

CAMP LEE, HEAD-QUARTERS, NEAR RICHMOND.



CONSCRIPT OFFICE, CAMP LEE.

CHAPTER XX.

THE PENINSULAR CAMPAIGN.

III. FROM THE CHICKAHOMINY TO THE JAMES.

Plans of Operations.—The Strength of the Armies.—Lee's General Order.—*Battle of Mechanicsville, or Beaver Dam Creek*: The March from Richmond.—The Federal Position.—The Attack upon the Right.—The Attack upon the Left.—Repulse of the Confederates.—McClellan's Plans.—Change of Base resolved upon.—*Battle of Cold Harbor, or Gaines's Mill*: The Federals fall back.—The new Position.—Advance of the Confederates.—The Assault by A. P. Hill.—Its Repulse.—General Assault by Longstreet, D. H. Hill, and Jackson.—Porter hard pressed.—Slocum re-enforces him.—The Union Line broken.—Ineffectual Cavalry Charge.—Batteries captured.—Arrival of French and Meagher.—The Pursuit checked.—The Federals cross the Chickahominy.—Operations on the right Bank.—The Fight at Golding's Farm.—The Council of War.—McClellan's Letter to the Secretary of War.—Results of the Battle.—Peril of Richmond.—The Change of Base.—Topography of the Region.—The Federal Retreat.—Lee's Embarrassment.—Stuart at the White House.—The Confederate Pursuit.—Skirmish at Price's Farm.—*Battle of Savage's Station*: Heintzelman's unauthorized Retreat.—Destruction of Stores.—Magruder's Attack.—The Retreat continued.—*Battle of Frazier's Farm, or Charles City Cross Roads*: The Confederate Pursuit.—Lee's Plan of Operations.—Why it failed.—Holmes's and Wise's Movements.—The Federal Position.—Longstreet's Attack.—McCall's Defense.—The Fight in the Woods.—Hooker's and Kearney's Divisions.—A. P. Hill's Attack.—Gains Ground.—Is repulsed.—Close of the Action.—The Result.—McCall's Division.—*Battle of Malvern Hill*: The Federal Position.—Repulse of D. H. Hill in the Morning.—Lee's Order.—Magruder and D. H. Hill attack in the Afternoon.—The Battle as seen from both Sides.—The Confederates repulsed.—Condition of their Force.—McClellan retreats to Harrison's Landing.—Errors in this Campaign.—Lee's first Error should have been fatal.—McClellan's Error at Cold Harbor.—His Failure to attack Richmond.—His general Failure as a Commander.—Absent at all important Moments.—Lee's second strategical Error.—Position and Movements during the six Days.—Lee's Error at Malvern.—McClellan's last Error.—Jackson in the Battles.—General Review of the Subject.—The Losses in these Battles.

THURSDAY, June 26th, had been fixed upon by both McClellan and Lee as the day when each was to commence an offensive movement. Neither was aware of the intention, and each was deceived as to the object and position of the other. Lee presumed that McClellan intended to lay siege to Richmond by regular approaches. The city was in no condition to sustain a prolonged and close investment. It was not provisioned for a fortnight in advance, and its line of supply was liable to be interrupted at any moment. His object was simply to raise the siege. This he proposed to do by assailing McClellan at the point where he himself was most vulnerable: by threatening his line of communications with the York River, whence, as Stuart's raid had shown, his supplies were wholly drawn. McClellan's purpose was to attack Richmond by direct assault.¹

The armies by which these two plans were to be carried out were almost equal in number, character of troops, and equipment. Each consisted of a little more than 100,000 effective men, present for duty. Making every allowance for defective reports on either side, the difference could not have been more than 5000. In a contest between forces so nearly balanced, the victory would rest with that which was most ably commanded. The general who made the fewest errors would win.²

¹ "The intention of the enemy seemed to be to attack Richmond by regular approaches. By sweeping down the Chickahominy on the north side, and threatening his communications with York River, it was thought that the enemy would be compelled to retreat or give battle out of his intrenchments."—(*Lee's Rep.*, i., 5.) "On the 25th, our bridges and intrenchments being at last completed, an advance of our picket line on the left was ordered, preparatory to a general forward movement." "On the 26th, the day upon which I had decided as the time for our final advance, the enemy attacked our right, and turned my attention to the protection of our communications and depôts of supply."—(*McC. Rep.*, 236, 239.)

² The strength of McClellan's force at this time is fixed within a few hundreds by official evidence. McClellan (*Report*, 53) states its numbers (from which should properly be deducted 1101 men with Colonel Ingalls, Quartermaster, at the White House) on the 20th of June to have been, "Officers and men, present for duty, 105,825." This is exclusive of Dix's Corps of 10,000 at Fortress Monroe, which was too far removed to take any part in the operations. The Report of

Lee's plan of operations was carefully elaborated by himself and Jefferson Davis, and carried into execution under the eye and by the direction of both, who were on the field, and under fire at the most decisive points. A chance shot might at any moment, by killing either, have changed the whole course of the war.¹

The whole scheme of operations was set forth on the 24th, in an elaborate General Order from Lee, in which the movements of each division were carefully prescribed. A. P. Hill, Longstreet, and D. H. Hill, with 34,000 men, were to march from before Richmond, cross the Chickahominy above the extreme right of the Union lines, and join Jackson, who, with 30,000, was coming down from the north. Half of the cavalry were also to cross the Chickahominy. On the south side of the river were left only Huger's and Magruder's divisions, numbering 24,000, and the reserve artillery and the remaining cavalry, about 3000 in all, making less than 30,000 men of all arms on that side.² This plan involved one error, which should have

McClellan's adjutant general of the same day (*Com. Rep.* 337) gives the apportionment of this force. From this number should be deducted the losses by casualty and sickness for the week between the 20th and the 26th. These, including the 600 killed and wounded in the "affair" of the 25th, could not vary greatly from 1500.

The Confederate force consisted of the divisions of Huger, Magruder, Longstreet, A. P. Hill, and D. H. Hill, the reserve artillery of Pendleton, and Stuart's cavalry, in front of Richmond; and Jackson's command, comprising the three divisions of himself, Ewell, and Whiting, coming down from the Valley of the Shenandoah. To these are to be added a portion of Holmes's division and Wise's brigade, brought over from the other side of the James River near the close of the operations. A. P. Hill (*Lee's Rep.*, i., 173), D. H. Hill (*Ibid.*, i., 187), and Holmes (*Ibid.*, i., 151) give the number of their force. Longstreet does not state his, but four of his six brigade commanders (*Ibid.*, i., 330, 331, 346, 353) give the number in their brigades, which enables us to fix very nearly the strength of the whole division. Magruder (*Ibid.*, i., 190) gives his, and (*Ibid.*, i., 191, 202) enables us, in connection with the statements of two of his four brigade commanders (*Ibid.*, i., 367, 371), to fix very nearly that of Huger. Pendleton (*Ibid.*, i., 224) enumerates fifteen batteries as constituting the reserve artillery; to each of these we assign 100 men. Stuart's cavalry (*Ibid.*, i., 398) consisted of six regiments and three legions; we give the strength wholly by estimate. The precise numbers are, however, of little consequence, as the cavalry was not actually employed on either side. The main possible source of error in estimating the Confederate force consists in fixing the strength of Jackson's command, of which we find no official statement. The lowest probable estimate is 27,000, the highest 35,000; we put it at 30,000, not merely as a medium between the two, but as the one which, upon careful examination, appears to be the closest approximation to the truth.

From the foregoing data we deduce the following table, representing the effective force upon each side on the 26th of June.

UNION FORCES.		CONFEDERATE FORCES.	
Sumner's Corps	17,581	A. P. Hill's Division	14,000
Heintzelman's Corps	18,810	D. H. Hill's Division	10,000
Keyes's Corps	14,610	Longstreet's Division	10,000
Porter's Corps	19,960	Magruder's Division	13,000
Franklin's Corps	19,405	Huger's Division	11,000
McCall's Division	9,514	Holmes's Division	7,000
McClellan's Staff, Engineers, Cavalry Division, Provost Guard, etc.	4,844	Jackson's Command	30,000
	104,724	Pendleton's Artillery	1,500
Deduct losses, June 20 to 26 (say)	1,500	Stuart's Cavalry	4,000
Entire Force, June 26	103,224	Entire Force, June 26	100,500

Besides this effective force, "present for duty," each army contained many sick. Of these, on the 20th of June, there were in McClellan's army 12,225, probably increased on the 26th to 13,000; moreover, there were nearly 30,000 reported as "absent," a considerable portion of whom were undoubtedly away on sick-leave. We have no means of ascertaining the number of these in the Confederate army; but scattered incidentally through the reports are evidences that it was very considerable. It is clear, however, that Lee brought into the field every effective man at his disposal.

¹ "The plan was submitted to his Excellency the President, who was repeatedly on the field in the course of its execution."—(*Lee's Rep.*, i., 5.) The presence of Davis is repeatedly mentioned in the reports of different officers. We find him on the 26th giving direction for the battle at Mechanicsville; on the 27th and 28th we find him on the field; and on the 30th at Frazier's Farm, where "the fight was commenced by fire from the enemy's artillery, which swept down the road, and from which his Excellency the President narrowly escaped accident."—(*Ibid.*, i., 177.)

² The following are the most important portions of the General Orders of Lee, "No. 75; June 24th (*Lee's Rep.*, i., 44, 45):

"General Jackson's command will proceed to-morrow from Ashland toward the Slash Church, and will encamp at some convenient point west of the Central Railroad. Branch's brigade of A. P. Hill's division will also, to-morrow evening, take position on the Chickahominy, near Half Sink. At 3 o'clock Thursday morning, 26th instant, General Jackson will advance on the road



ASHLAND.



MECHANICSVILLE.

insured his destruction. It was made on the assumption that the bulk of the Union army was still on the north side of the Chickahominy, whereas, of the 100,000 men of which it was composed, only 30,000 were on that side; the remaining 70,000 had already crossed, and were strongly posted on the south side.¹ While thus assailing the Union army on that side with double its force, he left Richmond open to assault from more than twice the number by which it was defended. But the very magnitude of the error prevented its being suspected. Neither McClellan nor one of his generals ever imagined that Richmond was practically uncovered. It is curious to find that during the 27th—the decisive day—while on the north side of the river the Confederate force was two to one, and on the south side the Union force two to one, the commanders on both sides, and at all points, believed themselves to be fighting with or confronted against superior numbers.

TUESDAY, JUNE 26.—MECHANICSVILLE.²

During the evening of the 25th—at almost the hour when McClellan was awakened from the dream of rejoicing over what he thought the successful result of the advance of his picket line preparatory for the final advance of his whole army on the following day, by the unwelcome tidings that Jackson was close at hand, threatening his right and rear—A. P. Hill had marched northward and concentrated his whole division near Meadow Bridge. Branch's brigade had gone still farther in order to communicate with Jackson, who was to be at that point at early dawn; the whole movement being entirely hidden by the formation of the ground from the view of the Union pickets on the opposite side of the Chickahominy.³ Two and three hours after midnight Longstreet and D. H. Hill commenced their still longer march through mud and darkness in the same direction, reaching their assigned positions in front of Mechanicsville at eight in the morning.⁴ Branch waited for six hours for the approach of Jackson. At ten word was sent that he was close at hand. Branch then crossed the Chickahominy, and moved slowly down its north bank, driving the Union pickets before him. A. P. Hill, with the rest of his division, waited at their post for hours, also momentarily expecting the approach of Jackson. Three o'clock came, and yet no tidings.

leading to Pale Green [Walnut Green] Church, communicating his march to General Branch, who will immediately cross the Chickahominy, and take the road leading to Mechanicsville. As soon as the movements of these columns are discovered, General A. P. Hill, with the rest of his division, will cross the Chickahominy near Meadow Bridge, and move direct upon Mechanicsville. To aid his advance, the heavy batteries on the Chickahominy will at the proper time open upon the batteries at Mechanicsville. The enemy being driven from Mechanicsville, and the passage across the bridge opened, General Longstreet, with his division and that of General D. H. Hill, will cross the Chickahominy at or near that point—General D. H. Hill moving to the support of General Jackson, and General Longstreet supporting General A. P. Hill—the four divisions keeping in communication with each other, and moving *en echelon* on separate roads, if practicable. The left division in advance, with skirmishers and sharpshooters, extending in their front, will sweep down the Chickahominy and endeavor to drive the enemy from his position above New Bridge; General Jackson, bearing well to his left, turning Beaver Dam Creek, and taking the direction toward Coal Harbor. They will then press forward toward the York River Railroad, closing upon the enemy's rear, and forcing him down the Chickahominy. Any advance of the enemy toward Richmond will be prevented by vigorously following his rear, and crippling and arresting his progress. The divisions of General Huger and Magruder will hold their positions in front of the enemy against attack, and make such demonstrations, Thursday, as to discover his operations. Should opportunity offer, the feint will be converted into a real attack; and should an abandonment of his intrenchments by the enemy be discovered, he will be closely pursued. . . . Commanders of divisions will cause their commands to be provided with three days' cooked rations. The necessary ambulances and ordnance trains will be ready to accompany the divisions, and receive orders from their respective commanders."

Magruder states (*Lee's Rep.*, i., 191) that when these orders had been executed "there were but 25,000 men between the enemy's army of 100,000 and Richmond." He underrates the actual force of all arms by some 3000.

¹ Lee seems never to have discovered this error, for in his Report, prepared eight months later, he says (p. 8): "The principal part of the enemy was now [June 27th] on the north side of the Chickahominy."

² The battle of Thursday, June 26th, is usually styled by Federal authorities that of Beaver Dam, from the small stream on whose banks it was fought; Lee, and all Confederate authorities, more properly call it that of Mechanicsville. Lee calls the battle of the 27th that of the Chickahominy; by the majority of Union authorities it is styled that of Gaines's Mill; but we follow all other Confederate Reports, and designate it as the battle of Cold Harbor. Various names have been given to the action of June 30th, such as Glendale, Charles City Cross Roads, and White Oak Swamp; we follow Lee and all other Confederate Reports, and call it the battle of Frazier's Farm, that being the place where the sharpest fighting occurred.

³ *Lee's Rep.*, i., 173, 258.

⁴ *Ibid.*, i., 122, 180.



ELLISON'S MILL.



JAMES LONGSTREET.

Jackson had been delayed by the Union skirmishers spread out along his line of march. Hill resolved to cross at once, rather than to hazard the failure of the whole plan by longer deferring the execution of his part of it. The crossing was effected without serious opposition, and the bulk of the division, Branch being yet far behind, pressed down toward Mechanicsville. Here, but on the south side of the stream, Longstreet and D. H. Hill were in waiting, and, after a little delay in repairing the bridge, also crossed the Chickahominy, the Union advance falling back from the village for a mile to a position beyond Beaver Dam Creek.

This was held by two brigades of McCall's Pennsylvania Reserves, who had joined McClellan a fortnight before. The position was a strong one—the creek curving around Mechanicsville for a mile; the water, waist-deep, was five or six yards wide, with steep banks. It was impassable for artillery except by bridges on two roads, one crossing at Ellison's Mill, near its mouth, the other a mile above. These roads and the open fields between them were commanded by artillery, and the whole line on the north bank was defended by rifle-pits and felled trees. The position could be carried in front only by a superior force, and with heavy loss. But it could be turned on the right; and A. P. Hill supposed that this had been already done by Jackson, who would then have interposed his force between McCall and Porter, cutting off both retreat and re-enforcements. Without waiting to ascertain whether this had been accomplished, Hill marched his whole division across the open fields, swept by the Union batteries. The main stress of his attack was at first directed upon the Union right at the upper road, which was held by Reynolds. The Confederates advanced gallantly under a murderous fire, and reached the edge of the creek. A few even succeeded in crossing above Reynolds's position, and gained a lodgment on the opposite side; but they effected nothing. Elsewhere the assault was repulsed, the assailants suffering fearfully.

Davis and Lee, who were watching the fight from different positions on the other side of the Chickahominy, ordered D. H. Hill to send forward a brigade to the support of the division which had been roughly handled. Ripley's was dispatched, and a little before dark aided A. P. Hill in a furious assault upon the Union left at Ellison's Mill, which was held by Seymour. The attack failed even more disastrously than that upon the right. At 9 o'clock, the Confederates, repulsed at all points, fell back beyond artillery range, and the firing gradually ceased.

This action was fought on the Union side wholly by Reynolds's and Seymour's brigades, numbering 6000, and five brigades of the Confederates, numbering about 12,000. The Confederate loss in killed and wounded was about 1500, of which two fifths fell upon Ripley's single brigade. The Union troops had every advantage in position, and their loss was not more than 300.¹

¹ For the data upon which the losses in this and subsequent battles are estimated, see Note at



JOHN F. REYNOLDS.

