the offensive at the creek, when we find him sending his heavy guns and wagons across the river to the right bank, withdrawing not only McCall's division from its advanced position, but it and the Fifth Corps to a position round the bridge-heads, and generally doing what he thought most conducive to the success of his proposed change of base from the Pamunkey to the James.

The night of the 26th of June was a busy one on the right of our army, and the work of removal went on until after sunrise, Friday, June 27, 1862; but shortly before daylight it was sufficiently advanced to permit the withdrawal of the troops from the creek. A new position was taken, in an arc of a circle, covering the approaches to our bridges of communication. Gen. Porter decided to place his left on the spur of Watts's house, and to extend his right to the spur where McGee's house stood. The troops of McCall's division appear to have been withdrawn skilfully, the horse-artillery and Seymour's brigade covering the rear. The enemy followed the retreat closely, and some skirmishing occurred; but he did not appear in front of the new line till noon of Friday, the 27th, the day which we are now to describe.

In the new position taken up to fight the battle of Gaines's Mills, Morell's division held the left of the line in a strip of woods on the left bank of the Gaines's Mill stream, resting its left flank on the descent to the Chickahominy, which was swept by our artillery on both sides of the river, and extending into open ground on the right towards New Cold Harbor. Butterfield's brigade held the extreme left; next came Martindale; and Griffin, further to the right, joined the left of Sykes's division, which, partly in the woods and partly in open ground, extended in the rear of Cold Harbor. Each brigade had in reserve two of its own regiments.[1]

McCall's division formed the second line; Meade's brigade on the left near the river, Reynolds's on the right, covering the approaches from Cold Harbor and Despatch Station to Sumner's Bridge. Seymour's brigade was in reserve to the second line. Gen. Cooke with fifteen companies of cavalry, nine of them regulars, was posted behind a hill in rear, and near the river, to aid in watching the left flank, and defending the slope to the river. The artillery, including the division batteries and two horse-batteries from the artillery reserve, were posted on the commanding ground and in the intervals between the divisions and brigades, with one of the horse-batteries on the extreme left in the valley of the Chickahominy.[2] There was no defensive work of any kind on the ground occupied by our troops, though undoubtedly the position had been somewhat strengthened by the felling of trees,

[1] McClellan's Report, 12 W.R., 55. [2] Ib., 56.

and perhaps by digging rifle-pits.[1] Three field-batteries and a battery of siege-artillery on the right (south-west) bank of the river helped to control the enemy in front of Porter.[2] Gen. Lee says that these batteries "played incessantly on his columns as they pressed through the difficulties that obstructed their way."[3]

Gen. Lee's account of our position is, that it occupied a range of hills behind Powhite Creek, its right resting in the vicinity of McGehee's (*sic*) house, and its left near that of Dr. Gaines, on a wooded bluff,[4] called Turkey Hill,[5] which rose abruptly from a deep ravine. He seems to have reconnoitred with sufficient accuracy to discover our two lines and the reserve, as he speaks of a second line behind a breast-work of trees, and a third occupying the crest strengthened with rifle-trenches. He says that the approach was over an open plain about a quarter of a mile wide, commanded by this triple line of fire, and swept by the heavy batteries south of the Chickahominy; and that in front of Porter's centre and right the ground was generally open, bounded on the side of his approach by a wood with dense and tangled undergrowth, and traversed by a sluggish stream which converted the soil into a deep morass.[6]

The attack was somewhat delayed by Jackson's slowness in coming up, upon our right. He found his road obstructed, and the obstructions defended by sharp-

[1] Barnard, Peninsular Campaign, 82.
[2] McClellan's Report, 12 W.R., 57.
[3] 13 W.R., 492.
[4] Ib.
[5] Ib., 757.
[6] Ib., 492.

shooters, and says, "It became necessary, for the purpose of saving time, to take a road still farther to the left."[1] While he was so occupied with his four divisions, of which that of D. H. Hill was now nearest to the field, and while Longstreet was held back on the Confederate right, waiting till the expected arrival of Jackson on our right should cause an extension of our line in that direction, A. P. Hill formed his line nearly parallel to the road leading from New Cold Harbor toward McGee's house.[2] He had six brigades; and he formed them, Gregg on his left, then Branch, then Anderson, then Field, then Archer, with Pender in rear of Anderson. He had also the batteries of Andrews, Braxton, Bachman, Crenshaw, Mackintosh, Johnson, and Pegram, in all about fourteen thousand men, — less his loss at Beaver Dam, which was probably very considerable, as he says that his division alone sustained the shock of this battle;[3] but the reports, so far as your committee have observed, do not state how great that loss was. He commenced his attack at 2.30 P.M., and seems to have pressed it with vigor; and Gen. Lee says that his battle raged fiercely and with varying fortune more than two hours. He adds that some brigades were broken, others stubbornly maintained their positions, but it became apparent that the enemy was gradually gaining ground.[4] Hill himself confesses, "From having been the attacking, I now became the attacked."[5] Perhaps the truth was worse than this.[6]

[1] Jackson's Report, 13 W.R., 553.
[2] Ib., 492.
[3] Ib., 836, 837.
[4] Ib., 492.
[5] Ib., 837.
[6] Ib., 563.

McClellan says that "at two P.M. Porter asked for re-enforcements."[1] This is a puzzling statement, as is also his statement that "by three P.M. the engagement had become so severe, and the enemy were so greatly superior in numbers, that the entire second line and reserves had been moved forward to sustain the first line against repeated and desperate assaults along our whole front."[2] It is probable that McClellan's report is not of the highest authority. Capt. W. P. Mason told the chairman of this committee, soon after the report appeared, that he wrote much of it. So important a work should not have been intrusted to one of the youngest and least experienced officers of the general staff. McClellan says that at 3.30 P.M. Slocum's division reached the field, and was immediately brought into action at the weak points of our line; parts of it, even single regiments, being sent to the points most threatened.[3] The truth is, that it is probable that up to 4.30 P.M. our forces considerably outnumbered the attacking force.

Under these circumstances, Longstreet was ordered to make a diversion in Hill's favor by a feint on our left; but he found that, to render the diversion effectual, he must convert the feint into an attack. He therefore resolved to carry the heights before him by assault, and formed his troops accordingly.[4] The brigades of Wilcox, Pryor, and Featherston were ordered forward against our

[1] 12 W.R., 56.
[2] Ib.
[3] Ib.
[4] Ib., 492, 757.

left, Pickett's brigade on their left, and part of R. H. Anderson's brigade supporting Pickett, and the rest guarding the right flank of the three brigades first mentioned. Kemper's brigade was held in reserve.[1] At this moment Whiting arrived with his division, and took position on the left of Longstreet; and the second and third brigades of Jackson's own division were also "sent to the right," apparently to the left of Whiting.[2] Ewell's division continued the line to the Confederate left; next came the first and fourth brigades of Jackson's own division; then A. P. Hill; and finally D. H. Hill, who formed the extreme left. At this time the force under Porter probably had double its own numbers in front of it; though D. H. Hill's troops seem to have been handled rather unskilfully, and were not all brought into action. When Lee's line was complete, a general advance from right to left was ordered, and our lines were speedily carried with heavy loss of guns. Lee speaks of repeated endeavors to rally, and of long and arduous conflict.[3] McClellan says that this occurred about seven P.M. French's and Meagher's brigades of the Second Corps now appeared, driving before them the stragglers who were thronging to the bridges, and Porter's men were rallied behind them; but there was no more serious fighting.[4] In the night the troops were withdrawn, the regular infantry forming the rearguard; and at about six the next morning they crossed the

[1] 13 W.R., 757.
[2] Ib. 493.
[3] Ib.
[4] 12 W.R., 56, 57.

river, destroying the bridge behind them. Our loss in guns was twenty-two. No accurate statement of the loss of men on either side is known to exist;[1] but Jackson reported a loss in this engagement of 3,284 men in his own division, and in those of Ewell, Whiting, and D. H. Hill.[2] Wilcox's and Pickett's brigades of Longstreet's division lost 1,010.[3] This leaves the loss of four brigades of Longstreet, and of the division of A. P. Hill, unstated. In the Report of the Committee on the Conduct of the War, our loss is placed at about nine thousand.[4]

While these events were occurring at Gaines's Mills, Gen. Franklin had a little battle of his own. The enemy opened upon him early on the 27th, and there was severe cannonading for perhaps an hour from some thirty guns on each side. Franklin regarded it as evidently a diversion to prevent our sending assistance to Porter. About dark there was a small but sharp infantry engagement on the same line, lasting about three-quarters of an hour, when the enemy was driven back.[5]

On the following day, Saturday, June 28, 1862, there was little fighting; but Franklin had an infantry fight on his front about noon, in which the enemy were again repulsed, and a great many prisoners taken.[6] Gen. Keyes moved his corps across the White Oak Swamp bridge, and seized strong positions on the other side of the swamp,

[1] Swinton, 153.
[2] 13 W.R., 559.
[3] Ib., 426, 774–775.
[4] 1 C.W., 24.
[5] Ib., 622, 623.
[6] Ib., 623.

to cover the passage of the other troops and the trains. The destruction of all property which could not be transported was carried on. The herd of twenty-five hundred beef-cattle was driven to the James. Porter's corps crossed White Oak Swamp, and took up positions covering the roads leading from Richmond towards White Oak Swamp and Long Bridge. McCall's division followed, and was ordered to take up a proper position to assist in covering the remaining troops and trains. The corps of Heintzelman and Sumner, and the division of Smith, were ordered to an interior line, the left resting on Keyes's old intrenchment, and curving to the right, so as to cover Savage's Station. Slocum's division was ordered to Savage's Station in reserve.[1]

Gen. Lee sent Stuart's cavalry, supported by Ewell's division, down the left bank of the Chickahominy, to prevent a retreat down the river; the infantry stopping at Bottom's Bridge, the cavalry watching the bridges below. His other troops appear to have rested in or near their positions.[2]

The events of the following day, Sunday, June 29, do not demand very minute description. Lee had satisfied himself during the afternoon and night of the preceding day that McClellan was retreating to the James River by the right bank of the Chickahominy.[3] He therefore ordered Longstreet and A. P. Hill to re-cross the river at New Bridge, and to move by the Darbytown road to the Long Bridge road. Learning that the works at the upper

[1] 12 W.R., 60., 61
[2] 13 W.R., 493. [3] Ib., 494.

extremity of our line of intrenchments were abandoned, he ordered Huger and Magruder in pursuit; the former by the Charles City road to take our army in flank, and the latter by the Williamsburg road to attack our rear. Jackson was ordered to cross Grape-Vine Bridge, but was delayed by the necessity of reconstructing it. These movements of the enemy led to a brisk affair of the rear-guard at Peach Orchard, a little in rear of Fair Oaks Station, in the forenoon; and a more serious engagement at Savage's Station in the afternoon, in which Sumner, with some aid from Franklin, repulsed with severe loss to the enemy a menacing attack made mainly between the railroad and the Williamsburg road by Magruder.[1]

Much solicitude was felt at this time lest Jackson should cross the river, and take our flank in rear;[2] and this gave especial importance to the action of Heintzelman, who, in seeming disobedience of orders, and without notice to Sumner, left his position on the left, and crossed White Oak Swamp.[3] Sumner says, "This defection might have been attended with the most disastrous consequences."[4] Heintzelman gives no reason that we know of for his action, except that "the whole open space near Savage's Station was crowded with troops, more than I supposed could be brought into action judiciously;"[5] and, "the reason I left with my corps was that the ground was so constructed there were absolutely more

[1] 13 W.R., 494.
[2] 12 W.R., 59, 60.
[3] 1 C.W., 364.
[4] 13 W.R., 50.
[5] Ib., 99.

troops there than could find room."[1] Happily for us, Jackson was delayed, and Heintzelman not needed, though Sumner says, "We should certainly have given him a more crushing blow if Gen. Heintzelman had been there with his corps."[2] We were thus enabled to cross the swamp without interruption, and destroy the bridge.

On this day Slocum crossed White Oak Swamp, and relieved Keyes, who then moved towards James River, and early on the morning of the 30th took up a position below Turkey Creek bridge. Porter was ordered to follow him, and prolong the line to the right on or near Malvern Hill.[3] Heintzelman retired early, as we have seen, and reached the Charles City road, the advance at 6.30 P.M., and the rear at ten P.M.

The rest of the army crossed the swamp during the night, French's brigade acting as rearguard; and at five A.M. on the 30th, all had crossed, and the bridge was destroyed. Gen. Franklin was ordered to hold the passage of White Oak Swamp bridge; and he had with him not only Smith's division of his own corps, but Richardson's division of the Second Corps, and Naglee's brigade. Slocum's division was on the right of the Charles City road.[4]

Jackson reached Savage's Station early on Monday, June 30, 1862. "He was directed to pursue the enemy on the road he had taken and Magruder to follow Longstreet

[1] C.W., 356.
[2] 13 W.R., 51.
[3] 12 W.R., 62.
[4] Ib., 64.

by the Darbytown road. . . . his [Jackson's] progress was arrested at White Oak Swamp. The enemy occupied the opposite side and obstinately [and successfully] resisted the reconstruction of the bridge,"[1] so that for all that day Jackson and his forces were lost to the Confederate army. Dabney, in his Life of Jackson,[2] thinks that on this occasion "he came short of that efficiency in action for which he was everywhere else noted," and that "this temporary eclipse of Jackson's genius was probably to be explained by physical causes," among which he mentions sleeplessness, and the general's having been drenched with rain. Perhaps the explanation need not be sought so far. Jackson had before him an able and determined commander, with two divisions of excellent troops, besides Naglee's brigade, and an abundant supply of artillery, the whole occupying ground which made the attack extremely difficult.

