

JOHN RODGERS.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE WAR ON THE MISSISSIPPI.

The River.—Gun-boat and Mortar Fleet.—Farragut's Squadron.—A Succession of Victories.—Vicksburg becomes a Military Post.—Masked Batteries along the River Shore.—Shelling of Grand Gulf.—General Williams arrives before Vicksburg.—Farragut runs the Blockade.—Junction of the Fleets.—Bombardment of Vicksburg.—Escape of the *Ram Arkansas*.—Battle of Baton Rouge, and Destruction of the *Arkansas*.—Resumption of Operations against Vicksburg.—General Grant's Plan of the Winter Campaign.—An embarrassing Surrender.—Sherman's Defeat at Chickasaw Bayou.—McClelland in Command.—Capture of Arkansas Post.—General Grant's Army at Young's Point.—A Series of Naval Exploits.—The "pocket-full of Plans."—General Williams's Canal.—The Lake Providence Route.—The Yazoo Pass Expedition.—The "Deer-Creek Raid."—On to New Carthage.—The Transports run the Blockade.—Grierson's Raid.

"THE possession of the Mississippi," said General Sherman, in his speech at St. Louis just after the close of the war, "is the possession of America."¹ That this great river is not to the American what the Nile was to the Egyptian is owing to the greatness of America herself, who proudly refuses to be dependent upon even so important an ally; though, next to the two great oceans which skirt her continent, the river is the most important fact of her physical existence, and now (that is, in *anno Domini* 1866) has been proved to be the bond, sealed in blood, of her indissoluble union. Naturally, both in appearance and in fact, the river unites the North with the South, and, though seeming to divide between the Atlantic and the Pacific slopes, she in reality unites these also. The Algonquin Indians aptly named her *Missi Sepe*, "the Great River;" for, if the Missouri is to be considered—as it would have been but for a natural blunder on the part of the early American geographers—the parent, and not merely the tributary stream, the Mississippi is the longest river in the world. Even if we accept the more contracted limits which the geographers have given her, and date her origin from Itasca Lake, she drains a basin of more than a million of square miles—a basin which by possibility provides for a population of nearly four hundred millions, or almost one half of the present population of the entire globe. Even Aaron Burr, in his most splendid calculations respecting the destiny of this mighty garden—this granary of the world, underestimated its gigantic possibilities. In the basin of the Mississippi the America of the future includes within its limits, as an *imperium in imperio*, a region, the population of which will outnumber the almost innumerable multitudes which have gathered about the Nile and the Ganges. For the present, however, the Englishman may well compare with the Mississippi his Thames, and the German his Rhine. Two centuries and a half go but a little way in the development of the resources of a nation, and far less than that period can be said to have been occupied in the real history of the Mississippi Valley.

The Mississippi is the most tortuous of rivers, and this circumstance, by the impediment which it offers to the current, doubtless favors navigation. Frequently the distance which has to be traversed is twelve, and sometimes

¹ When, at the beginning of this century, Monroe and Pinckney were negotiating with Napoleon I.—then First Consul of France—in regard to the purchase of Louisiana, Napoleon, anxious to transfer the province to the United States, lest it should fall into British possession, remarked that whatever nation held the Valley of the Mississippi would eventually be the most powerful on earth.

even thirty times greater than it would be in a direct line. This circumstance also renders the river more capable of defensive fortification. Taken with its tributaries, the river affords nearly 17,000 miles of water which is navigable by steam. Its largest tributaries are the Missouri, Ohio, White, Arkansas, and Red Rivers. The Missouri is 3000 miles in length; it is a rapid and turbid stream, and asserts its lordship over the Mississippi by imparting to the latter a good measure of these characteristics. It enters the Mississippi a few miles above St. Louis. The Ohio, the largest eastern tributary of the Mississippi, enters the latter stream at Cairo, having previously received the waters of the Alleghany, the Kentucky, the Cumberland, and the Tennessee. From Pittsburg, where the Alleghany and Monongahela unite, to the mouth of the Ohio, is 948 miles; the river, with its tributaries, has 5000 miles of navigable waters. Within the limits of Arkansas, and not far apart, are the mouths of the White and Arkansas Rivers. The latter, much the more important tributary, is about 2000 miles long, and drains a basin of 178,000 square miles. The Red River enters the Mississippi from the west, about 200 miles above New Orleans. The greater part of its course is through fertile prairies of a reddish soil, which gives its color to the waters, and a name to the river. But for "The Raft" which obstructs its course, this river would be navigable for 400 miles from its mouth.

All of the western tributaries of the Mississippi drain the slopes of the Rocky Mountains, while its great eastern tributary, the Ohio, with its tributaries, drains the western slopes of the Appalachian range. Every one of these tributary and sub-tributary streams is swollen in the spring from the melting snows of the mountains. From the first of March, therefore, until the last of May—or for about ninety days—there is not simply a flood on the Mississippi, but literally an accumulation of floods. On the Missouri there is an average rise of fifteen feet, and this, added to the swollen Mississippi, makes a flood twenty-five feet in height. A second flood is heaped above this from the Ohio, below whose mouth the rise of the Mississippi is fifty feet. Above Natchez the flood begins to decline. At Baton Rouge it seldom exceeds thirty feet, and at New Orleans seldom twelve. At every flood the river overflows its banks for a distance of five hundred miles from its mouth, chiefly on the western side, inundating the country for the space of from ten to thirty miles. To guard against this, levees have been constructed, which confine the river within its original limits. Sometimes these levees are broken down by the violence of the current, and the consequent destruction of property is immense. To the yearly overflow of the Mississippi are to be attributed the large number of bayous in its vicinity. These vary in their extent, some of them scarcely exceeding a small river in size, while others spread out into lagoons and lakes.¹

¹ "It is estimated that about 16,000,000 acres of the most fertile and productive lands of the states of Missouri, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana, are subject to overflow. To protect these lands from the annual devastation by the waters has been the object of incessant toil and immense outlays of capital by the inhabitants of the Valley of the Mississippi.

"So early as 1840, Congress made an appropriation for the construction of a chart of the "Hydrographical Basin of the Mississippi," which was executed by J. N. Nicollet, in the employ of the United States Topographical Bureau.

"In 1850, a corps of engineers was organized under Captain, now General A. A. Humphreys, which made a thorough survey of the Delta with special reference to the discovery of some system of works by which the country could be protected from overflow. These observations were made during and subsequent to the great flood of 1851.

"The constant increase of the volume of the flood revealed by each successive rise is ascribed by Captain Humphreys, in his Report, to the superior drainage produced by the cultivation of the country on the upper tributaries of the Mississippi, whereby the waters are thrown more rapidly into the main channel; the leveeing of the river and its tributaries in the states above Louisiana, so as to prevent the escape of the waters into the swamps and lowlands, whence it would be gradually drained to the river; the construction of cut-offs; the shortening of the channel, and more rapidly conveying the water to points below; and the lengthening of the Delta, thus extending the level mouth of the river, so that the current being retarded, the water is held back in the channel above.

"The remedies suggested are: Higher and stronger levees; prevention, by act of Congress, of the construction of additional cut-offs; formation of new outlets to the Lakes Borgne and Pontchartrain; opening of the closed bayous; enlargement of the Atchafalaya and Bayou Plaquemine, and the creation of artificial reservoirs in the swamps, to relieve the channel of the river in extreme cases.

"The early settlers, who selected the more elevated and fertile lands on the banks of the river, found little difficulty in protecting themselves from the floods. The whole country was then open to the waters, and a slight embankment, several inches high, would turn off the water, which was drained to the lowlands farther from the river. Other settlers, however, followed the pioneers; new plantations were established; and, by independent individual action, the slight embankments became linked together for many miles along both sides of the river. The waters, by reason of this confinement, rose higher every succeeding year, the embankments were enlarged, strengthened, and extended, until a line of levees, from fifteen to thirty feet wide at the base, and varying in height from five to twenty feet, stretched, with little interruption, from the lands on the coast, below New Orleans, along the channel of the river, to the boundaries of Tennessee and Missouri.

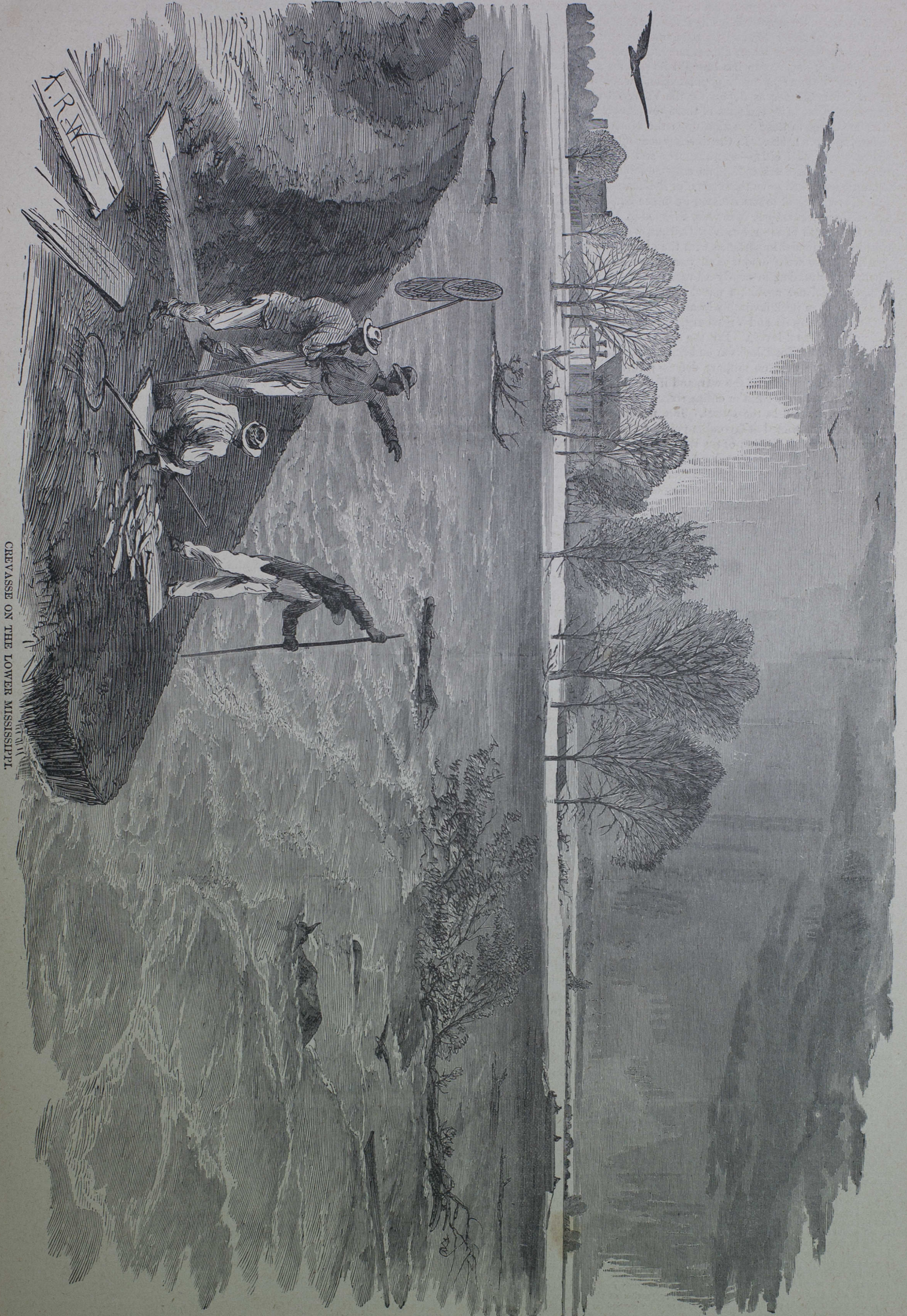
"The system, owing to its origin, was purely a selfish one. Each settler provided for his individual protection. If by a cut-off he could drain the water from his own place and throw it on the lands below, or by closing a bayou he could reclaim additional acres, the thing was done without reference to the effect it might have on the country lower down the stream. Much damage was thus done by shortening the channel of the river and by closing some of its natural outlets to the sea.

"The legislation of the states along the Mississippi has been little better than the individual action. The enactments depended more upon the comparative strength of the parties to be benefited and injured than upon any well-established plan for the control of the waters. Under authority of law, the channel of the river was shortened by the construction of cuts across the narrow necks formed by the great bends so frequent in the course of the stream. Bayous, which led from the main channel of the river to the gulf, forming independent outlets or mouths, were closed, and the water forced into one channel, which was unable to carry it to the sea.

"Before the war, therefore, the Father of Waters had become unmanageable in the hands of those who sought to control his floods. During the war, when labor that had been forced to the task day and night, and which at times was able to grapple successfully with the elements, was withdrawn, the waters swept away the levees at Morganzia, West Baton Rouge, at Chinn's and at Robertson's plantation, and at other points both above and below the mouth of the Red River, and inundated the country west of the Mississippi from Morganzia to Berwick's Bay.

"An attempt was made during last winter to rebuild these broken embankments. Under the combined efforts of the state authorities of Louisiana and the War Department at Washington, a large number of laborers were employed, and the work had been so far repaired that it was believed to be sufficiently strong to resist the pressure of the flood. Many planters and men from the North, believing that these levees would be rebuilt, engaged in the cultivation of the fertile lands in the parishes of Point Coupee, West Baton Rouge, Iberville, Lafourche, Terrebonne, and parts of others that were overflowed last year. Recent reports from Louisiana bring the sad intelligence that all these newly-constructed levees have been swept away, and that the water is rapidly filling up the swamps and spreading over the whole country, driving the homeless inhabitants before it.

"It is a grave question for the consideration of the country whether Congress should not undertake the protection of the whole Delta of the Mississippi against overflow. The present sys-



CHEVASSE ON THE LOWER MISSISSIPPI.

The commercial development of the Mississippi Valley, although very rapid, has scarcely advanced beyond its first stage. It has been thus far a purely agricultural growth. The fertility of the valley is infinite, and along the banks of the river and its affluents large plantations have suddenly sprung up, and enjoyed an almost incredible prosperity. Oftentimes a single cotton or sugar crop has brought its planter a fortune. Necessity has given rise to towns, sparsely populated, and whose sole importance consists in their convenience as dépôts for the shipment of cotton or sugar. The necessity of securing the sites of these towns against the violence of perennial floods led to their situation upon the bluffs which rise here and there along the river banks. In the development of these towns—for they could scarcely be called cities—manufactures and the arts could have but little scope. In some cases, indeed, an easy communication by railroad with the Atlantic sea-board gave them some of the characteristics of our Eastern cities. The principal towns situated upon the banks of the Mississippi are St. Louis, Cairo, Columbus, Memphis, Vicksburg, Natchez, Baton Rouge, and, near the mouth of the river, New Orleans, which alone can be said to compare in commercial importance with the great cities of the East.

All of these were in our civil war points of great military importance. Their very situation, in nearly all cases, was such as to give them many facilities for defense against a naval attack. The city of New Orleans was, however, not in itself favorably located in this respect; it was not built upon bluffs like Memphis and Vicksburg, and had to be defended against inundation by artificial levees. But the approach to the city from the Gulf was well guarded by Forts Jackson and St. Philip. With the exception of these two forts, there were no military defenses worth considering on the Mississippi at the beginning of the war, and if the nation had possessed any considerable naval strength, the entire river from Cairo to New Orleans might have been secured at the outset. But, while a navy was being provided, there were constructed at favorable points fortifications which for some time secured the greater portion of the river to the Confederacy. The two points which were the last to surrender to the national arms were Vicksburg and Port Hudson. The campaigns—naval and military—which had for their object the reduction of these two strong-holds form the main subject of this and the succeeding chapter. But, before entering directly upon these campaigns, we shall briefly review the previous naval history of the war on the Mississippi.

The importance of a navy on our Western rivers was early appreciated. A month after the capture of Fort Sumter, Commander John Rodgers was summoned to Washington, and to him was assigned the duty of creating the Western navy. In the first stages of the undertaking, the War Department, under Secretary Cameron, assumed the expense and supervision; and it was not until the autumn of 1861 that the matter was transferred to the charge of the Navy Department, where it properly belonged.

Rodgers, an officer fitly chosen to organize the armed flotilla of the West, was son of the distinguished Commodore John Rodgers, one of the fathers of the American Navy. A native of Maryland, he had entered the naval service of the United States in 1828, at an early age. He had seen much service as midshipman and lieutenant; had been for two years engaged in boat service on the coast of Florida, in the war with the Seminoles and in the Coast Survey Expedition; in 1852 had been appointed second in command of the North Pacific and Behring Straits Exploring Expedition, and, succeeding to the chief command of that expedition on account of the severe illness of Captain Ringgold, had taken his vessel, the Vincennes, farther into the Arctic region than a ship-of-war had ever before penetrated; and when the rebellion broke out he had reported for active service, and had been sent to Norfolk to attempt the rescue of the vessels there, but, arriving too late to accomplish this, had been assigned to the difficult and dangerous duty of blowing up the dry-dock. It was from Norfolk that Rodgers was, on May 16, 1861, summoned to Washington to receive orders respecting his mission to the West. Entering immediately upon this mission, he went to work heartily. He purchased steamers, which, under his supervision, were fitted, armed, and armored as gun-boats. But it was a slow and difficult undertaking, demanding much skill, and more than ordinary perseverance. The question of the comparative power of even iron-clad gun-boats as against forts was still one about which a great deal might be said on both sides. Even as we look back now and consider what the war has taught us in regard to the solution of this vexed problem, we hesitate to pronounce definitely, satisfying ourselves with the somewhat vague conclusion that the result depends as much upon one member of the equation as the other. In the instances of successful reduction of forts by gun-boats, the case might have been reversed if the enemy had constructed better fortifications. Certain it is that Foote was severely repulsed at Donelson, though he had been so victorious at Henry; and that nearly all the captures of forts during the war were the immediate consequence of assaults with an overwhelming military force, the ships accomplishing little beyond the silencing of the enemy's guns.

Commander Rodgers never took any of his vessels into action. He believed, or rather wanted of system, seems to be a failure; and, unless some such combination of works as is suggested by General Humphreys be adopted, planting on the fertile river lands must ever be a precarious undertaking, with the weight of the chances largely against success. The distinguished engineer who conducted the survey referred to estimated the total cost of works to protect the country from the Ohio to the Gulf at \$26,000,000. The country thus reclaimed and protected would easily bear a tax of an amount sufficient to pay the interest on this sum, to keep the works in repair, and, finally, to liquidate the debt. This, like all other physical problems, must be capable of determination. The water brought down the Mississippi is not infinite; its quantity, its velocity, its pressure, are measurable; the height and strength of levees, and the capacity of outlet required to confine and discharge the annual floods brought down, are therefore determinable measurements. To solve the problem, it is only necessary that a competent superintendent, clothed with ample authority over every portion of the territory to be protected, be charged with the task, so that the whole work may be carried on and completed in accordance with some well-established system.—*N. Y. Tribune*, May 26th, 1866.

came the victim of covetous contractors, and, at the suggestion of General Fremont, who afterward regretted the circumstance, was relieved by A. H. Foote, September 6, 1861. The new naval commander, on his arrival in the West, found three wooden vessels in commission, besides which there were, in process of construction, nine iron-clad gun-boats and thirty-eight mortar-boats. There was not a single navy yard or dépôt on any of the rivers. Much embarrassment was occasioned by the paucity of funds and the want of ordnance. Even after the boats were completed it was found difficult to man them. These obstacles were surmounted by Flag-officer Foote, "whose perseverance and courage," says Secretary Welles, "were scarcely surpassed by the heroic qualities displayed in subsequent well-fought actions on the decks of the gun-boats he had under so many discouragements prepared."

In the month of February Foote was able to bring against Fort Henry seven gun-boats—the Essex, St. Louis, Carondelet, Cincinnati, Tyler, Lexington, and Conestoga, of which the last three were wooden. In that fight the Cincinnati and Essex were disabled, and could not be brought against Fort Donelson a week later. In the naval action at Donelson the Tyler also was absent on the Tennessee, but the two iron-clads were replaced by the Louisville and Pittsburg. Foote declared that if the battle could have been postponed one week, he could also have brought eight of his mortar-boats into action. Besides the nine gun-boats involved in the attacks on Henry and Donelson, three others—the Benton, Mound City, and Cairo—were ready for action in a few days. At Island No. 10, in March, sixteen mortar-boats were engaged. From a letter written about this time by General Strong to Foote, it appears that the Confederates then had "thirteen gun-boats independent of the five below New Madrid, and the Manassas, or ram, at Memphis." These vessels were, however, far inferior to Foote's gun-boats, as was shown shortly afterward; yet they excited considerable apprehension, for Farragut's fleet had not then entered the river from below. From this time additions to the gun-boat fleet of the Western navy were slowly made. By the close of 1862, the Tusumbia, the Baron De Kalb, and the Osage had been added, and there were in process of construction the Nesho, Indianola, Choctaw, and Chillicothe. The Ozark was completed in 1863. Including these, the gun-boat fleet consisted of twenty vessels, with an armament of about 170 guns, and a tonnage of nearly 10,000 tons. Nine or ten more gun-boats were added before the close of the war.² Of the gun-boats added to the Western fleet during the year after the fight at Donelson, the Tusumbia was among the largest.³ The Mound City was blown up in July, 1862, on the White River, and subsequently the Cairo met a similar fate on the Yazoo.

Next to the vessels known as gun-boats, Ellet's steam-ram fleet held the most important place in the Mississippi squadron. Charles Ellet bore the same relation to steam rams as Ericsson to the monitors. He was a native of Pennsylvania. As a civil engineer he had gained a reputation which was well earned. His treatise on "The Laws of Trade in Reference to Works of Internal Improvement," published in Philadelphia in 1837, was an exhaustive work on the subject, and attracted considerable attention. A few years afterward he was chosen by the War Department to survey the Lower Mississippi. It was an important object of his life to carry out a scheme which he had conceived for improving the navigation of the Western rivers.⁴ He was so impressed with this project that, in honor of it, he named his son Charles Rivers Ellet. It is not more remarkable that De Soto found

¹ This title remained in existence until the operation of an act of Congress of July 16, 1862. By this act the officers of the navy were distributed into nine grades, taking rank according to the date of commission in each grade, as follows:

GRADES IN THE NAVY.	CORRESPONDING GRADES IN THE ARMY.
1. Rear Admirals.	1. Major Generals.
2. Commodores.	2. Brigadier Generals.
3. Captains.	3. Colonels.
4. Commanders.	4. Lieutenant Colonels.
5. Lieutenant Commanders.	5. Majors.
6. Lieutenants.	6. Captains.
7. Masters.	7. First Lieutenants.
8. Ensigns.	8. Second Lieutenants.
9. Midshipmen.	