From the moment when McClellan learned of the approach of the enemy on his right, he wisely gave up all idea of maintaining his position on the north bank of the Chickahominy. At noon of the 26th he telegraphed to the Secretary of War that his pickets were being driven in, he supposed by Jackson's advance-guard; that his communications would probably be cut off, and even Yorktown might be recaptured; the case was a desperate one, but he would do his best to outmaneuver, outwit, and outfight the enemy.¹ The Quartermaster at West Point was directed to send supplies to the front to the last moment; to hurry the remaining stores up the James River, burning every thing which could not be got off—to prepare, in fact, for a change of base from the York to the James River—a change which should have been made weeks before.² More than a week before, McClellan had made some arrangements looking to this movement. Had it been undertaken in time, the whole course of the campaign must have been changed. Lee, instead of raising the siege of Richmond by threatening the line to the York River, must have assailed McClellan in his intrenchments, or subjected the ill-provisioned city, with its immense protecting army, to the hazard

of the end of this chapter. The Reports of the various Confederate Commanders are very minute, and fully set forth the completeness of their defeat.

Lee says (*Report*, i., 6): "Jackson's march on the 26th was longer than had been anticipated, and his progress also being retarded by the enemy, A. P. Hill did not begin his movement until 3 P.M., when he crossed the river and advanced upon Mechanicsville. Longstreet and D. H. Hill crossed the Mechanicsville bridge as soon as it could be repaired, but it was late before they reached the north bank. D. H. Hill's leading brigade, under Ripley, advanced to the support of the troops engaged, and at a late hour united with Pender's brigade of A. P. Hill's division in an effort to turn the enemy's left; but the troops were unable, in the growing darkness, to overcome the obstructions, and after sustaining a destructive fire of musketry and artillery at short range were withdrawn."

D. H. Hill (*Ibid.*, i., 180) says: "I had received several messages from General Lee, and one from the President of the Confederate States, to send forward a brigade. In advancing this brigade I met General Pender, whose brigade had just been roughly handled, who told me that, with the assistance of two regiments of Ripley's brigade, he could turn the position at Ellison's Mill by the right, while two regiments should advance in front. General Ripley was ordered to co-operate with Pender, and the attack was made about dark. The enemy had intrenchments of great strength and development on the other side of Beaver Dam, and had the banks lined with his magnificent artillery. The approach was over an open plain, exposed to a murderous fire of all arms, and an almost impassable stream was to be crossed. The result was, as might have been anticipated, a disastrous and bloody repulse."

Ripley (*Ibid.*, i., 230) says: "I was informed by General A. P. Hill that the enemy had a strong and well-served battery and force in position near Ellison's Mill, to attack which he had sent Pender's brigade by the right, and other troops to the left; and it was arranged that my brigade should co-operate. While the troops were in motion I received orders to assault the enemy from General Lee, and also from General D. H. Hill. Night coming on, and it being deemed important to attack the position at once, the advance was ordered along the whole line. We drove back the enemy from his advanced positions, and closed in upon the batteries and their heavy infantry supports, all of which poured upon our troops a heavy and incessant fire of shell, canister, and musketry. The ground was rugged, and intersected by ditches, and covered with abatis a short distance in front of the position to be assaulted. A mill-race, with scarped banks, and in some places waist-deep in water, ran along the front of the enemy, at a distance ranging from fifty to one hundred yards. To this position our troops succeeded in advancing, notwithstanding the fire of the enemy was exceedingly severe. The loss was heavy in the extreme, amounting in the 44th Georgia to 335, and in the 3d North Carolina to 142. Some time after nightfall our troops were withdrawn. The fragments of the 3d North Carolina and the 44th Georgia were rallied some distance in the rear, under some difficulty, owing to the loss of all their field and many of their company officers." In this assault of hardly an hour's duration Ripley's single brigade of 2366 men lost 574 in killed and wounded—more than one fourth being killed outright.

A. P. Hill (*Ibid.*, i., 174), after describing the several assaults made by his division, and their "failure with heavy loss," adds: "It was never contemplated that my division alone should have sustained the shock of this battle; but such was the case, and the only assistance I received was from Ripley." Each of Hill's four brigade commanders who were engaged in this action speak of heavy losses in their command. ¹ *McC. Rep.*, 240.

² *Ibid.*, 241, 243—"The superiority of the James River route, as a line of attack and supply, is so obvious to need exposition."—*Ibid.*, 242.

of a siege or of direct assault. This change of base demanded that the whole army should be united on the south side of the Chickahominy. McClellan thought that Jackson—whose force was supposed to be the whole, instead of less than half, of that opposed to him on the right—was so close that the trains could be saved only by accepting battle on the north side. He did not expect to win a decisive victory. His utmost hope was to hold his own for a few hours.¹ The battle was to be fought by Porter, and McClellan wished to give him all the re-enforcements which could be spared from the other side of the river. He asked each commander of a corps on the south side how many men he could spare to re-enforce Porter, after retaining sufficient to hold his own position for twenty-four hours. The answers showed that not one of them imagined that the greater part of the force of the enemy which had confronted them had been withdrawn and was now on the other side. Keyes wanted to keep all the men he had, "if the enemy is as strong as ever in front;" Heintzelman would undertake to hold his intrenchments with four brigades, which would leave two disposable for service on the other side of the river. The afternoon of the next day, when the battle of Cold Harbor hung in even scale, Franklin, half of whose corps had already been sent over, did not think it prudent to take any more troops from him; and Sumner ventured only to say that he could send two of his eight brigades, and even that would be hazardous.² These two brigades were sent, but an hour too late to change the fortune of the day. They were too late to take part in the battle, but just in time to prevent a sore defeat from becoming a total rout.

FRIDAY, JUNE 27.—COLD HARBOR.

The position at Beaver Dam Creek was far in advance of the main force and easily turned. During the night the force which had held it was quietly withdrawn, leaving only enough to serve as a blind, and they were to retreat as the enemy advanced. A new line was taken up five miles below. The thirty heavy guns which had been placed in batteries between these two positions were removed across the Chickahominy, with nearly all the wagons of Porter's corps, and New Bridge, the upper one on the stream, was destroyed behind them. This was done during the night, and as the morning of the 27th broke, hot and sultry, Porter and McCall, freed from all impedimenta, stood ready for action.

The position was a strong one. A small unnamed stream, curving sickle-wise, empties into the Chickahominy. The banks are in most places fringed with a belt of swamp, but in places they rise steeply, and the bed of the stream forms a ravine. On the eastern side the land rises in a gradual slope crossed by gullies, about fifty feet above the swamp, and spreads into a flat table-land, with here and there a gentle swell. Patches of woodland dot the plain, which is mostly cleared and cultivated, the farm-houses standing alone each in the midst of its own fields. Two places find names on the map: New Cold Harbor, nearest the Chickahominy, and Cold Harbor a mile northward. Each consists of two or three dilapidated houses, a rifle-shot apart. Cold Harbor was the centre of Porter's line, which thence turned sharply eastward for a mile. The whole semicircular line covered the heads of the bridges crossing the Chickahominy. Hasty preparations had been made for defense. The trees in the swamp had been felled; rifle-



TRUMAN SEYMOUR.

¹ "Our retreat was a contingency I thought of; but my impression is, that up to the time of the battle of Gaines's Mill, I still hoped that we should be able to hold our own."—(McClellan, in *Com. Rep.*, 435.) "By desperate fighting, our right wing inflicted so severe a loss upon the enemy as to check his movement on the left bank of the river, and give us time to get our material out of the way."—*Ibid.*, 434. ² *McC. Rep.*, 250-258.



pits and barricades had been flung up on the hill-side; and the crest was crowned by the artillery, which could thus play over the heads of the infantry upon an advancing enemy; but the elaborate earth-works which now seam the region were the work of Grant, almost two years later. The plain over which was the approach to the front of this line was also swept by the heavy guns two miles away on the other side of the Chickahominy.

Butterfield held the extreme left of this line, extending to the swamps of the Chickahominy; next came Martindale—both of Morell's division—then Griffin's brigade; then Sykes, with his division: all of these, of Fitz-John Porter's corps, formed the first line. Behind this was McCall's division: Meade, then commander of a brigade, who was a year and a week after to win the battle of Gettysburg, the true turning-point of the war, was on the left; next Reynolds, in a few hours to be a prisoner of war; then Seymour, who a few hours before had crushed Ripley and Pender at Beaver Dam, as reserve behind the second line. Stoneman's cavalry were miles away to the north; they could be of no use on this field, which must be contested by infantry and artillery. Porter, fearing that Stoneman would be cut off by the advance of Jackson, sent orders to him to retreat to the White House, and afterward rejoin the army as best he could—where, no one knew.

If a battle was to be fought here by these forces, no stronger position could have been chosen, and no better dispositions made. Porter expected to be hard pressed in front; he hoped to hold his position without aid long enough to cover the retreat of the army; but he asked that some division on the other side should be held ready to support him.¹

At dawn of the 27th the Confederates at Mechanicsville were astir. They had been aroused by a sharp artillery fire, and expected a renewal of the fight at Beaver Dam. After an hour they discovered that the firing was a ruse to detain them, and that the Federal forces had retired. Another hour was spent in repairing the bridges so that the artillery could cross; and then the divisions took up the line of march, as prescribed in Lee's order. D. H. Hill bore to the left to unite with Jackson, who was still behind, having encamped for the night within sound of the cannonade. A. P. Hill and Longstreet—Hill in advance—kept to the right, following the road along the Chickahominy. The march was slow and cautious, for on rounding any swell of land they might come upon their enemy in force. Noon had passed before five miles had been accomplished. Passing Gaines's Mill, where a slight skirmish occurred, from which has been given one of the names to the whole battle, they came in sight of the Union force drawn up on the hill-side beyond the unnamed creek. Between them lay an open plain a quarter of a mile wide, swept by artillery from the crest in front and from the other side of the Chickahominy, and bounded by a wood tangled with undergrowth, and traversed by a sluggish stream which converted the soil into a dense morass. Here a slight delay occurred to form the line.

It was past two o'clock² when Hill was directed to begin the assault. Longstreet was held back, because it was thought by Lee that Jackson's approach on the left, which was every moment expected, would cause the extension of the Union line in that direction. Hill's brigades dashed across the plain, floundered through the swamp, and pressed up the opposite slope in the face of a fierce fire of artillery and musketry. Some brigades advanced close to the infantry lines; a

few regiments even pierced them. But they were soon forced back. For two hours the battle raged with equal obstinacy on either side. The Federal troops gained ground, and from being assailed became the assailants. Hill was defeated, crushed, and almost routed. Some of his regiments stood their ground; others threw themselves flat on the earth to escape the withering fire; others rushed from the field in disorder.

The completeness of the defeat at this point is fully shown in the Confederate reports. Lee¹ and Hill² affirm it in general terms. Archer³ says: "My troops fell back before the irresistible fire of artillery and rifles. The obvious impossibility of carrying the position without support prevented me from attempting to check the retreat. Had they not fallen back I would myself have ordered it." Pender⁴ says: "My men were rallied and pushed forward again, but did not advance far before they fell back; and I think I do but justice to my men when I say that they did not commence it. The enemy were continually bringing up fresh troops, and succeeded in driving us from the road." Whiting, of Jackson's command, who came to the relief of these troops, says:⁵ "Men were leaving the field in every direction, and in great disorder; two regiments, one from South Carolina and one from Louisiana, were actually marching back from the fire. The 1st Texas were ordered to go over them, and through them, which they did. . . . Near the crest, in front of us and lying down, appeared the fragments of a brigade. Men were skulking from the front in a shameful manner; the woods on our left and rear were full of troops in a safe cover, from which they never stirred. . . . Still farther on our extreme right our troops appeared to be falling back. . . . The troops on our immediate left I do not know, and I am glad I don't. Those that did come up were much broken, and no entreaty or command could induce them to come forward, and I have great reason to believe that the greater part never left the cover of the wood on the west side of the ravine." Whiting does great injustice to the troops of Hill. They were, indeed, defeated and broken, but it was after two hours of desperate fighting, under every disadvantage of position, against a force quite equal to them, as the record of their losses shows. Thus the regiment from South Carolina, which "was actually marching back under fire," must have been the "1st Rifles, S. C. Volunteers." Of this regiment its colonel, Marshall, reports:⁶ "In that charge we sustained a loss of 76 killed, 221 wounded, and 58 missing; and on the next morning I had only 149 officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates for duty. Early on the morning after the battle I made a detail from each company to bury their dead, and so severe was the work of death in some of the companies that it took the detail all day to bury their dead;" and of those "missing" in the morning all but four rejoined their regiment.⁷ Hill states the case fairly. After acknowledging the repulse, he says:⁸ "My division was engaged full two

¹ Lee's Rep., i., 8.

² Ibid., i., 176.

³ Ibid., i., 256.

⁴ Ibid., i., 253.

⁵ Ibid., i., 154.

⁶ Ibid., i., 502.

⁷ Ibid., i., 505.

⁸ Ibid., i., 176.



¹ McC. Rep., 246-253.

² There is a general discrepancy between the Union and the Confederate notation of the time of the different points of the whole series of actions, the latter making them usually about an hour later than the former.



FITZ-JOHN PORTER.



DANIEL BUTTERFIELD.

hours before assistance was received. We failed to carry the enemy's lines, but we paved the way for the successful attack afterward, and in which attacks it was necessary to employ the whole of our army that side of the Chickahominy. About four o'clock re-enforcements came up on my right from General Longstreet, and later Jackson's men on my left and centre, and my division was relieved of the weight of the contest."

Longstreet's division had been drawn up in the rear of Hill, covered from fire by a low ridge. Lee, finding Hill sorely worsted, ordered Longstreet to make a feigned attack upon the left, hoping to divert a part of the Union force to that direction, and thus relieve Hill. Longstreet soon found that the force here was too strong to be disturbed by a mere feint, and that to be of service he must make a real attack with his whole force. Jackson now came into view; D. H. Hill, who had joined him, in advance, on the extreme right, Ewell and Whiting on the left, and Lawton a little in the rear. The line was now complete, and a general advance along its whole extent was ordered.

Porter, in the mean while, seeing the immense force advancing upon him, had, two hours before, asked for re-enforcements. Slocum's division of Franklin's corps had been all day kept in readiness on the south side of the Chickahominy for this purpose. They had, indeed, been ordered over at daybreak, and had begun to cross; but when half way over the order was countermanded. They were now hurried over, and came upon the field at half past four, when the general Confederate attack had been fairly com-

menced. Porter's whole line was so severely pressed at every point that he was forced to divide Slocum's force, sending parts of it, even single regiments, to the points most threatened.¹

The general Confederate assault was commenced by D. H. Hill upon the extreme Union right, held by Sykes with his regulars. He opened by a sharp artillery fire; but in half an hour the battery was withdrawn badly crippled. Meanwhile he could hear, by the direction of the fire on his right, that the Federals were forcing A. P. Hill and Longstreet back. The assault must be made hand to hand. In the face of a fierce fire, by which his force

¹ *McC. Rep.*, 243-251. McClellan says (*Rep.*, 248): "At 3 30 Slocum's division reached the field, and was immediately brought into action at the weak points of our line." It is clear that he places the arrival of Slocum a full hour too early; for at 3 25 he telegraphed to Porter (*Ibid.*, 251): "Slocum is now crossing Alexander's Bridge with his whole command." To finish the crossing, form, march up the bank, and reach the field of action, must have required an hour or more. There is some confusion as to the recall of Slocum's division in the morning. McClellan says (*Rep.*, 243): "General Franklin received instructions to hold General Slocum's division in readiness by daybreak of the 27th, and if heavy firing should at that time be heard in the direction of General Porter, to move it at once to his assistance without farther orders;" and (*Ibid.*, 251) "Slocum's division commenced crossing the river to support Porter soon after daybreak on the morning of the 27th; but as the firing in front of Porter ceased, the movement was suspended." Franklin testifies (*Com. Rep.*, 622): "At seven o'clock in the morning of that day I was ordered to send Slocum's division to assist Porter. This order was countermanded about nine o'clock, after a part of the division had crossed the Chickahominy. The order to send the division over was signed by Colonel Colburn, and I sent back some word, I do not remember what. General Marcy answered that he hardly supposed the general commanding could have intended to send the division over; that there must have been some mistake about it, he thought. Then about nine o'clock, perhaps nearly ten, the order was countermanded, the order countermanding coming from General McClellan, though I do not remember who signed it. What was the reason for ordering the division back I do not know."



HENRY W. SLOCUM.