After getting some sleep on the southern bank of White Oak Swamp, Sedgwick's division of the Second Corps and the Third Corps got some rest along the roads, while Franklin held Jackson back in the rear, and thirteen batteries of the reserve artillery in an unending line galloped along the road to Malvern Hill. Meanwhile,[3] McCall moved out in front of Sedgwick's division, and formed in front of the point where four ways meet, — the Newmarket road, which from the crossing becomes the Long Bridge road, the Charles City road, and the Quaker road. His line was perpendicular to the Newmarket road, and

[1] 13 W.R., 495.
[2] 2, 207.
[3] 13 W.R., 389, 390.

crossed it; but most of it was on the left.[1] Meade's brigade, the Second, composed of the Third, Fourth, Seventh, and Thirteenth (Bucktail) Pennsylvania reserves, was on the right; Seymour's (Third) brigade, composed of the Ninth, Tenth, and Twelfth Pennsylvania reserves, was on the left. The Eleventh, of Meade's brigade, had been captured previously; and the Sixth, of Seymour's brigade, was not present. The First Brigade (under the command of Col. Simmons, Gen. Reynolds having been captured at Gaines's Mills), composed of the First, Second, Fifth, and Eighth Pennsylvania reserves, was in reserve. The artillery was established in front of the line, — Randol's regular battery on the right, Cooper's and Kerns's opposite the centre, and two German batteries, each of four twenty-pounder Parrotts, commanded by Diederich and Knieriem, on the left of the infantry line. Sedgwick's division was on and near the Quaker road, to the left rear of McCall. A field, about a sixth of a mile wide, extended in their front; and beyond that there was a wood, which concealed McCall from their view. Hooker was to the left of McCall, and Kearney to his right, neither of them connecting with him. Slocum appears to have been between Kearney and Franklin.[2]

On the afternoon of this day, Longstreet was in front of McCall.[3] He had made a reconnoissance by a brigade, found our troops in force and position, and put his own division in position for attack or defence, and ordered for-

[1] 1 C.W., 586.
[2] 12 W.R., 65.
[3] 13 W.R., 759.

ward Branch's brigade of A. P. Hill's division, then under his orders, to support his right flank; the rest of Hill's division being left for the time on the road, to secure the right or move up to support the front. At about three P.M., after Longstreet had taken his position, artillery-fire was opened upon us, apparently from the Charles City road.[1] This was, no doubt, Huger's feeble movement down that road[2] against Slocum's left, which Slocum checked with his artillery.[3] Longstreet took this fire for Huger's attack, and ordered several batteries forward hurriedly, in order to assure those troops that he was in position. Our batteries returned the fire immediately, and with great rapidity. One battery was found so near Longstreet's front line that he ordered Col. Jenkins to silence it. We were found to be in such force there that the engagement was brought on at once, four o'clock. Longstreet says that we were driven back slowly and steadily, contesting the ground inch by inch; but succeeded in getting some of our batteries off the field, and, by holding our last position till dark, in withdrawing our forces under cover of night.[4] This agrees well enough with Gen. Lee's statement that the battle raged furiously till nine P.M., and that by that time we had been driven with great slaughter from every position but one, which we maintained until we were enabled to withdraw under cover of darkness.[5] Longstreet confesses to some loss of officers and men as prisoners; and that A. P. Hill's troops

[1] 13 W.R., 759, 760.
[2] Ib., 495.
[3] 12 W.R., 66.
[4] 13 W.R., 759.
[5] Ib., 495.

recovered and secured certain captured batteries from which his men had been compelled to retire.[1]

Gen. Hill says that the battle had continued some little time, when Longstreet ordered him to send a brigade to the left to support his line, and that he sent Gregg's brigade; that, the fire becoming very heavy, he was ordered forward with his division; that the Fifty-fifth and Sixtieth Virginia charged and captured two batteries of Napoleon guns, the Sixtieth crossing bayonets with our men, who obstinately contested the possession of these guns; that the Forty-seventh Virginia, having taken possession of a battery, turned its guns upon us, and thereby greatly assisted Gregg on the left; that he restored affairs on the left where one, and on the right where two, of Longstreet's brigades had been forced back; that about dark we were pressing them hard along the whole line, and his last reserve, J. R. Anderson's Georgia brigade, was directed to advance cautiously, and was formed in line, two regiments on each side of the road; that we brought up heavy re-enforcements at this time, that the volume of fire approaching was terrific; that some troops of Wilcox's brigade, which had rallied, were rapidly formed, and, being directed to cheer long and loudly, were moved again to the fight; that this seemed to end the battle, for in less than five minutes all firing ceased, and the enemy retired.[2]

Gen. McCall's report does not tell the story very differently. He says that, at about three P.M., the enemy sent

[1] 13 W.R., 759.
[2] Ib., 83.

forward a regiment on his left centre, and immediately after on his right centre, to feel for a weak spot, but they were both driven back; that soon after his left was furiously attacked with artillery and infantry; that the battle raged fiercely for nearly two hours, but that the enemy at last retired for a time; that during this time the batteries of Cooper and Kerns in front of the centre were boldly charged upon more than once, but that the charges were unsuccessful; that soon after Randol's battery on the right was charged and captured, and its supporting regiment driven away, by a full brigade advancing in wedge shape, without order, with arms trailed, at a run; and that an actual bayonet and butt fight took place around the guns, between the men of the Eleventh Alabama and those of the Fourth Pennsylvania Reserve who stood their ground; that soon after sunset he was captured, while looking for troops he had left in line on the right, while he went to the rear to rally and collect stragglers.[1]

All this leaves it rather uncertain whether McCall meant in his report to claim that his division was not routed nor driven off its original ground. In his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, however, which was given on or after Feb. 28, 1863, he asserts, that, after a part of his left had given way, "the enemy, repulsed by Sumner and Hooker, was thrown on to my centre, whence they were finally repulsed by my division;" that, more than an hour later, part of his right was "borne off the ground,"[2] when Randol's battery was captured; that "the reserves, AS A DIVISION,

[1] 13 W.R., 390–392. [2] 1 C.W., 587, 588.

although terribly shattered, were never defeated, but maintained their ground, with these exceptions, for *three hours*." He supports these assertions with a formidable array of letters and certificates from officers then serving under him, from Gen. Meade down.[1] This testimony is entitled to respect; though most of the signatures, including Meade's (who was wounded, and compelled to leave the field), are appended only to a statement that "the Division was at no time completely routed."[2]

It is to be remembered that McCall asserts that he had about six thousand men, and that of his three brigades one was in reserve.[3] That is to say, seven of his eleven regiments, say thirty-eight hundred men, were in the front line, with the artillery in front of them. This infantry should have occupied a line of some eleven hundred yards. He admits that the Fourth and Twelfth regiments were mainly, and the Fifth, Eighth, and Tenth regiments partly, driven from the field. The Thirteenth also undoubtedly retired in a body.

The chairman of your committee has some personal recollections of that day, which may be of interest. His regiment, the Twentieth Massachusetts Infantry, forming part of Sedgwick's division of the Second Corps, occupied positions first to the east and then to the west of the Quaker road, after McCall's division had passed out of sight beyond the woods, which, at a distance of about a sixth of a mile, with woods also at the right, closed the

[1] C.W., 588–589.

[2] McCall, Pennsylvania Reserves in the Peninsula, 10.

[3] 1 C.W., 587.

view to one looking westward from the Quaker road. It formed part of a force sent back later in the day to White-Oak Swamp, to support Franklin. After remaining under artillery-fire there for some time, it was ordered back, a part of the way at double-quick, the Twentieth, being the leading regiment, marching left in front. Arrived at the point on the Quaker road where it had passed much of the day, it was faced by the right into line of battle, and hurried into the field before described, under the personal direction of Gen. Sumner. Our artillery-fire was brisk at this moment; and the enemy must have forced their way well up to the Quaker road, for a horse was shot dead by a bullet by the side of the writer as his command left that road, and in advancing across the field we met with considerable loss, including Lieut. Lowell, who was mortally wounded.

As we entered the belt of woods in front, we seemed to pass out of the fire, and it was quiet enough in passing through them. When we reached the farther or Richmond edge of the woods, we saw before us four large guns abandoned, three pointing towards the front, one toward the left. Dead and wounded men and horses lay thickly around, many of the men Confederate soldiers. This must have been the left of McCall's line. No troops were in sight, but a few individuals joined us. Here, again, woods on the right closed the view, but there was no sound of battle there. We advanced into the open, and formed line in front of the deserted guns, and engaged the enemy.[1] The Seventh Michigan, of our

[1] 13 W.R., 769.

brigade, emerged from the woods, and formed line on our left, but had no sooner done so than it broke utterly, and disappeared in the woods amid the jeers of our men. We continued the engagement alone. The pressure upon us was such that I was obliged to half wheel my right company to the rear, and soon after my two left companies in the same way, to resist the pressure which came upon us from both flanks as well as from the front. We carried on this fight for perhaps twenty minutes, possibly half an hour. No other troops joined us, and no commands came to us; and there was no reason to suppose that our position was known to any superior officer. The danger of capture becoming imminent, I withdrew the command to the edge of the woods just in rear, and re-formed the line. The engagement continued so hotly that men were seen setting their ramrods against trees to force the charges into the heated barrels. Here a few, a very few, brave men joined us, mere handfuls, and formed on either flank. There were several colonels, Col. Roberts of the First Pennsylvania Reserves among them, two or three sets of colors, and a few brave men who would not leave them. The enemy added artillery-fire, from some guns nearer than I ever was to guns before or since, to their musketry. Our loss was heavy, and the force of officers became very small. Still no word came from the rear, and no reenforcements appeared. After it grew dark enough for the sparks of the cartridges to be plainly seen as they fell from the muzzles of our rifles, I withdrew my men to the New Market road on our right, and by it rejoined our division. It is possible that the centre of a line eleven

hundred yards long may have been in position in the woods while we were so engaged on the left; but it is hard to understand why, if it were so, we heard nothing of them nor from them. Moreover, Major Revere, who was on staff duty that day, told me that he found the Thirteenth Reserves, the Rifles or Bucktails, in the field through which we passed when we left the Quaker road, and tried to get them to go through the woods in front to our assistance, and failed. The Nineteenth Massachusetts suffered heavily in this engagement; and yet, according to the best information accessible, it never entered the woods through which we passed. So also, Col. Charles, of the Forty-second New York, received a fatal wound; and yet neither his regiment nor he appeared in the open ground where we did our fighting. Taking all known facts into consideration, especially the facts that Cooper's and Kerns's batteries, posted in front of McCall's centre, were not captured; that we of the Twentieth saw that the left of his line was non-existent some time before dark; and that there was fighting accompanied by severe casualties in the open ground on the east side of the woods, on the west of which we of the Twentieth did our fighting; and that Randol's battery on the right, though captured, was not carried off till eight the next morning;[1] and that there was an interval between McCall's left and Hooker's right, — we may come to the following conclusions: —

That the left of McCall's line was utterly routed, and that the enemy pushed through the enlarged interval

[1] McCall, Pennsylvania Reserves, Sequel, 4.

thus left between him and Hooker, and then received punishment from Sedgwick and Hooker.

That the right of McCall's line was crushed, but that the enemy made no strong push forward there.

That some of the centre *may* have stood fast in its original position; but part of it probably retired on the Newmarket road in the direction and to the protection of Kearney, who was certainly coming up before the fight ended: and part of it certainly retired to the left; for the same Col. Roberts, who, with his colors and a few men, formed upon us in the woods, was in the original line of battle in support of Kerns's battery, which, though not captured, was "forced to withdraw."[1] The Twentieth Massachusetts was, without doubt, the regiment to which Col. Taggart, Twelfth Pennsylvania Reserves, refers in the letter printed in McCall's pamphlet, in which he says, "Afterwards a new line was formed, and a large number of men fought side by side with a Massachusetts Regiment, belonging, as I understood, to General Hooker's Division."[2]

The losses in McCall's Division, so far as your com-

[1] 1 Bates's History of Pennsylvania Volunteers, 788.

[2] The following extract from the report of an officer in Col. Taggart's regiment shows the severity of the action in which this regiment and the Twentieth Massachusetts were engaged: "Having been present with the Twelfth Regiment on the 30th June, 1862, when driven in, my Company joined a regiment of Gen. Hooker's Division, and was actively engaged; and there, indeed, one-fourth of my men were either killed or wounded." — CHILL HAZZARD, *First Lieut. Twelfth Reg., Commanding Company*, McCall's Pennsylvania Reserves in the Peninsula, 8.

mittee has been able to ascertain the losses in this engagement, were as follows: —

Regiments.	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.	Total.
First Regiment	11	85	..	96
Second "	21	19	6	46
Third "	..	..	..	86
Eighth "	16	14	..	30
Eleventh " (one company) .	9	15	..	24
Twelfth "	6	36	23	65
Thirteenth"	..	..	..	150
Say for six regiments . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	473

Averaging this for eleven regiments, it would give a total of eight hundred and sixty-seven, which does not indicate very sharp work for a division of six thousand men, fighting the whole afternoon against the entire divisions of Longstreet and A. P. Hill. Yet it seems to be incontestable that Longstreet was severely handled, and almost defeated, and that Hill had all that he could do; and we know that the enemy did not break through and cut our line of retreat, and that we were unmolested all that night; and, upon the whole, your committee is of the opinion that in this obscure, much-controverted battle, McCall and his men must have done their work well. Gen. Meade is reported, on the best private authority, to have always asserted this.

We, of the Twentieth, had eight officers and sixty-three enlisted men killed, wounded, or injured.

The table of losses in the Pennsylvania Reserves given

above is taken from Bates's History of Pennsylvania Volunteers, in which the history of each regiment is given at length. The loss of the regiments not included in the table is not given in these histories for Glendale separately, but they contain the following statements: —

Fourth Regiment, Seven Days; upwards of . . .	200
Fifth Regiment, Seven Days	236
Sixth Regiment, Seven Days; not present.	
Seventh Regiment, Seven Days	301
Ninth Regiment, Seven Days; not reported.	
Tenth Regiment, Seven Days; over	200
Eleventh Regiment, captured at Gaines's Mills, except one company.	—
	937

Add this total to the loss of the six regiments and one company, specially reported as occurring at Glendale, and we have 1,410, to be increased by the losses in the Seven Days of the six regiments and one company elsewhere, and by the losses of the Ninth and the Eleventh. Yet McClellan reports the losses of this division from the 26th June to 1st July, inclusive, at 3,074, of which 1,581 were missing.[1] McCall says, "The loss of the division . . . in the three battles of the 26th, 27th, and 30th of June was 3,180, the killed and wounded amounting to 1,650, out of about seven thousand who went into battle . . . the 26th."[2]

Whichever way we turn, we find contradictions and difficulties; and your committee, not flattering them-

[1] 12 W.R., 69. [2] McCall's Pennsylvania Reserves, 5.

selves that they have solved the problems of the battle of Glendale,[1] can only hope that they have added something to the known history of it, and done something to aid and direct the future and more thorough inquirer.

Holmes's demonstration upon the left of our line near Malvern Hill, made this day, was too feeble to call for description.

[1] The Confederates usually call the battle of Glendale the battle of Frazier's Farm. It is also often called the battle of Nelson's Farm by us, and the battle of Charles City Cross Roads by both sides.

V.

THE BATTLE OF MALVERN HILL.

By

FRANCIS W. PALFREY,

Late Brevet Brigadier-General, U.S.V.

Read before the Society on Monday evening, May 14, 1877.

THE BATTLE OF MALVERN HILL

DURING the night following the battle of Glendale, the troops which had been engaged there and at White Oak Swamp fell back; and when the sun rose on Tuesday, July 1, 1862, the whole Army of the Potomac was collected on and about Malvern Hill. This hill consists of an open plateau, about a mile and a half in width, and three-quarters of a mile in depth. At the rear the ground falls away abruptly. On the broad slopes of this position the Army of the Potomac rapidly arrayed itself in triple concentric lines, with the guns in the intervals and on the higher ground in the rear. Our line was something more than the half of a circle. The left rested on the hill near the river; and the line curved round the hill and backwards, through a wooded country, towards a point below Haxall's, on the James. The gunboats were so moored as, in some degree, to protect our left flank, and command the approaches from Richmond. Porter's corps was on the left; next came Couch's division of the Fourth Corps; then Heintzelman's corps; then Sumner's; then Franklin's; and on the extreme right Keyes, with the remainder of the Fourth Corps; McCall's division

was in reserve, and stationed in the rear of Porter and Couch; the right, where the troops were less compact than elsewhere, was strengthened by slashings and barricades.[1]

The formation of the Confederate army for attack was rather accidental, and the testimony of Gen. Hunt[2] suggests a doubt whether Lee meant to fight at all till the following day. Lee's own language, however, does not confirm this doubt.[3] Whiting was on the Confederate left; then a brigade of Ewell's; then D. H. Hill; then two brigades of Huger's; and then Magruder's command; Jackson's own division and the rest of Ewell's were in reserve to the Confederate left, and Longstreet and A. P. Hill were in reserve to their right. It is hard to say more of the formation, except that our left rested near Crew's house, and our right (as seen by the enemy) near Binford's;[4] because the Confederate reports do not state what troops they faced and engaged, and your committee has not found any reports of the battle from Sykes, Morell, Porter, or Couch, the commanders of the troops engaged.[5] Gen. Lee says that "immediately in his [the Union] front the ground was open, varying in width from a quarter to half a mile, and, sloping gradually from the crest, was completely swept by the fire of his [the Union] infantry and artillery. To reach this open ground," he says, "our [the Confederate] troops had to advance through a broken and thickly-wooded

[1] 12 W.R., 68. [2] 1 C.W., 574. [3] 13 W.R., 496. [4] Ib.

