

CHAPTER XVIII.
THE PENINSULAR CAMPAIGN.

I. FROM THE POTOMAC TO THE CHICKAHOMINY.

Authorities for the Peninsular Campaign.—The Strength of the Army of the Potomac.—Impatience at its Inactivity.—Army Corps.—Lincoln's and McClellan's Plans for the Campaign.—McClellan's Argument.—Strength of the Confederate Army.—The Council of War adopts McClellan's Plan.—The President's Order for an Advance on the 22d of February.—Condition of Beauregard's Army.—Fortifications at Centreville and Manassas.—Beauregard replaced by Johnston.—New General Orders.—Centreville and Manassas abandoned.—McClellan's Promenade.—Condition of the Confederate Fortifications.—McClellan's Plan modified. The President orders it to be carried into Effect.—McClellan relieved from the general Command.—McClellan's Address to the Army.—His new Plan of Operations.—Topography of the Peninsula.—Yorktown.—The Defenses of the Peninsula.—Magruder's Force.—Landing of the Federal Troops at Fortress Monroe.—Conflicting Opinions as to the Strength of the Enemy.—Blenker, Wool, and McDowell withdrawn from McClellan's Command.—The Reasons for this.—Its Effect on future Operations.—Proposed Naval and Military Attack upon Yorktown abandoned.—Statements of McClellan and Goldsborough.—Unsuccessful Attempt to force the Lines at Lee's Mill.—Magruder's Account.—Siege Operations begun.—Smith's Attempt to force the Lines at Wynne's Mill.—The Force of the Parties.—McClellan and the President.—Progress of the Siege.—Arrival of Franklin's Division.—Strength of the Army, June 30.—Proposed Attack upon Gloucester abandoned.—The Sieges of Yorktown in 1781 and 1862.—Completion of the Federal Batteries.—Losses during the Work.—Effectiveness of the Army.—The Abandonment of Yorktown.—McClellan's Dispatch.—Weakness of the Warwick Line.—Johnston's Retreat.—The Battle of Williamsburg: Stoneman repulsed; Confusion as to Command; Hooker at first successful; he is hard pressed; is relieved by Kearney; Movements of Peck and Hancock; Hancock's decisive Charge; Losses; Movements of McClellan.—Franklin sent up the River.—He is attacked at West Point.—The White House taken as a Base.—Johnston's Plans.—Norfolk to be abandoned.—Its Surrender.—The Destruction of the Virginia.—Tatall's Trial.—Note on the Virginia.—Drewry's Bluff.—Combined Attack on Fort Darling proposed by Goldsborough and declined by McClellan.—The Reason.—McClellan again demands Re-enforcements.—McDowell's Corps promised.—The President's Order.—Johnston's Proceedings.—His probable Force.—Panic in Richmond.—Proceedings of the Authorities.—Jefferson Davis and his Family.—The Citizens and the Press.—McClellan's Advance from Williamsburg.—He reaches the Chickahominy.

FROM the survey of the operations in the West, we now turn to the more important and disastrous campaign on the Peninsula of Virginia.¹ McClellan, when, in July, 1861, placed in command of the Army of the Potomac, found in and about Washington hardly 50,000 men, with thirty imperfectly equipped field-pieces. The panic which followed the rout at Bull Run soon subsided. The nation had unbounded confidence in the new commander, to whom was ascribed the entire credit of the successful operations in Western Virginia. This confidence was not shaken by the disaster of Ball's Bluff. On the 1st of November he was appointed to the chief command of the armies of the United States. The whole nation applauded the action of the government.² Re-enforcements poured in, and by the middle of October there were in and about Washington 152,000 men, of whom 133,000 were present and fit for duty. On the 1st of November the Army of the Potomac numbered 168,000, of whom 147,000 were fit for duty; but there were 13,000 imperfectly equipped, leaving an effective force of 134,000. The artillery numbered nearly 300 guns. Its weakest arm was the cavalry. This numbered nominally about 15,000, of whom half were wholly or partially unarmed.³ Yet, in the opinion of many generals, the cavalry force was

¹ The conduct of the Peninsular Campaign has been assailed and defended upon purely partisan grounds. So differently has it been represented, that I have thought proper to give the authority upon which every important statement in the text has been made. The works which are only occasionally referred to are fully designated in the proper places. The following authorities, which are continually cited, are designated thus:

"*McC. Rep.*"—Report on the Organization and Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, etc. By GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN, Major General United States Army.—This report is a defense, as well as a statement, of the operations of the commander. The edition cited is that put forth by the author. Where the same document is found here and in other authorities, it is usually referred to this report.

"*Com. Rep.*"—Report of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War (1863).—This report is especially valuable for the official documents which it embodies, and for the sworn testimony of leading generals. Only Part I., which relates to the Army of the Potomac from its organization to the battle of Fredericksburg, is referred to in these chapters.

"*Sec. of War Rep.*"—Report of the Secretary of War, Dec. 1, 1862. This report embodies that of General Halleck, general-in-chief, after July 11, and several important documents from General McClellan, not embraced in his detailed report.

"*Reb. Rec.*"—The Rebellion Record, etc. Edited by FRANK MOORE.—My obligation to this valuable collection of documents is not to be measured by the frequency of direct citations. Usually, when documents are referred to without direct citation, they are to be found in this collection, where they are presented in a more accurate form than in the newspapers of the day. Not unfrequently they have been corrected by the authors themselves.

"*Art. Op.*"—Report of the Engineer and Artillery Operations of the Army of the Potomac, etc. By Brigadier General J. G. BARNARD, Chief Engineer, and Brigadier General W. F. BARRY, Chief of Artillery.

"*Pen. Camp.*"—The Peninsular Campaign and its Antecedents, as Developed by the Report of Major General George B. McClellan. By J. G. BARNARD, Brigadier General, etc.—This is a review of some points in McClellan's Report. It is strongly controversial in tone, but embodies some important semi-official statements.

"*POLLARD.*"—Southern History of the War, etc. By EDWARD A. POLLARD, Editor of the Richmond Examiner.—This is chiefly valuable as the only formal attempt to present the history of the war from a Southern standpoint. It is thoroughly partisan. It is hard to tell whether hatred to the Union cause or hatred to the Richmond administration predominates in the author's mind. The work, however, embraces many citations from official reports not as yet accessible in any other form.

"*MAGRUDER.*"—Report of Operations on the Peninsula. By Major General J. B. MAGRUDER, Commanding.—This report embraces only the first half of the period occupied by the siege of Yorktown, down to April 16, when Magruder was displaced by the arrival of Johnston. It is contained in "Official Reports of Battles" (p. 515-537, as republished in New York), published by order of the Confederate Congress.

"*DE JOINVILLE.*"—The Army of the Potomac, etc.—This appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of Paris, over the signature of A. Trogon. It is attributed, without contradiction, to the Prince de Joinville, son of Louis Philippe, who accompanied his nephews, the Comte de Paris and the Duc de Chartres, with the Army of the Potomac, in which they served on the staff of General McClellan. It throws much light upon many points of the history.

"*LEE.*"—Report of General ROBERT E. LEE of the Operations of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, from the Battle of Seven Pines to that of Fredericksburg.—This report, though printed by order of the Confederate authorities, has not as yet (July, 1865) been published. After the capture of Richmond a copy of it fell into the hands of the editor of the *New York Herald*, to whom I am indebted for it. Having it only in newspaper "slips," I am not able to cite the pages to which reference is made.

² "With the retirement of General Scott came the executive duty of appointing in his stead a general-in-chief of the army. It is a fortunate circumstance that neither in council nor country was there, so far as I know, any difference of opinion as to the proper person to be selected. The designation of General McClellan is, therefore, in a considerable degree, the selection of the country as well as of the executive, and hence there is better reason to hope that there will be given to him the confidence and cordial support thus by fair implication promised."—*President's Message*, Dec. 3, 1861.

³ *McC. Rep.*, 47.

greater than was needed.¹ The importance of this arm of the service was yet to be learned. McClellan had from the first insisted that the war was to be mainly fought by the Army of the Potomac. The resources of the nation were lavished upon it; to it every other department was subordinated. Before the 1st of November it had nearly reached its utmost strength in numbers and discipline. Officers and men were eager to commence active operations. No one dreamed of going into winter quarters. The strength of this army was, indeed, much below that which McClellan thought requisite for an advance movement. He wished for a nominal force of 240,000, which would give about 208,000 effective men. Of these, 35,000 were to garrison Washington, 10,000 to garrison Baltimore and Annapolis, 13,000 to guard the Potomac above and below the capital, leaving 150,000 for the column of active operations. This force provided, he thought the Army of the Potomac might successfully assume active operations, the great object to be attained being "the crushing defeat of the rebel army at Manassas;" the advance "not to be postponed beyond the 25th of November, if possible to avoid it."²

The Confederate army of the "Department of Northern Virginia" lay mainly at Centreville and Manassas. Its outposts were pushed forward within a few miles of Washington; from their most advanced points the Capitol was visible. They had also a force in the Valley of the Shenandoah, threatening the capital from above; and had erected batteries at every commanding point along the lower Potomac, completely closing the approach by water. McClellan believed that at the close of October their "force on the Potomac was not less than 150,000 strong, well drilled and equipped, ably commanded, and strongly entrenched."³

The autumn months of 1861 had been unusually favorable for military operations; yet week after week passed, and no movement besides reconnoissances and consequent skirmishes was made by the Federal army. The impatience grew stronger as autumn lapsed into winter, and winter verged toward spring, with no indications of activity. The Confederate flag floated in plain view across the Potomac from the Capitol; the unmolested Confederate batteries barred the lower Potomac. Was the great national army, whose perfect organization had been so loudly vaunted, meant for work or for play? Were there not private plans, working against the public weal, which kept it motionless? Surmise grew into accusation. The administration was charged with wishing, for selfish purposes, to protract the war rather than to end it. A difference of opinion had arisen between the President and the general as to the organization of the army. Lincoln wished it to be divided at once into several corps. McClellan was opposed to this. It was a delicate matter, he said, to appoint major generals before they had been tried by actual service, and had shown their fitness to be selected to command 30,000 or 40,000 men. A major general could not be stowed away in a pigeon-hole, if he should prove incompetent, as easily as a brigadier general. He proposed to manage the entire army himself in some battle or campaign, and then select from the brigadier generals such as should prove themselves competent for higher commands;⁴ yet he himself, wholly untried in military operations on a large scale, wished to have the sole command of an army of 150,000 men. The Secretary of War and most of the generals were in favor of the immediate organization of army corps; but the President, who was slowly feeling his way, deferred for a time to the opinion of McClellan, and the corps were not arranged until the very day when the Army of the Potomac was ordered to prepare for the expedition to the Peninsula.

Of far more importance was the difference of opinion as to the entire plan of the campaign. The bulk of the Confederate force lay at and near Centreville and Manassas, drawing its supplies mainly from Richmond by way of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad. The President wished the Army of the Potomac to advance directly upon this railroad, at a point between Manassas and Richmond, and, by assailing the enemy's base of supply, force him to come out of his intrenchments and give battle in the open field. McClellan wished to assume the lower Chesapeake Bay as his base of operations, transporting the army by water down the Potomac and up the Rappahannock, disembarking at Urbana, and thence marching upon Richmond, forty miles distant.

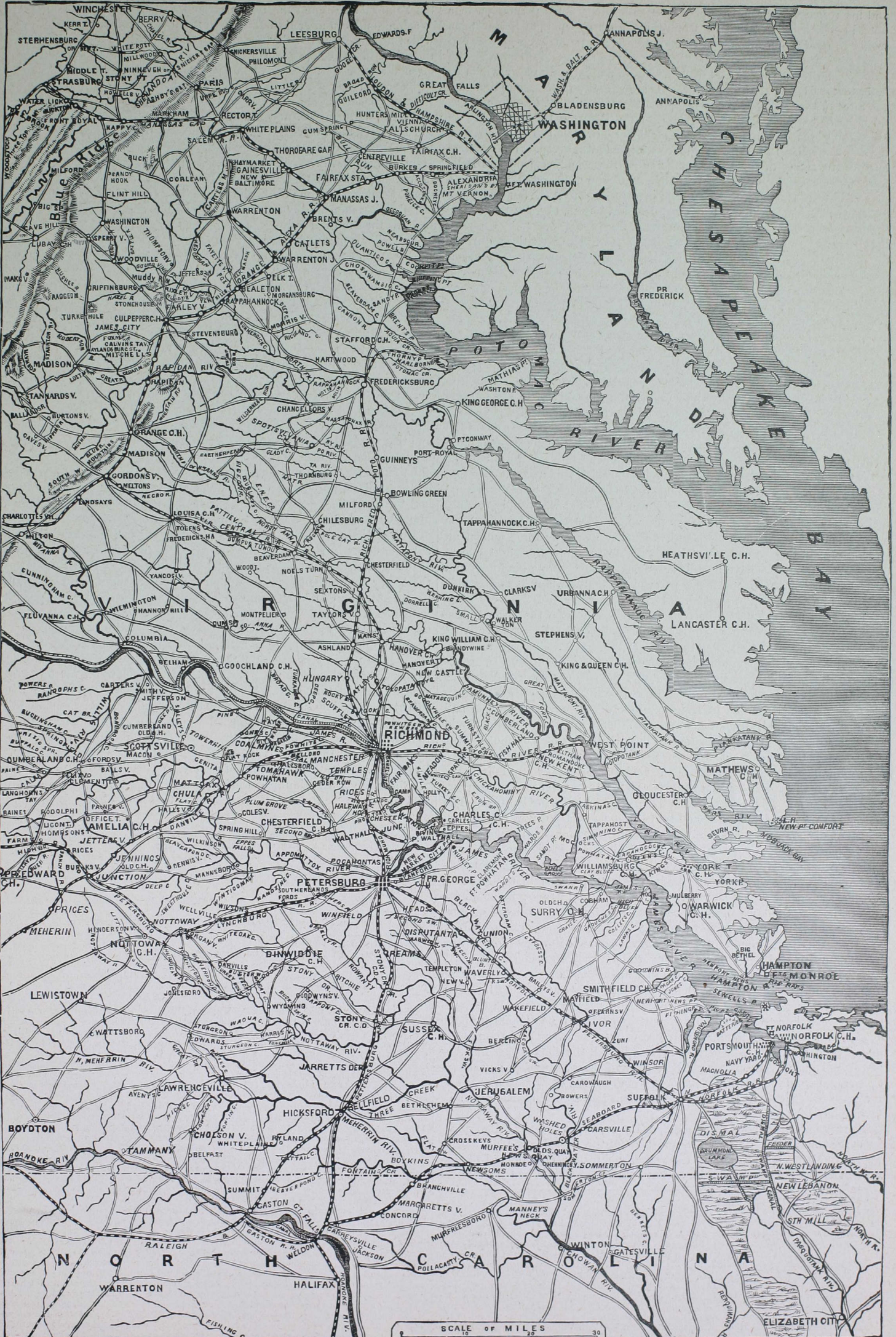
Two full months passed beyond the time which McClellan had fixed upon for the advance, and the direction in which it was to be made was not decided. The general laid his plan before the President, who disapproved it, and adhered to his own. To assure the country that this inaction was to come to an end, the President, on the 27th of January, issued a general order appointing the 22d of February as the day for a general advance of all the land and naval forces of the United States against the insurgent forces. This was followed, on the 31st of January, by a special order, directing that, after providing for the defense of Washington, the disposable force of the Army of the Potomac should be formed into an expedition for the immediate object of seizing and occupying a point upon the railroad southwestward of Manassas Junction, the details to be in the discretion of the commander-in-chief, and the expedition to move on or before the 22d of February. McClellan asked to submit in detail his objections to this plan,

¹ "In my judgment, a large amount of cavalry is not useful, and can not be used south of the Potomac. I have always said that the regular cavalry would have been sufficient for the operations of this army—merely as advanced guards, and to carry reports and messages."—RICHARDSON, *Com. Rep.*, 113. "I think we have more cavalry than we want; I should suppose that one half of the cavalry that is across the river [less than 12,000] would be sufficient."—HEINTZELMAN, *Ibid.*, 119. "I have in my division one regiment of cavalry. I would be very glad to get rid of two thirds of it. I think, as things are situated now, that 2000 cavalry are as much as we want for the whole army."—FRANKLIN, *Ibid.*, 124. "There are twelve divisions. My division has one regiment of cavalry. I think we might do with less. I think I might have done with two thirds of the amount of cavalry I have. If we were organized by corps of three divisions each, two regiments of cavalry would be sufficient for the three divisions."—MCDOWELL, *Ibid.*, 139.