GEORGE A. MCCALL.

was sorely galled, and some of the regiments thrown into disorder, he succeeded in passing the swamp in his front, and pressed up the opposite slope, only to be forced back. Ewell had come up on Hill's left, and attempted to carry the position in front of him; but most of his command gave way under the fierce fire which they encountered. "We were attacked," he says, "in front and flank by superior numbers, and were for hours without re-enforcements." The "hours" were less than an hour, and the "superior numbers" existed only in the imagination of the assailants, justifiable, indeed, by the terrible fire to which they were exposed. Trimble, of this division, led his brigade toward the Confederate right; he met two regiments coming out of the field in confusion, who cried out, "You need not go in; we're whipped; you can't do any thing!" "Get out of our way!" his men replied; "we will show you how to do it!" and they charged at a run across the field against the Union lines.¹ Still Ewell was losing ground, when Lawton's brigade came upon the field. This brigade, 4000 strong, composed wholly of Georgian troops, was a part of the force sent from Richmond a fortnight before to join Jackson, and "mask his withdrawal from the Valley." Jackson had incorporated this brigade with his "own" division, and it held the rear of his entire command. It was ordered forward from the place where it had been halted, two miles from the battle-field. Lawton went as rapidly as possible over a road blocked up by artillery and ambulances. Coming upon the field, he learned that Ewell "was sorely pressed, and that re-enforcements were promptly needed." Here he met two regiments standing in the open field, who had just been driven from the open woods. "I moved," he says, "through the interval between these regiments, promptly formed line of battle, and accepted the position which they had abandoned. A continuous line of 3500 men moving forward in perfect order, and at once opening fire along its entire length, chiefly armed with Enfield rifles, promptly marked the preponderance of musketry on our side." This long line advanced toward the thickest of the fight. In the wood Ewell was seen. He shouted "Hurrah for Georgia!" as he saw Lawton's long line advancing.²

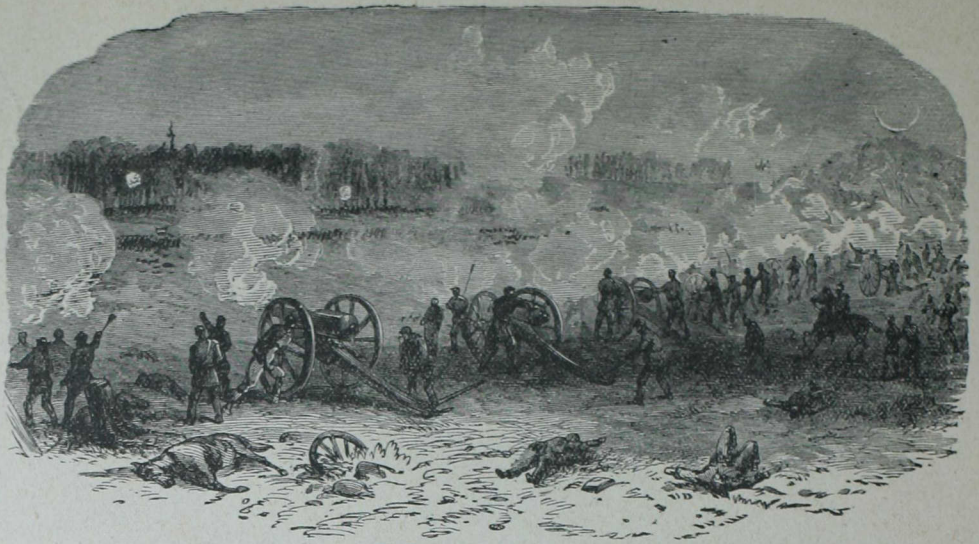
It was now half past six, an hour before sunset. The whole Confederate force on this side of the Chickahominy, with the exception of Kemper's single brigade of "1433 muskets," of Longstreet's division, which was held in reserve,³ was brought into action. Opposed to them were only Porter's corps, McCall's division, and Slocum's sent over from the other side. Making allowance for losses on each side up to this time, the Confederate force on the field numbered about 56,000; the Union force, 33,000.⁴ The Confederates, at a fearful sacrifice, had crossed the swamp at all points, and thus neutralized the former great advantage of position against them. The Union

¹ *Lee's Rep.*, i., 309.

² *Ibid.*, i., 270.

³ *Ibid.*, i., 124, 353.

⁴ Confederates: Jackson, Longstreet, A. P. Hill, D. H. Hill, 64,000; deduct losses, thus far, 8000=56,000. Union: Porter, 19,000; McCall, 9000; Slocum, 8000=36,000; deduct losses, thus far, 3000=33,000. These are given merely as a close approximation to the actual numbers at that moment.



THE FINAL CHARGE AT COLD HARBOR.

line was pressed along its whole length by a force of almost two to one. The crowning attack was made half an hour before sunset, and the Union line gave way almost simultaneously on the right, centre, and left. Where it first broke no one can say. Each Confederate commander believed that his troops gave the decisive blow. In our judgment the most decisive blow was struck near the centre, where Hood's Texans, of Whiting's division, charged upon a battery which was so posted that it had done fearful execution all through the fight. "In this charge, in which upward of a thousand men fell, killed and wounded, before the fire of the enemy, and in which fourteen pieces of artillery were captured, the Fourth Texas, under the lead of General Hood, was the first to pierce these strong-holds and seize the guns."¹ About the same time, Longstreet, on the extreme left, had driven back the Union force opposed to him, and was pressing them toward the brink of the Chickahominy. Five companies of cavalry, who had been kept in reserve, charged upon the pursuers, but were scattered at the first fire.²

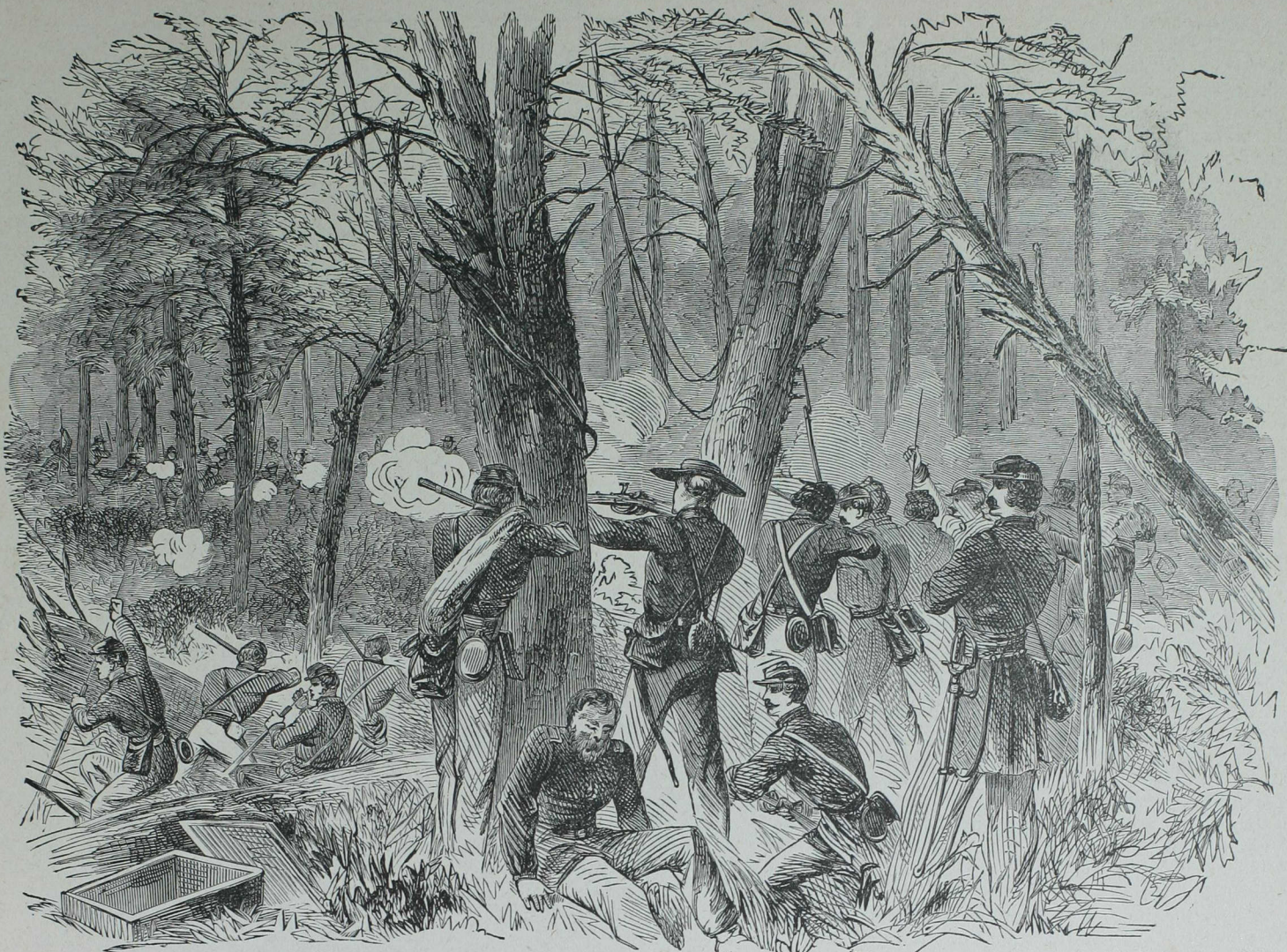
D. H. Hill, on the Confederate left, had been annoyed by an isolated battery which swept the road by which he proposed to attack in flank the Union right. A sudden charge by two of his regiments captured this battery; it was held only for a few minutes, then retaken, and the Confederates driven back, the regiment which had captured the guns losing half its number in the work. Brief as the time was, it was enough. The temporary

¹ Jackson in *Lee's Rep.*, i., 135.

² [*McC. Rep.*, 248; *Lee's Rep.*, i., 124.] This slight cavalry affair is the only one in which that arm was actively engaged on either side during the seven days, with the exception of a Confederate charge two days later, which McClellan (*Rep.*, 258) calls "a sharp skirmish with the enemy's cavalry;" but Bowers, the commander of the Confederate cavalry regiment, tells the exact story. He says (*Lee's Rep.*, i., 417) that he charged upon the Federal cavalry, but was driven back, carrying with him two officers and eleven privates wounded, but leaving behind two more officers and "forty-six non-commissioned officers [and privates?] missing, being wounded, killed, and thrown from their horses."



CAVALRY CHARGE AT COLD HARBOR.



SKIRMISHING IN THE WOODS.

silence of the terrible battery enabled the rest of Hill's division to advance. The extreme right of the Union line gave way; it rallied, and was again forced back, not without disorder, toward the river-bank. Hill asserts¹ that it was "this final charge upon their right flank which decided the fortunes of the day." The truth is, that the Union line, now pressed along its whole length by a twofold force, which had at a fearful sacrifice overcome the advantage of position, gave way on every point almost at once, and fell back toward the bluff which here bounded the Chickahominy. They were followed, though cautiously, by the enemy in the twilight which was fast closing in.

It was not a rout, though fast threatening to become one. The core of every division remained solid, but fragments were flying off, like sparks from an iron under the blacksmith's hammer. But all, soldiers and fugitives, pressed toward the bridges which stretched through swamp and over river, beyond which lay safety. All at once a great shout was heard, and French's and Meagher's brigades—Meagher, they say, leading in his shirt sleeves—dashed up the bluff, driving through the stragglers, who were thronging toward the bridge, and advanced to what was now the front. Their presence gave heart to the fugitives, who rallied behind them and marched up the hill. The Confederates paused in the pursuit, and, after delivering a few ineffectual volleys, withdrew as night set in, and the battle was over. An hour earlier, and these two brigades alone would have turned the wavering scale and won a victory. As it was, they were just in time to prevent a great defeat from becoming a disastrous rout. D. H. Hill, moralizing afterward, says: "A vigorous attack might have resulted in the total rout of the Yankee army and the capture of thousands of prisoners. But I was unwilling to leave the elevated plateau and advance in the dark along an unknown road, skirted by dense woods, in the possession of the Yankees."²

When morning broke the whole Union force was safely across the Chickahominy, and the bridges behind them were down. Three regiments, at different points, had been isolated by the Confederate rush, were surrounded and made prisoners. Many stragglers, scattered through the wood, were picked up next day by the cavalry who scoured the region. In all, the Federals lost about 2000 prisoners, among whom was General Reynolds, who, three days later, at Richmond, met his division commander, McCall, captured in a subsequent battle. The Union loss in this action was about 4000 in killed and wounded; that of the Confederates, 9500. The Federals also lost 22 guns, of which 20 were captured by the enemy; the others were run off the bridge while crossing.

During the whole of this action, while Lee was with his troops controlling their movements and directing the fight, McClellan was on the opposite side of the river.³ He was kept in alarm by the messages sent to him hour by

hour from different positions on that side. At half past eight, Smith, on the extreme right, reported that six or eight regiments had moved down to the woods in front of Sumner. At eleven, Sumner telegraphed that the enemy threatened an attack on his right, near Smith; and an hour and a half later, that there was sharp shelling on both sides; and two hours after, that there was sharp musketry firing in front, to which he was replying with artillery and infantry, and the man on the look-out reported that there were some troops—how many could not be made out—drawn up in line of battle opposite his right. Then, at intervals, Franklin reported. In the morning the enemy were massing heavy columns on his right; then, an attack had been begun there on Smith, which proved to be an artillery fire;¹ but his own shells were bursting well, and Smith thought Sumner would soon have a cross-fire upon the enemy which would silence them. At a quarter past five, Franklin, half of whose corps, under Slocum, were across the river, thought it not prudent to take any more troops from him at present. Ten minutes after, McClellan replied that Porter was hard pressed, and it was not a question of prudence, but of possibilities; if Franklin could possibly hold his position until dark with two brigades, he should send one to support Porter. This last order seems not to have reached Franklin, for he says that during the whole day he did not know that a battle was going on across the river.²

All the movements by the Confederates on this side of the Chickahominy are detailed at length by the different commanders. The substance is, that with pickets, skirmishers, and artillery, they felt the Union line along its whole length, showing themselves at points here and there, and then the force vanished, to reappear at a different spot, thus trebling their apparent numbers. The nature of the ground afforded facilities for these operations. There was a series of swamps, forests, low ridges, and ravines, which shut out all sight of what was passing at a few hundred yards' distance. If a body of troops showed itself at any point, no one could say whether it was a single regiment or the head of a full division. So an artillery fire upon any point

¹ McClellan writes (*Report*, 252) "from 3 pieces." This is probably a simply clerical error, for Franklin testifies (*Com. Rep.*, 622), "We had put up a work during the night of the 26th. The enemy opened upon that work, and such of our artillery as he could see, early on the morning of the 27th, and there was a very severe cannonading, with 30 guns on each side, I should judge, lasting about an hour. Their object appeared to be to drive us away from Golding's, but it was evidently a diversion to prevent our sending assistance to Porter. There was no infantry fighting till about dark."

² *McC. Rep.*, 251-253. Franklin testifies (*Com. Rep.*, 623): "At my position at Golding's, the woods were so dense between Fitz-John Porter and myself that we did not hear a musket or heavy gun of his all day. We did not know that there was any infantry fight going on. We saw some of the enemy's infantry going up to attack what we supposed to be his position, and we shelled them as well as we could from our side. I was about two miles distant from the field of battle at Gaines's Mills." General J. E. Johnston reports a similar occurrence at Fair Oaks. Though not more than three miles from the battle-field of May 31, he did not hear the cannonading, which was yet distinctly audible at the Federal head-quarters, ten miles or more distant, across the stream. Johnston supposed that this was occasioned by some peculiar condition of the atmosphere.

³ *Lee's Rep.*, i., 183.

² *Ibid.*, i., 181.