[5] The reports of these officers were published in Vol. 13 of the Official Records of the War, 1884. — *Editor.*

country, traversed nearly throughout its whole extent by a swamp passable at but few places, and difficult at those."[1] Gen. Wright, commanding Third Brigade of Huger's division, gives the best description of the approaches and position, as seen by the Confederates, that we have found. He says that he "ascertained that the enemy in very large force was occupying the crest of the hills in Crew's farm immediately in front of his farm-yard, and had pickets and sharpshooters advanced near the edge of the woods in which we [the Confederates] then lay. . . . A high knoll or hill, . . . abruptly sprang from the meadow below on our [Confederate] right." He ascended this, and discovered that "immediately in our front and extending one mile stretched a field, at the farther extremity of which were situated the dwelling and farm buildings of Mr. Crew. . . . In front and to our left the land rose gently from the edge of the woods up to the farm-yard, when it became high and rolling. Upon the right the field was broken by a series of ridges and valleys, which ran out at right angles to a line drawn from our [the Confederate] position to that of the enemy, and all of which terminated upon our extreme right in a precipitous bluff, which dropped suddenly down upon a low, flat meadow, . . . intersected with a number of ditches, which ran from the bluff across the meadow to a swamp or dense woods about five hundred yards farther to our [the Confederate] right. This low, flat meadow stretched up to, and swinging around, Crew's house, extended as far as Turkey Bend, on James River.

[1] 13 W.R., 496.

"The enemy [Union troops] had drawn up his artillery (as well as could be ascertained about fifty pieces) in a crescent-shaped line, the convex line being next to our position, with its right (on our left) resting upon a road which passed three hundred yards to the left of Crew's house on to Malvern Hill, the left of their advanced line of batteries resting upon the high bluff which overlooked the meadow to the right (our right) and rear of Crew's house. Their [Union] infantry, a little in rear of the artillery and protected by the crest of the ridge upon which the batteries were placed, extended from the woods on our [the Confederate] left along the crest of the hill and through a lane in the meadow on our right to the dense woods there. In rear of this and beyond a narrow ravine, the sides of which were covered with timber and which ran parallel to their [Union] line of battle and but a few rods in the rear of Crew's house, was another line of infantry, its right resting upon a heavy, dense woods, which covered the Malvern Hill farm on the east. The left of this line rested upon the precipitous bluff which overhung the low meadow on the west of the farm. At this point the high bluff stretched out to the west for two hundred yards in a long ridge or ledge, nearly separating the meadow from the low lands of the river, upon the extreme western terminus of which was planted a battery of heavy guns. This latter battery commanded the whole meadow in front of it, and by a direct fire was able to dispute the manœuvring of troops over any portion of the meadow. Just behind the ravine which ran in rear of Crew's house and under cover

of the timber was planted a heavy battery in a small redoubt, whose fire swept across the meadow. These two batteries completely controlled the meadow from one extremity of it to the other and effectually prevented the movement of troops in large masses upon it."[1]

(The redoubt which Gen. Wright speaks of probably existed only in his imagination.)

McClellan says that at about three P.M. a brisk attack of infantry was made on Couch's front, and that the attacking force was broken entirely, and driven back in disorder over its own ground, and that "this advantage was followed up until we had advanced the right of our line some seven or eight hundred yards, and rested upon a thick clump of trees, giving us a stronger position and a better fire."[2] This is one of McClellan's puzzling statements. If the position were stronger, why had he not taken it before, during his undisputed possession of not less than twenty-four hours of the whole ground? And how could a repulse of an attack on Couch lead to an advance of our right? Couch was almost at the left, with nothing to his left but Porter, while the whole of the Third, Second, and Sixth Corps, and Keyes's remaining division were stretched out to his right. The best explanation that we can offer of this careless statement is as follows: As our troops entered the position of Malvern Hill, they all or most of them moved on to the glacis which slopes up to the old one-storey Virginia house on the summit. Crew's house is on a spur, sharp to the right as one ascends from the low level of the Quaker road.

[1] 13 W.R., 811–812. [2] 12 W.R., 68.

Probably the strength of the position was not fully appreciated when our army was concentrating, and our men were allowed to pass by it; and probably our lines were drawn before it for the first time after the repulse McClellan speaks of. But it must be admitted that this theory does not accord with Gen. Wright's account;[1] but, as he speaks of himself as fighting from 11.30 A.M., while it is indisputable that there was no serious fighting till some hours later, we may accept his description of ground and of the way in which it was occupied, without accepting his notes of time.

It is not easy to write a satisfactory description of the Battle of Malvern Hill, for two reasons. We have already adverted to the former one, the want of reports from the generals who commanded the Union troops which did the fighting. The second reason is the character of the Southern reports. They are numerous and long enough; but they read like the reports of men disappointed by failure, and they abound in assertions of gallant behavior and of the individual success of brigades and regiments, while they are deficient in precision and in accuracy. Lee's report is little more than a compilation from, and condensation of, the reports of his corps and division commanders; but his general statement may be accepted, and it is as follows:[2] "Orders were issued for a general advance at a given signal, but the causes referred to" (he refers to the difficulties of the ground, ignorance of the country, the effective use of the Union artillery, and his

[1] 13 W.R., 811-812.
[2] Ib.

own inability to bring up a sufficient force of that arm) "prevented a proper concert of action among the troops. D. H. Hill pressed forward across the open field and engaged the enemy gallantly, breaking and driving back his first line; but a simultaneous advance of the other troops not taking place, he found himself unable to maintain the ground he had gained against the overwhelming numbers and numerous batteries of the enemy. Jackson sent to his support his own division and that part of Ewell's which was in reserve, but, owing to the increasing darkness and intricacy of the forest and swamp they did not arrive in time to render the desired assistance. Hill was therefore compelled to abandon part of the ground he had gained after suffering severe loss and inflicting heavy damage upon the enemy.

On the right the attack was gallantly made by Huger's and Magruder's commands. . . . Several determined efforts were made to storm the hill at Crew's house. The brigades advanced bravely across the open field, raked by the fire of a hundred cannon and the musketry of large bodies of infantry. Some were broken and gave way, others approached close to the guns, driving back the infantry, compelling the advanced batteries to retire to escape capture, and mingling their dead with those of the enemy. For want of concert among the attacking columns their assaults were too weak to break the Federal line, and after struggling gallantly, sustaining and inflicting great loss, they were compelled successively to retire. . . . The firing continued until after nine P.M., but no decided result was gained. . . . The lateness of the hour

at which the attack necessarily began gave the enemy the full advantage of his superior position and augmented the natural difficulties of our own."[1]

This is a confession of failure, and an apology for it; but, in the judgment of your committee, it is too rose-colored, even so, and we propose to examine it in detail. The excuse of "ignorance of the country"[2] is a lame one, coming from a man who commanded an army which contained thousands of Virginians, and had in it many men born and brought up in the immediate vicinity of the battle-field,[3] and who could command the ready aid of every man, woman, and child left near there. But we will not dwell on this.

It may be taken to be true, we think, that the first serious attack was made by D. H. Hill. He tells us,[4] "I had expressed my disapprobation of a farther pursuit of the Yankees to the commanding general and to Major-Generals Jackson and Longstreet even before I knew of the strength of their position. An examination satisfied me that an attack could not but be hazardous to our arms." He commanded the Third Division of Jackson's corps. His brigades were Rodes's (First) commanded by Gordon at Malvern Hill, Colquitt's (Second), Garland's (Third), G. B. Anderson's (Fourth), commanded by Col. Tew, and Ripley's (Fifth); and he seems to have had four batteries. He tells us that at about ten[5] o'clock, he thinks, he was informed from general headquarters that positions had been selected from which the Southern

[1] 1 13 W.R., 496–497. [2] Ib., 496. [3] Ib., 675–677. [4] Ib., 628.

[5] 1 Reports of Army of Northern Virginia (Confederate publication), 185; *cf.* 13 W.R., 628. In the latter version the hour is given as "2 o'clock." — *Editor.*

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artillery could silence the Yankee artillery, and that, as soon as that was done, Gen. Armistead (of Huger's division) would advance with a shout, and carry the battery immediately in his front; that this was to be the signal for a general advance, and all the troops were then to rush forward with fixed bayonets; that two or three batteries were ordered up, and knocked to pieces; that he wrote to Gen. Jackson that the firing of their batteries was of the most farcical character; that Jackson repeated the order for a general advance at the signal of the shouting from Armistead; that at about an hour before sundown shouting was heard on the right, followed by the roar of musketry, and he ordered his division to advance; that his division advanced alone, the troops on the right and left not moving forward an inch, and fought heroically, but fought in vain; that, half an hour after his division had ceased to struggle against odds of more than ten to one, he had to fall back.[1]

Gen. Garland says of the action of the artillery, that,[2] "so far from producing marked effect, the firing was so wild that we were returning to our posts under the impression that no movement of infantry would be ordered, when suddenly one or two brigades . . . charged out of the woods towards the right with a shout. Major-Gen. Hill at once exclaimed, 'That must be the general advance! Bring up your brigades as soon as possible and join in it.'" Garland moved his brigade forward along the Quaker road, by the flank, filed out to the right, and formed line of battle, while Anderson's, Ripley's and

[1] 13 W.R., 628–629. [2] Ib., 643.

Rodes' brigades (Gordon commanding the last) moved up on his left, and somewhat in advance of him. Garland says the batteries he was ordered to charge were some eight or nine hundred yards off, on a commanding hill, straight to the front, supported by two lines of infantry; that there was no cover, and that the ground nearest the enemy was ploughed. Half-way to the guns, or nearer, the fire of the Union guns and the opening fire of the infantry induced his men to halt, lie down, and commence firing, without his orders, and contrary to them. He sent for re-enforcements; but they approached slowly, and before they reached him his men began to give way, and finally the brigade fell back to the edge of the woods. He speaks of a want of concert and co-operation, and consequent struggling and lamentable disorder. He says that his brigade went up as far as any troops he saw, and behaved as well; and in conclusion,[1] "If they retired, so did all the rest who were ordered to charge the battery. The whole division became scattered." Col. Gordon,[2] who took Rodes's place in command of the First Brigade of D. H. Hill's division, seems to have been on the right of that division. He had with him the Third, the Fifth, Sixth, and Twenty-sixth Alabama, and a regiment from Anderson's brigade, which had strayed. Gen. Hill ordered him to charge the batteries in his front, distant seven or eight hundred yards, across an open field. He tells much the same story as Garland, except that he claims to have approached within a little over two hun-

[1] 13 W.R., 643.
[2] Ib., 634.

dred yards of the batteries, when the canister and musketry mowed down his already thinned ranks so rapidly, that it became impossible to advance without support, and he ordered his men to lie down and open fire, and sent back for supports, which failed to reach him; and he presently ordered his brigade to fall back. He claims that the dead of his brigade marked a line nearer the batteries than any other.[1]

Ripley's report[2] conflicts with Garland's; for he speaks of his own brigade as mounting the hill with Gordon's and Anderson's on his right, and of Garland's and Colquitt's as advancing later, and making good the action on the right. Unfortunately we have found no report from Colquitt or Tew of the operations of which they had charge in this engagement. At half-past six or seven o'clock, Ripley says, he moved forward, with Gordon's and Anderson's brigades on his right. His own line was formed with the Forty-eighth Georgia on the right, next the Third North Carolina, next the Forty-fourth Georgia, and the First North Carolina on the left. According to him, the troops never got far forward, and he confesses that the left of the line was pressed hard, though he claims that the advanced Union battery fell back, and the troops wavered; but he admits, that, as darkness approached, the Confederate troops fell back, and that there was much confusion, and that there were those "who strayed from the field of duty."[3]

There is not much to be learned from Gen. Jackson's

[1] 13 W.R., 634–635.
[2] Ib., 651.
[3] Ib., 650.

report. He says, "Gen. Whiting was directed to move to the left and take position on the Poindexter Farm; Gen. D. H. Hill to take position farther to the right; Taylor's brigade, of Gen. Ewell's division, to move forward between the divisions of Hill and Whiting; the remainder of Ewell's division to remain in rear of the first line. Jackson's division was halted near Willis'" (or the Quaker) "church in the wood and held in reserve. He says, that, when D. H. Hill sent to him for re-enforcements, he ordered that portion of Ewell's division which was in reserve, and the whole of his own division, to his relief, but that none of them reached him in time to afford him the desired support. He confesses to an attack upon his centre, but states that it was effectually driven back by the fire of his batteries.[1]

Taylor's brigade was commanded by Col. Stafford at Malvern Hill. At dusk an order was brought him to charge forward on the battery.[2] He obeyed, with three Louisiana regiments, — the Sixth, Seventh, and Twenty-eighth. The brigade, he says, became somewhat scattered, and was withdrawn, and order restored. Whiting's report[3] shows that he did little besides supporting and endeavoring to return a heavy artillery-fire.

We return, therefore, to that part of the field which lay to the Confederate right of D. H. Hill; only adding,[4] that Gen. Trimble, commanding the seventh brigade of Ewell's division, speaks of the Confederate troops as repulsed at sundown on the right after a fierce fight of

[1] 13 W.R., 557–558.
[2] Ib., 567.
[3] Ib., 620.
[4] Ib., 618.

two hours, and of Magruder's "disastrous charges," and declares that the next morning at dawn he "found the whole army in the utmost disorder . . . a scene of the most woeful and disheartening confusion;"[1] and that Gen. Early, commanding that day Elzey's brigade of Ewell's division, says that about sundown, while moving to support D. H. Hill, he met "a large number of men, retreating from the battle-field, . . . and producing great confusion;" that he "found a very deep ditch filled with skulkers from the battle-field;" that he "soon after found the road leading to the battle-field filled with a large number of men retreating in confusion, being mostly from Gen. Toombs' Georgia Brigade;" that he endeavored to rally them, but found it very difficult to do so; that after exposure for some time to the fiercest artillery-fire he ever witnessed, Gen. Ransom, with a portion of his command, retired to the rear past his position; that his own brigade became separated from different causes, among them "the confusion produced by the immense number of men retiring in disorder from the field." He also speaks of "a large body of disorganized men, who were giving the most disheartening account of the state of things in front."[2]

Gen. Huger, whose troops joined D. H. Hill's right, makes no report of this battle, because, as he says,[3] though present himself, he was not in command; that he was treated as he was at Seven Pines, that is to say, as the different brigades of his division were sent forward

[1] 13 W.R., 618–619.
[2] Ib., 612.
[3] Ib., 790.

into the battle, he was directed to report them to another commander, namely, Magruder.

Gen. Magruder says,[1] that, while he was approaching the battle-field, Huger had formed on the right of Jackson, i.e., of D. H. Hill, and that Gen. Lee directed him to place his troops on the right of Huger; and that he did so, as far as the ground would permit, placing his three divisions *en échelon* to the right and rear. His command consisted of his own division (brigades of Barksdale and Cobb), McLaws's division (brigades of Kershaw and Semmes), and D. R. Jones's division (brigades of Toombs and Col. G. T. Anderson). His report is long, and not altogether without value, but it is too inconsistent with known facts to dispose the student to use it freely; and as we distrust Magruder, and as Huger makes no report, we prefer to follow the reports of their subordinate commanders.

Armistead's advanced troops seem to have led in the attack from the centre,[2] on the right of D. H. Hill, with the brigades of Mahone and Wright immediately on his right, and Cobb's brigade closely following his advance. Armistead's report is very meagre. He says,[3] that the artillery in front of him was entirely disabled by the Union fire; that, at about three P.M., the enemy approached with a heavy body of skirmishers, and that he drove them back with three Virginia regiments in handsome style; that, between four and five P.M.,[4] Magruder came to him, and ordered a charge, — his three Vir-

[1] 13 W.R., 668.
[2] Ib., 674.
[3] Ib., 819.
[4] Ib.

ginia regiments being then in advance of Mahone's and Wright's brigades, which came up immediately on his right, Cobb's brigade being behind him, and his other three Virginia regiments being behind Cobb. He does not say whether the charge was made. He contradicts himself by placing the Fifty-third Virginia both before and behind Cobb.[1]

There is nothing to be gathered from Cobb's report. He claims[2] to have assisted in repulsing the advance of the enemy, and to have joined in the general assault on the batteries, but he does not describe the assault. His brigade was composed of the Georgia Legion, the Sixteenth and Twenty-fourth Georgia, the Second Louisiana, and the Fifteenth North Carolina.

