

energy has made this memorial possible, to the family who gave their only boy that we might have life more abundantly, that message would be, Tell them that the sacrifice was not in vain, that up from the depths of ignorance and poverty we are coming, and if we come through oppression, out of the struggle we are gaining strength. By the way of the school, the well-cultivated field, the skilled hand, the Christian home, we are coming up; that we propose to invite all who will to step up and occupy this position with us. Tell them that we are learning that standing-ground for a race, as for an individual, must be laid in intelligence, industry, thrift, and property, not as an end, but as a means to the highest privileges; that we are learning that neither the conqueror's bullet, nor fiat of law, could make an ignorant voter an intelligent voter, could make a dependent man an independent man, could give one citizen respect for another, a bank-account, nor a foot of land, nor an enlightened fireside. Tell them that, as grateful as we are to artist and patriotism for placing the figures of Shaw and his comrades in physical form of beauty and magnificence, that, after all, the real monument, the greater monument, is being slowly but safely builded among the lowly in the South, in the struggles and sacrifices of a race to justify all that has been done and suffered for it.

One of the wishes that lay nearest Colonel Shaw's heart was that his black troops might be permitted to fight by the side of white soldiers. Have we not lived to see that wish realized, and will it not be more so in the future? Not at Wagner, not with rifle and bayonet, but on the field of peace, in the battle of industry, in the struggle for good government, in the lifting up of the lowest to the fullest opportunities.

Sergeant Carney, next to Shaw, was the hero of Fort Wagner. Though shot twice, he crawled from the bat-

tle-field to the hospital, declaring, in his anguish, that the colors held aloft in his hands had never touched the ground. When the speaker turned to this dusky hero, then upon the stage, the excitement, the acclamations, made a scene long to be remembered.

In the mere accomplishment of oratory, in the power to speak rather than read, in the skill to seize and bear along the minds and the emotions of listeners, in dramatic climax, it was the colored man who excelled. But the substance of Washington's address was of such generous and noble quality that the art with which it was delivered becomes a matter of secondary importance.

We have spoken before of the verification of Motley's prediction that song and art would long exalt the fame of Shaw. Another American poet has added a wreath of stately, most musical, and fitting verse to the tributes already dedicated to his memory. The later poem is not to lay upon a grave, but to decorate a monument. Aldrich's «Ode» does not, like the earlier verse, celebrate death, but heroic life and «undying youth»:

A pæan, not a knell,
For heroes dying so!
No need for sorrow here,
No room for sigh or tear,
Save such rich tears as happy eyelids know.
See where he rides, our Knight!
Within his eyes the light
Of battle, and youth's gold about his brow;
Our Paladin, our Soldier of the Cross,
Not weighing gain with loss—
World-loser, that won all
Obeying Duty's call!



OPEN LETTERS

General W. F. Smith at Petersburg.

IN the April CENTURY the author of « Campaigning with Grant » says of « W. F. Smith's Attack on Petersburg, » the italics being mine:

Smith at half-past seven threw forward his troops in strong skirmish-lines. After a short struggle the enemy was forced back from his intrenchments in front of our center and left, and Smith's second line then made an attack upon the rest of the works. The Confederates were now driven back at all points, four guns were captured and turned upon the retreating troops, and *before dark* the whole line of intrenchments, about two miles long, had been carried, and three hundred prisoners and sixteen pieces of artillery captured.

Now, if I started at half-past seven to do all that work, it could not have been finished before dark, and time and darkness are important elements in the question. There is no foundation for that assertion as to time, for it was after nine o'clock before the assault was over. The assertion that I captured the whole line of intrenchments is also without foundation. From near the Jordan's Point road to the Appomattox, on the left, the enemy's works were intact, and their capture oc-

cupied the army several months. That very portion of the works, as will be seen, was the subject of a suggestion with reference to the disposition to be made of Hancock's troops on their arrival. I quote with reference to Hancock:

The head of Hancock's troops reached a point a mile in the rear of Hinks's division . . . about half-past six, and two divisions of Hancock's corps were ordered to push on and cooperate in the pending movement. Hancock himself rode forward to where Smith was, to learn the exact situation and participate in the attack; and though senior in rank, waived his rights in this respect, and left Smith in command of the operations, for the reason that he was more familiar with the ground and the movements of the troops up to that time. It was now after dark, and Smith contented himself with ordering up the two divisions of Hancock's corps to occupy the works which had been captured. This was not accomplished until about eleven o'clock *and the object of the movement had failed.* . . . It was a moonlight night; Kautz and Hinks were quite familiar with the country; . . . a bold dash . . . would undoubtedly have secured the prize, and made a vast difference in the campaign which followed.