² *McC. Rep.*, 46-49.

³ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁴ *Com. Rep.*, 6.



SOUTHEASTERN VIRGINIA.

and his reasons for preferring his own.¹ Lincoln granted permission in a note, in which he said that he would give up his own plan if McClellan would show wherein McClellan's was preferable in point of cheapness, certainty, and worth of victory, or facility for retreat in case of disaster.²

McClellan replied on the 3d of February, in an elaborate paper which he had previously prepared.³ It proceeds throughout on the assumption that the force of the enemy was at least equal to his own. At the close of October he had estimated that they had on the Potomac 150,000 men. In March he reduced the estimate to 102,500, besides 13,000 in the Valley of the Shenandoah. In this paper no direct estimate was given. The nominal force of the Army of the Potomac, including those in Maryland and Delaware, was, on the 1st of February, 219,000, of whom 28,000 were sick, absent, or in confinement, leaving 191,000 present for duty.⁴ After providing for the safety of Washington, he hoped to have from 110,000 to 140,000 troops to be thrown upon the new line.⁵

His principal objections to the President's plan were, that the nature of the country and the condition of the roads were such that the movement must be so slow that the enemy could not be taken by surprise; that, even if the roads were in a tolerably firm condition at the commencement, they were liable to be obstructed at any moment by rain and snow; that, however the operation was undertaken, whether by a direct assault upon his fortifications, or by an attempt to turn either or both flanks, the enemy, occupying a strong central position, with roads diverging in every direction, could concentrate his whole force for a decisive action upon any one point; and that, even if the operation were successful, the result would be indecisive. We should gain merely the possession of the battle-field, the evacuation of the line of the upper Potomac, and the moral effect of the victory. The main army of the Confederacy would not be destroyed. It could fall back upon other positions, and fight again and again, should the condition of his troops permit. If he was in no condition to fight again out of the range of his intrenchments at Richmond, he could fall back to them, destroying railroad bridges and otherwise impeding our progress through a region where the roads are as bad as they well can be; "and we would probably find ourselves forced at last to change the whole theatre of war, or to seek a shorter land-route to Richmond, with a smaller available force and at an expenditure of much more time than were we to adopt the short line at once. We would also have forced the enemy to concentrate his forces and perfect his defensive arrangements at the very points where it is desirable to strike him when least prepared."⁶

In favor of his own plan, he urged that the route from the lower Chesapeake Bay was the shortest land-route to Richmond, striking directly at the heart of the enemy's power in the East; that the region was more favorable for offensive operations than that in front of Washington, the roads being passable at all seasons of the year, and the spring two or three weeks earlier. A movement in force on that line would oblige the enemy to abandon his intrenched position at Manassas in order to cover Richmond and Norfolk; for, should he permit us to occupy Richmond, his destruction could be averted only by entirely defeating us in a battle, in which he must be the assailant. If the movement were successful, it would give us the capital, the communications, the supplies of the rebels; Norfolk would fall, all the waters of the Chesapeake would be ours—all Virginia would be in our power, and the enemy forced to abandon Tennessee and North Carolina. The alternative presented to him would be to beat us in a position selected by ourselves, disperse, or surrender. If we were beaten in battle, we should have a perfectly secure retreat down the Peninsula upon Fortress Monroe, with both flanks perfectly covered by the fleet. During the whole movement our left flank would be covered by the water; our right would be secure, for the enemy would be too distant to reach us in time; he could oppose us only in front, we bringing our fleet into full play. Should circumstances render it not advisable to land at Urbana, we could use Mob Jack Bay; or, "the worst coming to the worst, we can take Fortress Monroe as a base, and operate with complete security, though with less celerity and brilliancy of results, up the Peninsula." In conclusion, he said: "It is by no means certain that we can beat them at Manassas. On the other line I regard success as certain by all the chances of war. We demoralize the enemy by forcing him to abandon his prepared position for one which we have chosen, in which all is in our favor, and where success must produce immense results. Nothing is certain in war, but all the chances are in favor of this movement. So much am I in favor of the southern line of operations, that I would prefer the movement from Fortress Monroe as a base—as a certain though less brilliant movement than that from Urbana—to an attack upon Manassas."

The argument was ably stated; but, as the event proved, McClellan greatly overestimated the obstacles in the way of the President's plan, and as greatly underestimated those in the way of his own. The force of the enemy at Manassas was hardly half what he supposed.⁷ When he reached

the Peninsula he found the region far more difficult than that in front of Washington, even after he had adopted the line from Fortress Monroe, upon which he had supposed that he could "operate with complete security, although with less celerity and brilliancy of results, up the Peninsula." The order directing an advance upon Manassas was not formally revoked, but its execution was not required. The President, according to his wont, took time to consider. He was still in favor of his own plan, but he said he was not a military man, and would submit the question to a council of war consisting of the twelve generals commanding divisions, and be governed by the decision of the majority. Four of the generals, Sumner, McDowell, Heintzelman, and Barnard, were in favor of Mr. Lincoln's plan of an onward movement right on to Richmond. Eight generals, Fitz John Porter, Andrew Porter, Franklin, W. F. Smith, McCall, Blenker, Keyes, and Naglee (who represented Hooker), voted for McClellan's plan. This council was held on the 8th of March.¹

McClellan's plan having thus been definitely sanctioned, Lincoln determined that it should be put into execution. On the same 8th of March two general orders were issued. By the first order McClellan was directed to organize his army for active operations into four corps, to be commanded according to seniority of rank: First Corps, McDowell; Second Corps, Sumner; Third Corps, Heintzelman; Fourth Corps, Keyes. Besides these was to be a Fifth Corps, under Banks, to operate in the Valley of the Shenandoah; and the defenses of the capital were to be placed under Wadsworth, who was to be military governor of the District of Columbia.² The second order directed that no change of base should be made without leaving a sufficient force to render the capital entirely secure; that not more than half of the Army of the Potomac should be moved, without the assent of the President, until the Potomac River was freed from the enemy's batteries; and that the movement toward the lower Chesapeake should be commenced not later than the 18th of March.³ On the next day, March 9, came important tidings from two different quarters. In Hampton Roads the Virginia had sunk the Cumberland and Congress, and had encountered the Monitor; and the Confederate army had evacuated its position at Centreville and Manassas, and along the Potomac, and were falling back toward Richmond.

During the long period of inaction, Beauregard had commanded the Confederate forces in Northern Virginia. He was the popular hero of the day. He had taken Fort Sumter. He had won the fight at Bull Run. During the pleasant months of the late summer and early autumn, volunteers flocked to the army and filled its camps. They expected a short war; possibly a fight or two, to be decided by their terrible bowie-knives, at the very sight of which every Yankee who could would run. All idea of discipline and organization, every thing that distinguishes an army from a mob, was scouted. Quite possibly at this time there were 100,000 or 150,000 Confederate troops toward the Potomac. But by the time winter set in the spirit of volunteering had died out. The old volunteers were anxious to return to their homes, and no new ones came to fill their places. At the close of January, 1862, Beauregard was displaced from his command. The pretext was that his services were needed at the West. Joseph Johnston was placed in command. For the first, but not for the last time during the war, the thankless task was imposed upon him of retrieving the errors of his predecessors. He found an army diminished in numbers, ill disciplined, ill provided, and suffering from sickness.⁴ He saw at once that it was beyond his power to

March, have been preserved, all purporting to be based upon reports of McClellan's secret service corps. The first is stated by Colonel Lecompte, a Swiss officer serving on McClellan's staff, to have been furnished on the 21st of February by the Count of Paris, who was also on the staff (*Barnard, Pen. Camp.*, 13); the second was laid before a council of war on the 2d of March (*Ibid.*, 95); the third is given by McClellan (*Report*, 122), as furnished on the 8th of March by the chief of the secret service corps. These estimates, adapting the locations to those laid down in the last, are as follows:

McClellan, March 8.	Council, March 2.	Count of Paris, Feb. 21.
At Manassas, Centreville, Bull Run, Upper Occoquan, and vicinity.....	80,000	Same region... 29,900
At Brooks's Station, Dumfries, Lower Occoquan, and vicinity.....	18,000	Same region... 20,600
At Leesburg and vicinity.....	4,500	Not given (say) 4,500
In the Shenandoah Valley.....	13,000	Not given (say) 13,000
	115,500	63,500
		Leesburg..... 6,000
		Winchester... 12,000 to 18,000
		83,000 to 89,000

The Committee on the Conduct of the War say, "The strength of the enemy was variously estimated at from 70,000 to 210,000 men. Those who formed the highest estimates based their opinions upon information received at head-quarters. Subsequent events have proved that the force of the enemy was below even the lowest of these estimates; and the strength of their fortifications was very greatly overestimated."—*Com. Rep.*, 7.

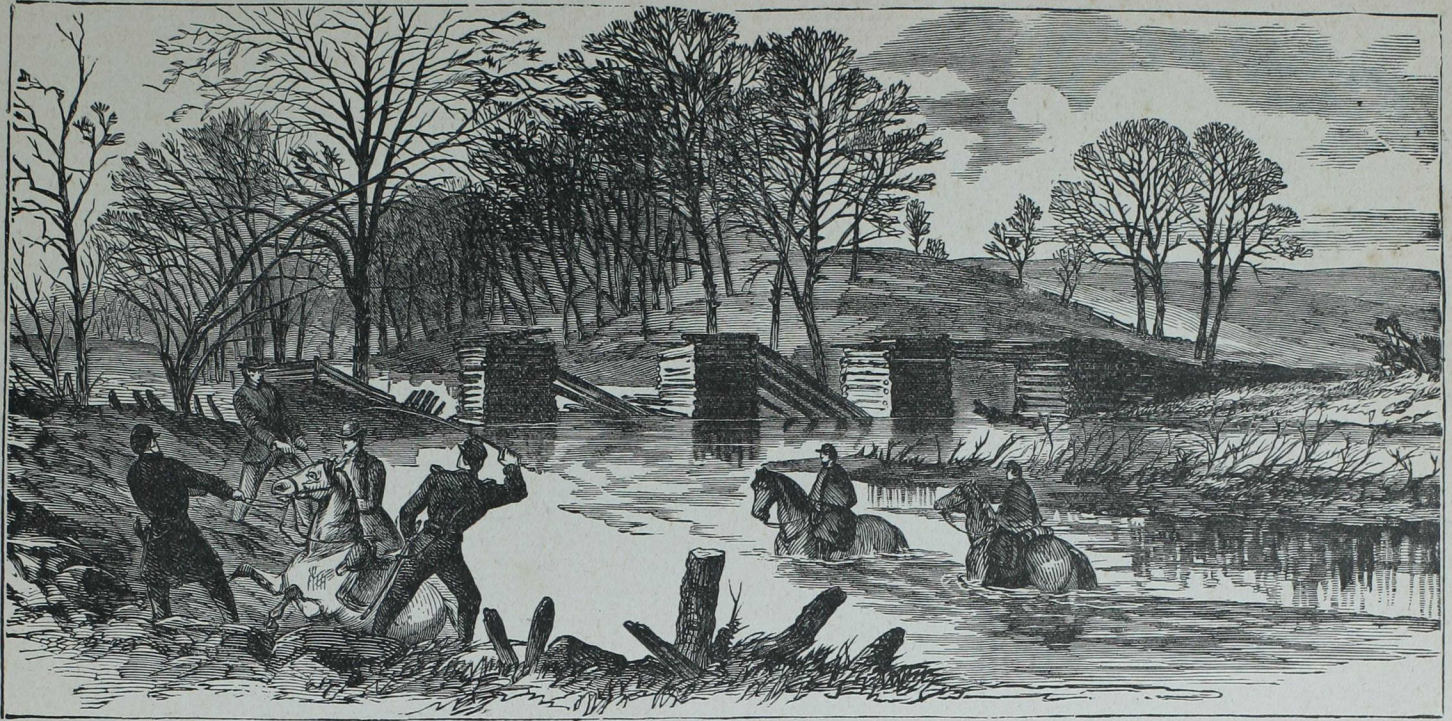
¹ Sumner's and Barnard's testimony (*Com. Rep.*, 360, 387). This important council, whose vote fixed the general plan of the campaign, has been strangely unnoticed. The question before it was whether the plan of Lincoln or that of McClellan should be adopted. No one of the generals taking part in it who testified before the committee could even fix the date. It was, they thought, late in February or early in March. Mr. Raymond (*Administration of President Lincoln*, 225) says it was held "late in February." The true date is fixed incidentally by McClellan (*Report*, 116). But he speaks of it merely as a meeting of commanders of divisions, convened by his invitation "for the purpose of giving them their instructions, and receiving their advice and opinions respecting their commands." ² *McC. Rep.*, 58. ³ *Ibid.*, 117.

⁴ "It was really most surprising to observe the inertness which followed the battle of Manassas. Our War Department, our generals, our soldiers, were all reposing on their laurels, lost in the happiest dreams of their late success. Nothing was done toward insuring the fruits of this victory. The idea of having beaten the Northern army was so consoling that the Southerners began to think that the idea that the soldier should be taught was pure folly. 'We have now,' they said, 'beaten Scott, the greatest general of the age; we have destroyed his army, and, consequently, it would be a waste of time to drill, exercise, and do things of that kind. We need only to draw our dreaded bowie-knives, and every enemy who is able to run will do so.' These ideas predominated among the soldiers of the army, and the officers took no pains to counteract them. When McClellan was appointed to the chief command of the Federal army, and set to work to strengthen his position by the construction of field-works in order to be enabled to proceed the better with the organization of his forces, Beauregard at last began to bestir himself, and to rouse his officers and men from their lethargy. Fortified works on a grand scale were now undertaken, and, indeed, the preparations were so extensive that it appeared as if the whole state of Virginia was to be fortified. No steps were, however, taken for the erection of hospitals, the improvement of the roads, or the instruction of the soldiers. We were especially ill provided with medicines and clothes, and the troops suffered greatly in consequence. Added to this, sickness broke out in Beauregard's camp. It was the more serious, inasmuch as our authorities had never directed their attention to any sanitary precautions. Wounded men and horses were alike treated in the most negligent manner, and the consequences were indeed appalling. Dead horses lay about in hund-

¹ *McC. Rep.*, 96, 97.

² *Lincoln to McClellan*, Feb. 3, 1862. "You and I have distinct and different plans for a movement of the Army of the Potomac. Yours to be done by the Chesapeake, up the Rappahannock to Urbana, and across and to the terminus of the railroad on the York River. Mine to move directly to a point on the railroad southwest of Manassas. If you will give me satisfactory answers to the following questions, I shall gladly yield my plan to yours: *First.* Does not your plan involve a greatly larger expenditure of time and money? *Second.* Wherein is victory more certain by your plan than mine? *Third.* Wherein is victory more valuable by your plan than mine? *Fourth.* In fact, would it not be less valuable in this, that it would break no great line of the enemy's communications, while mine would? *Fifth.* In case of disaster, would not a retreat be more difficult by your plan than mine?" ³ *McC. Rep.*, 98-107. ⁴ *Ib.*, 52. ⁵ *Ib.*, 106. ⁶ *Ib.*, 105.

