

tack a column of the Austro-Russian army which was making a flank movement. Garland replied: "I, too, was just thinking that McClellan was saying to his officers, as Napoleon did, 'When your enemy is making a false movement, do not strike him till he has completed it'; and it may be that he will gobble up Richmond while we are away."

The fortifications around Richmond at that time were very slight. He could have captured the city with but little loss of life. The want of supplies would have forced Lee to attack him as soon as possible, with all the disadvantages of a precipitated movement. But the Federal commander seems to have contemplated nothing of the kind; and as he placed the continuance of the siege upon the hazard of Cold Harbor, he was bound to put every available man into that fight.

While we were lying all day idle on the 28th, unable to cross the Chickahominy, the

clouds of smoke from the burning plunder in the Federal camps and the frequent explosions of magazines indicated a retreat; but General Whiting kept insisting upon it that all this was but a *ruse de guerre* of McClellan preparatory to a march upon Richmond. I made to him some such reply as that once made to General Longstreet, when a cadet at West Point, by Professor Kendrick.

The professor asked Longstreet, who never looked at his chemistry, how the carbonic acid of commerce was made. Longstreet replied:

"By burning diamonds in oxygen gas."

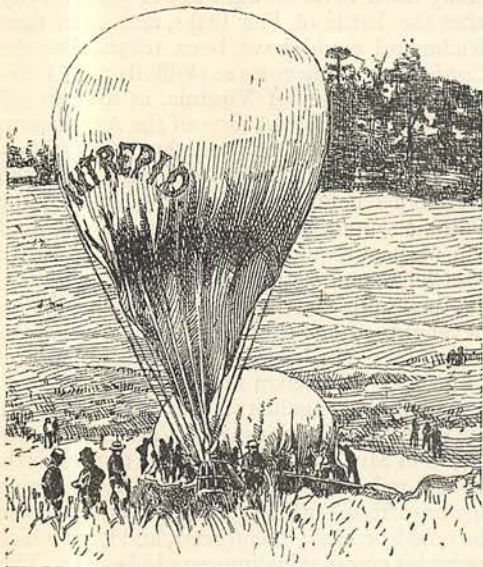
"Yes," said Professor Kendrick, "that will do it; but don't you think it would be a *leetle* expensive?"*

"Don't you think," I said to Whiting, "that this *ruse* of McClellan is a *leetle* expensive?"

The old West Point yarn had a very quieting effect upon his apprehensions.

D. H. Hill.

THE BATTLE OF GAINES'S MILL AND ITS PRELIMINARIES.



LOWE'S MILITARY BALLOON, IN THE SERVICE OF GENERAL McCLELLAN IN THE RICHMOND CAMPAIGN. †

THE events immediately preceding the "Seven Days' Battles on the Peninsula," in June, 1862, have been subjects of great

* Professor Kendrick would never contradict any one, but always modify the answer when wrong. The following is a specimen of his style of questioning. X. Y. Z. (whose name is now a household word) was on examination: Professor K. "What is its color?" X. Y. Z. "White, sir." Professor K. "Yes, you mean a kind of grayish white. In fact, you might call it coal black, might you not?" X. Y. Z. "Yes, sir, that's it."—D. H. H.

† The records give: Union army, 144 regiments, 60 batteries; Confederate, 187 regiments, 89 batteries.—F. J. P.

‡ Colonel Auchmuty, of New York City, who made many ascensions by this balloon from the camp near Doctor Gaines's before the battle, says that the Confederates had a Whitworth gun at Mrs. Price's, on the south side of the Chickahominy, with which they would fire at the balloon as it rose and descended. The usual height for observation was 1000 feet; and when lower than 300 feet high the balloon was within range of this gun. General Porter made no fewer than a hundred such ascensions.—EDITOR.

historical interest, and the causes which prompted certain movements connected with that campaign have given rise to much dispute and controversy. It is with the hope that a history of the part taken by my command during those days may shed new light upon the story of that eventful period, that the following narrative has been prepared. I have been compelled, however, to confine myself to facts within my own personal knowledge and to statements of the matters that influenced my actions, whether premeditated and by order, or the result of movements necessary to be taken by the exigencies of existing circumstances.

After the battle of Fair Oaks, during the greater part of the month of June, 1862, the Army of the Potomac, under General McClellan, and the Army of Northern Virginia, under General Lee, confronted each other, east of Richmond. The two armies were of nearly equal strength.† McClellan's forces, divided by the Chickahominy, were extended south of that stream, from New Bridge to White Oak Swamp, leaving north of the river only the Fifth Army Corps. The Confederate troops faced the Federal army throughout its length,

from White Oak Swamp to New Bridge and thence up the right bank of the Chickahominy, covering the important crossings at Mechanicsville and Meadow Bridge, north of the city.

South of the Chickahominy each army was secured against surprise in flank or successful attack in front by that swollen stream; by marshy lands and muddy roads; by redoubts studded with artillery and rifle-pits well manned, all flanked or covered by swamps, tangled thickets, and slashed timber. Notwithstanding the apparent quiet, both armies were actively engaged in the erection of those defensive works which permit large forces to be detached, at opportune moments, for aggressive action or for the defense of menaced positions. These preparations for offensive and defensive action, known to both commanders, plainly impressed on each the necessity of guarding against any errors in position, and the importance of preparing promptly to take advantage of any opening in his opponent's line which promised results commensurate with the risks involved.

It was apparent to both generals that Richmond could only be taken in one of two ways: by regular approaches or by assault. An assault would require superior forces, supported by ample reserves. It was equally apparent that an attack could readily be made from Richmond, because that city's well armed and manned intrenchments would permit its defense by a small number of men, while large forces could be concentrated and detached for offensive operations.

The faulty location of the Union army, divided as it was by the Chickahominy, was from the first realized by General McClellan, and became daily an increasing cause of care and anxiety to him; not the least disturbing element of which was the impossibility of quickly reënforcing his right wing or promptly drawing it to the south bank. That this dilemma was known to so intelligent and vigilant a commander as General Lee could not be doubted; and that it was certainly demonstrated to him by General J. E. B. Stuart's

dashing cavalry raid around the Union army, on June 14th, was shown in many ways.* One evidence of it was his immediate erection of field-works on his left, and his increasing resistance to the efforts of Union scouts to penetrate into the roads leading to Richmond from the north. This indicated that Lee was preparing to guard against the reënforcement of McClellan's right, and also against information reaching us of Confederate reënforcements from the north.

McClellan had been forced into this faulty position on the Chickahominy and held there by the oft-repeated assurances that McDowell's corps of 40,000 men, then at Fredericksburg, would be advanced to Richmond and formed on his immediate right, which would make that wing safe.† On the 27th of May, under promise that McDowell would join him at once, McClellan cleared his front of all opposition to his rapid march, by operations at Hanover Court House. If McDowell had joined McClellan then, it would have resulted in the capture of Richmond. That junction could also easily have been brought about immediately after the battle of Fair Oaks, and even then Richmond could have been taken. But the Confederate authorities so skillfully used Jackson, in the Valley of Virginia, as to draw off McDowell; while the fears of the Administration, then aroused for the safety of Washington, together with a changed policy, caused him to be held back from the Army of the Potomac; and, although orders were several times issued requiring McDowell to unite with McClellan, and assurances were given as late as June 26th that he would so unite, yet he never arrived, and the right wing of McClellan's army, then left exposed, became the object of attack. McClellan saw the coming storm, and guarded against it as best he could. Realizing the faultiness of his position, resulting from McDowell's withdrawal to the North, he desired to correct the error by changing his base from York River to the James, where he could be easily reënforced, and from which point his communications would be safe. This change could not be made so long as

* General Stuart's raid round the Union lines was begun on Wednesday, June 13 (1862), by an advance to the South Anna Bridge on the Richmond and Fredericksburg Railway. (See map on page 293.) Stuart had with him about 1200 cavalry and a section of the Stuart Horse Artillery, the principal officers under him being Colonel Fitzhugh Lee and Colonel W. H. F. Lee. Early Thursday morning they started east, and soon were having a brush with Union outposts at Hanover Court House. Thence they moved rapidly east to Old Church near the Tolopotomoy, where they had a skirmish and running fight with a detachment of Union cavalry. Stuart there decided to complete the circuit of the Union army by pushing forward to Tunstall's Station, nine miles farther east, and thence to the James. At Garlick's, on the Pamunkey, his forces destroyed two transports and a number of wagons. They captured Tunstall's on the York River Railway, and tried to obstruct the road and fired into a train laden with soldiers which dashed past them. After burning a railway bridge and a wagon-train, they proceeded by moonlight south to Jones's Bridge on the Chickahominy, the repairing of which delayed their march till 1 P. M. of Friday. Once across, they made their way without difficulty to Charles City Court House and reached Richmond *via* the River road early Saturday morning.—EDITOR.

† See Stanton's letter of May 18: "You are instructed to cooperate so as to establish this communication as soon as possible, by extending your right wing to the north of Richmond."—F. J. P.

McDowell's advance was to be expected, nor in any event could it be effected without great risk to the safety of his own army in the face of a vigilant and active foe of superior strength, and without seriously jeopardizing the success of the cause for which he was devoting all his energies. He, however, secured, by careful examination full information of the roads and the character of the country over which he would be obliged to move, if circumstances or policy should require a change of base, and as early as June 18th sent vessels loaded with supplies to the James River.

In the middle of June General McClellan intrusted to me the management of affairs on the north bank of the Chickahominy, and confided to me his plans, as well as his hopes and apprehensions. His plans embraced defensive arrangements against an attack from Richmond upon our weak right flank. We did not fear the results of such an attack if made by the forces from Richmond alone; but if, in addition, we were to be attacked by Jackson's forces, suspicions of whose approach were already aroused, we felt that we should be in peril. But as Jackson had thus far prevented McDowell from joining us, we trusted that McDowell, Banks, and Frémont, who had been directed to watch Jackson, would be able to prevent him from joining Lee, or, at least, would give timely warning of his escape from their front and follow close upon his heels.

With McClellan's approval, my command was distributed as follows:

Meade's brigade of McCall's division of Pennsylvania Reserves was posted at Gaines's house, protecting a siege battery controlling New Bridge; Reynolds's and Seymour's brigades held the rifle-pits skirting the east bank of Beaver Dam Creek and the field-works covering the only crossings near Mechanicsville and Ellerson's Mill. These field-works, well armed with artillery, and the rifle-pits, well manned, controlled the roads and open fields on the west bank of that creek, and were concealed by timber and brush from an approaching foe. The infantry outposts from the same division, and their supports, west of Mechanicsville to Meadow Bridge, were instructed, if attacked or threatened by superior forces, to fall back by side approaches to the rear of Reynolds, at the upper crossing, thus leaving the main approaches open to the fire of their artillery and infantry defenders.

North from Meadow Bridge to the Pamunkey Federal cavalry pickets kept vigilant watch, and protected detachments felling timber for obstructing the roads against the rapid march of any force upon the flank or rear of the right wing.

