

oners, among whom were 137 field-officers, captains, and subalterns. [The official Confederate reports make their loss 505 killed, 2150 wounded, 2183 missing — EDITOR.] We captured 3300 stand of small arms, fourteen stand of colors, two pieces of artillery, and a large quantity of equipments. We pursued his retreating column forty miles with all arms, and with cavalry sixty miles, and were ready to follow him to Vicksburg, had we received the orders.

Our loss was 355 killed, 1841 wounded, 324 captured or missing.

In closing his report Van Dorn said :

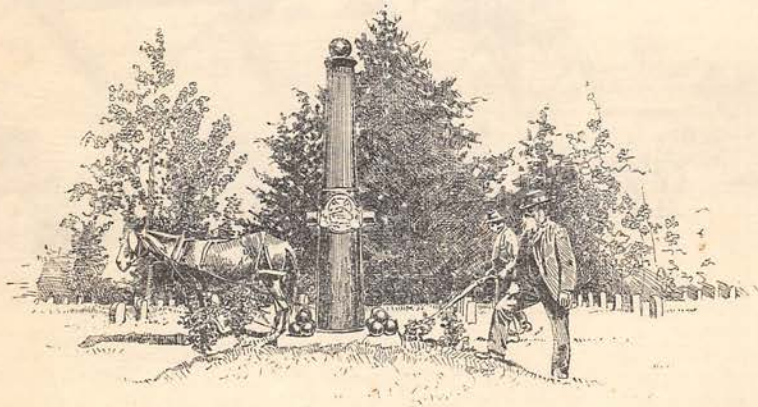
“A hand-to-hand contest was being enacted in the very yard of General Rosecrans’s headquarters and in the streets of the town. The heavy guns were silenced, and all seemed to be about ended when a heavy fire from fresh troops from Iuka, Burnsville, and Rienzi, who had succeeded in reaching Corinth, poured into our thinned ranks. Exhausted from loss of sleep, wearied from hard marching and fighting, companies and regiments without officers, our troops — let no one censure them — gave way. The day was lost. . . . The attempt at Corinth has failed, and in

consequence I am condemned and have been superseded in my command. In my zeal for my country I may have ventured too far without adequate means, and I bow to the opinion of the people whom I serve. Yet I feel that if the spirits of the gallant dead, who now lie beneath the batteries of Corinth, see and judge the motives of men, they do not rebuke me, for there is no sting in my conscience, nor does retrospection admonish me of error or of a reckless disregard of their valued lives.”

And General Price says in his report :

“The history of this war contains no bloodier page, perhaps, than that which will record this fiercely contested battle. The strongest expressions fall short of my admiration of the gallant conduct of the officers and men under my command. Words cannot add luster to the fame they have acquired through deeds of noble daring which, living through future time, will shed about every man, officer, and soldier who stood to his arms through this struggle, a halo of glory as imperishable as it is brilliant. They have won to their sisters and daughters the distinguished honor, set before them by a general of their love and admiration upon the event of an impending battle upon the same field, of the proud exclamation, ‘My brother, father, was at the great battle of Corinth.’”

W. S. Rosecrans.



MONUMENT IN THE NATIONAL CEMETERY, CORINTH.

MEMORANDA ON THE CIVIL WAR.

A Rumor from Shiloh.

“ENDURIN’ of the war” it was not safe in Kentucky for Southern sympathizers to rejoice over Southern successes. A certain old “secesh” from the hills of Tate’s Creek in Madison County had been frequently admonished by Judge Turner of Richmond, Kentucky, that if he was not more cautious he would land in Camp Chase or some other Northern prison. One day the Judge observed his old friend glancing anxiously into his office as he passed and repassed the door. Calling him in, the Judge asked him what was the matter. “Well,” said the old man, “Jedge, if you’ll lock yer door I’ll tell you.” After assuring himself that there were no listeners he proceeded :

“Jedge,— I hearn as the Rebils an’ the Yankees has had a master fight. As I hearn it, the Rebils and the

Yankees they met away down on the Mass-is-sippi River, an’ they fit three days in and three days out, an’ the een uv the third day cum John C. Brackenridge, Kentucky’s noble son, an’ axed fur the priverlige uv the fiel’ fur fifteen minits, an’ — Jedge — they *do* say he slew er hunderd thousand uv’m.”

X.

When Stonewall Jackson Turned our Right.

ON the afternoon of May 2d there was an ominous calm at Chancellorsville. The cavalry with Pleasanton had been five days in the saddle, scouting or skirmishing all the time. We were now therefore enjoying a welcome rest in an open field near General Hooker’s headquarters. We had dismounted, and had slacked our saddle-girths. Some of the men were sleeping

while holding their horses ; some were discussing the battle in progress, while others were even playing their usual game of "poker." Occasional shells merely reminded us that the armies were watching each other. Then there was a sudden commotion at headquarters, due to news from the front that Lee was heading upon Gordonsville. The bugle sounded us to horse. In a few moments we were off at a brisk trot out through the abatis which the infantry had made at the edge of the field. Making our way as best we could through a dense wood we came up with a reconnoitering party that had captured the Twenty-third Georgia. We supposed the unfortunate regiment had been sacrificed to give the main body a chance to escape, as our own men had sometimes been ; but while we were commiserating the poor fellows one of them defiantly said, "You may think you have done a big thing just now, but wait till Jackson gets round on your right."