⁷ The Confederate government carefully abstained from making any public statement of the strength of its armies in the field. Their actual force in Northern Virginia at any period can be given only by approximation. At the close of October, when it was probably largest, McClellan had estimated it at 150,000. A few weeks later, Butler, collecting all accessible official evidence, calculated that there were 70,000. Three estimates of the number, near the beginning of



RUINS OF BRIDGE AT BLACKBURN'S FORD.

withstand a serious attack, and resolved to fall back the moment any determined movement was made by the Federal forces. Beauregard had, indeed, laid out immense works at Centreville and Manassas. At Centreville were two lines. One faced east, a mile and three quarters long; the other faced north, two miles long. In both were thirteen distinct forts, connected by "infantry parapets," "double caponniers," and "redans." There were embrasures for seventy-one guns. On a high hill commanding the rear of both lines was a large redoubt with ten embrasures. Manassas was defended in all directions by a system of detached works, with platforms for heavy guns, arranged for marine carriages, and connected by infantry parapets; the system being rendered complete by a very large work with sixteen embrasures, commanding the highest of the other works by about fifty feet.¹ The works at Manassas had been mounted with guns. Those at Centreville had

reds as they had fallen, and nobody seemed to care any thing about it, or to take any steps to put an end to a state of things so detrimental to the health of the army. Before long the hospitals in Beauregard's camp became enormously overcrowded, and the scythe of death reaped a large harvest in the narrow lanes of the camp, mowing down the lately blooming youth of the South. Happily for the army, General Beauregard received orders to assume command of the army on the Mississippi. It was, indeed, high time for a change in the administration of the Army of the Potomac, as the demoralization, negligence, and the lax discipline which permitted the soldiers to assume a bearing which verged on actual insubordination were becoming quite unbearable. Pale, haggard faces peered out upon you from the tents, and forms worn to the bone by hunger and disease tottered about. Nobody seemed to exert any authority, and nobody was disposed to obey. Beauregard left his army in the most deplorable condition, hurrying straight to the scene of his future defeat."—ESTYAN, *War Pictures from the South*, 107-109.

"The Acts of Congress providing for re-enlistments had failed to effect the desired object. The spirit of volunteering had died out, and the resolution of our soldiers already in the field was not sufficient to resist the prospects, cherished for months amid the sufferings and monotony of the camps, of returning to their homes. The exigency was critical, and even vital. In a period of thirty days the term of one hundred and forty-eight regiments expired. There was good reason to believe that a large majority of the men had not re-enlisted, and of those who had re-enlisted a very large majority had entered companies which could never be assembled, or, if assembled, could not be prepared for the field in time to meet the invasion actually commenced."—POLLARD, ii., 23.

¹ *McC. Rep.*, 123.

been merely laid out, but no heavy artillery had been placed in them, and for weeks they were occupied only by a corps of observation, ready to fall back upon any alarm.

Beauregard's order upon giving up the command of the army, issued on the 30th of January, and Johnston's order upon assuming it, five days later, clearly indicate that both were aware of their perilous position. The main point of each was an urgent appeal to the troops not to disband.¹ Johnston, however, before giving the final orders for evacuation, waited for some definite movement on the part of the enemy. He had trusty friends who informed him at once of every thing that took place in Federal councils. So long as the Federal authorities were undecided where to strike, he might safely hold his position. But the moment he learned of the order to move by the way of the Peninsula, he called back his corps from Centreville, destroyed the bridges over Bull Run, and fell back to Manassas. The next day, March 10, he evacuated this place, burning every thing which he could not carry away.²

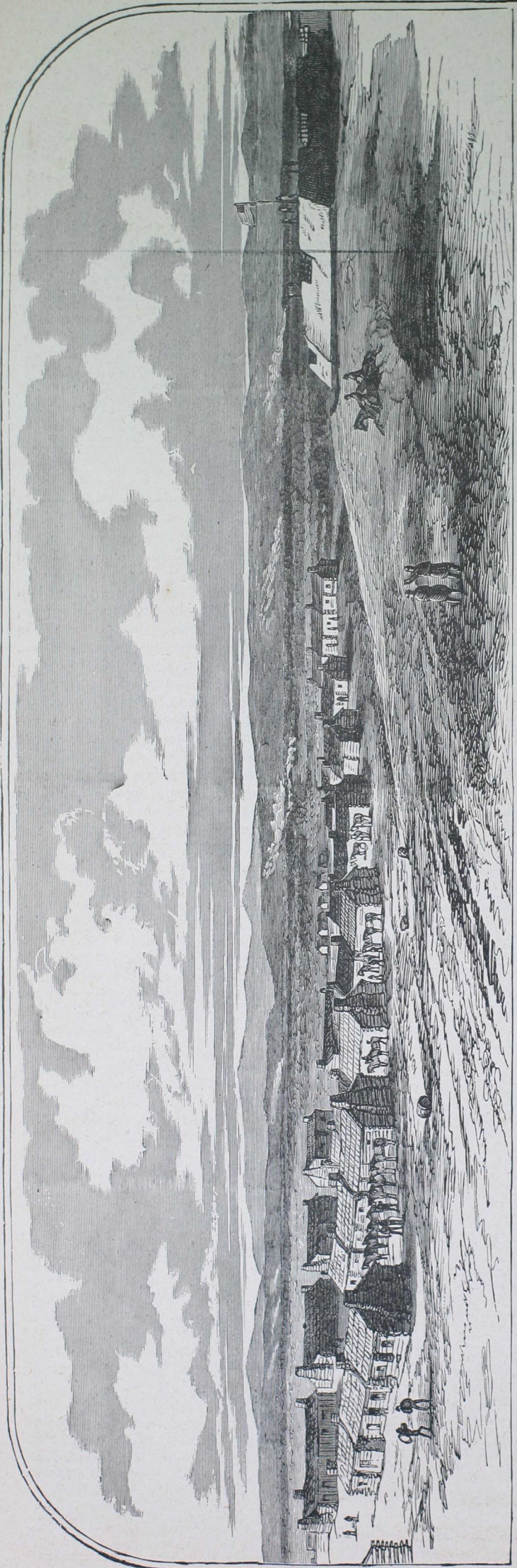
Early on the 9th of March McClellan was apprised that the enemy was

¹ Beauregard said: "I can not quit you without deep emotion, without even deep anxiety in the moment of our country's trials and dangers. This is no time for the Army of the Potomac—the men of Manassas—to stack their arms and quit, even for a brief period, the standards they have made glorious by their manhood."—*Reb. Rec.*, iv., 66. Johnston said: "Accustomed to the comforts and luxuries of home, you have borne and met the privations of camp life, the exactions of military discipline, and the rigors of a winter campaign. Your country now summons you to a noble and a greater deed. The enemy has gathered up all his energies for a final conflict. He does not propose to attack this army so long as it holds its present position with undiminished numbers and unimpaired discipline; but, protected by his fortifications, he awaits the expiration of your term of service. Expecting a large portion of our army to be soon disbanded, he hopes that his immense numbers will easily overpower your gallant comrades who will be left here. The commanding general calls upon the twelve-months' men to stand by their brave comrades who have volunteered for the war. You can not, you will not draw back at this solemn crisis of our struggle, when all that is heroic in the land is engaged, and all that is precious hangs trembling in the balance."—*Reb. Rec.*, iv., 130.

² *Com. Rep.*, 250.



EVACUATION OF MANASSAS JUNCTION.



CONFEDERATE HUTS AT CENTREVILLE.

evacuating his positions at Centreville, Manassas, and on the upper and lower Potomac. This, he thought, presented a good opportunity for his troops to gain some experience on the march and bivouac preparatory to a campaign, and to get rid of the superfluous baggage and other impediments which accumulate around an army in camp. He hoped, though rather faintly, that by marching upon Manassas he might be able to harass the rear of the retreating enemy.¹ On the morning of the 10th the Army of the Potomac began its "promenade" toward Manassas. Centreville was reached at noon. For once the Virginia mud did not prevent a rapid march. The formidable works which had so long been an object of dread were found to be thoroughly dilapidated. They did not appear to have been touched for months. The banks and escarpments were washed down by the rains. The ditches were so filled up that a man might leap across them. There was not the slightest evidence that a single heavy gun had ever been mounted upon them. There were, indeed, huts sufficient to shelter an army of 50,000 or more men; but the utmost force collected here at any time was 12,000 or 15,000.² The army marched no farther than Centreville, but McClellan and a strong escort rode on to Manassas, wading Bull Run, for the rude bridge at Blackburn's Ford had been destroyed. The strong-hold at Manassas was a scene of ruin. Here the promenade ended. Stoneman, with a force of 2800 cavalry and infantry, pushed on fourteen miles in the track of the retreating Confederates. They found the roads strewn with abandoned small-arms, stores, and munitions, showing that the final retreat had been hasty. They were, however, far from disorganized. After ascertaining their position, and finding them too strong to be assailed, Stoneman returned. The whole army then marched back, and in less than a week after it had set out was again in its camps near Washington.

In the course of this week the plan of the campaign was modified. Instead of going up the Rappahannock to Urbana, and thence marching straight across the Peninsula, as McClellan had all along proposed, the "less brilliant" plan of landing at Fortress Monroe was adopted. This change was made at a council of the four newly-appointed corps commanders, McDowell, Sumner, Heintzelman, and Keyes, held at Fairfax Court-house on the 13th of March. According to the memorandum of the proceedings given by McClellan, it was unanimously voted "that, the enemy having retreated from Manassas to Gordonsville, behind the Rappahannock and Rapidan, it is the opinion of the generals commanding army corps that the operations to be carried on will be best undertaken from Old Point Comfort, between the York and James Rivers," provided that certain conditions were secured; but if this could not be done, "the army should then be moved against the enemy behind the Rappahannock at the earliest possible moment."³ But Sumner testified that no such proposition was submitted to the council, and had it been submitted, he should have voted against it.⁴ McClellan assented to what he considered the decision of the council, and communicated it to the War Department. The Secretary of War replied that the President had considered the plan, made no objections to it, but ordered that in its execution sufficient force should be left at Manassas Junction to make it sure that the enemy would not repossess himself of that position and line of communication; that Washington should be left entirely secure, and then the general should "move the remainder of the force down the Potomac, choosing a new base at Fortress Monroe, or any where between here and there; or, at all events, move such remainder of the army at once in pursuit of the enemy by some route."⁵

The President had by this time become convinced that the direction of the active operations of the Army of the Potomac would fully occupy all of McClellan's powers, without the task of controlling the entire military operations of the nation. Accordingly, on the 11th of March, an order was issued stating that "General McClellan having personally taken the field at the head of the Army of the Potomac, until otherwise ordered, he is relieved from the command of the other military departments, he retaining the command of the Army of the Potomac." All the region west of Knoxville was formed into a new Department of the Mississippi, the command being given to Halleck; and a new Department of the Mountain, embracing all between those of the Mississippi and the Potomac, was created for Fremont. All commanders of departments were to report directly to the Secretary of War. McClellan, though chagrined that this order was published before it was officially communicated to him, yielded to it with a good grace. He wrote to the President, "I have said to you that no feeling of self-interest or ambition should ever prevent me from devoting myself to the service. I am glad to

¹ *McC. Rep.*, 118, 119.

² *Com. Rep.*, 243-250.

³ *McC. Rep.*, 128.

⁴ "When the army returned to Fairfax Court-house a council was convened there, consisting of the four corps commanders, McDowell, Heintzelman, Keyes, and myself, and the proposition was submitted to us in this form: Whether, as the enemy was then rapidly retreating through the country, and the roads were in a very bad condition, it would not be better to turn them by a movement by water—as my understanding was, to descend the Potomac and land at Urbana. With the understanding that the army was to land at Urbana, I yielded to the proposition; and I will add, that I was never more surprised in my life than, when I embarked at Alexandria, to learn that the whole army was going down to Fortress Monroe. I had not dreamed of any such movement, and would not have voted for it."—*Com. Rep.*, 360. The testimony of General Keyes, however, confirms the view of McClellan. He says: "About the 13th of March a council of corps commanders was held at Fairfax Court-house, at which were present Generals McDowell, Sumner, Heintzelman, and myself. General McClellan was not much present during the discussions. The subject of the campaign was talked of. I do not know that any minutes were made. It was finally agreed and understood that we were to take the army down to Old Point Comfort and move up the Peninsula. . . . The corps commanders were unanimous in their agreement. In consequence of the arrangements made there, the army was embarked for Old Point Comfort."—*Com. Rep.*, 598. He also wrote to Senator Harris, June 7: "The plan of campaign on this line was made with the distinct understanding that four army corps should be employed, and that the navy should co-operate in the taking of Yorktown, and also (as I understood it) support us on our left, by moving gun-boats up the James River. . . . The above plan was adopted unanimously by Generals McDowell, Sumner, Heintzelman, and Keyes, and was concurred in by General McClellan, who first proposed Urbana as our base. The army being reduced by 45,000 troops, some of them among the best in the service, and without the support of the navy, the plan to which we are reduced bears scarcely any resemblance to the one I voted for."—*McC. Rep.*, 165.

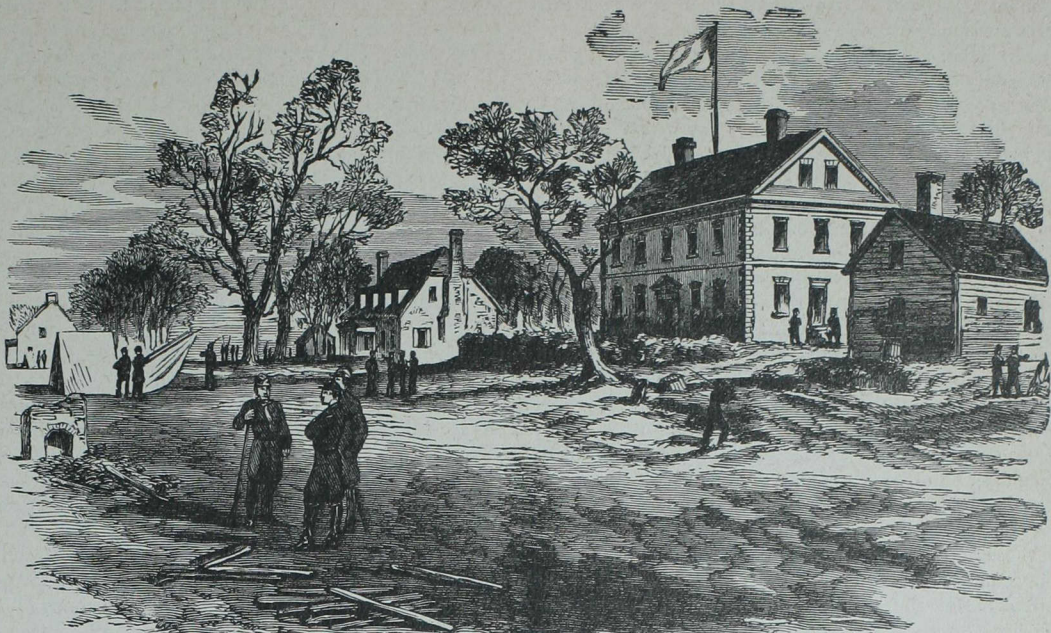
⁵ *McC. Rep.*, 129.

have the opportunity to prove it; and you will find that, under present circumstances, I shall work just as cheerfully as before, and that no consideration of self will in any manner interfere with the discharge of my public duties."¹