Gen. Wright describes what he calls "this ill-timed advance," but diminishes our confidence by asserting that he was fighting from 11.30 till three. He finds much fault with the commander of one of his regiments, — Col. R. H. Jones, of the Twenty-second Georgia. He gives a very picturesque account of his advance, and claims that he and Mahone were finally left alone within one hundred yards of the enemy's batteries, and passed the night there.[3] He seems to have had the Third, Fourth, and Twenty-second Georgia, and First Louisiana.

Mahone says[4] that, while posted in rear of Wright's brigade, he was ordered by Gen. Magruder, at about five P.M., to join in the charge; that these two brigades fought alone for about two hours, and finally, with

[1] 13 W.R., 819.
[2] Ib., 749.
[3] Ib., 813–815.
[4] Ib., 800.

some aid from the right, succeeded in driving the enemy from the ground occupied by them, and in pressing somewhat beyond it, and near to the hostile batteries. He had the Sixth, Twelfth, Sixteenth, and Forty-first Virginia regiments. He gives as much credit to Wright as Wright gives to him. It is probable that these two brigades did as good and as successful fighting as was done by any Southern troops that day.

We have now disposed of that portion of the battle which was fought mainly by Huger's troops, as his remaining brigade, Ransom's, was detached, and fought on the extreme right of the line: that is to say, if we can, as we probably may, accept his statement. Ransom says he "brought the brigade in line, within two hundred yards of the enemy's batteries. This," he says, "was upon our extreme right." He claims to have "advanced to within twenty yards of the guns;" but then "the line wavered, and fell back before a fire the intensity of which is beyond description."[1] He lost 499 out of about 3,000. This is an intelligible account, but Magruder says[2] that Ransom supported the left of his line. Ransom's statement,[3] that "at seven P.M. I received word from Gen. Magruder that he must have aid, if only a regiment," is an instructive commentary on Magruder's report of "favorable results," etc.[4]

Col. G. T. Anderson, commanding third brigade of Jones's division, describes[5] the movements, forward and

[1] 13 W.R., 794–795.
[2] Ib., 671.
[3] Ib., 794.
[4] Ib., 669.
[5] Ib., 707.

back, right and left, which he made under Magruder's orders, until finally, after being ordered to move back rapidly by the left flank to support Cobb, he was ordered,[1] at about 4.30 P.M., to advance to attack a battery of the enemy. His right, the First Georgia Regulars, and the Seventh and Eighth Georgia, became separated from the command; while the Ninth and Eleventh Georgia remained more immediately under his observation. He does not claim to have accomplished any thing.

Gen. Toombs, commanding first brigade of Jones's division, states that he was ordered to support Anderson and Cobb; that when he reached the open field on the elevated plateau immediately in front of and in short range of the enemy's guns, there was "great confusion and disorder in the field," and that his own brigade became separated by misapprehended or erroneous orders, and that he was only partially successful in his efforts to reform his line; that "the stream of fugitives was pouring back over my" (his) "line, frequently breaking it and carrying back with them many of the men;" that, when Kershaw's brigade came up, what was left of his brigade joined Kershaw's in an advance, but that when they advanced beyond the edge of the woods into the open field, under the destructive fire of the enemy's cannon and small arms, "they wavered and fell back" into a road skirting a pine thicket; that ten or fifteen minutes later they received a heavy musketry fire from the left flank, and "retreated in disorder."[2]

[1] 13 W.R., 707.
[2] Ib., 697–698.

Gen. Kershaw, commanding fourth brigade of McLaws's division, admits[1] that he was hardly engaged, and accomplished little.

Col. Barksdale, commanding third brigade of Magruder's division,[2] joined in the assault, and continued it till night closed the scene; but he does not claim to have gained ground.

Gen. Semmes, commanding the first brigade of McLaws's division,[3] tells his story well, and claims to have got very near to the enemy's guns; but finally it is the old story, — the line wavers, finally breaks, and seeks shelter, and his effort to advance again at 8.30 P.M. proves unavailing.

The battle may be summed up as follows: —

The army of McClellan was attacked in a strong position on, and in front of, Malvern Hill, by the army of Lee. The artillery of McClellan, and the infantry of Porter's corps, of Couch's division of the Fourth Corps, and of the brigades of Caldwell (Second Corps), and Meagher and Sickles (Third Corps), repulsed the attack, which was made mainly by D. H. Hill's division of Jackson's corps, the whole of Huger's corps, Magruder's three divisions, and a brigade of A. P. Hill's. Jackson's other troops were either not ordered into action at all, or arrived too late to take an active part. Longstreet was not engaged, nor A. P. Hill, beyond the single brigade already referred to. The fighting took place mainly in front of the point at which the Quaker road rises from the low lands on the

[1] 13 W.R., 728.
[2] Ib., 751.
[3] Ib., 724.

acclivity of Malvern Hill, and to the right, or west, of that point, about Crew's house.

Every one, unless Magruder be an exception, confesses that the attack was a failure. Lee says, that, to reach the enemy's position, his "troops had to advance through a broken and thickly wooded country, traversed nearly throughout its whole extent by a swamp passable at but few places, and difficult at those. The whole was within range of the batteries on the heights and the gunboats in the river;" that, "owing to ignorance of the country, the dense forests impeding necessary communication, and the extreme difficulty of the ground, the whole line was not formed until a late hour in the afternoon;" that "the obstacles presented by the woods and swamp made it impracticable to bring up a sufficient amount of artillery to oppose successfully the extraordinary force of that arm employed by the enemy, while the field itself afforded us few positions favorable for its use and none for its proper concentration;" that "orders were issued for a general advance at a given signal, but the causes referred to prevented a proper concert of action."[1] His final expression is, "No decided result was gained."[2] Whiting, who saw the fighting without taking an active part in it, says,[3] "The enemy appeared to fight with great stubbornness, and our attack to have made but little impression upon him." He says that towards night he learned that the centre was pressed hard.

The truth is, that Lee's account is far too favorable, and

[1] 13 W.R., 496.
[2] Ib., 497.
[3] Ib., 567.

that he was beaten with heavy loss out of the forces engaged. Jackson lost[1] 2,162, of whom 377 were killed, substantially out of the single division of D. H. Hill. Magruder reported[2] his loss at not exceeding 2,900; but this estimate seems, from our examination of the reports of his brigadiers, to be at least a thousand too small.

Lee's army, as has been shown, was thrown into great confusion, and a vigorous attack by the Union army at the close of the day might have done him incalculable damage. Of our army, the Pennsylvania Reserves of the First Corps, the Second Corps all but one brigade, the Third Corps all but two brigades, a division of the Fourth Corps, and the whole of the Sixth Corps, were disposable, and virtually fresh; for none of them had had much to do but rest for twelve hours, more or less, before the late sunset of that day. The ground was entirely favorable for the rapid advance of great masses of troops; and our artillery, massed on the heights from which we should have descended to the attack, might have effectually covered the advance.

We of the Second Corps had a lazy afternoon of it, and towards sunset the surgeons of the Twentieth Massachusetts went up on the hill to see what they could see. When they came back they said they had seen our light artillery pursuing the enemy; and they described, in glowing language, the beautiful and cheering spectacle of the advancing artillery-fire. This was, no doubt, the movement to which Gen. Hunt refers, when he says

[1] 13 W.R., 559.
[2] Ib., 672.

"I followed him [the enemy] up as long as possible, until it was so dark that it was impossible to move the guns."[1]

Swinton puts the loss of the enemy at five thousand, and says that our loss was not above a third of that number.[2]

A noteworthy point in the history of the battle is the question suggested as to what the army of Lee was doing all day. We of the second division of the Second Corps were sharply shelled early in the day. Gen. Hill tells us[3] that he thinks it was about ten A.M. when he received his orders from Lee for the general advance. All the accounts agree that it did not take place till late in the afternoon, some seven or eight hours after; and yet Lee complains that he had not had time to form his line.

The Confederate army seems to have been ill commanded that day, and the Union army not commanded at all. Had McClellan been where he should have been at the critical moment, and had he been the man to perceive and profit by that moment, he might have sent his army down the slopes of Malvern Hill like an avalanche, and poured swift destruction upon the demoralized and disordered Confederates, crowded and immovable in their wooded swamps. He lost his opportunity, as Lee lost his at Fredericksburg; and the battle of Malvern Hill, instead of being a great victory, was permitted to be only an affair of the rearguard.

[1] 1 C.W., 574. [2] Swinton, 163.
[3] 1 Army of Northern Virginia, 185, cf. 13 W.R., 628.

VI.

COMMENTS ON THE PENINSULAR CAMPAIGN OF GENERAL McCLELLAN.

By

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Brevet Brigadier-General, U.S.V.

Read before the Society on Monday evening, May 13, 1878.

COMMENTS ON THE CAMPAIGN.

IT is with unaffected diffidence that I attempt a subject upon which so much has been written, and of which I cannot hope to present any novel view. All that can be said has been so well said by the Comte de Paris, that his work cannot be controverted or improved upon.

In advance, however, it is interesting to note how the armies and Washington authorities finally accepted McClellan's views, which at his time were the subject of the severest stricture, almost derision. Every civilian of influence in the country seemed to deem himself an able and sweeping critic of the general to whom every military responsibility was assigned. The popular and official objections were directed mainly against, —

1st, The Army of the Potomac "digging," not fighting. "Spades are trumps," was the standard witticism. Yet to the end of the war no outside pressure was able to make "digging" unpopular with the Army of the Potomac, and it has in all wars since been a strong element.

2d, McClellan's call for re-enforcements. He might have been deemed the best judge as to the necessities in this direction. In contrast, after the Spottsylvania bat-

tles, Gen. Augur informed the writer of this that thirty-eight thousand men had been sent through his department for the re-enforcement of the Army of the Potomac; and in one way or another these re-enforcements were continued until the end of the war.

3d, That the garrison for the defence of Washington was insufficient. When Grant was investing Petersburg, Gen. Wright was sent with the Sixth Corps to assist in the defence of Washington. He and his staff arrived in advance of the troops; and upon the sound of cannon he rode with his adjutant-general to Fort Stevens, on the Fourteenth-street road, when they met Gen. McCook, who pointed out the pickets of the enemy, muskets in hand, within a few rods of the work, and said, "Well, Wright, there they are; I've nothing here but quartermaster's men and hospital bummers; the enemy can walk right in if he only tries: let's go down below, and get some lager beer."

These things I mention as a preliminary, to show the different condition of the public mind at the beginning, and towards the end, of the war.

"Comments on the Peninsular Campaign of Gen. McClellan" involve a discussion of the merits of those two armies whose terrible but indecisive battles were the most important events of our civil war.

The Army of Northern Virginia will deservedly rank as the best army which has existed on this continent; suffering privations unknown to its opponents, it fought well from the early Peninsular days to the surrender of that small remnant at Appomattox. It seemed always ready,

active, mobile: without doubt it was composed of the best men of the South, rushing to what they considered the defence of their country against a bitter invader; and they took the places assigned them, officer or private, and fought until beaten by superiority of numbers. The North sent no such army to the field, and its patriotism was of an easier kind: there was no rallying-cry which drove all the best — the rich and the educated — to join the fighting armies. All avocations here went on without interruption: the law, the clergy, educational institutions, merchants and traders, suffered nothing from a diminution of their working forces; we had loyal leagues, excellent sanitary and Christian commissions, great "war governors" (Andrew, Curtin, and Morton), and secretaries, organizers of victory; we had a people full of loyalty and devotion to the cause, and of hatred for the neighbor who differed as to the way in which the war should be conducted, never realizing that *the* way was by going, or sending their best and brightest.

As a matter of comparison: we have lately read that from William and Mary's College, Virginia, thirty-two out of thirty-five professors and instructors abandoned the college work, and joined the army in the field. Harvard College sent one professor from its large corps of professors and instructors!

An article which lately appeared in the Philadelphia "Weekly Times," on the Battle of Ball's Bluff, says: "Gen. Evans held a similar command along the South Bank with four thousand men. He had four regiments, — the Eighth Virginia Volunteers, Col. Eppa Hunton; the

Thirteenth Mississippi, Col. E. Barksdale (formerly M. C., killed at Gettysburg at the head of his brigade); the Seventeenth Mississippi, Col. Featherston (now candidate for governor of his State); and the Eighteenth Mississippi, Col. E. R. Burt: these troops were, perhaps, superior to the average even of the early volunteers. Take, for example, the last-named regiment: Col. Burt was a well-known Christian gentleman and good officer; Major Henry had been a judge of the Supreme Court; Capt. A. G. Browne had been governor of Mississippi; Capt. O. R. Singleton, now in Congress, was an ex-member of Congress; Capt. A. P. Hill afterwards became distinguished. Corporals Pettus and Cooper were slain in this battle: one was a son of Gov. Pettus, the other a member of the legislature. The private fortunes of members of this company aggregated six millions of dollars at the outbreaking of the war. Such men were naturally moved in a high degree with personal pride, the surest guaranty of sticking qualities in the untrained, inexperienced volunteer."

Contrast our volunteers on the opposite shore. Commissions were given to most unfit men, only because they had enlisted a company and offered it to their State; and our enlisted men, it is painful to admit, were not animated by the same strong personal feelings which were universal in the South.

I can recall but one regiment from the North which was organized and maintained on true military principles, where even the *effort* was made to select excellent officers in all grades: this was the Second Massachusetts Infantry.

We thought our own Massachusetts a pattern of loyalty and patriotism during the war. Read the "Record of Massachusetts Volunteers" as published by the State; the bounties paid (thirteen million dollars by the State, and more millions by the cities and towns, — a worthless expenditure, — to give Massachusetts a nominal credit, but of no service in sending good fighting men to the front); the desertions; the hosts of men who never joined their regiments: and there is so much to be ashamed of! An effort to fill the required quota, without reference to the good service to be rendered! The enlisting officers at one time put out their posters with something like this: "Enlist in the heavy artillery regiments. No marching, no fighting, comfortable quarters," etc.!

THERE WERE ENLISTED IN MASSACHUSETTS IN THE—		There were killed in Battle.
Second Heavy Artillery	3,045	8
Third " "	2,358	1
Fourth " "	1,852	0
First Battalion Heavy Artillery	1,486	0
NINE-MONTHS' REGIMENTS.		
Forty-second Infantry	1,044	3
Forty-third "	1,076	2
Forty-fourth "	1,047	8
Forty-fifth "	1,025	10
Forty-sixth "	980	1
Forty-seventh "	1,158	1
Forty-eighth "	1,025	11
Forty-ninth "	966	21
Fiftieth "	994	0
Fifty-first "	973	3
Fifty-second "	955	7
Fifty-third "	973	19
Total	20,957	95

This does not indicate brilliant or useful service; and yet the material was probably better than that of any regiments of the State. The same class of men in the South was in the thickest of the fight, and their intelligence and patriotism did a great work. And what a power these twenty thousand men I have mentioned would have been, with a little discipline and drill, added to the Army of the Potomac — an army corps of twenty thousand young men from Massachusetts alone! If it was so with us, it is reasonable to suppose that other Northern States pursued the same selfish policy.

The South showed more earnestness, more personal effort.