The entire statement as to Hancock's command, and its participation in the movement of that day, is wholly

erroneous. The records say that. About four o'clock P. M. of June 15, 1864, under authority from General Grant, I wrote a note to General Hancock, detailing the situation, and suggesting that he should assault with his command in the vicinity of the Norfolk and Petersburg Railroad—that is, on the left of Hinks, who held the left of my infantry line. General Hancock received that despatch at 5:40 P. M., and he states that two of his divisions were massed on the *left and rear* of General Hinks at 6:30 P. M. This was about half an hour before I began the assault, and the locality was precisely the one from which I had suggested that his attack should be made. General Hinks wrote to me afterward that during the progress of his assault he had offered to send a staff-officer to the general of Hancock's leading division to guide his division to the portion of the line on the left which he (Hinks) could not cover in his assault. Of this, however, I at the time knew nothing, as I was engaged in making the assault on the strong bastion in front of Brooks's division. In my note to Hancock I had not asked him to support me directly, but to go in and carry out an attack beyond my reach. I did not see General Hancock until my assault was over, and after I had returned from the front, having while there given Hinks orders to reverse the slopes in the rear of the captured works to put him in a defensible position; and that order was not given until after the reception of official despatches from the signal-stations announcing many reinforcements arriving in Petersburg. The statement that Hancock waived rank is utterly without foundation. That I knew nothing of the arrival of Hancock's troops, and that I did not see him until after nine o'clock, are shown by the fact that at that hour, and after the receipt of despatches announcing the arrival of reinforcements to the enemy, I signalled to Butler: «I must have the Army of the Potomac reinforcements immediately.» I should certainly not have sent such a despatch after I knew that Hancock's troops were at hand, or after my interview with him. The assertion that I gave orders to Hancock's troops is without foundation. The record shows what orders were given, and who gave them; and according to my report made on the 16th of June, Gibbon's division did not relieve my colored troops until midnight. The troops of General Kautz were of no service to me during the assault. (See his report.¹) Hinks and his command did excellent service.

The following statement is also made in the article:

General Smith said that before taking the last works that he had captured, he had heard rumors that the enemy was crossing the James to reinforce Petersburg.

In my note to Hancock I said: «General Lee is reported crossing at Chaffin's Bluff.» There was no rumor about this; it had come from the signal-station at Cobb's Hill, and was a report as to facts. At 6:50 P. M. the following message was sent to me: «A train of fourteen cars loaded with troops just passed toward Petersburg. The enemy also appears to be sending troops on the roads west of Petersburg. Another train of twenty-two cars has just passed toward Petersburg loaded with troops.» On the same page of the War Records are two other signal despatches—one of 7:30 P. M., saying, «A train of thirteen cars has just passed toward Peters-

burg; also a heavy gun by the turnpike»; and one of 8:30 P. M.: «Two trains have passed toward Petersburg. Too dark to see what they were loaded with, or the number of cars.» At 9:30 P. M. I received the following while at the extreme front: «Hancock has been ordered up by General Grant's and my orders. Another army corps will reach you by 10 A. M. to-morrow. It is crossing. *They have not got ten thousand men down yet.* Push on to the Appomattox.» This last was from General Butler. Now, are these rumors, as the author of «Campaigning with Grant» states? As I had not ten thousand men in the morning, and had lost several hundred, I should have been reckless to have plunged into the woods, in an unknown country, at ten o'clock at night, to meet such a force as was reported by Butler and his signal-officers, besides having to attack, before reaching the Appomattox, a town where every house was a fortification, and all this in the middle of the night. In addition to the Confederate reinforcements reported as arriving, the sixteen pieces of artillery which I had captured indicated the presence of a goodly number of men. Farther on the paper says that General Grant

had just reason to feel grievously disappointed over the failure of the admirable plan conceived for the capture of Petersburg. . . . It was no wonder that he felt keen disappointment when Smith's command failed to seize the golden opportunity he had prepared; but brilliant generals, like eminent sculptors, in executing their best conceptions sometimes find that their tools break in their hands.