Cooke's cavalry, near Cold Harbor, guarded the right rear, and scouted towards Hanover Court House, while Morell's and Sykes's divisions were conveniently camped so as to cover the bridge-crossings and to move quickly to any threatened point.

Such was the situation on the 24th of June, when, at midnight, General McClellan telegraphed me that a pretended deserter, whom I had that day sent him, had informed him that Jackson was in the immediate vicinity, ready to unite with Lee in an attack upon my command. Though we had reason to suspect Jackson's approach, this was the first intimation we had of his arrival; and we could obtain from Washington at that time no further confirmation of our suspicions, nor any information of the fact that he had left the front of those directed to watch him in northern Virginia.

Reynolds, who had special charge of the defenses of Beaver Dam Creek and of the forces at and above Mechanicsville, was at once informed of the situation. He prepared to give our anticipated visitors a warm welcome. The infantry division and cavalry commanders were directed to break camp at the first sound of battle, pack their wagons and send them to the rear, and, with their brigades, to take specified positions in support of troops already posted, or to protect the right flank.

On the 25th the pickets of the left of the main army south of the Chickahominy were pushed forward under strong opposition, and gained, after sharp fighting, considerable ground, so as to enable the Second and Third Corps (Sumner's and Heintzelman's) to support the attack on Old Tavern intended to be made next day by the Sixth Corps (Franklin's). The result of the fighting was to convince the corps commanders engaged that there had been no reduction of forces in their front to take part in any movement upon our right flank.

Early on the 26th I was informed of a large increase of forces opposite Reynolds, and before noon the Confederates gave evidence of intention to cross the river at Meadow Bridge and Mechanicsville, while from our cavalry scouts along the Virginia Central Railroad came reports of the approach from the north of large masses of troops.

Thus the attitude of the two armies towards each other was changed. Yesterday, McClellan was rejoicing over the success of his advance towards Richmond. He was still assured of McDowell's junction. To-day, all the united available forces in Virginia were to be thrown against his right flank, which was not in a convenient position to be supported.

The prizes now to be contended for were: on the part of McClellan, the safety of his right wing, protection behind his intrenchments with the possibility of being able to remain there, and the giving of sufficient time to enable him to effect a change of base to the James; on the part of Lee, the destruction of McClellan's right wing, the drawing him from his intrenchments and attacking him in front, and thus to raise the siege of Richmond.

BATTLE OF MECHANICSVILLE.

THE morning of Thursday, June 25th, dawned clear and bright, giving promise that the day would be a brilliant one. The formation of the ground south of the Chickahominy opposite Mechanicsville, and west to Meadow Bridge, largely concealed from view the forces gathered to execute an evidently well-planned and well-prepared attack upon my command. For some hours, on our side of the river, the lull before the storm prevailed, except at Mechanicsville and at the two bridge-crossings. At these points our small outposts were conspicuously displayed for the purpose of creating an impression of numbers and of an intention to maintain an obstinate resistance. We aimed to invite a heavy attack, and then, by rapid withdrawal, to incite such confidence in the enemy as to induce incautious pursuit.

In the northern and western horizon vast clouds of dust arose, indicating the movements of Jackson's advancing forces. They were far distant, and we had reason to believe that the obstacles to their rapid advance, placed in their way by detachments sent for that purpose, would prevent them from making an attack that day. As before stated, we did not fear Lee alone; we did fear his attack, combined with one by Jackson, on our flank; but our fears were allayed for a day.

General McClellan's desire to make the earliest and quickest movements at that time possible, and his plans arranged for the accomplishment of that desire, as expressed to me, were substantially conveyed in the following dispatch of June 23d from his chief-of-staff:

"Your dispositions of your troops are approved by the commanding general. . . . If you are attacked, be careful to state as promptly as possible the number, composition, and position of the enemy. The troops on this side will be held ready either to support you directly or to attack the enemy in their front. If the force attacking you is large, the general would prefer the latter course, counting upon your skill and the admirable troops under your command to hold their own against superior numbers long enough for him to make the decisive movement, which will determine the fate of Richmond."

The position selected on Beaver Dam Creek for our line of defense was naturally very strong. The banks of the valley were steep, and forces advancing on the adjacent plains presented their flanks, as well as their front, to the fire of both infantry and artillery, safely posted behind intrenchments. The stream was over waist-deep and bordered by swamps. Its passage was difficult for infantry at all points, and impracticable for artillery, except at the bridge-crossing at Ellerson's Mill, and at the one above, near Mechanicsville.

Quite early in the day I visited General Reynolds, near the head of the creek, and had the best reasons not only to be contented, but thoroughly gratified, with the admirable arrangements of this accomplished officer, and to be encouraged by the cheerful confidence of himself and his able and gallant assistants, Seymour on his left, at Ellerson's Mill, and Simmons and Roy Stone in his front. Each of these officers commanded a portion of the Pennsylvania Reserves — all under the command of the brave and able veteran, McCall. These troops were about to engage in their first battle, and bore themselves then, as they did on trying occasions immediately following, with the cheerful spirit of the volunteer and the firmness of the veteran soldier — examples inspiring emulation in these trying "seven days' battles."

Part of the general details previously adopted was then ordered to be followed, and subsequently was enforced as near as practicable in all the battles in which my corps engaged: that under no circumstances should the men expose themselves by leaving their intrenchments, or their cover, merely to pursue a repulsed foe; nor, except in uneven ground, which would permit the fire of artillery to pass well over their heads, was infantry or cavalry to be posted in front of a battery, or moved so as to interfere with its fire. Bullet, shot, and shell were to be relied upon for both repulse and pursuit.

Sitting for hours near the telegraph operator at my quarters, prior to the attack, I listened to the constant and rapid "ticking" of his machine, and was kept informed, by the various intercommunicating messages at the headquarters of the army, of the condition of affairs in front of the three corps farthest to the left. Reports often came from them that the enemy's camps seemed to be largely deserted, confirming the information that the enemy had gathered in front of Franklin and myself. Yet, the following day, when I called for aid to resist the forces of Lee and Jackson at Gaines's Mill, known to be immensely superior to mine, the commanders of these three corps expressed the belief that



CONFEDERATE RETREAT THROUGH MECHANICSVILLE BEFORE ADVANCE OF McCLELLAN'S ARTILLERY, MAY 24TH. (FROM A SKETCH AT THE TIME.)

[These buildings, together with one house to the left (not shown in the picture), compose the town. The view is from the east, and the retreat is in the direction of the Mechanicsville Bridge. This was a month before the battle of Mechanicsville.—EDITOR.]

they were about to be attacked by bodies larger than their own, and objected to detaching any part of their troops.

From the cavalry scouts of Farnsworth, Stoneman, and Cooke, whose forces stretched, in the order named, from Meadow Bridge north to the Pamunkey, reports came that Jackson was advancing slowly upon my flank. I was also informed that the departure of Jackson from northern Virginia was suspected, but not positively known, at Washington; but that at this critical moment no assistance whatever could be expected from that vicinity.

Perhaps at this time the Administration had been crippled by its own acts, and could not respond to General McClellan's calls for aid. About April 1st, when our army began active operations in the field and recruiting should have been encouraged, the enrollment of troops was ordered to be stopped. The War Governor of Pennsylvania, notably, disregarded this order. His foresight was afterwards recognized at Antietam, when he was able to render valuable assistance. In the month of June, however, the policy had begun to change, and the troops in northern Virginia were being placed in charge of an officer called to Washington "to take command of Banks and Frémont, perhaps McDowell, take the field against Jackson, and eventually supersede McClellan." At the day the order was issued, June 27th, however, there was no enemy confronting that officer—Jackson having disappeared from northern Virginia, and being in my front at Gaines's Mill.

About two o'clock P. M. on the 26th, the

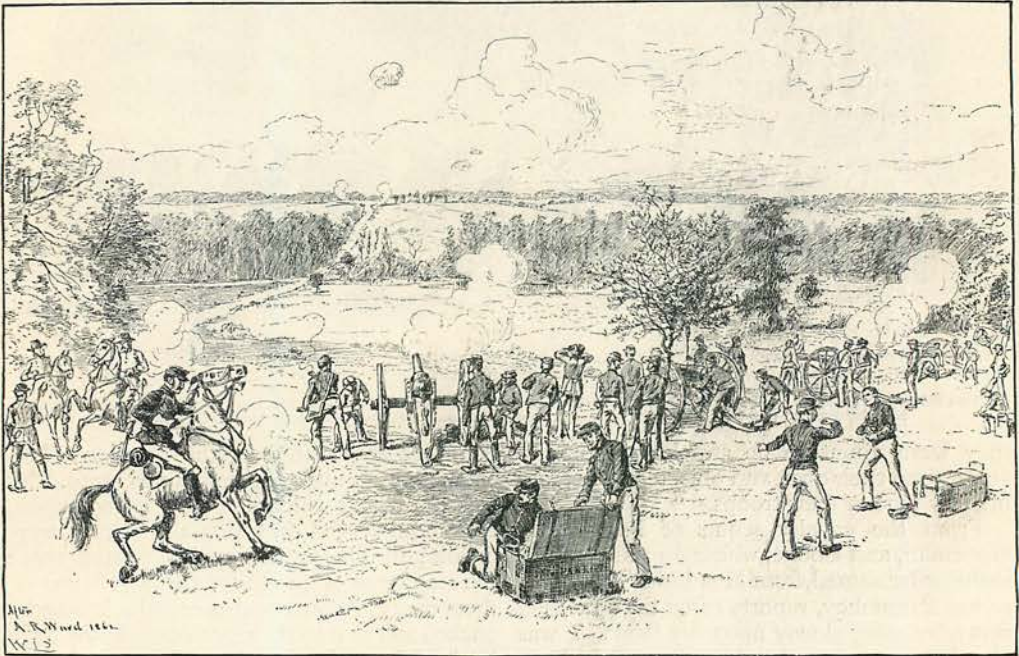
boom of a single cannon in the direction of Mechanicsville resounded through our camps. This was the signal which had been agreed upon, to announce the fact that the enemy were crossing the Chickahominy. The curtain rose; the stage was prepared for the first scene of the tragedy. At once tents were struck, wagons packed and sent to the rear to cross to the right bank of the Chickahominy. The several divisions were promptly formed, and took the positions to which they had previously been assigned. General McCall assumed command at Beaver Dam Creek; Meade joined him, taking position behind Seymour; Martindale and Griffin, of Morell's division, went, respectively, to the right and rear of Reynolds; Butterfield was directed to support General Cooke's, and subsequently Martindale's right, while Sykes was held ready to move wherever needed. Reynolds and Seymour prepared for action, and concealed their men.

About three o'clock, the enemy, under Longstreet, D. H. and A. P. Hill, in large bodies commenced rapidly to cross the Chickahominy, almost simultaneously at Mechanicsville, Meadow Bridge, and above, and pushed down the left bank, along the roads leading to Beaver Dam Creek. In accordance with directions previously given, the outposts watching the access to the crossings fell back after slight resistance to their already designated position on the east bank of Beaver Dam Creek, destroying the bridges as they retired. (See map on page 300.)