On the 14th McClellan issued a stirring address to his army. "For a long time," he said, "I have kept you inactive, but not without a purpose. You were to be disciplined, armed, and instructed. The formidable artillery you now have had to be created; other armies were to move and accomplish certain results. The patient labors of many months have produced their results. The Army of the Potomac is now a real army, magnificent in material, admirable in discipline and instruction, excellently equipped and armed. Your commanders are all that I could wish. The period of inaction has passed. I will bring you now face to face with the rebels, and only pray that God may defend the right. In whatever direction you may move, however strange my actions may appear to you, ever bear in mind that my fate is linked with yours, and all that I do is to bring you where I know you wish to be—on the decisive battle-field. I shall demand of you great, heroic exertions, rapid and long marches, privations perhaps. We will share all these together." And more in the same strain.²

McClellan then submitted to the War Department his proposed plan of operations. Fortress Monroe was to be the first base of operations, Richmond being the objective point, to be reached by the way of Yorktown and West Point. It was assumed that the enemy would concentrate his forces, and that a decisive battle would be fought between Richmond and West Point. The first object of the campaign was to capture Yorktown by a combined naval and military attack, which would be the work of only a few hours; then West Point would be established as the new base, about twenty-five miles from Richmond, "with every facility for developing and bringing into play the whole of our available force on either or both banks of the James."³ The co-operation of the navy was again and again insisted upon as an absolutely necessary part of this programme. "Without it the operations may be prolonged for many weeks, and we may be forced to carry in front several strong positions, which, by its aid, could be turned without serious loss of either time or men. . . . For the prompt success of this campaign, it is absolutely necessary that the navy should at once throw its whole available force, its most powerful vessels, upon Yorktown. There is the most important point—there the knot is to be cut."³

The Peninsula of Virginia lies between the James and York Rivers, which, running nearly parallel from the northwest, empty into Chesapeake Bay, their mouths forming wide estuaries. Fortress Monroe occupies the extremity of the Peninsula, and is connected with the main portion only by a narrow sand beach. The extreme length, from the fort to a line drawn between Richmond and West Point, is about sixty miles; the average breadth about twelve. At Yorktown, twenty miles up, it is narrowed to eight, which width it preserves ten miles, to Williamsburg; then the rivers begin to diverge. The shores of the lower portion of the Peninsula are deeply indented with creeks, some of which extend half way across. The land is flat and low,



THE NELSON HOUSE, YORKTOWN.

covered with swampy forests, through which sluggish streams flow lazily, expanding after every rain into miry ponds. Here and there is a small settlement, grouped around a rude church, a court-house, or a cross-road tavern. The roads, winding from one to another, hardly passable at any time, are, after a storm, impracticable for a wheel-carriage. The climate is unhealthy during the summer, but the soil is generally fertile, and the fisheries productive, the oysters of the York and James Rivers being among the finest in the world. The population is 45 to the square mile, about equal in density to that of Pennsylvania, the slaves slightly outnumbering the whites. Yorktown is a dilapidated village of some fifty houses, on the York River, twenty miles from Fortress Monroe. It is chiefly noted for the surrender of Cornwallis in 1781. In the colonial times it was much larger, and for a long time vied with Williamsburg, the capital of the colony. The principal building is the Nelson House, built by Thomas Nelson, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and afterward governor of Virginia. For years it had been occupied as a tavern, the only one in the place. It stands upon a bluff, the highest point of land on the Peninsula below Richmond. Opposite is Gloucester Point, setting sharply in from the northern bank, reducing the width of the York River from two miles to one.

Strong fortifications had been thrown up at Yorktown under the direction of General Magruder, formerly an officer in the United States army. On one side they commanded the river, and on the other overlooked the narrow neck of land. He had also prepared an elaborate line of defense, stretching for miles down both rivers, and almost meeting in the centre of the Peninsula. Magruder was confident that, with 25,000 men to hold it, this line could not be broken by any force that could be brought against it. But 11,000 was the utmost force given him, and he had to adopt a shorter line, which could be held by his small force. This line, which was thirteen miles long, followed the course of the Warwick River, a muddy stream rising close by the Yorktown bluff, and flowing through swamps across the Peninsula into the James. At intervals of three or four miles were mill-dams, which set the water back, forming a series of shallow ponds. The only roads crossed these dams. Redoubts were thrown up at the heads of the bridges and at various points along the Warwick. Six thousand men were retained in garrison at Yorktown, Gloucester, and Mulberry Island, leaving five thousand to defend the line of the Warwick.¹

The Federal army was hurried to the Peninsula as rapidly as transportation could be furnished. The advance, consisting of Heintzelman's corps, landed on the 23d of March. They were ordered to encamp close by Fortress Monroe, in order to leave the enemy in doubt whether Norfolk or Yorktown was to be the immediate object of attack. Four days afterward a reconnaissance was made as far as Big Bethel, but strict orders had been given by McClellan that no demonstration should be made. Heintzelman believed that, had he been permitted to advance, he could have forced the enemy's lines with a single brigade, have isolated the troops at Yorktown, and have compelled the surrender in a few days. Hooker was of the same opinion.² The



FORTIFICATIONS OF YORKTOWN, LOOKING TOWARD THE RIVER.

¹ McC. Rep., 125.

² Reb. Rec., iv., 306.

³ McC. Rep., 132-134.

¹ MAGRUDER, 516.
² Heintzelman testifies: "A few days after I got to Fortress Monroe, I got information, which I considered reliable, that General Magruder had about 7500 men on the Peninsula; at all events, not to exceed 10,000. . . . I think, if I had been per-

Confederates were fully aware of the weakness of their position, and of the disasters which would follow had it been forced.¹

McClellan reached Fortress Monroe on the 2d of April, preceded or immediately followed by the bulk of his force. It was less than he had demanded. Blenker's division of 10,000 men had been withdrawn from his immediate command, to be held in a position to re-enforce Fremont. He had expected to be authorized to draw 10,000 men from Wool's force at Fortress Monroe. On the day following his arrival he received orders depriving him of all control over Wool's forces, and was forbidden to detach any of his troops without his consent. "This order," he says, "left me without any base of operations under my own control." The very next day he was informed that McDowell's whole corps was detached from his immediate command, and ordered to remain behind. It had been stipulated by the council which recommended the Peninsular movement that "the force to be left to cover Washington should be such as to give an entire feeling of security for its safety from menace." Sumner thought that 40,000 men in all for the defense of the city would be sufficient; the other corps commanders thought that, "with the forts on the right bank of the Potomac fully garrisoned, and those on the left bank occupied, a covering force in front of the Virginia line of 25,000 men would suffice." To man the forts, it was estimated, would require 25,000 first-rate troops—50,000 in all. McClellan proposed to leave for the defense of Washington and its approaches 73,000 men. Of these, 35,000 were in the Valley of the Shenandoah; 20,000 at Warrenton, Manassas, and on the lower Potomac; and 18,000 in and before the capital. But the military authorities at Washington "did not consider the force in the Valley of the Shenandoah as available for the immediate defense of the capital, being required for the defense of that valley;" and Wadsworth, who had been appointed military governor of the district, said that the force under his command was "nearly all new, imperfectly disciplined, several of the regiments in a very disorganized condition, and entirely inadequate to and unfit for the important duty to which it had been assigned." They reported that the stipulation and the order of the President "had not been complied with;" and, in consequence, Lincoln ordered McDowell's division to remain behind.²

The combined naval and military attack upon Yorktown, which McClellan had declared to be the essential feature of his plan of operations, was never made. It seems hardly to have been mentioned after his arrival at Fortress Monroe. It appears to have been set aside in consequence of the presence of the Virginia, which lay apparently ready for another raid upon the fleet. "Flag-officer Goldsborough," says McClellan, "then in command of the United States squadron in Hampton Roads, regarded it (and no doubt justly) as his highest and most imperative duty to watch and neutralize the Virginia, and as he designed using his most powerful vessels in a contest with her, he did not feel able to detach for the assistance of the army a suit-

able force to attack the water batteries at Yorktown and Gloucester. At no time during the operations against Yorktown was the navy prepared to lend us any material assistance in its reduction until after our land batteries had partially silenced the works."¹ Goldsborough, however, asserted that he had given to McClellan all the assistance for which he asked. "I was requested," he says, "to perform services in connection with the army, and every thing was done that was asked. General McClellan came on board my ship to consult me, and I pointed out to him what I thought the best plan, to which he assented. The plan of attack upon Yorktown was that I should furnish him with seven gun-boats, which I did. Every thing was furnished to General McClellan by the Navy Department that he desired in the way of gun-boats. He told me that he wanted no more than I had detailed for him." By the plan then agreed upon, the approach to Richmond was to be made by the York River, Goldsborough guaranteeing to prevent the Virginia from interfering with it, for which he said that he had ample means. The main body of the army was to advance direct upon Yorktown from Fortress Monroe; a strong force to be landed, under cover of the gun-boats, within four miles; while another column was to land on the northern side of the York, and attack Gloucester in the rear, where it was wholly unprotected. Gloucester, it was thought, would fall without any fighting, and its fall would involve that of Yorktown, whose river front could be attacked from the Point more effectually than by the fleet. No attempt was made to execute this plan—why, Goldsborough never knew.² The reason undoubtedly was that McClellan, who greatly overestimated the enemy's strength, dared not attempt it at once after the withholding of McDowell's corps, to whom he had assigned the attack upon Gloucester, nor even a fortnight later, when he was joined by Franklin, whose division formed a considerable part of that corps.

McClellan then undertook to carry out the plan, which Heintzelman had proposed, of piercing the Confederate line in the centre of the Peninsula, and interposing a force between Yorktown and Richmond. W. F. Smith's division of Keyes's corps was directed, on the morning of the 5th of March, to go straight up the Peninsula to the Half-way House, between Yorktown and Williamsburg, so as to prevent the escape of the garrison at Yorktown, and prevent re-enforcements from being thrown in. Heintzelman was to send Fitz John Porter's division by a road nearly parallel, but to halt at Powers's House, six miles below Yorktown, there to await farther orders. Heavy rains fell all the morning, which made the roads almost impassable for the infantry of Smith's column. He could bring forward only a few guns; ammunition, provision, and forage could not be brought up at all. Early in the afternoon he unexpectedly found himself brought to a stand by the Warwick River, and the works which guarded its passage at Lee's Mill. On all the maps of that region the river was laid down as running parallel with, and not crossing, the main road from Newport News to Williamsburg, re-entering a creek on the James, and making the so-called Mulberry Island a real island. Instead of this, the Warwick was now found to run directly

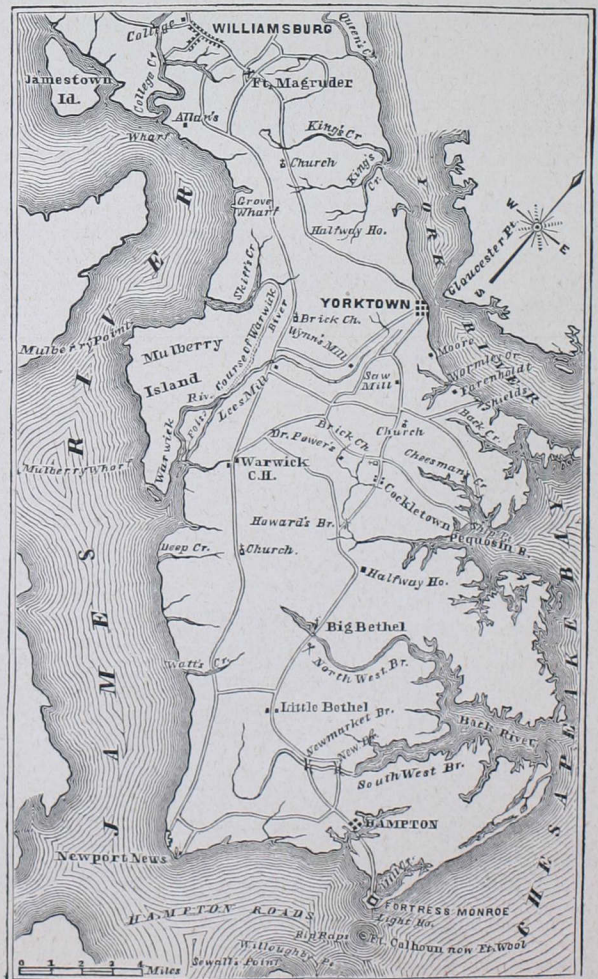
mitted to advance when I first landed on the Peninsula, I could have isolated the troops at Yorktown, and the place would have fallen in a very few days. . . . I supposed that we could force the enemy's lines at about Wynne's Mill, so as to prevent the enemy from re-enforcing it. . . . I was always of opinion that we could have forced their lines; and, from information that we got at the Adams House, about two miles from Williamsburg, the day before the battle there [i. e., May 4], I was satisfied we could have done so. We were willing to try it with a single brigade. General Hamilton made the application, and I forwarded it to the commanding general."—*Com. Rep.*, 346, 347.

Hooker testifies: "When General McClellan landed, there were somewhere between 8000 and 15,000 at Yorktown. . . . From my examination of the works at Yorktown, I felt that their lines could be pierced without any considerable loss by the corps with which I was on duty—Heintzelman's corps. We could have gone right through and gone to the rear of the enemy. They would have run the moment we got to their rear, and we could have picked up the prisoners. Right there at Yorktown they had expended a great deal of labor. But I would have marched right through the redoubts which were a part of the cordon they had, and got on the road between Yorktown and Richmond, and thus compelled the enemy to fight me on my ground, and not have fought them on theirs. If McClellan had thrown his army between Yorktown and Williamsburg, it would have resulted in the capture and destruction of the enemy's army. I know of no reason why that could not be done."—*Com. Rep.*, 575, 576.

McClellan estimated the enemy's force much higher. He says: "Information which I had collected during the winter placed General Magruder's command at from 15,000 to 20,000 men, independently of General Huger's force at Norfolk. Knowing that General Huger could easily spare some troops to re-enforce Yorktown, and that he had indeed done so, and that Johnston's army at Manassas could be brought rapidly by the James and York Rivers to the same point, I proceeded to invest the town without delay."—*Report*, 155. General Keyes wrote on the 7th of April: "Suppose we succeed in breaking through the line in front of us, what can we do next? The roads are very bad, and if the enemy retains the command of James River, and we do not first reduce Yorktown, it would be impossible for us to subsist this army three marches beyond where it is now. . . . The line in front of us is one of the strongest in the world, and the force of the enemy capable of being increased beyond the numbers we have to oppose to him. . . . If we break through and advance, both our flanks will be assailed from two great water-courses in the hands of the enemy; our supplies would give out, and the enemy, equal if not superior in numbers, would, with the other advantages, beat and destroy this army."—*McC. Rep.*, 167, 168. General Keyes appears subsequently to have modified his opinion. In testifying before the committee a year after, he said: "My impression now is that, if the whole army had been pushed forward, we should have found a point to break through. . . . I will not say that, if we had pressed on immediately on arriving in front of their lines, we might not have found a point where we could have broken the line, and then have invested Yorktown on two sides, when the fall of it would, of course, have been hastened. It is my opinion that if we had pressed on rapidly when we first arrived, we might have found a point through which we could have broken."—*Com. Rep.*, 600, 601.

Colonel Cabell, the Confederate chief of artillery, reports: "From the topography of the ground, it was absolutely necessary to occupy the whole of this line in the then condition of our forces. Our forces were so few in number, that it was essential to the safety of the command that the whole should be defended, as the breaking of our lines at any point would necessarily have been attended by the most disastrous results; the centre broken or our flank turned, compelling a precipitate retreat to Yorktown or Mulberry Island, to stand a siege of the enemy's land force, assisted by the whole naval force, with but little prospect of relief or re-enforcements when the enemy occupied the intervening country. Three roads led up from the Peninsula and crossed our line of defenses. The first, on our right, was the Warwick Road, that crossed at Lee's Mill; the second crossed at Wynne's Mill; and the third was commanded by redoubts Numbers 4 and 5, near Yorktown. The crossing at Lee's Mill was naturally strong, and fortifications had been erected there and at Wynne's Mill. Below Lee's Mill, the Warwick River, affected by the tides, and assisted by swamps on each side, proved a tolerable protection; but the marshes could easily be made passable, and the river bridged."—*MAGRUDER*, 531.

