

"It sometimes happens that the general in command, or some other general, is himself forgetful, and orders the fire to be opened too soon, without considering what injurious consequences may result from it. In such case the artillery officer must certainly obey, but he should fire as slowly as possible, and point the pieces with the utmost accuracy, in order that his shots may not be thrown away."

As to the other question, that of policy, each general must decide it for himself, and General Hancock presumably acted according to his best judgment in the emergency suddenly presented to him when the cannonade opened. I do not know his reasons for countermanding my orders, and therefore cannot discuss them, even were I disposed to do so. As to the hypothetical case presented by General Walker, the possible effect of the enemy's cannonade on the *morale* of the troops, and his question, "Who was the better judge, General Hunt or General Hancock?" I may be permitted to reply, that a corps commander ought to be, so far as his own corps is concerned. It is, however, one of the necessary duties of an artillery commander to study the qualities of the other arms, for these must be considered in organizing and distributing the artillery, and are, as we see in this very case, important elements in determining its service. I had studied the Army of the Potomac, believed in its high qualities, and when, for special reasons, I instructed our batteries to withhold their fire for a given period, I knew the severity of the trial to which I was subjecting all the troops. I knew, also, that while the batteries would be the direct object of the enemy's fire, their men must stand idle at the guns and bear its full fury, while the infantry, lying on the reverse slope of the ridge and out of the enemy's sight, would be partly sheltered from it. Yet I felt no misgiving as to the fortitude of my cannoners, and no doubt as to that of the infantry. I think I was justified by the event, for the troops on General Hancock's line where my instructions were not followed, and those on General Newton's line (on Hancock's immediate left), where they *were* followed, were in equal "heart and courage" for the "fearful ordeal of Longstreet's charge." The object of my orders, however, was to spare them this ordeal altogether by breaking up the charge before it reached our lines. Had my orders been fully carried out, I think their whole line would have been — as half of it was — driven back before reaching our position, and this would have given us our only chance for a successful counter-attack. As it was, the splendid valor of Pickett's division alone enabled the Confederates, although defeated, to preserve their *morale* intact.

*Henry J. Hunt.*

#### A Just Man and a Great Historical Work.

In the recent death of Lieutenant-Colonel Robert N. Scott of the Third Artillery, well known in connection with his work of compiling the War Records, the nation has met with a loss which is in many respects irreparable. It is not too much to say that no one now living possesses the intimate knowledge which Colonel Scott had gathered of the numerous disputed and still partly obscured points of our war history. The loss would be less if he had left written notes of his conclusions and of the records which sustained

them. Fortunately, however, the extended work upon which he was engaged — much greater, of its kind, than any Government has heretofore undertaken — is more advanced than many who have watched it since its inception suppose it to be.

Robert Nicholson Scott was born at Winchester, Tennessee, January 21st, 1838. His father was a widely known Scotch Presbyterian clergyman, and a man of untiring energy and great ability. In 1857, while with his father in San Francisco, young Scott was appointed second lieutenant in the Fourth Infantry. He was then nineteen years of age. Older officers under whom he served say that he was a marked man with them from the first. While full of life and sociability, there was a gravity, a large-mindedness, and a mature judgment manifested in the discharge of all duties committed to him that attracted the attention of his superiors. In November, 1861, he joined the Army of the Potomac with the rank of captain. He was engaged in the siege of Yorktown, was wounded at Gaines's Mill, and was brevetted Major for gallant conduct in that engagement. From June, 1863 to September, 1864 he was senior aide-de-camp to Major-General Halleck. He was lieutenant-colonel of volunteers on General Halleck's staff, and on duty with that officer at the headquarters of the army and the Military Division of the James until July, 1865. He went with General Halleck to the Pacific coast as adjutant-general of the Military Division of the Pacific, and served there with that officer until 1869, when he accompanied him to the Military Division of the South, where he served with him until 1872. It was during this long service with General Halleck, throughout which he held the most confidential relations with that officer, that he gained a knowledge which no other man of his rank, and few of any rank, acquired of the secret history of the war. A great part of Halleck's most confidential correspondence with Lincoln, Stanton, and the chief officers of the army is in the handwriting of Colonel Scott. On the 1st of January, 1878, he was ordered to Washington to take charge of the work of compiling the War Records. He was the author of a digest of military laws which is now the accepted authority to the time of its date. In addition to his duties in compiling the records, he was twice called on to assist in revising army regulations. He was assigned as the military secretary of the joint commission of the two Houses of Congress for the reorganization of the army under the Burnside bill, and at the time of his death was a member of a board to untangle, re-arrange, and revise the present compilation of army regulations. This wide range of duties performed under, or in association with, officers of great prominence, made him more generally known among those of high rank than almost any other officer of equal age and position. To this distinction can be added, as a crowning glory, that he gained and held the unqualified respect and cordial esteem of all.