After passing Mechanicsville the attacking forces were divided, a portion taking the road to

Ellerson's Mill, while the larger body directed their march into the valley of Beaver Dam Creek, upon the road covered by Reynolds. Apparently unaware, or regardless, of the great danger in their front, this force moved on with animation and confidence, as if going to parade, or engaging in a sham battle. Sud-

ress. Seymour's direct and Reynolds's flank fire soon arrested them and drove them to shelter, suffering even more disastrously than those who had attacked Reynolds. Late in the afternoon, greatly strengthened, they renewed the attack with spirit and energy, some reaching the borders of the stream, but



UNION ARTILLERY AT MECHANICSVILLE SHELLING CONFEDERATE WORKS SOUTH OF THE CHICKAHOMINY.

[This sketch was made at the time—several days before the beginning of the Seven Days' Battles. It is here given to indicate the topography of the neighborhood. The road to Richmond crosses the stream by the Mechanicsville Bridge, the half-dozen houses composing the town being to the left of the ground occupied by the battery. It was by this road that the troops of D. H. Hill's and Longstreet's divisions crossed to join Jackson and A. P. Hill in the attack upon the right of McClellan's army.—EDITOR.]

denly, when half-way down the bank of the valley, our men opened upon it rapid volleys of artillery and infantry, which strewed the road and hill-side with hundreds of dead and wounded, and drove the main body of the survivors back in rapid flight to and beyond Mechanicsville. So rapid was the fire upon the enemy's huddled masses clambering back up the hill, that some of Reynolds's ammunition was exhausted, and two regiments were relieved by the Fourth Michigan and Fourteenth New York of Griffin's brigade. On the extreme right a small force of the enemy secured a foothold on the east bank, but it did no harm, and retired under cover of darkness.

The forces which were directed against Seymour at Ellerson's Mill made little prog-

only to be repulsed with terrible slaughter, which warned them not to attempt a renewal of the fight. Little depressions in the ground shielded many from our fire, until, when night came on, they all fell back beyond the range of our guns. Night put an end to the contest.

The Confederates suffered severely. All night the moans of the dying and the shrieks of the wounded reached our ears. Our loss was only about 250 of the 5000 engaged, while that of the Confederates was nearly 2000 out of some 10,000 attacking.*

General McClellan had joined me on the battle-field at an early hour in the afternoon. While we discussed plans for the immediate future, influenced in our deliberations by the gratifying results of the day, numerous and

* Union forces engaged, eleven regiments, six batteries. Confederate forces engaged, twenty-one regiments, eight batteries.—F. J. P.

* According to the official returns the total Union loss at Mechanicsville was 361, but little more than that of the Forty-fourth Georgia alone (335). The Confederate loss, exclusive of Field's and Anderson's brigades and of the batteries, is reported at 1589. General Longstreet is quoted by Mr. William Swinton as his authority for putting the aggregate at "between three and four thousand." ("Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac," p. 145.)—EDITOR.

unvarying accounts from our outposts and scouts toward the Pamunkey warned us of the danger impending on the arrival of Jackson, and necessitated a decision as to which side of the Chickahominy should be held in force. He, however, left me late at night, about one A. M. (27th), with the expectation of receiving information on his arrival at his own headquarters, from the tenor of which he would be enabled to decide whether I should hold my present position or withdraw to a well-selected and more advantageous one east of Gaines's Mill, where I could protect the bridges across the Chickahominy, over which I must retire if compelled to leave the left bank. He left General Barnard, of the Engineers, with me, to point out the new line of battle in case he decided to withdraw me from Beaver Dam Creek. The orders to withdraw reached me about three o'clock A. M., and were executed as rapidly as possible.

GAINES'S MILL, OR THE CHICKAHOMINY.

THE position selected for the new stand was east of Powhite Creek, about six miles from Beaver Dam Creek. The line of battle was semicircular, the extremities being in the valley of the Chickahominy, while the intermediate portion occupied the high grounds along the bank of a creek and curved around past McGee's to Elder Swamp. Part of the front was covered by the ravine of the creek. The east bank was lined with trees and underbrush, which afforded concealment and protection to our troops and artillery.

From the point where the line of the creek turns suddenly to the east, the front was a series of boggy swamps covered extensively with tangled brush. Near McGee's and beyond, the ground, elevated and drier, was filled with ravines swept by our artillery and infantry, who were covered by depressions in the ground. The high land embraced within the semicircle was cleared ground, but undulating, and often, with the aid of fences and ditches, giving concealment and cover, breast high, to both infantry and artillery.

Before sunrise of the 27th the troops were withdrawn from Beaver Dam Creek and sent to their new position east of Powhite Creek, destroying the bridges across it after them.

Some batteries and infantry skirmishers, left as a ruse at Beaver Dam Creek, by their fire so fully absorbed the attention of the foe that our purpose suddenly and rapidly to abandon the intrenchments seemed unsuspected. But when they discovered our withdrawal, their infantry pressed forward in small detachments, the main body and the artillery being delayed to rebuild the bridges. Seymour's brigade, the

last to start, under its skillful commander, with Tidball's and Robertson's well-managed Horse Batteries on its flanks, kept the enemy at a respectful distance and enabled all horse, foot and artillery, wagons and wounded, to reach, with little loss, their designated posts in the new position; my brave and efficient aide, Lieutenant Weld, however, was taken prisoner.

The siege guns were safely removed by hand from the works overlooking New Bridge and taken to the south bank of the Chickahominy, where, protected by Franklin's corps, they were posted and used with damaging effect upon the enemy as they advanced that afternoon to attack the left of our line.

Our new line of battle was well selected and strong, though long and requiring either more troops to man it than I had, or too great a thinning of my line by the use of the reserves. The east bank of the creek, from the valley of the Chickahominy to its swampy sources, was elevated, sloping, and timbered. The bed of the stream was nearly dry, and its west bank gave excellent protection to the first line of infantry posted under it to receive the enemy descending the cleared field sloping to it. The swampy grounds along the sources of the creek were open to our view in front for hundreds of yards, and were swept by the fire of infantry and artillery. The roads from Gaines's Mill and Old Cold Harbor, along which the enemy were compelled to advance, were swept by artillery posted on commanding ground.

Along the ground thus formed and close to its border were posted the divisions of Morell and Sykes—the latter on the right—Martin's Massachusetts Battery between—each brigade having in reserve, immediately in its rear, two of its regiments. Sections or full batteries of the Division artillery were posted to sweep the avenues of approach, and the fields on which these avenues opened. Wherever possible and useful, guns were placed between brigades and on higher ground, in front or rear, as judgment dictated. The unemployed guns were in reserve with their divisions. Batteries of Hunt's Reserve Artillery were in rear of the left, covered by timber from view of the enemy, but ready to move at a moment's call, or from their stand to pour their irresistible fire into the enemy's face in case they broke our line.

McCall's division formed a second line, near the artillery in reserve, in rear of Morell, and immediately behind the woods on the left. Reynolds, the first to leave Beaver Dam Creek, had gone to Barker's Mill to cover the approaches from Cold Harbor and Dispatch Station to Grapevine Bridge; but hearing the battle raging on our left, and having no enemy in his front,



UNION DEFENSES AT ELLERSON'S MILL. (DRAWN BY CHARLES KENDRICK FROM A SKETCH AT THE TIME BY A. R. WAUD.)

while Emory of Cooke's cavalry, with artillery, was near at hand to do the duty assigned to him, he hastened to join McCall, arriving opportunely in rear of Griffin's left.

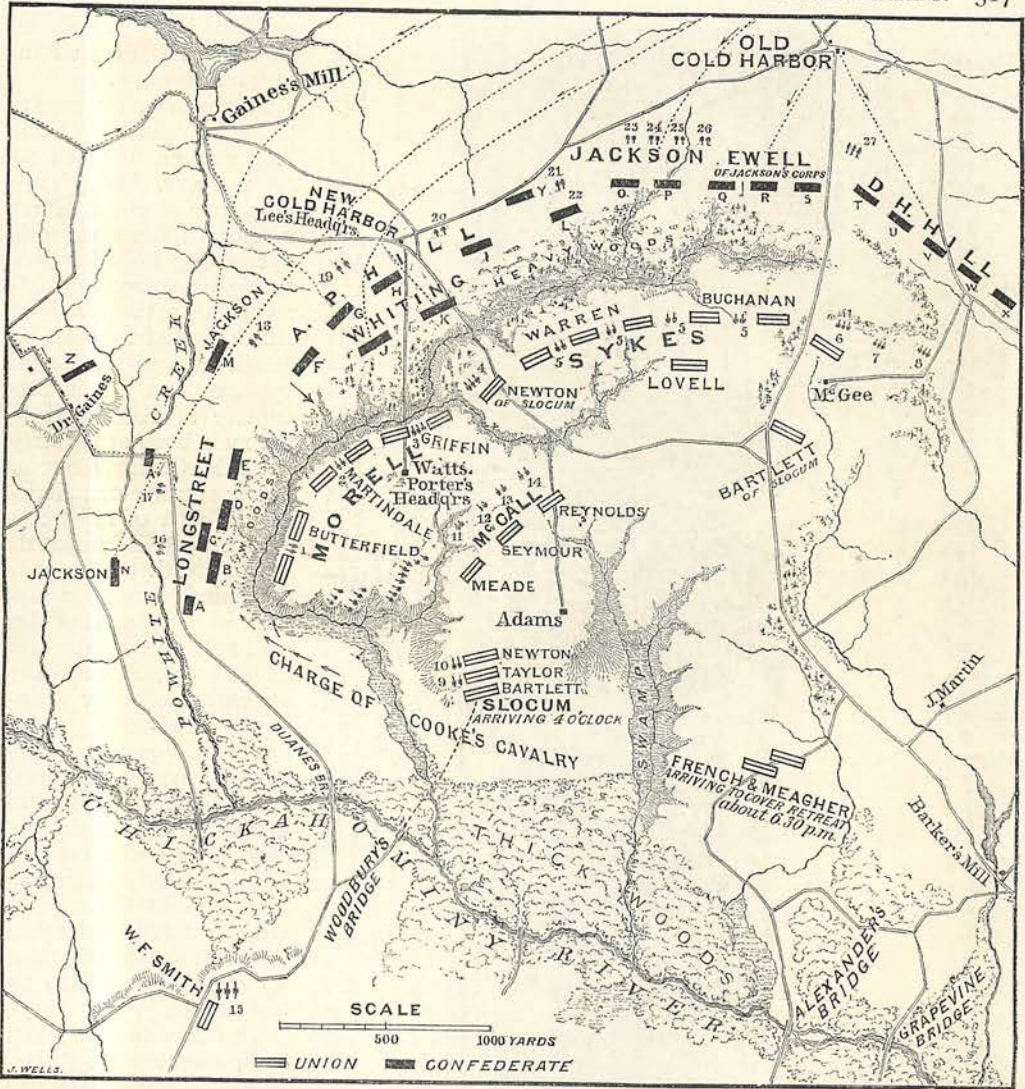
General Cooke was instructed to take position, with cavalry, under the hills in the valley of the Chickahominy — there with the aid of artillery to guard our left flank. He was especially enjoined to intercept, gather, and hold all stragglers, and under no circumstances to leave the valley for the purpose of coming upon the hill held by our infantry, or pass in front of our line on the left. Stoneman's detachment of cavalry and infantry, miles to the north, was no longer available. Fearing it might be cut off by Jackson, I sent Stoneman word to make his way as best he could to White House, and in proper time to rejoin the army — wherever it might be.

