

crossed the river I saw him again, when he told me that he had it in his mind to relieve Sumner from command, place Hooker in arrest, and Franklin in command of the army.

In the third interview General Reynolds was with me, and in that he said that the men on the left did not fight well enough. To this we replied that the list of killed and wounded proved the contrary. He then said, "I did not mean that; I meant there were not muskets enough fired," adding, "I made a mistake in my order to Franklin; I should have directed him to carry the hill at Hamilton's at all hazards."

At the fourth interview he stated that the

mistake was that Franklin did not get the order early enough; that he had started it at four o'clock in the morning, but that General Hardie, to whom the order was committed, had stopped an hour and a half in camp to get breakfast. I then told him that we should have had the order before midnight in order to form such a column of attack as we had proposed.

For a few days General Burnside was dazed by the defeat and grief-stricken at the loss of life; but he soon recovered, and planned and attempted to carry out his harmless "Mud Campaign," his last, at the head of the Army of the Potomac.

William Farrar Smith.

MEMORANDA ON THE CIVIL WAR.

Why Burnside did not Renew the Attack at Fredericksburg.

NOVEMBER 22d the whole Union army had reached Falmouth, opposite Fredericksburg, and General Lee, who had proved upon more than one occasion his watchfulness and enterprise, took means to insure the arrival, about the same time, of the Army of Northern Virginia on the heights in the immediate rear of Fredericksburg.

Without the slightest delay the enemy's line of defense was marked out, nor did their labors cease until their defensive lines were made formidable, and completed by the mounting of a large number of guns. In the mean time the Army of the Potomac had drawn its abundant supply of daily rations, subjected itself to some drilling and several reviews, and its commander had carried on an animated correspondence with the powers at Washington, chiefly in relation to pontoons which had been promised, but failed to reach Falmouth until long after the arrival of both armies at the points they then occupied. Some time during the first week in December the much-looked-for pontoon train appeared, and then came the oft repeated camp rumor of a "movement over the river," which in a few days assumed a more definite form, the actual plan of attack becoming the topic of many a camp gossip. It was freely stated that the whole army was to cross the river about such a time, and that the chief attack was to be made by General Sumner's Right Grand Division upon the enemy's center immediately back of Fredericksburg, where the hills were the steepest and the fortifications the strongest. There were a few officers in the Army of the Potomac who had watched the gradual growth of the enemy's lines, and knew something of the natural formations in that direction,—a succession of steep hills which in themselves were almost as potent for defensive purposes as the average artificial fortifications. I, for one, had been over that ground several times the August before while engaged in ascertaining the best line for a grand guard for the protection of the roads leading from the back country into Fredericksburg. The three or four officers who were possessed of this

knowledge expressed themselves very strongly in opposition to the plan of attack as foreshadowed by the gossips of the camp, and the news of these adverse opinions having come to General Burnside, he sent a circular to the general officers of the Right Grand Division and colonels commanding brigades to meet him at the Phillips house the evening of December 9th. At the time appointed the large room of that mansion was filled with general officers, with here and there a colonel and a few grand division staff-officers. General Burnside made a speech in which he partially disclosed and explained his plan for the coming battle. It was received without any particular criticism or comment, but General French, who was very enthusiastic, said the battle would be won in forty-eight hours, and called for three cheers for the commander, which were given.

The meeting ended, Colonel J. H. Taylor, assistant-adjutant-general of the Right Grand Division, and myself were standing together in the hall of the house; General Burnside came along and said to me, "What do you think of it?" I answered, "If you make the attack as contemplated it will be the greatest slaughter of the war; there isn't infantry enough in our whole army to carry those heights if they are well defended." He then turned to Colonel Taylor and said, "Colonel, what do you say about it?" The response came quickly and was sufficiently definite: "I quite agree with Colonel Hawkins. The carrying out of your plan will be murder, not warfare." The commanding general was very much surprised and irritated at these answers, and made a remark about my readiness to throw cold water upon his "plans"; he repeated the assertion of General French about victory within forty-eight hours, and passed on.

The meeting dispersed, the officers who had composed it going to their respective commands and giving their final orders for the movement of the following day. Besides attending to the details of moving my command on the morrow I found time to write three letters—one to my mother, another to my wife, and a third to Charles P. Kirkland of the city of New York. In each of these defeat was distinctly and without qualification predicted. The first letter in the order

mentioned has been preserved, and from it the following quotations are given :

"CAMP NEAR FALMOUTH, VA., December 10, 1862.

"DEAR MOTHER— . . . To-morrow, if our present plans are carried out, the great battle of the war will commence. . . . I have little hope of the plans succeeding. I do not think them good,— there will be a great loss of life and nothing accomplished. I am sure we are to fight against all chances of success. There is a rumor and a hope that Banks may have landed on the James River ; if so a large part of the enemy's force will be diverted from this point, but if they have a force anywhere near our own in number we are pretty certain to get whipped."

