

MEMORANDA ON THE CIVIL WAR.

Was Chattanooga Fought as Planned?

EDITOR OF THE CENTURY MAGAZINE:

From the article entitled "General Grant," in your very interesting May edition, I make the following extracts having reference to the battle of Chattanooga:

"Chattanooga came next. This was the most elaborate of all Grant's battles, the most like a game between skillful players. Few battles in any war have ever been fought so strictly according to the plan. . . . This battle more closely resembled those of European commanders and European fields than any other great engagement of the American war. . . . And, while undoubtedly the contingencies that were unforeseen contributed to the result,—for Grant always knew how to avail himself of unexpected emergencies,—it still remains that this battle was fought as nearly according to the plan laid down in advance as any recorded in the schools."

Holding, at the time of the battle of Chattanooga, the position of chief engineer of the Army of the Cumberland under General Thomas, and being at the same time chief engineer of the Military Division of the Mississippi under General Grant, it was absolutely necessary that I should know the plan to be able to direct the engineering operations. I desire to give to your readers the original plan as "laid down in advance" and a sketch of the battle as fought, for comparison with the statements which I have quoted.

The original plan of the battle of Chattanooga was to turn Bragg's right flank on Missionary Ridge, thereby throwing his army away from its base and natural line of retreat. This, the first thing to be done, was confided to Sherman, and the plan was not adopted till after Sherman had carefully examined the situation and asserted that he could do the work assigned to him. Thomas was to hold the center and right of our front, to cooperate with Sherman, and attack when the proper time arrived.

The preliminary movements were simple and can be given in few words. Sherman was to effect a lodgment on the left bank of the Tennessee River, just below the mouth of the South Chickamauga Creek. This was to be done by landing a brigade of troops from the boats, which were to be used in the bridge to be thrown at that point across the Tennessee for the crossing of Sherman's army. One division of Sherman's army was to march up the Lookout valley, on the extreme right of our operations, and threaten a pass in Lookout Mountain, ostensibly to turn Bragg's left flank. The march was to be made in daylight, in sight of the enemy, and after dark the division was to retrace its steps, cross the Tennessee at Brown's Ferry, and join the main body of Sherman's force, which was to be massed during the night preceding the intended attack at the point where the bridge was to be laid. Hooker with his small force was to hold Lookout valley and threaten Lookout Mountain at the point where it strikes the Tennessee. This general plan was filled in with all necessary details, embracing all the initial movements of the whole force under

Grant. At the very outset began the changes in this plan. The division which made the threat against Bragg's left flank on returning found the bridge at Brown's Ferry impassable; and as it could not join Sherman, it was turned over to Hooker, who was ordered, with his command thus strengthened, to assault the works on his front on Lookout Mountain. This was a most decided change from the plan "laid down in advance."

On the evening of the first day the results could be summed up as follows: Sherman had crossed the Tennessee River at the point selected, but had not turned Bragg's right flank. Thomas had drawn out the Army of the Cumberland facing Missionary Ridge, had connected with Sherman, but had had no fighting other than skirmishing varied by some artillery practice. Hooker had carried Lookout Mountain after a fight which has been celebrated in song as "The battle above the clouds." This victory of Hooker's compelled Bragg to withdraw his troops from the Chattanooga Valley, and retreat or concentrate for a battle on Missionary Ridge. On the morning of the second day Hooker was ordered by Thomas to march for and carry the Rossville Gap in Missionary Ridge, and as soon as that was done to send an aide or courier to him, in order that he might then make the assault of the "Ridge" with the Army of the Cumberland. Sherman with severe fighting continued his efforts to reach the crest of Missionary Ridge. As the day wore on, and without news from Hooker, Thomas became anxious, but could give no order to assault the works on his front till one at least of the enemy's flanks had been turned.

Finally, in the afternoon General Grant sent orders directly to the division commanders of the Army of the Cumberland to move forward and carry the rifle-pits in their front at the base of Missionary Ridge. This was very easily done, and after capturing the rifle-pits the soldiers, seeing that they could not remain there under the fire from the crest of the ridge, and having no intention of giving up any ground won by them, demanded to be led up the hill to storm the works on the crest, which was successfully done, and Bragg's headquarters were in their possession just before the sun went down on the second day of the battle. This assault was, of course, the crisis of the whole battle, and the successful carrying of Missionary Ridge was doubtless due in a measure to the position of Sherman and the threatening movement of Hooker.

The battle was then ended and nothing left but a retreat by one and a pursuit by the other opposing general. A condensed statement of the history of the original plan and the battle of Chattanooga as fought is this: The original plan contemplated the turning of Bragg's right flank, which was *not done*. The secondary plan of Thomas looked toward following up the success of Hooker at Lookout Mountain by turning the left flank of Bragg, and then an attack by Thomas along his entire front. The Rossville Gap was not carried in time to be of more than secondary importance in the battle.

The assault on the center before either flank was turned was never seriously contemplated, and was done without plan, without orders, and as above stated.