Believing my forces too small to defend successfully this long line, I asked General Barnard, when he left me, to represent to General McClellan the necessity of reinforcements to thicken and to fill vacant spaces in my front line. He himself promised me axes. This was my first request for aid, but none came in response. The axes did not arrive till near dark, and were useless — but with the few obtained early in the day from the artillery, and in the little time at command, trees were felled along a small portion of our front, and useful barriers were erected, which were filled in with rails and knapsacks.

While withdrawing from Beaver Dam, I had seen to my delight Slocum's division of Franklin's corps crossing the river to my assistance. McClellan had promised to send it, and I needed it; it was one of the best divisions of the army. Its able, experienced, and gallant commander and his brave and gifted subordinates had the confidence of their well-trained soldiers. They were all worthy comrades of my well-trying and fully trusted officers, and of many others on that field, subsequently honored by their countrymen. But to our disappointment, through some misunderstanding, the division was almost immediately recalled to Franklin. In response, however, to a later call, it returned at a time when it was greatly needed, and rendered invaluable services.

I fixed my headquarters at first at the Adams house; but early in the battle that locality became a hospital, and I advanced to the Watts house, on more elevated ground, whence I could see the greater part of the field and communicate readily with all parts of it.

Thus far, it will be seen, all plans were defensive; I had reason to believe that the enemy largely outnumbered me — three to one. Evidently it was their plan and their policy to crush me, if possible. Their boldness and confidence, I might add incaution, if not imprudence and rashness in exposure and attack,



MAP OF THE BATTLE-FIELD OF GAINES'S MILL, SHOWING APPROXIMATELY THE POSITIONS OF INFANTRY AND ARTILLERY ENGAGED. (THE TOPOGRAPHY FROM THE OFFICIAL MAP.)

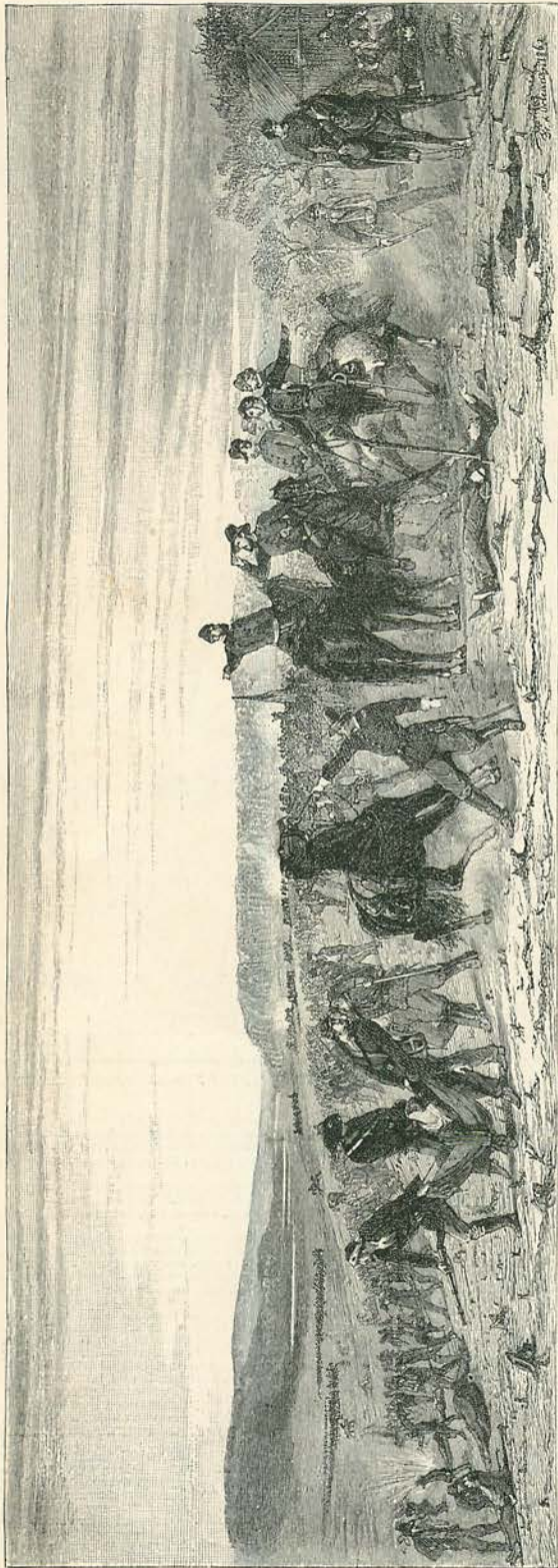
Confederate brigades: A, A. Anderson (R. H.); B, Wilcox; C, Featherston; D, Pryor; E, Pickett; Z, Kemper; F, G, H, J, L, Y, line of A. P. Hill's six brigades at the opening of the battle, as follows: Archer, Field, Anderson (J. R.), Branch, Gregg, Pender; I, K, Hood and Law (Whiting's division of Jackson's corps, replacing Archer, Field, Anderson); M, N, O, P, Jackson's old division, as follows: Fulkerson (Third Va.), Cunningham (Second Va.), Lawton, and Winder; Q, R, S, Seymour, Trimble, and Elzey; T, U, V, W, X, line at first: Ripley, Colquitt, Rhodes, Anderson (C. B.), Garland. General directions of approach are indicated by dotted lines.

Union batteries: 1, Allen; 2, 3, Weedon; 4, Martin; 5, 5, 5, Edwards; 6, Weed; 7, Tidball; 8, Kingsbury; 9, Hexamer; 10, Upton; 11, 12, 13, 14, Kerns, Easton, DeHart, Cooper; 15, Diederich, Knierim, and Tyler; also Voegelée, Smead, Porter, and Robertson. Total, 124 guns.

Confederate batteries: 16, 17, 18, Longstreet's artillery; 19, Braxton; 20, Pegram; 21, Johnson; 22, Crenshaw; 23, Pelham; 24, Brockenbrough; 25, Carrington; 26, Courtney; 27, Bondurant; also other guns not here indicated.

At 2 o'clock P. M., after a sharp engagement between Gaines's Mill and New Cold Harbor, A. P. Hill made the first severe attack on the Union center and left, and after two hours' fighting was repulsed in such disorder that Longstreet was ordered up to relieve the pressure by a feint on the right, which he converted into an attack in force. Thus, up to four o'clock, the Confederate assault was mainly on the Union left center and left. About this hour D. H. Hill's division got fully into action, and Jackson's corps (consisting of Ewell's, Whiting's, and Jackson's divisions) was thrown in where needed from the direction of Old Cold Harbor. Major Dabney, Jackson's chief-of-staff, in a letter to General Hill, thus describes the movements of Jackson's corps: "The column," he says, "came on the eastern extension of Gaines's Mill road at Old Cold Harbor, and passing the old tavern a little way, soon ran afoul of McClellan's right wing, with infantry and artillery in position. Your division had taken the lead, and became, therefore, the left of our whole line of battle. Jackson put Ewell in position on your right. My division had to drive the enemy into his corps. But in a little while the state of the firing convinced him that Porter didn't drive worth a cent, and he bestowed himself to let out his full strength. Then it was that, after ordering Ewell's advance, he wheeled on me and began to give instructions about putting in his six other brigades, which were then standing idle in the road by which we had come. I sent them in from left to right *en echelon*, each brigade to support its left-hand neighbor, and Law and Hood kept the proper relation to Ewell's right, and thus helped A. P. Hill's beaten division, attacked the enemy's center or left center, and about 6 P. M. drove it in. But Lawton, bearing too much by his own left, unwittingly crossed Hood's line of march and reinforced Ewell—a most timely providence, for Ewell's line was about done for. The Second Virginia brigade seems to have borne as much too far to the right, and at last, Third Virginia brigade brought up behind Longstreet's extreme right,—the brigade of R. H. Anderson, whom they assisted in driving the enemy. The brigade, under Winder, bore too much to the left, and entered the right on your right. Pickett's brigade, headed by the 'Old Ironsides' (Eighteenth Virginia), broke Porter's line just west of the Watts house." With regard to this break, General Law, in a letter to the Editor, says: "Whiting's division covered the ground on which J. R. Anderson's, Archer's, and Field's brigades had previously attacked. We passed over some of these men as we advanced to the assault. We carried the Federal line in our front, and Longstreet on our right, bringing up his reserves, again attacked and carried his front." At the last and successful advance the line from left to right was: Longstreet (Anderson, Pickett), Whiting (Hood and Law), Jackson (Winder and Lawton), Ewell (one or two brigades), and D. H. Hill (Rhodes, Anderson and Garland). General Porter thinks the first break in his line was made by Hood from the direction indicated on the map by an arrow.

Of the Union reserves, McCall's division was put in on the line of Morell,—except a part of Reynolds's brigade, which went to the assistance of Warren; Stocum's division also went to the left,—except Bartlett's brigade, which was sent to the right of Sykes near the McGee house.—EDITOR.



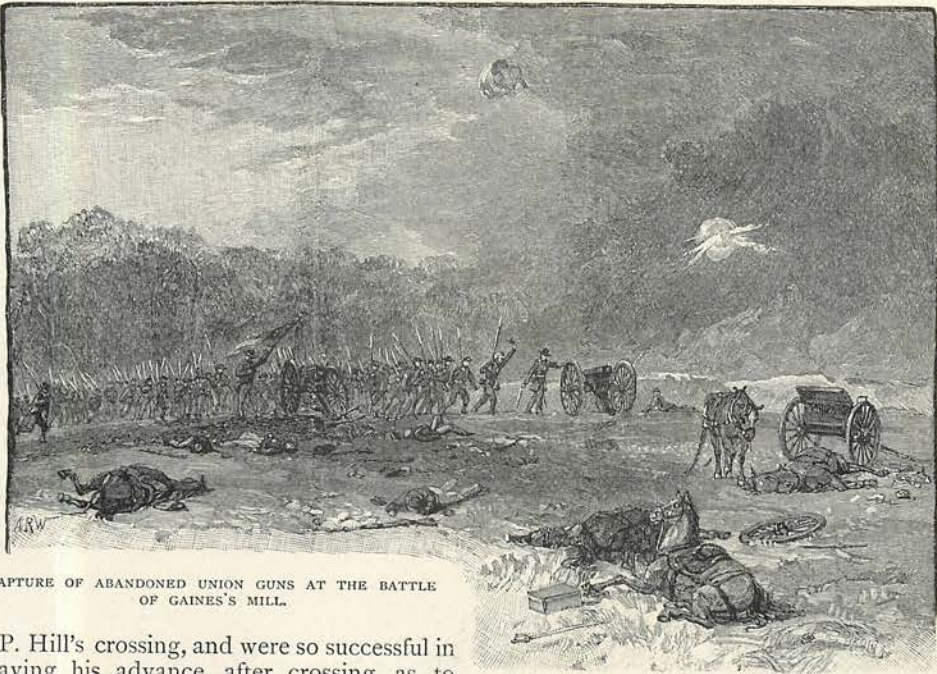
THE BATTLE OF GAINES'S MILL. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE PAINTING BY THE PRINCE DE JOINVILLE, 1862, MADE FROM PERSONAL OBSERVATION.)
 Persons represented: 1. Gen. F. J. Porter, 2. Gen. G. W. Morell, 3. Gen. George G. Meade (on horseback in the distance), and the following aides-de-camp: 4. Comte de Paris, 5. Col. Radowitz, 6. Major Hammerstein, 7. Duc de Chartres, 8. Capt. Mason.