The letter to Judge Kirkland was much stronger and more explicit, and evoked an answer from which one paragraph is quoted :

"NEW YORK, December 18, 1862.

"How wonderfully *prophetic* is your letter, written on the 10th of December. It *foretells* exactly the awful disaster and reverse that our cause has met with. How is it possible, if you thus knew all this, that those *having control* were ignorant of it? This whole transaction seems now almost incredible. To think of the thousands of splendid, brave, patriotic fellows absolutely butchered without the least beneficial result : on the contrary, with a result disgraceful and disheartening to us, but I fervently trust a result from which we can recover."

This matter of the letters is here referred to, not in a spirit of pride, but simply to show a want of knowledge, judgment, and foresight on the part of those high in command.

We now pass over the bombardment of December 11th, the many disastrous attempts to lay the pontoons in front of Fredericksburg, and come to three o'clock of that day, when volunteers were called for to cross the river in open boats for the purpose of dislodging the enemy from the opposite bank. For this service the Seventh Michigan, Nineteenth and Twentieth Massachusetts of General Howard's division, and the Eighty-ninth New York of my brigade answered the call. The first three regiments crossed under fire where the first bridge was afterwards laid, and the fourth under sharper fire where the second was completed. By nine o'clock that night the division of General Howard and my brigade had obtained possession of the town, the former taking the right of the line and the latter the left. The whole of the 12th of December into the night was occupied in crossing the army, and the morning of the 13th the battle was begun and continued at intervals until darkness set in. During a considerable portion of that day, while the attacks upon the enemy's center, known as "Marye's Heights," were being made, General George W. Getty, my division commander, and myself were on the roof of the Slaughter house, a high residence at the lower end of the city, named after its owner. From this prominent position our repeated repulses and the terrible slaughter of the Union troops had been witnessed. At about half-past three o'clock the order came for General Getty's Third Division of the Ninth Corps to make an attack upon that part of the enemy's line to the left of where the principal attack had been. The order was obeyed, but not until after I had tried to induce General Getty to protest against its obedience and the further useless waste of life. The attack of our division closed a battle which was one of the most disastrous defeats to the Union forces during the war.

The sadness which prevailed throughout the whole army on that night can neither be described nor imagined. The surgeons were the happiest of all, for they were so busy that they had no time to think of our terrible defeat.

About nine o'clock that evening I found myself near a building situated upon the main street of the town, where several of the generals of the Right Grand Division had assembled for the purpose of discussing the attack to be made the next morning. When I entered the room the officers were looking at a map upon a table, showing the position of the enemy. There were present Generals Willcox, Humphreys, Getty, Butterfield, and three or four others. They were seriously discussing the renewal of the attack of the morrow as though it had been decided upon. I listened until I was thoroughly irritated because of the ignorance displayed, and then uttered a solemn, earnest, and emphatic protest against even the consideration of another attack. With a pencil I made a rough drawing of the first line then occupied by the enemy, and also showed a second position a little to the rear of their first, to which they could fall back and make a strong stand in the event of their being driven out of their first line. It did not take long to convince these officers that another attack would probably end more disastrously than the first, and they united in a request that I should immediately proceed to the Phillips house, and try to persuade General Burnside that the attack ought not to be renewed.

It was a cheerless ride through the wet, cold, and deep mud of the army-traveled road that dark night, for I was a subordinate officer, weary from much care, watching and loss of sleep, bent upon an ungrateful errand to an officer commanding one of the largest armies of modern times. But a solemn sense of duty, and a humane desire to save further useless slaughter, convinced me that any sacrifice of self ought to be made in the interest of the brave men who were fighting our battles.

I arrived at the Phillips house about eleven o'clock to learn that I had probably passed on the road General Burnside, who had gone to perfect the details for a second attack. Those present at the Phillips house were Generals Sumner, Hooker, Franklin, Hardie, and Colonel Taylor. I made a brief statement and explanation of the object of my mission, which deeply interested all present. They united in a desire that I should wait until the arrival of General Burnside, which occurred about one o'clock. As he came through the door he said : "Well, it's all arranged ; we attack at early dawn, the Ninth Corps in the center, which I shall lead in person"; and then seeing me he said : "Hawkins, your brigade shall lead with the Ninth New York on the right of the line, and we'll make up for the bad work of to-day."