In regard to the change thus introduced, Secretary Welles, in his Report for 1862, says: "The act of July 16, 1862, to Establish and Equalize the Grade of Line Officers of the United States Navy, does justice in conferring ranks and grades that had until that time been withheld from as meritorious and gallant a class of officers as ever devoted their days and periled their lives for their country. Though the justice to which they were entitled has been long delayed, it was gracefully and generously rendered by the present Congress, and has been and is appreciated by the brave men who are its recipients, and by all attached to the service, as a just recognition of the worth and ability of the officers of the American Navy. . . . The commanders of our squadrons now hold rank with those of other naval powers on the ocean, on distant service, and wherever they carry our flag, or appear as the representatives of their country."—Page 40.

Flag-officers Goldsborough, Dupont, Farragut, and Foote were nominated to the Senate for the grade of rear-admiral on the day subsequent to the approval of the act. Other officers—among whom were captains Stewart, Read, Gregory, Stringham, and Paulding—were the same day nominated for rear-admirals on the retired list.

Subsequently, in 1864, the rank of vice-admiral was created by Congress, to correspond with the revived grade of lieutenant general in the army. The bill creating this rank, originating in the Senate, passed the House December 20, and was approved on the 21st by the President, who the same day nominated Farragut to the new office. After the close of the war Congress created the rank of general in the army, and the corresponding rank of admiral in the navy, to which ranks U. S. Grant and David G. Farragut were respectively assigned.

² There were building in May, 1864, the following iron-clad vessels for the Mississippi squadron: The Catawba, 2 guns, 970 tons; the Chickasaw, 2 guns, 970 tons; the Etah, 2 guns, 614 tons; the Kickapoo, 4 guns, 970 tons; the Klamath, 2 guns, 614 tons; the Koka, 2 guns, 614 tons; the Milwaukee, 4 guns, 970 tons; and the Oneota, 2 guns, 1034 tons.

³ The Tusumbia had an armament of five guns—three eleven-inch Dahlgrens forward, and two 100-lb. rifled guns in battery aft. Her sides were plated with three-inch, and her deck with one-inch wrought iron; the plates over the batteries, or gun-rooms, were six inches thick forward, and four aft. Her timbers were very strong, her build staunch, and her outfit complete. A bulwark of iron, loop-holed for musketry, was placed around her guards. She had also an apparatus for throwing a stream of water 200 feet.

⁴ "Mr. Ellet found that the use of dikes, or levees, along the banks caused the water to rise higher between them, because the river was previously wont to fill the swamps adjacent. Either fresh outlets must be formed for the tremendous accumulation of water somewhere above the present Delta, or the levees must be raised indefinitely, at an enormous cost, and with a continual danger of breaking away. His remedy proposed for the navigation of the Ohio seemed to be the most natural, the most secure, and the cheapest, as well as the most beneficial to apply to the Mississippi. He advocated the building of dams on the Ohio or other tributaries, to improve their navigation and secure the lower valley from inundation, and urged Congress to adopt the work for the general benefit of the country."—*Harper's Magazine*, vol. xxxii, p. 297.

his grave in the waters of the Mississippi, which he discovered, than that both the Ellets, father and son, perished in the attempt to secure, by their warlike invention of rams, that very navigation which the father had sought to improve by peaceful measures for so many years.¹

After the seizure of the Norfolk Navy Yard, and when uneasiness had been aroused by the report that the Confederates were converting frigates and steamers into iron-clad rams, Ellet appreciated the threatened danger, and in a printed memorial to Congress, dated Georgetown, February 6, 1862, a month before the appearance of the Merrimac, he gave the government a warning as to the consequences which might ensue upon the appearance of these Confederate rams.² The government listened to this final appeal, though it was not until the appearance of the Merrimac, and the events which followed had fully vindicated Ellet's judgment, that the latter was summoned to the aid of Secretary Stanton. Foote was at this time very anxious on account of Confederate rams on the Mississippi, and he knew he had no vessels which could meet these rams on equal terms. Here was an opportunity to test Ellet's favorite project. He was sent West by Secretary Stanton with authority to purchase and convert into rams such vessels as he should deem suited to his purposes. With a colonel's commission, he set out on the 26th of March. At Pittsburg he purchased five powerful tow-



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boats, the Lioness, Samson, Mingo, Fulton, and Homer. The hulls were strengthened, the bows filled with solid timber, the boilers protected by a double tier of oak twenty-four inches thick, and the pilot-house plated against musketry. At Cincinnati he purchased four side-wheel steamers of great power, as being more readily handled in the strong current of the Mississippi—the Queen of the West, Monarch, Switzerland, and Lancaster. But for Colonel Ellet's extraordinary personal influence he would never have been able to obtain men for his rams, although he had permission to recruit from the army. The project was deemed not only a visionary, but a perilous one. His brother, Alfred W. Ellet, then a captain in the Fifty-ninth Illinois, brought his own com-

pany, with another from the Sixty-third Illinois, and met the boats at Cairo. For firemen Ellet was mainly indebted to negroes.

¹ In order that the reader may fully comprehend Mr. Ellet's connection with steam rams previous to the war, we transcribe a few paragraphs from the article in *Harper's Magazine*, already referred to:

"It was in the winter of 1854-5, at Lausanne, in Switzerland, that home of wandering savans, during the siege of Sebastopol, when the Russians spoke of sinking their splendid fleet, that Mr. Ellet first revolved in his mind the plan of protecting and strengthening war vessels, so that they might be used as rams; that thus, instead of sinking their fleet, the Russians might sink that of the allies, and raise the blockade of the harbor. In December, probably, he wrote to the Russian government, giving a detailed statement of his plan, which was thankfully received, but, in consequence of the death of the emperor soon after, was overlooked and never acted upon. In the following April (26th) he addressed a letter to the Secretary of War, through Mr. John Y. Mason, our minister at Paris, with the same propositions. These, with a reply and rejoinder from our Navy Department, were afterward published (Richmond, 1855) in pamphlet form, and circulated widely both in the South and in Europe. We were at that time slightly menaced with war with England on the Right of Search question.

"In his prefatory note, dated Richmond, December 1, 1855, Mr. Ellet says:
 "People are accustomed to regard the art of naval warfare as the art of manœuvring cannon, and throwing shot and shell. I wish them to reflect upon the power of a moving steam-boat driven against the enemy who has no means of resistance but his batteries, and to decide which is the more certain warfare. I wish, therefore, to compare the number of fighting steamers which may be sent to any port in the United States from the shores of Europe with the number of river steamers, coasting steamers, steam-tugs, and even ferry-boats, which might be found ready to meet them here."

"This remarkable pamphlet, upon which must be based his claims to the paternity of the steam ram, is so forcible and explicit, that it should be given entire did space allow. Like all he ever wrote, it is clear, earnest, well reasoned, and nervous in style. He says:

"My plan is simply to convert the steamer into a battering-ram, and to enable her to fight, not with her guns, but with her momentum. In short, I propose to strengthen the steamer throughout in the most substantial manner, so that she may run head on into the enemy, or burst in his ribs, or drive a hole into his hull below the water-line. A hole only two feet square, four feet under water, will sink an ordinary frigate in sixteen minutes."

"He then minutely details the altering or building of ships for his purpose. And then he adds:
 "I have read accounts of five or six accidental collisions at sea in the last six months—sometimes by steamers running into sailing vessels, and sometimes by sailing vessels running into steamers—and in every case the vessel struck in the waist was sunk, and the vessel which ran into her was able to keep on her course. For harbor defense, however much we may continue to build and arm forts and batteries, I think we should not neglect also to build floating batteries—rams—great steamers, as near shot and shell proof as they can be made, with a strength of hull, speed, and power that will enable them to crush in the side of a man-of-war by simple collision."

"To my understanding, the efficacy of the plan which I recommend is self-evident. And I hold myself ready to carry it out in all its details whenever the day arrives that the United States is about to become engaged in a naval contest."

"To this letter the following remarkable answer was returned:

"Navy Department, Washington, D. C., March 21, 1855.
 "Sir,—The receipt of your letter of the 25th ult. is acknowledged, and the Department tenders you its thanks for the views expressed therein. The suggestion to convert steamers into battering-rams, and, by the momentum, make them a means of sinking an enemy's ships, was proposed as long ago as 1832, and has been renewed many times since by various officers of the navy. No practical test has been undertaken; but with the necessary speed, strength, and weight, a large steamer on the plan proposed by you would introduce an entire change in naval warfare."

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
 "CHARLES W. WELCH, Acting Secretary of the Navy."

"In reply to this, Mr. Ellet, on the 16th of August, sent another letter to the Navy Department, through Mr. Buchanan, then our minister in London, in which letter he still more strenuously urges the adoption of his plan. The Secretary of the Navy, J. C. Dobbin, in a very courteous reply, dismissed the subject, stating that the Department had no power, but by special vote of Congress, to undertake the construction of proper vessels and machinery for experimenting."

"In the letter which elicited this last reply Mr. Ellet discusses the objections which are likely to be raised against his plan, such as that his own vessel might be sunk or hopelessly damaged in engine or vital parts by the collision or by hostile shell. With our late remarkable experience we can see that these objections fall to the ground. But from the data before him he reasoned correctly that the danger from collision would be immensely against the vessel struck; and in the danger from shot, he entered into a nice calculation of the probabilities of a vessel being struck in a vital part, between the points of extreme range and that of close contact, by which he showed that the chances were reduced to an inappreciable fraction."

We turn now from the Mississippi squadron, which before the end of 1862 numbered about 80 vessels—gun-boats, rams, mortar-boats, and side-wheel steamers—to Farragut's fleet, which, after the fall of New Orleans, occupied the Lower Mississippi. This fleet consisted of two parts: vessels of the West Gulf squadron, and Admiral D. D. Porter's mortar flotilla.³ At the close of 1861 the entire Gulf squadron numbered 21 vessels, with 282 guns and 1000 men. This squadron was divided into an Eastern and Western, February 21, 1862. The former was under the command of Flag-officer McKean, who was relieved June 4, 1862, by acting Rear-admiral Lardner, who was shortly succeeded by Commodore Theodorus Bailey.



CHARLES RIVERS ELLET.

The limits of this eastern squadron comprised the southern and western portions of the Florida coast, commencing at Cape Canaveral and extending to Pensacola. Westward from and including Pensacola, the West Gulf squadron extended to the Rio Grande. This latter was a very important command, for two reasons: first, on account of the operations against New Orleans, which had been contemplated ever since the early autumn of 1861; and, secondly, on account of the importance of the blockade in this quarter, within the limits of which were included the ocean outlets of the Mississippi Valley. David G. Farragut, then captain, afterward admiral, vice-admiral, and finally Admiral of the United States Navy, was wisely chosen to command this de-

"When we consider how the allied fleet bombarded the fortress of Sveaborg, defended by about 800 guns, for the space of forty-five hours, without suffering the loss of a single man by the enemy's shot, 'in consequence of the continual movement of the ships,' as the Russian general alleged, and as we also recall some very remarkable engagements of our own in the late war, we may appreciate the prevision of our advocate. The bombardment of Port Royal and the experience of blockade-runners confirm the result of his calculations."

"Among the cases of accidental collisions cited are several remarkable ones, all tending to the support of his theory. The well-known sinking of the Arctic by the Vesta, with great loss of life; the Wellington, of 131 guns, damaged by a sailing ship; the Imperatrice, steamer, sunk almost immediately by the schooner Commerce; the Victoria, ship, sunk in two minutes by a small Sardinian steamer; the brigantine Henry, run into by a diminutive steamer and lost immediately."

"In 1842, the Hudson River steamer Empire, coming into New York with a new pilot on a misty morning, ran fairly into a new wharf with the full power of the engine, forcing the bow of the boat through the timber facing of logs eighteen inches square, then through a solid stone filling eight and a half feet thick, and then through earth and rubbish seventeen feet farther, making a chasm of twelve feet wide at the logs, twenty-seven feet long, and seventeen feet deep. The only injury sustained by the boat was the breaking of one of her oblique braces and a slight leak at the stem."

"Now, if such is the effect of a frail river steamer upon an object of this sort, what must be expected of a vessel built and armed for the very purpose of a ram? There is another example, memorable for the tragical, mysterious manner in which it occurred. It may be recollected that, a few years ago, an American vessel, with an English captain, was hired, it is supposed, to run down a Russian ship of war in the Baltic. He strengthened his bows with solid timber, and followed the war vessel out of St. Petersburg, and in the gray of dawn next morning, when near the Categat, while his crew were asleep or below decks, he took the helm himself and ran into the Russian ship with the power of sails merely, and instantaneously sunk her with her crew of three hundred souls."

"The practical conclusion," says Mr. Ellet, "to be drawn from these facts is apparent. If vessels built for ordinary commercial purposes, and propelled either by steam or sail, invariably sink the vessel they strike with their bow when running with any considerable velocity, while themselves receiving but little injury from the collision, it follows, of necessity and *à fortiori*, that a steamer expressly designed for such conflict, well fortified at the bow, strongly built throughout, divided longitudinally and centrally by a solid partition reaching from keelson to deck and from stem to stern, and transversely by other partitions, separating the hull into six or eight water-tight compartments, and horizontally by one or more partitions or floors, of which one shall be below the water-line when light—I say it follows of necessity that such a vessel, skillfully framed and properly fastened, may be driven at high speed against any ship of ordinary construction in the certainty that the ship struck will go down and the battering ship float."

"All this, which is familiar knowledge to us in 1865, was foreseen and reasoned out in 1855. At that time Mr. Ellet was living in Richmond. His views, as set forth by his pamphlet, addresses to Congress, and by conversation and newspaper communications, were all well known. Here, indeed, is the germ of the idea wrought out but partially by the rebels after their seizure of the navy yard at Norfolk. To the suggestion that the enemy could strengthen his ships, and meet them ram with ram, it is only necessary to add that this is a fundamental condition of all civilized warfare, and will occur under every species of construction, armament, or defense."

² We make the following extract from this memorial:

"STEAM RAMS.—It is not generally known that the rebels now have five steam rams nearly ready for use. Of these, two are on the Lower Mississippi, two are at Mobile, and one is at Norfolk. The last of the five is doubtless the most formidable, being the steam frigate Merrimac, which has been so strengthened that, in the opinion of the rebels, it may be used as a ram. But we have not yet a single vessel at sea, nor, so far as I know, in course of construction, able to cope with a well-built ram. If the Merrimac is permitted to escape from the Elizabeth River, she will be almost certain to commit great depredation on our armed or unarmed vessels in Hampton Roads, and may even be expected to pass out under the guns of Fortress Monroe and prey upon our commerce in Chesapeake Bay. Indeed, if the alterations have been skillfully made, and she succeed in getting to sea, she will not only be a terrible scourge to our commerce, but may prove also to be a most dangerous visitor to our blockading squadron off the harbors of our Southern coasts."

"I have attempted to call the attention of the Navy Department and of the country so often to this subject during the last seven years that I almost hesitate to allude to it again, and would not do so here but that I think the danger from these tremendous engines is very imminent, but not at all appreciated."

³ Farragut's fleet was constituted thus:

Steam-sloops.		Steam-sloop.		Mortar Fleet.	
Hartford.....	24 guns.	Sciota.....	4 guns.	H. Beals.	
Richmond.....	26 "	Sailing-sloop.		J. Griffith.	
Pensacola.....	24 "	Portsmouth.....	17 "	Racer.	
Brooklyn.....	24 "			S. Bruen.	
Mississippi.....	12 "	Mortar Fleet.		H. Jones.	
Colorado.....	28 "	Norfolk Packet.		Dan. Smith.	
		Arlotta.			
		Sophonria.			
		Para.			
		C. P. Williams.			
		O. H. Lee.			
		W. Bacon.			
		T. A. Ward.			
		A. Dugel.			
		M. Vassar.			
		C. Mungham.			
		M. J. Carlton.			
		S. C. Jones.			
		Kennebec.....			
		Orvetta.			

The Octorara did not arrive until after the capture of New Orleans. Each of the mortar-boats mounted a bomb and two guns. Some of the vessels accompanying the mortars were only armed tugs.



ADMIRAL PORTER'S MORTAR FLEET.

partment. After July 11 Pensacola became the great naval dépôt for the West Gulf squadron.

Farragut sailed from Hampton Roads to take the command on February 2, 1862, and, arriving at Ship Island on the 20th, began to organize his fleet. Two months were consumed in these preparations, the greatest difficulty being encountered in landing the vessels of heavy draught. After every effort had been made, the Colorado and the Wabash could not be got over the bar. The entire fleet sent against New Orleans, including the vessels withdrawn from the blockade, consisted of 48 vessels, with about 300 guns and 20 bombs. Porter's mortar flotilla had been organized at the Brooklyn Navy Yard in the winter of 1861-2, and performed a very important part in the opening of the Mississippi. In Farragut's entire fleet there was not a single iron-clad vessel.

The most brilliant naval period of the war—if the brilliancy of naval operations depend upon their success in actual engagement with the enemy's ships and forts—is comprised within the brief space of four months, beginning February 6, and ending June 6, 1862. Yet this was far from being the period of our greatest naval strength. Very much stronger expeditions were fitted out afterward, but they failed of success, except in one or two instances.¹

Let us review the brief, but eventful and satisfactory record of these four months. The capture of Fort Henry, February 6, was the first of a series of victories on the Western rivers that aroused the nation from a situation, if not of doubt, at least of a negative sort of confidence, to one of positive hope and courage. The capture of Donelson ten days later, though it could scarcely be called a naval victory, still derived a large measure of its importance from its bearings upon the progress of naval operations. It gave us command of the Cumberland, as the victory at Fort Henry had given us command of the Tennessee. It was followed, within the space of a fortnight, by the evacuation of Columbus and Nashville. The Confederates held New Madrid until March 14, when their communications had been cut off by General Pope. In the capture of Island No. 10, April 7, the army under Pope, and the naval squadron under Foote, had an equal share. Here there was no battle, but there were captured nearly 7000 prisoners and a large amount of war material, including 100 siege-guns. The crossing of Pope's force to the rear of the enemy, on the west side of the Mississippi, by the aid of the gun-boats, had secured the victory without the loss of a single man.

Before the close of April, Farragut, with his fleet, had steamed past Forts Jackson and St. Phillip, and, arriving before New Orleans, held the city under his guns. Lovell's fleet had been disposed of in a short but sharp conflict during the passage by the forts. This was purely a naval victory. New Orleans was conquered by Farragut, and the forts surrendered to Admiral Porter, commanding the mortar fleet. Butler's army, numbering about 14,000 men, became an army of occupation. The capture of New Orleans

¹ It would be unfair to infer that because our navy was not always successful in these gigantic expeditions, that it ceased, after the period we have indicated, to be an important element in the war. Our blockading squadrons were from the first indispensable to success. If the monitors accomplished little in actual service, they were none the less a security against foreign intervention. The extent of our iron-clad fleet made it useless for the Confederates to organize a fleet of any sort. Though the Confederates could construct forts which baffled our fleets, yet the latter, co-operating with the army, were of the greatest service, of which service one of the most memorable instances was the capture of Fort Fisher. And the instances are not a few in which our armies were saved from disaster by the presence of gun-boats. Two or three of the inferior gun-boats of the Mississippi squadron, in several important Western battles, were of greater value than an entire military division could have been. At Belmont, the Tyler and Lexington saved Grant's army from defeat. At Pittsburg Landing, the same gun-boats, if they did not save the first day's battle, at least, by the moral effect of their presence, rendered the defeat far less disastrous than it might otherwise have been. On February 4, 1863, the Lexington, assisted by the A. S. Robb and other boats, repulsed 4500 Confederates at Dover, Tennessee. At Helena, five months later, the Tyler enabled an inferior national force to hold the position against an attack which, under other circumstances, might possibly have succeeded. In the same month (July), at Bluffington Island, Indiana, John Morgan's force was terribly cut up by the Alleghany, Naumkeag, and three other boats. Although the navy, acting alone, was unable to capture Vicksburg, it not only rendered some of the most brilliant feats of General Grant's campaign against that post possible, but also, after the victory, secured the permanent possession of the river far more effectively than a reserve force of one hundred thousand men could have done. It was due to our great naval strength alone that, after the termination of the Vicksburg campaign, the Confederates were compelled to adopt the line of defense running eastward and southward from Chattanooga, keeping aloof from the great Western rivers.



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE BASIN OF THE MISSISSIPPI.



CHARLES H. DAVIS.

was, thus far, the most substantial triumph of the war. It was to the South a greater disaster, comparatively, than the loss of New York City would have been to the North.

In the mean time, Foote was engaged in an expedition against Fort Pillow, which he had undertaken directly after the surrender of Island No. 10. But Pope's army abandoned him April 17th, to join the army moving upon Corinth, and left him helpless. Early in May, this gallant naval officer, still suffering from his wound, was, at his own request, relieved, and the command of the Mississippi squadron was assigned to Captain C. H. Davis. A little more than a year after his resignation of this command Admiral Foote died, while making preparations to depart for Charleston, to relieve Admiral Dupont. The day after Davis assumed the command—May 10—the Confederate fleet at Memphis came up the river and engaged the squadron, but withdrew, defeated, after an hour's fight, having, however, succeeded in badly crippling the Cincinnati and the Mound City. The evacuation of Corinth gave us Fort Pillow without a battle, June 4, and the next day the city of Memphis was surrendered.