I am second to no one in my love for the Army of the Potomac. The officers who never served in it have given it little credit for its action in the greatest battles of our war; the generals coming from other armies had at first the idea that it didn't or couldn't fight. They changed their views. Such a reproach can cling to no army which records on its banners Fair Oaks, Glendale, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, the Wilderness, Spottsylvania, and Cold Harbor!

But in forming this army, time, patience, and ability were required. The genius of Gen. McClellan in the matter of organization is beyond controversy; and he imparted to the Army of the Potomac a character and confidence which were felt to the last. With its elements not the best in a military view, it needed a McClellan to show these men how to be soldiers. Recognizing, as he did, the ability and the earnestness of the South, and the

duel to the death which must follow, he may well have hesitated; and, since the responsibility was all to be his and his army's, he could not yield at once to the wicked and ignorant clamor which soon succeeded in betraying his plans, appointing his subordinates against his views or wishes, and even taking charge of the conduct of the war in Virginia.

To him in the impending contests, one of two courses was open: either to defeat the enemy by strategic combinations and operations, or to undertake the process of attrition or elimination (that after-thought of Gen. Grant's, which history will hardly commend).

That the former method was the only one for the hour and the material of his army, is certain. His first step must be thorough organization.

The necessities of the case were great: the obstacles put in his way were greater than ever were thrown by a government upon an officer to whom so much had been assigned. Subordinate officers were summoned by the Committee on the Conduct of the War, asked their opinions of the loyalty, ability, plans of campaigns, etc., of their superiors; a lieutenant (of a very bad regiment) is asked why he did not open sealed letters addressed to a general commanding his division of ten thousand men or more, — what the officers of his regiment had generally to say, or thought, of that general, whether there is not considerable restraint in the army; they urged a council of war, the organization of army corps, the distribution of troops, and, in fact, every thing of which they knew absolutely nothing. And this Committee succeeded in all its purposes.

McClellan wisely and anxiously deliberated on his plan of campaign. The overland route to Richmond, urged by Mr. Lincoln and the politicians, was most distasteful to him: he saw the peril there, which all succeeding commanders vainly tried to overcome. He dreaded the natural obstacles, which afforded such splendid opportunity of defence to the Army of Northern Virginia, and destruction to the Army of the Potomac.

He made his selection. And from this moment commenced a line of conduct, on the part of the Government, the like of which conduct can never have been seen elsewhere. The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein mildly imitated this in her famous army. A faithful reproduction of the work of our statesmen at that time would have transcended the limits of the credulity afforded to even opera-bouffe.

"After ordering the preparations which McClellan had so long solicited, Mr. Lincoln relapsed into hesitancy, and insisted that the general-in-chief should submit his project to the examination of a council of war. Twelve generals assembled on the 8th of March, not to receive the instructions of their chief, but to constitute a tribunal for passing judgment on his plans. These were approved by a majority of eight to four."

The absurdity of communicating a plan, where secrecy was so essential, to twelve men in council, is apparent; and the result was as might have been expected. On the next day the enemy evacuated Manassas, hastened thereto, as intimated by the Comte de Paris, by some "criminal indiscretions"[1] (on the part of some member of the council).

[1] 1 Comte de Paris, 613.

The Comte de Paris further says: "The Confederates, by a rapid retreat, escaped the most serious dangers they would have encountered from this expedition. Now they had time to reach Richmond even before the Federal army could embark upon the transports, whose arrival was delayed from day to day. . . . The moral effect which the retreat of the Confederates would have produced a few days later was wanting. . . . The evacuation of Manassas would have coincided with the disembarkation of the first Federal soldiers at Urbana or Newport News, and everybody would have attributed it to the bold movement of McClellan."[1]

The organization of army corps was resisted by McClellan; and yet, without consultation with that commander, upon whom the work devolved, his army was arranged for him. Gen. McDowell, the only man sufficient to the command of a corps, was assigned to the First, and he never served with Gen. McClellan. The unfitness of Keyes and Heintzelman was soon demonstrated, and they retired at an early day from field commands. Sumner, brave, dashing, impetuous, was, by age, unequal to an emergency.

I would not do injustice to so gallant a soldier, and so it is fair to state his failings. At Savage's Station, by his obstinacy and bad judgment, he nearly defeated the plans of his chief, by insisting for a long time on remaining there, and not completing the move to James River, which his commander had ordered. Whether or no the move was a wise one, will be considered hereafter; but there can be no doubt that for two corps of the army to

[1] 1 Comte de Paris, 613–614.

have remained at Savage's Station, would have resulted in disaster. He was only finally induced to move, by a stratagem on the part of Franklin and another division-commander. He again showed a condition of mind not available for active service, when Pope's army retreated on Alexandria. After a semi-panicky night march of his corps, which had well sustained itself in all actions, his nerve seemed to fail him; and, in his tent in the early morning, he said to half a dozen officers, gathered there after the march for a hasty meal, "I should not like to see this corps go into action at present: no, I should really fear the result." His strength seemed to return, as the army showed its confidence and improvement under McClellan's admirable march to Antietam; but in the battle there every thing, so far as he was concerned, was of the worst. Possessed in advance with the idea that he was to make a grand *coup*, he bulged in, as if it were a charge of dragoons, with no preliminary examination of the ground, his divisions not connecting, his troops massed so that the second and third lines were of no use except to be destroyed, and his defeat was as immediate as his loss was great; and then he became despondent, and useless for command, not permitting Franklin to make any effort, and saying that his (Sumner's) corps could be relied on for nothing. Certainly he was the best of soldiers, but a poor general. At Fredericksburg, where he commanded the right grand division, his adjutant-general, Col. Taylor, fearing that rashness or some other unfitting condition of mind might supervene, obtained authority from Gen. Burnside to issue such orders in his

name to Gen. Sumner, as he (Col. Taylor) might deem best.

Of the appointment of the commander of the Fifth Corps (Gen. Banks) it is impossible to speak with patience, and it is unnecessary to speak at all; for his incapacity and worthlessness are admitted to have exceeded those of any officer intrusted with so important a command during the war. The forces left for the defence of Washington were placed under the command of Gen. J. S. Wadsworth, — manifestly a bad appointment.[1] Here an experienced, educated officer was required, one who might have quieted the continually recurring fears of the Washington officials.

The President next (March 8) issued his General War Order No. 3,[2] embarrassing McClellan by absurd restrictions. Mr. Lincoln and his advisers (Secretary Stanton, Halleck, the Committee on the Conduct of the War) were unable to perceive for many years that the defence of Washington lay in watching and taking care of the Army of Northern Virginia. Place a moderate force in the works about Washington and in the Shenandoah Valley, with good commanders at both places, keep the Army

[1] It is only intended here to speak of Gen. Wadsworth as unsuited for a command of this nature. No man went to the war with a greater sacrifice than he. A man of age, family, and fortune, he might well have remained at home and served his country well. All of his sons served in the war, two of them with great distinction. He himself, the first to cross in the pontoon-boat with his men below Fredericksburg (in the Chancellorsville campaign), gave a wonderful exhibition of gallantry: his death (in Grant's campaign) was as heroic as any thing which occurred during the war.

[2] 5 W.R., 50.

of Northern Virginia employed, and there should be no fear as to the capital. McClellan saw this at the start.

Swinton says,[1] "When McClellan presented his scheme of a change of base to the lower Chesapeake, the project should either have been frankly approved or frankly disapproved. The plan was meritorious, and promised brilliant and decisive results. But the President first disapproved it, on the ground that it would require too long a time to be put into execution. He then approved it; but for almost a month withheld the order to provide water transportation!"

Of this McClellan says,[2] "The time of beginning the movement depended upon the state of readiness of the transports, the entire control of which had been placed by the Secretary of War in the hands of one of the Assistant Secretaries, and not under the Quartermaster-General, so that, even if the movement were not impeded by the condition imposed in regard to the batteries on the Potomac, it could not have been in my power to begin it before the 18th of March, unless the Assistant Secretary of War had completed his arrangements by that time." Swinton continues,[3] "Having at length taken this step, and while the costly preparations were, by his own order, in the full course of execution, he renewed all his old objections to removing the army from the front of Washington, and required that the question should be submitted to a council of McClellan's generals.

[1] Swinton, 94.
[2] Swinton, 94.
[3] 5 W.R., 50.

"These officers having approved the project, the Executive once more assented; but tied up his approval with the foolish restriction that not more than one-half of the army should be taken away, until the enemy's batteries were destroyed, — an enterprise which would have involved a movement of the whole army, and which was, besides, certain to be the bloodless fruit of the execution of the general plan.

"Again, when the evacuation of Manassas had so far necessitated a change of plan, that it was determined to seek a new base of operations at Fortress Monroe, and the council of corps commanders, to whom the President had referred the decision of the question, had approved it on certain conditions as to the safety of Washington, etc., the President further embarrassed the operation by insisting on the presence of a large force at Manassas, a measure not dictated by any sound military consideration.

"From a still weaker motion, he ordered the detachment of Blenker's division from the command of McClellan, and transferred it to Gen. Fremont.

"And finally, moved by morbidly recurring fears for the security of the capital, no sooner had McClellan left for his new field of operations, than the President further stripped him of the powerful corps of McDowell, to retain it in front of Washington.

"The secret of much of this conduct, were one disposed here to seek it, would doubtless be found in a 'pressure' of the same kind and coming from the same source as that the President urged to Gen. McClellan in excuse

for depriving him of Blenker's troops. There had already sprung up at Washington a group of men, cherishing a violent hostility to Gen. McClellan on account of his so-called 'conservative' policy. Uninstructed in war, these men were yet influential, persistent, and had the ear of the President; but while it is easy to understand the ascendency which they gained over a character like that of Mr. Lincoln, the concession is unfortunate for his reputation as a statesman.

"Gen. McClellan should either have been removed from command, or he should have been allowed to work out his own plans of campaign, receiving that 'confidence and cordial support' promised him by the President when he assumed command, and 'without which,' as Mr. Lincoln justly added, 'he could not with so full efficiency serve the country.'"[1]

As to the force left for the protection of Washington, it seems ridiculously ample, had there been any one to command it, or the slightest unity of plan. The ignorance of those in power forbade their seeing any defence of Washington, except by the presence of troops covering the city itself. McClellan[1] and Swinton[2] name 73,456 as left behind; deduct Blenker, — 10,028, if you please; the troops of the Shenandoah Valley can be fairly counted in, for they guard the approach to Maryland, and no commander would have dared to assault the Washington works with 35,000 hostile troops in the valley in readiness for use in his rear.

[1] Swinton, 94–95.
[2] 5 W.R., 60.
[3] Swinton, 92.

Gen. McClellan says in his Report: "Before starting for the Peninsula, I instructed Lieut. Col. B. S. Alexander, of the United States Corps of Engineers, to visit Manassas Junction and its vicinity, for the purpose of determining upon the defensive works necessary to enable us to hold that place with a small force. The accompanying letters from Col. Alexander will show what steps were taken by him to carry into effect this important order. I regret to say that those who succeeded me in command of the region in front of Washington, *whatever were the fears for its safety*, did not deem it necessary to carry out my plans and instructions to them. Had Manassas been placed in condition for a strong defence and its communications secured as recommended by Col. Alexander, the result of Gen. Pope's campaign would probably have been different."[1]

At the inception of the Peninsular Campaign, it was important that one military mind should guide all the operations of the Northern armies. McClellan, by his organization of one large army, by his letters to the President indicating his views of military action simultaneous and co-operative throughout the North, by his instructions to Banks, Butler, Burnside, Buell, Sherman, and Halleck, had shown a wonderful appreciation of the necessities and proprieties of the time. The President saw fit, with no warning to McClellan, to relieve him of the command of the armies. More than this, and most unfortunately, at the same time he relieved him of the command of the armies of Virginia (except his three corps), and

[1] 5 W.R., 64–65.

left a spectacle, most saddening and ridiculous, — an army under Fremont, an army under Banks, an army under Wadsworth, an army under McDowell, and at times independent commands under Gens. Shields and Milroy, all receiving orders from Mr. Lincoln and his advisers. These advisers were either civilians, with no military instinct or fitness; or generals like Halleck, unsuited by nature and his habits for such work, or Hitchcock, or Lorenzo Thomas, who never developed any thing like genius or even talent. Even the command of Gen. Wool, at Fortress Monroe, McClellan's base of operations, was taken away. Swinton most truly says:[1] "If there be any sure lesson taught by the military experience of nations, it is that when extrinsic influences, whether from councils, or congresses, or war-offices, intrude into the direction of military affairs, all hope of success is gone. History has chosen to express its views of this kind of interference in the contumely with which it has covered the Austrian Aulic Council; but the Aulic Council was composed at least of military men. Of what was the American council composed?"

The comments on the Peninsula Campaign might well end here: in fact, there was no Peninsula Campaign of Gen. McClellan. His plans were excellent, which, as the Comte de Paris says, "Grant's last campaign so clearly demonstrated four years later;" but, as carried out, it was the campaign of Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Stanton, and the Committee on the Conduct of the War.

As for the fighting and tactical movements, they were

[1] Swinton, 95–96.

much the same as characterized all the struggles between the two armies. At Yorktown every plan he had formed was defeated by the inferior knowledge of his superiors. To assault the works at that time with such an army, and with the opposition of the Administration to his plan, was to put every thing to the hazard of one blow. Wise men who were there thought the plan of investment better. Gen. Barnard,[1] chief of engineers, expressed the judgment that "those formidable works could not, with any reasonable degree of certainty, be carried by assault." This will always be a mooted question; but all allowances must be made for the entire abandonment of the promises given McClellan, viz., that four army corps should be employed, and that the navy should co-operate. His movement towards Richmond was well conducted; and at last McDowell's corps of forty thousand men and one hundred guns was promised him as a re-enforcement. On the advance from Williamsburg, he threw his right wing well forward, to insure the junction of McDowell's force, which was fixed for May 26. McDowell had moved eight miles; and McClellan, to assist him in the union, sent forward Porter's corps to Hanover Junction, where there was an engagement with the command of Gen. Branch, ending in a victory for Porter, the enemy losing two hundred killed, and seven hundred prisoners.

Swinton[2] so well expresses the following circumstances, which were the climax of the stupidity ruling in Washington at the time, that I venture to quote him in full: —

[1] 12 W.R., 12, 17, 318.

[2] Swinton, 124.

"The right of the Army of the Potomac [was] within fifteen miles, or one march, of McDowell's van. McDowell was eager to advance, and McClellan was equally anxious for his arrival, when there happened an event which frustrated this plan and all the hopes that had been based thereon. This event was the irruption of Stonewall Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley. The keen-eyed soldier at the head of the main Confederate army, discerning the intended junction between McDowell and McClellan, quickly seized his opportunity, and intrusted the execution of a bold *coup* to that vigorous lieutenant who had already made the valley ring with his exploits."[1]

Then follows a description of Jackson's operations against Milroy and Banks, and his march to Halltown, within two miles of Harper's Ferry.

"The tidings of Jackson's apparition at Winchester on the 24th, and his subsequent advance to Harper's Ferry, fell like a thunderbolt on the war-council at Washington. The order for McDowell's advance from Fredericksburg to unite with McClellan, was instantly countermanded; and he was directed to put 20,000 men in motion at once for the Shenandoah Valley, by the line of the Manassas Gap Railroad. McDowell obeyed, but, to use his own language, 'with a heavy heart,' for he knew, what any man capable of surveying the situation with a soldier's eye must have known, that the movement ordered was not only most futile in itself, but *certain* to paralyze the operations of the main army and frustrate that campaign against Richmond on the issue of which hung the fortune of the war. In vain he pointed out that it was impossible

[1] Swinton, 124.

for him either to succor Banks or co-operate with Fremont; that his line of advance from Fredericksburg to Front Royal was much longer than the enemy's line of retreat; that it would take him a week or ten days to reach the valley, and that by this time the occasion for his services would have passed by. In vain Gen. McClellan urged the real motive of the raid, — to prevent re-enforcements from reaching him. Deaf to all sounds of reason, the war-council at Washington, like the Dutch States-General, of whom Prince Eugene said, that 'always interfering, they were always dying with fear,' heard only the reverberations of the guns of the redoubtable Jackson. To head off Jackson, if possible to catch Jackson, seemed now the one important thing; and the result of the cogitations of the Washington strategists was the preparation of what the President called a 'trap' for Jackson — a 'trap' for the wily fox who was master of every gap and gorge in the valley!