[The view is from the left of the Federal position, looking in a north-westerly direction up the Chickahominy, shown at the left. The outbuildings (on the right) belonged to the Witts house, which, during the thick of the fight, was the headquarters of General Fitz John Porter. The wooded ravine in the center of the picture was the point of contact of this part of the opposing lines. The horsemen in the swampy bottom-lands are Cooke's Union cavalry, whose charge up the valley, and then by a right wheel to the front of the Union batteries, is referred to by General Porter on page 323. General Longstreet's extreme right did not extend out of the woods; his left reached to a point about two-thirds across the picture, where it joined A. P. Hill's and, later, Whiting's division. — EPHOR.]

confirmed my belief that at first they deemed the task an easy one.

I, however, determined to hold my position at least long enough to make the army secure. Though in a desperate situation if not reënforced, I was not without strong hope of some timely assistance from the main body of the army, with which I might repulse the attack and so cripple our opponents as to make the capture of Richmond by the main body of the army, under McClellan, the result of any sacrifice or suffering on the part of my troops or of myself. I felt that the life or death of the army depended upon our conduct in the contest of that day, and that on the issue of that contest depended an early peace or a prolonged, devastating war—for the Union cause could never be yielded. Our brave and intelligent men of all grades and ranks fully realized this, and thousands of them freely offered up their lives that day to maintain the sacred cause, which they had voluntarily taken up arms to defend to the last extremity.

The Confederates, under Longstreet and A. P. Hill, following us from Mechanicsville, moved cautiously by the roads leading by Dr. Gaines's house to New Cold Harbor, and by 2 P. M. had formed lines of battle behind the crest of the hills east of Powhite Creek. These lines were parallel to ours, and extended from the valley of the Chickahominy through New Cold Harbor around Morell's front, so as nearly to reach Warren's brigade—the left of Sykes's division. At Gaines's Mill, Cass's gallant Ninth Massachusetts Volunteers of Griffin's brigade obstinately resisted



CAPTURE OF ABANDONED UNION GUNS AT THE BATTLE OF GAINES'S MILL.

A. P. Hill's crossing, and were so successful in delaying his advance, after crossing, as to compel him to employ large bodies to force the regiment back to the main line. This brought on a contest which extended to Morell's center and over Martin's front,—on his right,—and lasted from 12:30 to near 2 o'clock—Cass and his immediate supports falling back south of the swamps. This persistent and prolonged resistance gave to this battle one of its well-known names.*

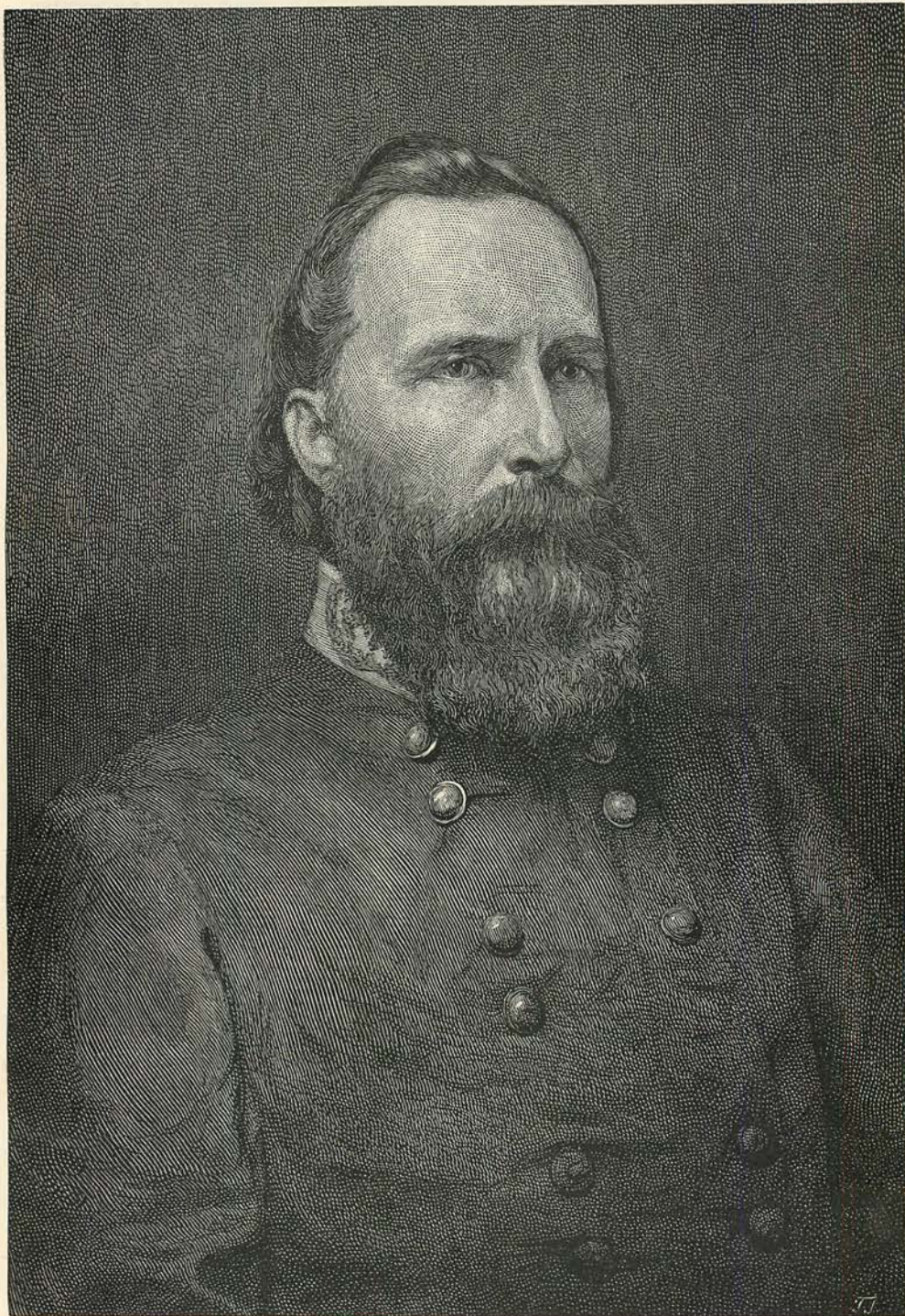
Another column of the enemy, D. H. Hill's, from Beaver Dam Creek, and Jackson's column, from northern Virginia, with which it had united, came opposite my right front from the direction of Old Cold Harbor and deployed, connecting with A. P. Hill's on the left and extending to our right beyond McGee's. The advance column of these troops came a little earlier than those under Longstreet and A. P. Hill, but were more cautious and for some hours not so aggressive. Believing that they were passing on down the river to intercept our communications, and thinking that I might strike them to good advantage while in motion, I asked permission to follow, intending to attack with Sykes's division and Emory of Cooke's cavalry, leaving Morell and McCall to hold the other lines in check. Information, however, soon poured in, convincing me that this force was larger than any I could use against them,

and that still larger forces were forming to attack our left and center. This compelled me to keep my troops united and under cover, and also again to ask aid from the south bank of the Chickahominy. My first message to General McClellan was not delivered, as already stated; my second one was responded to by the speedy arrival of Slocum.†

Soon after two P. M., A. P. Hill's force, between us and New Cold Harbor, again began to show an aggressive disposition, independent of its own troops on its flanks, by advancing from under cover of the woods, in lines well formed and extending, as the contest progressed, from in front of Martin's battery to Morell's left. Dashing across the intervening plains, floundering in the swamps and struggling against the tangled brushwood, brigade after brigade seemed almost to melt away before the concentrated fire of our artillery and infantry; yet on others pressed, followed by supports as dashing and as brave as their predecessors, despite their heavy losses and the disheartening effect of having to clamber over many of their disabled and dead, and to meet their surviving comrades rushing back in great disorder from the deadly contest. For nearly two hours the battle raged, extending more or less along the whole line

* It is a curious fact that all the large engagements about Richmond in this campaign began after noon: Seven Pines about 1 o'clock; Mechanicsville from 3 to 4; Gaines's Mill at 12:30; Savage's Station at 4; White Oak Swamp at from 12 to 1; Glendale from 3 to 4; Malvern Hill after 1.—EDITOR.

† The forces in this battle were: Union, 50 regiments, 20 batteries (several of which were not engaged),—in all about 27,000 men; Confederate, 129 regiments, 19 batteries,—in all about 65,000.—F. J. P.



James Longstreet

to our extreme right. The fierce firing of artillery and infantry, the crash of the shot, the bursting of shells and the whizzing of bullets, heard above the roar of artillery and the volleys of musketry, all combined was something fearful, which only brave hearts, determined at all hazards to maintain the cause they deemed just, could withstand.

Regiments quickly replenished their exhausted ammunition by borrowing from their more bountifully supplied and generous companions. Some withdrew, temporarily, for ammunition, and fresh regiments took their places ready to repulse, sometimes to pursue, their desperate enemy, for the purpose of retaking ground from which we had been pressed and which it was necessary to occupy in order to hold our position.

The enemy were repulsed in every direction. An ominous silence reigned. It caused the inference that their troops were being gathered and massed for a desperate and overwhelming attack. To meet it, our front line was concentrated, reinforced, and arranged to breast the avalanche, should it come. I again asked for additional reinforcements. French and Meagher's brigades, of Sumner's corps, all that the corps commanders deemed they could part with, were sent forward by the commanding general, but did not arrive till near dark.

At 2 P. M., when I took my station beyond the Watts house, my anxieties and responsibilities had been substantially relieved, at least so far as related to the establishment of a line of battle, in which all engaged felt their power to resist attack. At that time the practicability of our defensive position, in charge of troops having implicit confidence in each other, had been demonstrated by the successful resistance for nearly two hours against the strong and persistent attacks upon our center and right. The troops were well shielded with their reserves within immediate call. Commanders of divisions, of brigades, and of batteries were in the midst of their men, all confident and determined to hold their posts to the utmost, to resist and drive back the enemy, prepared to call up their reserves, replenish ammunition and to communicate to me such needs as they could not fill, and to furnish all necessary information for my action. They had been left to their own judgment and energy, to determine in what manner they could accomplish the best results with the means at their command and with the least exposure.