General Grant won a great victory at Chattanooga which was of incalculable benefit to the country, and it is worse than useless to attempt to cover his reputation with pinchbeck by such statements as "Few battles in any war have ever been fought so strictly according to the plan," "It still remains that this battle was fought as nearly according to the plans laid down in advance as any recorded in the schools," and "This battle more

closely resembled those of European commanders and European fields than any other great engagement of the American war"; for, like plaster ornaments on a fine façade, they are easily knocked off, and are liable to mar the real beauty of the front in their fall.

There were, however, during our great war some battles which, so far as my information and knowledge go, were fought strictly in accordance with the original plans, and these should not have escaped the notice of one who desires to write history.

June 1, 1885.

Wm. Farrar Smith.

TRANSFORMATION.

"GIVE me the wine of happiness," I cried,
 "The bread of life!—Oh ye benign, unknown,
 Immortal powers!—I crave them for my own,
 I am athirst, I will not be denied
 Though Hell were up in arms!"—No sound replied,
 But turning back to my rude board and lone,
 My soul, confounded, there beheld—a stone,
 Pale water in a shallow cup beside!
 With gushing tears, in utter hopelessness,
 I stood and gazed. Then rose a voice that spoke,—
 "God gave this, too, and what He gives will bless!"
 And 'neath the hands that trembling took and broke,
 Lo, truly a sweet miracle divine,
 The stone turned bread, the water ruby wine!

Stuart Sterne.

THE CHAUTAUQUA LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC CIRCLE.

ONE hears of the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle in all sorts of unexpected places. What is it? Can an old hack, used to condensation, tell in twenty-five hundred words? Let us try.

1. It is based on a plan of home-reading in regular system. At this moment it consists of about one hundred thousand readers, more or less, who are reading in the system proposed. Most of these are in America, some are in Japan, and the rest are elsewhere, in Europe, Asia, Africa, the islands of the ocean, or tossed upon the sea in ships.

2. The reading is selected and arranged for men and women, not boys and girls. The average age of the readers in the Circle is probably above thirty-five years.

3. The course of reading is in the English language.

4. It is arranged for four years,—supposing

at the least, say, five hours' reading a week. But it is so elastic, above this minimum, that a member of the Circle receives instructions and suggestions for a much wider range; and in fact, I think, most members read much more than five hours a week within the broad directions of the course.

5. It follows, to a certain extent, the outlines of an old-fashioned college course, omitting the mathematics entirely. Where it is followed with the supplementary reading, it gives a student much such a general knowledge of literature, physical and moral science, and mental philosophy, as in an old-fashioned college the average student received. But it makes no attempt to give the knowledge of ancient or foreign languages which he receives, or that of mathematics.

At this point the professors in old-fashioned colleges hold up their hands in holy horror,

More than once that day as I thought of our thin line back yonder, I wondered how the boys were making it, for disturbing rumors came to us as we lay in a field near Centreville, exchanging rude *badinage* across the cordon of sentries surrounding us. We received recruits from time to time who brought the same unvarying story, "Jackson hard-pressed — no news of Longstreet yet." (He was there, but keeping silent.) So the day wore on. Towards evening there was a noticeable stir in the camps around us, much riding to and fro of couriers and orderlies, and now we thought we could hear more distinctly the deep-toned, jarring growl which had interjected itself at intervals all the afternoon through the trivial buzz about us. Watchful of indications, we noted too that the drift of wagons and ambulances was *from* the battlefield, and soon orders came for us to take the road in the same direction. The cannonading down the pike was sensibly nearer now, and

at times we could catch even the roll of musketry, and once we thought we could distinguish, faint and far off, a prolonged, murmurous modulation of sound familiar to our ears as the charging shout of the gray people — but this may have been fancy. All the same, we gave tongue to the cry, and shouts of "Longstreet! Longstreet's at 'em, boys! Hurrah for Longstreet!" went up from the column, while the guards trudged beside us in sulky silence.

There is not much more to tell. An all-day march on Sunday through rain and mud brought us to Alexandria, where we were locked up for the night in a cotton-factory. Monday we embarked on a transport steamer, and the next evening were off Fort Monroe, where we got news of Pope's defeat. I was paroled and back in Richmond within ten days of my capture, and then and there learned how completely Jackson had eclipsed his former fame on his baptismal battle-field.

Allen C. Redwood.

MEMORANDA ON THE CIVIL WAR.

Comments on General Grant's "Chattanooga."

IN THE CENTURY for November is a most valuable and interesting article by General Grant on Chattanooga. Written at a time when he was enfeebled, and suffering intensely from a mortal malady, it has in it some statements which are at variance with official documents, and which may properly be attributed to any cause other than a desire to do injustice to others or to relate anything but facts. General Grant's description of the situation at Chattanooga at the time of his arrival is graphic, and might be added to without exaggeration. The condition of matters was known not only to all officers of rank and intelligence in the Army of the Cumberland, but was discussed among the soldiers, who expressed themselves as willing to starve before giving up Chattanooga, which was all that remained to them of the battle of Chickamauga. We were in truth short of food, medicine, ammunition, and clothing, and without prompt relief were rapidly drifting to utter destruction as an army, and to terrible loss of life.