But before the surrender of Memphis there was a spirited conflict with Montgomery's fleet. Davis left Fort Pillow, June 5, with a fleet of nine boats—five gun-boats, two tugs, and two of Colonel Ellet's rams, the Queen of the West and the Monarch. Montgomery, with his eight boats, had threatened to "send Lincoln's gun-boats to the bottom," and the inhabitants of Memphis gathered upon the hill-side to witness this expected catastrophe. The fight which followed has already been described in a previous chapter. It was here that Ellet redeemed all the promises which he had made for his rams. The two rams alone could have sunk the entire fleet.¹ Colonel

¹ "While the engagement," writes Captain Davis, "was going on in this manner, two vessels of the ram-fleet, under command of Colonel Ellet, steamed rapidly by us, and ran boldly into the enemy's line. Several conflicts had taken place between the rams before the flotilla (of gun-boats), led by the Benton, moving at a slower rate, could arrive at the closest quarters. In

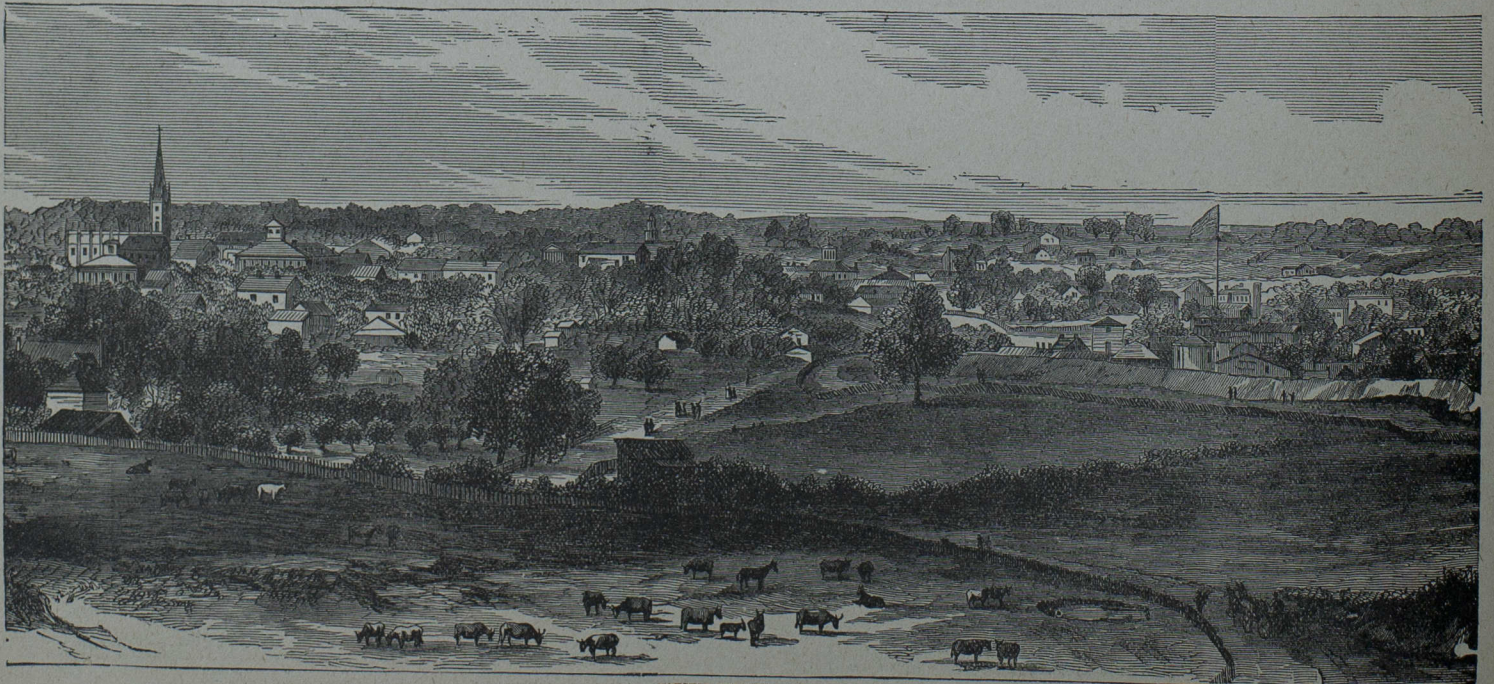
Ellet in person commanded the Queen of the West, which was his flag-ship. His brother, Alfred Ellet, commanded the Monarch. During the progress of the fight, Colonel Ellet, stepping out upon the forward part of the deck to observe the effect of a blow which he had given the Lovell, and which was sinking the latter, received a bullet in his knee. The wound proved to be a dangerous one, and amputation became necessary; but the colonel resisted stoutly, declaring that "the life should go first." Two weeks after the battle he was conveyed to Cairo on one of his rams—the Switzerland—and died on reaching the wharf on the morning of June 21. He left his brother Alfred in command of the ram fleet.

After the capture of Memphis, four of the gun-boats, with an Indiana regiment under Colonel Fitch, were dispatched to the White River to open communication with General Curtis, who had advanced to Batesville. Some batteries were carried at St. Charles, but the main object of the expedition was not accomplished, and General Curtis, in order to find a base of operations, was obliged to transfer his army from Batesville to Helena, on the Mississippi.

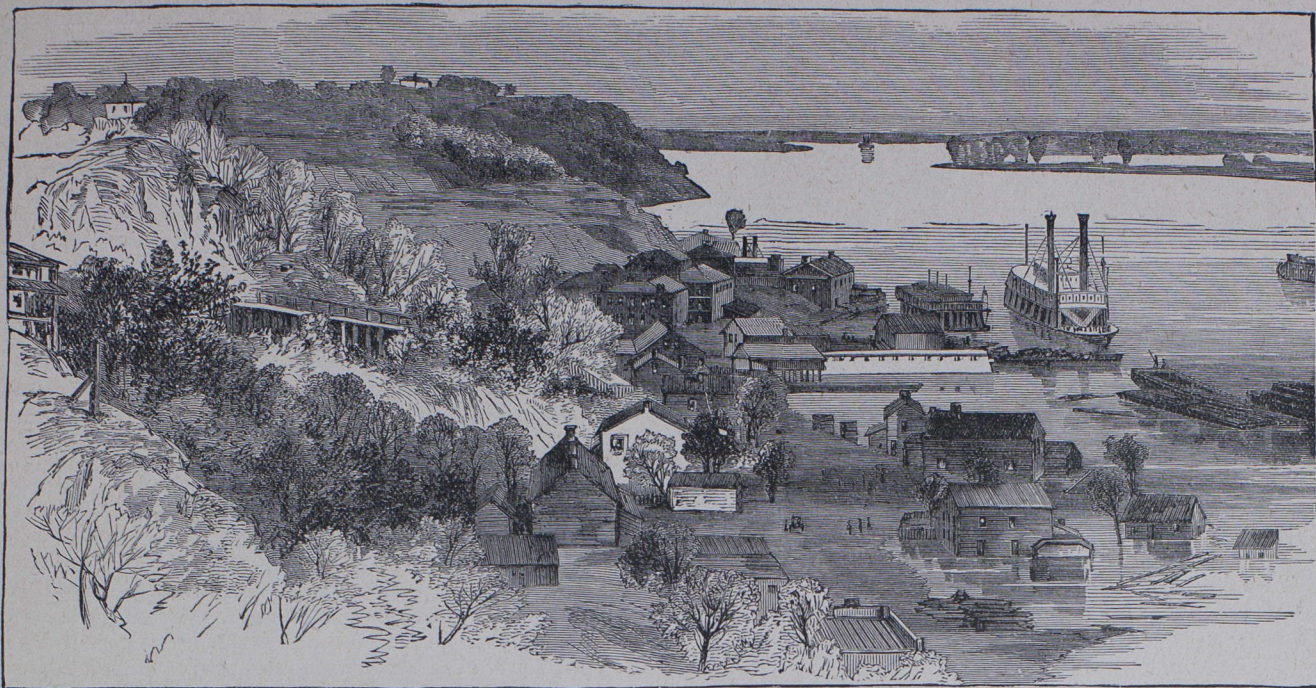
Meanwhile Farragut's fleet had been advancing up the river. The Iroquois, under Commander Palmer, arrived off Baton Rouge May 7. The authorities, ordered to surrender, indulged in the same mock-heroic nonsense which the mayor and council of New Orleans had been indulging in the week before. They were determined that the city of Baton Rouge should not "be surrendered voluntarily to any power on earth." There was no military force, the mayor added, in the city, and its possession by the Federals "must be without the consent and against the wish of the peaceable inhabitants." He declined to hoist the national flag because it was "offensive to the sensibilities of the people." Palmer, "determined to submit to no such nonsense," took possession of the arsenal, barracks, and other public property of the United States. No resistance was offered. In a note to Mayor Bryan, on the 9th, Palmer informed him that he had taken possession of the arsenal, and hoisted over it the United States flag, and added: "War is a sad calamity, and often inflicts severer wounds than those upon the sensibilities. I therefore trust I may be spared from resorting to any of its dire extremities; but I warn you, Mr. Mayor, that this flag must remain unmolested, though I have no force on shore to protect it. The rash act of some individual may cause your city to pay a bitter penalty." Farragut, having come up on May 10, continued the mayor in office, and encouraged the employment which the latter had already made of the foreign corps as a police guard for the maintenance of good order. Baton Rouge was the first place of importance above New Orleans, from which it was distant about 140 miles. It was situated on a plateau 40 or 50 feet above high water, on the east bank of the river; was the capital of Louisiana, and had a population, in 1860, of 5498.

Fifteen miles above Baton Rouge is Natchez, in Mississippi. This place Palmer, with the Iroquois and other gun-boats, reached on the 12th. He addressed a note to the mayor, which the citizens at the landing refused to receive. Palmer then seized a ferry-boat which was loading with coal, put aboard of it a force of seamen, a few marines, and two howitzers, and sent the expedition across the river, with orders to see that the mayor received the note. But there was no occasion to land this force, as two members of the Common Council were already in waiting with the mayor's apology. Mayor Hunter submitted to the necessities of the situation, if not with remarkable grace, at least without any heroic bluster. But Natchez was of

the mean time, however, the firing from the gun-boats was continuous, and exceedingly well directed. The General Beauregard and the Little Rebel were struck in the boilers and blown up. "The ram, Queen of the West, which Colonel Ellet commanded in person, encountered with full power the rebel steamer General Lovell, and sunk her, but in so doing sustained pretty serious damage. Up to this time the rebel fleet had maintained its position, and used its guns with great spirit. These disasters compelled the remaining vessels to resort to their superiority in speed as the only means of safety. A running fight took place, which lasted nearly an hour, and carried us ten miles below the city. The attack made by the two rams under Colonel Ellet, which took place before the flotilla closed in with the enemy, was bold and successful."



NATCHEZ UPON THE HILL.



NATCHEZ UNDER THE HILL.

little military importance, and had never been occupied by any military force; it was therefore abandoned.

Thus far no resistance had been encountered by the fleet since the capture of New Orleans. It was therefore somewhat of a surprise, doubtless, to S. P. Lee, commanding the advanced naval division of Farragut's squadron, when, on May 18, in reply to his demand for the surrender of Vicksburg, he received the defiant response, "Mississippians don't know, and refuse to learn, how to surrender to an enemy. If Commodore Farragut or General Butler can teach them, let them come and try!" Such, indeed, was the answer returned to the demand by James L. Antry, military governor and colonel commanding the post. M. L. Smith, a brigadier general in command of the military defenses of Vicksburg, replied, on his own account, that he had been ordered to hold the defenses, and that it was his intention to do so as long as it was in his power. L. Lindsay, mayor of the city, added his refusal to that of the military authorities. "As far as the municipal authorities are concerned," he said, "we have erected no defenses, and none are within the corporative limits of the city." Phillips, on the 21st, gave Mayor Lindsay notice to remove the women and children of Vicksburg beyond the reach of his guns, as any attack upon the defenses must injure or destroy the town. This notice was given by Phillips for the purpose of placing it at his own option whether he should fire or not immediately upon the expiration of the truce. And thus the matter rested. Phillips, however, did not make an attack.

Above and below Vicksburg the river was now entirely in the possession of the national forces. A co-operating military force only half as large as that which secured the victories at New Madrid and Island No. 10 could at this time have compelled the surrender of Vicksburg, and opened the Mississippi from Cairo to New Orleans. But the whole available military force in the West was then being collected together against Beauregard's army at Corinth. Even Curtis's force in Arkansas had been so far reduced for this purpose that it was unable to assume the offensive. From General Butler's department no troops could be spared, since, after garrisoning Forts Jackson and St. Philip, Ship Island and Baton Rouge, there was left a force barely sufficient to defend New Orleans against such an attack as might be expected.

But for Vicksburg—an obstacle which was not overcome for nearly fourteen months—the river, we have said, was completely possessed. But armed vessels and transports, passing up and down, were frequently annoyed by attacks from guerrillas and concealed batteries. Porter, on his way up the river with the mortars, was thus attacked at Ellis's Bluffs on June 3.



ELLIS'S BLUFFS.

Whenever these attacks were made in the vicinity of towns, it was found necessary to retaliate by holding the inhabitants responsible; and if they were repeated, the villages or towns, as the case might be, were in some instances destroyed. Natchez, Grand Gulf, and Donaldsonville, in the course of the year, suffered severely from punishments inflicted upon them in this way. The most serious collision of this nature took place early in June, at Grand Gulf. The Confederates were just then beginning to fortify that place, and Commander Palmer, fearing that the passage down the river might be obstructed, sent down the *Wissahickon* and *Itaska*, under Commander De Camp, to reduce the newly-erected batteries. These vessels arrived off Grand Gulf on the morning of June 9, when they were attacked from the shore with rifled and other cannon. After an action of two hours, in which the gun-boats were quite roughly handled, one of them being hulled seventeen and the other twenty-five times, the batteries were silenced. On the vessels one man was killed and five wounded. Palmer then decided to bring down the rest of the squadron from below Vicksburg. His position was one of some difficulty. The batteries above him were manned by a force of 500 artillerists. Their position upon the hill seemed to protect them against serious injury, and the gun-boats had much to fear from their plunging fire. He did not dare to leave a few vessels only at Vicksburg. He expected that at any moment the iron-clad ram *Arkansas* might come down from the Yazoo. Fort Pillow, too, had just been evacuated; and, not aware of the destruction of the Confederate fleet at Memphis, he feared that the vessels of that fleet might, in conjunction with the *Arkansas*, attempt a raid against his little squadron. The fortifications of Vicksburg were daily being strengthened by the arrival of new guns and ammunition. His gun-boats were "all of them in a most crippled condition;" the sick-list had largely increased; the time of the men on the *Colorado* had expired; he was almost out of both coal and provisions, and had little oil left for his engines. "Unless supplies come up," he writes, June 10, "we can not stay here a week longer."

Palmer sent the *Katahdin* and *Itaska* down as far as to the mouth of Red River to discover if there were any more of those formidable obstacles in the shape of batteries in process of erection, and on the afternoon of the 10th dropped down and shelled the Grand Gulf batteries for an hour. This effected nothing, and he determined, in case of the repetition of an attack from the shore, to burn the town. The attack was repeated, and the town was burned.¹

¹ Captain Craven, of the *Brooklyn*, passing up the river a week afterward, reports that he was molested nowhere on his route from Baton Rouge to Vicksburg. Speaking of Grand Gulf, he says: "The town there was in ruins, having been first riddled by shot and then destroyed by fire. On a small hill just to the right of the town was a small earthwork, which had been but recently thrown up, and was capable of receiving three or four field-pieces. This work, as well as the town, was entirely deserted."

Grand Gulf had been fired upon previously, on which occasion Lieutenant Commander E. T. Nichols, of the *Winona*, had notified the Mayor of Rodney, a few miles below, that a similar punishment would be visited upon that place in the event of the batteries in that vicinity firing upon the national vessels. This notification led to the following correspondence:

[No. 1.]

"Jackson, Mississippi, June 12, 1862.

"SIR,—I have the honor to inclose a copy of a letter received by the Mayor of Rodney, notifying him, in substance, that if the vessels of the United States Navy are fired upon by our troops from or near the town, vengeance will be taken upon the women and children, or, as the writer is pleased to term it, 'punishment will be visited upon the town;' and this, too, that 'we are not here to war upon unarmed and peaceable citizens.'

"Where two nations are at war, it has been customary, among civilized people, 'to punish the offense' of an attack by the armed forces of one upon those of the other by a combat with the attacking party. If such attack be made from a town, the assaulting party is not entitled to, and, so far as our troops are concerned, does not claim, any immunity by reason of the presence of women and children. *What we do claim*, however, and insist upon, is, that when your vessels or transports are fired upon by our troops, they shall not hasten to the nearest collection of unarmed and peaceable women and children, and wreak their vengeance upon them, as was done lately at Grand Gulf by United States vessels in retaliation for an attack with which the town had nothing more to do than had the city of St. Louis.

"My batteries are located at such points upon the river as are deemed best suited for the desired purposes, and without reference to or connection with the people of the town. Should the site happen to fall within a village, you, of course, are at liberty to return the fire. Should it be



VIEW OF VICKSBURG FROM THE RIVER.

Vicksburg, which, as regards heroic and obstinate resistance to the national arms, held almost equal rank with Richmond and Charleston, lies in the State of Mississippi, on the east bank of the river, 400 miles above New Orleans, and about the same distance from Cairo. Its commercial importance is due to its location in the midst of the great cotton-growing country along the Yazoo. It is connected with Jackson, the state capital, by railroad; and from De Soto, on the opposite bank, a railroad, running to Monroe, drains the land commerce of Northern Louisiana. It is the most important, and, at the same time, the most defensible military position on the Mississippi. At the time of the capture of New Orleans, this fact was little appreciated on either side.¹ The population of Vicksburg, before the war, was, in round numbers, 5000. The town, situated on the shelving declivity of high hills, with its dwellings scattered in groups on the terraces, presents a very picturesque appearance.

On the 20th of June, a month after the first appearance of Farragut's fleet off Vicksburg, Brigadier General Thomas Williams left Baton Rouge with a large portion of the garrison which had been there posted, and in four days' time reached a position on the peninsula opposite Vicksburg. He had only four regiments and eight field-guns. The force defending Vicksburg at this time consisted of about 10,000 men.² General Williams immediately set about constructing a canal across the narrow neck of the peninsula, on the Louisiana side, which, if successful, would throw Vicksburg and its defenses six miles inland. Of this we shall have more to say hereafter in connection with the projects for getting a position to the rear of the city. Porter's mortar fleet of sixteen vessels had in the mean while moved up the river to Vicksburg. It was now proposed that a junction should be effected between Farragut's fleet and that under Davis's command, as preliminary to as formidable an attempt against the city as it was possible for this combined naval force to make.

In two or three instances already the national vessels had run the gauntlet of Confederate batteries on the Mississippi. The Carondelet on the 4th, and the Pittsburg on the 6th of April, had run past the enemy's fortifications on Island No. 10. In the latter part of the same month, Farragut, with nearly his entire fleet, passed Forts Jackson and St. Philip. He did not, therefore, reckon it an enterprise of very great magnitude or peril to run the Vicksburg blockade. It is not likely that he anticipated any very important results from this operation. He knew well enough that batteries could be passed with much greater ease than they could be taken. But he had been ordered by the Navy Department and the President to do something against Vicksburg, and was disposed to strike the heaviest blow possible with the force he had in hand; and on the night of the 27th of June he had every thing in readiness for the undertaking. The order was given for a movement the next morning. Porter, who had got his mortar fleet and his gun-boats in an advantageous position, and who had been for the past two days employed in ascertaining the range of the enemy's works, was to open fire upon the latter at four o'clock A.M. He was to perform a part similar to that which had been assigned him at New Orleans—that is, he was to stand still and engage the enemy's batteries, while Farragut should pass them with his fleet. This fleet of Farragut's consisted of the

in the vicinity of one, however, the usages of civilized warfare do not justify its destruction, unless demanded by the necessities of attack or defense.

"I can not bring myself to believe that the barbarous and cowardly policy indicated in the inclosed letter will meet with the approval of any officer of rank or standing in the United States Navy. I have, therefore, thought proper to transmit it to you under a flag of truce, with the confident expectation that you will direct those under your command to confine their offensive operations as far as possible to our troops, and forbid the wanton destruction of defenseless towns, filled with unoffending non-combatants, unless required by imperious military necessity.

"The practice of slaying women and children as an act of retaliation has happily fallen into disuse in this country with the disappearance of the Indian tribes, and I trust it will not be revived by the officers of the United States Navy, but that the demolition and pillage of the unoffending little village of Grand Gulf may be permitted to stand alone and without parallel upon record.

M. LOVELL, Major General Commanding.

"Commanding Officer United States Navy, Mississippi River, near Baton Rouge."

[No. 2.]

"Baton Rouge, June 17, 1862.

"Sir,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 12th instant, together with its inclosure, in which you are pleased to say that vengeance will be visited upon the women and children of Rodney if our vessels are fired upon from the town. Although I find no such language contained in the letter of Lieutenant Commanding Nichols, or even any from which such inference might be drawn, still I shall meet your general remark on your own terms. You say you locate your batteries 'at such points on the river as are deemed best suited,' etc., without reference to the people of the town, and claim no immunity for your troops. Now, therefore, the violation is with you. You choose your own time and place for an attack upon our defenseless people, and should therefore see that the innocent and defenseless of your own people are out of the way before you make the attack; for rest assured that the fire will be returned, and we will not hold ourselves answerable for the death of the innocent. If we have ever fired upon your 'women and children,' it was done here at Baton Rouge, when an attempt was made to kill one of our officers, landing in a small boat manned by four boys. They were, when in the act of landing, mostly wounded by the fire of some thirty or forty horsemen, who chivalrously galloped out of the town, leaving the women and children to bear the brunt of our vengeance. At Grand Gulf, also, our transports were fired upon in passing, which caused the place to be shelled, with what effect I know not; but I do know that the fate of a town is at all times in the hands of the military commandant, who may at pleasure draw the enemy's fire upon it, and the community is made to suffer for the act of its military.

"The only instance I have known where the language of your letter could possibly apply took place at New Orleans, on the day when we passed up in front of the city, while it was still in your possession, by your soldiers firing on the crowd. I trust, however, that the time is past when women and children will be subjected by their military men to the horrors of war; it is enough for them to be subjected to the incidental inconveniences, privations, and sufferings.

"If any such things have occurred as the slaying of women and children, or innocent people, I feel well assured that it was caused by the act of your military, and much against the will of our officers; for, as Lieutenant Commanding Nichols informs the mayor, we war not against defenseless persons, but against those in open rebellion against our country, and desire to limit our punishment to them, though it may not be always in our power to do so.

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

D. G. FARRAGUT.

"Major General MANSFIELD LOVELL."