. . . . . .

"In this exciting month's campaign, Jackson made great captures of stores and prisoners; but this was not its chief result. Without gaining a single tactical victory he had yet achieved a great strategic victory, for by skilfully manœuvring 15,000 men he succeeded in neutralizing a force of 60,000. It is perhaps not too much to say that he saved Richmond; for when McClellan, in expectation that McDowell might still be allowed to come and join him, threw forward his right wing, under Porter, to Hanover Court House, on the 26th of May, the echoes of his cannon bore to those in Richmond who knew the situa-

tion of the two Union armies the knell of the capital of the Confederacy. McDowell never went forward — was never allowed, eager though he was, to go forward. Well-intentioned though we must believe the motives to have been of those who counselled the course that led to the consequences thus delineated, the historian must not fail to point out the folly of an act that must remain an impressive illustration of what must be expected when men violate the established principles of war." [1]

And here ended for a while McClellan's last hope of a strategic and combined movement with what he considered sufficient troops.

It is unnecessary to describe the actions at Fair Oaks and on the skilful Seven Days' march. It is possible that he might have attacked to advantage after the battles at Fair Oaks and Malvern, but his troops were not up to the work. We have seen in the case of every commander of the Army of the Potomac, halting, helplessness, and fear to act, after any bloody struggle; often the same thing when there had been no struggle. McClellan's successors received all the troops and support which they had asked; yet Burnside at Fredericksburg, Hooker at Chancellorsville, Meade at Williamsport and Mine Run, and pre-eminently Grant at Cold Harbor, showed weakness, — yes, utter inability to decide or act.

In almost every case this condition of mind was caused by the obviousness of the folly of trying the attrition plan against such an enemy in such positions.

McClellan arrived at the James River, and again impressed upon the Government the necessity of bringing

[1] Swinton, 124–128.

troops there, and crushing the military strength of the Rebellion. He proposed to move to the south bank of the river, and operate against Petersburg and the communications of Richmond: he was overruled by Halleck, who considered his plan "dangerous and impracticable," and the army was returned to Washington.

McClellan's appeal at this time to the General-in-Chief is worthy of notice. He says, "Here, directly in front of this army, is the heart of the Rebellion. It is here that all our resources should be collected to strike the blow which will determine the fate of the nation. All points of secondary importance elsewhere should be abandoned, and every available man brought here; a decided victory here and the military strength of the Rebellion is crushed. It matters not what partial reverses we may meet with elsewhere. Here is the true defence of Washington. It is here, on the banks of the James, that the fate of the Union should be decided."[1]

It is interesting to compare the condition of things at Harrison's Landing with that of the army under Grant two years later at Cold Harbor.

Gen. Grant, after confidently attempting the overland route, and being beaten by Lee in the latter's superb defensive campaign from the Rapidan to Richmond, obtained at Cold Harbor the culmination of defeats: he saw his army stop fighting by the will almost of the individual soldiers. With a loss at that place estimated at twenty of his army to one of the enemy, he and Gen. Meade discussed the situation, and were powerless to act.

[1] 12 W.R., 81.

They decided on a siege; but it promised so badly that this was soon abandoned, and he soon adopted McClellan's plan of the campaign on the other side of the river. The civil authorities, dispirited and fearing further responsibility, although no force of moment compared with that left by McClellan guarded Washington, assented to the move. Of course it was distasteful to them after that announcement of Grant's, which has become a household phrase, and which was a terrible crusher upon McClellan's ideas of war: "I propose to fight it out on this line, if it takes all summer." (That line was abandoned without taking all summer, but the desperate sentiment stands!) What if, at that time, Grant's army had been returned to Washington? But no! Fortunately Grant was permitted to give up attrition, and move across a few miles farther down the river than McClellan had proposed and would have been able to. The result is as complete a practical vindication of McClellan's plan as could be desired. Sheridan's message to Grant, when, a little while before the surrender, he urged him to come with all the force he could command in pursuit of Lee, saying, "Here is the end of the Rebellion," is a fit corollary to McClellan's despatch from James River to Halleck, "Here, directly in front of this army, is the heart of the Rebellion." And there surely the blow should have been struck; but success could come only to a commander autocratic, or at least having the thorough support of his Government. War cannot be conducted on the town-meeting principle.

OPERATIONS IN THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY, FROM WINCHESTER TO PORT REPUBLIC, MARCH 10—JUNE 9, 1862.

By

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Read before the Society on Monday evening, November 13, 1888.

WINCHESTER TO PORT REPUBLIC.

THE paper I am about to read does not deal with vast strategic combinations, or the movements of great armies. It is a narrative drawn from personal recollections of operations in the Shenandoah Valley in the spring and early summer of 1862, particularly regarding the attempt made to cut off Stonewall Jackson's retreat after he had driven Banks across the Potomac. Early in March of that year, an Army Corps, then known as the Fifth, comprising the divisions of Shields and Williams under the command of General Banks,[1] entered the Valley and advanced as far as Winchester. The force under Jackson which had been in and about that place, being largely out-numbered, retired up the Valley without offering any resistance. While Banks still occupied Winchester, an order was issued by General McClellan March 16th, which directed the transfer of the command of General Banks to Manassas Junction.[2] In pursuance of that order, General Williams had made one day's march from Winchester,[3] when, on March 22d, the advance of Jackson's army under Colonel Ashby appeared before that town.[4] It had been reported to Jackson that the whole corps had left Winchester, and he expected, or at least hoped, to occupy

[1] 5 W.R., 18.
[2] 15 W.R., 163, 164.
[3] Ib., 339, 378.
[4] Ib., 339.

the place without resistance. He had been greatly deceived; Shields's division was still there. Jackson's appearance at that time was a surprise for our side as well. It had been thought advisable that before Williams's division left the Valley an effort should be made to ascertain the location of Jackson's army. Accordingly a reconnoissance was made by Shields's division as far as Strasburg.[1] No force was encountered except a small mounted one commanded by Colonel Ashby, with whom there was some light skirmishing as they retired before our advance. The division returned to Winchester, and the conclusion was reached that if Jackson was in the Valley at all, he was a long way off and had no present intention of coming any nearer.

On his return from the reconnoissance Shields encamped his division and established his headquarters some two miles north of the town. He afterwards asserted that this arrangement was a deep laid plot of his to lure Jackson to advance on Winchester.[2] Shields had an opinion, which I have heard him express, shared I imagine by no other person, that Jackson was afraid of him, and would not risk a battle with so remarkable a strategist. However this may be, it is certain, that the fact that Ashby was followed by Jackson with his entire force was unknown to General Shields until late on the morning of the 23d, on which day was fought the first battle of Winchester,[3] the earliest in that series of sanguinary conflicts of which the Shenandoah Valley was to

[1] March 18–19, 15 W.R., 338.

[2] Ib.

[3] Battle of Kernstown, 15 W.R., 335–410.

become the theatre. Into the details of that action I do not propose to enter. Suffice it to say, that for the only time in his remarkable career as a soldier, General Jackson was unmistakably beaten. Beaten, but not routed; far from it. He retired up the Valley in a very leisurely way, taking all his *impedimenta* with him. The so-called pursuit was slower still, under the direction of General Banks, who had returned in haste with two brigades of Williams's division, when the news of the battle reached him.

It was there that I first met with the 2d Massachusetts Infantry, then, as ever, distinguished for discipline and soldierly bearing. A regiment destined to prove on many a bloody field, that if second in name, it was in name only, to any regiment of any State which through these years of conflict bore the Stars and Stripes from the Potomac to the Gulf of Mexico. I felt proud of my native State, as that and other fine regiments from the old Commonwealth, in Williams's division, marched gallantly by.

The ubiquitous Ashby, with his cavalry and horse artillery, covered the enemy's rear. The contour of the Valley afforded a succession of good artillery positions. Ashby would take up one and open fire on the head of our column, which would thereupon halt till a battery could be brought to reply. After exchanging a few shots, the enemy's battery would limber up and retire to the next convenient position, and there repeat the game. This sort of thing went on for two days, whereas Banks had force enough to have walked right over Ashby,

battery and all, if he did not get out of the way. The pursuit, such as it was, ceased at Strasburg, and for the time Jackson was left to his own devices. On April 1st the advance was resumed.

A mile or two beyond Strasburg the road crosses a stream called Tumbling Run, and beyond, it is built along the side of Fisher's Hill, the scene, as you know, of heavy fighting later in the war, but at the time of which I speak, birds and not bullets sang among its wooded slopes. The lower side of the road was protected by a solid stone wall. Down in the valley of the run stood a comfortable-looking farm-house. While the battery was halted on the road, an infantryman reconnoitering about the premises was attacked by a large and savage goose; the soldier was victorious in the contest that ensued, and came up the hill dragging his prize after him. When he reached the wall, not noticing what was on the other side, or unfamiliar with the habits of artillerymen, he pitched the goose over into the road. It had hardly struck the ground when it was seized and clapped into a chest. The man quickly followed and stooped to pick up his trophy; the expression of his countenance when he found the bird had flown, and the tone in which he inquired, "Have any of you fellows seen a goose?" made the bystanders roar with laughter. On being told that no such bird had been seen in that locality he replied, with a profusion of big D's, that he did not believe it. A year later, I venture to say, geese were scarcer about Tumbling Run than snakes in Ireland.

Near the village of Edenburg, Ashby had burned the bridge over a small stream and taken position on a range of hills a short distance beyond it. Whether or not this obstacle checked our advance, I am unable to say; at all events, the army again halted. On the following day my battery was posted on high ground overlooking the stream, and within range of the enemy's guns. We were conducted to this position by a foreign officer of Banks's staff, who spoke English so well that one could almost understand him. It was in reference to these European adventurers as a class, some of whom set up for experienced cavalry officers on the strength of having kept a livery stable in Germany, that I once heard that stout old fighter, General Nathan Kimball, remark, that when he could not find American officers competent to serve on his staff he would take them from the ranks, as he knew he had them there. It was Kimball, by the way, and not Shields, who actually commanded at the battle of Winchester. Shields was wounded the afternoon before, while watching an artillery duel between my battery and that of Ashby, and was confined to his room on the day of the battle. Ashby's artillerists soon discovered our position, and seemed to think they had a chance for a bit of target practice. They daily improved themselves in gunnery by pitching shells at us of various descriptions. In return we furnished them specimens of Mr. Shenkle's invention, just then the latest thing out in rifle projectiles. Every morning a fresh regiment of infantry was sent up, as a so-called support; they occupied the wood

in our rear in a good place to catch the shots that went over the battery, as many of them did. One morning the Sixty-second Ohio assumed this duty. The surgeon of the regiment, a very portly gentleman, appeared at my quarters and was anxious to know if I thought the enemy would open on us that day. He really hoped they might, as he had never seen any artillery practice and was longing to do so. The evening before I had posted a section about one hundred yards to the left of our regular position, and it happened that when Ashby's battery began to fire the doctor was looking about on the line of pieces. Soon after we began to reply, as I walked towards the detached section, I espied my stout friend prone behind the trunk of a fallen tree, fairly hugging the ground. In reply to my suggestion that he had selected a very poor place from which to observe artillery practice, and had better get from under the log, he muttered something about being a non-combatant, and stayed where he was.

After playing target for a week the battery was withdrawn under cover of the wood in our rear. I call it playing target, because our guns were in a fixed position, and in plain sight, while Ashby's were concealed behind a crest and moved from place to place. We could only judge of the distance by watching the smoke rising when they fired, and timing the flight of the projectile. I imagine we did them about as much harm as they did us, which was just none at all, though we had some very close calls. This immunity was due not so much to want of skill on the part of the enemy's gun-

ners, as to the poor quality of their ammunition, as they made good line shots. Their powder was doubtless of uncertain value, a condition fatal to accuracy in firing beyond point-blank range. Their percussion shell very often failed to explode; many of them were so poorly balanced as to come end over end, striking butt first. We built quite a little pyramid of these unexploded projectiles. The principal damage was sustained by the wrong party. A woman, whose husband was serving in Jackson's army, lived in a small house near the river at the foot of our position. One of Ashby's shells fell short and passed through the kitchen, incidentally smashing the poor woman's cooking-stove into remarkably small pieces. As a rule, this long-range firing is a simple waste of ammunition. Later in the war, under similar circumstances, I would not have expended a single round.

During the night of April 16 our column advanced to the village of Mount Jackson, near which place, it was rumored, the enemy intended to dispute our farther progress. Jackson's main force had been camped about there since his defeat at Winchester. His rear guard was driven out of the village by the First Vermont Cavalry. Not far beyond Mount Jackson, the turnpike crosses the north branch of the Shenandoah by a wooden bridge, which it was important to secure. The Green Mountain troopers knew how to use their sabres, a somewhat rare accomplishment at that period, and a party of them dashed across the bridge, falling sword in hand on a lot of Ashby's men, who were engaged in

setting fire to it, and took most of them prisoners. Ashby himself, who was directing the operation, barely escaped, thanks to the speed of his horse and to his wearing no insignia of rank. The bridge being thus secured, the army halted for some hours on a plateau overlooking the plain beyond it. Some two miles away was the rugged height called Rude's Hill, a strong natural position, commanding the approaches from the direction of Mount Jackson. There, if anywhere, the enemy would make his stand. About four o'clock operations were resumed. The infantry crossed the river and deployed into line on both sides of the road, and threw out skirmishers. I was admiring the martial scene, as with waving banners and glittering arms the troops formed in battle array, when one of General Banks's staff gave me an order to cross the river, get in front of the line of battle, and follow the skirmishers.

The idea of skirmishing with a battery was new to me, but finding the order authentic I proceeded to obey. The line of battle advanced very slowly, and was soon more than a mile in the rear. Situated as we were in heavy ground, practically without support, I thought it fortunate that Jackson, who it seemed had postponed the *stand* to a more convenient season, did not send out a party before he left, strong enough to surround and take us in. After gaining Rude's Hill, we halted till the infantry arrived and then resumed the march. It was as dark as Erebus when the last round of the Ashby fight came off in the main street of Newmarket. His battery opened from a little hill near the farther end of

the town. My leading section unlimbered and replied at short range, guided by the flash of the enemy's guns. Presently, by the light of a shell bursting in their front, we had an instantaneous view of guns limbering to the rear, and we caught the sound of their retiring wheels as hey vanished in the darkness. Returning far enough to clear the town, we groped our way into the first vacant field and bivouacked for the night.

Newmarket is situated on the Valley turnpike, midway between Winchester and Staunton, being fifty miles distant from either. It was a place of some importance, as Virginia country towns go, having a normal population of some 1,200, but at that time largely reduced by the absence of pretty much all of the able-bodied males, who had either followed the fortunes of Jackson, or had left in season to avoid a pressing invitation to do so. Though with but little to boast of in the way of architecture, the town is beautiful for situation. Seated in a lovely and fertile valley, the wooded slopes of North Mountain bound its western horizon. On the east a bright and rushing river washes the base of the picturesque range of the Massanutten, which, rising abruptly from the plain, divides the valley for some thirty miles. The eastern portion is known as the Luray Valley, from a village of that name lying within its borders. An admirably constructed road from Newmarket crosses the Massanutten by easy grades to the Shenandoah at White House bridge, and thence to Luray and Front Royal.