On the 3d of October, 1863, having reported a day or two before to General Rosecrans, I was assigned to duty as chief engineer of the Army of the Cumberland, and it devolved on me as a part of my duty to lay out and construct the fortifications so as to enable a comparatively small force to hold the place, and also to look out for the communications by which the army was supplied. In the performance of that duty I was actively engaged in building boats and material for bridges, and was studying earnestly to find some way of restoring our short line of communications lost by the giving up of Lookout mountain and valley. I found a most excellent company of volunteers styled "Michigan Engineers and Mechanics," commanded by Captain Fox. They, before my arrival, had set up a saw-mill, and were engaged in making boats and flooring, etc.,

for military bridges. In pursuance of the one paramount necessity of finding some way of shortening our distance to the railroad at Bridgeport, on the 19th of October I started to make a personal examination of the north side of the Tennessee River below Chattanooga. The object was to find some point on the south side, the holding of which would secure to us the river from Bridgeport through the Raccoon Mountain, and the short road in the valley from there to Chattanooga. On returning unsuccessful in my search, to within about five miles of Chattanooga, I saw before me on a bluff, washed by the river, an earthwork in which was posted a field-battery commanding a road through a break in the hills on the opposite side, where had formerly been established a ferry, known as Brown's Ferry. The position struck me as worthy of close examination, and learning from the commanding officer of the battery that there was a tacit agreement that the pickets should not fire on each other, I left my horse in the battery and went down to the water's edge. There I spent an hour, studying the character of the hills, the roadway through the gorge, and marking and estimating the distances to the fires of the picket reserves of the enemy. I then rode back to headquarters, to find that during my absence General Rosecrans had been relieved from duty there and General Thomas put in command of the army.

The next morning, October 20th, General Thomas asked me what length of bridge material I had not in use, and directed me to throw another bridge across the river at Chattanooga. I asked him not to give the order till he had heard my report of my examination of the day before and had looked into a plan I had to propose for opening the river to our steamboats, of which there were two then partly disabled, but which had not been repaired by me lest they should eventually serve the purposes of the enemy. After a discussion which I think was finished in two days and by the 22d of October he gave his approval to the plan, and I

went to work at once, he giving the necessary orders for the coöperating movements from Bridgeport, which were a vital part of the operations. After that there was but one discussion between General Thomas and myself, which was as to the relative time Hooker's column was to move from Bridgeport. That took place after the arrival of General Grant at Chattanooga, all others having been concluded before General Grant made his appearance. Having now given my statement of the condition of matters prior to the arrival of General Grant, I will quote what General Grant says on the subject in the paper to which I refer.

"The next day we reached Chattanooga a little before dark. . . . The next day, the 24th of October, I started out to make a personal inspection, taking Thomas and Smith with me, besides most of the members of my personal staff. We crossed to the north side of the river, and moving to the north of detached spurs of hills, reached the Tennessee at Brown's Ferry, some three miles below Lookout Mountain, unobserved by the enemy. Here we left our horses back from the river and approached the water on foot. . . . That night I issued orders for opening the route to Bridgeport—a cracker line, as the soldiers appropriately turned it."

There is not a word in the above to indicate that General Thomas had already approved a plan for opening the route to Bridgeport, and issued the necessary orders. I will now quote from the "Official Records" to show that General Grant trusted too much to his memory. The following dispatches from Assistant Secretary of War Charles A. Dana, to Secretary Stanton, give the situation before and after the arrival of General Grant at Chattanooga. They are papers of record in the War Department.

"CHATTANOOGA, October 23d. To E. M. STANTON: No change in the situation here. Ten days' rations on hand. Thomas firmly resolved to hold at all events. Rain heavy since midnight, and roads worse to-day than yesterday. An immediate movement for the occupation of Raccoon Mountain and Lookout Valley is indispensable, but Hooker, though ordered" [by Rosecrans] "ten days since to concentrate his forces for the purpose, has not done so, but waits, on the ground that his wagons have not arrived from Nashville. The fact is that about one hundred have arrived, and besides *Thomas will not allow him to take any wagons at all in this movement.* But Hooker seems to show no zeal in the enterprise. *It will necessarily wait somewhat for the arrival of Grant, who will get in before night.* The interior line of fortifications is so far advanced that General Smith tells me only one day's work more is needed to make them tenable, and the place temporarily safe with a garrison of ten thousand men, though the works will still be far from finished. *The pontoons are done for a bridge across to Lookout Valley as soon as Hooker has entered into that position.*"

This dispatch shows that a move had been determined upon by Thomas both from Bridgeport and into Lookout Valley by a bridge, before the arrival of General Grant, although Mr. Dana was in error in stating that the bridge was to be thrown after the arrival of Hooker in that valley, as is shown by this dispatch:

"CHATTANOOGA, 10 A. M., October 24th. To E. M. STANTON: Grant arrived last night, * * * He is just *going* to reconnoiter an important position which General Smith has discovered at the mouth of Lookout Valley, which will be occupied from here simultaneously with Hooker's occupation of Raccoon Mountain. . . ."