² For full details of these withdrawals, see *McC. Rep.*, 134, 139-142; *Com. Rep.*, 251, 252, 303-305. McClellan, in reviewing his campaign, says this reduction of force "removed nearly 60,000 men from my command, and reduced my force by more than one third after its task had been assigned, its operations planned, its fighting begun. To me the blow was most discouraging. It frustrated all my plans for impending operations. It fell when I was too deeply committed to withdraw. It left me incapable of continuing operations which had been begun. It compelled the adoption of another, a different, and a less effective plan of campaign. It made rapid and brilliant operations impossible. It was a fatal error."—*Report*, 160.



THE PENINSULA, BELOW WILLIAMSBURG.

¹ *McC. Rep.*, 156.

² Goldsborough's testimony, *Com. Rep.*, 631-633.

across the Peninsula. Heintzelman's division, after overcoming some slight resistance at Big Bethel and Howard's Bridge, found itself in like manner checked when almost in front of Yorktown.¹ Skirmishing, which Magruder magnifies into an attack of "furious cannonading and musketry," ensued at both points; but the result was that the Confederates held the line of the Warwick intact. If McClellan found the line "stronger than was expected, unapproachable by reason of the Warwick River, and incapable of being carried by assault,"² Magruder was still more astonished that the line was not forced. He believed that he had before him the whole army of the Potomac, "forming an aggregate of not less than 100,000, since ascertained to have been 120,000," and that he had held them in check with 5000. For several days he expected another attack; his men slept in the trenches under arms, but, to his surprise, day after day passed without an assault. In a few days the object of the delay became apparent. Long lines of earthworks began to appear in every direction through the intervening woods and along the open fields.³ McClellan had become convinced that "instant assault upon Yorktown would have been simple folly," and that he must prepare for it by the preliminary employment of heavy guns and some siege operations.⁴ The five thousand Confederates, who, without re-enforcements, held for at least six days the line of the Warwick, decided the whole course of the campaign. They delayed the entire Federal army for a month in the swamps of the Warwick.

Much was to be done before Yorktown could be formally invested. Miles of road were to be cut and corduroyed through swampy forests, and bridges to be built over sluggish streams. Direct hostile operations were suspended. McClellan ordered Keyes, whose corps was posted opposite the line of the Warwick, "not to move any of the troops from their positions unless the enemy actually lands or crosses the Warwick." Once only did he depart from this cautious policy. Smith, whose division was posted on the extreme right, chafed at this inactivity. Keyes, who had more than once "seen a disposition on his part to try to break through the enemy's lines with his division, or a part of it," ordered that no such attempt should be made. Smith had discovered that the weakest point was at Wynne's Mill, near the centre of the enemy's line. He was authorized by McClellan, without the knowledge of Keyes, to push a strong reconnoissance to this point, and sustain the reconnoitring party by a real attack, if found expedient.⁵ At this point the enemy had only a single battery of three six-pounders. The fire of this was silenced, and four companies of the 3d Vermont, wading to the arm-pits, crossed the stream, and drove a North Carolina and Georgia regiment from their rifle-pits. These rallied, and, re-enforced by three regiments, forced the Vermonters out of the pits and back across the stream, with heavy loss. The other regiments who were preparing to support the advance were recalled. Later, an attempt was made by the 6th Vermont to cross by the dam; but a single gun of the enemy commanded this passage, and the attempt was abandoned. The four companies of the 3d which crossed the Warwick lost 25 killed and 50 wounded, most of them severely. The entire loss was 35 killed and 120 wounded. Magruder represents this affair as a decided victory; the Federal loss, he thought, could not be less than 600, his own being not more than 75; "but," he adds, "all the re-enforcements which were on their way to me had not yet joined me, so that I



WILLIAM F. SMITH.

was unable to follow up the action by any decided step." He enumerates fourteen entire regiments of infantry, besides artillery and dragoons, as engaged or within supporting distance. These were the forces on the line of the Warwick. Adding to them the troops in the fortifications, the Confederate force in and about Yorktown probably numbered from 20,000 to 25,000 men. Additional re-enforcements soon arrived, and with them came officers who outranked Magruder, and he ceased to command.¹ This was the only serious engagement on the Peninsula previous to the evacuation of Yorktown, although an almost continuous artillery fire and picket shooting was kept up on various parts of the line.

Meantime for a fortnight an almost continuous dialogue was held by telegraph and mail between McClellan and the government at Washington, running thus:²

¹ *McC. Rep.*, 154, 159.
⁴ *McC. Rep.*, 162.

² *Ibid.*, 160.

³ *MAGRUDER*, 517.
⁵ *McC. Rep.*, 177; *Com. Rep.*, 599.

¹ *MAGRUDER*, 517-535.

² *Com. Rep.*, 319-323.



MAKING ROAD THROUGH THE SWAMP.

McCLELLAN, April 5. The enemy are in large force along our front. Deserters say they are daily re-enforced from Richmond and Norfolk. I beg you to reconsider the order detaching the first corps from my command. If you can not leave me the whole of that corps, let me not lose Franklin and his division. April 6. The order forming new departments, if enforced, deprives me of the power of ordering up wagons and troops absolutely necessary to enable me to advance to Richmond. I request that my orders for wagon-trains, etc., that I have left behind, as well as Woodbury's brigade, may be at once complied with. I repeat my request that Franklin may be restored to my command.

LINCOLN, April 6. Your orders for forwarding transportation and Woodbury's brigade under your command will not be interfered with. You have over 100,000 troops with you, independent of Wool's command. You had better break the enemy's line from Yorktown to Warwick River at once. They will probably use time as advantageously as you can.

McCLELLAN, April 7. Johnston arrived at Yorktown yesterday with strong re-enforcements. It seems clear that I shall have on my hands the whole force of the enemy—not less than 100,000 men, possibly more. When my present command all joins me, I shall have about 85,000 men. With this army I could assault the enemy's works, and perhaps carry them; but were I in possession of their intrenchments, and assaulted by double my numbers, I should not fear the result. I shall do all in my power to carry the works; but I should have the whole first corps to land upon York River, and attack Gloucester in the rear.

LINCOLN, April 9. My explicit directions that Washington should be left entirely secure have been neglected. Do you think I should permit the line from Richmond to this city to be entirely open except the resistance which could be offered by less than 20,000 unorganized troops? When I telegraphed that you had more than 100,000 men, I had just obtained a statement, taken from your own returns, making 108,000 with you or on the way. You say you have but 85,000. Where are the other 23,000? Wool's command is doing for you just what a like number of your own command would have to do if that command was away. I suppose your whole force is with you now. If so, it is the precise time for you to strike a blow. The enemy will gain faster by fortifications and re-enforcements than you can by re-enforcements alone. Let me tell you it is indispensable for you that you strike a blow. I am powerless to help this. I have always thought that going down the bay in search of a field, instead of fighting at or near Manassas, was only shifting, not surmounting a difficulty: we should find the same enemy, and the same or equal intrenchments at either place. The country is noting that the present hesitation to move upon an intrenched enemy is but the story of Manassas repeated. I will do all I can to sustain you; but you must act.

McCLELLAN, April 10. The reconnoissance of to-day proves that it is necessary to invest and attack Gloucester Point. Give me Franklin's and McCall's divisions, and I will at once undertake it. If you can not possibly send me the two divisions to carry out this final plan of the campaign, I will run the risk, and hold myself responsible for the result, if you will give me Franklin's. Grant me this request. The fate of our cause depends upon it. I wish the two divisions; Franklin's is indispensable. I have determined on the point of attack, and am engaged in fixing the positions of the batteries.

ADJUTANT GENERAL, April 11. Franklin's division has been ordered to embark immediately for Fort Monroe.

McCLELLAN, April 12. Thank you for the re-enforcements sent me. Franklin will attack on the other side. The moment I hear from him I will state point of rendezvous. I am confident. April 13. Arrangement proposed by Franklin would assist me much. Our work progressing well. We shall soon be at them, and I am sure of the result. April 14. Have seen Franklin. Thank you for your kindness and consideration. I now understand the matter, which I did not before. Our field-guns annoyed the enemy considerably to-day. Roads and bridges now progressing rapidly. Siege-guns and ammunition coming up very satisfactorily. Shall have nearly all up to-morrow. The tranquillity of Yorktown is nearly at an end.

SECRETARY OF WAR, April 20.¹ I am rejoiced to learn that your opera-

¹ In the Committee's Report this dispatch is dated the 27th. This is doubtless an error, as it clearly refers to the two preceding dispatches, and to McClellan's dispatches of the 18th (not given in the Report) relating to the affair of the 16th, in which he says, "The conduct of the Green Mountain Boys is spoken of in the highest terms. They drove a superior number of the enemy from their fortified position, but were forced to relinquish it on the rebels being re-enforced. The loss of the enemy must have been very heavy, as the well-directed fire of our artillery mowed them by acres."



REMAINS OF BRITISH WORKS AT YORKTOWN.

tions are progressing so rapidly, and with so much spirit and success, and congratulate you and the officers and soldiers engaged upon the brilliant affair mentioned in your telegrams. Every thing in the power of the department is at your service. I hope soon to congratulate you upon a splendid victory that shall be the finishing stroke of the war.

Here the colloquy appears to have closed for a while. The tranquillity of Yorktown was not disturbed for a fortnight; and it was many months before the splendid victory was achieved which was to be "the finishing stroke of the war." Franklin, with his division, 11,000 strong, reached Yorktown on the 14th, raising the effective force of the Army of the Potomac to more than 100,000 men,¹ besides the 10,000 of Wool, who at Fortress Monroe were doing just what, had they been removed, McClellan would have been obliged to do with the same number of his own command. McClellan's first plan, for the success of which he proposed to hold himself responsible, was to join Hooker's division to Franklin's, and, landing on the Severn, to make a diversion by attacking Gloucester in the rear. This plan was abandoned because "no more troops could be spared" to assist Franklin. He then determined to act on Gloucester by disembarking Franklin on the north bank of the York, under the protection of the gun-boats. A place for landing was selected, but nothing more was done. Franklin's division was kept for more than three weeks on board the transports, and was not disembarked until the 6th of May, after Yorktown had been abandoned and the battle of Williamsburg had been fought.²

By the middle of April the works at Yorktown had been reconnoitred, the locations for the batteries determined, and the roads and bridges to reach them well advanced. The topography of the place indicates the position of its defenses. The Confederate works occupied the precise lines of the British works of 1781, which were until recently in fair preservation. The level bluff upon which Yorktown stands forms an irregular parallelogram, the longer sides, running northwest and southeast, being 1200 yards, the shorter sides being 400 and 600 yards. It is inclosed by deep ravines, which almost meet in the rear. The American forces in 1781 advanced southwestwardly from Williamsburg. The Federal forces in 1862 advanced from the opposite direction; but the attack in both cases was directed against the southwestern face of the works. In 1781 the assailing batteries were advanced to within 200 and 300 yards from the defensive works; in 1862 they were from 1500 to 2500 yards; one battery, with two two-hundred pound and five one-hundred pound Parrotts, was 3810 yards from the nearest point of the defenses. All told, there were fifteen batteries, mounted with 111 guns and mortars. By the 3d of May these were essentially completed and armed. The work had been carried on under an incessant but inef-

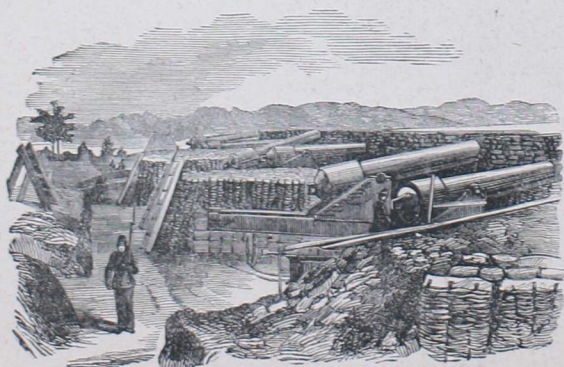
¹ McClellan undesignedly gives the impression that Franklin joined him a week later. He says (Report, 176), "On the 22d of April, General Franklin, with his division from General McDowell's corps, had arrived and reported to me." The misdate here implied has been positively made by various writers; among others, by Hillard, who says (*Life and Campaigns of McClellan*, 180), "On the 22d of April, while the siege of Yorktown was going on, General Franklin's division of General McDowell's corps arrived, and reported to General McClellan. These troops were kept on board the transports, and not embarked for some days." The force of the Army of the Potomac at this precise date has not been given; but, on the 30th of April, no considerable re-enforcements having arrived in the interval, McClellan (Report, 53) says that there were, nominally, including Franklin, 126,387 men. Of these, however, 11,037 were absent by authority, and 6015 sick or under arrest, leaving an effective force of 109,335.

The Assistant Adjutant General furnished the following detailed statement, "accurately compiled from the morning Report of the Army of the Potomac on the 30th day of April, 1862, signed by Major General McClellan and his assistant adjutant general" (Com. Rep., 323):

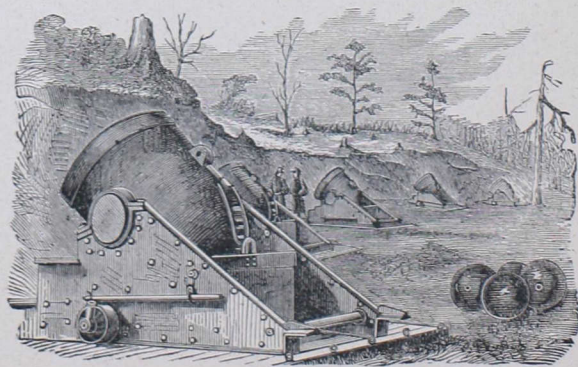
Number of Men composing the Army of the Potomac, April 30, 1862.

	Present for duty.	Sick and on special duty.	Aggregate absent.	Present and absent.
General Staff, Engineers, and Engineer Brigade, Cavalry Division, Escort to Head-quarters, and Provost Guard.....	13,787	798	2,072	16,657
Second Corps, General Sumner.....	19,054	887	2,061	22,002
Third Corps, General Heintzelman...	34,633	2009	3,068	39,710
Fourth Corps, General Keyes.....	33,586	1886	4,089	39,561
Franklin's Division.....	11,332	270	846	12,448
	112,392	5850	12,136	130,378

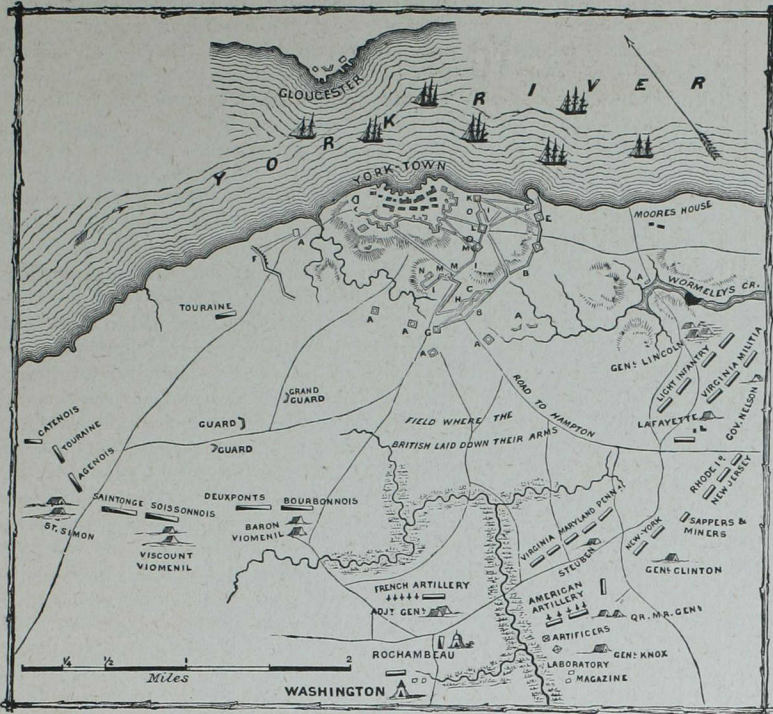
The Assistant Secretary of War states (McC. Rep., 109), "In thirty-seven days (and most of it was accomplished in thirty days) from the time I received the order [Feb. 28], there were transported to Fort Monroe 121,500 men." Franklin's division can not, from the dates, be included in this number. ² McC. Rep., 176; Com. Rep., 621, 632; Art. Op., 71-82.