From my post in advance of the Watts house, the field in front of Sykes was visible, and it was easily understood, by the sound of battle in the woods and by the fire of the enemy in his advance and repulse, that the

center and left still remained solid and undisturbed. All available means were used by which I could be kept informed so that I could provide, in the best possible manner, for the many rapid changes and wants suddenly springing up. The Prince de Joinville and his two nephews — the Comte de Paris and Duc de Chartres — and Colonels Gantt, Radowitz, and Hammerstein, from the commanding general's staff, joined me as volunteer aides. Each of these, with my own staff, Locke, Kirkland, Mason, Monteith, and McQuade exposed themselves to danger, not only quickly and cheerfully carrying every message, but often voluntarily throwing themselves where needed to direct, to lead, to encourage, and to rally.

During the greater part of the afternoon, D. H. Hill's troops, in detachments, were more or less aggressive on the right. The silence which followed the repulse, already referred to, lasted but a short time. The renewed attacks raged with great fierceness and fury, with slight intermission, along the most of our front, till after five o'clock. Large and numerous bodies of infantry from the direction of Old Cold Harbor, under cover of artillery, directed their attacks upon Sykes's division and Martin's battery; others, from the west side of Powhite Creek, were hurled in rapid succession against Martindale and Butterfield. These furious attacks were successfully repelled, but were immediately renewed by fresh troops. McCall's Pennsylvania Reserves, as needed, were pushed as rapidly as possible into the woods, in support of Martindale and Griffin, whose brigades for a long time bore the brunt of the attacks and whose regiments were relieved as soon as their ammunition was expended. All our positions were held against enormous odds, and the enemy was driven back by our fresh troops, successively thrown into action. At each repulse they advance new troops upon our diminishing forces, and in such numbers and so rapidly that it appeared as though their reserves were inexhaustible. The action extended along our entire line. At four o'clock, when Slocum arrived, all our reserves were exhausted. His brigades were necessarily separated, and sent where most needed. Newton's brigade, being in advance, was led to the right of Griffin, there to drive back the enemy and retake ground only held by the enemy for an instant. Taylor's brigade filled vacant spaces in Morell's division, and Bartlett's was sent to Sykes, just in time to render invaluable service, both in resisting and attacking.

On the right, near McGee's, the enemy captured one of our batteries, which had been doing them great damage by enfilading their lines and preventing their advance. They

gained thereby a temporary foothold by advancing some infantry; but, prompt to act, General Sykes directed its recapture, and a regiment with arms shifted to the right shoulder, and moving at a double quick, was soon in possession of the prize, which again renewed its damaging blows. At times, the enemy on the right would gain an advantage, but in such a case our infantry, supported by the fire of artillery, would move immediately at a rapid gait and regain the lost ground. This occurred frequently in Sykes's command and in the brigades serving near it, all of which were, more or less, in exposed ground. Not less deserving of praise were the divisions of McCall, Morell, and Slocum in their stubborn resistance to the oft-repeated and determined onslaughts of their assailants, who vastly outnumbered them.

About 6:30, preceded by a silence of half an hour, the attack was renewed all along the line with the same apparent determination to sweep us by the force of numbers from the field, if not from existence. The result was evidently a matter of life or death to our opponent's cause. This attack, like its predecessors, was successfully repulsed throughout its length. The sun had sunk below the horizon, and the result seemed so favorable that I began to cherish the hope that the worst that could happen to us would be a withdrawal after dark, without further injury—a withdrawal which would be forced upon us by the exhausted condition of our troops, greatly reduced by casualties, without food, and with little ammunition.

As if for a final effort, as the shades of evening were coming upon us, and the woods were filled with smoke, limiting the view therein to a few yards, the enemy again massed his fresher and re-formed regiments, and threw them in rapid succession against our thinned and wearied battalions, now almost without ammunition, and with guns so foul that they could not be loaded rapidly. In preparation for defeat, should it come, I had posted artillery in large force just in rear of our center and left, ready for any emergency—and especially to be used against a successful foe, even if his destruction involved firing upon some of our own retreating troops, as might have been necessary. The attacks, though coming like a series of apparently irresistible avalanches, had

thus far made no inroads upon our firm and disciplined ranks. Even in this last attack we successfully resisted, driving back our assailants with immense loss, or holding them beyond our lines, except in one instance, near the center of Morell's line, where by force of numbers and under cover of the smoke of battle our line was penetrated and broken; this at a point where I least expected it. This was naturally the weakest point of our line, owing to the closer proximity of the woods held by the enemy. Under this cover they could form, and with less exposure in time and ground than elsewhere, and launch their battalions in quick succession upon our men. I believed I had guarded against the danger by strongly and often reëncoring the troops holding this part of the line. Here the greater part of McCall's and Slocum's forces were used. Just preceding this break, to my great surprise, I saw cavalry, which I recognized as ours, rushing in numbers through our lines on the left, and carrying off with sudden fright the limbers of our artillery, then prepared to pour their irresistible fire into a pursuing foe. With no infantry to support, and with apparent disaster before them, such of the remainder of these guns as could be moved were carried from the field; some deliberately, others in haste, but not in confusion.

In no other place was our line penetrated or shaken. The right, seeing our disaster, fell back united and in order, but were compelled to leave behind two guns the horses of which had been killed. The troops on the left and center retired, some hastily, but not in confusion, often turning back to repulse and pursue the advancing enemy.* All soon rallied in rear of the Adams house behind Sykes and the brigades of French and Meagher sent to our aid, and who now, with hearty cheers, greeted our battalions as they retired and re-formed. We lost in all twenty-two cannon; some of these broke down while we were withdrawing, and some ran off the bridges at night while we were crossing to the south bank of the Chickahominy. The loss of the guns was due to the fact that some of Cooke's cavalry which had been directed to be kept, under all circumstances, in the valley of the Chickahominy, had been sent to resist an attack of the enemy upon our left. The charge, executed in the face of a withering fire of infantry and in the midst of our heavy cannonading, as well as that of

* We are informed by Colonel Auchmuty, then assistant adjutant-general of Morell's division, that there was no running or panic when the line broke. The men fell back in small groups, turning and firing as they went, and carrying many of the wounded with them. On the crest of the hill in the rear of the line of battle a stand was made, and from that point regimental organizations were preserved. Near the close of the war General Griffin said to Colonel Auchmuty that he regarded Gaines's Mill as the hardest-fought battle in his experience.

The same officer informs us that after the line of battle had been formed in the morning and while the attack was momentarily expected, the mail arrived from the North, and the newsboys went along the line crying the New York and Philadelphia papers.—EDITOR.

the enemy, resulted, as should have been expected, in confusion. The bewildered and uncontrollable horses wheeled about, and dashing through the batteries, satisfied the gunners that they were charged by the enemy. To this alone I always attributed the failure on our part to longer hold the battle-field and to bring off all our guns in an orderly retreat. Most unaccountably this cavalry was not used to cover our retreat or gather the stragglers, but was peremptorily ordered to cross to the south bank of the river.* I never again saw their commander.

At night I was called to General McClellan's headquarters, where the chiefs of corps, or their representatives, were gathered. The commanding-general, after hearing full reports, was of the opinion that the final result would be disastrous if we undertook longer to hold the north bank of the river with my command in the condition in which it was left by a hard fight and the loss of rest for two nights. In this opinion all concurred; and I was then instructed to withdraw to the south bank and destroy the bridges after me. The plans to move to the James River were then explained, together with the necessity for the movement, and the orders were given for the execution of those plans.†

My command was safely withdrawn to the south bank of the river, and the bridges were destroyed soon after sunrise on the 28th.

The Prince de Joinville and his two nephews, the Comte de Paris and the Duc de Chartres, were on the field as volunteer aides-camp, actively engaged in encouraging the men, carrying messages, and performing other duties of aides. Each of these officers was in the midst of flying musket-balls, and was liable to be struck at any moment.‡ At one time the Comte de Paris, regardless of himself, begged me to send his uncle to General McClellan with a message which would at once and permanently remove him from the dangers of the battle, since the family interests at stake were too important to permit him to be so exposed. I had shortly before asked Colonel Gantt, another of McClellan's aides, to hasten to that general and hurry up reinforcements, as our lines would soon be broken. The danger

was now imminent, and I asked the Prince to carry the same message, telling him that he was selected because of the speed of his horse. He turned as if to go, and I went to attend to the field. Soon the Comte returned, with tears in his eyes, and with choking utterance, expressive of his care and affection, begged me again to send away his uncle. This also I did. Scarcely had the Prince left the second time when our cavalry fell back on us as I have related, our line was broken, and our artillery rendered unserviceable. The Prince and Colonel Gantt afterwards told me that they did not leave, as I had directed, because all seemed favorable to us, and they thought I could not be in earnest or that I had greatly misjudged the situation. This shows how sudden the tide may turn in battle and on what little incidents success may depend.

The forces arrayed against us, and especially those which had thus far been launched upon my command, were the chosen of Southern manhood from Maryland to Texas. No braver or more spirited body of men was to be found among the Confederates, or any who more strongly believed in their own invincibility.§ Their general officers, from the chief down, had been selected for earnest devotion to their cause, and well-earned reputation for intelligent and energetic performance of duty in other fields. With few exceptions they had been my personal friends, and many of them my intimate associates. In the varied relations to them as subaltern, as instructor, as academical and regimental comrade, in social life, as competitor for honors in war and in garrison life, and engaged in watching those performing trying duty in Kansas, Utah, and elsewhere, I learned to know them well in all their qualifications, and to respect their decision under conviction of duty, when, to my regret, they left the cause of the Union.

Notwithstanding my friendship, my personal regard for these old friends and former comrades, which never varied, it was my duty to oppose them, when arrayed against the Union, to the utmost. At the earliest moment, when separation was attempted, and afterwards, my efforts were continuously directed against the success of their cause. One of the results of those efforts was manifested on this

* See "War of the Rebellion — Official Records," Vol. XI., Part II., pp. 43, 223, 273, 282.— F. J. P.

† At Gaines's Mill the Union loss was: Killed, 894; wounded, 3107; missing, 2836—total, 6837, or one in four engaged. On the Confederate side the losses of Jackson, Ewell, Whiting, and D. H. Hill were: Killed, 589; wounded, 2671; missing, 24—total, 3284. Of these, Whiting (*i. e.*, Hood's and Law's brigades) lost 1017. The losses of A. P. Hill and Longstreet for this battle are not reported separately, but a safe estimate from their losses in the campaign would probably bring the total considerably beyond the Union loss, that of the killed and wounded certainly much higher. Almost the whole of two Union regiments, the Eleventh Pennsylvania and the Fourth New Jersey, were captured.— EDITOR.