Here it is shown that when Grant had been but about twelve hours in Chattanooga, and before he had even started on his trip to Brown's Ferry, Mr. Dana had sketched to the Secretary of War the substance of the whole movement. That General Thomas had, after General Grant's arrival, to put before him the plan

which he had determined upon, and that General Grant's approval was necessary, and that it was proper for him to go to Brown's Ferry at once to see the position before he gave his approval to it, cannot be gainsaid, but there is not the slightest reason for doubting that Thomas would have made the same move with the same men and with the same results, had General Grant been in Louisville, from which place he telegraphed the order putting Thomas in command of the Army of the Cumberland. General Grant does not overstate the importance of this movement to the army. It gave at once to the army food and clothing, with forage for the animals which were yet left alive, and last but not least, ammunition, of which General Grant says the Union army had "not enough for a day's fighting." From being an army in a condition in which it could not retreat,—for as General Grant says, "a retreat at that time would have been a terrible disaster," and "would have been attended with the loss of all the artillery. . . . and the annihilation of that army itself either by capture or demoralization,"—it became an army which, so soon as it was reinforced by the troops with Sherman, assumed the offensive, and under the leadership of General Grant helped to win the battle of Missionary Ridge, inflicting a mortal blow upon the army under Bragg. General Thomas was a man who observed strictly the proprieties and courtesies of military life; and had the plan "for opening the route to Bridgeport," and the orders necessary for its execution, emanated from General Grant, he would hardly have noticed the subject in the following words:

"To Brigadier-General W. F. Smith, chief engineer, should be accorded great praise for the ingenuity which conceived, and the ability which executed the movement at Brown's Ferry. The preparations were all made in secrecy, as was also the boat expedition which passed under the overhanging cliffs of Lookout, so much so that when the bridge was thrown at Brown's Ferry, on the morning of the 27th, the surprise was as great to the army within Chattanooga as it was to the army besieging it from without." [Vol. I., page 398, Van Horne's "History of the Army of the Cumberland."]'

With some hesitation I will give a copy of a letter from General Grant to the Secretary of War, which, though speaking of me in possibly much too high terms, is yet important in this connection from its date. It was written two weeks after the opening of the river, and two weeks before the battle of Missionary Ridge. It could hardly have been written from General Grant's previous knowledge of me, for he says he "had no recollection of having met me, after my" [his] "graduation, in 1843, up to this time,"—the night of his arrival at Chattanooga—October 23, 1863. It could not have been written because I had shown zeal in establishing a saw-mill, making a steamboat or any amount of bridge material, nor yet because I had commanded two brigades in a surprise attack at Brown's Ferry. No other movement than the successful opening of the river had been made from the time of General Grant's arrival to the date of this letter. Was it possible that it arose from any other reason than that General Grant, appreciating fully the great and prompt change in the condition of the army, arising from the opening of the river, had perhaps overestimated the ability of the one who within his own knowledge had planned the movement? Circum-

stances afterward occurred to change the relations between General Grant and myself, to which it is not necessary to refer, and his opinion of me may and probably did afterward undergo a change, but at the time at which the letter was written there was some striking reason which produced it:

"HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISS.
"CHATTANOOGA, TENN., Nov. 12, 1863.

"HON. E. M. STANTON, SECRETARY OF WAR.

"SIR: I would respectfully recommend that Brigadier-General William F. Smith be placed first on the list for promotion to the rank of major-general. He is possessed of one of the clearest military heads in the army—is very practical and industrious—no man in the service is better qualified than he for our largest commands.

"I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
(Official) "U. S. GRANT.
"Major-General.

"Signed, GEO. K. LEET, Assistant Adjutant-General."

Not only is it due to the truth of history that this evidence of General Grant's military appreciation of the movement on Brown's Ferry should appear, but it also establishes his generosity of character in giving credit where he felt it to be due.

At some future time I may have an opportunity of doing justice to the memory of General George H. Thomas, whose comparatively early death was so great a loss to the country. The civil war developed no higher character than his, viewed in all its aspects, either as soldier or civilian. There are no clouds on it to mar the brightness of his glory.

Wm. Farrar Smith.

NOTES AND CORRECTIONS.