BATTERY NO. 1.

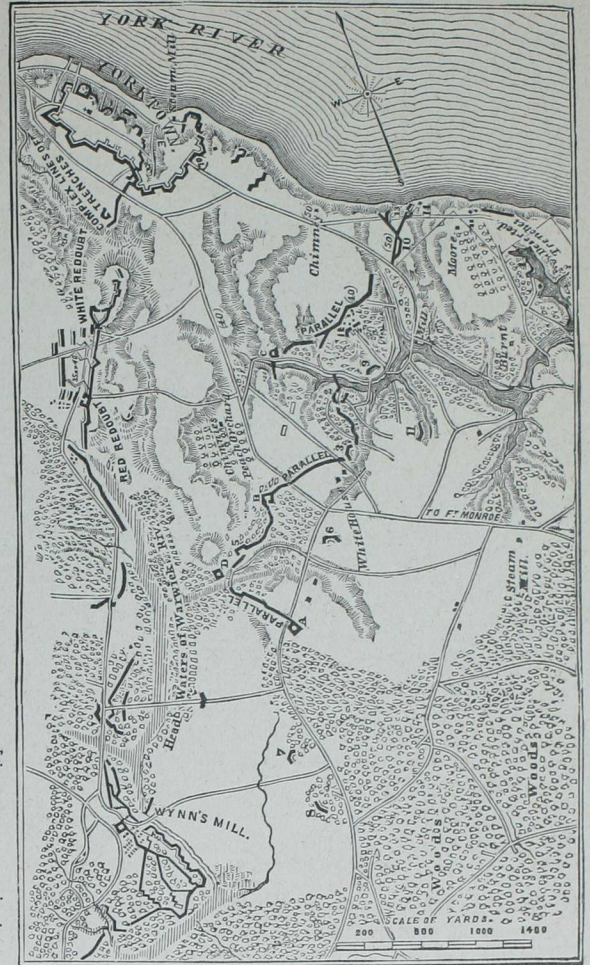


MORTAR BATTERY NO. 4.



SIEGE OF YORKTOWN, OCTOBER, 1781.

A, British Outworks, taken possession of by the Americans on their arrival.—B, First Parallel.—C, D, American Batteries.—E, Bomb Battery.—G, French Battery.—H, French Bomb Battery.—I, Second Parallel.—K, Redoubt stormed by the Americans.—L, Redoubt stormed by the French.—M, M, M, French Batteries.—N, French Bomb Battery.—O, American Batteries.



SIEGE OF YORKTOWN, APRIL, 1862.

The Figures (1—15) designate the Union Batteries.—The Letters (A, B, C, D) designate Redoubts.

- NO. ARMAMENT.
- 1, 2 20-pdr. Parrotts,
 - 5 100-pdr. Parrotts,
 - 2, 3 44-inch Rifled,
 - 6 30-pdr. Parrotts,
 - 6 20-pdr. Parrotts,
 - 3, 7 20-pdr. Parrotts,
 - 4, 10 13-inch Mortars,
 - 5, 8 20-pdr. Parrotts,
 - 6, 5 10-inch Mortars,
 - 7, 6 20-pdr. Parrotts,
 - 8, 6 20-pdr. Parrotts,
 - 9, 10 10-inch Mortars,
 - 10, 7 44-inch Rifled,
 - 3 100-pdr. Parrotts,
 - 11, 4 10-inch Mortars,
 - 12, 5 10-inch Mortars,
 - 5 8-inch Mortars,
 - 13, 7 30-pdr. Parrotts,
 - 14, 3 100-pdr. Parrotts,
 - 1 100-pdr. James,
 - 15, 2 8-inch S. Howitzers.

fectual fire from the enemy. Not a score of lives were lost by this fire.¹ But the troops suffered severely from sickness during that month. Nearly an eighth of the army was disabled by disease. Its morale was also impaired; it was hard to bring officers and men to endure, day after day and week after week, the weary toil of digging in the Warwick swamps. The Army of the Potomac was less effective at the beginning of May than it had been a month before.²

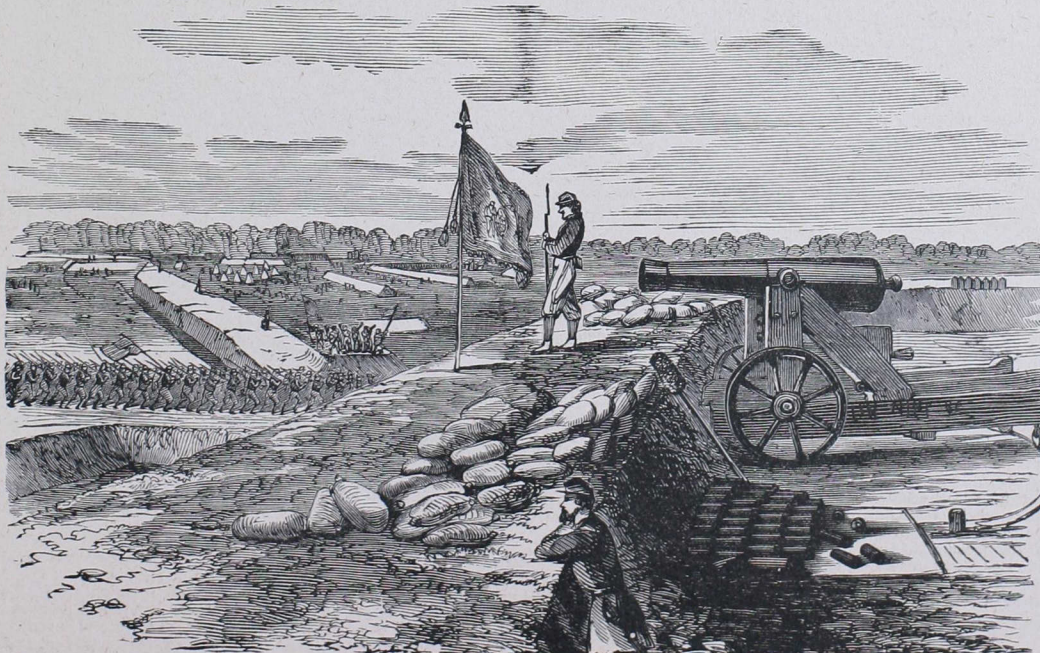
McClellan, in opposition to the opinion of the chief of engineers, would not open fire from the batteries, one by one, as they were finished, but resolved to wait until all were ready, when he would have such an overwhelming force as would crush every thing before it. He departed from the plan only so far as to open with solid shot and shell from the 100 and 200 pounders of Battery No. 1, upon the wharf at Yorktown, 4800 yards distant, where the enemy were discharging several vessels. Most of the percussion shells failed to explode, and those filled with Greek fire produced no perceptible effect. The vessels were driven off, and took refuge across the river, behind Gloucester Point.³ Daybreak on the 6th of May was the time fixed upon for the general fire to open. On the afternoon of the 3d the enemy began a vigorous fire of shells into Heintzelman's camp, which was nearest to Yorktown. A balloon, which was sent up to reconnoitre, seemed to be a special mark. They kept up a random fire, without any apparent object, until after midnight. Toward daylight, Heintzelman was awakened by a rattling fire of musketry. He telegraphed to the officer commanding the skirmishers in the trenches, and received answer that there was no fighting, but the light of a great fire in Yorktown was visible. At daylight it was reported that the enemy were evacuating their works. Heintzelman went up in the balloon, saw that the number of camp-fires about Yorktown was much dimin-

ished, and the guns had disappeared. Presently he saw the Federal skirmishers entering the works. He came down, and, presuming that he should be at once ordered in pursuit, gave direction for his troops to prepare three days' rations. But hour after hour passed, and no orders came. He rode over to head-quarters, and found that orders had been given for the pursuit; but it was past noon before they got off.⁴ Magruder, who had constructed the works, and had so obstinately held them without re-enforcements, had ceased to command a fortnight before. A council of war had decided that the fortification was untenable, and must be abandoned; and the fire of the previous evening was merely to mask the evacuation. Of the ninety-four guns, fifty-six were left behind, only three of them disabled.⁵ McClellan telegraphed to Washington, "We have the ramparts; have guns, ammunition, camp equipage, etc. We hold the entire line of his works, which the engineers report as being very strong. I have thrown all my cavalry and horse-infantry in pursuit, supported by infantry. No time shall be lost.

¹ "An incessant fire was kept up during the day with rifled projectiles and eight-inch shell and solid shot, and thirty-two and forty-two pounder shot, without retarding the work in the least. Since our first appearance before Yorktown (April 5), and particularly since the 15th, the ravines have been filled with men night and day, making roads, building batteries and parallels, and guarding the works. The loss of life has been most trifling. I have not the exact number, but I have reason to believe that it does not amount to a dozen."—*Art. Op.*, 146.

² On the 30th of April the sick-list numbered 5618; there were also "absent by authority" 11,037 (*McC. Rep.*, 53). It is fair to assume that two thirds of the leaves of absence must have been given by reason of disability. "April 19. Colonel Alexander states that the men worked well, but their officers do not attach sufficient importance to the work to be performed, many of them lying in the shade in place of superintending the work" (*Art. Op.*, 159). "April 21. Of the 3000 men asked for, 2326 reported this morning for duty" (*Ibid.*, 160). "April 26. Very little work was done last night; it was impossible to get the working parties to do any thing" (*Ibid.*, 169). "April 27. A great deal of difficulty and delay is still experienced in regulating the working parties. Details, after waiting at the place where they have been directed to go, return to camp and report no engineer officer to be found; while the engineer officer reports waiting several hours without seeing them" (*Ibid.*, 171). "April 28. To-day only 1000 men reported in place of 1500 to Lieutenant McAlester" (*Ibid.*, 173). "We should probably have succeeded [in an immediate assault upon Yorktown], and if we failed, it may well be doubted whether the shock of an unsuccessful assault would have been more demoralizing than the labors of the siege. Our troops toiled for a month in the trenches, or lay in the swamps of the Warwick. We lost few men by the siege, but disease took a fearful hold upon the army, and toil and hardship, unredeemed by the excitement of combat, impaired the morale. We did not carry with us from Yorktown so good an army as we took there" (*Ibid.*, 62).

³ *Art. Op.*, 63, 127; *Com. Rep.*, 429.
⁴ *Com. Rep.*, 347.
⁵ *Art. Op.*, 189.



TAKING POSSESSION OF YORKTOWN.



MAJOR-GENERAL W. S. HANCOCK. (1880.)

The gun-boats have gone up the York River. Gloucester is also in our possession. I shall push the enemy to the wall."¹

The works at Yorktown were certainly of very great strength. Probably they could not have been carried by assault unless the assailants were fully twice as many as the defenders. There were also strong outworks, extending for a mile to the head waters of the Warwick. This stream, with its swampy borders, presented a very strong defensive line if held by an adequate force. But, extending for more than ten miles, a much larger force than the enemy had at his disposal would have been needed to hold them against a determined attack. They consisted of an infantry parapet and trenches along the bank, with three or four redoubts and batteries, mounting only two or three light field-pieces to sweep the main approaches. At no time before the 16th of April could Magruder have given more than 10,000 men to the defense of this whole line without stripping Yorktown of its garrison. A real attack by 20,000 men could have pierced the line. Once broken, there was nothing between the assailants and Williamsburg.²

Johnston, who had for a fortnight been in command on the Peninsula, conducted the retreat from Yorktown with rare ability. Besides the heavy guns, and ammunition belonging to them, he left little behind. His trains and the mass of his troops were well under way hours before their departure was perceived. The weather had favored him. Several clear days had put the roads in good condition, and before the pursuit was commenced he was past the defensive lines before Williamsburg, and well on his way to Richmond. A strong rear guard was left behind near Williamsburg, where works had been thrown up to check any pursuit. Two main roads run down the Peninsula from near Williamsburg; one, following the York River, goes to Yorktown; the other, following the course of the James, crosses the Warwick at Lee's Mill. These two roads, which are connected by numerous cross-roads, come together a mile east of Williamsburg. At this point was Fort Magruder, the centre of the Confederate works, which, to the number of thirteen, stretched clear across the narrow isthmus between the two rivers. All these works were hidden by heavy forests, concealing them from view until the observer was within a mile. The trees near the works had been felled, so that the occupants of the redoubts might have timely notice of the approach of an enemy and bring their artillery to bear.

McClellan, though he was convinced that the force of the enemy outnumbered his own, had no idea that they would make a stand before Williamsburg. He remained at Yorktown to direct the movements of Franklin's division by the York River to West Point, having ordered Stoneman, with all the available cavalry and four batteries of horse artillery, to pursue the enemy and harass his rear. A heavy and continuous rain-storm now set in, which soon rendered the roads difficult. But Stoneman pressed on, and, a little past noon of the 4th, debouched from the screen of woods, and found

himself under a hot fire from Fort Magruder. He fell back, suffering some loss in men and guns, to await the coming up of the infantry, without whom it was useless to attempt to assail the enemy's works. Hooker's division of Heintzelman's corps had been ordered to support Stoneman. They left Yorktown about noon. While struggling to reach the position where Stoneman stood at bay, they found the road occupied by Smith's division, which, coming up from Lee's Mill, had turned into this road. Hooker had to stop for three or four hours until Smith had passed. Night was closing in before he was able to advance. He pressed on for four hours through the darkness and rain, hoping to come up with the enemy before morning; but the men were exhausted by laboring the previous night in the trenches before Yorktown and by the long march. They must have rest. An hour or two before midnight they were ordered to halt, and flung themselves down in the miry road. At daybreak they were aroused and summoned to march. In an hour after they came in sight of Fort Magruder. Hooker required but a few minutes to decide upon his course. He was in pursuit of a retreating army. It was his business to attack it, and, if he could not capture it, to hold it in check. His own force was hardly 9000; but within two hours' march were 30,000 men, and within four hours' march was the bulk of the Army of the Potomac, 60,000 more. He was sure that he could hold his grasp upon the enemy against thrice his numbers for twice the time that it would be required for aid to reach him. The Confederates were soon driven into Fort Magruder, and Hooker pushed his skirmishers so close to the works that not a gun could be worked. If a man showed his head or hand he got a ball in it. Hooker sent word to the commanding officer in the rear that there was nothing in the way of his advancing his troops. The enemy "was in a vice," and could not fire; the line of defenses across the isthmus could have been carried, he said, without the loss of ten men.¹

But there was really no commanding officer there. McClellan was at Yorktown. Heintzelman had been ordered to take charge of operations in front; but Sumner had come up in person the night before without any troops of his own corps, and assumed command in virtue of seniority. "Sumner ranked me," says Heintzelman, "and I had nothing to do." That night nothing was done. Next morning a consultation was held. Sumner decided to assail the enemy's left, and troops were ordered up for that purpose. So hour after hour passed away. Hooker all the while had been hotly engaged upon the left. The sound of the firing was plainly heard at head-quarters. Heintzelman was sent in that direction to take charge of operations. He had scarcely gone when Hooker's letter came, telling Heintzelman that he had been hotly engaged all the morning; his men hard at work, but much exhausted; but communication was open; troops could come up, take post by his side, and whip the enemy. In twenty minutes the letter was returned from Sumner, with an endorsement that it had been opened and read by the senior officer on that field.² But no re-enforcements came up. For hours Sumner was apprehensive of an attack upon the centre, where he kept his post, though he repeatedly gave orders for the troops in the rear to move up on the same road which Hooker had taken.³



GEORGE STONEMAN.