³ "During the battle at Gaines's Mills I was on the right bank of the river, at Dr. Trent's house, as the most central position."—McClellan's testimony, in *Com. Rep.*, 435.

might be a mere feint, or the prelude to an attack in force. All the shows of force which had all day long disturbed McClellan were but feints. The only real attack on that day, south of the Chickahominy, was just at sunset, when Toombs, anxious to distinguish himself, sent two small infantry regiments, re-enforcing them afterward, to force the Union pickets. The attempt cost dearly. Half of the Georgia Second went into action 271 strong, and lost 120; the Fifteenth carried in 370, and lost 70 in killed and wounded. Toombs claims that after "two hours of fierce and determined conflict" the Federals were "driven back and repulsed." Franklin says: "There was no infantry fighting until about dark, when two brigades of the enemy attacked Hancock's brigade, which was in position as the advance of the picket line. He had a sharp engagement for about three quarters of an hour, when the enemy was driven back. It was then entirely dark, too late to make any pursuit."¹

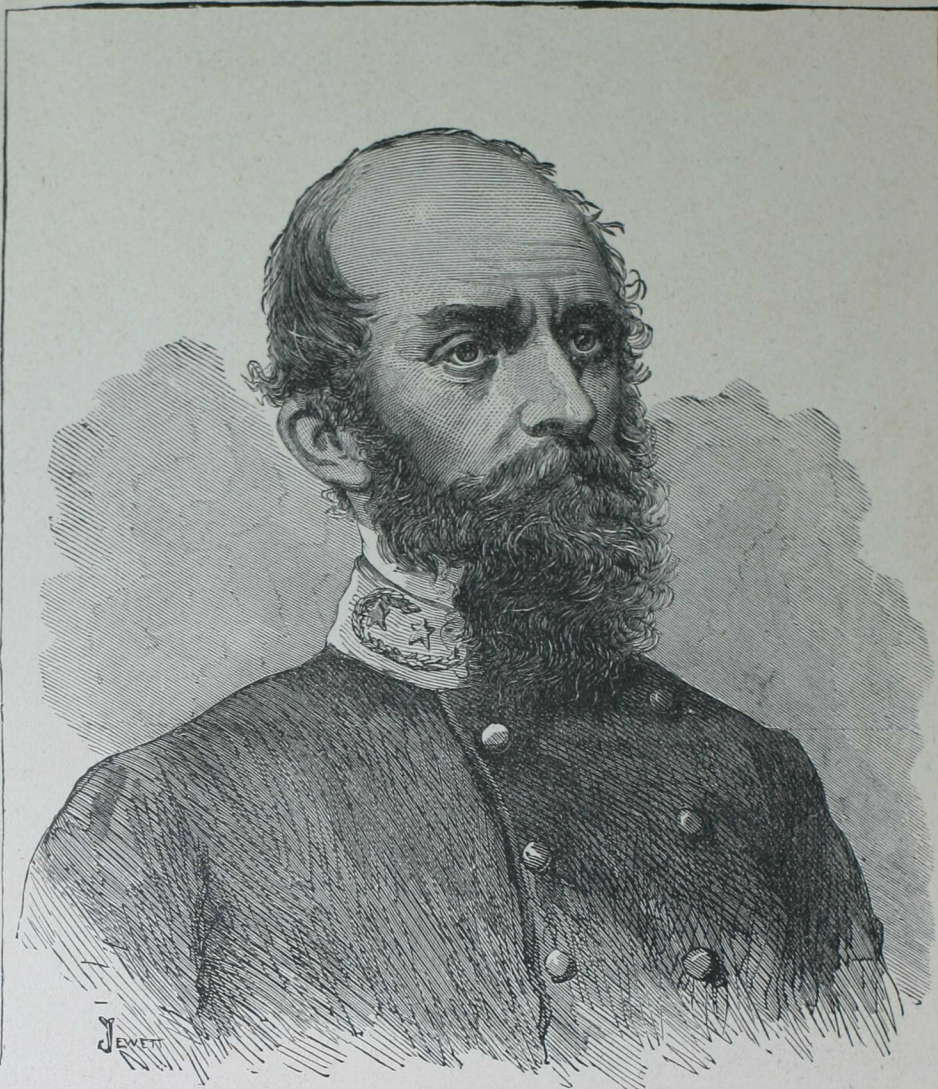
Toward midnight McClellan held a council of war—the only one, apparently, during the campaign. Even then he seems to have had some purpose of re-crossing the Chickahominy and risking another battle on that side. If the purpose was a serious one it was soon abandoned, and orders were given for a retreat to the James River.² He then wrote a bitter letter to the Secretary of War: He knew the whole history of the day. On this side of the river, the right bank, we repulsed several strong attacks; on the left our men did all that men could do, but they were repulsed by vastly superior numbers soon after he had brought his last reserves into action. If he had 20,000, or even 10,000 fresh troops to use to-morrow, he could take Richmond; but he had not a man in reserve, and he should be glad to cover his retreat and save the material and personnel of the army. A few thousand more men would have changed this battle from a defeat to a victory; as it was, the government could not hold him responsible for the result. "If I save this army now," he concludes, "I tell you plainly that I owe no thanks to you or to any other persons in Washington. You have done your best to sacrifice this army."³

SATURDAY, JUNE 28.—THE RETREAT.

Lee had indeed won a formal victory, but at a fearful cost. In the two actions he had suffered a loss in killed and wounded of almost 10,000 men, double that which he had inflicted. He had indeed driven the enemy from the field of battle, and across the river; but this crossing was just what his opponent was endeavoring to effect. He had cut McClellan's line of communication and supply with the York River; but that line had been already given up, and a far better one chosen. To accomplish this, he had placed his army in a position which, had his opponent known it, rendered its destruction inevitable. Two thirds of it, 54,000 strong after its losses, was on the north side of the Chickahominy. The other third, ten miles away in a straight line, was before Richmond. Between them, and more than equal to both, the Union army, at last united, lay like a solid wedge. The river, which McClellan had so long found to be an impassable barrier, lay right between Lee's two wings, which he could unite only by retracing his two days' march up the left bank to Mechanicsville, then down the other side to Richmond. Had McClellan on the 28th or 29th struck at Richmond with his whole available force, the city must have fallen in five hours. The bridges being down, 25,000 men could have held the whole line of the Chickahominy from Bottom's Bridge to New Bridge, leaving fully 70,000 for the assault of Richmond, which was defended by only 27,000, along a line of nearly ten miles. The fall of Richmond must have involved the destruction or dispersion of the force across the Chickahominy, for at Richmond were his only dépôts of supplies. His men had marched out with only three days' rations, and were followed by a very small train. The rapidity of Jackson's march, and the nature of the country traversed, show that he could have only a meagre train. There is not the slightest reason to suppose that, away from Richmond, the Confederates had within a hundred miles provisions sufficient to supply Lee's 54,000 men for five days; and without supplies, an army in that time becomes a disorganized and paralyzed mass, incapable of offense or defense. If McClellan had but known

¹ *Lee's Rep.*, i., 280; *Com. Rep.*, 622. This skirmish at Golding's Farm is the only affair which in any way justifies McClellan's assertion (*Report*, 257): "On the right bank we repulsed several strong attacks."

² Of this council Heintzelman testifies (*Com. Rep.*, 355): "At about eleven o'clock I got a telegram that General McClellan wished to see me immediately at his head-quarters, about a mile and a half off. I found them all packed up and ready to move. The general stated the situation of affairs and what he proposed to do. One thing was to move across to the James River. The other plan was to collect all the troops from my side of the Chickahominy and have a battle the next day, and throw every thing upon the result of that battle. I asked him what would be the result if we lost. He said that if we were defeated the army would be lost, but he was inclined to risk every thing upon that battle. I told him that it was of vital importance to the country, I thought, to save that army; that we were ruined if that army was lost; and that I thought it was better for us not to fight that battle, but to fall back from there to the James River; that we could reach there with a loss, perhaps, of a few pieces of siege artillery and some wagons, and then we could receive re-enforcements. He said that was his opinion; still, he felt inclined to risk every thing on a battle. The next day we commenced to retreat. That was the first time I was consulted in that campaign, any thing more than by mere conversation."—See also *McC. Rep.*, 254, 255.



RICHARD S. EWELL.

his own position and strength, and that of his opponent, he could hardly have wished that Lee should have placed his troops in any other position than that occupied by them just after the battle of Cold Harbor. Magruder, who was in chief command on the left bank, appreciated the sore peril of the Confederate capital and cause. He saw that a vigorous attack upon him could not be other than successful.¹

But McClellan had resolved, instead of giving battle to Lee on the left side of the Chickahominy, or of assaulting Richmond on the right, to abandon the whole position, and retreat with his entire force to the James River. The different commanders were ordered to load the wagons with ammunition and provisions, and the necessary baggage of officers and men, and to destroy every thing which could not be carried off. The sick and wounded, who could not march or be carried, were to be left behind. These were fewer than might have been expected. Of the 13,000 on the sick-list, and the 3000 wounded in the two previous days, about 2500 in all were thus abandoned.

The problem of the "Change of Base" was, after all, a very simple one. It was merely to march an army for ten or fifteen miles with no enemy in front, but with one, erroneously supposed to be superior, in its rear, and upon one flank. The main difficulty was to carry off the guns and trains of supplies and ammunition. The country over which the march was to be made favored the retreating army. The retreat must indeed be slow, for the roads were few and difficult, but the pursuit must be slower, for these roads could be obstructed at every step.

Some three or four miles from the extreme left of the Union position White Oak Creek empties into the Chickahominy. This creek is bordered by a swamp. For five miles the stream has some volume, and the swamp is narrow, three or four hundred yards wide; then it spreads out, for eight miles toward Richmond, to a breadth of three miles or more. From the Chickahominy to the head of the swamp it was crossed by only two roads. Southward, toward the James, the ground rises slowly, and becomes a dry flat instead of a wet flat, but with swamps along the sluggish streams, cov-

¹ Magruder, in *Lee's Rep.*, i., 191: "From the time at which the enemy withdrew his forces to this side of the Chickahominy and destroyed the bridges to the moment of his evacuation—that is, from Friday night until Sunday morning—I considered the situation of our army as extremely critical and perilous. The larger portion of it was on the other side of the Chickahominy; the bridges had all been destroyed, and but one was rebuilt, the New Bridge, which was fully commanded by the enemy's guns from Golding's; and there were but 25,000 men between his army of 100,000 and Richmond. I received repeated instructions during Saturday night from General Lee's head-quarters, enjoining upon my command the utmost vigilance, directing the men to sleep on their arms, and to be prepared for whatever might occur. I passed the night without sleep, and in the superintendence of their execution. Had McClellan massed his whole force in column, and advanced it against any point of our line of battle, as was done at Austerlitz by the greatest captain of any age, though the head of his column would have suffered greatly, its momentum would have insured him success, and the occupation of our works about Richmond, and consequently the city, might have been his reward. Our relief was therefore great when information reached us that the enemy had evacuated his works, and was retreating."

³ *McC. Rep.*, 257, 258.



COMMENCEMENT OF THE RETREAT.—JUNE 29.



MAP OF THE REGION NEAR RICHMOND.

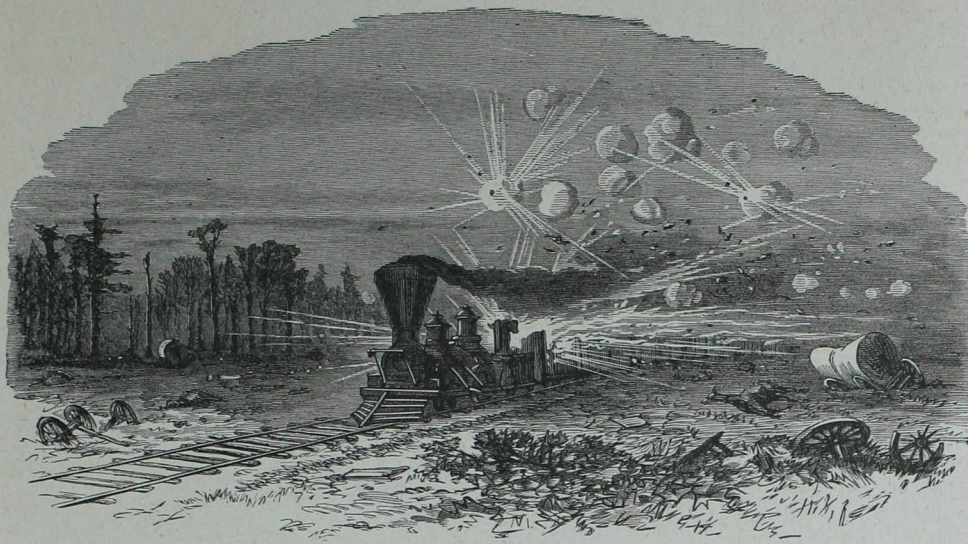
ered with scrubby forests, with here and there a clearing. The maps show roads in abundance and intricate confusion, but they are mainly mere paths, over some of which no wheeled vehicle had passed for years. Three roads, however, starting from Richmond, spread out like the sticks of a fan, and then unite half way between the swamp and Malvern Hill, the point to which McClellan directed his retreat. Thence they branch out in every direction: toward the lower bridges of the Chickahominy, some miles below the railroad, and toward the rich plantations which border the James. Just skirting the swamp is the Charles City Road, then the Central or Darbytown, then the Newmarket. It was by these roads that Longstreet and A. P. Hill, who, having recrossed the Chickahominy and turned the head of White Oak Swamp, marched to make their attack on the 30th upon the retreating column; and Magruder, coming from near Richmond, reached Malvern, where he was so disastrously beaten back on the 1st of July.

McClellan's retreat was in the following order: At noon on the 28th, Keyes, who lay nearest, crossed White Oak Creek and took position on its opposite bank, to cover the passage of the other troops and trains. These, which would have stretched for a distance of forty miles if drawn up in

single line—accompanied by a herd of 2500 cattle—were got safely over, and proceeded on their way, Keyes's corps guarding the advance. They reached the James River without molestation on the morning of the 30th. Franklin and Porter followed from the rear by the same route, and were over on the morning of the 29th. At daybreak of this day Heintzelman and Sumner evacuated their works in front, falling back toward Savage's Station, which they were to hold until night, and then to cross the swamp by the upper road. A part of these several corps were to keep a line of battle fronting toward the creek to check pursuit from the rear, while others were to take position across the three roads, and so fronting toward Richmond, in order to protect the trains passing behind them from assault in flank. McClellan, having given general directions for the movements and positions of the troops, rode to the James to select the best position on that river, and to consult with the naval commanders there.¹

On the morning of the 28th Lee was wholly at a loss what next to do. There was no force in front of him on his side of the Chickahominy; but

¹ McC. Rep., 255-265.



DESTRUCTION OF THE TRAIN.

still McClellan might propose to cross the river lower down, and give battle, in order to preserve his communications with the York River. The cavalry, with Ewell's division of Jackson's command, were sent down to the railroad to observe the state of things there. As they approached, the few troops guarding the railroad passed the river, burning the bridge behind them. Ewell remained until evening, and then rejoined his command. Stuart, with his cavalry, dashed down the railroad toward the White House, which they reached next morning. With him was the proprietor of that estate, Fitz-Hugh Lee, son of the Confederate commander. The house was in flames; nearly all the immense quantity of stores accumulated here had been removed, and were on their way to the James.¹ The abandonment of the railroad and the destruction of the bridge showed that no attempt would be made to hold that line; but still it might be McClellan's purpose either to move upon Richmond or to reach the lower bridges on the Chickahominy, cross the stream, and retreat down the Peninsula. Lee was therefore forced to wait until the intent of his opponent was developed. During the night it was evident that the Union army was in motion, and the Confederate pickets failing to detect any approach to the lower bridges, it became evident that the retreat was toward the James River. So, early on the morning of the 29th, Longstreet and A. P. Hill were ordered to cross the Chickahominy by the New Bridge, which had been rebuilt by Magruder during the night of the 27th, and, crossing in front of Richmond, to move down by the Central Road; Magruder and Huger were to move by the Charles City Road, thus taking the Federal army on the flank; while Jackson at a later hour was to cross by the Grapevine Bridge, and move down near the right bank of the river, thus threatening the rear.²

SUNDAY, JUNE 29.—SAVAGE'S STATION.

At dawn Magruder discovered that the Federal works at Fair Oaks were abandoned, and Sumner and Heintzelman were slowly falling back toward Savage's Station. The works on the extreme right were held a little longer. An attack was made upon them, but it was repulsed, with a loss of 150.³ Magruder, in the mean time, followed cautiously down the railroad, opening a distant fire at intervals—Sumner's retiring troops turning occasionally, and then keeping on the retreat. Late in the afternoon they had fallen back nearly to Savage's Station from the front and the right. Sumner and Heintzelman had been ordered to hold this point until nightfall, the positions of each being assigned to them by McClellan. But Heintzelman abandoned his position before the time, and crossed the swamp by the upper road, giving orders for the destruction of the ammunition and stores remaining at Savage's Station which could not be carried off by the trains. The stores and provisions were piled up in a great pyramid and set on fire. The ammunition and shells were heaped upon a train, which, with steam up, was sent down the railroad to the Chickahominy. Fire was set to the train, and before it reached the site of the bridge it was ablaze, and the shells began to explode. So great was the momentum, that the engine and first car leaped clear across the chasm and landed on the opposite side.

¹ Stuart (*Lee's Rep.*, i., 402) gives a glowing account of the quantity of munitions and stores destroyed here. He says: "The conflagration had raged fearfully at the White House during the night previous, while explosions of shells rent the air. I was informed that 5000 men held the place. . . . Provisions and delicacies of every description lay in heaps, and the men regaled themselves on the fruits of the tropics as well as the substantial of the land. Large quantities of forage were left also. Nine large barges loaded with stores were on fire as we approached. Immense numbers of tents, wagons, and cars in long trains, loaded, and five locomotives; a number of forges; quantities of every species of quartermaster's stores and property, making a total of many millions of dollars—all more or less destroyed." Ingalls, the quartermaster at the White House, however, testifies (*Com. Rep.*, 448): "There were no stores of any importance destroyed. There was some pork destroyed, and some whisky, belonging to the Commissary Department. There were also the stores on one of the trains that I was going to send out at the time the rebels got possession of the road. Most of the stores on that train were abandoned. All the vessels, with the exception of two or three barges which had been got close to the shore, were got off."

² *Lee's Rep.*, i., 10.

³ *Ibid.*, i., 169, 285.

At the same instant the whole mass of powder exploded, and the remaining cars plunged, shattered, into the mud of the river.¹

Magruder, in the mean time, had been delayed by various contradictory orders, but at length came in sight of Sumner's corps drawn up a little in front of Savage's Station, and about half past five o'clock opened a sharp attack with artillery, supporting it by infantry. He had one heavy gun mounted on a railroad car, protected from cannon-shot in front by a sloping iron roof, and from rifle-shot on the sides by thick walls of wood lined with iron. This contrivance, which the Confederates named "the land Merrimac," was used with considerable effect. The action continued hot for more than two hours, when, darkness coming on, the firing ceased as if by common consent, neither side gaining any perceptible ground from the other, though the action was so close that firing was sometimes suspended on account of the impossibility of distinguishing friends from foes. The numbers actually engaged on either side were small. Magruder brought fairly into action only McLaw's

two small brigades, numbering together 2250 men; of these, 345 were killed and wounded. His entire loss was about 400. The loss on the Union side was considerably larger. Early next morning Magruder was ordered by Lee to cross over to the Newmarket Road in order to join in the flank attack of that day. Lee had counted in this action upon the co-operation of Jackson; but he was delayed by the necessity of rebuilding a bridge in order to cross the Chickahominy. Sumner's stand had effected its object of delaying the enemy, and before midnight his force was on its way to White Oak Swamp, leaving behind 2500 sick, wounded, and their attendants in the hospital at Savage's Station.²

MONDAY, JUNE 30.—FRAZIER'S FARM.