MAJOR J. L. COKER of Darlington, South Carolina, says of General Grant's description of the fighting in Lookout Valley on the night of October 28-29, 1863: "The engagement of Wauhatchie, or Lookout Valley, was of minor importance; but it is well to have errors corrected. General Geary's Federal division was not attacked by Longstreet's corps, but by Jenkins's South Carolina brigade, commanded by Colonel (afterwards General) John Bratton. No other troops fired a shot at Geary's men that night. The battle lasted about one hour and a half, and was brought to a close on account of General Howard's advance threatening Bratton's rear, and not by a Confederate stampede caused by a 'mule-charge' in the dark. When the order to retire was received, the brigade was withdrawn in good order. The writer, acting A. A. G. on Colonel Bratton's staff, was wounded and taken from the field at the close of the battle, and did not observe any disorder. General Howard was opposed by a small force, and made such progress that Jenkins's brigade was in danger of being cut off from the crossing over Lookout Creek. They were ordered out when they seemed to be getting the better of General Geary, who was surprised by the night attack, and no doubt thought himself 'greatly outnumbered,' and reported himself attacked by a corps instead of a brigade."

LIEUTENANT J. S. OSTRANDER, formerly of the Eighteenth U. S. Infantry, writing from Richmond, Indiana, says: In General Grant's paper there is a strange omission in describing the assault on Missionary Ridge. The General states that his order for the assault was communicated to General Wood in person and the assaulting column, consisting of the

divisions of Wood and Sheridan, at once moved and carried the ridge. As a matter of fact, the signal to advance was the firing of six guns from the battery on Orchard Knob, and instead of two divisions the assaulting column, counting from left to right, consisted of four divisions,—Baird, Sheridan, Wood, and Johnson (less one brigade of Johnson's, left in the trenches). The column moved in line, and to this day it is an open question which division first crowned the ridge."

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN F. HEGLER of Attica, Indiana, who was second in command of the Fifteenth Indiana, in the assault on Missionary Ridge, writes: "General Grant says of the assault on Missionary Ridge:

'The fire along the rebel line was terrific. Cannon and musket balls filled the air; but the damage done was in small proportion to the ammunition used.'

"The inference might be that the assault, though brilliant, was after all a rather harmless diversion. The Fifteenth Indiana, of Sheridan's division, started up the ridge just to the left of Bragg's headquarters with 337 officers and men, and lost 202 killed and wounded, in just forty-five minutes, the time taken to advance from the line of works at the foot of the ridge and to carry the crest. This report I made officially to General Sheridan near Chickamauga Creek the morning after the battle."

General Leggett's Brigade before Vicksburg.

In my father's paper on "The Siege of Vicksburg," (September CENTURY, page 760) a sentence reads:

"At the point on the Jackson road in front of Ransom's brigade, a sap was run up to the enemy's parapet, and by the 25th of June we had it undermined and the mine charged."

This sentence should read:

"At three points on the Jackson road in front of Leggett's brigade," etc., etc.

These mistakes were probably made by me in copying my father's MS. Ransom commanded a division, and was not in Logan's command.

F. D. Grant.

[We have also received letters from General John A. Logan and General M. D. Leggett calling attention to this error.]—EDITOR.

The Rear-Guard after Malvern Hill.

A FEW days ago, in Switzerland, my attention was called to a communication in the August number of THE CENTURY, page 642, which falsifies history. It is under the heading, "The Rear-Guard after Malvern Hill," and is signed Henry E. Smith. Mr. Smith asserts that it was General Averell who commanded the rear-guard, and that to Averell, and not to Keyes, belongs the credit which General McClellan gives the latter in his article in THE CENTURY of May last. Mr. Smith cites authorities for his statements, and refers to the "Official Records of the Rebellion," Vol. XI., Part II., page 235, and to my report, page 193 same volume, in which he says there is "no mention of Averell." It is not unreasonable to suppose that Mr. Smith had read General McClellan's and my reports, since he refers to them, but it is certain that he discredits both, and that he rejects my claim to approval unceremoniously. General McClellan says

in his book, "Report * * * of the Army of the Potomac," etc., page 273 :

"The greater portion of the transportation of the army having been started for Harrison's Landing during the night of the 30th of June and the first of July, the order for the movement of the troops was at once issued upon the final repulse of the enemy at Malvern Hill.