¹ *Reb. Rec.*, iv., 6.

² For the strength of the Confederate works on the Warwick, see especially *Art. Op.*, 194-201. The most exaggerated reports were put forth respecting the strength of this line. Thus the *New York Herald* of April 22 furnishes an elaborate map showing three continuous lines of intrenchments running completely across the isthmus. The first line mounts 140 guns, the second, two miles in the rear, has 120 guns, both being provided with "hot shot furnaces." The third, two miles beyond, has 240 guns, and consists, besides the intrenchments, of six forts. Behind these appear the "encampments of the rebel army in four grand divisions," besides a "reserve at Williamsburg;" in all, 500 guns, besides those of Yorktown itself. The works on Gloucester Point were said to have "eighteen 100-pounder rifle guns." Instead of which, most of the pieces were light navy guns; "the others are believed to be as heavy as 32-pounders." Of the whole, only eight in all bore on the river and on our positions.—*Art. Op.*, 193.

³ *Com. Rep.*, 577.

² Hooker's Report, *Reb. Rec.*, iv., 15.
³ Keyes, in his testimony (*Com. Rep.*, 603), says that these orders were countermanded; but Sumner (*Testimony, Ibid.*, 361) makes no reference to any such countermand; and Kearney's division, which relieved Hooker, and Peck's and Hancock's brigades, which performed important parts toward the close of the battle, came up under orders from Sumner. McClellan (*Report, 1862*) merely mentions the countermanding by Sumner of orders to re-enforce Hancock.

Hooker had opened the battle at half past seven in the morning. At nine he had silenced the fire of Fort Magruder, and kept his advantage for two or three hours. But the enemy began to receive re-enforcements, and took the offensive. Longstreet, who commanded the rear, had retreated beyond Williamsburg; he turned back to strengthen the force which was engaged. Three times in succession the Confederates charged upon Hooker's centre, each time with fresh troops, and each time were thrown back with heavy loss. Hooker's ammunition began to give out. Longstreet made a furious charge upon a battery left for a moment without support, and captured four guns, but was again driven off. So the tide of battle ebbed and flowed until between four and five in the afternoon, when Kearney came upon the field. For six hours he had been struggling up along a single muddy road, encumbered with other troops and trains. He outranked Hooker, who gladly left the command to him, his wearied regiments resting from the fight. Kearney dashed impetuously forward, and, after a sharp contest, drove the enemy back, gained his rear, and won the fight on this part of the scene. Darkness now closed in, and the regiments bivouacked on the field which they had won.

Toward the close of the day the action had stretched to the right of Fort Magruder. Peck's brigade, which had come up, took position there, and held its ground against all attacks. Hancock had come up still farther to the right. He took possession of two redoubts, which were weakly held, and repeatedly asked for re-enforcements to enable him to advance and take another redoubt which commanded the plain between him and Fort Magruder. Sumner twice ordered this re-enforcement, and twice countermanded the order at the moment of execution. At length, the request being repeated, Sumner ordered him to fall back; but Hancock deferred the execution of this order to the last moment. He was unwilling to lose the advantage which he had gained. The enemy began to press hard upon him. Feigning to retreat slowly, he suddenly turned upon them, poured in some terrific volleys of musketry, and then giving the word, "Now, gentlemen, the bayonet!" charged with his whole brigade. The enemy broke into utter rout, leaving behind more than 500 killed, wounded, and prisoners. Hancock's loss was only 31. This brilliant charge, just in the dusk, closed the battle. The entire Federal loss was 2228; of these, 456 were killed, 1400 wounded, and 372 missing. More than two thirds of this was suffered by Hooker's division, which lost, in all, 1575, of whom 338 were killed, 992 wounded, and 335 missing. Nearly all of the prisoners were taken on the night preceding the battle. They were men who had straggled into the woods, and, not being able to extricate themselves in the darkness, were captured by the enemy's pickets. The loss of the Confederates must have been larger. During the greater part of the fight they attacked with superior numbers, and were flung back by cannon and musketry. Hooker believed that the killed of the enemy was double his own. The next day more than eight hundred of his wounded were found in the hospitals at Williamsburg; others were distributed among private houses, and all the available tenements in the vicinity of the battle-field were filled with them.

McClellan had remained at Yorktown to superintend the preparations for sending Franklin's troops up the river. He sent aids to observe operations in front. It was past noon before he heard any thing to lead him to suppose that there was any thing occurring beyond a simple affair of a rear guard. At one o'clock came a message importing that all was not going well in front. Soon Sprague, the governor of Rhode Island, who was acting as aid to the chief of artillery, dashed up, reported how matters stood in front, and urged him to go up there at once. "I thought they could take care of that little matter," replied McClellan; but promised to go up.¹ He reached Sumner's head-quarters between four and five, took the command in person, and, hearing heavy firing toward the right, ordered three brigades in that direction; but, before the orders could be executed, Hancock had decided the day on that part of the field.²

Night put an end to the contest, and the wearied troops slept upon the muddy field, many without food, and all without shelter. The enemy took advantage of the darkness to decamp, leaving their dead and wounded behind them. During the night McClellan sent word to Heintzelman not to renew the attack in the morning, as he was about to make other dispositions, and would send re-enforcements. The Confederates, making no delay at Williamsburg, pushed on up the Peninsula for Richmond. A few cavalry were sent after them, who succeeded in picking up some prisoners and four or five guns which had stuck fast in the mud.

The day after the battle four divisions were sent in transports up the York River. They landed at West Point. The landing had just been effected, when, at nine o'clock on the morning of the 7th, an unsuccessful attempt was made to drive them off by a body of Confederates who had got thus



THE WHITE HOUSE.

far on their retreat. A sharp musketry fire was kept up till afternoon, when the Confederates withdrew, and kept on their retreat. The Federal loss in this affair was 49 killed, and 154 wounded and missing. After two or three days' delay at Williamsburg, the army commenced its slow march up the Peninsula, and on the 16th of May the head-quarters were established at the White House, on the Pamunkey, one of the two streams which unite to form the York River. This place is thirty miles north of Williamsburg, and twenty-five east of Richmond, with which it is connected by the Richmond and York River Railroad.³

Johnston had determined to abandon Yorktown some days before the evacuation took place. On the 28th of April he wrote to Tattall, the commander of the Virginia, "The enemy continues his cautious policy. The preparations for opening fire upon Yorktown seem to be nearly completed. His great superiority in artillery will probably enable him to dismount our guns very soon." He suggested to Tattall that possibly he might make a dash past Fortress Monroe and destroy the Federal transports in the York River. On the 10th of May Johnston wrote: "Finding it necessary to abandon this position, and regarding the evacuation of Norfolk as a consequence of that measure, I have directed Major General Huger to withdraw his troops from that place and remove to Richmond. I have also desired Captain Lee to abandon the navy yard, and report to the Secretary of the Navy in Richmond, saving as much as possible of the public property, and destroying, if practicable, what he can not save." Norfolk had been held by Huger with 15,000 men. The greater part of these went toward Richmond almost simultaneously with the evacuation of Yorktown. A few thousand were left behind until the last moment. Intelligence of this reached Fortress Monroe on the 8th. Wool, with a few thousand men, set out to take possession. They approached Norfolk on the afternoon of the 10th. At the outskirts they were met by the mayor and a deputation of citizens with a white flag, and bearing a letter from Huger, stating that, being unable to hold the city, he had surrendered it into the hands of the civil authorities. The mayor said that he had come to surrender the city into the hands of the United States, and to ask protection for the persons and property of the citizens. This was assured by Wool. The general, Mr. Chase, the Secretary of the Treasury, who had accompanied the expedition, and the mayor, then entered a carriage and drove to the City Hall to inaugurate the new government. Wool issued a proclamation appointing General Viele military governor, who was to see that no peaceable citizen should be molested, and that no United States soldier entered the city without a written permit from the commanding officer of his regiment. Wool then left the city. A crowd of people assembled. The mayor made a speech. He said that if the question

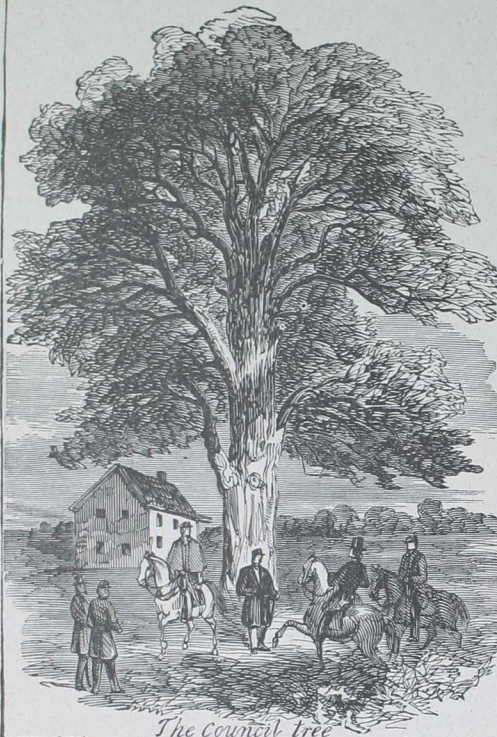
¹ Sprague's testimony, *Com. Rep.*, 570.

² De Joinville says (p. 55): "The success of Hancock had been decisive, and the reserves brought up by the general-in-chief, charging upon the field, settled the affair." McClellan (*Report*, 184) shows that the contest was over before these re-enforcements could come up. Estvan, who scarcely ever tells the truth even by accident, and whose work is only worthy of notice because others have repeated his statements, brings McClellan personally into the action. He says (*War Pictures*, 279): "Suddenly a shout of a thousand voices broke upon the ear like the rushing of a mighty wind from the wood. What did this portend? There was little time left for us to speculate. Charge after charge was made upon our men, and the news then spread that McClellan, with the main body of his army, had arrived on the field of battle. This explained the loud cheers from the wood. Our men could no longer stand their ground. McClellan in person led on his troops into the midst of the fire. Magruder, now finding that the battle was lost, ordered a retreat to be sounded."

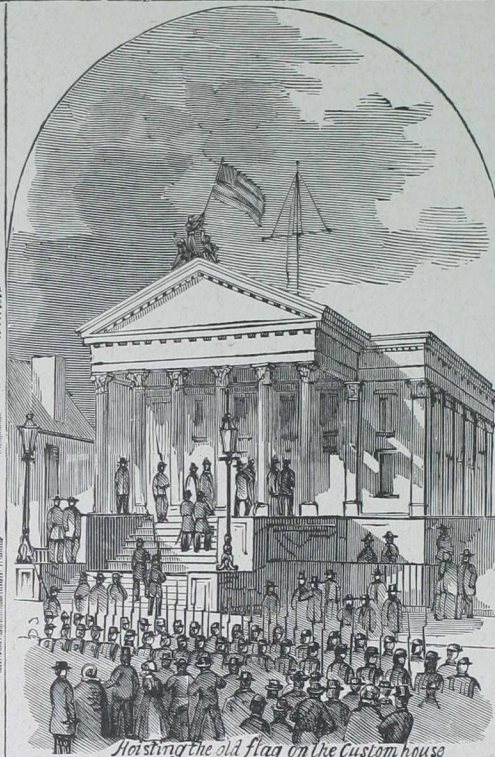
³ The place derived its name from a plain white wooden house, occupying the site of the residence of Mrs. Custis, afterward the wife of Washington. This, as well as Arlington House on the Potomac, had fallen to the daughter of George Washington Parke Custis, the son of Martha Washington by her former husband. She was now the wife of General Robert E. Lee. The family of Lee had been residing at the White House, but had, just before the arrival of the Federal troops, removed to the neighborhood of Richmond. Mrs. Lee left upon the wall the following note: "Northern soldiers, who profess to honor the memory of Washington, forbear to desecrate the home of his first married life, the property of his wife, now owned by her descendants.—A Granddaughter of Mrs. Washington." Under this one of the Union guards wrote: "A Northern officer has protected your property, in sight of the enemy, and at the request of your overseer." This residence was burned at the close of June, when the Federal forces abandoned West Point.



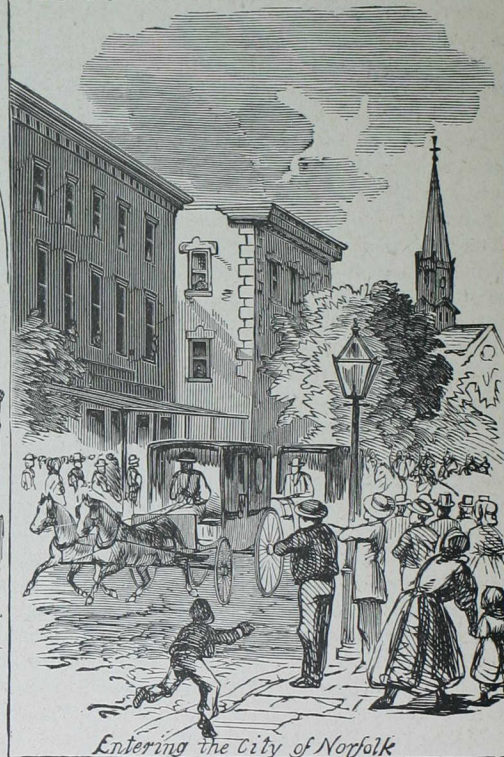
The Mayor & Councils of Norfolk meeting the Federal forces under a flag of truce



The Council tree



Hoisting the old flag on the Custom house



Entering the City of Norfolk



Burning of the Gosport Navy Yard

THE OCCUPATION OF NORFOLK.

had rested with him he would have defended the city to the last man, but the government had decided differently; the citizens of Norfolk had been deserted by their friends, and all that the city authorities could do was to make the best terms possible. The Union commander had granted all that had been asked, and now the citizens should yield, and abstain from acts of violence and disorder. The crowd dispersed, having given three cheers for Davis and three groans for Lincoln. No notice was taken of this impudent proceeding. The loss of Norfolk, as has already been related, involved the destruction of the iron-clad Virginia.¹ A court of inquiry decided that this was unnecessary. A naval court-martial was convened, before which Tatt-nall was arraigned. The court honorably acquitted him, affirming that, on the day before the evacuation of Norfolk, a council was held by order of the Secretary of the Navy to determine what should be done with the Virginia; that Tatt-nall was in favor of passing Fortress Monroe and taking the ship into York River, or of running to Savannah with her, but that he was over-ruled by the council, who directed that she should remain on this side of Fortress Monroe for the protection of Norfolk and Richmond; that she was

¹ *Ante*, page 257.

lightened in order to enable her to go up to a safe place on the James; that she could not be lightened sufficiently to enable her to reach that place, but was thereby rendered vulnerable;¹ that all which was necessary for the enemy to do was to keep a watch upon her until her provisions were exhaust-

¹ NOTE ON THE VIRGINIA.—The report of the trial of Tatt-nall enables us to correct and supplement our account (*ante*, page 250) of the Virginia. It shows that she was far less formidable than was supposed. The iron plating of the roof or shield was only four inches thick. The "knuckle" formed by the projection of the eaves of the roof beyond the hull was twenty inches under water. Below this the hull was covered for a depth of two feet by three layers of iron, each an inch thick and eight inches broad, put on horizontally. She then drew between twenty and twenty-two feet of water. After her encounter with the Monitor she was put on the dock, with the purpose of putting additional plates two inches thick perpendicularly upon the hull; the iron, however, gave out before all her whole length could be covered. These additional plates reached about one hundred and eighty feet from the bows, leaving sixty feet at the stern with only three inches. Four shots what broken, but there was no serious injury. A rafter was cracked and the plates some twenty-two feet forward and twenty-three feet aft. Her engines were very defective. They failed several times, and the engineer said they were liable to fail at any moment. It was often found difficult to start, to stop, or to reverse them. In the opinion of Buchanan, her first commander, she was not seaworthy, not being sufficiently buoyant, and would founder in a common sea; the moment a sea struck her it would wash into her ports; she was only fitted for harbor defense. Catesby Jones, her executive officer, thought her no match for the Monitor, if properly handled; the Monitor ought to have sunk her in fifteen minutes; one of the smallest tugs might have disabled her rudder and propeller.

ed, and then capture her; and that, under these circumstances, the only alternative of her commander was to abandon and destroy the ship, as he had done. The navy yard at Gosport was destroyed by fire, and an attempt, only partly successful, was made to blow up the great stone dry dock. All the batteries which guarded the James River were abandoned, and the water approach was open to within eight miles of Richmond.