When he had ceased there was perfect silence, and he was evidently astonished that no one approved. With hesitation and great delicacy General Sumner then stated the object of my visit, and suggested that General Burnside should examine the rough drawing then upon the table, and listen to some reasons why the attack contemplated ought not to be made. After I had explained the enemy's positions, had called attention to several pertinent circumstances, and had made something of an argument, General Burnside

asked General Sumner what he thought, and he replied that the troops had undergone such great fatigue and privation, and met with such a disaster, that it would not be prudent to make another attack so soon. General Hooker, who was lying full length upon a bed in one corner of the room, upon being appealed to by General Burnside, sat up and said in the most frank and decided manner that no attack ought to be made in the morning. Then a general consultation took place, in which all who were present joined, the result of which was a verbal order, transmitted through me, countermanding the order for the second attack.

Of those present at the first interview, on the Fred-

ericksburg side, Generals Getty, Willcox, Butterfield, and probably several others not now remembered, still survive. The only survivors of the Phillips house interview are General Franklin and myself. To show the importance that General Franklin attached to the second interview, let me quote a paragraph from a letter from him to me, dated Hartford, Conn., December 17, 1866, in which he says :

" . . . I distinctly recollect your talk to Burnside, to which you refer, and had he been so talked to before he crossed the river, many lives would have been saved, as well as much credit to himself and reputation to the gallant Army of the Potomac."

Rush C. Hawkins.

TOPICS OF THE TIME.

The Falsehood of Extremes.

IN the fight now going on between capital and labor, the worst elements on both sides are pretty nearly agreed in their fundamental principles. The conscienceless capitalist and the demagogue laborer seem to be far apart in their aims, but in their ruling ideas they are quite in harmony. Each believes in the employment of force to achieve his purposes; they differ only in the way in which the force is employed. The one organizes workingmen into companies, and arms them with brickbats to raise the price of labor; the other gets possession of legislatures and courts, and thus calls into action the power of the State, with its police and its militia, to validate and invalidate contracts, to make and unmake properties.

In their philosophy, as well as in their methods, the extremists on both sides are substantially at one. The maxim that the end justifies the means is continually appealed to as the warrant for their worst offenses. When we denounce the monopolies by which competition is crippled and killed, we are pointed to the beneficent results of these monopolies. Is not coal cheap to-day in the New York market? Is not the price of oil lower than ever before? How much does it cost to bring a barrel of flour from the Mississippi River to the Atlantic coast? Such are the triumphant queries of the apologists of monopoly. Has it not cheapened commodities and greatly multiplied the facilities of transportation? Does not the end justify the means?

The answer to these questions is by no means so obvious as the questioners suppose. Even from an economical point of view it is not certain that these triumphs of cheap commodities and cheap freight are not disasters. Oil at twenty cents a gallon may be a boon, but if it is the result of a process by which enterprise has been paralyzed in one great branch of industry, and by which thousands of men who might otherwise have been organizers of labor and captains of industry, gaining in such pursuits not only livelihood but mental development and independence of character, have been deprived of employment, or else made parts of a great machine in which their individuality is suppressed and their activity greatly circumscribed,—it is a serious question whether the loss to the country does not exceed the gain. Suppose that

the cheapening of oil, through this monopoly, has resulted in the weakening of the habit of self-help, and in the reduction of the productive energies of a large number of the people. Some of us would be willing to pay a little more for oil and a little less for poor-rates. We would rather have good neighbors than cheap commodities. It is possible that the end may justify the means; but what is the end? Are we sure that we have got to the end of the monopoly when we have purchased the material product at a reduced price?

A portion of the people may be benefited by cheap freights between terminal points on the great trunk lines of railroad; but the effect of the discriminations in favor of these points upon all the intermediate communities must also be considered. The fact that a barrel of flour is carried from Chicago to New York for fifty cents does not conclude the argument in favor of railroad monopolies and combinations. Nor does any story that can be told of the great reduction in the cost of transportation really meet the case, until we hear also the tale of those thousands of luckless investors who have been plundered of their little all to make this reduction possible.

It is not, then, so clear as it might be that monopoly is the beneficent force that its apologists represent it to be. So long as it keeps within the law, however, it must be allowed to use the power that it is able to accumulate. But when it begins to defeat the law by bribery and corruption, it is time to make a stand. Cheap freights and cheap commodities are a poor recompense for perverted justice and debauched legislation. The New York aldermen and their bribers may point to the increased facilities and the reduced prices of travel on Broadway; but the people of this city could better have afforded to travel that thoroughfare on foot for twenty years than suffer the injury to their municipal life of which these men were the authors. The end of those insidious practices by which great corporations, aided by astute lawyers and abetted by corrupt officials, evade and pervert and paralyze the laws of the land, does not appear in the cheap freights and the low railway fares that they sometimes offer us; it begins to be visible in the contempt for law which is constantly showing itself, and in the sullen resentments that fill the minds of the less fortunate classes. Greedy capital, seeking to justify its lawless methods by pointing to the good which it has accom-