‡ See "The Princes of the House of Orleans," by General McClellan, in THE CENTURY for February, 1884.

§ The known presence of President Davis and General Lee, to oversee, direct, encourage, and urge, was another influential power in favor of the Confederates in this movement.— F. J. P.

battle-field. I was enabled, after great labor and care, to meet these friends and comrades in command of men, than whom there could be none more intelligent, better disciplined, braver, more confiding in each other, and more determined on success. They embraced soldiers from Maine, Michigan, Illinois, Pennsylvania, New York, and all New England—together with all the regular army, then at the East, from all parts of the country. Their commanders were not excelled by those in any other corps in ability, experience, or reliability; they had the highest confidence in each other, in the army, and in their own men, and were fully competent to oppose their able adversaries.

I have said we did not fear Lee alone at Beaver Dam Creek. Nor, though anxious, did we fear the combined attack of Lee and Jack-

son at Gaines's Mill. Defeat to us was necessarily great damage to them. Our flanks were secure and could not be turned; though fewer in numbers, the advantages of our position, combined with the firm discipline of our own brave men, overcame the odds. Our adversaries were forced to meet us face to face. All day they struggled desperately for success, and near night, after fearful destruction, broke our line at one point, just at a time when a most unforeseen mismanagement on our part aided to crown their labors with possession of the field. Still, our confidence was not broken; and, as we shall see in a succeeding paper, under like circumstances victory crowned our arms with success against the same opponents, strongly reënforced, at Malvern Hill.

Fitz John Porter.

MEMORANDA ON THE CIVIL WAR.

Sawing out a Channel above Island Number Ten.

THE Engineer Regiment of the West was an organization composed of twelve full companies of carefully selected workmen, chiefly mechanics, and officered by men capable of directing such skilled labor. Most of the officers and about six hundred of the men were engaged in the operations about New Madrid and

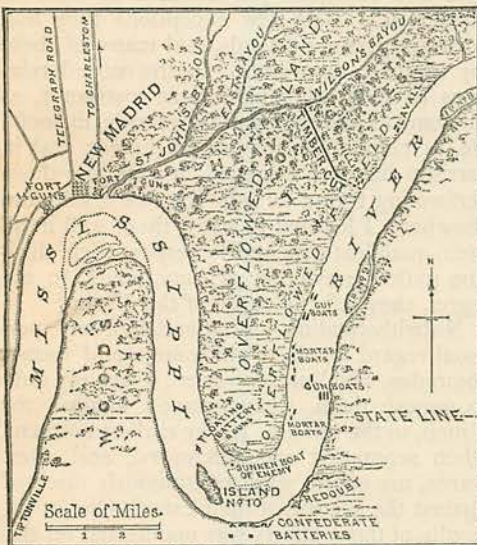
tions of that regiment I am not aware that any of its officers ever made a report beyond a verbal notification to the general in command that the work required of it was done. This narrative is therefore made entirely from memory, aided by reference to letters written to my family and not intended for publication.

It is perhaps proper to state here that the term "canal," as used in all the letters and reports relating to the opening of this waterway, conveys an entirely wrong idea. No digging was done except by way of slightly widening a large break in the levee, and those officers who speak of the men as "working waist-deep in the water" knew nothing at all of the matter.

The enemy held Island Number Ten and the left bank opposite, and the same bank from New Madrid down to Tiptonville, a ridge of high land between the back swamp and the river.* In rear of their positions was Reelfoot Lake and the overflow, extending from above them to a point below Tiptonville. Escape by land was impossible, the right bank below New Madrid and that town being occupied by General Pope. The gun-boats under Foote held the river above, and our heavy batteries commanded the only place of debarkation below. Having accomplished this much, the problem for General Pope to solve was to cross his army to make an attack, for which purpose he judged that two gun-boats, to be used as ferry-boats, would be sufficient. The general stood with me on the parapets of Fort Thompson (just captured) and pointed out his whole plan; and he was so confident that his letter to Foote would bring the boats that he directed me to go back to the fleet at Island Number Eight by dug-out across the overflow, and come down with them past the batteries, and a set of private signals was arranged between us then and there for use upon their appearing in sight.

I reached the flag-ship in the afternoon about dark, and that evening Foote called together all his com-

* The reader is presumed to be acquainted with the fuller map of the operations here referred to, printed on page 441 of the *JANUARY CENTURY*, with Admiral Walker's paper on the Western Flotilla. The above map shows the course of the channel as corrected by Col. Bissell.—Ed.



MAP OF THE MISSISSIPPI AT ISLAND NO. 10.
Showing (corrected) line of the channel cut by the Engineer Regiment.

Island Number Ten; to them should be given the credit of the success of the engineering operations of that campaign. In order to do this and to correct some erroneous impressions, I yield to the request of the editor of THE CENTURY MAGAZINE to give a brief account of the opening of the so-called "canal" above Island Number Ten, a work which was executed under my personal and general direction. In all the opera-

"The canal across the peninsula opposite Island Number Ten, and for the idea of which I am indebted to General Schuyler Hamilton, was completed by Colonel Bissell's Engineer Regiment, and four steamers brought through on the night of the 6th."

General Pope again, in his official report to General Halleck (same volume, pages 85-87), dated "Head-quarters Army of the Mississippi, camp five miles from Corinth, Mississippi, May 2, 1862," writes:

"On the 16th of March I received your dispatch, directing me, if possible, to construct a road through the swamps to a point on the Missouri shore opposite Island No. 10, and transfer a portion of my force sufficient to erect batteries at that point to assist in the artillery practice on the enemy's batteries. I accordingly dispatched Col. J. W. Bissell, Engineer Regiment, to examine the country with this view, directing him at the same time, if he found it impracticable to build a road through the swamps and overflow of the river, to ascertain whether it were possible to dig a canal across the peninsula from some point above Island No. 10 to New Madrid, in order that steam transports might be brought to me, which would enable my command to cross the river. The idea of the canal was suggested to me by General Schuyler Hamilton in a conversation upon the necessity of crossing the river and assailing the enemy's batteries near Island No. 10 in the rear.

The New York "Herald," in its issue of April 13, 1862, published an article in reference to this channel, entitled "The Schuyler Hamilton Canal."

Schuyler Hamilton,
Late Major-General of Volunteers.

NEW YORK, June 16, 1885.

The Charge of Cooke's Cavalry at Gaines's Mill.

IN THE CENTURY for June there is an article on the battle of Gaines's Mill, signed by Fitz John Porter, in which appear singular errors of statement regarding the action of the "Cavalry Reserve," affecting also the conduct and reputation of its commander. They are chiefly found at pp. 322-3:

"We lost in all twenty-two cannon; some of these broke down while we were withdrawing, and some ran off the bridges at night while we were crossing to the south bank of the Chickahominy. The loss of the guns* was due to the fact that some of Cooke's cavalry which had been directed to be kept, under all circumstances, in the valley of the Chickahominy, had been sent to resist an attack of the enemy upon our left. The charge, executed in the face of a withering fire of infantry, and in the midst of our heavy cannonading, as well as that of the enemy, resulted, as should have been expected, in confusion. The bewildered and uncontrollable horses wheeled about, and dashing through the batteries, satisfied the gunners that they were charged by the enemy. To this alone I always attributed the failure on our part to longer hold the battle-field, and to bring off all our guns in an orderly retreat. Most unaccountably this cavalry was not used to cover our retreat or gather the stragglers, but was peremptorily ordered to cross to the south bank of the river." [Foot-note: "See 'War of the Rebellion—Official Records,' Vol. XI., Part II., pp. 43, 223, 273, 272.—F. J. P."]

To silence forever the injurious statements and insinuation of the last sentence, I give here evidence of two witnesses who were present, and whose high character is known to all. Major General W. Merritt, colonel Fifth Cavalry, superintendent United States Military Academy, writes me, April 8, 1885:

"The cavalry remained, with you in immediate command, on that portion of the field, until after midnight on the 27th of June, 1862. It provided litter-bearers and

lantern-bearers for our surgeons who went over the field of battle, succoring and attending the wounded. . . . The cavalry was the last force to leave the field and to cross the Chickahominy, and the bridge on which it crossed, between 12 midnight on the 27th and 2 A. M. on the 28th of June, was, I think, rendered impassable by your order."

Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel J. P. Martin, assistant adjutant-general United States Army, wrote me from Fort Leavenworth, April 30, 1885:

"The artillery did not drive the enemy from his front; the enemy was not driven from his front, but the charge of your cavalry did *stop the advance* of the enemy, and this enabled Porter's troops to get off the field. I am by no means alone in the belief that the charge of the cavalry at Gaines's Mill, on June 27, 1862, *saved Fitz John Porter's corps from destruction*. . . . You did not direct your command at once to cross the river. There were no frightened men in your vicinity. All the frightened men were far to your right; you could not have reached the retiring crowd; and if you could have stopped them, you could have done more than Porter himself did do, and he was amidst them, for I saw him. Your command, at least a part of it, was the very last to cross the river. . . . Your reputation is made, and the afterthought of a defeated commander can never smirch it."

It should be observed that in the short extract from THE CENTURY, above, General Porter repeats the assertion that the cavalry caused the loss of the (22) guns,—emphasizes, makes plainer the meaning of the opening sentence: to the charge "*alone* I always attributed the failure on our part to longer hold the battle-field, and to bring off *all* our guns in an orderly retreat."

Captain Weeden, commanding battery C., Rhode Island Artillery, reports, page 282, "Rebellion Records," the loss of a section by stress of the enemy's attacks; the two other sections "held in support in rear of Griffin's brigade" opened fire; "the smoke had filled the whole field to the woods, and it was impossible to direct the fire. The batteries were limbering to the rear in good order" when, he says, the cavalry fugitives ran through them, but he only lost one more piece "mired in the woods." But General Griffin reports that the artillery "opened fire upon the enemy advancing upon our left; but it was too late; our infantry had already commenced to fall back, and nothing being left to give confidence to the artillerymen, it was impossible to make them stand to their work." And that was just when the cavalry did go in and give confidence to the three batteries on the left, and the saving work was done.

I have examined the "Official Records" and found reports of about twenty batteries engaged in the battle, and the above is the only mention of the cavalry fugitives to be found in them; their losses are attributed to other causes. Here I will give the account of the loss of whole batteries:

General Seymour reports, p. 402, of Captain Easton, "This gallant gentleman fell and his battery was lost with him."

Captain Mark Kerns was wounded, but "loaded and fired the last shots himself, and brought *four* of the guns off the field." Of another battery he reports, "No efforts could now repel the rush of a successful foe, under whose fire rider and horse went down and guns lay immovable on the field."

Captain I. H. Cooper, battery B., Pennsylvania Artillery, reports, p. 410:

* One is reminded of the mournful fate of the famous skaters,— "It so fell out they all fell in—the rest, they ran away." "We lost in all twenty-two cannon"; "the loss of the guns was due" "to Cooke's cavalry"; "the rest" "ran off the bridges," or "broke down."—P. St. G. C.