¹ So little notion was there of any farther struggle for the possession of Vicksburg, that we find, in an intercepted letter from Mr. Davis's niece, dated May 7, 1862, and addressed to her mother in Mississippi, the following passage: "Uncle Jeff. thinks you are safe at home, as there will be no resistance at Vicksburg, and the Yankees will hardly occupy it, and, even if they did, the army would gain nothing by marching into the country, and a few soldiers would be afraid to go so far into the interior."

² This was Captain Craven's estimate (*Rep. Sec. Navy, Accompanying Documents*, p. 309). This estimate tallies with that given by A. S. Abrams, one of the Vicksburg garrison. (See *Abrams's Siege of Vicksburg*, pp. 6 and 7.)

three steam-sloops Brooklyn, Hartford, and Richmond, and the gun-boats Iroquois, Oneida, Wissahickon, Sciota, Winona, Pinola, and Kennebec. The fleet was to form a double line of sailing, so that the gun-boats, advancing in the order named, should form a second line, and fire between the ships. The Hartford, as occasion offered, was to fire her bow guns on the forts at the upper end of the town, while the broadside batteries of all the ships were to be particularly directed to the guns in the forts below and on the heights. "When close enough," ordered Farragut, "give them grape." Upon reaching the bend of the river, which was just above Vicksburg, the Wissahickon, Sciota, Winona, and Pinola were in any case to continue their course, but the other gun-boats were to drop down the river again if the enemy's batteries were not thoroughly silenced.

The signal to weigh anchor was given at 2 A.M. on the 28th. At four o'clock, as had been ordered, Porter opened fire from the mortars, and almost at the same moment the Confederates fired their first gun, which was returned by the leading vessels of the fleet as they came up. On Farragut's starboard quarter, Porter brought up the Octorara, Westfield, Clifton, Jackson, Harriet Lane, and Owasco, and united in the attack. By the united efforts of the fleet and the mortar flotilla the Confederate guns were soon silenced, sometimes not replying for several minutes, and then again with but a single gun. The Hartford, in its attack upon the summit batteries, succeeded better than had been expected. The passage up the river was slow, the flag-ship having but eight pounds of steam, and even stopping once in order that the vessels in its stern might close up. The Brooklyn, Kennebec, and Katahdin failed to follow the flag-ship past the batteries, and turned back. The commanders of these vessels gave various explanations of this failure, but they do not seem to have been satisfactory to the commander of the fleet. The vessels which succeeded in passing received some injury, not of a serious character, from the upper batteries, after the latter had been passed, and suffered a loss in men of fifteen killed and thirty wounded. On the vessels which failed to pass there were no casualties. General Williams, on the Louisiana side, had a battery in operation during the action, thus affording a slight support to the fleet.

The whole significance of this bold affair is summed up in a few words by Admiral Farragut, namely, "that the forts can be passed; and we have done it, and can do it again as often as may be required of us." And that was all. We can do no more, he added, than silence the batteries for a time, as long as the enemy has a large force behind the hills to prevent our landing and holding the place. He said that it was impossible to take Vicksburg without an army of from 12,000 to 15,000 men. Admiral Porter, in his official report of the action on the 28th, says: "It is to be regretted that a combined attack of army and navy had not been made, by which something more substantial might have been accomplished. Such an attack, I think, would have resulted in the capture of the city. Ships and mortar vessels can keep full possession of the river and places near the water's edge, but they can not crawl up hills 300 feet high, and it is that part of Vicksburg which must be taken by the army. If it was intended merely to pass the batteries at Vicksburg, and make a junction with the fleet of Flag-officer Davis, the navy did it most gallantly and fearlessly.¹ It was as

¹ In regard to the conduct of his own men in the bombardment, Admiral Porter says: "They know no weariness, and they really seem to take a delight in mortar-firing, which is painful even to those accustomed to it. It requires more than ordinary zeal to stand the ordeal. Though I may have been at times exacting and fault-finding with them for not conforming to the rules of the service (which requires the education of a lifetime to learn, yet I can not withhold my applause when I see these men working with such earnest and unflinching devotion to their duties while under fire."—*Rep. Sec. Navy, 1862, Acc. Doc.*, p. 410.



PORTER'S MORTAR FLEET IN TRIM.

handsome a thing as has been done during the war, for the batteries to be passed extended full three miles, with a three-knot current against ships that could not make eight knots under the most favorable circumstances."

By six o'clock the batteries were passed, and Farragut met Lieutenant Colonel Charles Rivers Ellet, of the ram fleet, who had made his way down the river bank during the night, and who now offered to forward communications to Flag-officer Davis, and to General Halleck, then at Memphis. After effecting a junction with Davis, Farragut applied to Halleck for a military force to co-operate in an immediate attack on Vicksburg. Halleck's reply on the 3d of July was an utter disappointment.

In the mean while Vicksburg was subjected to a bombardment from the mortar-boats above and below. When Farragut passed the batteries there were but few guns mounted.¹ During the progress of the bombardment which followed, General Earl Van Dorn² was sent to Vicksburg, and placed in command over Brigadier General M. L. Smith. Soon afterward the garrison was re-enforced by Breckinridge's brigade from Beauregard's army. Van Dorn's appointment to this post, for which he certainly had no peculiar fitness, was received by the Mississippians with enthusiastic pleasure. The hope of successful resistance at this point was every day growing brighter. It was with no little pride that the citizens of Vicksburg contrasted their own position, and the fate of their city thus far, with what they naturally regarded the too facile surrender of other posts on the river. In this pride the ladies of the heroic city had their full share. On the morning of June 28, when Farragut's fleet was on its way past the city, and shells were falling like hail in the streets, crowds of these enthusiastic ladies might have been seen on the Court-house, the "Sky Parlor," and other prominent places in the city, gazing upon "the magnificent scene."³

While Vicksburg was being bombarded by mortars, Farragut and Davis

¹ Abrams says only seven.—*Siege Vicks.*, p. 6. This estimate is probably considerably below the mark.

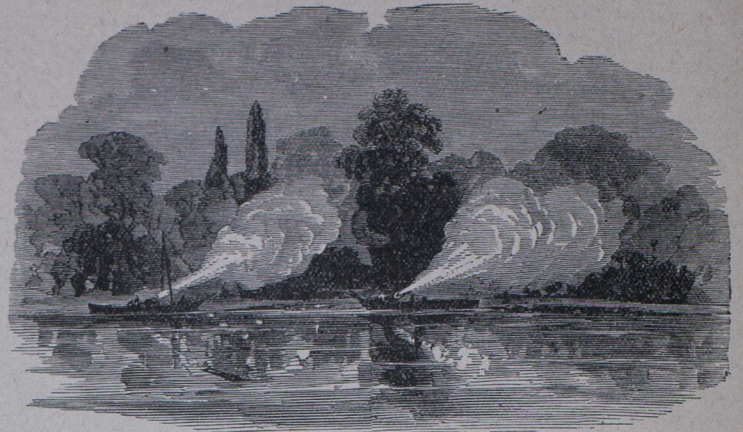
² "This doughty Confederate cavalier, of Rosecrans's class at West Point, has greatly astonished his old associates. West Point men of his time remember him as a small, handsome, modest youth, literally at the foot of his class. In Mexico he was on the staff of General P. F. Smith, and was very popular, for to his other qualities he added dashing bravery. His conspicuous course in the rebel interests at the breaking out of the war deceived them into thinking him a general. A good soldier he certainly was—brave, dashing, a splendid horseman, but he lacked head, and was always taking his men into *culs de sacs*. He died by the hand of a man who believed he had seduced his wife."—*Coppee's Grant and his Campaigns*, p. 133.

³ Abrams's *Siege Vicks.*, p. 7.



PASSAGE OF THE VICKSBURG BATTERIES BY FARRAGUT'S FLEET.

organized an expedition to ascend the Yazoo River. General Williams offered to send up a few sharpshooters from his army to co-operate with the gun-boats Tyler, Carondelet, and the ram Queen of the West, which formed the naval part of the expedition. The object of the movement was to procure correct information concerning the obstructions and defenses of the river. It was known that eighty miles from the mouth there was a raft obstructing the passage with a battery near it below, and above, the new Confederate ram Arkansas, "a vessel represented to be well protected by iron, and very formidable in her battery." To find and capture this ram was the most important part of the expedition. The gun-boats, early on the morning of July 15, had scarcely passed the mouth of the Yazoo when they encountered the Arkansas coming down. This vessel, in her construction, resembled the Louisiana and Mississippi, destroyed at New Orleans. She was built at Memphis, and at the time of the capture of this place she succeeded in escaping up the Yazoo, while a consort of hers, built in the same manner, was destroyed. She was a sea-going steamer of 1200 tons. Her cut-water was a sharp, cast-iron, solid beak. She was thoroughly covered with T rail iron, with heavy bulwarks of thick timber, with cotton-pressed casing, impervious to shot. Her port-holes were small, with heavy iron shutters; all her machinery was below the water-line, and she had a battery of ten guns.¹ She was commanded by Isaac N. Brown, and had a picked crew. The gun-boats met the ram about six miles above the mouth of the Yazoo. They were commanded, the Carondelet by Captain H. Walke, the Tyler by Captain Gwin, and the ram Queen of the West by Colonel Alfred Ellet. When the ram was discovered, the gun-boats were proceeding at intervals of a mile apart, the Queen of the West ahead, the Tyler next, and the Carondelet behind. The result of a conflict with the Arkansas was, to say the least, uncertain, and all the national vessels reversed their course, and retreated down the river, keeping up a running fight with



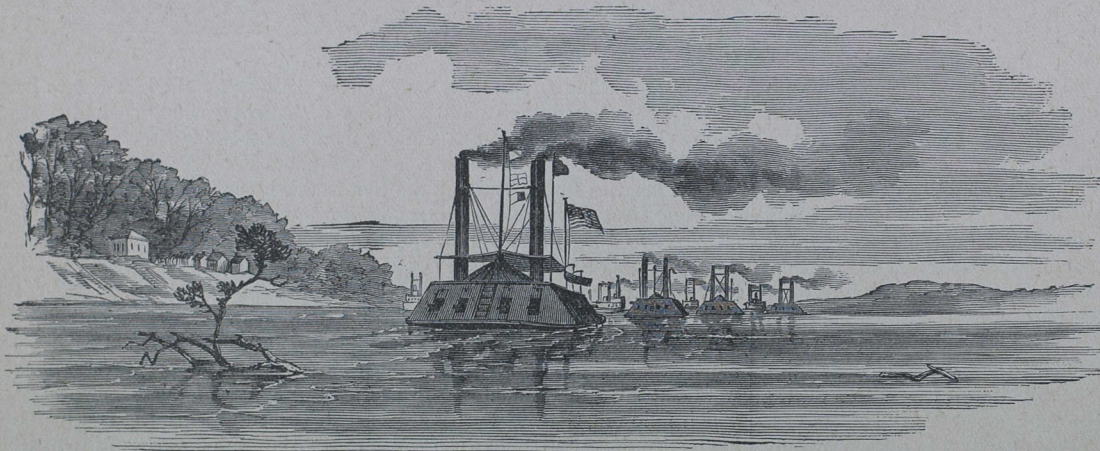
MORTAR BOATS FIRING ON VICKSBURG AT NIGHT.

the Tyler was seen to proceed from the mouth of the Yazoo, with the Arkansas closely following. It was to Admiral Farragut a moment of surprise and of mortification. Had the event been anticipated, the fate of the Arkansas could have been decided in thirty minutes. As it was, the vessels of the fleet were lying with low fires, but none of them had steam, or could get it up in time for so instant an emergency, and the ram escaped without serious injury, though she received a broadside fire from all the national vessels. The Benton, it is true, got under way and pursued the ram for some distance, but at her snail's pace the pursuit seemed only less ludicrous than the situation which would have followed if she had been so unfortunate as to overtake and come into close quarters with her adversary.

Thus far the result of the ram's appearance had not been seriously disastrous. Indeed, though this was not known at the time to her opponents, she was incapable of inflicting a very severe blow. Her smoke-stack had been shivered in pieces early in the action, and for want of steam she could not be used as a ram with any effect. The Carondelet had run ashore, her wheel-ropes being shot away, and would probably have fallen a prey to the Arkansas if the latter had had leisure for improving her opportunity. The Tyler was partially injured. About thirty men on the Federal side were killed, wounded, or missing, and

many of these casualties occurred among Williams's sharpshooters, who were especially exposed. The loss on the Arkansas was ten killed and fifteen wounded.

Partly to support the few vessels of his fleet on the Lower Mississippi,



DAVIS'S FLEET ON ITS WAY TO JOIN FARRAGUT'S.

the ram for about an hour. The firing was distinctly heard by both the squadrons in the Mississippi, and it was supposed that the gun-boats were engaging batteries. But the true cause of the firing became apparent when

¹ *Naval Scenes on the Western Waters*, p. 59.



THE ARKANSAS RUNNING THROUGH THE UNION FLEET OFF VICKSBURG.

and partly to make another attempt against the Arkansas, Admiral Farragut determined, on the night of the 15th, to re-pass the Vicksburg batteries. He was supported by Davis's squadron and the mortar flotilla; but the ram, lodged under the guns of Vicksburg, was so well concealed by her situation that she escaped the destruction intended for her.

On the 22d another attack was made upon the ram, which now lay between two forts at the upper bend of the river. Farragut's fleet was four miles below, and it was understood that he would receive the ram if she should attempt to escape down the river. The attack was made by the Queen of the West, commanded by Colonel Ellet, and the Essex, under Commander W. D. Porter; but it proved a failure. The Queen of the West and the Essex passed down under cover of a fire opened upon the upper batteries by the Benton, Cincinnati, and Louisville. The Essex boldly attacked the ram, but the bow-line of the latter being let go, the current drifted her stern on, and the gun-boat, missing the Arkansas, ran ashore. There was less than a rod's distance between the two vessels, and in these close quarters the three nine-inch guns of the Essex told with serious effect upon the ram. The Queen of the West also ran at the ram, but was so severely damaged by the fire from the shore that she with difficulty escaped. "This attempt on the part of Colonel Ellet," says Farragut, "was a daring act, and one from which both Flag-officer Davis and myself tried to deter him." The Sumter, which had come down with the other vessels, on account of some misunderstanding did not join in the attack. The Essex remained aground for ten minutes, under a heavy fire, and then, getting afloat, ran down to Farragut's fleet through a storm of shot and shell, but without receiving a single blow after she left the upper forts. From the latter and from the ram she was penetrated with three projectiles, one of which went through her casemates, and, exploding inside, killed one man and wounded three of her crew. The Queen of the West steamed back, exposed to the fire from the shore and struggling against the current of the river, to Davis's squadron. She had on board two officers, four soldiers, and three negro firemen, not one of whom were injured.

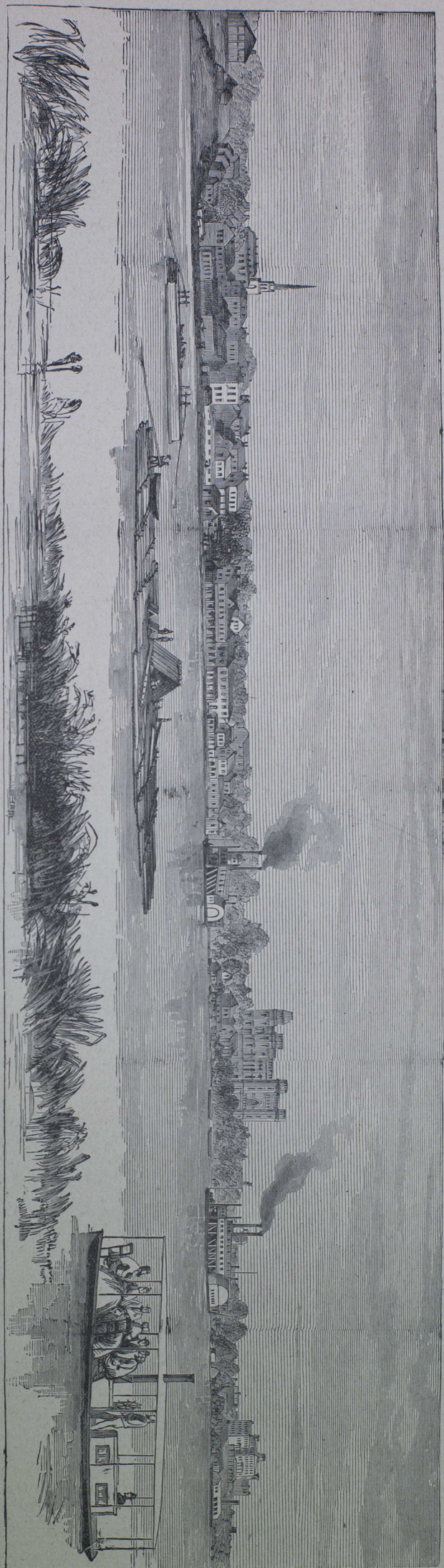
Farragut had on the 20th received an order to descend the river to New Orleans. Owing to the fall in the river, this was becoming an imperative necessity. Waiting only a day or two after the engagement with the ram, and until General Williams had completed his arrangements for departure with his small force, he proceeded to obey this order. It was arranged that the Essex and Sumter, under Commander W. D. Porter, should take charge of the lower part of the river. Left in this situation, the fleet on the Mississippi, so far from being competent to make any offensive movement, was likely to have difficulty in holding its ground against the enemy, who now had, besides the Arkansas, two gun-boats on the Red River and two on the Yazoo. "I presume," says Farragut, writing from New Orleans, July 29, "Flag-officer Davis will destroy those in the Yazoo; and my gun-boats chased the Music and Webb up the Red River, but drew too much water to go far."

The situation before Vicksburg, therefore, at the beginning of August, was discouraging. There was no longer any co-operating army. Flag-officer Davis's fleet was reduced in power, both by the absence of a large number of gun-boats—undergoing repairs or engaged in special duty—and by sickness among the men.¹ The garrison of Vicksburg had been largely increased, nearly doubled, and a large number of additional guns had been mounted in the batteries. The canal, which had been finished for about ten days, had proved a failure. The bulkhead was knocked away on the 22d of July, but the Mississippi, which had so often been known to change its channel in a single night on the slightest occasion, refused by a singular caprice to take the course which General Williams had opened for it, and Vicksburg, instead of becoming an inland city, had joyful occasion for self-congratulation and for laughter at the foiled project of "the Yankees." But, although the canal failed to answer the purpose for which it had been constructed, it was of great service so long as Williams remained. It had been made a means of defense "by constructing a continued breastwork and rifle-pit on the lower border, and an angle on the upper border to enfilade the canal where it was crossed by the levee. This levee, distinguished as the *new levee*, formed in itself a convenient breastwork."² When Williams left, however, it was no longer safe for the ordnance, commissary, hospital, and mail boats to lie at the bank. It was also impossible to maintain communication with the vessels below Vicksburg across the neck, and the latter could no longer be used to co-operate in a bombardment from below. The Sumter and Essex must now depend upon Baton Rouge and New Orleans for their supplies. Davis found, moreover, that he would be compelled to exhaust a large measure of his force in maintaining his own connection with Cairo. He determined, therefore, to abandon his position before Vicksburg, and withdraw to the mouth of the Yazoo River. From this point there was a lull of five months in the operations against Vicksburg.

The Confederate line of defense in the West at this time ran from Vicks-

¹ Davis writes, July 23, just before Williams's departure, thus: "My force is also reduced by the absence of eight gun-boats, three of which are guarding important points on the river, and five of which are undergoing repairs. I have said that I am in want of 500 men to insure the efficiency of the flotilla. In this calculation I make allowance for the return to duty of many of the sick; but 600 men would not be too many to send to me. The most sickly part of the season is approaching, and the Department would be surprised to see how the most healthy men wilt and break down under the ceaseless and exhausting heat of this pernicious climate. Men who are apparently in health at the close of the day's work, sink away and die suddenly at night under the combined effects of heat and malarial poison. The enemy, however, suffers a great deal more than we do. He counts seventeen or twenty thousand men on his rolls, but can hardly muster five thousand in his ranks. To sickness are added, in his case, the want of hospital accommodations, the want of medicines, and the want of suitable food. I learn that General Williams is about to move down the river. Should it prove so, it will be very unfortunate in its results. This is one of the points at which the co-operation of the army is most essential."

² *Rep. Sec. Navy, 1862, Acc. Doc., p. 517.*



burg southward parallel with the river, and from the same point deflected northward to the northern boundary of the State of Mississippi, and thence turned eastward, following the Virginia and East Tennessee Railroad. Morgan and Forrest had just been raiding through Kentucky and Tennessee, preparatory to Bragg's invasion. General Grant, on the northern border of Mississippi, was confronted by large Confederate armies under Price, Lovell, and Van Dorn. As soon as General Williams left Vicksburg, Breckinridge withdrew his division in order to attack Baton Rouge, and, in co-operation with the ram Arkansas, to secure the Lower Mississippi. If the expedition could have been undertaken a few days sooner, it would have been a success so far as Baton Rouge was concerned. Breckinridge doubtless knew that a large proportion of Williams's troops were suffering from sickness. He could not have reckoned too strongly upon this element in his favor, for when Williams left Vicksburg he had scarcely well soldiers enough to take care of the sick ones.

Breckinridge's force received marching orders on the 26th of July. It was transported by railroad as far as Tangipahoa, in St. Helena Parish, Louisiana, which became the base of operations. Between forty and fifty miles from this place, at Camp Moore, on the Comite River, there was a body of Louisiana troops being fitted for active duty in the field. There were only one or two regiments here, with a battery, and a few cavalry, the whole under the command of General Ruggles. This became one of the two columns acting against Baton Rouge, and remained under Ruggles's immediate command, while the column from Vicksburg was assigned to General Charles Clarke. The latter consisted of two brigades, of four regiments, or parts of regiments, each. The troops of this column were all veterans. The design was to attack Baton Rouge from the rear, while the Arkansas, with the help of the Webb and Music from the Red River, engaged the Federal gun-boats. Several days were occupied in waiting until the ram should have recovered from the wounds inflicted upon her in her recent conflicts with the Mississippi squadron. At length Van Dorn telegraphed to Breckinridge that the ram was ready, and would be due at Baton Rouge on the morning of August 5th, which time, therefore, was fixed for the attack.