If Grant had «an admirable plan conceived for the capture of Petersburg,» and had set me as the agent to carry out that plan, he knew on the morning of June 16 whether or no I had «failed to seize the golden opportunity he had prepared.» At 1 P. M. of that day Mr. Dana, Assistant Secretary of War, telegraphed to Secretary Stanton as follows: «I went over the conquered lines with Grant and the engineer officers. The works are of the very strongest kind, more difficult even to take than was Missionary Ridge at Chattanooga.» In a paper written by Colonel Lyman of the staff of General Meade, he (Colonel Lyman) states that General Grant, on leaving the captured works on the 16th, met General Meade, and called out: «Well, Smith has taken a line of works stronger than anything we have seen this campaign. If it is a possible thing, I want an assault made at six o'clock this evening.» (Military Historical Society of Massachusetts.) On the 17th, at 11 A. M., still a day later, Grant telegraphed to Halleck: «The Eighteenth Corps (Smith's) was transported from White House to Bermuda Hundred by water, moved out near to Petersburg the night of its arrival, and surprised, or rather captured, the very strong works northeast of Petersburg before sufficient force could be got in there by the enemy to hold them.» On July 1, 1864, sixteen days after the assault on Petersburg, Grant wrote a long letter to Halleck, saying: «I have feared that it might be necessary to separate him [General Butler] and General Smith. The latter is really one of the most efficient officers in service, readiest in expedients, and most *skillful in the management of troops in action.* I would dislike removing him from his present command unless it was to increase it, but, as I say, may have to do it yet if General Butler remains.» On the 6th of July, at 10 A. M., twenty-one

¹ Vol. XL, Part I, p. 729, Official Records.

days after the assault on Petersburg, Grant telegraphed to Halleck as follows: «Please obtain an order assigning the troops of the Department of Virginia and North Carolina serving in the field to the command of Major-General W. F. Smith, and order Major-General Butler, commanding department, to his headquarters, Fort Monroe.» This request, granted, would have put me in command of the Army of the James. On the 7th of July the order was published in these words: «The troops of the Department of North Carolina and Virginia serving with the Army of the Potomac in the field under Major-General Smith will constitute the Eighteenth Army Corps, and Major-General William F. Smith is assigned to the command of the corps. Major-General B. F. Butler will command the remainder of the troops in that department, having his headquarters at Fort Monroe.» By the telegrams and letters from Grant from the 16th of June to the 7th of July, is it not shown, beyond any doubt whatever, that he was persistent in his efforts to increase my command, and not acting as toward one with reference to whom «displeasure was aroused»? Is there any indication that he thought his tools had broken in his hands? The quotations above made are from Grant's writings in the War Records.

In the May CENTURY the paper «Campaigning with Grant» says that General Grant

was constantly embarrassed by some of his subordinates. General W. F. Smith was engaged in quarrels with his superior officers as well as with his associates. An acrimonious personal warfare was progressing between Butler and him. . . . Grant finally made up his mind that he would either have to relieve General Smith or several prominent commanders, and the result was that Smith was given a leave of absence, and was never recalled.

On June 21 I forwarded to headquarters some correspondence with General Butler, and asked to be relieved from duty in the Department of Virginia and North Carolina, which request was not granted. On July 1 Mr. Dana telegraphed to Secretary Stanton: «Butler is pretty deep in controversial correspondence with Baldy Smith, in which Grant says Butler is clearly in the wrong.» On the same day Grant wrote to Halleck as already quoted, adding a suggestion that Butler be given a command where «there is a dissatisfied element to control.» This suggestion was not deemed practicable, and General Grant on July 6 telegraphed to Washington, asking for

an order putting me in command of the troops then in the field under Butler, and ordering Butler to Fort Monroe, and this order was issued on July 7.

About July 1, I applied for leave of absence on account of my health, which was very much impaired, and received the following letter from General Grant:

CITY POINT, July 2, 1864.

GENERAL W. F. SMITH:

Your application for leave of absence has just come to me. Unless it is absolutely necessary that you should leave at this time, I would much prefer not having you go. It will not be necessary for you to expose yourself in the hot sun, and if it should become necessary, I can temporarily attach Humphreys to your command.
U. S. GRANT.

These extracts and orders show conclusively, from General Grant himself, that up to the publication of the order of the 7th I was not embarrassing General Grant by my quarrels; and as the only contention I had had was with General Butler, not having had even the shadow of a quarrel with any other «superior officer or associate,» I cannot understand how such an error should have crept into such a paper.

W. F. Smith.

«Scientific Kite-Flying»—An Acknowledgment.

IN the symposium on scientific kite-flying in the May CENTURY, in which reference is made to the work at the Blue Hill Observatory, no mention is made of Mr. A. Lawrence Rotch, the director of the observatory. It should be known to your readers that no continuously and graphically recording instruments had ever before been elevated into the air by means of kites until the work was taken up at Blue Hill; that no such records were anywhere else available for scientific study when THE CENTURY articles were written; that the work at Blue Hill is the most thorough exploration of the free air within a mile of the ground ever made in any manner; and that all the deductions concerning the conditions of the air were drawn by the staff of the observatory. Finally, and most important of all, this investigation was carried on, in connection with the other work of the observatory, with the private fortune of Mr. Rotch, for the sole purpose of increasing the world's fund of scientific knowledge.

H. Helm Clayton,
Meteorologist of the Blue Hill Observatory.