On the morning of the 29th Longstreet and A. P. Hill recrossed the Chickahominy at New Bridge, and after passing through the deserted Union lines, and going almost within sight of Richmond, headed the White Oak Swamp, went down the Darbytown Road, and encamped within striking distance of the centre of McClellan's retreating column. They had made a forced march under a fierce sun, and many of the men dropped from the ranks in utter exhaustion. Magruder and Huger were marching to the same point by parallel roads. Jackson and D. H. Hill crossed the Chickahominy on the 30th, and followed straight upon the line of McClellan's retreat to White Oak Swamp. In the mean while, Holmes, whose brigade was at Fort Darling, on the opposite side of the James River, was to cross with all his disposable force and join in the attack. McClellan's whole force was stretched in a line

¹ This retreat of Heintzelman has occasioned much censure. He himself (*McC. Rep.*, 261; *Com. Rep.*, 356) gives reasons for his movement which seem hardly reconcilable with each other. Sumner, he says, had taken a position in advance of that ordered, and "this movement of General Sumner uncovering my right flank, it became necessary for me to retreat." But immediately after he says that, after having been ordered to hold his position by Sumner, who was the commanding officer on the ground, he saw that Sumner and Franklin had "more troops than could be brought into action judiciously," and "the reason I left with my corps was that the ground was so constructed that there were absolutely more troops there than could find room. The roads in their rear were filled with artillery and wagons. . . . I knew that General Sumner had as many troops as were necessary, and my corps, in case of a forced retreat, would only have rendered it more disastrous. . . . Sumner and Franklin had a very sharp action that afternoon, and repulsed the enemy." Sumner (*McC. Rep.*, 260) says: "When the enemy appeared on the Williamsburg road, I could not imagine why General Heintzelman did not attack him, and not till some time afterward did I learn, to my utter amazement, that General Heintzelman had retreated with his whole corps (about 15,000 men) before the action commenced. This defection might have been attended with the most serious consequences; and although we beat the enemy signally, and drove him from the field, we should certainly have given him a more crushing blow if General Heintzelman had been there with his corps." It is clear that not half of Sumner's force was engaged.

² *McC. Rep.*, 259-262; *Lee's Rep.*, i., 10, 160, 193, 290, 295, 298. No reliance can be placed upon the Confederate estimates of the Union loss in this action. Thus Magruder (*Lee's Rep.*, i., 195) says: "I estimate the loss of the enemy to be not less than 3000 killed and wounded; Semmes [who lost 53] reporting not less than 400 dead in his front alone;" while Kershaw, who was more hotly engaged, "turns (*Ibid.*, i., 299) with pride and satisfaction to 500 dead of the enemy left on the field" as evidence of the prowess of his troops.



SAVAGE'S STATION ABANDONED.

eight miles long from the swamp to Malvern Hill, on the James; protected by this line, his artillery and trains were slowly floundering over difficult roads.

Lee's plan of battle for this day was an illustration of grand strategy—the only one deserving the name during the whole campaign. His purpose was to make an attack in column upon McClellan's long line, break through it at the centre, hurl the left back upon Jackson, and assault the right in the rear. To accomplish this plan, his whole strength—more than 80,000 men—were so situated that they might apparently be concentrated at the right moment upon the given point: Jackson upon the rear, all the rest upon the flank. The plan failed because the force could not be brought together in time; and instead of the attack being made by the whole, the action on his side was confined wholly to Longstreet and A. P. Hill, with 18,000 men; and in place of a grand and decisive battle, there were a series of combats, in which each brigade on both sides engaged almost without concert. From the accounts, more or less at variance, and all incomplete, we have to attempt to set forth the leading points in this fierce but desultory conflict.¹

Holmes, joined by Wise, crossed the James with 7000 men, mostly fresh North Carolinians, and on the morning of the 30th came within sight of McClellan's retreating column, upon whom, in the afternoon, he opened fire from a distance. A few rounds of artillery and a few shells from the gunboats scattered his force, the cavalry and artillery breaking into a wild stampede, and riding over and through the infantry. Two were killed, forty-one wounded, and several others seriously hurt by being run over by the cavalry and artillery. Holmes and Wise made no farther appearance in this campaign, but the day after the battle of Malvern marched quietly back to their encampments across the James.

Jackson reached the White Oak Creek at noon. He found the bridge destroyed and the approaches covered by artillery from the opposite side. In vain he attempted to repair it all through the afternoon. The men would not work under the heavy fire to which they were exposed. He was but two miles distant from the fierce battle in which Longstreet and Hill were engaged, and the noise of it could be distinctly heard; but he was powerless to aid the attack in which he had been expected to bear so prominent a part.

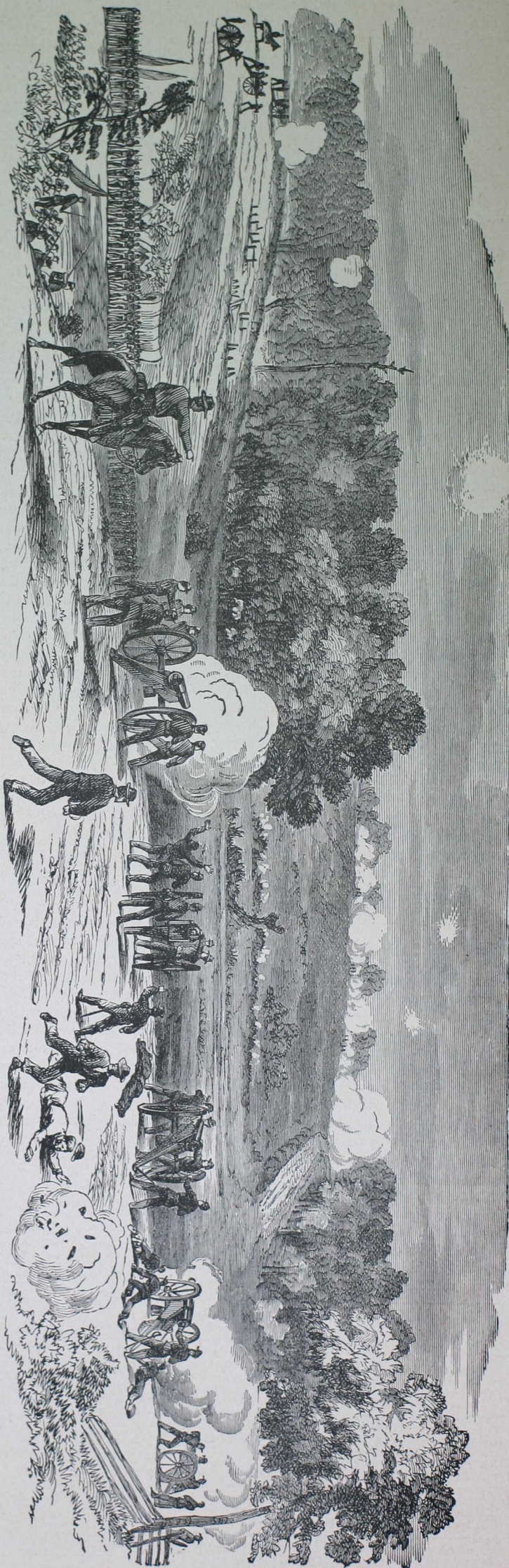
Longstreet and A. P. Hill resumed their march down the Darbytown Road in the morning, and about noon came in sight of a part of the Union line drawn up, its centre at Frazier's Farm, near a point where a road leading to the James River crosses the roads coming from Richmond, by which they were advancing. Huger was supposed to be coming down the Charles City Road, two miles on the right.

The whole Union line was so long that it was unoccupied in portions. At this point McCall was in the centre, with Kearney on the left, and Hooker, then Sumner, on the right. McCall was somewhat advanced, and upon his division, weakened by the two battles in which it had been engaged, the first onset fell.

After some skirmishing, at about four o'clock Longstreet made the onset with the fiery impetuosity which he ever manifested. The first attack was made by Kemper's brigade, which had not yet been engaged, it having been the only one held in reserve at Cold Harbor. The brigade was driven back, losing 250 killed and wounded, and nearly 200 prisoners—a quarter of its whole number. Its place was taken by others, who, in greater force, dashed upon the same point. They swept in the Union line for a space, but were checked by Hooker and forced back. This was on McCall's left. All the force of Longstreet and Hill now rushed in, each brigade commander apparently acting for himself. Foiled at one point, they dashed upon another, determined to break the line somewhere. At last, Wilcox's Alabama brigade leading, they poured over a swampy stream and through a dense wood, and across an open field upon McCall's right, straight in the teeth of his batteries.

Of this charge McCall says:² "On the right, Randall's battery was charged upon by the enemy in great force, and with a reckless impetuosity I never saw equaled. They advanced at a run over a space of six hundred yards of open ground. The guns of the battery mowed them down, yet they never paused. A volley of musketry was poured into them at a short distance by the 4th regiment, in support of the battery, but it did not check them for an instant; they dashed on, and pistoled and bayoneted the cannoniers at their guns. Part of the 4th regiment gave way; the remainder, however, with part of the 7th regiment in their rear, then coming forward, stood their ground like heroes. As I was with the battery at the time, it was my fortune to witness, in the bayonet fight that there took place, such a display of reckless daring on the part of the Alabamians, and of unflinching courage on the part of the Pennsylvanians, as is rarely beheld. My men were, however, overpowered and borne off the ground. The battery was taken, but immediately after abandoned by the enemy, who rapidly retired. Just before sunset, Cooper's battery in front of the centre was, after several charges had been repulsed, finally taken by the enemy, but only to be retaken by the 9th regiment in a most glorious charge."

Wilcox says:³ "The enemy's battery had an open field of fire, the ground being perfectly level. The 11th Alabama advanced, and, entering upon the open field, came on the battery, which began a rapid fire of grape and canister. The regiment did not halt an instant, but continued to advance, steadily and rapidly, without firing, until it approached within two hundred yards of the battery, when it gave loud cheers and made a rush for the guns. Halting in front of it for an instant, they fire upon the battery and infantry



JACKSON IN CHIEF AT WHITE OAK CREEK.

¹ Our authorities are: Lee (*Lee's Rep.*, i., 10), Longstreet (*Ibid.*, i., 125), A. P. Hill (*Ibid.*, i., 177), Jackson (*Ibid.*, i., 134), and Reports of the several Confederate brigade commanders engaged, all given in Lee's Report; McClellan's Report (p. 265-269); the testimony of Heintzelman, Sumner, and McCall (*Com. Rep.*, 357, 365, 586).

² *Com. Rep.*, 558.

³ *Lee's Rep.*, i., 342.

immediately in rear of it, and then make a successful charge upon and take it. . . . The enemy, at first repulsed and driven from the battery, retire to the woods, and deliver a terrible and destructive fire upon this regiment. With its ranks sadly thinned, it heroically stands its ground. The enemy, now seeing this regiment isolated and unsupported, advance from their cover against it. The sword and bayonet are freely used; many of the men received and gave in return bayonet wounds. There are no supports for them; no re-enforcements come, and they are at length forced to yield and retire to the woods in the rear, having left upon the field and around the battery in dead alone eight officers, of whom seven were captains or lieutenants commanding companies, and forty-nine privates."

The battle raged with almost equal fury along the whole line. Hill, on the Confederate left, pressed forward his brigades in a mass, and gained ground at first, capturing two full batteries, which he retained; but he was unable to gain any ground permanently, and at last it became apparent that Hooker and Kearney, on their right and left, were slowly gaining, while the earlier repulse of McCall's flanks had been retrieved, and his centre remained unbroken. Lee, indeed, says: "The enemy had been driven with great slaughter from every position save one, which he maintained until he was enabled to withdraw under cover of darkness. At the close of the struggle nearly the entire field remained in our possession." Longstreet reports:² "The enemy was driven back slowly and steadily, contesting the ground inch by inch. He succeeded in getting some of his batteries off the field, and, by holding his last position till dark, in withdrawing his forces under cover of night." Sumner errs equally on the other side. He says:³ "After a furious contest, lasting till dark, the enemy was routed at all points, and driven from the field." There was no rout; though, as most of the Confederate brigade commanders report, their brigades were greatly shattered. A. P. Hill⁴ gives the true account of the condition when darkness closed the struggle: "On our extreme right matters seemed to be going badly. Two brigades of Longstreet's division had been roughly handled, and had fallen back. Archer was brought up and sent in, and in his shirt sleeves leading his gallant brigade, affairs were soon restored in that quarter. About dark the enemy were pressing us hard along our whole line, and my last reserve, General J. R. Anderson, was directed to advance cautiously. Heavy re-enforcements to the enemy were brought up at this time, and it seemed that a tremendous effort was being made to turn the fortunes of the battle. The volume of fire that, approaching, rolled along the line, was terrific. Seeing some troops of Wilcox's brigade who had rallied, they were rapidly re-formed, and, being directed to cheer long and loudly, moved again to the fight. This seemed to end the contest, for in less than five minutes all firing ceased, and the enemy retired."

The Confederates captured in the earlier part of the action about 20 guns, and lost about 300 prisoners. Their loss in killed and wounded exceeded that of their opponents. Their two divisions kept a part of the field after their enemy had retired, thus holding the honors of the battle; but they were so fearfully shattered, here and before, that not a man of them was brought into the greater fight fought next day at Malvern. A. P. Hill had crossed the Chickahominy four days before with 14,000 men, and at Mechanicsville, Cold Harbor, and Frazier's Farm had lost 4000 in killed and wounded. Longstreet had crossed with 10,000, and at Cold Harbor and here lost 4200. Some of his brigades had more than half their number killed and wounded. Wilcox carried 1850 into action at Cold Harbor; in the two battles he lost 1035. Pryor had 1400, and lost 850.

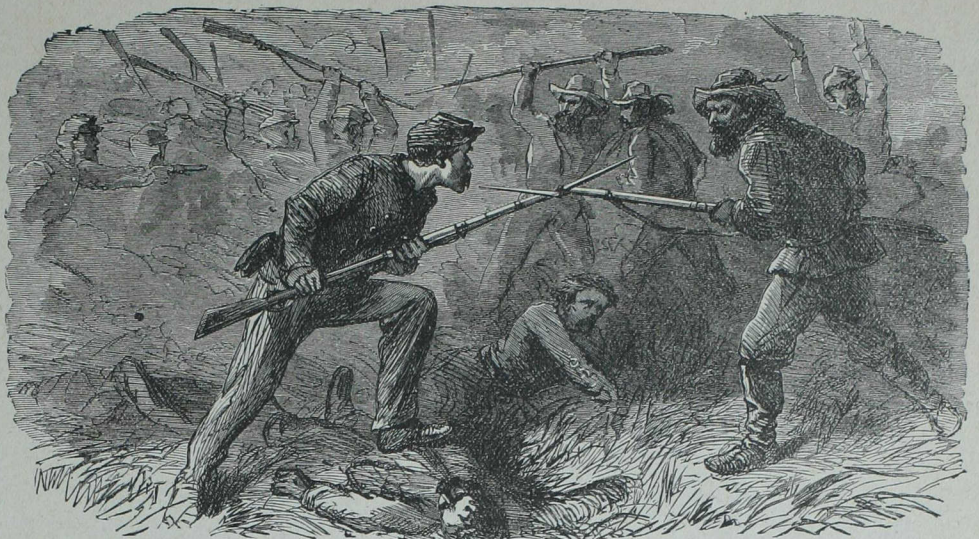
Accounts current at the time represent the division of McCall as having

¹ Lee's Rep., i., 11.

² *Ibid.*, i., 126.

³ McC. Rep., 268.

⁴ Lee's Rep., i., 177.



BAYONET FIGHT AT FRAZIER'S FARM.

been thoroughly routed on this field. Parts of it were indeed shattered and broken; but, as a division, it fought bravely and held its ground firmly. Of the whole army it alone had fought in two battles—Mechanicsville and Cold Harbor. Here it was opposed to the first onset and the severest brunt of the fight. Meade, then leading one of its brigades, and a year after, lacking two days, to command the whole Army of the Potomac down to the close of the war, claimed for this division no more than its rightful due when he wrote: "It was only the stubborn resistance offered by our division, prolonging the contest till after dark, and checking till that time the advance of the enemy, that enabled the concentration during the night of the whole army on the James River, which saved it." After the battle was over, McCall, riding out into the darkness, fell in with a regiment of the enemy and was captured. He had been almost the whole day under the hottest fire, escaping unharmed, though every one of his staff was killed or wounded.

TUESDAY, JULY 1.—MALVERN HILL.

The battle at Frazier's Farm was hardly over when the Union forces again took up their retreat toward Malvern Hill, the point selected for resisting the farther advance of the enemy. The rear of the wagons and reserve artillery had arrived there about four in the afternoon. Soon after daylight the last division was in, and the post of each was assigned.