Business was of course suspended, except as conducted by certain individuals, mostly of the Jewish

persuasion, who, taking possession of some of the vacant shops, offered for sale articles suited to the taste of the soldiers, at prices suited to their own. On our arrival at Newmarket neither the officers nor men of the battery were in a position to swell the traffic of these enterprising traders. Up to that time we had not seen the color of Uncle Samuel's money, and our finances were in a deplorable state. The officers' mess had been for some time supplied entirely by barter. That system, though in some respects inconvenient, had this advantage, that by a sort of sliding scale of our adjusting, a given amount of sugar or salt was made to represent the money value affixed to a chicken or a pound of butter by the venders of those articles. At times we had a limited supply of a local currency which came fully up to General Butler's idea of perfect money — something of no value. Of these various shin-plasters, the promises to pay of White's Omnibus line, a defunct institution of *ante-bellum* days, were perhaps the favorite. It may be readily imagined that there was quite an excitement in our camp when the rumor spread that a paymaster had arrived, and with him greenbacks. On a very rainy Sunday the long looked-for officer made his appearance, and, repairing to a church near by, he soon replenished our empty pockets.

During our sojourn in the Valley we collected our forage from the country, and at Newmarket the horses literally lived in clover. We found that most of the wealthier farmers held safeguards from the Corps commander. We were therefore obliged to leave them

alone and levy contributions on a class far less able to bear them. One day, however, we called on an old gentleman who had a fine estate and a large stock of hay and grain, who was unprovided with one of the documents referred to. Great was the wrath and strong the expressions of this owner of many acres and of a species of live stock the value of which was daily becoming more doubtful, at the result of our visit. It seemed, however, that he had greater woes than even the loss of his forage, for after he had relieved his mind on that subject, the old gentleman grew quite pathetic as he enlarged upon the base ingratitude of his "niggers." Three of the best of them had left his paternal care, only the night before, and had not mentioned any period for their return. To this violation of constitutional right he would not submit, and he announced his intention of calling on the "head commander, Mr. Banks," as he termed that officer, to insist that his missing property should be forthwith hunted up and returned. Sure enough, the next day we saw a carriage pass, which looked as if it might have been built for one of the "first families," in point of time if not in rank, a negro driver on the box, and inside our worthy friend, grand in the ruffled shirt and imposing tile of the traditional Virginia planter, proceeding to lay his wrong before the "head commander."

About May 1, our cavalry occupied Harrisonburg, some eighteen miles farther up the Valley. They were followed, a few days later, by the whole corps, preparatory, as we supposed, to an advance on Staunton. The

ruling powers had ordained otherwise. At this time it was announced "officially," as Sir Joseph Porter would say, that Jackson had left the Valley for good, and was hastening to join Lee at Richmond. It happened in this instance, as in several others, that the wily Stonewall knew his own whereabouts and intentions better than did those who undertook to speak for him. At that period he was snugly ensconced in the pleasant valley south of Swift Run Gap preparing an expedition to stir up Frémont in the solitudes of his Mountain Department. That geographical division, when formed, had the advantage of not containing a Confederate soldier within its borders. The Washington authorities doubtless thought, it being a supposed political, as it certainly was not a military, necessity that Frémont should be provided with an independent command, that even if he could not hurt anybody no one would be likely seriously to molest him there. But Jackson, with the perversity he always showed regarding arrangements made by his opponents, had determined to interfere with this innocent programme. The nature and object of his interference will be seen hereafter. The War Department issued an order directing that General Banks with Williams's division should take up and fortify a position at Strasburg to cover the lower valley. An easy task enough if Jackson had only gone to Richmond, as was laid down in the official programme. But, as we have seen, he had no present intention of doing anything of the sort. While Williams's division held the Valley, that of Shields, which comprised about two-thirds of the

strength of the corps, was to march with all haste to join McDowell at Fredericksburg. The Washington authorities had so far yielded to the oft-repeated demands of General McClellan as to direct McDowell to march overland and connect with the right wing of the army operating against Richmond, re-enforced by Shields's division, for which there was supposed to be no further use in the Valley.[1]

On May 6 we returned to Newmarket to prepare for the long march before us. The preparation consisted in getting rid of our tents, cutting down the baggage to the lowest point then thought possible, and sending the sick and disabled back to Winchester. The supply department of Shields's division was always miserably managed. It was difficult to obtain the commonest articles of quartermaster's stores. At this time the battery horses were hardly more than half shod, for want of nails, for which repeated requisitions were of no avail. I finally sent out and collected all the old scythes we could find in the neighborhood, and made nails of the backs. When a supply of nails finally arrived, they came consigned to the Medical Director. The difficulty with which they were rescued from his clutches would lead one to suppose that the surgeon thought them a newly invented tonic intended to promote the digestion of our country's defenders. Of course no provision was made for a supply of forage on the march, and battery commanders were expected to provide the daily food for one

[1] 15 W.R., 97.

hundred and thirty animals in the best way they could. We did so by starting a party with a wagon every morning at daylight with orders to load at the first available corn crib they came to, and wait the arrival of the column. Of course this method was only practicable when the march was unopposed, and through a country not previously foraged.

On Monday, May 12, we broke camp and took up the line of march towards Fredericksburg *via* the Massanutten Gap and White House bridge over the Shenandoah. The weather was very hot and the roads dusty; but during the night a heavy rain set in, and continuing with but little intermission for the remainder of the journey, laid the dust most effectually. On Saturday afternoon we reached the pleasant town of Warrenton, which had not been previously occupied by our troops. It was my fortune to revisit it several times during the next two years, and each time it looked much more the worse for wear. On Monday morning we marched for Catlett's Station on the Orange & Alexandria Railroad.

As we approached the place the sound of volley-firing became distinctly audible; the men involuntarily quickened their pace and closed their files, though we could not conceive why there should be any fighting in that direction. We found on arrival that Duryea's brigade, who occupied Catlett's, had been indulging in a sham fight. These troops, whose practice had thus far been confined to the use of blank cartridges, in their bright uniforms and spotless white gaiters, contrasted strongly

with our mud-spattered, travel-worn column. For we could well have said with King Henry:

> We are but warriors for the working day:
> Our gayness and our gilt are all besmirch'd
> With rainy marching in the painful field; . . .
> And time hath worn us into slovenry.

One of this gorgeous party who ventured some derogatory remarks as our column passed, seemed to be in doubt, as he slowly picked himself up, whether he had come in contact with the business end of an army mule or the iron fist of a stalwart son of Indiana.

We halted two days at Catlett's for a trial and inspection of the artillery ammunition, resulting in the condemnation of the greater part of it. A fresh supply was ordered from the Washington arsenal. On the 23d of May we reached Fredericksburg, where the large force under General McDowell was awaiting our arrival to commence the movement on Richmond. There was a little delay owing to the flats with our fresh ammunition getting aground in the Potomac. On Friday afternoon the division was reviewed by the President, and we returned to camp elated by the thought that on Monday morning Shields's division was to have the advance, destined, as we hoped, to play a brilliant part in the *dénouement* of the great drama enacting in front of Richmond. Little did we dream what fate had in store for us. At that moment Jackson with an overwhelming force was driving the little division left under Banks before him from the Valley. Soon there flashed over the

wires the fatal order suspending the advance on Richmond, and directing McDowell to attempt the futile task of heading off and bagging Jackson.[1] I say fatal order, because I do not believe that any single order issued during the war, with the possible exception of that appointing Halleck General-in-Chief, in its immediate and remote results was productive of greater injury to the Union cause. It at once neutralized an army of nearly 40,000 men; it ruined the campaign on the Peninsula; it gave the rebel cause and capital a new lease of life. Like Achilles's wrath, it was "the direful spring of woes unnumber'd." For who can doubt that if a few thousand men had been sent by water to Washington to still the clamor there, and the remainder of McDowell's corps had been marched straight on Richmond, the history of the war had been differently written. Jackson would have hustled back fast enough, or stood a good chance of not going back at all.

The Army of the Potomac, with a solid right wing across the Chickahominy covering its base, would have defied the attack, which Porter's corps was too weak to parry, had Lee been rash enough to make one. In all human probability, with a smaller loss than was incurred in the battles fought to secure a humiliating retreat, a triumphant advance would have made Richmond ours. It was not so to be. Vainly McDowell, sick at heart, while obeying as a soldier, protested as a general against this suicidal policy. He urged that Jackson had a shorter route of retreat than any by

[1] 18 W.R., 219.

which he could march to intercept him; that a combined movement, with a force so far distant as that of Frémont, could not be relied upon.[1] Vainly McClellan telegraphed that this raid was designed simply to divert re-enforcements from his army, and that we were playing into Jackson's hand.[2] General Panic was at the head of the military advisers of the President; who can number the lives, who can estimate the money, the rule of that commander ultimately cost the country?

Since this paper was written, I have read the account of the Valley campaign as given in the instalment of the Life of Lincoln, in the current number of the Century. The writer intimates that those who held the opinion I have expressed are "partisans of General McClellan.'[3] I for one decline to be so classed. I am not a partisan or even an admirer of McClellan. I believe had he been the military genius his supporters represent him, that he would have taken Richmond without McDowell's assistance. Being what he was, all the more reason for giving him a force so strong that he could not help taking it. At all events, to do just what your enemy desires you to do, is not an accepted maxim in war. While this enterprise of Jackson's as a strategic operation had such vast, and for the cause he served, such valuable results, considered simply as a feat of arms, it does not, in my opinion, merit the encomiums lavished on it by his admirers.

The withdrawal of Shields's division from the Valley left General Banks with less than 5,000 effective men.

[1] 18 W.R., 220. [2] 12 W.R., 32.
[3] 37 Century Magazine, 133. 5 Nicolay & Hay, 409.

The position he held at Strasburg was absolutely indefensible against a superior force, liable, as it was, to be turned on either flank. Jackson had with him at least 20,000 men, with a large proportion of cavalry. Under such circumstances, and with such a force, to have surrounded that of Banks and compelled him to surrender, would not have been very much to boast of. To allow them to escape, as they actually did, without a very serious loss in men or material, was, as it seems to me, rather discreditable than glorious. As might have been expected, Jackson did not advance on Banks's position, which had been made tolerably strong against a direct attack, by way of the Valley turnpike. He left that road at Newmarket, and crossing the Massanutten into the Luray Valley, first made his presence known by an overwhelming assault on two of Banks's regiments stationed at Front Royal. These were cut to pieces or captured after a short but most gallant resistance. From Front Royal, Jackson had but ten miles to march to reach the road by which alone the Strasburg garrison could retreat as an organized body, to say nothing of saving their large supply train. Jackson could have started a column in that direction about the time that the news of the disasters at Front Royal reached General Banks. There seems to be no sufficient reason for his failure to occupy a strong position south of Winchester in season to prevent Banks's command from reaching that place; in other words, forcing them to surrender or disperse. That Jackson failed to accomplish this, or anything like it, justifies, I think, the term

I have applied to this part of his operations in the Valley. It is but fair to say that the false position in which Banks was placed was due to direct and repeated orders from Washington, where his representations regarding it were treated with contempt.

I do not mean to decry the merit of Jackson's bold conception. To form and execute such was the prominent characteristic of his military genius. Yet I venture the opinion that in formulating plans that were bold even to rashness, an estimate of the military capacity of his opponent was an important factor in the problem. In Pope's campaign, and at the battle of Chancellorsville, Jackson placed his corps in situations that should have insured its destruction. Had he made such ventures in the face of Grant or Sheridan, such would certainly have been the result. But he was not opposed to generals of their calibre, and he knew it. Jackson was, undoubtedly, a great commander, but had he lived to the close of the war, I do not believe that his military fame would have been as brilliant as it is to-day. His reputation as a man, no change of fortune would have the power to tarnish.

I trust that the Recording Angel was too much occupied to make a note of the language used in Shields's division when we learned, with mingled feelings of rage and mortification, that we were to return to the Valley by forced marches. About noon on Sunday [May 25] we turned our steps again toward the Shenandoah, proceeding *via* Manassas Junction. The nearer we approached Washington, the more alarming were the reports:

Jackson, with twenty, thirty, forty thousand men, was marching straight on that devoted city. We reached the Junction about noon on Tuesday, where we found the gallant band that under General Geary had retreated in hot haste from Thoroughfare Gap. According to their own account they had narrowly escaped being gobbled up bodily, whereas there had not been a Confederate soldier within twenty miles of them. We took the road to Thoroughfare and pushed rapidly on. Soon we met squads and scattered men coming along, a lot of Geary's pickets, whom in the hasty departure they had forgotten to call in, but who, after vainly waiting some twenty-four hours for their relief, relieved themselves. On reaching the scene of Geary's "last stand," we found fresh evidence of a cowardly and disgraceful panic, in the shape of commissary and quartermaster property burnt or abandoned; personal baggage of officers left in tents still standing. It was, as General Kimball remarked in a telegram to Shields, "The all-firedest scare I ever heard of."[1]

The advance of our division occupied Front Royal early on Friday, May 30.[2] The cavalry made a gallant charge on a regiment of Jackson's infantry, who were holding the town, taking many prisoners, but with heavy loss to themselves. Instead of pressing right on to join hands with Frémont, who was approaching Strasburg by the Moorfield road, the division halted at Front Royal. This unfortunate delay was largely due to a rumor that pressed heavily on Shields's mind, that

[1] 18 W.R., 255. [2] Ib., 299; 15 W.R., 283.

Longstreet was advancing by the Luray Valley with a large force. In fact, had all the rumors of advances been true, Lee would hardly have had a corporal's guard left with which to hold Richmond. The batteries were posted and the infantry disposed to cover the approaches from that direction. At that time Jackson was supposed to be still near the Potomac River, threatening to cross into Maryland. It was fair to presume that he would remain there to keep up the panic at Washington, and prevent a resumption of McDowell's movement on Richmond as long as he could do so with safety. But the fallacy in the plan of the War Department strategists lay in the assumption that Jackson would sit quiet while superior forces were collecting in his rear. Still, it was on the cards that Jackson's audacity and his contempt for the ability of his opponents might lead him to delay his retreat so long that they might be able to make it unpleasant for him.

General McDowell arrived on the following day [May 31[1]] with one of his divisions. He had been delayed by the bad condition of the roads and because his troops were as yet unused to hard marching. When McDowell, who took no stock in the Longstreet scare, learned the state of affairs, he directed Shields to start his division at once on the direct road to Strasburg to intercept Jackson's column now rapidly falling back on the Valley turnpike. It was late in the afternoon before Shields got ready to move, and then, owing to some blunder never clearly explained, he took the road to

[1] 15 W.R., 283.

Winchester. By the time this mistake was discovered and the division transferred to the Strasburg road, night had fallen. During the evening Bayard's cavalry, that had been sent forward to reconnoitre, reported that the rear of Jackson's column had passed Strasburg. Bayard and his brigade went on and joined Frémont. Further operations therefore, by McDowell's command, would be in the nature of a pursuit. When Shields returned to Front Royal after this fiasco, McDowell, now thoroughly disgusted, determined to march his corps back to Fredericksburg and resume the movement on Richmond. It was thought possible that Frémont might press close enough on Jackson's rear to force him to a halt. In that case, by crossing over through the Massanutten Gap, he might yet be intercepted at Newmarket. The conduct of this or any future operations against Jackson was left to General Shields, who was cautioned by McDowell to always keep his brigades within supporting distance.

The movement began on the following morning. When we reached the Shenandoah, that river, swollen by the continuous rains, was found a rushing torrent level with its banks. Jackson had taken care to burn all the bridges within twenty miles; we had no pontoons, and perforce came to a halt. His scouts were, doubtless, snugly ensconced on the opposite side, observing our discomfiture and giving Jackson the assurance that for the present he had to deal only with Frémont. No sooner was Shields left to himself, than the grim spectre of Longstreet with his following again stalked before

his mental vision, obscuring the real issue — how to co-operate with Frémont. Had Shields without a moment's delay marched with his whole command up the eastern bank of the Shenandoah, crossed at Port Republic, and fallen on Jackson's rear while he was engaged with Frémont at Cross Keys, instead of lingering at White House and sending his brigades up piecemeal, there would have been a different story to tell.