Four days after the destruction of the Virginia, the Galena, Monitor, and two gun-boats were repulsed at Fort Darling on Drewry's Bluff. Among those who defended the fort were the crew of the Virginia.¹ The boats had been put to a work for which they were not adapted. Goldsborough urged McClellan to send a force to capture that fort, which was of no great strength.² He offered to lead the naval attack in person. If the fort should be captured, he said that the vessels could remove the obstructions above, go straight to the city, and shell it to surrender. McClellan considered the proposal, and concluded to defer a decision until he had got his army on the other side of the Chickahominy.³ The truth was, that, in consequence of his urgent representations, an order had just been given to McDowell which rendered it necessary to move on the basis of the York River rather than on the far preferable line of the James.

Yorktown had scarcely been evacuated when McClellan again began to represent his force as wholly inferior to that of the enemy. On the evening of the battle of Williamsburg he telegraphed, "I find Joe Johnston in front of me in strong force, probably greater a good deal than my own, and very strongly entrenched." Five days later, Williamsburg having been abandoned, he writes from "three miles beyond Williamsburg," "I regard it as certain that the enemy will meet us with all his force on or near the Chickahominy. They can concentrate many more men than I have. Every effort should be made to re-enforce me with all the disposable forces in Eastern Virginia. If I am not re-enforced, it is probable that I will be obliged to fight nearly double my numbers strongly entrenched. I do not think it will be possible for me to bring more than 70,000 men upon the field of battle." Four days later he said, "I can not bring into actual battle more than 80,000 men at the utmost, and with them I must attack in position, probably entrenched, a much larger force, perhaps double my numbers. I beg that you will cause this army to be re-enforced without delay by all the disposable troops of the government. I ask for every man that the government can send me. Any commander of the re-enforcements whom your excellency may designate will be acceptable to me, whatever expression I may heretofore have addressed to you on the subject. I will fight the enemy, whatever their force may be, with whatever force I may have, and I firmly believe that we shall beat them; but our triumph should be made decisive and complete." He desired that these re-enforcements should be sent by water, because their arrival would be more safe and certain, and because he would then be free to rest his army on the James River whenever the navigation of that stream should be opened.

To these repeated and urgent requests, the President replied on the 18th that he was unwilling to uncover the capital entirely; that, even if this were prudent, the junction could be more speedily made by a land march than by water; but, in order to increase the strength of the attack upon Richmond, McDowell, whose forces had been augmented to 35,000 or 40,000 men, would march by the shortest route, and, keeping himself always in a position to save the capital from any possible attack, he should so operate as to put his left wing in communication with McClellan's right, which should be extended to the north of Richmond. The communication between the forces might be established either north or south of the Pamunkey River. After this had been effected, McDowell was to be under the orders of McClellan; but he must give no orders which could put McDowell out of position to cover Washington. This definitive order decided the plan of the operations against Richmond.⁴

The conduct of Johnston evinced that he was at no time in command of the powerful force attributed to him. He had made no attempt to interfere with the siege operations against Yorktown, but abandoned his strong works as soon as he found that they were likely to be assailed. He gave up his strong lines at Williamsburg after fighting just long enough to enable his trains to escape, abandoning his sick and wounded. He pursued his retreat to Richmond, making no attempt to impede or harass the enemy beyond the slight attack upon a single division which was for a moment isolated at West Point. Instead of 150,000 or 160,000 men, it is hardly possible that his strength could have exceeded 50,000 or 60,000.

The approach of the Federal army occasioned a fearful panic at Richmond. Congress adjourned in haste on the 21st of April. The Confederate officials sent off their wives and children, and packed up the government archives for transportation to Columbia. Packing-boxes and trunks became the staple wares, and encumbered all the sidewalks; the railway depôts were crowded with baggage, the trains thronged with refugees. The panic increased as successive tidings came that Yorktown had been evacuated, Williamsburg abandoned, Norfolk surrendered, the Merrimac destroyed, and the Federal gun-boats were ascending the James River. The only obstruction to their ascent was the incomplete fort at Drewry's Bluff, and the unfinished barrier just above it. The Secretary of the Navy advertised for timber to construct new defenses; schooners loaded with plaster and guano were seized and sunk in the river; sharpshooters were called upon to organize into companies to line the banks. One enthusiastic individual

offered to be one of a hundred to board the whole fleet of gun-boats and take them at all hazards. The state Legislature resolved that the city should be defended to the last extremity, "if such defense is in accordance with the views of the President," and appointed a committee to wait upon him to learn his intentions. He said that it would be the effort of his life to defend Virginia and to cover the capital; he had never thought of abandoning the state; if Richmond should fall, which he did not anticipate, that would be no reason for withdrawing the army from Virginia; the war could be carried on in the state for twenty years. Notwithstanding his confident words, he was worn and haggard. His family feared for his life. He lost no time in putting his house in order. He was baptized at home one Tuesday morning, and was confirmed in church an hour later. His family should go to Raleigh; they only feared that they had delayed too long already. The 16th was appointed as a fast-day. On the day when the proclamation was issued, tidings had just come of the capture of New Orleans. The evacuation of Yorktown and the abandonment of Norfolk had been determined upon. Well might the proclamation declare that "recent disaster has spread gloom over the land, and sorrow sits at the hearth-stones of our countrymen." In the interim Norfolk had been seized, and the Virginia, "the iron diadem of the South, worth an army of 50,000 men," destroyed. On the day before the fast, Letcher, the governor, summoned all who were willing to unite in defending the capital of the state to assemble at the City Hall. He was there, in the vinous condition which was his wont, and made a speech. "I have been told," he said, "that the duty of surrendering the city would devolve upon the President, the mayor, or myself. I answered, if the demand is made upon me, with the alternative to surrender or be shelled, I shall reply, Bombard and be damned!" Mayo, the mayor, followed in the same vein. "When the citizens of Richmond," he said, "demand of me to surrender the capital of Virginia and of the Confederacy to the enemy, they must find some other man to fill my place. I will resign the mayoralty; and when that other man elected in my stead shall deliver up the city, I hope I have physical courage and strength enough left to shoulder a musket and go into the ranks."¹ The governor ordered all the stores and other places of business, except such manufacturing establishments as were engaged in fulfilling contracts for the government, to be closed at two o'clock in the afternoon, so that all persons should have time for drill and discipline, and directed the militia to assemble at three, every day excepting Sunday, to be drilled for the four hours until sunset. The city was thronged with refugees from the border states, the dregs of the Baltimore mob predominating. A few of these, with nothing to lose, held a public meeting and passed resolutions devoting Richmond to flames as soon as the Union troops should enter it. A portion of the city press clamored for this. "To lose Richmond," said the Dispatch, "is to lose Virginia, and to lose Virginia is to lose the key to the Southern Confederacy. Virginians, Marylanders! ye who have rallied to her defense, would it not be better to fall in her streets than to basely abandon them? The loss of Richmond in Europe would sound like the loss of Paris or London, and the moral effect will hardly be less. It is better that Richmond should fall as the capital of the Confederacy than that Richmond exist the dépôt of the hireling horde of the North. The next few days may decide the fate of Richmond. It is either to remain the capital of the Confederacy, or be turned over to the Federal government as a Yankee conquest. The capital is to be either secured or lost—it may be feared not temporarily—and with it Virginia. Life, death, and wounds are nothing if we only can be saved from the fate of a captured capital and a humiliated Confederacy. Let the government act—let the people act. There is time yet. If fate comes to its worst, let the ruins of Richmond be its most lasting monument."

McClellan's advance toward the panic-stricken city was slow. The distance from Williamsburg was a little more than forty miles. On the 8th the troops collected there began to move. In two days nineteen miles had been gained. On the 13th the army was concentrated near West Point. On the 14th and 15th rain fell. On the 15th and 16th two divisions set out for the White House, five miles farther. So bad were the roads, that the train of one division occupied thirty-six hours in passing this distance. About this time two provisional army corps were organized—the Fifth, consisting of the divisions of Porter and Sykes, and the reserved artillery, was placed under Fitz John Porter; the Sixth, consisting of Franklin's division and that of Smith, which was detached from Keyes's corps, was placed under Franklin. On the 16th head-quarters were at the White House; on the 19th five miles beyond. On the 20th more rain fell, but the advanced light troops reached the banks of the Chickahominy. On the 21st the main body of the army was near that stream, which was henceforth to be historic.²

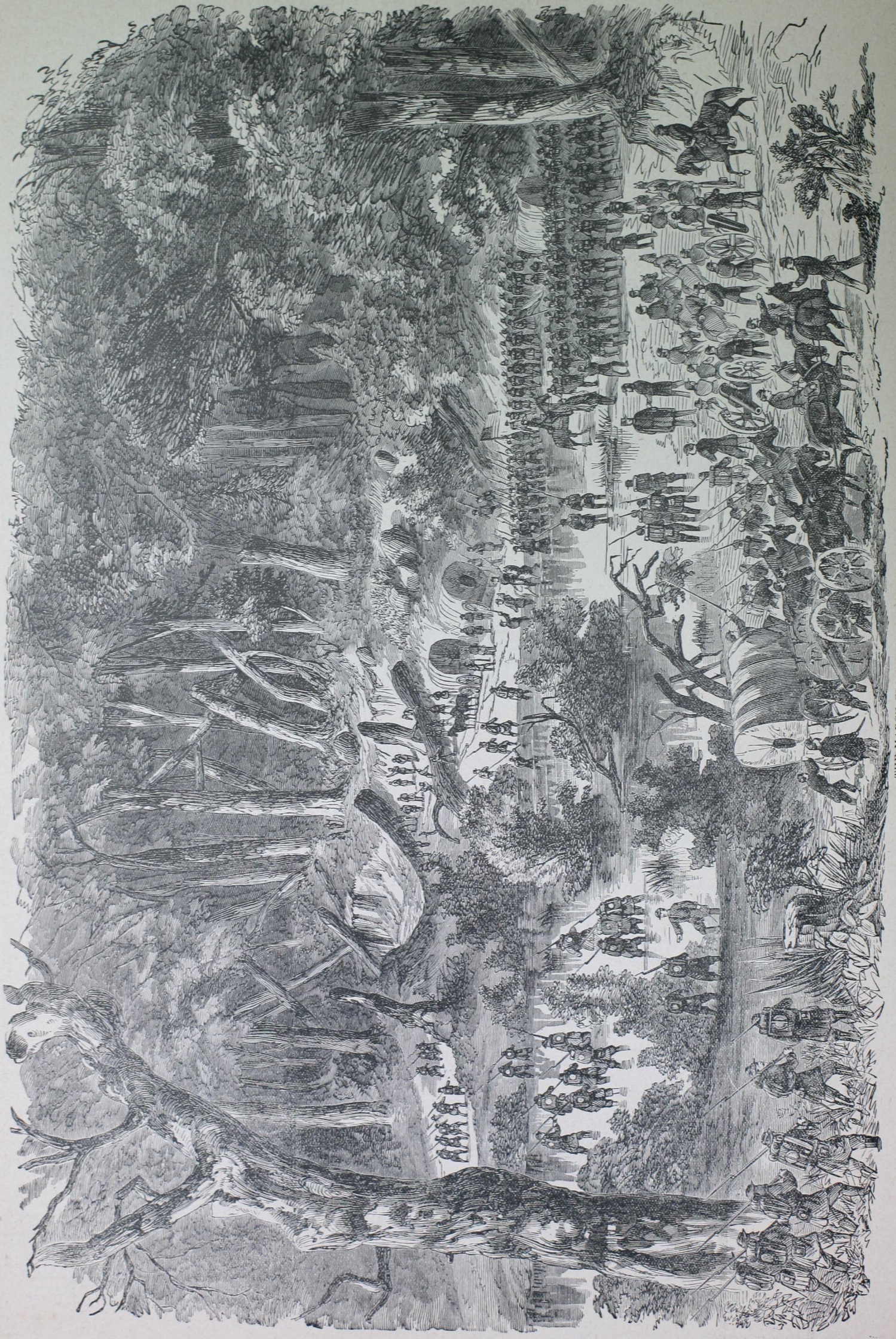
¹ For the panic in Richmond, see POLLARD, i., 322-325; ii., 28-34, 309-311. *Reb. Rec.*, iv., 136, 424-426. An intercepted letter, written on the 7th of May by a niece of Jefferson Davis, resident in his family, furnishes some striking details. She writes: "I am ready to sink with despair. There is a probability of General Jackson's army falling back on Richmond; and, in view of this, no lady is allowed to go up on the railroad to Gordonsville, for fear, if allowed to one, that many others would wish to do it, which would incommode the army. General Johnston is falling back from the Peninsula or Yorktown, and Uncle Jeff. thinks we had better go to a safer place than Richmond. If Johnston falls back as far as Richmond, all our troops from Gordonsville and Swift Run Gap will also fall back to this place and make one desperate stand against McClellan. The Yankees are approaching Richmond from three different directions—from Fredericksburg, Harrisonburg, and Yorktown. Uncle Jeff. is miserable. He tries to be cheerful and bear up against such a continuation of troubles, but I fear he can not live long. Our reverses distressed him so much, and he is so weak and feeble, it makes my heart ache to look at him. What a blow the fall of New Orleans was! It liked to have set us all crazy here. Every body looks distressed, and the cause of the Confederacy looks drooping and sinking. We all leave here to-morrow morning for Raleigh. Three gun-boats are in the river on their way to the city, and may probably reach here in a few hours, so we have no longer any time to delay. I only hope we have not delayed too long already. I am afraid that Richmond will fall into the hands of the enemy, as there is no way to keep back the gun-boats. James River is so high that all obstructions are in danger of being washed away; so there is no help for the city. She will either submit, or else be shelled. Uncle Jeff. was confirmed last Tuesday, in St. Paul's Church, by Bishop Johns. He was baptized in the morning, before church."—POLLARD, ii., 31. ² *McC. Rep.*, 187, 188.

¹ *Tattall's Trial*, p. 89.

² POLLARD, i., 324; ii., 30, says that it mounted only four guns.

³ Goldsborough's testimony, *Com. Rep.*, 633.

⁴ *McC. Rep.*, 191-195; *Com. Rep.*, 324-329. "Had McDowell joined me by water," says McClellan, "I could have approached Richmond from the James, and thus avoided the delays and losses incurred in bridging the Chickahominy, and would have had the army massed in one body instead of being necessarily divided by that stream."—*Report*, 195.



THE MARCH FROM WILLIAMSBURG.