General Williams had not returned to Baton Rouge a moment too soon. He was well aware of the enemy's design, and industriously provided for the coming battle. On the river were the Essex, Cayuga, Sumter, Kineo, and Katahdin. On the land Williams had nearly 2500 men available for action. These were encamped in the rear of the city, and it was determined to meet the enemy just on the skirts of the town, and there dispute his nearer approach.

The march to Comite River from Tangipahoa, a distance of about fifty miles, was at this season very exhausting to the Confederates under Breckinridge. The heat was intense, and the men fell rapidly out of the ranks from sickness or fatigue. Almost every farm-house on the roadside was converted into a hospital. There was a brief halt at Camp Moore, and on the 4th, a little before midnight, the two columns were pushing on over a smooth sandy road that led through well-cultivated plantations to Baton Rouge. About dawn, when these columns were within three miles of the city, there occurred a strange misadventure. They were passing by a piece of woods when they were fired upon by a company of partisan rangers, who mistook them for Federal troops. Before the mistake was rectified several casualties had occurred, and the line had been thrown into confusion. General Helm, commanding one of the brigades, was disabled by the fall of his horse into a ditch, and was withdrawn from the field. It was here that Captain Alexander A. Todd, a brother-in-law of President Lincoln and an officer on General Helm's staff, met his end. He was instantly killed by a shot from the woods.¹ Order was soon restored, and the columns marched on, Clarke's to the right and Ruggles's to the left. They first appeared in the open fields bordering on the Greenwell Springs Road, toward the upper part of the city and southeast of the Arsenal. Here they attempted without success to draw out the national forces. Failing in this, they veered to the southward a little farther, and it was in the position thus taken that the battle of Baton Rouge was fought.

The streets of the city ran out to the verge of the Federal encampments. The battle-field was flat in surface, extending in the form of an arc about the city from the Arsenal grounds to those of the Capitol. Bayou Gross ran north and east of the Arsenal grounds. Within the latter were two guns, sweeping the field to the left of the Fourth Wisconsin and Ninth Connecticut, on the opposite or right bank of the bayou. In the rear of the centre of the Ninth were two guns, and on the other side of a knoll in the Government Cemetery two more. Farther to the right was the Fourteenth Maine, on the left of the Greenwell Springs Road and in rear of the Bayou Sara Road, which crosses at right angles the two main approaches to the city. In the road itself were four guns, afterward increased to six. On the right of the Greenwell Springs Road was the Twenty-first Indiana (which was under cover of a wood), with the Magnolia Cemetery in its front. To the right

of Magnolia Cemetery the Sixth Michigan continued the line across a country road and another known as the Clay Cut Road, supporting two guns in the country road. The Seventh Vermont was stationed in the rear of the two latter regiments, on the right of the Catholic cemetery. The extreme right was held by the Thirtieth Massachusetts, a short distance in the rear of the Capitol, and supporting Nims's Battery. Considering that the attack was expected on the Greenwell Springs Road, this disposition of force was an admirable one, the only fault consisting in the unfortunate position of the encampments of the Fourteenth Maine and Twenty-first Indiana, which were in front of those regiments, and liable to capture in case of their retreat, an event which really did occur.¹

The Confederates at daylight drove back the Federal pickets. General Breckinridge in person led the right wing, his young son, Cabell, acting as aid-de-camp. The full force of the first determined attack fell upon the Indiana, Maine, and Michigan regiments. The resistance was obstinate. The Federal flanks were called in to support the centre; but the enemy succeeded, after a sharp conflict, in driving in the regiments in the advanced front and capturing their encampments. The Seventh Vermont failed to give efficient support at the critical moment, and Colonel Roberts, its commander, was killed while vainly attempting to urge forward his men. "He was worthy," said General Butler, "of a better disciplined regiment and a better fate." The Indiana regiment lost all its field-officers before retreating. General Williams had just given the order for the line to fall back, when, seeing the condition of this regiment, he advanced to its front, and told the Indianians that, in the absence of their officers, he would lead them himself. Scarcely had the responding cheers died away when he fell, mortally wounded.² The batteries had done good execution. The soldiers, though many of them had never seen a battle before, disputed bravely every advance of



DEATH OF GENERAL THOMAS WILLIAMS.

the enemy. It had come at length to a hand-to-hand conflict, the result of which seemed to be in favor of the Confederates. As the national forces withdrew from the vicinity of Magnolia Cemetery, where had been the deadliest conflict, the gun-boats in the river opened on both of the enemy's flanks, their fire over the city being directed by a system of signals from the Capitol, instituted by Lieutenant Ransom.

In the mean time Breckinridge was listening anxiously in the intervals of conflict for the guns of the Arkansas; but he heard them not. About six miles from the city the ram had stopped in her progress down the river, unable to proceed on account of her inefficient engine machinery. She had left Brown, her former commander, sick at Vicksburg, and was now commanded by Lieutenant Stevens. Her crew numbered 180 men, well chosen; she had ten heavy guns (six 8-inch and four 50-pounders), but could not be brought into action.

Disappointed at the non-appearance of this indispensable ally, and seeing

¹ See *Weitzel's Report in Reb. Rec.*, vol. v., p. 301, *Doc.* Fletcher, an English historian of the war, says: "The position does not appear to have been well selected, as in front of the centre of the line, between the two roads, was a large cemetery, overgrown with high grass, and affording both cover for an advancing enemy, and, when occupied, a strong offensive position." This is probably true so far as the position was related to the shape which the attack finally took.

² The following General Order (No. 56) was issued by General Butler after the battle: "The commanding general announces to the Army of the Gulf the sad event of the death of Brigadier General Thomas Williams, commanding Second Brigade, in camp at Baton Rouge."

"The victorious achievement—the repulse of the division of Major General Breckinridge by the troops led by General Williams, and the destruction of the mail-clad Arkansas by Captain Porter, of the Navy—is made sorrowful by the fall of our brave, gallant, and successful fellow-soldier."

"General Williams graduated at West Point in 1837; at once joined the Fourth Artillery in Florida, where he served with distinction; was thrice breveted for gallant and meritorious services in Mexico as a member of General Scott's staff. His life was that of a soldier devoted to his country's service. His country mourns in sympathy with his wife and children, now that country's care and precious charge."

"We, his comrades in arms, who had learned to love him, weep the true friend, the gallant gentleman, the brave soldier, the accomplished officer, and the devoted Christian. All this and more went out when Williams died. By a singular felicity, the manner of his death illustrated each of these generous qualities."

"The chivalric American gentleman, he gave up the vantage of the cover of the houses of the city, forming his lines in the open field, lest the women and children of his enemies should be hurt in the fight."

"A good general, he made his dispositions and prepared for battle at break of day, when he met his foe."

"A brave soldier, he received the death-shot leading his men."

"A patriot hero, he was fighting the battle, and died as went up the cheer of victory."

"A Christian, he sleeps in the hope of the blessed Redeemer."

"His virtues we can not exceed; his example we may emulate; and, mourning his death, we pray, 'May our last end be like his.'"

¹ A Confederate, alluding to this event, says: "Captain Todd was a young gentleman of fine accomplishments, great personal daring, exceeding amiability, and the warmest home affections. But the evening before he wrote to his mother, and just before the accident he was conversing with Lieutenant L. E. Payne, ordnance officer of the brigade, communicating the messages he wished conveyed home in case of his fall. . . . Brave boy! he met his end serenely, and his body was interred by gentle and loving hands."



DESTRUCTION OF THE ARKANSAS.

the impossibility of attempting to fight the national infantry, artillery, and gun-boats at the same time, Breckinridge ordered the captured camps to be burned as a preliminary to withdrawal from the field. His forces found some shelter from the shells of the fleet in the woods which skirted the battle-field all around. It was not noon yet when the battle was over, and the field was left in possession of the national forces, under Colonel Cahill, who had succeeded to the command after the death of General Williams.

The enemy had suffered severe loss, especially in officers, among whom General Clarke was left in our hands mortally wounded. His dead, to the number of seventy, were left upon the field, so hasty had been his retreat. The battle-field gave striking evidence of the nature of the conflict. In front of the Indiana and Michigan regiments some of the enemy were found who had been killed with rails, which the Union soldiers, having lost their arms, had used as weapons. "In one spot," says an eye-witness, "behind a beautiful tomb, with effigies of infant children kneeling, twelve dead rebels were found in one heap."

The forces engaged in the battle, though variously estimated, were probably not very far from equal.¹ The loss on the national side was 90 killed and 250 wounded.

The morning after the battle, the Essex, accompanied by the Cayuga and Sumter, advanced up the river to where the Arkansas was lying, abandoned by her companions, the Webb and Music. There was no serious conflict. Commander W. D. Porter engaged the ram for a short time, when the latter was fired, deserted, and then blown up. Very soon the vessels of the national fleet saw floating past them the shattered fragments of their most formidable antagonist on the Mississippi. In informing the Naval Secretary of this event, Admiral Farragut said: "It is one of the happiest moments of my life that I am able to inform the Department of the destruction of the ram Arkansas, not because I held the iron-clad in such terror, but because the community did."

A few days after the battle (August 16) Baton Rouge was evacuated by the national troops, and the place was afterward held by the naval force.

Sherman had been confirmed major general of volunteers on the 1st of May, 1862. In urging this appointment, Halleck, writing from the West shortly after the battle of Shiloh, said: "It is the unanimous opinion here that Brigadier General W. T. Sherman saved the fortunes of the day on the 6th, and contributed largely to the glorious victory of the 7th." At the time when Halleck wrote thus, Grant was under a cloud; his military qualities were scarcely appreciated; he was thrust somewhat into the background, and subjected to much mortification, enjoying little of that confidence which he afterward won from the government. But in this unfortunate period of his career his rightful claims were supported heartily and in full by General Sherman.² Afterward when, at the very close of the war, the latter was for one single act bitterly and unjustly calumniated, he received from General Grant a full return of sympathy and support. Grant had always believed in Sherman, even when the latter had

¹ Whatever odds there may have been were certainly in favor of the Confederates. The wide discrepancy in the estimates given is somewhat singular. Pollard says Breckinridge had less than 3000 men, and Williams nearly 6000. Abbott, on the other hand, makes Williams's force less than 2500, and Breckinridge's 8000. The only authority for this latter estimate of the enemy's numbers is a soldier's letter published in the *Rebellion Record* (vol. v., p. 307, *Doc.*). This letter is throughout wholly unreliable. In a later statement Abbott estimates the enemy's force at 5000. Cahill makes Williams's force 2500, and that of the enemy ten regiments, or 5000 men. Weitzel estimates Breckinridge's force at 6000. Fletcher makes the numbers on both sides about 4000. It is possible that the enemy may have numbered between 3000 and 4000; Williams certainly had not 3000 men.

² A staff-officer of General Grant thus writes of this period: "La Fontaine truthfully says, 'Aucun chemin de fleurs ne conduit à la gloire.' De- traction was busy with her poisonous tongue. Grant was more bitterly as- sailed now than at any previous time, as a 'butcher,' as 'incompetent,' and as being a 'drunkard.' Some one was disparaging Grant in Sherman's presence, when the latter broke out with, 'It won't do, sir, it won't do; Grant is a great general! He stood by me when I was crazy, and I stood by him when he was drunk, and now, sir, we stand by each other.'"

been called insane. He always gave him the most responsible position under his command. In recommending his promotion to the rank of brigadier general in the regular army in 1863, he says: "At the battle of Shiloh, on the first day, he held, with raw troops, the key-point of the landing. It is no disparagement to any other officer to say that I do not believe there was another division commander on the field who had the skill and experience to have done it. To his individual efforts I am indebted for the success of that battle."

When Halleck was called to Washington in July, 1862, to assume the duties of general-in-chief, the Department of the Mississippi was assigned to the hero of Fort Donelson.¹ There was at that time a lull in military operations, and Grant had leisure to give attention to the general administration of affairs in this department. One of the very first things which he did was to send Sherman, with his own and Hurlbut's divisions, to occupy Memphis as its military commander. Sherman assumed command of the district, superseding General Hovey, on the 21st of July, stationing his own division in Fort Pickering, Hurlbut's on the river

below, and sending the other troops to Helena. He retained the mayor and other civil officers of the city in their offices, and confined the action of provost-marshal guards to persons in the military service, and to buildings and grounds used by the army. All citizens were required to yield obedience to the United States government or leave the district; if they staid, and gave aid to the enemy, they were to be treated as spies. He did not exact from all a formal oath of allegiance. He required no military passports for inland travel, but he restricted it to the five main roads leading from the city, and there was a minute inspection of all persons and property going in or out. The principal matter requiring stringent regulations was that of trade. The exportation of salt and of all war material was prohibited. All cotton bought beyond the lines and brought in had to be purchased on contracts for payment at the close of the war, because, if paid for in coin or in treasury notes, these were almost always sure to find their way into the coffers of the Confederate treasury.

As the army penetrated the southern districts along the Mississippi, the temptation to indulge in cotton speculation became a great obstruction to military discipline. But, notwithstanding this, it was found expedient to allow a partial trade in cotton, though every effort was made by General Grant to prevent this commerce from demoralizing his subordinate officers. It was manifestly the policy of the government to drain the South of its cotton. This important staple was an invaluable aid to the enemy; it was a part of his war material, since his foreign loans were based entirely upon a cotton basis. It seemed wise, therefore, to make it for the interest of Southern cotton-holders to retain the staple, instead of burning it or allowing it to pass into the hands of the Confederate government. This temptation was afforded by allowing a partial trade.²

¹ It was on October 16, 1862, that General Grant was made commander of the Department of the Tennessee, this department being made to include Cairo, Forts Henry and Donelson, Northern Mississippi, and portions of Kentucky and Tennessee west of the Tennessee River.

² The connection of the cotton question with the Confederate conduct of the war is so important that some of its details may be interesting to the reader.

The first auction sale of confiscated cotton from Port Royal took place in New York on the 10th of June, 1862. At this sale seventy-nine bales were sold, at an average of sixty cents per pound. From this time on to the close of the war such sales were quite frequent. Before a single bale of cotton had been confiscated, however, the Confederates had contemplated the possibility of such conquests on the part of the United States government as would bring into its possession a portion of their accumulated stores. As early as February 26, 1862, a meeting of cotton and tobacco planters was held at Richmond to consider the expediency of the purchase by the Confederacy, or of a voluntary destruction of the entire tobacco and cotton crop. The *Richmond Examiner* describes the audience as "one of the largest, wealthiest, and most intellectual meetings" ever as-



COTTON HOARDS IN SOUTHERN SWAMPS.

Toward the close of October Sherman was summoned to meet Grant at Columbus for military consultation. The Department of the Mississippi had

sembled in that city. The speeches made and the resolutions adopted were certainly characteristic. General T. J. Green, of North Carolina, having called the meeting to order, the Hon. C. K. Marshall arose to read the resolutions. "We have it in our power," he said, by way of preface, "to do what will have a serious influence not only within the city of Richmond, but may ameliorate the condition of the race of mankind at large."

The following is a copy of the resolutions: "Whereas, the government of the United States have made an unprovoked, flagrant, and wicked war on the government and people of the Confederate States, and have conducted that war on principles hitherto unknown among civilized nations; and, whereas, we feel that our only safety against so ruthless and unrelenting a foe is to be found in the courage, patriotism, and self-sacrificing spirit of our people; and, whereas, no sacrifice, however enormous, is too great if it only brings us freedom from our oppressors; and, whereas, the tyrants and despots of the North have openly proclaimed their purpose to desolate our homes and appropriate our property to their own use, and have, in various instances, carried the infamous threat into practical execution by plundering our people of cotton, tobacco, rice, and other property; and, whereas, fire, when applied by heroic hands, is more formidable than the sword, therefore it is by this meeting

"Resolved, That as a means of national safety, dictated alike by military necessity and true patriotism, we deem it the imperative duty of this government to adopt measures for the purchase of the entire crops of cotton and tobacco now on hand, with the purpose of at once preventing the appropriation of them by the invaders of our soil and country, and making a fair and equitable compensation for the same to their owners, by such arrangements as shall enable the government to meet the debt incurred thereby without involving the public treasury in any serious liability on account of the said purchase. Certificate of government liability to be given for the entire property.

"Resolved, That, as the owners of these great staples, the government would hold in its hands the power of removing so great temptation from the path of the Federal army, now making its raids into our country, and robbing our citizens under the avowed pledges of supplying, by force, the markets of the world with these valuable articles of demand, which must necessarily be done, if those pledges are redeemed, with the total bankruptcy of our planting interests on the one hand, and the utter subjugation and enslavement of the people of the South on the other.

"Resolved, That, possessed of these products, it would become the solemn duty of the government to take immediate action through commissioners appointed for that purpose, or otherwise to take an account of such portions of said crops as are at exposed places, first furnishing the owners thereof with certificates of the amount and value of their crops as evidences of debt by the government therefor, and consign the property to the devouring flames.

"Resolved, That in case the owners of said staples decline to accept the terms offered by the government, a tax of _____ cents per pound should be assessed and collected from such crops, and if finally lost or sacrificed, as a measure of public safety thereafter, such owners should not be allowed any compensation for the same.

"Resolved, That where other articles of produce or stock are exposed to the raids of the enemy, they should be removed if practicable, and if not practicable, an inventory of them should be taken, with an estimate of their value, by military authority, or a government agent, or, in the absence of either, by competent citizens, and certified to by them, and said property forthwith destroyed, and the parties thus deprived of their property should be indemnified by the government."

Mr. Marshall then made a speech on the resolutions. He alluded in terms so extravagant as to appear ludicrous, to the expedients to which the Confederates had been driven by the blockade. "Men," he said, "have seized pikes and lances, for want of proper arms, to defend their wives, and daughters, and mothers." He thought the Richmond government did not fully appreciate the exigency of the times. If it had purchased the first cotton crop the Southern navy might then have boasted of thirty such vessels as the Merrimac. The last crop was now actually rotting unbled. They had been taught to believe that France and England wanted cotton so badly that they would come and get it. Why didn't they come? He had begun to doubt whether there were such countries as France and England. "The enemy found cotton at Ship Island; some, it is true, they found in flames, but not enough of it. At Florence they went up and took an inconsiderable quantity. No one seemed to think of setting fire to it. At Nashville they will perhaps get fifty thousand bales, and the owners, to save their property, will have to swear allegiance to that miserable tyrant, Abe Lincoln. And presently they will descend the Mississippi with perhaps fifty gun-boats, and compel the negroes to load them with cotton, and send it to Europe, and say, We have opened a cotton port—there is the evidence. I want us to do something manly—something grand. I want the Confederate government to buy all the cotton, and, if need be, destroy it. If one of those pillars which support this temple were cotton, and the other tobacco, and England, France, Russia, and the United States of America, and ourselves depended on them for existence, and it were necessary, I would, Samson-like, drag them down, and let one universal ruin overwhelm civilization. Suppose, as these resolutions propose, the government buys the cotton and tobacco crops, it is not to be expected that it will soon be able to pay for them. Hardships will be the consequence. Great numbers must suffer. A tax will have to be imposed. I will suppose that half of the cotton and tobacco crop has been burned. My cotton has been burned, and I have received seven cents a pound from the government, while my neighbor's, whose crop has not been burned, has been enhanced double in value. His small crop of cotton would be a fortune, yet who among us would hesitate to apply the torch to it sooner than it should fall into the hands of the enemy? But suppose the government were to buy the whole crop, and determine to burn it (as I want them to do), that the world may see that this little republic, as they may choose to consider us, can strike a blow that will send consternation through the world, while they are talking about conquering the republic and hanging the President. I want the government to come forward and say, Here is the money for four million bales of cotton, and give it to her commissioners, and say, Burn it. I want the government to go in search of the cotton, instead of leaving it to be captured by her [that is, the enemy's] iron-clad steamers. The government have two million of bales as a financial measure. There are some gentlemen present who raise as much as four thousand bales of cotton, and who say they will themselves burn it, indemnity or not, rather than the Yankees shall get possession of it. A lady of my acquaintance has said she will not only burn her crop, but her house itself, and take to the forest, rather than see the enemy possess it. We shall ruin our own interest by letting this crop lie here, and putting another crop upon it. Cotton, instead of being ten cents, will not command more than three cents. Suppose the blockade were opened now, we could not get it to market by August. The boats which used to transport our cotton are engaged in making war upon us, and some of them have got well peppered at Fort Donelson. They are to-day planting cotton in Texas, and next week they will begin to plant farther north. I need not enlarge on this to planters. It is evident to them there will be two crops on the market before next January. Some will say we will force England to go to India for cotton. I will say to her, Go! England has spent three hundred and fifty million pounds, and gotten Louisiana planters to go to those distant countries, and has been obliged to give it up as a forlorn hope. But suppose England finds other cotton-fields, I'd like to know if we can't find other spinners for our crops, and be forever independent of her. To the west of us are two little countries, China and Japan. In China they desire to put all their lands in tea, but they fear to discontinue the raising of cotton. If they could get cotton elsewhere, they would put all the land in tea. Well, then, the best spinners and weavers in China can be hired for nine cents a day, and we can get them to spin and weave our cotton long before England can find other cotton-fields. China and Japan are not so distant from us as we were from England when Whitney put the first cotton-gin in operation in Savannah. I hope Congress will take up and pass these resolutions. I have great hope from this meeting. So much have these resolutions to recommend them to the people of the Southern Confederacy, that, were I addressing them to-night, I believe I could get an overwhelming vote for government buying the entire crops of cotton and tobacco, and consigning them to the flames."

Governor Moore, of Kentucky, then addressed the meeting, advocating the resolutions. On motion of Edmund Ruffin, who fired the first gun of the war, and who blew his brains out after the defeat of the Confederacy, the resolutions were put to vote, and unanimously adopted. Henry S. Foote, the Tennessee senator in the Confederate Congress, was then called to the stand, and strongly approved of the resolutions.

About the same time, a bill was reported in the Confederate Senate to indemnify planters for property destroyed to prevent its capture. The bill, as passed, made no such provision, but made it the duty of all military commanders to destroy all cotton, tobacco, or other property that might be useful to the enemy, if the same could not be safely removed, whenever said property was, in their judgment, liable to capture. It was estimated that the amount of cotton and tobacco which would thus be destroyed would be about one twentieth of the entire crop. On the 3d of March a resolution was passed in the House advising planters to raise provisions and cattle in place of cotton and tobacco. This came before the Senate March 12, and Mr. Brown, of Mississippi, proposed a substitute, in the form of a bill to curtail the cotton crop for 1862, the amount being limited to three bales for each planter, and an additional bale per head for each hand employed in its culture, and inflicting a penalty of forty dollars for every bale raised above this quota. He thought the House measure would affect injuriously the patriotic planters, while it enriched the disloyal.