We laughed at his harmless bravado, for we did not think he would betray Jackson's move had he known anything about it ; but while we were yet trying to get through the thick wood the roar of musketry and artillery on our right confirmed his speech. Leaving one regiment there, Pleasonton took the other two and the artillery back at a gallop, in a direction between the place we were resting at, and the point where the battle was raging. As we rode into an elevated clearing, called Hazel Grove, our regiment, the Eighth Pennsylvania Cavalry, was brought into line. We nervously braced ourselves for the ordeal, not knowing whether we were to make an attack or wait there to receive one.*

The roar of musketry was now heavier and nearer ; the vast woods between us and Dowdall's Tavern seemed to shake with it. There was no time to ask or to wonder what had happened, for General Pleasonton rode up to the regiment and started it off at a gallop, following it a short distance that no time might be lost in giving the necessary orders. After riding about three hundred yards we turned into a narrow road that promised to take us into the midst of the enemy. Half a dozen horsemen in cadet gray, a general's staff, most likely, as they did not ride in ranks, were in the road ahead of us, and turned and fled back to their lines with all the speed that was in their horses.

The word charge was now passed from the leading squadron, and sabers flew into the air along our line ; but none too soon, for we were already in the midst of the foe, and they were ready for us. The unfortunate squadron that led caught all the fire as we dashed along the narrow lane, and we who rode next it got only the smoke from the muzzle of their guns. We could reach nothing as yet, and see nothing but fire and smoke, for their line of battle was safely posted behind a thicket that lined the left of the road, while their rifles were aimed through it.

As for myself, my saddle-girth had either broken or was cut by a bullet, and it required all my skill to balance myself, leaving no surplus energy to expend on the enemy, had they been within reach of my saber.

It was a long lane, and a hot lane to go through, but the lane had a turn, and we got to it at last when we reached the Plank road, and struck Rodes's division right in the front. We struck it as a wave strikes a

stately ship : the ship was staggered, maybe thrown on her beam ends, but the wave is dashed into spray, and the ship sails on as before.

Major Keenan, who led the charge, went down with thirteen bullets in his body, the adjutant nine, and men of lower grade perhaps with fewer in proportion. My horse fell dead as we closed with them, and I was pitched across the road, falling on my face.

I was not long getting on my feet, and at once comprehended my situation, as I was only ten paces from the line of battle, which was bent, and doubled, and broken, as the result of the charge.

The officers were trying to recover their alignment ; so I had no time to look at the men and horses that were lying dead at the junction of the roads. I could just get a glimpse of the survivors of my regiment galloping back over the skirmish line that was about fifty yards from where I was standing. To follow them on foot through the skirmishers was the thought that flashed upon my mind, and in an instant I made the attempt by running after, my saber in one hand and carbine in the other.

The Confederates had just recovered from their surprise that a cavalry regiment should have ridden over them from their rear, and were firing after the regiment, when I ran out between them. I jostled against one, who shouted : "There goes a Yank !" They were now loading, and when they began to fire I dropped down behind the trees that had been cut to make an abatis, or had been shot down by the cannon, and when the volley was over I jumped up and ran as fast as before.

The Plank road, and the woods which bordered it, presented a scene of terror and confusion such as I had never seen before. Men and animals were dashing against each other in wild dismay before the line of fire that came crackling and crashing after them. The constantly approaching rattle of musketry, the crash of the shells through the trees, seemed to come from three sides upon the broken fragments of the Eleventh Corps that crowded each other on the road.

The horses of the men of my regiment who had been shot, and the pack mules that carried the ammunition of the Eleventh Corps, tore like wild horses through the woods, and I tried in vain to catch and mount one. When I saw the ammunition pack-saddles of a couple of mules exploded by the shells, and the poor creatures blown to pieces, I desisted. Then the Confederate line again got uncomfortably near and I continued my flight.

Once, when throwing myself down to escape the fury of the fire, I saw a member of my own regiment, whose horse also had been shot, hiding in a pine top that had been cut down by a shell. He had thrown his arms away that he might run the faster, and he begged me to do the same. This I refused to do, and I had a moral to point to from it ever afterward. I got in safely with my arms, while he was never seen again. I now joined the crowd of fugitives on the Plank road. What made their confusion greater was that while they were fleeing from an enemy that was at their heels with bullet and shell, they were going in the direction whence they had expected the foe, and this foe was following them from the direction they believed to be their line of retreat. To this day my geography of Chancellorsville is reversed in consequence of our getting turned round in the charge. We charged an enemy who was

* See the September CENTURY for map and pictures relating to the battle of Chancellorsville.—EDITOR.

apparently behind our own breastworks, and returned from the charge by jumping over from the side where our line of battle had been standing.