The position was admirably chosen for a defensive battle. Malvern Hill is an elevated plateau, a mile and a half long and half as broad, the top nearly free from woods. It slopes gently toward the north and east down to the verge of a thick forest; westward it falls more abruptly into a ravine, which extends to the James River. All along the front are ravines, rendering the approach difficult except by the roads which cross them. On the crest of the hill seven heavy siege guns had been placed in position, and the reserve artillery was so posted that a concentrated fire of sixty guns could be brought to bear upon any point in front or on the left, the direction from which the enemy must advance to the attack. Here the main force was massed. The right, less strongly held, curved backward through a wooded region to the James. Both flanks thus rested upon the river, and were protected by the gun-boats. Porter's corps was on the left; then Heintzelman's, a part of Keyes's, Sumner's, Franklin's, and last, on the extreme right, the remainder of Keyes's.

Jackson crossed the White Oak Creek, and followed in the track of the retreating army. At Frazier's Farm he found Lee, who ordered him to press forward; at 9 o'clock, coming in sight of the Union line, he took up his position, Whiting on the left, then Ewell; D. H. Hill being on the right, who was thus brought in front of Hooker, near the Union centre. Hill was

within range of the artillery on the plateau, and suffered severely. "Anderson's brigade was roughly handled, he being wounded and borne from the field." The division was then halted, and the Union position reconnoitred.² "The Yankees," says Hill,³ "were found to be strongly posted on a commanding hill, all the approaches to which could be swept by his artillery, and were guarded by swarms of infantry, securely sheltered by fences, ditches, and ravines. Tier after tier of batteries were grimly visible on the plateau, rising in the form of an

¹ Com. Rep., 589.

² McClellan thus describes this part of the engagement: "About 3 P.M. a heavy fire of artillery opened upon Kearney's left and Couch's division, speedily followed up by a brisk attack of infantry on Couch's front. The artillery was replied to with good effect by our own, and the infantry of Couch's division remained lying on the ground until the advancing column was within short musketry range, when they sprang to their feet, and poured in a deadly volley, which entirely broke the attacking force, and drove them in disorder back over their own ground. This advantage was followed up until we had advanced the right of our lines some seven or eight hundred yards, and rested upon a thick clump of trees, giving us a stronger position and a better fire. Shortly after 4 o'clock the firing ceased along the whole front, but no disposition was evinced on the part of the enemy to withdraw from our front."—McC. Rep., 271.

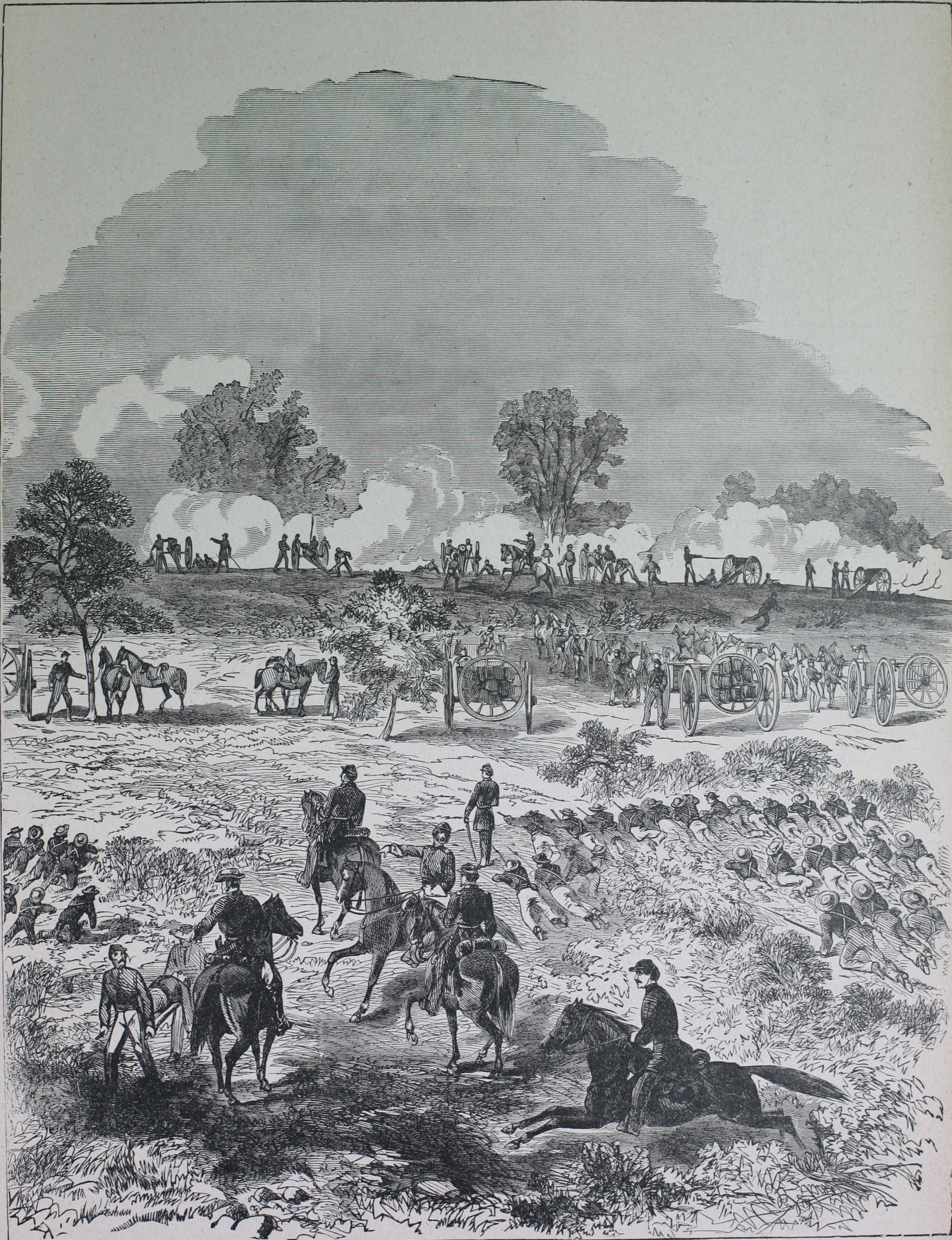
³ Lee's Rep., i., 185.



ON THE FIELD.



BATTERY D., FIFTH U. S. ARTILLERY, AT FRAZIER'S FARM.



FIRST MASSACHUSETTS BATTERY AT FRAZIER'S FARM.

amphitheatre. We could only reach the first line of batteries by traversing an open space of from three to four hundred yards, exposed to a murderous fire of grape and canister from the artillery and musketry from the infantry. If that was carried, another and another, still more difficult, remained in rear. I had expressed my disapprobation of a farther pursuit of the Yankees to the commanding general, and to Generals Jackson and Longstreet, even before I knew of the strength of their position. An examination satisfied me that an attack would be hazardous."

But Lee was resolved that his grand stroke of strategy should not fail. He sent a note to each of his division commanders ordering an assault. That brief note of forty words cost him more than 4000 men.¹

Huger had been directed to march down the Charles City Road and join Longstreet and A. P. Hill in the battle of the 30th. He failed to reach the point in time. Next day he tried to move forward, but got entangled among the other divisions, and finally lost his way. He had had the same misfortune a month ago at Seven Pines; and now, when his divisions came up, they were one by one taken from him and given to Magruder, and formed a part of his command during the battle. At first he was inclined to ignore the arrangement, and even directed one of his brigade commanders not to place himself under Magruder;² but his order was disregarded, and he could only remonstrate afterward against the slight which had been put upon him, not for the first time. After the battle was over he was suffered to direct his division in removing the wounded and burying the dead.³

The afternoon was now wearing away when Lee ordered the artillery attack which he hoped would break the Union lines. "But, instead of one or two hundred pieces, only a single battery opened, and that was knocked to pieces in a few minutes; and one or two others shared the same fate of being beaten in detail." Hill knew not what to do. He "wrote to Jackson that the firing from the batteries was of the most farcical character;"⁴ and received for reply that he must advance as ordered upon hearing the shout from Armistead. At length, an hour and a half before sunset, he heard shouting and firing on his right, and, supposing this to be the signal, urged his whole division forward. He shall tell the story of his charge in his own words, somewhat abridged:

"We advanced alone; neither Whiting on the left, nor Magruder or Huger on the right, moved forward an inch. The division fought heroically, but fought in vain. Garland, in my immediate front, showed all his wonted courage, but he needed and asked for re-enforcements. I found Toombs's brigade in our rear, and ordered it to support Garland, and accompanied it. The brigade advanced handsomely to the brow of the hill, but soon retreated in disorder. Gordon pushed gallantly forward and gained considerable ground, but was forced back. Ripley's brigade was streaming to the rear. Colquitt's and Anderson's brigades had also fallen back. Ransom's brigade had come up to my support from Huger; a portion of it had come, but without its brigadier. It moved too far to the left, and became mixed up with the mass of troops there, suffering heavily, and effecting little. Winder was sent up by Jackson, but he came too late, and also went to the same belt of woods already overcrowded with troops. Finally Ewell came up, but it was after dark, and nothing could be accomplished. I advised him to hold his ground, and not to attempt a forward movement."⁵ Hill lost in this action,

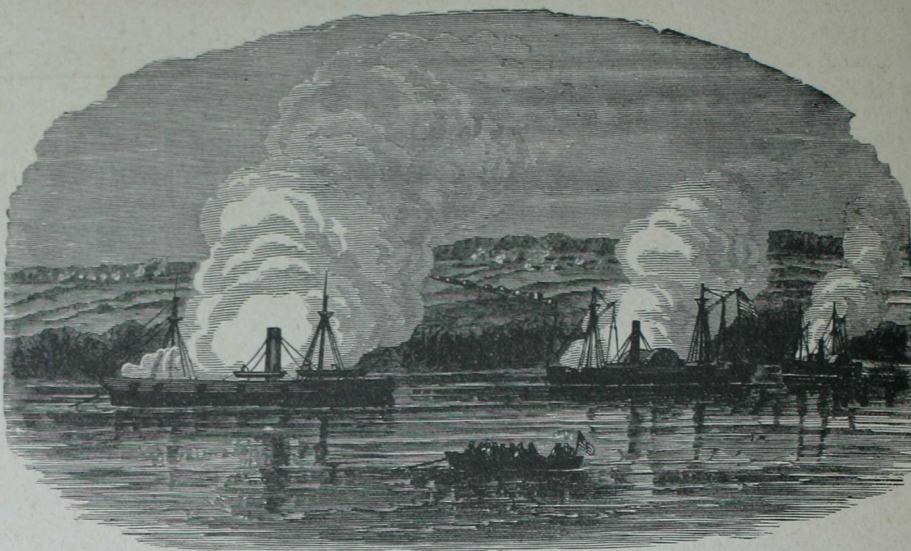
¹ Lee's note, given in *Report*, i., 212. See also p. 185, 199. "Batteries have been established to act upon the enemy's lines. If they are broken, as is probable, Armistead, who can witness the effect of the fire, has been ordered to charge with a yell. Do the same."

² *Lee's Rep.*, i., 200, 212, 368.

³ "My brigades were, during the action, under the immediate command of General Magruder. As they were sent forward into the battle at Malvern Hill, I was directed to report them to another commander. As I was treated in the same manner at Seven Pines, I can only hope this course was accidental, and required by the necessities of the service. I therefore make no report, and refer to reports of others for details of the battle of Malvern Hill. After this battle, as required, the division was occupied, under my orders, in removing the wounded and burying the dead."—Huger, in *Lee's Rep.*, i., 149.

⁴ D. H. Hill, in *Lee's Rep.*, i., 186.

⁵ *Ibid.*



THE GUN-BOATS AT MALVERN HILL.

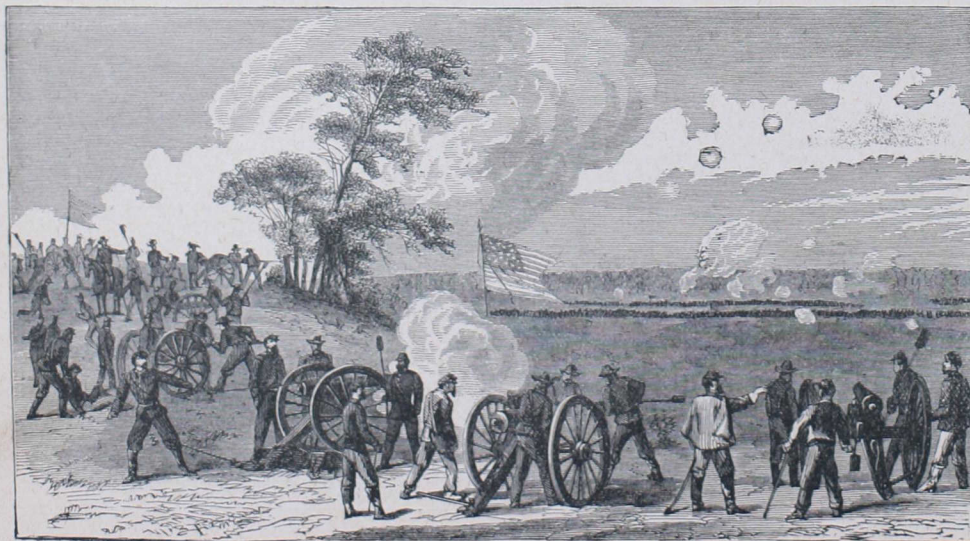
lasting only an hour and a half, of his own division, 336 killed and 1373 wounded.¹

McClellan thus describes this part of the engagement:

"At six o'clock the enemy suddenly opened upon Couch and Porter with the whole strength of his artillery, and at once began pushing forward his columns of attack to carry the hill. Brigade after brigade, formed under cover of the woods, started at a run to cross the open space and charge our batteries; but the heavy fire of our guns, with the cool and steady volleys of our infantry, in every case sent them back reeling to shelter, and covered the ground with their dead and wounded. In several instances our infantry withheld their fire until the attacking columns, which rushed through the storm of canister and shell from our artillery, had reached within a few yards of our lines. They then poured in a single volley and dashed forward with the bayonet, capturing prisoners and colors, and driving the routed columns in confusion from the field."²

Hill was mistaken in supposing that "neither Magruder nor Huger moved forward an inch," and in afterward reiterating, "So far as I can learn, none of our troops drew trigger excepting McLaw's, mine, and a portion of Huger's." McLaw's division was a part of Magruder's command; and all this time Magruder, with the whole of his own and Huger's force, was engaged in a fierce conflict on the right. From them came the shouting and firing which Hill supposed to be the signal for his own advance. To this attack by Magruder, as well as to that by Hill, belongs McClellan's account just quoted. So close were they in space and time that, viewed from the opposite lines, they appeared as parts of one movement.

Magruder, after a weary and harassing march from the battle-field at Savage's Station, was ordered by Lee to attack on the right of Hill, who was in position. He found Armistead, of Huger's division, awaiting the arrival of artillery. Magruder sent back to hurry it up, and pushed on some of his troops within range of a heavy fire. Just then he received a copy of Lee's note, ordering him, as soon as he heard the yell from Armistead, to "do the same," and charge. Armistead had driven in some skirmishers, and yelled. Lee, supposing that the Union line was broken, and that the troops were retreating, wrote to Magruder to advance and cut them off.³ He attempted to carry out the order. His plan was "to hurl about 15,000 men upon the enemy's batteries and supporting infantry; to follow up any successes they might obtain; and, if unable to drive the enemy from his strong position, to continue the fight in front by pouring in fresh troops, and, in case they were repulsed, to hold strongly the line of battle where I stood, to prevent serious disaster to our arms."⁴ But in a short time his whole force was engaged, breasting a terrific fire of artillery and musketry. "The battle-field," says Magruder, "was enveloped in smoke, relieved only by flashes from the lines of the contending troops. Round shot and grape crashed through the woods; and shells of enormous size, which reached far beyond the head-quarters of our gallant commander-in-chief, burst amidst the artillery parked in the rear. Belgian missiles and Minié balls lent their aid to this scene of surpassing grandeur and sublimity." This determined attack failed in making any impression upon the Union lines or in disturbing a single battery. The Federal troops had no occasion to leave their strong position. It was quite sufficient to mow down the enemy with artillery as they advanced. When darkness set in, Magruder "concluded to let the battle subside," and his wearied men sank down to sleep on the spot they had reached. Some of them were within a hundred yards of the Union batteries.



THE BATTLE OF MALVERN HILL.

¹ *Ibid.*, i., 307.

² *McC. Rep.*, 271.

³ Lee to Magruder, in *Lee's Rep.*, i., 210: "General Lee expects you to advance rapidly. It is reported that the enemy is getting off. Press forward your whole line and follow up Armistead's successes."

⁴ Magruder, in *Lee's Rep.*, i., 200.