"The order prescribed a movement by the left and rear, General Keyes's corps to cover the manoeuvre. It was not carried out in detail as regards the divisions on the left, the roads being somewhat blocked by the rear of our trains. Porter and Couch were not able to move out as early as had been anticipated, and Porter found it necessary to place a rear-guard between his command and the enemy. Colonel Averell, of the Third Pennsylvania Cavalry, was intrusted with this delicate duty. He had under his command his own regiment and Lieutenant-Colonel Buchanan's brigade of regular infantry and one battery. By a judicious use of the resources at his command, he deceived the enemy so as to cover the withdrawal of the left wing without being attacked, remaining himself on the previous day's battle-field until about 7 o'clock of the 2d of July. Meantime General Keyes, having received his orders, commenced vigorous preparations for covering the movement of the entire army, and protecting the trains. It being evident that the immense number of wagons and artillery pertaining to the army could not move with celerity along a single road, General Keyes took advantage of every accident of the ground to open new avenues, and to facilitate the movement. He made preparations for obstructing the roads after the army had passed so as to prevent any rapid pursuit, destroying effectually Turkey Bridge, on the main road, and rendering other roads and approaches temporarily impassable, by felling trees across them. He kept the trains well closed up, and directed the march so that the troops could move on each side of the road, not obstructing the passage, but being in good position to repel an attack from any quarter. His dispositions were so successful that, to use his own words: 'I do not think that more vehicles, or more public property were abandoned on the march from Turkey Bridge than would have been left, in the same state of the roads, if the army had been moving toward the enemy, instead of away from him,'—and when it is understood that the carriages and teams belonging to this army, stretched out in one line, would extend not far from forty miles, the energy and caution necessary for their safe withdrawal from the presence of an enemy vastly superior in numbers, will be appreciated, * * *. Great credit must be awarded to General Keyes for the skill and energy which characterized his performance of the important and delicate duties intrusted to his charge."

The above extract defines General Averell's duties on the field of Malvern, and gives him credit, and it is equally distinct in reference to me, but General McClellan's article in *THE CENTURY* for May is vague in its expressions regarding the same subjects. As Mr. Smith's article is historically erroneous, I trust you will consider it just to give place to this explanation, and to the following short account of "The Rear-Guard after Malvern Hill."

After the battle of Malvern Hill, which was fought on the 1st of July, 1862, the Army of the Potomac retired to Harrison's Landing on the James River. Late in the evening of that day I received orders from Adjutant-General Seth Williams to command the rear-guard. I spent nearly the whole night making preparatory arrangements; dispatched a party to destroy Turkey Bridge, with two of my aides, Jackson and Gibson, to see that it was done promptly; selected twenty-five expert axe-men under Captain Clarke, Eighth Illinois Cavalry, with orders to chop nearly through all the large trees that lined the road below the bridge. All my orders were well executed, and within fifteen minutes after the tail of the column passed, the bridge was destroyed without blowing up, and the road blocked

beyond the possibility of passage by wheels and cavalry, and made difficult for infantry for several hours.

The force composing the rear-guard consisted of Peck's division of infantry, and four batteries of artillery of my own corps; Gregg's Eighth Pennsylvania Cavalry, and Farnsworth's Eighth Illinois Cavalry. Averell's regiment of cavalry was also designated in a dispatch sent me by Adjutant-General Williams, and he may have taken part below the bridge, but I do not remember to have seen him during the day.

The danger to the trains arose from the fact that the narrow country roads were insufficient in number, and their composition was mostly clay, which was soon converted into mud by the torrents of rain which fell nearly the whole day, and from the liability to attack on the flank. The main road was skirted with woods on the left the entire distance, which is about seven miles from Turkey Bridge to Harrison's Landing. The opposite side of the main road was open, and the columns of troops could move parallel with the wagons. When General W. F. Smith came along at the head of his division, I was opposite an opening in the woods at the highest point of the road. Smith exclaimed to me: "Here's a good place for a battle!" "Would you like to have a fight?" said I. "Yes, just here, and now!" While the columns of troops were moving alongside the trains I felt no apprehension, but after they had all passed there still remained in rear not less than five hundred wagons struggling in the mud, and it was not above ten minutes after the last vehicle had entered the large field bordering the intended camp when the enemy appeared and commenced a cannonade upon us. Fortunately I had in position Miller's and McCarthy's batteries, and they replied with such effect that the attack was discontinued.

The anxiety at headquarters was such that I was authorized, in case of necessity, to cut the traces and drive the animals forward without their loads. Nothing of that kind was done, and we saved all the wagons except a small number that broke down and were as necessarily abandoned as a vessel in a convoy would be after it had sunk in the ocean.

About the middle of the day I received a note from headquarters at Harrison's Landing, of which the following is a copy:

"GENERAL: I have ordered back to your assistance all the cavalry that can be raised here. It is of the utmost importance that we should save all our artillery, and as many of our wagons as possible; and the commanding general feels the utmost confidence that you will do all that can be done to accomplish this. Permit me to say that if you bring in everything you will accomplish a most signal and meritorious exploit, which the commanding general will not fail to represent in its proper light to the Department. Very respectfully,
(Signed) R. B. MARCY,
Chief of Staff, July 2d."

General McClellan came out half a mile and met me. I was engaged sending forward sheaves of wheat to fill the ruts in the road near camp, which were so deep that in spite of all efforts to fill them, about 1200 wagons were parked for the night under guard outside. The general appeared well satisfied with what had been done by the rear-guard, and after all the proofs cited above, it is scarcely probable that he made a mistake in the name of its commander.

D. Keyes.

BLANGY, SEINE-INFÉRIEURE, FRANCE, August 20, 1885.

MEMORANDA ON THE CIVIL WAR.

In Vindication of General Rufus King.