In jumping the abatis, one of our men was lifted from his saddle by a grape-vine, and remained suspended till made a prisoner, because, seeing Confederate lines on both sides, he did not know in which direction to escape.

Finally I met on the Plank road General Howard, who had commanded the Eleventh Corps, but who had no command of it now.

He was in the middle of the road, mounted, his maimed arm embracing the colors that some regiment had deserted, and with his sound arm he was gesticulating to the men to make a stand by their flag. He was bare-headed, pleading, praying, and beseeching his men, literally weeping and entreating the unheeding horde to rally. Under different circumstances I should have considered it my duty to follow and find my command, for a cavalry-man, when dismounted, is no more expected to form with infantry on the field, than a foot-soldier, separated from his regiment, would feel it his duty to follow the cavalry in a charge. But I could not go past that general. Maimed in his person and sublime in his patriotism, he seemed worthy to stand by, and out of pure compliment to his appearance I hooked up my saber and fell into the little line that gathered about him. As the front became clear, we fired a few shots at the advance line of the Confederates, but a fresh mass of fugitives in blue soon filled the road, and we had to stop firing. The general now ordered us to cover the whole line of retreat so as to let none pass, and the officers, seeing their general before them, ran in front of their men, drew their swords, and attempted to stop them.

As the number constantly increased, the pressure became greater upon the line that blocked the way; but this line was constantly reinforced by officers, and offered a firm resistance to the pressure upon it. At last the seething, surging sea of humanity broke over the feeble bank that held it back, and General Howard and his officers were carried away by main force with the tide.

Pharaoh and his chariots could have held back the walls of the Red Sea as easily as those officers could resist this retreat. I had never seen General Howard before then, neither have I seen him since that hour so trying to men's souls; but I have always carried that picture in my mind, and, whatever blame he may deserve for the breaking of his corps, I only remember him as a hero, for such he surely was in his tenderness and courage.

I started again on my race for life, this time towards the slopes of the Chancellorsville plateau, where battery after battery was galloping into position, and fresh regiment after regiment wheeling into line behind them. A line of battle showed itself at last; the Third Corps had come up to stop the successful charge, and Jackson's men would find a difference between attacking the Third Corps in front and the Eleventh in the rear.

Seeing them unlimber the guns and load, I made my greatest effort at speed. Not caring for a few fugitives, the guns belched forth their fire before I could get in. Yet I passed safely in, and at last paused for a long breath. While congratulating myself upon my escape, I looked behind the line of battle, and

there saw my own regiment drawn up for a charge, the line not so long as half an hour before by one-third, but still as shapely and resolute as ever. The horses were blown and nervous, and the men were no doubt depressed by the rough usage they had met with. A horse that followed the company riderless from the charge was given to me, and my confidence and self-respect came back as I mounted him, for I was no longer a fugitive.

The fighting now began on a more terrific and magnificent scale than before, but the men who had for two hours carried everything before them must now advance over the divisions of Birney, Berry, and Whipple, if Jackson's object were to be gained. Berry and Whipple laid down their lives on that field on the following day and the day after, and Birney gave his life for the cause in October, 1864.

The gathering darkness was now favorable to the Confederates, for they could get near the guns before they were seen; but it also added to the terror of the batteries, which were discharged double-shotted at the assailants, and lit up the heavens with fire that seemed supernatural. The dusky lines fell back into the woods in disorganized masses as oft as they advanced, and the cheers of our troops rang out at each retreat.

From the boldness and the frequency of the Confederate charges it was found necessary to move the infantry in front of the guns lest the enemy should seize them before being discovered. The slope was so steep that a line of battle could be formed in front of the guns and a double skirmish line in front of that.

Our regiment now moved up to the guns, enabling us to see better the slopes and the woods when lit up by the flashes. Sometimes darkness and stillness would reign for a few minutes, and we would think the long day's fighting was over, but it would soon be renewed. The stealthy rush from the woods could be heard first, then the sharp crack of the skirmisher's rifle, then a yell and a louder rushing of their lines met by the loud roll of the line of battle's fire. As the cheer of our men announced that the enemy's line was again in retreat, the flash of forty or fifty cannon from the right to the left would light up the scene and carry death over the heads of our men into the woods beyond.

When Jackson's men paused, for they had been marching and fighting since morning, and human nature could endure no more, our men were ordered to advance into the woods to find and drive them back. Though it was now midnight the woods were lit up with the flame of the musketry as they came face to face among the trees, and the battle began anew.

The artillerists pushed on their guns by hand a hundred yards behind the infantry line, and shook the woods in their depths, as they had the hills to their foundations. It seemed as if there was no limit to human courage or to the ammunition.

At two in the morning only, the fighting for the day was done. We were told to sleep on our arms; but who could sleep while counting the dead of our commands? Only the dead themselves could sleep after the rage of that battle. Comrades were gone; file-leaders and file-closers were gone; officers of every grade had perished. And Jackson himself had gone down in his greatest charge; his men never again came down on our flank with such fury.

John L. Collins.