"The remaining infantry falling back, we were compelled to retire from our guns. The charge being too sudden and overpowering, it was impossible to remove them, many of the horses being killed by the enemy's fire."

Was General Porter prevented from bringing off all these guns by the cavalry charge?

General Porter says, p. 322:

"Just preceding this break" (in Morell's line) "I saw cavalry, which I recognized as ours, rushing in numbers through our lines on the left."

All the evidence goes to disprove this very deliberate statement, and that all the infantry on the left had broken and was fast disappearing before the first advance of the cavalry. Again he says:

"General Cooke was instructed to take position, with cavalry, under the hills in the valley of the Chickahominy—there with the aid of artillery to guard our left flank. He was especially enjoined to intercept, gather, and hold all stragglers, and under no circumstances to leave the valley for the purpose of coming upon the hill held by our infantry, or pass in front of our line on the left."

What strange folly of self-contradiction is betrayed between this order "to guard our left flank" and the violent condemnation in the first extract, which we have been considering, of the march "to resist an attack of the enemy on our left . . ." in a "charge executed in the face of a withering fire of infantry, and in the midst of our heavy cannonading as well as that of the enemy." Could a poet laureate say more?

"Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them
Volley'd and thundered—

Then they rode back—"

Ay, there's the rub.

When I reported to General Porter before the battle, I remember that he proposed that I should take post in the narrow open meadow on the extreme left. I urged that that flank of the army was virtually covered by the Chickahominy; that, moreover, it was covered by three reserve batteries, and three twenty-pounder batteries on the opposite side of the river; while the position I had taken on the hill-slope was within view, and also within cavalry striking distance. If I had gone there, I should not have been able, when the time came, to *face*, and, with artillery aid, to stop the enemy in the flush of his success. To some such objections which I made General Porter evidently yielded, instead of "enjoining" me; for the cavalry remained quite near his first station, Adams's house; and I was there with him repeatedly. An order "under no circumstances to leave the valley for the purpose of coming on the hill" would have been to a general officer not only unprecedented, but insulting.

How strange, to military ears, would sound an order "to intercept, gather, and hold all stragglers," on the extreme front and flank!—and the warning not to "pass in front of our line on the left!" Such extravagance of action—marching with no earthly object, between two lines of fire—is seldom thus forestalled! Seriously, this passes the bounds of sanity. But it is emphasized by his map which represents my cavalry as actually making a flank march between the lines of battle,—Morell's and Longstreet's.

It seems necessary to add the statements of eye-witnesses, from different points of view,—men of well-known high character,—to corroborate my assertions and my corrections of the misrepresentations of the

part played by the cavalry and myself in the battle, as found in THE CENTURY article.

Next morning at Savage's Station the Prince de Joinville approached me with both hands extended, saying with *empressment*, "I saw you make your charge, yesterday"; and next day he wrote to the Duc d'Aumale [see "New York Times," August 13, 1862:]

. . . "Those fresh troops rush in good order upon our left, which falters, flies, and passing through the artillery draws on in disorder the troops of our center. The enemy advances rapidly. The fusillade and cannonade are so violent that the projectiles striking the ground raise a permanent cloud of dust. At that moment General Cooke charged at the head of his cavalry; but that movement does not succeed, and his horsemen on their return only increase the disorder. He makes every effort, aided by all who felt a little courage, to stop the panic, but in vain."

The Comte de Paris wrote to me, February 2, 1877:

. . . "I was with De Hart's battery on the crest of the hill when you advanced on our left. . . . The sacrifice of some of the bravest of the cavalry certainly saved a part of our artillery; as did, on a larger scale, the Austrian cavalry on the evening of Sadowa. . . . The main fact is, that with your cavalry you did all that cavalry could do to stop the rout."

General W. Merritt wrote me, February 2, 1877:

"I thought at the time, and subsequent experience has convinced me, that your cavalry and the audacity of its conduct at that time, together with the rapid firing of canister at short range by the battery mentioned, did much, if not everything, towards preventing the entire destruction of the Union army at Gaines's Mill. The circumstances were these:

"The enemy had emerged from a wood, where his ranks were more or less disorganized, into an open field. Instead of finding the way clear before him he was met by a determined charge of cavalry and a heavy artillery fire. In his mind a new line of fresh troops were before him. It was but natural, at that stage of our military experience, that he should hesitate and halt, to prepare for a new emergency. He did so; and that night the cavalry bivouacked as near the scene of these events as the enemy did."

Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel J. P. Martin wrote to me, March 24, 1870:

"It is my opinion that but for the charge of the Fifth Cavalry on that day, the loss in the command of General Fitz John Porter would have been immensely greater than it was; indeed, I believe that the charge, more than any other thing, was instrumental in saving that part of the army on the north bank of the Chickahominy.

"You were the last general officer of General Porter's command on the field on the left, General Porter himself leaving before you did; you had, therefore, an excellent opportunity of seeing what was going on."

Colonel G. A. H. Blake, United States Army, wrote me, June 16, 1879:

"About sundown you advanced the brigade under a warm fire and I deployed the Fifth and First cavalry in two lines, and a little to the rear of (the interval of) reserve batteries of artillery, which had opened a rapid fire. The infantry of the left wing had then disappeared from the top of the hill. You then rode off to a battery further to the left, where Rush's lancers had been ordered. The Fifth Cavalry soon charged, and I saw no more of them. You had ordered me to support them; there was a warm fire, and the smoke and dust made everything obscure. I saw none of the Fifth after it was broken, pass through the battery, which was very near. It was soon forced to retire, and was followed by the First in its rear."

Finally, General William N. Grier, United States Army, wrote me, July 19, 1879:

"The reserve was stationed on the hill . . . in full view of the slopes of the hill, down to the timber through which the enemy debouched in large numbers. The

United States batteries were on the slope of the hill, a little to our right front. You ordered the Fifth to make a charge, directing me to make a second charge after the Fifth would rally. I never saw that regiment again on that day, after it was enveloped in a cloud of dust, making the charge — but soon after saw a battery or two emerge from the dust . . . withdrawing from the contest. I then wheeled my squadrons into column of fours, at a trot along the top of the hill, until getting in rear of the batteries — receiving the enemy's fire at a loss of an officer and many men and horses — and, as I then supposed, saving the batteries from further loss."

The orders actually given were to support the batteries to the last moment, and then charge, if necessary, to save them.

P. St. George Cooke.
Brigadier and Brevet Major-General.
United States Army, Retired.

DETROIT, June, 1885.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A PARTICIPANT IN THE CHARGE.

Remembering clearly the incidents connected with the cavalry charge, I wish to clear up a point in regard to that charge, so far as the regiment (the Fifth Regular Cavalry) with which I had the honor of being connected was concerned.

The battle did not begin till noon. We were stationed on the left of our position. As the hours of the day passed by, the battle became more and more furious. At about five o'clock in the afternoon we were moved up near to the crest of the hill on our left, and within some twenty rods of the five or six batteries planted on the crest of the hill.

It was something marvelous to watch those brave men handle their guns; never a man flinched or was dismayed, though a most withering fire of musketry and artillery was poured upon them.

Just before dark, when we could tell by the sound of the musketry fire, and by the constantly advancing yells of the charging foe, that he was getting near the guns in our front, General Philip St. George Cooke, commanding the cavalry, rode to our front. I was on the right of the front line of the first squadron, and I heard his order to Captain Whiting, commanding the five companies of our regiment that were present on the field. He said, "Captain, as soon as you see the advancing line of the enemy, rising the crest of the hill, charge at once, without any further orders, to enable the artillery to bring off their guns." General Cooke then rode back around the right of our squadron.

Captain Whiting turned to us and said, "Cavalry! Attention! Draw saber!" then added something to the effect, "Boys, we must charge in five minutes." Almost immediately the bayonets of the advancing foe were seen, just beyond our cannon, probably not fifty rods from us. Captain Whiting at once gave the order, "Trot! March!" and as soon as we were fully under way he shouted, "Charge!"

We dashed forward with a wild cheer, in solid column of squadron front; but our formation was almost instantly broken by the necessity of opening to right and left to pass our guns. So furiously were our brave gunners fighting that I noticed this incident: The gun directly in my front had just been loaded; every man had fallen before it could be fired. As I bore to the right to pass this gun, I saw the man at the breech, who was evidently shot through the body, drawing himself up by the spokes of the wheel, and reaching for the lanyard, and I said, "He will fire that gun," and so

kept to the right, and almost immediately felt the shock of the explosion. Then I closed in to re-form the line, but could find no one at my left, so completely had our line been shattered by the musketry fire in front and the artillery fire in our rear. I rushed on, and almost instantly my horse reared upright in front of a line of bayonets, held by a few men upon whom I had dashed. My horse came down in front of the line, and ran away partly to our rear, perfectly uncontrollable. I dropped my saber, which hung to my waist by the saber-knot, and so fiercely tugged at my horse's bit as to cause the blood to flow from her mouth, yet could not check her. The gun I had passed, now limbered up, was being hauled off at a gallop. I could direct my horse a little to right or left, and so directed her toward the gun. As she did not attempt to leap the gun, I gained control of her, and at once turned about and started back upon my charge. After riding a short distance I paused. The firing of artillery and infantry behind and of infantry in front was terrific. None but the dead and wounded were around me. It hardly seemed that I could drive Lee's battle-scarred veterans alone, and so I rode slowly off the field. My regiment had only about two hundred and fifty men in action. Our commissioned officer was the only one not wounded, except some who were captured. Only about one hundred returned from that bloody field for duty the next day. Some were captured, but a large number fell in that terrible charge, and sleep with the many heroes who on that day gave their lives for the Union. So far as those of the Fifth Regular Cavalry present in this charge were concerned, we certainly did our whole duty, just as we were ordered. We saved *some* guns, and tried to save all.

Rev. W. H. Hitchcock.

FAIRVIEW, ILL., June 13, 1885.

"General Beauregard's Courier at Bull Run."

THE effort of Mr. Robert R. Hemphill (in the July CENTURY) to clear up the obscurity surrounding the fate of General Beauregard's missing courier at the First Battle of Manassas, only deepens the mystery which attaches to that now interesting person.

Mr. Hemphill thinks that he saw this courier, disabled by a fall from his horse, "lying helpless in rear of the (Confederate) line at Mitchell's Ford, badly used up and bleeding."

How is this possible? General Beauregard says that the courier started about 8 A. M. from "Camp Pickens, the headquarters," to go first to Holmes, then to Ewell. To seek either Holmes or Ewell by way of Mitchell's Ford would be nearly like going from New York to Brazil by way of London.

At a later hour General Beauregard rode from his headquarters to a hill in rear of Mitchell's Ford, and thence, near noon, a staff officer, accompanied by a courier, set out to go to Ewell with an order to move to the support of our left. Meeting with some accident, he sent the courier ahead to deliver the order. It was perhaps this officer whom Mr. Hemphill saw.

Campbell Brown.

SPRING HILL, TENN., July 5, 1885.