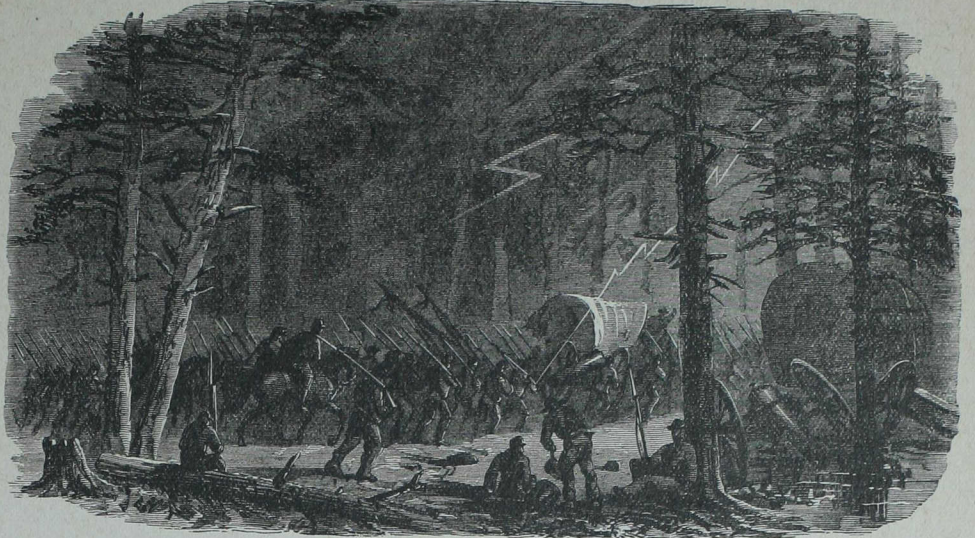
Of these closing scenes, as viewed from the other side, McClellan writes: "About 7 o'clock, as fresh troops were accumulating in front of Porter and Couch, Meagher and Sickles were sent with their brigades to relieve such regiments of Porter's corps and Couch's division as had expended their ammunition, and batteries from the reserve were pushed forward to replace those whose boxes were empty. Until dark the enemy persisted in his efforts to take the position so tenaciously defended; but, despite his superior numbers, his repeated and desperate attacks were repulsed with fearful loss, and darkness ended the battle of Malvern Hill, though it was not until after 9 o'clock that the artillery ceased its fire."¹

The Confederates were indeed repulsed fearfully—and, had McClellan only known it and followed up his advantage—disastrously.² But the superior forces of the enemy existed, as they had for months, only in the imagination of the Union commander. Neither Longstreet nor A. P. Hill had a man in this action. Jackson's own command was not engaged in the attack, though all of it was within the range of our guns, and suffered a loss of just 41 killed and 363 wounded by the distant fire.³ D. H. Hill's division, reduced to less than 8000, and Magruder's and Huger's, then not exceeding 20,000, were all.⁴

General Trimble thus describes the condition of the Confederate army on the morning after the battle:⁵ "The next morning, by dawn, I went off to ask for orders, when I found the whole army in the utmost disorder. Thousands of straggling men were asking every passer-by for their regiments; ambulances, wagons, and artillery obstructing every road, and altogether, in a drenching rain, presenting a scene of the most woeful and heart-rending confusion." The very show of an attack upon such an army by the unbroken Union force must have defeated it. But there was in the mind of its commander no thought of an attack. When, in the morning, the Confederates looked up the hill which they had so vainly attempted to scale, they saw not a trace of the grim batteries and serried lines which had confronted them the night before. In the storm and darkness the Union army had fled from a victory as though it had been a rout.

McClellan had "perceived that the position at Malvern Hill was the key to our operations in that quarter."⁶ His whole army was concentrated here, having during the actions and retreat suffered far less loss than it had inflicted. Here he had wisely resolved to give battle; and yet before the battle was fought he had begun the retreat, and as soon as the "complete victory" was won, the troops were on the march, abandoning the key to the position.⁷ Hitherto the retreat had been orderly, but for this last seven miles it presented the aspect of the flight of a routed army.⁸ Keyes, who was to form the rear-guard, was instructed: "Bring along all the wagons you can; but they are to be sacrificed, of course, rather than imperil your safety. Celerity of movement is the sole security of this position." Next day, while the retreat was going on, the chief of staff wrote to Keyes: "It is of the utmost importance that we should save all our artillery and as many of our wagons as possible. If you bring in every thing you will accomplish a most signal and meritorious exploit, which the commanding general will not fail to represent in its proper light to the Department."⁹ On the 3d, McClellan wrote to the Secretary of War that the army was thoroughly worn out, and required rest and very heavy re-enforcements; but he hoped that the enemy was equally worn out. He hoped the army would have breathing space before it was attacked again. It was impossible then to estimate the losses, but he doubted whether there were more than fifty thousand men with their colors. To "accomplish the task of capturing Richmond," re-enforcements should be sent to him "rather much over than less than one hundred thousand men."¹⁰

This hasty and disorderly retreat was performed with little molestation from the enemy. Stuart's cavalry, who had rejoined Lee after the battle, followed after, through the storm, making a few captures of straggling men and abandoned arms. Some of the Confederate infantry followed cautiously, and on the 3d came near enough to throw a few shells at the rear-guard,



THE RETREAT FROM MALVERN.

but were quickly dispersed by a fire from the batteries and gun-boats. But no serious attempt at annoyance was made; and after passing a few days near the battle-field of Malvern, burying the dead and gathering abandoned property, the Confederates, on the 8th, retired to Richmond. McClellan felt himself in a condition, on the 7th, to write to the President that his position was very strong, and daily becoming more so; if not attacked that day he should laugh at the enemy; his men were in splendid spirits, and anxious to try it again. Meanwhile the President was to alarm himself as little as possible, and, above all, must not lose confidence in the army.¹

With the battle of Malvern Hill properly closed the campaign on the Peninsula. To the errors which marked its earlier period, as conducted by McClellan, we advert but briefly. They arose mainly from the exaggerated estimates which he made of the forces opposed to him. Thus, at the close of October, 1861, when the Confederates had at and around Centreville only 40,000 or 50,000, he believed that they numbered 150,000; when they abandoned this point, he put their numbers at 115,000 instead of 50,000. He was held in check at Yorktown for weeks by 11,000, 20,000, and finally 53,000, instead of 100,000, "and possibly more," as he believed. While lying idle in the Chickahominy swamps, confronted, as he thought, by a superior force, there was not a day up to the battle of Fair Oaks when his strength was not greater by half than that of the enemy. And when at length Lee had gathered all his re-enforcements, including Jackson, his utmost effective strength was barely 100,000, instead of the 180,000 or 200,000 which McClellan attributed to him, his own force being fully as great.

Into the six days—which have somehow passed into history as the Seven Days—from June 26 to July 1, in which this ill-starred campaign culminated, were concentrated on both sides more grave errors than can elsewhere be found in modern military history.

Of Lee's initial error in dividing his army, which should have lost him every thing, we have already spoken. The wild attack upon the strong Union position at Beaver Dam Creek can be justified only on the ground that it was made in utter ignorance of his own force at that point, and of that opposed to him. It finds its parallel upon a larger scale in our own attack upon Fredericksburg, six months later.

The battle of Cold Harbor was fought upon the Union side without any assignable object. McClellan indeed says:² "The objects sought for had been attained. The enemy was held at bay, our siege-guns and material were saved, and the right wing had now joined the main body of the army." But the material had all been saved hours before the action commenced. The very last of the siege-guns was carried off at sunrise, half past four, and it was not till "after noon that the enemy were discovered approaching in force, and it soon became evident that the entire position was to be attacked."³ Here were fully eight hours of daylight during which Porter's and McCall's troops, unnumbered by trains, could have crossed wholly without molestation. Any two or three hours of that time would have been amply sufficient for the purpose. In the darkness, and after the fatigue and confusion of a lost battle, the crossing was effected in three or four hours by half more men. The crossing might indeed have been made during the night of the 26th, and the right wing, entirely fresh, with the exception of McCall's division, which had won the fight at Beaver Dam Creek, might have been with the main body of the army on the right bank of the Chickahominy, in the very position where McClellan had been for weeks trying to place them; with the wholly unexpected advantage that the force of the enemy was divided, with the whole Union army and the impassable Chickahominy between the portions. With the bridges destroyed, and the approaches covered by artillery, the whole Confederate force on the left bank of the Chickahominy, for at least two days, was wholly useless for the defense of Richmond.

This battle was not fought to preserve the communications with the White House, for on the day before orders had been given to abandon that base,⁴

¹ *McC. Rep.*, 272.

² Some days after the retreat from Malvern Hill McClellan proposed to renew the movement upon Richmond, if he could have a re-enforcement of 20,000 men. In reply to the question, "In what do you consider your chances of success would have been greater, with the addition of 20,000 to the number which you had at Harrison's Landing, than they were when you were in front of Richmond, and before Jackson had formed a junction with the rest of the rebel forces?" he answered: "I should have counted upon the effect of the battles which had just taken place upon the enemy. We had then strong reason to believe that the enemy's losses had been heavier than our own, and that portions of his army were very much demoralized, especially after the battle of Malvern Hill."—*Com. Rep.*, 438.

³ *Lee's Rep.*, i., 307.

⁴ Magruder, indeed, says (*Lee's Rep.*, i., 202) that "there was a force of 26,000 or 28,000 under my orders engaged and under fire." But he must have considered himself in command of the whole field, and so have included D. H. Hill's division. For he repeatedly states that his own division and that of Huger together numbered, at the outset, only 25,000; of these fully 800 had been killed and wounded at Golding's, Price's, and Savage's Station, and many of his men gave out in the march before reaching Malvern Hill. As one example out of many scattered through the minor Confederate reports, General Howell Cobb says (*Lee's Rep.*, i., 279) that his brigade "commenced the march on the morning of the 29th of June with 2700 men, but fatigue and exhaustion had so reduced our ranks that less than 1500 were carried into the battle of the 1st of July." Of his own division and Huger's, Magruder could not have had more than 18,000 or 20,000 at Malvern Hill. ⁵ *Lee's Rep.*, i., 314. ⁶ *Ibid.*, 264.

⁷ The greater portion of the transportation of the army having been started for Harrison's Landing during the night of the 30th of June and 1st of July, the order for the movement of the troops was at once issued upon the final repulse of the enemy at Malvern Hill.—*Ibid.*, 273.

⁸ "We were ordered to retreat, and it was like the retreat of a routed army. We retreated like a parcel of sheep; every one was on the road at the same time, and a few shots from the rebels would have panic-stricken the whole command."—*Hooker's Testimony, Com. Rep.*, 58.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 611, 612.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 342.

¹ *Lee's Rep.*, i., 13, 136, 404; *McC. Rep.*, 279.

² *McC. Rep.*, 249.

³ *Ibid.*, 247. According to all Confederate accounts, they were not in position to open the attack until nearly two o'clock.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 243. McClellan intimates that this was done in consequence of the operations of the 27th. He says (*Ibid.*, 254): "The operations of this day [the 27th] proved the numerical superiority of the enemy, and made it evident that while he had a large army on the left bank of the

and unite the whole force on the right bank. The reasons which McClellan assigns for not effecting this junction on the left bank are valid, and it is only to be wondered at that, after having got his whole army together on the right bank during the night of the 27th, he should even have suggested the idea of recrossing with his whole force and giving battle on the other side. His whole army was now just where it should have been long before, whether for advance or for retreat. But the reasons which he assigns for failing to advance upon Richmond are wholly invalid, not only in view of what is now known, but in view of what was or should have been known at the time. "The enemy," he repeats, "was in our rear, and there was every reason to believe that he would sever our communications with our supply dépôt at the White House. We had on hand but a limited amount of rations; and if we had advanced directly to Richmond, it would have required considerable time to carry the strong works around that place, during which our men would have been destitute of food; and even if Richmond had fallen before our arms, the enemy could still have occupied our supply communications between that place and our gun-boats, and turned their disaster into victory." But, as we have seen, the communications had already been abandoned. The whole army was furnished with supplies on the right bank of the Chickahominy for at least a fortnight. After destroying an immense amount of stores, which the train, forty miles long, was unable to convey, the army was fed, until it reached Harrison's Landing, a period of seven days, from what it carried with it. Even then "some portions of the army had still some rations left."¹ The supplies could by no means have been exhausted; for, besides the amount remaining in the wagons when the army retreated from Malvern Hill to Harrison's Landing, "the large herd of 2500 beef cattle was transferred to the James River without loss."² A few hours' combat on the 28th or 29th of June must have resulted in the capture of Richmond. The victorious army, besides the supplies which it would have captured there, would have been in a condition to have drawn its supplies from its new and better base, while the Confederate army on the left bank of the Chickahominy would have been wholly destitute of supplies from any source.

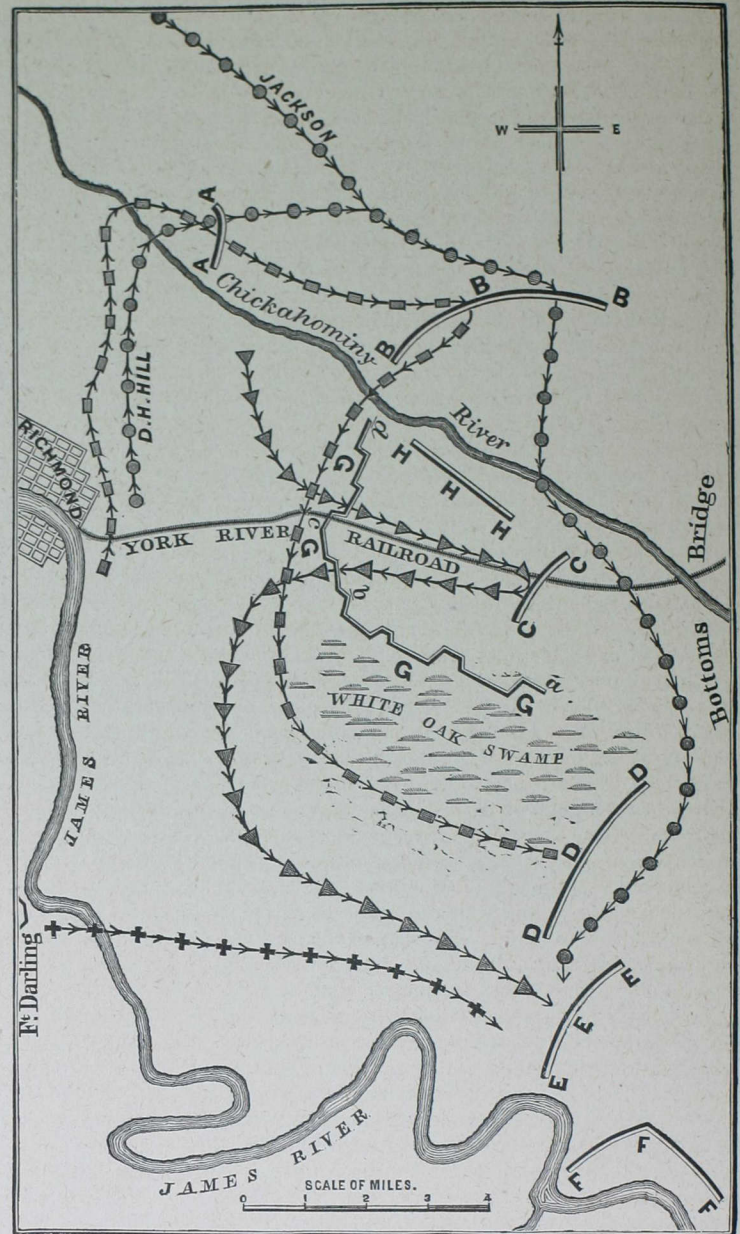
There was not the slightest occasion for leaving Porter and McCall as a forlorn hope, merely to hold a superior force at bay for a few hours. The battle of Cold Harbor was one which might either have been accepted or avoided. But, if accepted, there was no reason why it should have been fought with forces so inadequate as to render defeat a foregone conclusion. Ten thousand out of three times the number of men unemployed within hearing, and almost within sight of the battle, would have changed the issue of the day. With these Cold Harbor would have been a victory instead of a defeat.

The Union army was united during the night of the 27th; the Confederate force was separated, the Chickahominy River and swamp lying between the two portions. The operations of the day showed that the main Confederate force was on the left bank. Whether the Union army was to endeavor to take Richmond, or was to retreat to the James River, and there to find a new and better base, the first thing was to keep the force of the enemy apart. This was all the more imperative now that it was determined to retreat. To do this long enough to secure that the retreat should be unmolested, it was only necessary to thoroughly destroy the bridges. This was done so imperfectly that it might as well not have been done at all. The bridges, which it had cost weeks to build, were so little damaged that they were repaired in hours. New Bridge was rebuilt by Magruder during the night of the 27th, without opposition, right under the guns of the Union batteries, and over this Longstreet and A. P. Hill crossed. The Grapevine Bridge, over which Sumner had so hardly passed a month before to repair the defeat at Seven Pines and win the victory at Fair Oaks, was left so little damaged that Jackson reconstructed it in a few hours of the night of the 29th. The thorough destruction of these two bridges would have kept the Confederate force, then across the Chickahominy, on that side long enough to have enabled the retreating army to have gained its new position without another battle.

But the Union army had no commander. From the moment when McClellan learned of the approach of Jackson, he seems to have lost head and heart. Having resolved to retreat instead of to advance, he posted his troops each morning, and his corps commanders saw no more of him for the day. He was busy selecting positions and expediting the passage of trains; doing the work of an engineer rather than that of a general. Each commander of a corps was left to himself to do the best he could. Except at Malvern Hill, the commanding general was not even constructively on the field at any important moment during the whole campaign. He was not present during the battles at Williamsburg or Hanover Court-house, at Seven Pines or Fair Oaks, at Cold Harbor, Savage's Station, or Frazier's Farm. Few of his generals even saw him at Malvern.³

Chickahominy, which had already turned our right, and was in position to intercept the communications with our dépôts at the White House, he was also in large force between our army and Richmond. I therefore effected a junction of our forces."