Mr. Orr, of South Carolina, thought the number of "patriotic planters" was very small. Wiggall, of Texas, was not so sure about the expediency of neglecting to raise cotton. Mr. Barnwell, of South Carolina, thought that on the cultivation of cotton, and the increase of supplies of that staple for the market, depended not only the sources of wealth, but the importance, consequence, and weight of the Confederacy with foreign nations. "We must," he said, "raise it, hold it, and fight for it." Besides, he thought the power assumed by Mr. Brown's substitute the grossest as-

been broken up, and General Grant was at the head of the Department of the Tennessee. About this time Rosecrans assumed command of the Department of the Cumberland. Corinth and Perryville had been fought, and both battles—that of Corinth especially—had resulted in important national victories. The objective point in the campaign now contemplated by General Grant was Vicksburg.

During the interval of some months in which Vicksburg had been left undisturbed, the enemy had strengthened its fortifications. Several additional batteries had been erected above the town, and a strong line of defenses had been thrown up from Chickasaw Bayou to Haines's Bluff on the Yazoo River. The bluff itself had been fortified, and opposed an insuperable obstacle to the ascent of the national fleet farther up the river. Port Hudson, in the mean time, had become a strong-hold second only to Vicksburg in importance, and between these two points the Mississippi (as also the Red River) was in full possession of the Confederates, who had thus an opportunity of availing themselves, to an almost unlimited extent, of the abundant supplies to be obtained from Louisiana and Texas. After Van Dorn's defeat at Corinth, he had been superseded by John C. Pemberton, a favorite of President Davis, who, that he might outrank Van Dorn and Lovell, had been made a lieutenant general. This officer has been very severely criticised by Southern writers on the ground of his general incompetency for the position assigned him, and, in particular, for his apathy during this important period, when the opportunities for provisioning Vicksburg and increasing its efficiency as a defensive point appear to have been neglected. He made his head-quarters, it is said, at this time rather at Jackson than at Vicksburg, only paying an occasional visit to Vicksburg. He thought, probably, and with good reason, that his presence was imperatively demanded to the rear and westward of Vicksburg, to guard against



MAP OF THE MISSISSIPPI CENTRAL RAILROAD.

sumption of authority he had ever witnessed. Mr. Hunter, of Virginia, objected on the ground that the measure taxed the patriotism of the planters, and was an interference with state rights. Like Barnwell, he thought that reducing the supply would so advance the price that other sources of cotton would be sought. Mr. Brown urged that the main object of the United States in descending the river was to get cotton, and that there should be as little of it to be found as possible. The idea that cotton could be raised in India was "played out." He was in favor of burning all the cotton they had, and raising no more until the world was disposed to do them justice. Semmes, of Louisiana, said he had long since abandoned the idea that cotton was king. England would not interfere for it. "Rather than make war with the United States, she would convert her government into an almshouse for the maintenance of her hordes of starving operatives." He should vote for the resolution, to warn the people of a lengthy war, and that they must raise provisions. The resolution, being put to vote, was lost.

On the 6th of May, in answer to an inquiry made by a Southern firm whether cotton purchased on foreign account would be exempted from the order enjoining the destruction of all cotton about to fall into the enemy's hands, J. P. Benjamin, the Confederate Secretary of State, replied that if purchases of that sort were made, it must be at the risk of the purchasers.

The Charleston Courier of May 14 published a circular which it claimed to be "the deliberate expression of the wealthiest and most influential class of the citizens of New Orleans." For manifest reasons no signatures were attached. After a chivalric prelude, the circular goes on to urge the destruction of every bale of cotton liable to capture on the Western rivers, and the refusal to ship or sell a bale until the independence of the Confederacy was recognized. "Let the conquest of the United States," it said, "be a barren one. If we are true to ourselves there will be no trade, and the countless millions of foreign products will be without a purchaser. How long will they remain idle spectators of such a scene," etc. For copying this circular, the New Orleans Bee was on the 16th suppressed by General Butler. The same day, for publishing an article of similar purport, the general took possession of the New Orleans Delta.

The planters, for the most part, justified Mr. Orr's doubt of their patriotism. They were very reluctant to burn their cotton, and in most cases where the destruction was accomplished it was by Confederate guerrillas. Such, for instance, was the case near Memphis, where, toward the last of June, a large body of Confederate cavalry visited a number of plantations on the line of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, burning great quantities of cotton, and arresting all persons found purchasing that staple. But, in spite of every effort made by the Confederate government, large quantities of cotton were seized by the United States at every step of the army's progress southward. A portion of the cotton found belonged to the Confederate government, and a portion to private citizens, who had in many instances secreted it against the very occasion of possible capture.

Mr. Pollard, the Southern historian, thinks it was a great mistake that the Confederate government did not, in 1861, purchase the entire cotton crop, and make it the basis of its credit. He estimates that there were at this time 3,500,000 bales of cotton in the South, which might have been secured at the rate of seven cents a pound. He enters into an indignant protest against the illicit trade in cotton indulged in by the planters: "The country had taken a solemn resolution to burn the cotton in advance of the enemy; but the conflagration of this staple soon became a rare event; instead of being committed to the flames it was spirited to Yankee markets. Nor were these operations always disguised. Some commercial houses in the Confederacy counted their gains by millions of dollars since the war, through the favor of the government in allowing them to export cotton at pleasure. . . . The cotton and sugar planters of the extreme South, who prior to the war were loudest for secession, were at the same time known to buy every article of their consumption in Yankee markets, and to cherish an ambition of shining in the society of occupation in this war in planting in copartnership with the enemy, or in smuggling cotton into in 1863, from the Southwest and Charleston, enough cotton at present prices to uphold its whole system of currency—a damning testimony to the avarice of the planter. Yet it is nothing more identified with selfishness, is one of the most weak and cowardly things in revolutions, and the first to succumb under the horrors of war."—Pollard's Second Year of the War, p. 289.

the operations of General Grant, which were threatened in that quarter. It has been said that Pemberton was in favor of evacuating all points held by the Confederates on the water, and had even recommended the abandonment of Charleston and the destruction of its works.¹ He certainly did not act upon this theory in the Vicksburg campaign.

The first thing to be accomplished by General Grant was the expulsion of the enemy from the line of the Tallahatchie. Then, while Rosecrans occupied Bragg, Grant, with Sherman's help, proposed to take Vicksburg. The details of the campaign were admirably planned, and, so far as the principal movements were concerned, successfully carried out up to just the last point, when the whole scheme miscarried, not by reason of a great defeat, but by the disgraceful and unnecessary surrender of Holly Springs.

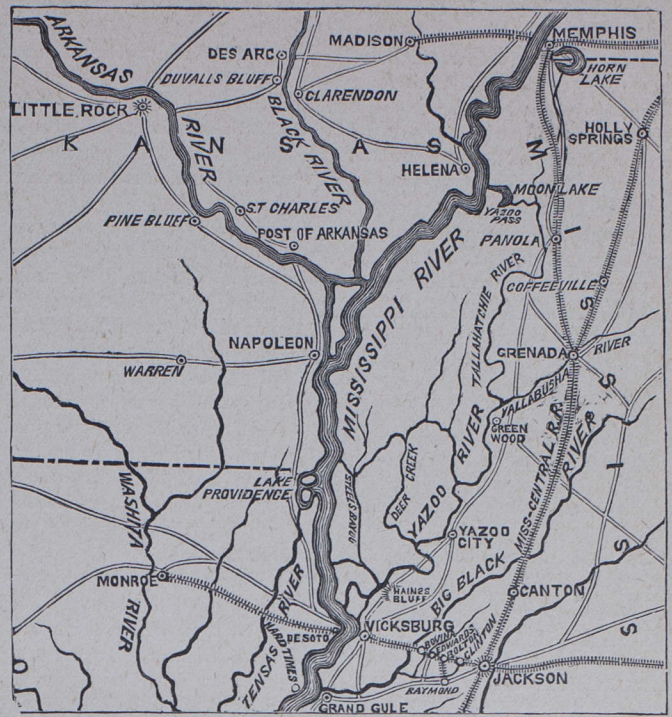
In the first stage of the campaign, as arranged by Grant and Sherman, three columns were to move—one, under Grant, from Jackson, in Tennessee; a second, under Sherman, from Memphis; and a third, consisting mainly of a cavalry force, under C. C. Washburne, from Helena—against Pemberton's army on the Tallahatchie, numbering 40,000 men.² The success of this first part of the campaign is thus concisely summed up by Sherman: "Grant moved direct on Pemberton, while I moved from Memphis, and a smaller force under General Washburne struck directly for Grenada; and the first thing Pemberton knew, the dépôt of his supplies was almost in the grasp of a small cavalry force, and he fell back in confusion, and gave us the Tallahatchie without a battle."³

From the vantage-ground thus gained Grant could almost see his way into Vicksburg. To him, then, Jackson seemed almost within his grasp, and thence it was but a step into the coveted strong-hold. The force sent from Helena, which had now been recalled (perhaps too soon), had swept a clear course for him to Grenada. Pemberton had fallen back to Canton, a few miles north of Jackson. On November 29th Grant reached Holly Springs; on December 3d his headquarters were at Oxford, and his cavalry in the advance were driving Van Dorn out from Water Valley and Coffeeville. Not a score of miles from Coffeeville is Grenada; and if all holds well behind—at the dozen points in the rear where garrisons have been left to keep open communications—Jackson must fall before Christmas, and Vicksburg before New Year.

So sure was Grant of his goal, that, while at Oxford (December 8), he dispatched General Sherman, commanding the right wing of his army,⁴ to undertake a co-operative expedition from Memphis against Vicksburg. Sherman was to take with him one division of his present command, and all the spare troops from Memphis and Helena. Scarcely a fortnight was allowed for the preparation of this important but ill-fated expedition. In the mean while Grant waited, or pushed on slowly, so as to give the appearance of a continuous movement. On the 14th of December he wrote to Sherman, saying that, for a week hence, his headquarters would be at Coffeeville, and expressing particular anxiety to have the Helena cavalry back again with him—evidently not at ease about Van Dorn's movements in his rear. With one eye on Vicksburg, he was forced to cast the other suspiciously on Holly Springs, his principal dépôt of provisions and ammunition, garrisoned with little over a thousand men under Colonel R. C. Murphy. Van Dorn was leading his cavalry against this place, and Grant, knowing this, gave Murphy timely warning. The blow fell suddenly, on December 20, and found Murphy unprepared. The place was surrendered, and Grant, cut off from his base, was obliged to fall back to Grand Junction, and to give up a campaign which, but for this fatal surrender, promised a fortunate issue.

Sherman embarked from Memphis on the 20th of December,⁵ the very day on which Holly Springs was surrendered. He had in his command Morgan's and the two Smiths' divisions—about 30,000 men. At Helena this army was re-enforced by over 12,000 men under General Frederick Steele, comprising the brigades of Hovey, Thayer, Blair, and Wyman.

From a letter written by Sherman to Porter (December 8), we gather a pretty definite idea of the objects which the expedition was intended to ac-



MAP ILLUSTRATING OPERATIONS ON THE YAZOO AND THE ARKANSAS.

complish. Sherman at this time, and, indeed, up to the time of his own defeat, confidently expected that Grant would succeed on the northeast of Vicksburg—a result which, so far as he was concerned, was chiefly valuable because it would keep Pemberton on the line of the Yalabusha, and thus insure his own success on the Yazoo. "We hope," he writes, "that they (the rebels) will halt and re-form behind the Yalabusha, with Grenada as their centre. If so, General Grant can press their front, while I am ordered to take all the spare troops from Memphis and Helena, and proceed with all dispatch to Vicksburg." He intended first to break the inland communications of Vicksburg, and then to make a combined attack upon the city by land and water, Porter co-operating with the fleet. He would "cut the road to Monroe, Louisiana, to Jackson, Mississippi, and then appear up the Yazoo, threatening the Mississippi Central Road where it crosses the Big Black," thus disconcerting the enemy and throwing him on to Meridian, leaving Vicksburg an easy capture.

The want of sufficient transportation for Sherman's large force was the cause of much embarrassment in fitting out the expedition, and of great confusion and inconvenience on its route to Friar's Point. The confusion was increased by the necessary haste of the embarkation. The transports, suddenly pressed into service, were crowded so closely as to afford scarcely more than standing-room, and, of course, there were no adequate accommodations for the comfort or cleanliness of the men. The discomforts of this situation were exaggerated by the embarkation of Steele's force at Helena. The negroes along the river were greatly impressed at sight of an expedition which they confidently believed had been sent down for the express purpose of their liberation. Many of them, indeed, came upon the boats, and were taken under the protection of the flag. The fleet arrived at Milliken's Bend on Christmas eve, and not a few of the enthusiastic soldiers expected to eat their Christmas dinner in Vicksburg.

The next day troops were landed, and destroyed the railroad leading from Vicksburg to Texas. The expedition was conveyed by Porter's gun-boats, on December 26th, to Johnston's Landing, twelve miles up the Yazoo River.¹ On the transport fleet Morgan's division led the advance, followed in order by Steele, Morgan L. Smith, and A. J. Smith.

Vicksburg itself is situated upon very high bluffs, which extend southward along the river to Warrenton, and northward till they touch the Yazoo, about fifteen miles from Haines's Bluff. Between these bluffs, upon which the Confederates were now strongly fortified, and the Yazoo is a low country, full of swamps, lagoons, sloughs, and bayous. The points of approach to the bluffs from the river are few and difficult—far more difficult than Sherman had anticipated. In this bed of mire and quicksand the national troops were landed, on the 27th, near Chickasaw Bayou, which runs from Vicksburg around the hills in the rear of the city and into the Yazoo, taking a sharp turn northward before it reaches the river.

Scarcely had Holly Springs fallen into Van Dorn's hands before Pemberton was warned of the attempt about to be made against the northern de-

¹ "On entering the Yazoo, the first object that attracted the attention was the ruins of a large brick house and several other buildings, which were still smoking. On inquiry, I learned that this was the celebrated plantation of the rebel General Albert Sidney Johnston, who was killed at Shiloh. It was an extensive establishment, working over three hundred negroes. It contained a large steam sugar refinery, an extensive steam saw-mill, cotton-gins, machine-shop, and a long line of negro quarters.

² "The dwelling was palatial in its proportions and architecture, and the grounds around it were magnificently laid out in alcoves, with arbors, trellises, groves of evergreens, and extensive flower-beds. All was now a mass of smouldering ruins. Our gun-boats had gone up there the day before, and a small battery planted near the mansion announced itself by plugging away at one of the iron-clads, and the marines went ashore after the gun-boats had silenced the battery, and burned and destroyed every thing on the place. If any thing were wanting to complete the desolate aspect of the place, it was to be found in the sombre-hued pendent moss, peculiar to Southern forests, and which gives the trees a funeral aspect, as if they were all draped in mourning, as on almost every Southern plantation there were many deadened trees standing about in the fields, from the limbs of all of which long festoons of moss hung, swaying with a melancholy motion in every breeze."—*Missouri Democrat*.

¹ *Abrams*, p. 8.

² This is Bowman's estimate.—*Sherman and his Campaigns*, p. 77.

³ Speech at St. Louis after the war.

⁴ General Grant's army constituted the Thirteenth Army Corps, of which the right wing was under command of General Sherman. This right wing consisted of three divisions:

The First, commanded by A. J. Smith, and consisting of two new brigades, Burbridge's and Landrum's.

The Second, commanded by Morgan L. Smith, consisting of G. A. Smith's and David Stuart's brigades.

The Third, commanded by G. W. Morgan, comprising the new brigades of Osterhaus, Lindsay, and De Courcy.

The other brigades remained at Memphis.

⁵ Before embarkation General Sherman issued the following characteristic order:

"I. The expedition now fitting out is purely of a military character, and the interests involved are of too important a character to be mixed up with personal or private business. No citizen, male or female, will be allowed to accompany it, unless employed as a part of the crew, or as servants to the transports. Female chambermaids to the boats and nurses to the sick alone will be allowed, unless the wives of captains and pilots actually belonging to the boats. No laundress, officer's or soldier's wife, must pass below Helena.

"II. No person whatever, citizen, officer, or sutler, will, on any consideration, buy or deal in cotton, or other produce of the country. Should any cotton be brought on board of any transport, going or returning, the brigade quarter-master, of which the boat forms a part, will take possession of it, and invoice it to Captain A. R. Eddy, chief quarter-master at Memphis.

"III. Should any cotton or other produce be brought back to Memphis by any chartered boat, Captain Eddy will take possession of the same, and sell it for the benefit of the United States. If accompanied by its actual producer, the planter or factor, the quarter-master will furnish him with a receipt for the same, to be settled on proof of his loyalty at the close of the war.

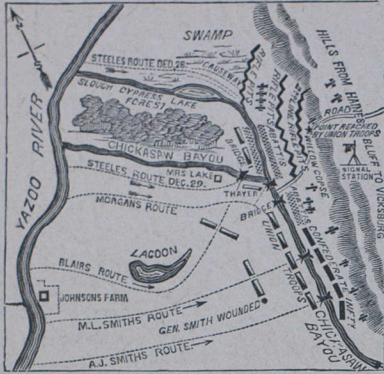
"IV. Boats ascending the river may take cotton from the shore for bulkheads to protect their engines or crew, but on arrival at Memphis it must be turned over to the quarter-master, with a statement of the time, place, and name of its owner. The trade in cotton must await a more peaceful state of affairs.

"V. Should any citizen accompany the expedition below Helena in violation of these orders, any colonel of a regiment or captain of a battery will conscript him into the service of the United States for the unexpired term of his command. If he show a refractory spirit, unfitting him for a soldier, the commanding officer present will turn him over to the captain of the boat as a deck-hand, and compel him to work in that capacity, without wages, until the boat returns to Memphis.

"VI. Any person whatever, whether in the service of the United States or transports, found making reports for publication which might reach the enemy, giving them information, aid, or comfort, will be arrested and treated as spies."

fenses of Vicksburg. In this respect he had an overwhelming advantage over Sherman (who knew nothing of the unfavorable turn which affairs had taken in the rear of Vicksburg), and Grant's withdrawal to Grand Junction left him free to pursue his advantage without hinderance. He faced about with his army; and by the time Sherman had landed on the south bank of the Yazoo, he had not only an equal force to confront the latter, but also an impregnable line of defense, covered by abatis, constructed from the thicket in front of his works. Thousands of slaves had for months been engaged upon these fortifications.

The emergency which Sherman was about to meet was one in which neither the bravery of his Western soldiers nor his own fertile ingenuity availed him any thing. It is true, the enemy had a line of works fifteen miles in



BATTLE OF CHICKASAW BAYOU.

extent to defend; and, supposing that he was attacking a force much inferior to his own in point of numbers, Sherman may well be justified in the confident hope that he might, at some point in this long line, make an impression, and that, by persistent pressure, he must succeed in driving the enemy out of his fortifications. Having debarked his troops, he pushed the enemy's pickets back toward the bluffs, and on the 28th intended to make a general assault. Chickasaw Bayou proved the chief obstacle to his plan of attack. Dividing the country in the enemy's front into nearly equal portions, it could be crossed only at two points, each completely covered by the enemy's fire. This necessitated either a division of the attacking force, or the restriction of the assault to the west side of the bayou; and, as the bayou turned westward along the base of the bluffs, it covered the enemy's entire left, and had in this section only four points at which a crossing could be effected, and even at these only in the face of rifle-pits on the table-land behind, of rifle-trenches on the hill-sides farther back, and of heavy batteries posted on the summits of the hills. Along the base of these hills, and back of the bayou, ran the road from Vicksburg to Yazoo City, serving the enemy as a covered way along which he could at leisure move his artillery and infantry, concentrating them upon any of the points which might be selected for crossing the Federal troops.

Steele advanced on the east side of the bayou, but, encountering a swamp over which there was no passage except by a long corduroy causeway, and

that, too, at the risk of losing one half of his division, wisely concluded to give up the attempt. Morgan, on the other side of the bayou, advanced up to the enemy's centre as far as to the bank of the bayou in front of the bluffs, where his progress was arrested, though he held his ground during the ensuing night. Morgan L. Smith advanced simultaneously farther to the right. While reconnoitring the ground he was disabled by a bullet lodged in his hip, and Brigadier General David Stuart succeeded to the active command. Where this division reached the bayou there was a crossing by means of a narrow sand-slip, but the attempt was deemed too perilous. On the extreme right General A. J. Smith advanced, and Burbridge's brigade—arriving on the field about noon, having just returned from a raid on the Vicksburg and Shreveport Railroad—was pushed forward by Smith to the bayou, with orders to cross on rafts under cover of a heavy cannonade. Landrum's brigade occupied a high position on the main road, within three fourths of a mile of the enemy's works, and with Vicksburg in plain view on his right.

On the morning of the 29th Steele had been recalled, and held the left, supporting Morgan. The entire army lay opposite the Confederate centre and left, with the inevitable bayou on its own left and front. Nothing had been heard from Grant, but his near presence was conjectured from a signal rocket which had been seen ascending in the east the first night after landing.

Sherman determined to assault the hills in Morgan's front, while A. J. Smith should cross at the sand-slip to the right. The assault was made, and a lodgment effected on the table-land across the bayou, the heads of the supporting columns being brought well up to the enemy's works. The audacity of the troops up to this point was never surpassed. Blair's brigade, originally holding a position between Morgan and M. L. Smith, in advancing, had crossed the track of Morgan's division till it reached the extreme front on the left, in Steele's van. Here it crossed the bayou at a point where both banks were covered by tangled abatis, and the quicksand bed of the bayou was covered by water three feet deep. Through this bed Blair led his brigade across, leaving his horse floundering in the quicksands behind, and carried two lines of rifle-pits beyond, under a fire which struck down one third of his command. But, despite such instances of valor, beyond the crossing of a few regiments, and the slight foothold gained on the southern bank of the bayou, no impression was made; and so scathing was the fire from the enemy's rifle-pits, and the cross-fire from his batteries, that the advanced columns faltered and fell back, leaving many dead, wounded, and prisoners.