IN writing for THE CENTURY his recollections of "The Second Battle of Bull Run," General Pope has, perhaps inadvertently, used the exact language which in 1863, and long after, so bitterly hurt one of his most loyal subordinates. On page 452 of the January number these words appear:

"I sent orders to McDowell (supposing him to be with his command), and also direct to General King, several times during that night and once by his own staff-officer, to hold his ground at all hazards."

Now the casual reader, ignoring the commas before and after the words "and also direct to General King," would say that orders were sent to King several times that night and once by his own staff-officer. Indeed these words have been used as authority in the army, in histories, even in Congressional debate, for the statement that General King received repeated orders to hold his ground on the evening of August 28th, 1862, and abandoned it in spite of them.

No order or message of any kind, sort, or description reached General King that night from General Pope or any other superior officer; no staff-officer of General King saw or heard of General Pope that night; and, in point of fact, no matter how many he may have sent to McDowell, Pope has since admitted he sent none to King.

Early in '63, when those words first met General King's eyes he wrote at once to his late commander to have the error rectified. General Pope claimed that the construction of the sentence proved that McDowell was meant as the one to whom the repeated orders were sent, but at that time he thought he had sent *one* message to King by a staff-officer. I quote from his letter now in my possession, the italics being mine:

"It was far from my intention to imply even that any blame attached to you in the matter. . . . The officer came into my camp about ten o'clock looking for McDowell, to report the result of your action. I told him I had no idea where McDowell was, but to return at once to you with the message to hold your ground. He got something to eat, I think with Ruggles, and went off. . . . Whether he was on your staff or not I really do not know though I thought he was your staff-officer.

"Several officers of McDowell's staff came to me during the night looking for him, and to more than one of them I gave the same message *for McDowell*. If McDowell had been with his command as I supposed he was, Sigel and Reynolds could have been brought to your support. I was disappointed, of course, but did not for a moment attach any sort of blame to you. *I never knew whether the aide-de-camp reached you that night or not*, but I felt always perfectly satisfied that whether he did or not you had done the very best you could have done under the circumstances."

Now the aide-de-camp in question was Houston of the Corps of Engineers, serving on McDowell's staff. He had witnessed the severe engagement of King's division, west of Groveton, and sometime after dark had ridden off through the woods in search of his general who had not been seen by King or his officers since two o'clock in the afternoon. McDowell in

hunting for Pope got lost in the woods, and Houston, hunting for McDowell, stumbled in on Pope's camp late at night, told there of King's battle, got refreshment, he says, of Ruggles, and went off; but he remembers no message from Pope to King, and if there was one, which he doubts, he did not deliver it, for he never attempted to return to King, but went on in search of McDowell until he found him late the following day. No other officer from King got within range of Pope that night, so far as rigid investigation has ever disclosed, and that none at all came from Pope to King is beyond peradventure. Indeed, in 1878 General Pope declared it was to McDowell that all the orders were sent.

As to King's falling back to Manassas Junction, that was the result of the conference between him and his four brigade commanders, and was vehemently urged upon him as the only practicable way to save what was left of the command after the fierce conflict that raged at sunset. King's orders were to march to Centreville, which was objected to strenuously by Stonewall Jackson's corps, and they were in the majority. The brigade commanders voted for a deflection to the right towards Manassas Junction, General John Gibbon being most urgent, and the following extract from a letter from him to King, also in my possession, gives his views:

"I deem it not out of place to say that that retreat was suggested and urged by myself as a necessary military measure. . . . I do not hesitate to say, and it is susceptible of proof, that of the two courses which I considered open to you of obeying your orders to march on Centreville or retreat on Manassas on your own responsibility, the one you adopted was the proper one. "Having first suggested the movement and urged it on military grounds, I am perfectly willing to bear my full share of the responsibility, and you are at liberty to make any use of this communication you may deem proper."

Charles King,
Captain United States Army.

Government Aid in the Marking of Battle-fields.

THREE members of the faculty of Vanderbilt University recently visited the battle-field of Nashville. They were in possession of an excellent map, upon which all the works, lines, and positions of the two-days' fighting were accurately indicated by a military engineer. They tramped fifteen miles to examine and identify all the points of interest. Windings in the pikes, of which three pierce the field, courses of streams, and bearings of hills and houses were all frequently noted and compared with the map. Inquiries were made of persons living on or near the battle-field, yet the precise fixing of even important localities was, in some instances, impossible. This experience has led me to think that the Federal Government, while participants and eye-witnesses are still living, might devise some simple and inexpensive, but still effective, system of laying off and marking the important battle-fields of the Civil War, so as permanently to aid intelligent investigation by military students and visitors. The persons of whom