To rich and varied stores of the most confidential knowledge concerning the moving reasons and forces which operated about the great headquarters, and of the real personal and official relations of those in command, Colonel Scott added severe, continuous, and methodical study. To guide him and give effect to his work he was possessed of thorough impartiality, unswerving

fidelity to the trust imposed in him, and a courage which forbade even hesitation upon the question of doing exact justice without fear of the powerful, or favor to friends. He was devoted to his work. For over nine years he scarcely left it. His days of recreation were very few, and were taken at long intervals. He not only gave his office hours to his task, but his nights at home as well. With the eagerness of an explorer, he pursued every clew which threw new light on the records. He spared no pains of research which promised to make any chapter of military history more complete. It is absolutely certain that he has never withheld a paper of any kind found in the records which, if added, would change the history by so much as a hair's breadth. It was such qualifications, and such use of them, that now give value to the great work which he has left.

The progress of this work is of national interest. The general examination of the immense mass of records, both Union and Confederate, in possession of the Government has been completed, and the material which properly belongs to the plan of the work has been selected, copied, and chronologically arranged. Of this selected material, that part relating to operations up to January 1, 1865, has been divided into chapters and volumes according to the plan of Colonel Scott, and this plan has received the formal approval of the Secretary of War. As adopted, it really fixes the arrangement of the material already gathered, covering the operations of the closing six months of the war.

The mass of records which have been examined filled scores of rooms in the War Department, and several large buildings besides. The records embrace the files of the War Department proper, and of the adjutant-general's office, engineer's office, ordnance office, and of the offices of the provost-marshal general, quartermaster-general, and commissary-general. The files of the adjutant-general's office, in addition to the records there made during the war, embrace all the records of the several departments, districts, military posts, etc., as well as those of all the armies, corps, divisions, brigades, and regiments. Besides all these, there are the corresponding records of the Confederate Government. The examination of this immense collection has been most thorough. Besides his own force, a large number of clerks in the office of the adjutant-general have been employed in the preliminary sifting and arranging. The work began in the summer of 1874, under Secretary Belknap, an appropriation of fifteen thousand dollars having been made to enable the Secretary of War "to have copied for the public printer all reports, letters, telegrams, and general orders not heretofore copied or printed, and properly arranged in chronological order." Both Secretary Belknap and Adjutant-General Townsend took great interest in the matter, as have all of their successors. The second year the appropriation was increased to fifty thousand dollars. The work was pushed with vigor, the best men in the War Department being assigned to it. A great collection of telegrams sent and received, and battle reports, both Union and Confederate, were selected and printed in volumes ready for the compiler. When Colonel Scott took charge, in January, 1878, much valuable preliminary work had been done, and the true magnitude of the undertaking began to appear. He at once organized a most efficient force, and began again at the very beginning. All col-

lected material was compared with originals, and the many omissions inseparable from preliminary examinations of such immense masses of records were supplied. He entered into correspondence with all officers yet alive whose records seemed incomplete, for the purpose of obtaining originals which might have been retained. No paper written since the war has been allowed a place; but all original papers have been accepted, and, where the owners desired, copied and returned. Through the efficient services of General Marcus J. Wright, the agent of the War Department for the collection of Confederate records, Colonel Scott received a great mass of material, and through his own efforts much more was gathered, until, considering the circumstances attending the dissolution of the Confederacy, the collection of Confederate records, including field-maps, is surprisingly complete.

Upon this immense collection of official material Colonel Scott had worked without intermission for nearly ten years. As a result, its examination is complete, and the material to be printed will make about fifty volumes. As several of these contain two or three parts, the total number of separate volumes will be about eighty. A large collection of maps has been made, covering the operations of both sides for the entire period of the war. These will appear in atlas form. Twenty-five separate volumes have been printed and issued of the operations from 1861 to January 20th, 1863. Fifteen other separate volumes, up to and including (nominal) Volume XXV., are stereotyped and ready for the index. The volumes for the rest of 1863 are, with one exception, ready for the printer. Of the operations for 1864, which run over to January 15th, 1865, and are embraced in Volumes XXXII. to XLIV., three are ready for the printer, four more are ready for final revision, and the plan and scope of the remaining six, including the subjects for each chapter, have been adopted. To close the work of compilation there remains only the arrangement of the material already collected for the period from January, 1865, to the disbandment of the armies.

It is fortunate that two men remain who have been active workers with Colonel Scott from the first, and who are thoroughly acquainted with his methods and plans. These are his chief clerk, Mr. J. S. Moodey, who has had special charge of the valuable indexes, and Mr. J. W. Kirkley, of the adjutant-general's office. There is also great reason for congratulation that the work has advanced so far toward completion. As it stands, it will endure as a fitting monument to an able, faithful, and impartial soldier.

P. S.—Since the above lines were written, Lieutenant-Colonel Henry M. Lazelle of the 23d Infantry has been ordered to assume the duties of compiler. Colonel Lazelle was born in Massachusetts, and was graduated from the Military Academy in 1855. During the war he was assistant commissary-general of prisoners until October, 1863, when he became colonel of the 16th New York Cavalry. Since the war he has been on staff duty on the frontier and in Indian campaigns, and from 1879 to 1882 commandant of cadets at West Point; and he was detailed to witness the movements of the British troops in India. His recent detail was that of inspector-general of the Department of the Columbia. He has been an excellent officer in a varied line of duties.