Still Sherman urged A. J. Smith, on the right, to push his attack across the sand-bar. The latter had already crossed the Sixth Missouri, who lay on the other side, under the bank of the bayou, with the enemy's sharpshooters directly over their heads. They were about to make a road by undermining the bank, when the utter failure of Morgan's assault on the left led to an order for their withdrawal, which was accomplished, as the advance



POSITION OF THE SIXTH MISSOURI AFTER CROSSING THE BAYOU.



ADMIRAL PORTER'S FLEET AT THE MOUTH OF THE YAZOO.

had been, with heavy loss. All this time Burbridge had been skirmishing across the bayou, and Landrum pushing ahead through the abatis toward Vicksburg.

The night of the 29th was spent by the troops in the position of the night before, lying, exposed to a heavy rain, upon the miry ground, with no shelter but their blankets, and with no consolation from victory for their past loss or present hardship.

Sherman now gave up all hope of success from his present position. His only resource left was an attempt to turn the enemy's line by carrying his extreme right, the batteries upon Drumgould's Bluff, some miles farther up the Yazoo. While his army was encamped in the swamp on the night of the 29th, Sherman visited Admiral Porter on board his flag-boat, where was concerted the following plan of operations: Porter was to move up the Yazoo and bombard the batteries, while about 10,000 picked troops should make a determined assault, the rest of the army making a strong demonstration on the enemy's left. If successful in carrying out this plan, the national forces would have complete possession of the Yazoo River, and would hold the key of Vicksburg.

Steele's division, and one of Morgan L. Smith's, were accordingly embarked on the night of the 31st. But a dense fog made it impossible for Porter to advance his gun-boats, and the expedition was deferred to another night. But the next night the clear moonlight, which would last till morning, proved as unfavorable as the fog of the night before, since there would be no cover of darkness for landing the troops, and the attempt to secure a lodgment on the ridge between Yazoo and Black Rivers was abandoned.

Porter had previously (on the 24th and 27th) assailed the position at Haines's Bluff without success. In the second attempt the gun-boat Benton had been disabled, and Captain Gwin, her gallant commander, received a wound of which he died January 3, 1863.

The entire expedition was now a pronounced failure. The loss suffered by the national forces was 191 killed, 982 wounded, and 756 missing. The Confederate loss was very slight. It was also evident to General Sherman that the army under Grant, due a week ago, must have failed to co-operate with him. On the morning of January 2d the expedition was re-embarked for Milliken's Bend, and before nightfall the last of the transports had passed out of the Yazoo. At the mouth of the river Sherman met General McClernand, who had come down on the steamer Tigress with orders to assume command of the expedition. To him General Sherman resigned his command.¹

¹ On January 4 Sherman issued the following order:

"Pursuant to the terms of General Order No. 1, made this day by General McClernand, the title of our army ceases to exist, and constitutes in the future the Army of the Mississippi, composed of two 'army corps,' one to be commanded by General G. W. Morgan, and the other by myself. In relinquishing the command of the Army of the Tennessee, and restricting my authority to my own 'corps,' I desire to express to all commanders, to the soldiers and officers recently operating before Vicksburg, my hearty thanks for the zeal, alacrity, and courage mani-

The War Department had, on December 18, 1862, issued a general order dividing the Army of the Tennessee into four separate army corps, to be

festated by them on all occasions. We failed in accomplishing one great purpose of our movement, the capture of Vicksburg, but we were part of a whole. Ours was but part of a combined movement, in which others were to assist. We were on time. Unforeseen contingencies must have delayed the others.

"We have destroyed the Shreveport road, we have attacked the defenses of Vicksburg, and pushed the attack as far as prudence would justify, and, having found it too strong for our single column, we have drawn off in good order and good spirits, ready for any new move. A new commander is now here to lead you. He is chosen by the President of the United States, who is charged by the Constitution to maintain and defend it, and he has the undoubted right to select his own agents. I know that all good officers and soldiers will give him the same hearty support and cheerful obedience they have hitherto given me. There are honors enough in reserve for all, and work enough too. Let each do his appropriate part, and our nation must in the end emerge from this dire conflict purified and ennobled by the fires which now test its strength and purity. All officers of the general staff not attached to my person will hereafter report in person and by letter to Major General McClernand, commanding the Army of the Mississippi, on board the steamer Tigress, at our rendezvous at Gaines's Landing, and at Montgomery Point.

"By order of Major General W. T. SHERMAN.

"J. H. HAMMOND, A. A. G."

The connection of General McClernand with this expedition against Vicksburg is chiefly worthy of note as being so characteristic of the entire want of system—and, we might add, of judgment—in the general direction of the national armies at this time, and, indeed, until Grant became lieutenant general. It appears that, independently of any consultation with Grant, of whose winter campaign Vicksburg was the objective point, McClernand had in the autumn of 1862 been intrusted by the War Department with the organization of an expedition down the Mississippi. This, we understand, was done at McClernand's own instance. There was a long correspondence between him and the Department, the latter adopting his suggestions and urging him to hasten his preparations. The President and the Secretary of War united in drafting a document ordering him to organize the troops remaining in Indiana, Iowa, and Illinois, and to forward them with all dispatch to Memphis and Cairo, that, as soon as a sufficient force, not required elsewhere, should be got together, an expedition against Vicksburg might be organized under his command. The troops, however, were "subject to the designation of the general-in-chief," and were to be employed "according to such exigencies as the service in his judgment might require." The order was a confidential one, but the President, in his indorsement, allowed McClernand to show it to governors or others at his discretion, and expressed his "deep interest" in the proposed expedition.

McClernand was all in earnest. On the 16th of December he writes:

"Having substantially accomplished the purpose of the order sending me to the states of Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa, by forwarding upward of 40,000 troops, as was particularly explained in my letter of the 1st instant to the Secretary of War, and referred by him to you, I beg to be sent forward in accordance with the order of the Secretary of War on the 21st of October, giving me command of the Mississippi expedition."

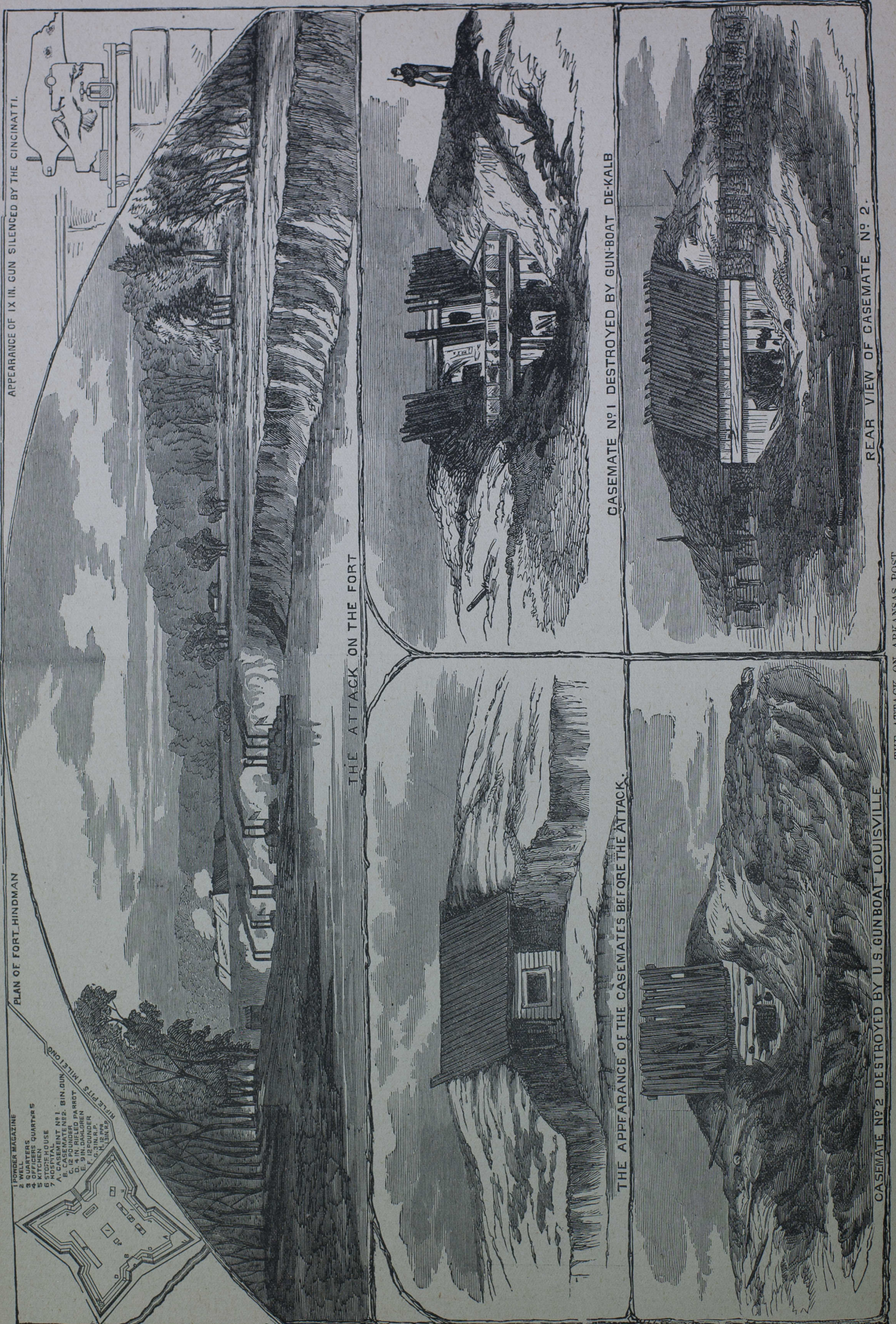
Whether General Halleck looked with disfavor upon the arrangements made with McClernand by the President or Secretary of War, thinking it would be better to leave the disposition of the troops at Memphis to General Grant, does not appear. Certain it is, however, that when Grant, early in December, received the order to send an expedition down the river, no mention of McClernand was made. When Halleck received McClernand's letter of the 16th, the expedition was upon the point of starting under Sherman's command. Yet, two days after the receipt of this letter, the following telegram was transmitted to Grant from Halleck:

"The troops in your department, including those from General Curtis's command which join the down-river expedition, will be divided into four corps. It is the wish of the President that General McClernand's corps shall constitute a part of the river expedition, and that he shall have the immediate command under your directions."

McClernand was detained by his correspondence with the War Department until December 25th, when he left Springfield (Illinois), with his staff, for Cairo—nearly a week after Sherman's expedition had started from Memphis. Grant had dispatched an order the same day that he received Halleck's telegram, giving McClernand the command, but the dispatch was interrupted at Jackson, Tennessee, and could proceed no farther.

Finally, McClernand received the dispatch and was ready to leave Memphis December 30th, reaching the mouth of the Yazoo, as we have seen, just in time to meet the retreating expedition, with which he had been so curiously connected.

In regard to Sherman's conduct of the expedition, General Grant, writing after the capture of



APPEARANCE OF 19 IN. GUN SILENCED BY THE CINCINNATI.

PLAN OF FORT HINDMAN

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- 2 WELL HEADS
- 3 OFFICERS QUARTERS
- 4 STOREHOUSE
- 5 KITCHEN HOUSE
- 6 HOSPITAL
- 7 CASEMATE NO. 1
- 8 CASEMATE NO. 2
- 9 CASEMATE NO. 3
- 10 CASEMATE NO. 4
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- 106 CASEMATE NO. 100

THE ATTACK ON THE FORT

CASEMATE NO 1 DESTROYED BY GUN-BOAT DE-KALB

THE APPEARANCE OF THE CASEMATES BEFORE THE ATTACK.

REAR VIEW OF CASEMATE NO 2.

CASEMATE NO 2 DESTROYED BY U.S. GUNBOAT LOUISVILLE

THE ATTACK ON ARKANSAS POST.



CONFEDERATE TRANSPORT BRINGING CATTLE TO VICKSBURG.

known as the Thirteenth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth, and to be commanded respectively by McClernand, Sherman, Hurlbut, and McPherson, while General Grant was to retain command of the whole. Upon assuming command of the expedition, now returned to Milliken's Bend, McClernand gave the command of his own corps to General Morgan, this command comprising the divisions of A. J. Smith and Morgan's own division, now commanded by General P. J. Osterhaus. Sherman's corps comprised also two divisions, Steele's and M. L. Smith's (now commanded by Stuart).

These two corps, with McClernand in chief command, embarked upon the same transports which had brought them from Memphis, and, under convoy of Admiral Porter's gun-boats, proceeded up the river to attack Fort Hindman, commonly known as Arkansas Post, on the north bank of the Arkansas River, fifty miles from its mouth, and a little more than twice that distance below Little Rock. Here a settlement had been made by the French in 1685. The fort was situated on the first high ground to be found in ascending the Arkansas; it had a parapet eighteen feet across, with a ditch of twenty feet wide by eight deep, strong casemates, and a cordon of rifle-pits. Its commander was General T. J. Churchill, who had under him a garrison of about 5000 men. The fort was mounted with eight guns, and its capture was an affair of no great difficulty. But Churchill had orders from Lieutenant General Holmes, the Confederate commander in Arkansas, "to hold on till help arrived, or till all were dead."

The expedition entered White River, and, after ascending it for fifteen miles, through a cut-off, moved into Arkansas River January 9, and by noon of the next day the troops were all debarked three miles below the fort. The story of the capture is soon told. The gun-boats, even while the troops were landing, had shelled the sharpshooters out of their rifle-pits along the levee, and, moving up to the fort, opened a bombardment. By land the army was pushed up around the fort, across bayous and swamps, and during the night of the 10th slept on their arms, in readiness for the assault of the next day. The gun-boats opened again a little after noon on the 11th, and in two or three hours the guns of the fort had been completely silenced. In the mean time several brigades had charged up to within musket-range of the enemy's works, where they found partial shelter in the ravines. In this advance General Hovey was wounded, and General Thayer had a horse shot under him. General A. J. Smith pressed back the Confederate right until, as he sent word to McClernand, he could "almost shake hands with the enemy." As soon as the guns of the fort were silenced, McClernand ordered a general assault, when a white flag appeared on the ramparts, just as the Eighty-third Ohio and Sixteenth Indiana, with General Burbridge at their head, were entering the intrenchments on the east side, while Sherman's and Steele's advanced regiments were on the point of entering on the north and west, and the fort was in McClernand's hands, with 5000 prisoners, 17 guns, and 3000 small-arms. Churchill professed, even after the capture, his intention to have held out till the last man was slain, and said he was only prevented from doing so by the unauthorized display of the white flag by some of his Texan soldiers. So much the better, it would seem, for the Texans! The Confederate loss in killed was 60, and in wounded from 75 to 80. McClernand reports his own loss 129 killed,

831 wounded, and 17 missing. A few days later, the fortifications at Arkansas Post, the command of which had been assigned to General Burbridge, were dismantled and blown up. The position was of no importance, and was therefore abandoned. Before the withdrawal from Arkansas, however, an expedition under General Gorman and Lieutenant Commanding Walker was sent up the White River, and Des Arc and Duval's Bluff were captured.

Grant, having attended to the reorganization of his forces into four army corps, proceeded to Memphis, and on the 18th of January he went down the river and met Sherman, McClernand, and Porter near the mouth of the White River, returning from their successful raid into Arkansas, and, accompanying them to Helena, he consulted them in regard to farther operations for the reduction of Vicksburg. Three days later, McClernand's force reached Young's Point, nine miles above Vicksburg, on the opposite bank of the river, facing the mouth of the Yazoo. For over two months—until the movement on New Carthage—Grant's army was engaged in several unsuccessful attempts at an approach to Vicksburg from above. Before entering upon a review of these experiments, let us for a moment turn our attention to the interesting exploits of some of our gun-boats during this interval.

On the 2d of February, Colonel Charles R. Ellet, with the *Queen of the West*, ran past the batteries, with orders to destroy the City of Vicksburg, a vessel which had, after Sherman's failure, been brought down by the enemy from the Yazoo to the front of Vicksburg. This movement had not escaped Porter's observation. It was also known to him that supplies were continually being obtained both at Vicksburg and Port Hudson by means of transports. To these transports, also, Colonel Ellet was expected to pay his regards. The *Queen of the West* was a wooden steamer, strengthened so as to carry an iron prow. Her armament consisted of an 80-pounder rifled Parrott gun on her main deck, one 20-pounder and three 12-pounder brass howitzers on her gun-deck. In order to protect her from the shot and shells of the batteries, she had had her steering apparatus removed and placed behind the bulwarks of her bows, and three hundred bales of cotton covered her machinery. The change in her steering apparatus proved a great inconvenience, and, after starting on her trip, it was found necessary to return it to its original position. This caused some delay, and she did not pass into full view of the batteries before sunrise, thus becoming a fair target for a hundred guns bearing upon her at once. Only three or four shots, however, struck her before she reached the City of Vicksburg, which was made fast to the river's bank at the centre of the bend. Colonel Ellet made for the steamer at once, and struck her, but the force of the blow was broken by wide guards, which overlapped the prow of the ram, and prevented the latter from reaching the hull of the *Vicksburg*. The current, which was very strong at this point, swung the *Queen* round side by side



THE QUEEN OF THE WEST AND THE VICKSBURG.

Vicksburg, says, "General Sherman's arrangement as commander of troops in the attack on Chickasaw Bluffs last December was admirable. Seeing the ground from the opposite side from the attack afterward, I saw the impossibility of making it successful."

The account of the expedition published just after its failure in the *Missouri Democrat* abounded in vituperative charges against General Sherman. It accused him of an ambition to anticipate Grant in order to gain for himself the entire glory of the capture of Vicksburg; it asserted, without any authority, that Sherman knew that McClernand was properly the commander of the expedition, and represents him as exulting in his shrewdness in "cutting that general out;" and it charges him, in effect, with the murder of 2000 soldiers for the satisfaction of his own ambition. It is, however, quite evident that the motive which led to this outburst of indignation was General Sherman's order in relation to newspaper correspondents.



LOSS OF THE QUEEN OF THE WEST.

with the enemy. At this moment Colonel Ellet fired his starboard bow gun, loaded with incendiary shells, into the Vicksburg, his own cotton bales being at the same time set on fire by shells from the batteries. It was impossible to attempt any thing farther at this point, and the Queen, without material injury, passed the lower batteries. Below Natchez she captured and burned three small steamers laden with provisions. During the night a flat-boat, with a cargo of coal, was cast loose from the fleet above, and floated down to the ram.

A week later (February 10) the Queen started upon another expedition down the river, accompanied by the De Soto as tender. The next evening she reached the mouth of Old River, into which Red River runs. On the 12th, leaving the De Soto to guard the mouth of Old River, the Queen entered the Atchafalaya, and made some captures of army wagons and provisions, and, on the way back to her anchorage of the previous night, was fired upon from the shore and her master mortally wounded. On the 12th the two steamers passed up into Red River, and, moving up to the mouth of the Black River, where they anchored for the night, they the next morning captured the Era, No. 5, a steamer of 100 tons, with fourteen Texan soldiers, \$28,000 in Confederate money, and 4500 bushels of corn destined for Little Rock. The pilot of the Era was taken on board the Queen, and, either by accident or design, he grounded the steamer directly under the guns of Fort Taylor, located at a bend in the river twenty miles above the spot where the Era was captured, and where she now lay under guard. The guns of the fort opened with frightful accuracy upon the unfortunate Queen, nearly every shell striking her, and one shot pierced her smoke-pipe, filling the boat with steam. It was impossible for the Queen to reply to the shots that were crashing through her machinery. There was the greatest confusion on board; cotton-bales were tumbled into the river, and men, jumping overboard, clung to them, hoping to float down to the De Soto, a mile below; negroes, frightened to death, were plunging into the water, where, with no means of preservation within their reach, they were drowned. The De Soto endeavored to come to the rescue, but the attempt proved too perilous, and she withdrew out of range. As she floated down she picked up several of the crew. Colonel Ellet escaped in this manner. By 11 o'clock P.M. the De Soto reached the Era, and, proving unmanageable, was blown up. Upon the Era, with the Confederate ram Webb sixty miles behind him and in swift pursuit, Colonel Ellet worried his way out of Red River and up the Mississippi, past Ellis's Cliffs, where he met the Indianola, one of the finest of the national gun-boats. Just as the Era came alongside of her unlooked-for deliverer the fog lifted, and revealed her pursuer, the Webb, not far in the rear. The tables were then turned, and the Webb was pursued by the two boats, but, being a swift vessel, she escaped.

The Era was now furnished with supplies, and sent back to Admiral Por-

ter. The Indianola¹ had set out from the mouth of the Yazoo on the night of February 13. She passed the batteries without steam, floating down with the current at the rate of about four miles an hour. Although her crew could hear the voices of the Confederate soldiers on the bank, yet she passed by unobserved until she drifted by a camp-fire on the levee, when she was discovered by a soldier, who discharged his musket at her. This was the signal for a general discharge of muskets and cannon. As the Indianola now put on steam to hasten her progress her position became known, and she was opened upon from every battery which she had now to pass; but she suffered no injury. She was commanded by Lieutenant Commander Brown. How she arrived in time to rescue the Era has been already shown.