It will be remembered that Jackson was preparing to enter the Mountain Department when Shields's division left for Fredericksburg. His main object was to cripple Frémont and prevent his interference with the contemplated operations in the Valley. The ultimate object of the whole plan was to prevent re-enforcements to the army in front of Richmond. There was but one real battle in the Mountain Department. Jackson attacked a force comprising the brigades of Milroy and Schenck [May 8] near the village of McDowell. The losses on either side were about the same, but Frémont thought proper to retire to Franklin, where he was, strategically at least, in a position to menace the flank of the enemy advancing against Strasburg. Jackson did not consider his presence there a sufficient reason for delaying his operations against Banks, and was correct in that opinion. He at once retired to the Valley and marched for Strasburg.

The Washington plan for bagging Jackson of course involved the co-operation of Frémont, who was adjured to act promptly, and to strain every nerve to gain the

Valley turnpike in Jackson's rear.[1] Frémont was still at Franklin when this order was received; but instead of marching direct for the Valley turnpike, for reasons stated in his official report,[2] he moved north by a substantially parallel road to Moorfield, and thence towards Strasburg. Frémont's movements were delayed by the terrible condition of the roads; but he did manage to reach Strasburg in season to intercept the enemy's column. When, hearing nothing of a supporting force coming from Front Royal, instead of barring, or attempting to bar the road, he took position on the heights near that town, and waited for Jackson to attack him there. A demonstration held him where he was until Jackson got past with his train. Then with Frémont, as with Shields, it became what sailors call a "stern chase," except that the former had no unfavorable river to cross, and had it in his power to force his opponent to a stand, as he finally did at Cross Keys.

To return to our position at White House bridge. After we had spent a day gazing at the river, the battery was ordered back to the vicinity of Luray; for what object, unless to exercise the horses, I was never able to discover. The road was in a horrible condition, at intervals there were lakes of liquid mud, which would engulph a mule bodily, leaving nothing but his ears in sight. We were suffering for forage; during our absence, Jackson's cavalry had made a clean sweep of the grain left in the hands of the farmers, and our foraging parties returned empty handed. We reached the designated

[1] 15 W.R., 643–644. [2] Ib., 11–12, 644–645.

spot about 2 P.M., and at six received an order to report at White House bridge again by daylight. This was a good deal easier said than done, but after one of the hardest pulls we ever had, we managed to reach the river about 5 A.M. In several places we were obliged to cut roads through the woods from one hundred to five hundred yards in length to get round the beforementioned mud lakes. We found that Carroll's brigade, with Robinson's battery of our regiment, had gone up the river the day before. After halting a couple of hours we marched in the same direction, with Tyler's brigade and Clark's regular battery. General Shields remained at White House with considerably more than half his division. On this march we met with an unusual accident. The contents of a limber chest, containing fifty cartridges and the same number of shot and shell, exploded, scattering the latter in every direction. Fortunately no one was riding on the limber, but the wheel-driver and horses came in for a pretty severe scorching. By this time the forage question had become serious; for four days the horses, though worked to the extent of their ability, had not been fed, except by the little grazing we had been able to give them at night, and they were fast playing out. In order to keep the concern moving, I had to send parties one or two miles out on the flank, with orders to seize anything in the shape of a horse they could lay their hands on, at the same time keeping the sharpest of sharp lookouts for available corn-cribs. None such were discovered until nearly noon on the second day, when a crib containing about a hundred bushels was seen and

promptly levied on; but not a moment too soon, for we had hardly placed a guard over it, before half a dozen quartermasters were howling round eager for a share. Taking all the corn we had means to transport, we again went on a few miles farther; entering a piece of woods, we came across a Pennsylvania regiment of Carroll's brigade in a badly demoralized condition. They lined the road as we passed, calling out to our men, "Don't go up there; you'll all be killed!" It happened that this same regiment was posted to cover my flank at the battle of Chancellorsville, and there it gave way at the first serious pressure, and nearly caused the loss of the entire battery.

Beyond the wood we found the remainder of Carroll's command, and learned that they had encountered a portion of Jackson's forces at the bridge and village of Port Republic. Robinson's battery, pushed forward without proper support, had been roughly handled, having lost two guns, several men killed and wounded, his brother, an officer in the battery, and a number of men made prisoners. The brigade had then fallen back some three miles to the place where we found them. It was afterwards much debated whether General Carroll's orders were to burn, or hold, the bridge at Port Republic. So accurate a writer as the Comte de Paris asserts the latter.[1] I know, for I have seen them, that Carroll's instructions contained no reference to the bridge one way or the other. What he should have done about it, of his own volition, is another matter.

[1] 2 Comte de Paris, 49.

During the afternoon a council was held to determine what operations, if any, should be undertaken. The situation was this: Frémont and Jackson were fighting somewhere across the river, as we knew by the firing, which was distinctly audible; just where, and with what success, we did not know, though the sound seeming to recede as the day wore on, indicated that Jackson was more than holding his own. A road from Cross Keys crosses the river at Port Republic, leading thence, through Brown's Gap, to Gordonsville. It was thought that Jackson would prefer to continue his retreat by this road, in which case he must be able to control the bridge at Port Republic. While still holding Frémont in check in the vicinity of Cross Keys, he had detached a considerable force of infantry with several batteries for that purpose. It was proposed to mass our artillery within range of the bridge, and attempt to batter it down. This scheme was rejected by General Tyler, now the ranking officer present, as impracticable. The result was that we simply remained where we were, and bivouacked for the night. Instead of doing that we should have retreated under cover of the darkness to Conrad's Store, and waited the arrival of the remainder of the division. To attempt to fight a battle where we stood was worse than useless. The force under Tyler's command was utterly unable to cope with the number controlled by Jackson, unless, indeed, he should be so pressed by Frémont on the other side of the river as to prevent his sending a considerable part of his army in our direction. We had no communication with Frémont, and no accurate knowledge of

his situation, while he was equally ignorant regarding ours.

Jackson's plan for the next day was to leave a brigade to amuse Frémont, — for whose enterprise and military talents he seems to have entertained a profound and not ill-founded contempt, — to throw the remainder of his troops across the river, and polish us off in short order; then to return and put a quietus on Frémont. The stubborn resistance offered by Tyler's command caused Jackson to omit the last part of his programme, and even to send for the brigades left at Cross Keys before the first plan was successfully accomplished.

Reveille was sounded at daybreak and the battery horses were fed and harnessed. Our position was by no means indefensible, had we been strong enough to occupy it properly, as we might have done had the whole division been present. The road to Port Republic at this point ran along the base of a steep and densely wooded range, crossing a wide and much lower ridge, or rather swell, which, projecting from the main hill-side, gradually fell off into a gently undulating wheat-field, extending to the Shenandoah, about a mile away on our right. After crossing this swell, the road descended rather abruptly, and was intersected by a brook which issued from a ravine in the main hill-side, and, rising again beyond, it maintained its previous direction about five hundred yards, then turned sharply to the left and was hidden by the woods bordering on that side. At the mouth of the ravine on our side was an excavation made for burning charcoal; on the farther

side a dense growth extending to the road would conceal the approach of the enemy to within pistol-shot of the coal-pit. On the right of the road was a large farm-house with numerous out-buildings, forming a strong point of vantage if occupied by our opponents. Still farther to the right, near the river, was a detached grove covering to some extent the movements of the enemy in that direction. The artillery was placed on the low ridge near where it began to descend to the brook — Clark's battery in the coal-pit, and a twelve-pounder howitzer, of Robinson's battery, in the space between the coal-pit and the road; my left piece was in the road itself, and the others were extended in the field on the right. The infantry were concealed in the woods along the main ridge to the rear. Three thousand bayonets would be a liberal estimate of the number we put into line of battle, and there were absolutely no reserves.

By six o'clock, two batteries and some of Jackson's infantry had arrived from Port Republic, and had driven in our pickets. An artillery duel ensued, greatly to our advantage; for although our guns were on higher ground, most of the enemy's shot passed over us, while our shells exploded among them with deadly effect. Meanwhile, Jackson's infantry were rapidly arriving, massing as they did so under cover of the wood on the right as if intending to attack from that direction. To meet this, our infantry were withdrawn from the ridge and formed in line of battle in the wheat-field, the right extending nearly to the river; with them went three of

Clark's and two of my pieces, leaving the guns on the left practically without support. Only the Sixty-sixth Ohio remained in that part of the field, about fifty yards in our rear, and a few less than one hundred men deployed as skirmishers in the woods on the left. So the line of battle, so far as we had one, was formed in two distinct and unconnected parts: on the right, the infantry and five guns; then a vacant space; the remaining guns were on the extreme left, and really held the key of the position. Jackson soon recognized this fact, and though pressed on his left by the steady and bold advance of our infantry, while as yet the bulk of his troops had not reached the field, he ordered a portion of Dick Taylor's brigade, the Louisiana Tigers, as they liked to call themselves, to take those guns at all hazards. Meanwhile, the guns in question, disregarding the enemy's batteries, kept up a steady fire on his infantry, which were constantly increasing in number, but so far as we could see failed to display their customary vigor. Soon we observed and shelled a column of infantry marching towards our left, that, crossing the road, disappeared behind the trees. This was Taylor's brigade moving to the attack. In a short time, from the woods in front of our left was poured a tremendous volley of musketry at close range. In return we gave them canister in allopathic doses, and repulsed the attack without the aid of a musket. Contrary to my wishes, one of my pieces was then sent to the right, near the Lewis house, to shell out a party of sharpshooters who occupied the out-buildings and were seriously annoying our infantry.

It did not stay there long, for, turning their attention that way, the riflemen made it so hot for the gunners that the officer in charge found it best to withdraw while he was still able to do so. In fact, to shell good troops out of good cover, is about as futile a task as can be undertaken by artillery.

The situation of our left flank was awkward in the extreme, particularly in regard to Clark's guns, jammed into the coal-pit so that it would be impossible to extricate them if the left was turned by the enemy's infantry and our line taken in reverse. I advised Captain Clark to move out into open ground while he had the chance; but he was unwilling to do so without the sanction of General Tyler, who was on the opposite flank, and out of immediate reach. The regiment then posted in our rear should have been put in the woods on Clark's left, where they might have been of some use. As it was, in an emergency where seconds counted, they were practically out of the game. There was every reason to suppose that though the first attack had been repulsed, another would soon be made in stronger force. In fact, Taylor's troops in passing through the woods, bore too far to their left, coming out in front instead of on the flank of the battery as intended. They had fallen back to rectify their direction and wait for re-enforcements. Meanwhile the infantry on the right seemed to be gaining ground, keeping up a heavy fire and a vociferous cheering, though the prostrate forms behind them, and the stream of wounded hobbling to the rear, showed they were suffering some loss. In anticipation of

another charge, I had our remaining supply of canister placed on the ground near the muzzles of the pieces ready for instant use, and searched the woods in our front with shrapnel.

My attention had been called to a fresh battery the enemy were establishing at some distance to our right, and I was watching it through a glass, when from the woods on our left rushed forth the Tigers, taking the line in reverse and swarming among Clark's guns. His cannoneers made a stout but short resistance, as pistols and sponge staffs do not count for much against muskets and bayonets. His guns were taken, so was the howitzer, and if ours were to be saved they must instantly be withdrawn. The right piece was limbered to the rear and started. As the team of the next came up, two of the drivers fell, badly wounded, from their saddles. The remaining driver could not control the frightened animals, they broke away and dashed off with the limber, and the piece was abandoned. The gun in the road was in imminent peril. Hastening thither, I told the chief of that piece, a splendid soldier, to get up his team and limber to the rear. Cool as if on parade, the sergeant turned to obey, when he fell almost at my feet, shot through the heart, and died without uttering a sound. I ran myself to get the team up. It was under cover, and the drivers were loath to leave it. By that time a force had broken out of the woods in our front, and yelling like demons, came pouring up the road, straight for our remaining gun. No. 1, the loader, stood firmly to his post, but No. 2, who inserts the

charge, went down just as he had put a cartridge in the gun. No. 1 picked up two of our big canisters and rammed them down. The man whose duty it was to fire, actually got the primer in the vent, when his heart failed him and he dropped the lanyard and ran. The gunner, who stood by the trail ready to help limber, seized it and fired. This opened a lane and checked the onset of that particular lot of Tigers for an instant, in which we limbered up the piece, the cannoneers jumped on, and the drivers lost no time in getting away with it to the rear. The gun saved, I felt rather at a loss what course to adopt. My first impulse was to lie down and surrender, as there seemed to be a very poor prospect of reaching cover with a whole skin. But having a wholesome dread of Southern hospitality as dispensed at that period, I concluded to take the chances, and was lucky enough to slip out between the bullets.

When General Tyler saw the disaster that had befallen his left, he at once hurried his infantry in that direction to regain the road that was our only line of retreat, and, if possible, retake the lost artillery. I endeavored to rally the dispersed cannoneers and get up teams to haul off the guns, if they came again into our possession. This took time, and when it was accomplished our infantry had given way before the superior forces of the enemy, and fallen back in final retreat. After collecting our remaining pieces, all we could do was to secure the gun captured by the infantry on the left, that had been taken a short distance to the rear and abandoned.

Without confusion, our retreating column took the road to the rear, which, through the woods, was in a terrible condition. The only sign of unmanly panic I noticed on the retreat was shown by a fellow who disgraced the uniform of a captain of cavalry. He rode by us digging the spurs into his horse, and shouting, "The enemy are upon us!" escaping, I regret to say, a bullet sent after him by an indignant officer.

Near Conrad's Store we found General Shields with the First and Second brigades of his division. Here we halted till nightfall, when, tired and sulky, we continued the retreat to White House bridge, and on the following day to Luray, where the division went into camp. Our loss had been heavy in killed, wounded, and missing, about thirty-five per cent. of the number engaged. In my battery we lost nearly one-third of the men actually under close fire.

As for Jackson, relinquishing his intention of turning again on Frémont, he hastily recalled the force he had left at Cross Keys, and, collecting his trophies, burned the bridge, marched off through Brown's Gap, and into the valley beyond. He had by no means gained a bloodless victory. General Taylor says, alluding to the ground in front of our left, "I never saw so many dead and wounded lie in the same limited space."[1] I have talked with a number of Confederate officers who were at this battle, and all insisted that Shields's whole division was present. It is so asserted even in one of the Century War Articles. Jackson's next appearance was in the

[1] Taylor. Destruction and Reconstruction, 76.

operations that practically decided the campaign on the Peninsula.

Frémont returned to the vicinity of Strasburg. Shields resigned soon after, when his appointment as Major-General was refused confirmation, and the division was broken up.

Thus ended this abortive campaign. Our failure was due to the military skill and boundless audacity of the Confederate leader, as opposed to what the Comte de Paris calls "the presumptuous incapacity of those who directed the operations against Jackson from Washington,"[1] to the blundering of Shields and the sluggishness of Frémont. The only redeeming feature of the operation is found in the valor of the troops who did the actual fighting. There was, probably, not a man who stood in our thin battle-line at Port Republic, who did not know that our defeat was only a question of time. There was a grim determination to make that time as long as possible. Many a good man and true laid down his life in that useless and purposeless conflict, the very name of which is hardly known, save to those who have made the details of our Civil War a study, — a war that furnished as long a list of battles that ought not to have been fought, of noble lives uselessly sacrificed, as, perhaps, any other recorded in history.

[1] 2 Comte de Paris, 47.

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