

MEMORANDA ON THE CIVIL WAR.

Union War Songs and Confederate Officers.

THE reading of Mr. Brander Matthews's "Songs of the War," in the August number of *THE CENTURY*, vividly recalls to mind an incident of my own experience which seems to me so apt an illustration of the effect of army songs upon men that I venture to send it to you, as I remember it, after twenty-two years.

A day or two after Lee's surrender in April, 1865, I left our ship at "Dutch Gap," in the James River, for a run up to Richmond, where I was joined by the ship's surgeon, the paymaster, and one of the junior officers. After "doing" Richmond pretty thoroughly we went in the evening to my rooms for dinner. Dinner being over and the events of the day recounted, the doctor, who was a fine player, opened the piano, saying: "Boys, we've got our old quartette here; let's have a sing." As the house opposite was occupied by paroled Confederate officers, no patriotic songs were sung. Soon the lady of the house handed me this note: "Compliments of General — and Staff. Will the gentlemen kindly allow us to come over and hear them sing?" Of course we consented, and they came. As the general entered the room, I recognized instantly the face and figure of one who stood second only to Lee or Jackson, in the whole Confederacy. After introductions and the usual interchange of civilities, we sang for them glees and college songs, until at last the general said: "Excuse me, gentlemen, you sing delightfully, but what *we* want to hear is your army songs." Then we gave them the army songs with unction, the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," "John Brown's Body," "We're Coming, Father Abraham," "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys are Marching," through the whole catalogue, to the "Star-spangled Banner,"—to which many a foot beat time as if it had never stepped to any but the "music of the Union,"—and closed our concert with "Rally Round the Flag, Boys." When the applause had subsided, a tall, fine-looking fellow in a major's uniform exclaimed, "Gentlemen, if we'd had your songs we'd have licked you out of your boots! Who could n't have marched or fought with such songs? While we had nothing, absolutely nothing, except a bastard 'Marseillaise,' the 'Bonny Blue Flag,' and 'Dixie,' which were nothing but jigs. 'Maryland, my Maryland' was a splendid song, but the true, old 'Lauriger Horatius' was about as inspiring as the 'Dead March in Saul,' while every one of these Yankee songs is full of marching and fighting spirit." Then turning to the general he said: "I shall never forget the first time I heard 'Rally Round the Flag.' 'T was a nasty night during the 'Seven Days' Fight,' and if I remember rightly it was raining. I was on picket, when, just before 'taps,' some fellow on the other side struck up that song and others joined in the chorus until it seemed to me the whole Yankee army was singing. Tom B——, who was with me, sung out, 'Good heavens, Cap, what are those fellows made of, anyway? Here we've licked

'em six days running and now, on the eve of the seventh, they're singing "Rally Round the Flag." I am not naturally superstitious, but I tell you that song sounded to me like the 'knell of doom,' and my heart went down into my boots; and though I've tried to do my duty, it has been an up-hill fight with me ever since that night."

The little company of Union singers and Confederate auditors, after a pleasant and interesting interchange of stories of army experiences, then separated, and as the general shook hands at parting, he said to me: "Well, the time *may* come when we can *all* sing the 'Star-spangled Banner' again." I have not seen him since.

Richard Wentworth Browne.

General Edwards's Brigade at Spotsylvania.

IN the interesting article in the June *CENTURY*, entitled "Hand-to-Hand Fighting at Spotsylvania," the author, while generally accurate and graphic, unaccountably omits any reference to that brigade of the Sixth Corps which was first engaged there, which was holding the key to the position when his own (Upton's) brigade came upon the field, and which, without egotism, can claim to have fought longer and more effectively than any other brigade of the Sixth Corps engaged. This honorable claim is made for the Fourth Brigade, Second Division, commanded by Colonel Oliver Edwards, which on that day had present for duty three small regiments, the 10th and 37th Massachusetts and the 2d Rhode Island. This claim is based upon the following facts:

When the two divisions of the Sixth Corps, which had been massed the previous evening, were summoned to the support of General Hancock, whose Second Corps had penetrated the Confederate lines, General Wright, who had just assumed command of the Sixth Corps, directed that the first brigade under arms and ready to move should lead the way. Edwards's brigade was first in line and led the march of the corps. It moved to the vicinity of the Landrum House, passing the Confederate generals and some of the prisoners who had been captured by Hancock, and, reaching the edge of woods facing the scene of action, came into line of battle facing by the rear rank, and advanced toward the captured works with the 10th Massachusetts on the right, the 2d Rhode Island in the center, and the 37th Massachusetts on the left.

The situation at this time was simply this,—the force of the Second Corps' attack had of itself broken up the organization of that command; the mass of men had been withdrawn to the outer face of the Confederate works and re-formed as well as possible under the circumstances. By the time this was accomplished the Confederates were prepared to undertake the recapture of the works they had lost. Then it was that Edwards's brigade moved forward and occupied the outer face of the intrenchments, relieving some troops already there