mention has been made purpose visiting Donelson, Franklin, Murfreesboro', Shiloh, and Missionary Ridge, thus completing the circuit of the battle-fields of Tennessee; and it is certain, if proper facilities of identification and study were afforded by the Government, that many summer tourists would prefer such excursions to any other entertainment accessible in the South. The expenditure of public money, of which there now seems to be a surplus, would possibly not be greater than that often cheerfully appropriated to the erection of a single custom-house; and the advantages, not only to the general public, but to the future historian, would be incalculable. The changes effected in a few years are surprising. New dwellings are erected, old ones destroyed, fences are changed, woods cleared, pikes and roads opened, ditches and hedges are run, and the topography altered in many ways. Old houses receive new occupants, and these, upon inquiry, are often found in possession of erroneous and impossible traditions concerning the events which took place on the historic ground they occupy. Many of the battle-fields of Europe, I am informed, are so marked with stones that the intelligent visitor finds no difficulty in connecting the battle with the field. Unless steps are speedily taken, on the part of our General Government, to mark the places of the special movements and events of our great battles, the limits and outlines of the fields will soon be lost beyond recovery.

Jno. J. Tigert.

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY, NASHVILLE, Dec. 21, 1885.

A Statement from the Confederate Commissary General.

GENERAL BEAUREGARD in the November CENTURY (1884) and Generals Johnston and Imboden in the May CENTURY (1885) criticise the management of my department in the matter of supplies for the army at Manassas both before and after the first battle. In the statements of these generals, there is some conflict, but they all concur in making me appear a preposterous imbecile, and Mr. Davis guilty of retaining such an officer. General Imboden in effect charges Mr. Benjamin with suppressing, in order to shield my incapacity, an official report of a board of officers convened by Johnston.

General Beauregard wrote to his aides, Colonels Chesnut and Miles, on July 29, 1861,—the latter read the letter in Congress,—about his vision of capturing Washington, and laid the foundation of the cabal against Mr. Davis, which made the Confederate Government a "divided house." It produced a resolution of inquiry, followed soon by a standing committee, and afterwards by a unanimous resolution, in secret session of both houses, in January, 1865, to appoint a joint select committee to investigate the condition and management of all the Bureaux of the War Department. The session of this committee on commissary affairs was held on January 23, 1865. The investigations of the standing committee, during the war, into my policy and methods were frequent; several were long taking testimony, for one member, H. S. Foote,—who when I was in prison published me as cruel to Federal prisoners,—was ever zealous to attack. Every investigation ended in approval. I have a letter from Mr. John B. Baldwin, chairman of the joint select committee, stating that he had declared in Congress, as the

result of their examination, "that the commissary department of subsistence, under the control of Colonel Northrop, the Commissary General, had been managed with a foresight and sagacity, and a far-reaching comprehensive grasp of its business, such as we had found in no other bureau connected with the army supply, with perhaps a single exception."

The engineer, General Beauregard, neglected his communications, so that "troops for the battle" and "supplies" were "retarded"; but they were at the depot. "Eighteen heavy cannon, called for two weeks before," occupied unloaded cars. Numerous cars were retained as stationary storehouses "for provisions," "useless baggage" and "trunks"; one hundred and thirty-three cars were abstracted by the "military" power from the use of the railroads for two weeks and more before the battle until returned by the Quartermaster-General and Mr. Ashe, the Government agent. There was plenty of lumber available to construct a storehouse. General Beauregard was not "urgent on the Commissary General for adequate supplies before the battle," for there was no ground of complaint. It was *after the battle*, when the vision of capturing Washington had seduced him, that he tried to construct a ground of complaint anterior to the battle.

Beauregard made but *one* demand on me (July 8th, by a telegram which I have) for a commissary of the old service. Colonel Lee was added; no one was removed. On July 6th I ordered Fowle to buy all the corn-meal, and soon after all the bacon he could. July 7th, Beauregard ordered him to keep in advance a two weeks' supply for twenty-five thousand men, and Major Noland was ready to supply *any number* of beeves. The findings of the Board (on which Colonel Lee sat) are incoherent, as stated by Imboden. The interdictions alleged by him are refuted by Colonel Ruffin (my chief assistant), and by all the letters sent officially to me in August, 1861. I have Fowle's detailed report of the rations at Manassas; there was plenty of provision for a march on Washington. If I had removed his commissaries as he alleges, or "interdicted" them as General Imboden states, General Beauregard need not have been hampered, in a country which all the generals have declared abounded in the essentials of food.

General Johnston's comments in the May CENTURY, on the commissariat, are unfounded. *He* "requested" an increase of provisions which his commissary alone could determine, and allowed the accumulation to go on for twelve days, after he knew that he had more than he wanted. When I was informed, I did what he should have had done—telegraphed the shippers to stop. Two weeks before his move he promised my officer, Major Noland, the transportation deemed sufficient, and of which he had assumed direct control. Empty trains passed the meat which had been laid in piles, ready for shipment. Empty trains lay idle at Manassas for days, in spite of Noland's efforts to get them. General Johnston says the stores of the other departments were brought off. He burned up "hundreds of blankets and shoes, and three hundred new cavalry saddles."

L. B. Northrop.

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA., December 16, 1885.