¹ Ingalls's Testimony, *Com. Rep.*, 449. ² *McC. Rep.*, 256. ³ During the Seven Days' Battles "the corps commanders fought their troops entirely according to their own ideas. If any body asked for re-enforcements, I sent them. If I wanted re-enforcements, I sent to others. . . . General Sumner fought the battle of Savage's Station entirely himself. . . . The next day [Frazier's Farm] General McClellan again posted his troops, and then went off to the James River. That battle was fought entirely by the corps commanders; at least, I received no directions myself. At Malvern Hill I received no orders from General McClellan after the troops were posted. . . . During that fight he was down at his headquarters on the James River. He came up some time late in the afternoon, and was with General Porter about half an hour. . . . He was the most extraordinary man I ever saw. I do not see how any man could leave so much to others, and be so confident that every thing would go right."—Heintzelman's Testimony, in *Com. Rep.*, 358, 359. Sumner testifies (*Ibid.*, 364, 365): "The action at Malvern commenced on the left at about ten o'clock in the morning. General McClellan had deemed it necessary to go down to Harrison's Landing to determine on the points to



POSITIONS AND MOVEMENTS, JUNE 25 TO JULY 1.
 This plan indicates, in a general way, the positions and movements of the armies from June 25 to July 1.
 A. A. Union position at Mechanicsville, June 26.
 B. B. " " Cold Harbor, June 27.
 C. C. " " Savage's Station, June 29.
 D. D. " " Frazier's Farm, June 30.
 E. E. " " Malvern Hill, July 1.
 F. F. " " Harrison's Landing, July 4.
 G. G. Union intrenchments before Richmond: a. Keyes; b. Heintzelman; c. Sumner; d. Franklin.
 H. H. Porter and McCall, after crossing the Chickahominy.
 Jackson's and D. H. Hill's march.
 Longstreet's and A. P. Hill's march.
 Magruder's and Huger's march.
 Holmes's and Wise's march.
 The retreat of the Union army was by the same line as Jackson's march, after crossing the Chickahominy.

Lee, unless he was greatly misinformed as to the strength of his opponent, or entertained the most profound contempt for his capacity, must have shared in Magruder's feeling of relief when he learned, on the morning of the 29th, that the Union army, instead of moving upon Richmond, was in full retreat for the James River. The siege of Richmond was indeed raised for the time, but if the retreating army safely reached its new base, the beleaguering could be renewed under more favorable auspices. To secure any permanent advantage, this army must be signally defeated, or, at least, greatly crippled on its march. To effect this was the design of the movements of the 29th and 30th. If Lee had succeeded, as he proposed, in concentrating 70,000 men on the afternoon of the 30th, half upon the flank and half in the rear,¹ yet both so near as to constitute one body, his plan would have succeeded. The plan failed from contingencies which should have been taken into account. The attacking force had to march twice as far as the retreating one, and over a country of which they were ignorant. The

which the troops should retire. I therefore found myself, by virtue of my seniority of rank, in command of the army, without having been formally invested with that command, or having received any instructions in relation to it. I received a note from General McClellan's chief of staff to this effect, that any orders I gave on the field would be approved. About an hour or two afterward I received a verbal message from General McClellan. He was then down the river, two and a half miles from where the battle was going on. . . . Some time afterward General McClellan came on the field. I think he first went up on the left, and came down the line toward the right where I was. He stopped and conversed with me for some time, and then went down toward the right, in the direction of the river. I did not see him again that day. About four o'clock that afternoon a very furious attack was made on our left again. That was the time when Magruder made the assault. . . . I do not know where General McClellan was during this second fight. I presume he was at his quarters. I do not know of his being on the field." McClellan says (*Rep.*, 269): "General Barnard then [the night of the 30th June] received full instructions for posting the troops as they arrived. I then returned to Haxall's, and again left for Malvern, soon after daybreak, accompanied by several general officers. I once more made the entire circuit of the position, and then returned to Haxall's, whence I went with Captain Rodgers to select the final location for the army and its dépôts. I returned to Malvern before the serious fighting commenced, and after riding along the lines, and seeing most cause to feel anxious about the right, remained in that vicinity." But he says, on the same page, "From the position of the enemy, his most obvious lines of attack would come from the directions of Richmond and White Oak Swamp, and would of necessity strike us upon our left wing." There was no fighting on the right, in the vicinity of which General McClellan remained.
¹ "When I was taken prisoner I was conducted at once to Lee's head-quarters. Here Longstreet told me that they had 70,000 men bearing on that point, all of whom would probably arrive during the night."—McCall, in *Com. Rep.*, 588.

result was that the flank attack at Frazier's Farm was made by 18,000 men instead of 40,000, while Jackson, who was to have assailed the rear with 30,000, was held in check, utterly unable to cross the White Oak Creek.¹ The neglect of Lee to acquire minute information of the character of the country is inexplicable. The entire operations were carried on within a dozen miles of the capital of the Confederacy. One would suppose that every rood of ground, and every road and military point, would long before have been accurately surveyed and mapped. Moreover, even during the siege, this region, on the south side of the Swamp, had never been occupied by the enemy. It is doubtful whether, with the exception of a single cavalry reconnoissance in May, a single company of Union soldiers had crossed to the south side of the swamp until within a week. The first duty of a commander is to make himself acquainted with the country where he is to operate. If Napoleon owed to any one thing more than to another his marvelous triumphs, it was to the care with which he studied the topography of his campaigns. Thus alone was he enabled to manœuvre his forces so as to have them, however apparently separated, brought together at the right moment. "The great art of war," he said, "consists in knowing how to separate in order to subsist, and how to concentrate in order to fight." Lee had neglected this one essential thing, and, in consequence, his flank and rear assault failed utterly.

Had there been any real commander of the Union army on the field, the Confederate check at Frazier's Farm might have been rendered a severe defeat. Before the fight was fairly begun, the last of the Federal trains were safe at Malvern Hill. The army occupied a line from front to rear of barely eight miles. Jackson, in the rear, was held firmly in check across the Swamp, and could not advance a foot. Longstreet's and Hill's column struck this line near its centre. Keyes's corps, fully equal to Longstreet's and Hill's, had not been engaged at all. It had marched but eight miles in two days, and must have been fresher than the enemy, who had marched fully twice as far, after having fought at Cold Harbor. This corps, or half of it, brought back into the fight at Frazier's Farm, would have given such a preponderating strength to the Union force that Longstreet and Hill, instead of being merely checked, must have been overwhelmed. As it was, they suffered so severely that they could not be brought into the action of the next day. But the commanding general was miles away from the scene of action, and no one of the corps and division commanders could have any knowledge of the whole field and of the positions of the different troops. Each did the best he could under the circumstances, and no troops could have fought more bravely; "but no one knew who and where his next neighbor was; and, what is worse, there was no common head near at hand to direct, and give coherence and unity to the operations."² "It was very late at night," says McClellan,³ "before my aids returned to give me the results of the day's fighting along the whole line, and the true position of affairs."

The battle of Malvern Hill was fought by the Confederates without plan or concert. Of more than 70,000 men, whom Lee had even then within two hours' march, less than 30,000 were brought into action.⁴ Opposed to these was the whole Union force of fully 85,000 effective men, holding a position which they could have maintained against twice their number. With such odds, there could have been but one result. The mad Confederate assault failed utterly, and could not but have failed if it had been made with their whole force instead of less than half. D. H. Hill, who had opposed it, endeavors to show that, if properly supported by Jackson, he could have succeeded; but in the very attempt he is forced to point out the "blundering arrangements" of his superiors.⁵

In reviewing the operations of these six days one can not but be impressed by the slight part borne by Jackson. He failed to be at his designated place at Mechanicsville. He reached Cold Harbor only in time to turn the wavering scale. Had Porter been re-enforced, as he should have been, Jackson would have been too late. He was held at bay at White Oak Swamp, utterly unable to aid in the battle raging only two miles away. At Malvern Hill he did not even attempt to bring his own proper divisions into ac-

tion, though he sent Hill upon his hopeless effort to storm the heights, which even that reckless fighter thought impregnable. Where, as in this case, all was accomplished by hard fighting, the losses sustained by each commander afford the best measure of his efficiency. Jackson had 30,000 men, and lost not quite 2300; Longstreet and D. H. Hill, out of 10,000 each, lost each 4000; A. P. Hill, out of 14,000, lost 3900; Magruder, out of 25,000 belonging to himself and Huger, lost nearly 4000, fully four fifths of them in the single battle at Malvern, in which, if it was to have been fought at all, Jackson should have borne the prominent part. The "blundering arrangements" in this battle, of which D. H. Hill complains, must be mainly charged to Jackson.

Never was there better fighting, and never worse generalship than during the six days on the Peninsula. "The Union army," says McClellan,¹ "fought an overwhelming enemy by day, and retreated from successive victories by night, through a week of battle, closing the terrible scenes of conflict with the ever-memorable victory at Malvern, where they drove back, beaten and shattered, the entire Eastern Army of the Confederacy." But at no point, as we have shown by an analysis of forces, was there an "overwhelming" or even a superior force of the enemy except at Cold Harbor, where such a supremacy should not have existed. "Richmond," as McClellan says, "was still within our grasp," as it had indeed been for a month; but the hand which should have grasped it was too feeble for the effort.

We have written, "In a contest between forces so nearly balanced, the victory would rest with that which was most ably commanded. The general who made the fewest errors would win." We might have said, where the whole campaign was a series of errors on both sides, the commander who made the last great error would lose. McClellan's retreat from Malvern was the last great error, and so Lee won. The fruits of victory remained with him; though at a heavy cost, he had won the object at which he aimed, and had good right to say, "The siege of Richmond was raised, and the object of a campaign which had been prosecuted, after months of preparation, at an enormous expenditure of men and money, completely frustrated."²

¹ *McC. Rep.*, 445.

² *Lee's Rep.*, i., 14.

LOSSES FROM JUNE 26 TO JULY 1.

After the retreat to Harrison's Landing, the losses of each division of the Union army, in killed, wounded, and missing, were summed up, but no attempt was made to give the proportion in each engagement (*McC. Rep.*, 272). If any confirmation of the accuracy of the statement were needed, it would be found in a comparison of the official reports of June 20 and July 20 (*McC. Rep.*, 53; *Com. Rep.*, 337, 344). The entire loss, in killed, wounded, and missing, is undoubtedly accurately stated; but as the dead and many of the wounded were abandoned, probably some hundreds should be added to these and taken from the number put down as "missing." Lee, indeed, says (*Rep.*, i., 14) that more than 10,000 prisoners were taken; but this is clearly erroneous. Besides the 2000 at Cold Harbor, and the 2500 at Savage's Station, almost all of whom were sick or wounded, and perhaps 1000 (*Lee's Rep.*, i., 11, 134, 184) picked up by Jackson on his march to White Oak Bridge, very few prisoners were taken by the Confederates.

Of the Confederate commanders, Jackson, D. H. Hill, Longstreet, A. P. Hill, Holmes, and Pendleton, give their exact losses. The losses of Magruder and Huger can be made up very closely from the reports of their brigade commanders. Barksdale (*Lee's Rep.*, i., 296) says that "one third of his brigade fell upon the field: it numbered about 2400, which would make the loss 800. Cobb (*Ibid.*, i., 279) puts his loss in killed and wounded at "nearly 500." McLaw's (*Ibid.*, i., 161, 164), 97 killed, 456 wounded. D. R. Jones (*Ibid.*, i., 172), 103 killed, 708 wounded. Ransom (*Ibid.*, i., 370), 69 killed, 354 wounded. Mahone (*Ibid.*, i., 372, 378), 63 killed, 216 wounded. Armistead (*Ibid.*, i., 438, 439, 448, two regiments estimated), 320 killed and wounded. Wright (*Ibid.*, i., 397), 55 killed, 243 wounded. In all, 3984, of whom 656 were killed, and 3328 wounded. Of the cavalry and reserve artillery, we find mention of about 20 killed and 104 wounded.

The missing in A. P. Hill's division are not given; the number was evidently small, probably about 100. In Magruder's command we find about 400 missing in about two thirds of the brigades; we set down the whole at 600.

From the foregoing data we have compiled the following table of

KILLED, WOUNDED, AND MISSING.

	UNION.				CONFEDERATE.			
	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.	Total.	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.	Total.
McCall	253	1240	1531	3,024	376	1,392	74	2,842
Sumner	187	1073	845	2,111	714	3,192	48	3,954
Heintzelman	189	1051	833	2,073	763	3,429	237	4,429
Keyes	69	507	201	777	619	3,251	100(?)	3,970
Porter	620	2460	1198	4,278	656	3,328	600(?)	4,584
Franklin	245	1313	1179	2,737	3	59	..	62
Engines and Cavalry ..	19	62	118	199	20	104	..	124
Total	1582	7709	5858	15,249	3151	15,255	999	19,406

The losses in the separate battles can be given only approximately, by considering the troops engaged in each, and the nature of the fighting, aided by a few indicia scattered here and there through the various reports of Confederate commanders.

Keyes was engaged mainly at Malvern Hill; we put his entire loss in that battle. Sumner was engaged at Savage's Station, Frazier's Farm, and Malvern; we divide his loss between those three engagements. Heintzelman at Frazier's Farm and Malvern; we divide his loss between them. McCall was at Mechanicsville, where he lost about 300, and at Cold Harbor, and the Farm, losing about equally in each. Porter was chiefly engaged at Cold Harbor and Malvern; we put three fourths of his loss at the former. Of Franklin's corps, half with Slocum was at Cold Harbor, the other half with Smith at Garland's and Price's Farms, and elsewhere; we put two thirds of his loss at Cold Harbor, dividing the remainder among the other engagements.

Jackson was engaged at Cold Harbor and slightly at Malvern; D. H. Hill at Mechanicsville, Cold Harbor, and Malvern: both of these distinguish between their losses in each engagement. A. P. Hill was at Mechanicsville, Cold Harbor, and Frazier's Farm. We estimate his loss in the first at 750, in the last at 900, leaving the remainder for Cold Harbor. Longstreet was at Cold Harbor and Frazier's Farm; we put his loss in the latter battle at 1100, leaving the remainder for Cold Harbor.

From these data we construct the following approximate table of

KILLED AND WOUNDED IN THE SEVERAL ENGAGEMENTS.

	UNION.			CONFEDERATE.		
	Killed.	Wounded.	Total.	Killed.	Wounded.	Total.
Mechanicsville	50	250	300	250	1,250	1,500
Cold Harbor	75	3250	3925	1500	8,000	9,500
Savage's Station	100	500	600	75	325	400
Frazier's Farm	300	1500	1800	325	1,700	2,025
Malvern Hill	375	1800	2175	900	3,500	4,400
Skirmishes (say)	82	599	681	101	459	561
Total	1582	7809	9391	3151	15,255	18,406

¹ "Huger not coming up, and Jackson being unable to force the passage of White Oak Swamp, Longstreet and Hill were without the expected support. The advantages in numbers and position were on the side of the enemy. Could the other commands have co-operated in the action, the result would have proved most disastrous to the enemy." . . . "Under ordinary circumstances the Federal army should have been destroyed. Prominent among the causes to which its escape is due is the want of timely information. This fact, attributable chiefly to the character of the country, enabled General McClellan skillfully to conceal his retreat, and to add much to the obstructions with which nature had beset the way of our pursuing columns."—*Lee's Rep.*, i., 11, 14. ² *Barnard, Pen. Camp.*, 44. ³ *McC. Rep.*, 268.

⁴ We estimate the effective Confederate force within five miles of Malvern Hill, on the 1st of July, thus: Jackson and D. H. Hill, 30,000; Longstreet and A. P. Hill, 15,000; Magruder and Huger, 20,000; Holmes, 7000; in all, 72,000. Longstreet, A. P. Hill, and Holmes were not under fire at all. Of Jackson's "command" only D. H. Hill's 8000 were brought fairly in; these, with Magruder's 20,000, were all that actually fought.

⁵ "The battle of Malvern Hill might have been a complete and glorious success had not our artillery and infantry been fought in detail. My division batteries, having been three times engaged, had exhausted all their ammunition, and had been sent back for a fresh supply. If I had had them with me, with a good supply of ammunition, I feel confident that we could have beaten the force immediately in front of us. Again, the want of concert with the infantry divisions was most painful. Whiting's division did not engage at all, neither did Holmes's. My division fought an hour or more the whole Yankee force, without assistance from a single Confederate soldier. Some half hour after my division had ceased to struggle against odds of more than ten to one, I had to fall back. McLaw's division advanced but to share the same fate. Notwithstanding the tremendous odds against us, and the blundering arrangements of the battle, we inflicted heavy loss upon the Yankees. The actual loss in battle was, in my opinion (though most persons differ with me), greater on our side than on that of the Yankees."—D. H. Hill, in *Lee's Rep.*, i., 187.