The Queen of the West was being repaired by the enemy, and as it would be difficult to manœuvre so long a boat as the Indianola in the waters of the Red River, and no pilots could be obtained, Brown returned with his boat up the river. When he reached the mouth of the Big Black River, forty miles below Vicksburg, on the 24th, the Webb and the Queen of the West hove in sight behind him, accompanied by two cotton-clad steamers. Brown had expected another vessel to come down to assist him in meeting the emergency which now threatened, but he had been disappointed. It was now half past nine P.M., and the night was very dark. Clearing for action, Brown stood down the river to meet them. The Queen of the West led in the attack, striking through a coal-barge against the Indianola, but harmlessly; then came the Webb. "Both vessels came together, bows on," says Brown, "with a tremendous crash, which knocked nearly every one down on board both vessels, doing no damage to us, while the Webb's bow was cut in at least eight feet." Not minding the cotton-clads, which kept up an incessant fire with small-arms, Brown turned his attention to the rams, with whom he was now engaged at close quarters. From his forward guns

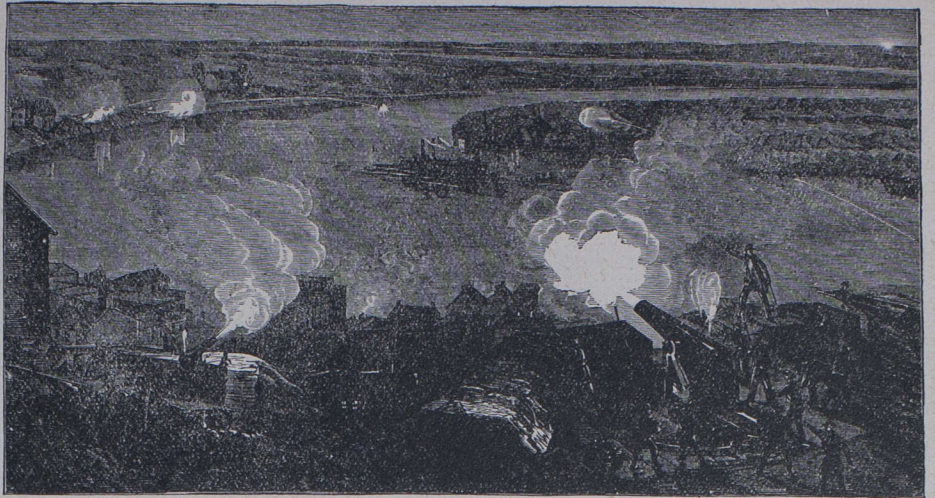
¹ "The Indianola was a new iron-clad gun-boat, one hundred and seventy-four feet long, fifty feet beam, ten feet from the top of her deck to the bottom of her keel, or eight feet four inches in the clear. Her sides (of wood) for five feet down were thirty-two inches thick, having beveled sticks laid outside the hull (proper), and all of oak. Outside of this was three-inch-thick plate iron. Her clamps and keelsons were as heavy as the largest ship's. Her deck was eight inches solid, with one-inch iron plate, all well bolted. Her casemate stood at an incline of twenty-six and a half degrees, and was covered with three-inch iron, as were also her ports. She had a heavy grating on top of the casemate that no shell could penetrate, and every scuttle and hatch was equally well covered. She was ironed all round, except some temporary rooms on deck, and, besides the amount of wood and iron already stated, had coal-bunkers seven feet thick alongside of her boilers, the entire machinery being in the hold. She had seven engines—two for working her side wheels, two for her propellers, two for her capstans, and one for supplying water and working the bilge and fire pumps. She had five large five-flued boilers, and made abundance of steam. Her forward casemate had two eleven-inch Dahlgren guns, and her after casemate two nine-inch. Her forward casemate was pierced for two guns in front, one on each side, and two aft, so that she could fire two guns forward, one on each side, and four at an angle sideways and astern. She had also hose for throwing scalding water from her boilers that would reach from stem to stern, and there was communication from the casemates to all parts of the vessel without the least exposure. The pilot-house was also thoroughly iron-clad, and instant communication could be had with the gunners and engineers, enabling the pilot to place the vessel in just such position as might be required for effective action."—Appleton's Annual Cyclopaedia, 1863, p. 44.

he fired at his antagonists as opportunity offered. He received a third blow, which crushed the starboard coal-barge. Two more blows were struck without seriously damaging the Indianola. The sixth blow from the Webb crushed the starboard wheel and disabled the starboard rudder, starting a number of leaks back of the shaft. The Webb now struck a fair blow in the stern, starting the timbers of the Indianola, which let in the water in large volumes. Finally, the gun-boat, with two feet and a half of water over her floor, was run ashore. Unable longer to hold out against four vessels, mounting ten guns, and manned by over a thousand men, Brown surrendered, after a fight of an hour and a half. All his guns had been either thrown overboard or rendered useless.

The enemy intended immediately to repair the Indianola, which was an important accession to his fleet. Her destruction afterward was probably the most ludicrous incident of the war. It happened in this way. Porter observed the Queen of the West on the morning of February 25th at Warrenton, seven miles below Vicksburg. He had not heard of the capture of the Indianola, and the appearance of this boat excited alarm. He had no expectation that the Queen would so soon be repaired, and began to fear (too late) for the safety of the Indianola. In a letter written by him on the 26th, he expresses his anxiety on her account. It appears that he stood in becoming awe of the Queen (whose loss he considered more to be deplored than the disaster at Galveston), but had little fear of the Webb, which really gave the death-blow to the Indianola. The latter vessel (the Indianola) Porter characterizes as weak, the only good thing about her being her battery. But a trivial instrument of war at this crisis was destined to effect more than the Queen of the West or the Indianola had been able to accomplish. Admiral Porter had observed that while the Queen and the Indianola were running past the batteries, five of the enemy's guns were burst and dismantled. He therefore tried to provoke the fire of the batteries by placing a mortar so that its fire bore upon that portion of the town where there was nothing but army supplies. For a time the mortar accomplished its object, when the enemy gave up firing.

"Finding," says the admiral, "that they could not be provoked to fire without an object, I thought of getting up an imitation monitor. Ericsson saved the country with an iron one, why could I not save it with a wooden one? An old coal-barge, picked up in the river, was the foundation to build on. It was built of old boards in twelve hours, with pork-barrels on top of each other for smoke-stacks, and two old canoes for quarter-boats; her furnaces were built of mud, and only intended to make black smoke and not steam."

Porter considered his "dummy" a very much better-looking affair, after all, than the Indianola. Well, he let slip this formidable dog of war one night (that of the 24th), hardly expecting of it such good service as it really accomplished before the enemy discovered how he had been fooled. When the dark monster, without a soul on board, was disclosed by the first dim



THE INDIANOLA RUNNING THE VICKSBURG BATTERIES.

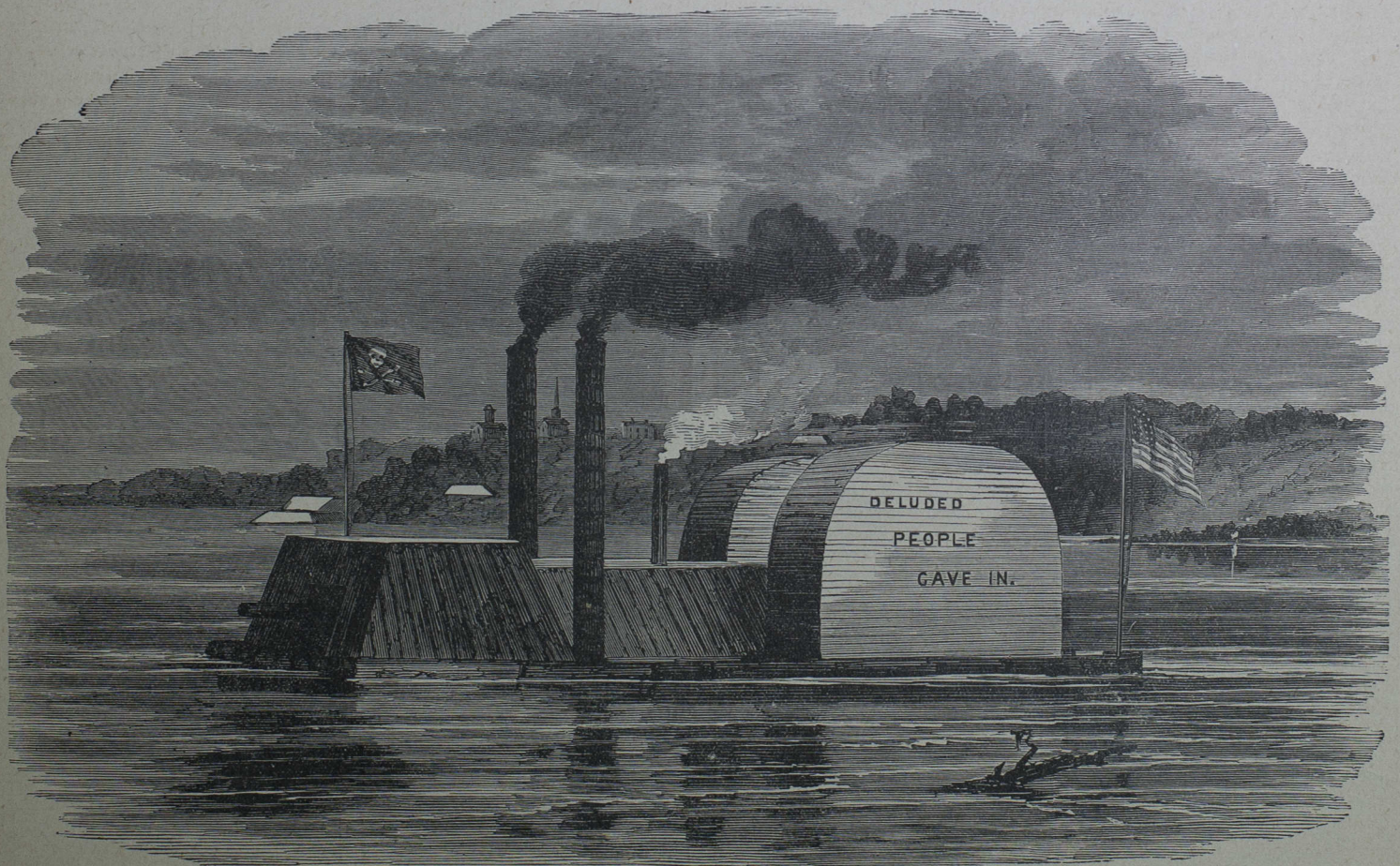
morning light, the Confederates appear to have had no hesitation about firing. "Never," says Porter, "did the batteries of Vicksburg open with such a din; the earth fairly trembled, and the shot flew thick around the devoted monitor." Of course the "dummy" could not be sunk, for the shots went in one side and out at the other. The soldiers of Grant's army lined the banks, and "shouted and laughed like mad" to see the fun. In the very midst of this frolic the Queen of the West appeared off Warrenton, and a damper was thrown upon the jollity of the spectacle on which all eyes had been fixed, by apprehensions as to the fate of the Indianola.

In the panic occasioned by the appearance of the "dummy," the enemy had given warning to the Queen of the West, who, supposing that she was pursued by a monster gun-boat, and trembling for her life, turned and fled down the river. The sham monitor, though it deigned no reply to the Confederate guns, did pursue the Queen as rapidly as a five-knot current would allow. Dispatches had been already sent from Vicksburg ordering the Indianola to be blown up without delay, that she might be saved from the clutches of her novel antagonist. The Queen of the West took refuge in the Red River, but, having no support, was not long afterward blown up to avoid capture. The order to blow up the Indianola was obeyed, and the gun-boat was annihilated. This exploit of the "dummy,"¹ strange as it may

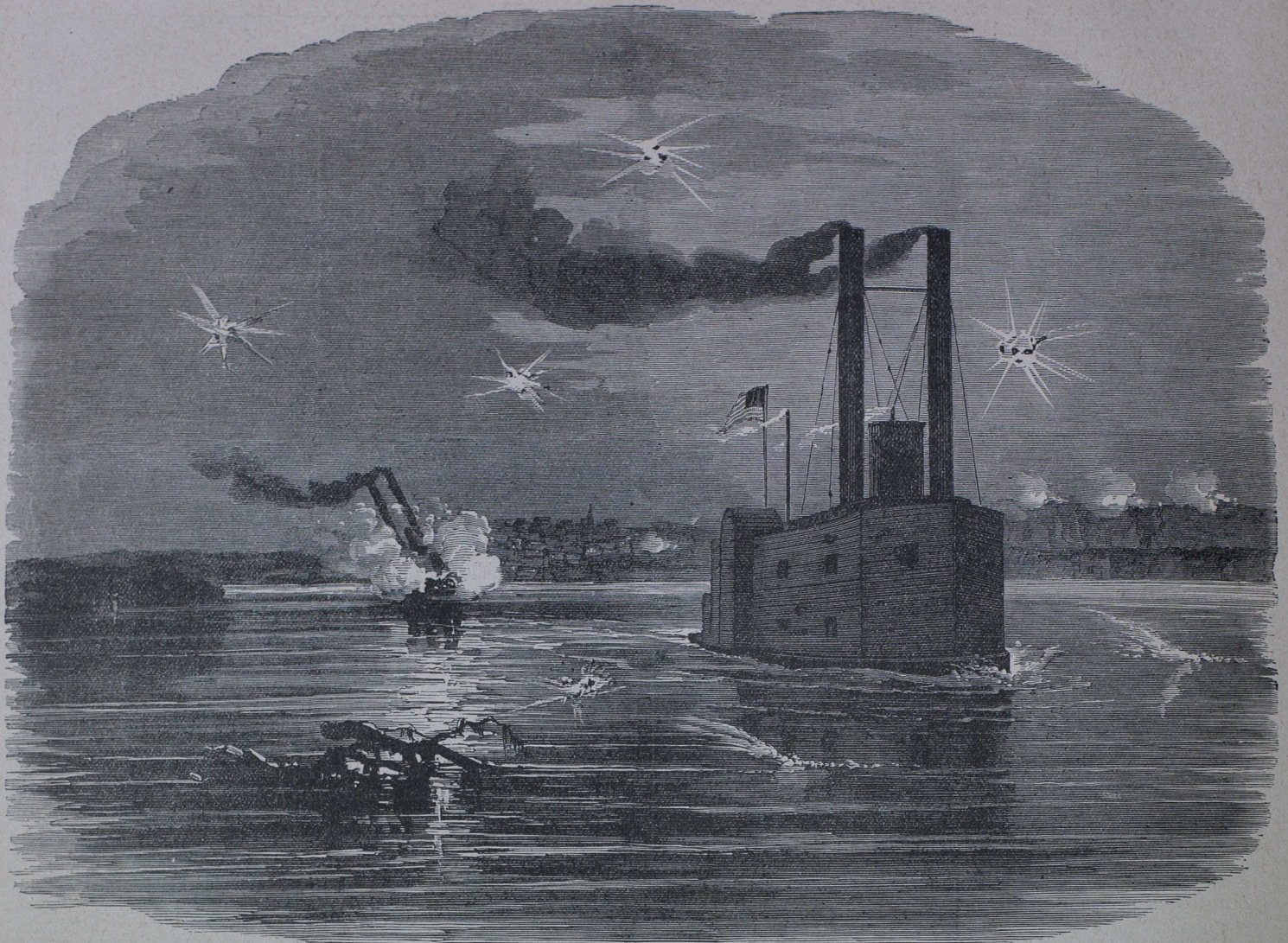
¹ In regard to the effects produced by Porter's "dummy," the *Richmond Examiner* of March 7, 1863, says:

"The telegraph brings us tidings of something which is tremblingly described as a 'turreted monster.' Gun-boats are deemed not more dangerous than dug-outs, but when the case is altered to an interview with a 'turreted monster,' then the brave defenders of the Father of Waters can do nothing better than make two-forty toward the mountains.

"The reported fate of the Indianola is even more disgraceful than farcical. Here was perhaps the finest iron-clad in the Western waters, captured after a heroic struggle, rapidly repaired, and destined to join the Queen of the West in a series of victories. Next we hear that she was of necessity blown up, in the true Merrimac-Mallory style, and why? Laugh and hold your sides, lest



ADMIRAL PORTER'S "DUMMY."



THE LANCASTER AND SWITZERLAND RUNNING THE VICKSBURG BATTERIES.

seem, broke up that naval supremacy of the river below Vicksburg which had been almost secured by the enemy. If a few more regular gun-boats had run the blockade with the same results as the Queen of the West and Indianola, the Confederates would have soon had a powerful and almost irresistible fleet. It was certainly ingenious in Admiral Porter to send the "dummy" down instead.

Precisely a week after the victory of the "dummy" the rams Lancaster and Switzerland attempted to pass the batteries, being wanted by Admiral Farragut in the Red River. By some delay, it was daylight when they came under fire. The Lancaster was sunk, and the Switzerland, though she succeeded in passing, was badly cut up. Colonel Charles Rivers Ellet¹ com-

manded the latter vessel; the Switzerland was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John A. Ellet, brother of Alfred Ellet.

manded the latter vessel; the Switzerland was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John A. Ellet, brother of Alfred Ellet.

The aspect of military affairs at the close of 1862 was for the nation a discouraging one. The repulse at Fredericksburg in the East had its Western counterpart in Sherman's defeat on the Yazoo. Indeed, the whole year just closed had presented no grand results in favor of the national arms except the capture of New Orleans.

The Yazoo expedition had been an experiment, and a somewhat costly one; and, following upon its failure, for several weeks, so far as Vicksburg was concerned, every operation of Grant's army was an experiment, and proved a failure. The state of the river did not allow of those brilliant operations which in the end were successful. But Grant had a large army, consisting of McClelland's command, and of his own troops brought down from Memphis. It would almost seem that it was to keep this immense force out of idleness that he embarked upon the series of adventures which preceded the advance to New Carthage in April.

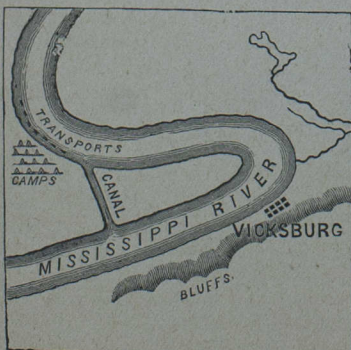
you die of a surfeit of derision, oh Yankeeedom! Blown up because, forsooth, a flat-boat or mud-scow, with a small house taken from the back garden of a plantation put on top of it, is floated down the river before the frightened eyes of the Partisan Rangers. A turreted monster!

"A most unfortunate and unnecessary affair," says the dispatch. Rather so! "The turreted monster proved to be a flat-boat, with sundry fixtures to create deception!" Think of that! "She passed Vicksburg on Tuesday night, and the officers (what officers?), believing her to be a turreted monster, blew up the Indianola, but her guns fell into the enemy's hands." That is passing odd. Her guns fell into 'the enemy's hands after she was blown up!' Incredible! Mallory and Tatnall did better than that with the Merrimac.

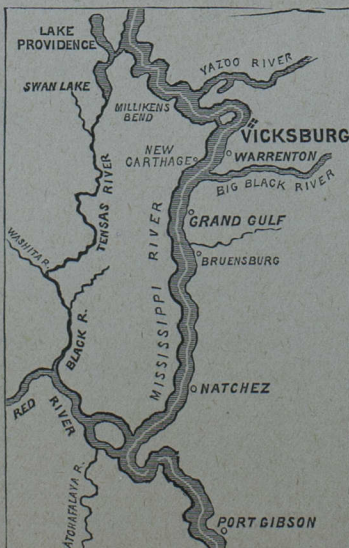
"The Queen of the West," continues the facetious dispatch, 'left in such a hurry as to forget part of her crew, who were left on shore.' Well done for the Queen of the West and her brave officers! "Taken altogether," concludes the inimitable dispatch, "it was a good joke on the Partisan Rangers, who are notoriously more cunning than brave." Truly an excellent joke—so excellent that every man connected with this affair (if any resemblance of the truth is contained in the dispatch) should be branded with the capital letters 'T. M.', and enrolled in a detached company, to be known by the name of 'The Turreted Monster' henceforth and forever."

¹ A few weeks afterward, at the close of the summer, Colonel Charles Rivers Ellet applied for leave of absence on account of illness, and in Au-

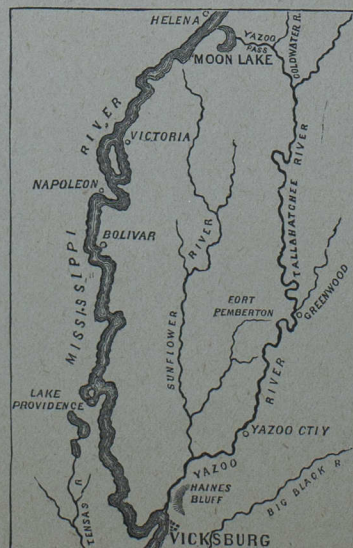
gust retired to the home of his uncle, Dr. Ellet, at Bunker Hill, Illinois. He had been troubled with a severe attack of neuralgia in the face, for which he was in the habit of taking some opiate. On the night of October 16th he died, either from an overdose of morphine or from prostration. He was little more than twenty years old, was a man of great literary culture and refinement, and had shouldered responsibilities such as few of much riper years were called upon to bear.



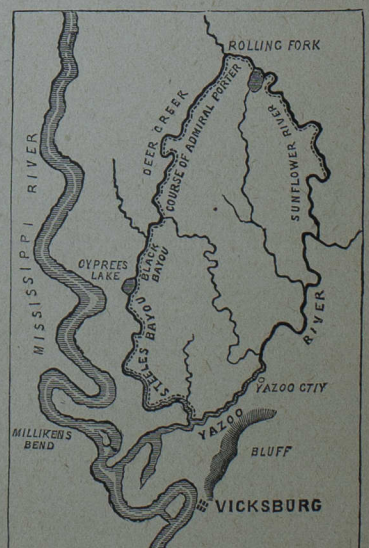
POSITION OF WILLIAMS'S CANAL.



THE LAKE PROVIDENCE ROUTE.



THE YAZOO PASS ROUTE.



THE STEELE'S BAYOU ROUTE.



NEGROES AT WORK ON THE CANAL.

First among these was General Williams's Canal, to which allusion has already been made. Grant came down to Young's Point in person on the 2d of February, and under his superintendence the work on the canal was reopened and vigorously prosecuted. To secure the encampment from inundation, a levee was constructed on the eastern side. The river was rising rapidly, and it proved difficult to keep the gathering flood out of the canal and the camps. While the work was still going on, on the 8th of March the levee gave way suddenly just west of the canal, and the waters with great violence rushed in, carrying away the dikes which had been built and the implements of the workmen, and, entering the camps, drove the soldiers to the refuge of the levee. The entire peninsula south of the railroad was flooded.

Failing to find a route for his transports to a point below Vicksburg by means of the canal, Grant directed his attention more prominently toward another mode of effecting this object, by a route which his engineers had pronounced practicable. By cutting a channel into Lake Providence from the Mississippi, it was thought possible that transports might be conveyed through that lake, then through the Tensas, Black, and Red Rivers into the Mississippi below Natchez. Work had been begun on the channel shortly

after the work on the canal had been reopened. This Lake Providence route would have brought the army down to a point far below Vicksburg, but it would have enabled Grant to co-operate with Banks at Port Hudson. The channel, about a mile in length, was completed March 16th. Before, however, any thing had been fairly done in making this plan available, the promise of success by means of a similar route on the east side of the river created a diversion. The flood, to which a path was opened by the Lake Providence Canal, inundated a large district of country in Louisiana, some portion of which was a fine cotton-growing region.

The plan of operations on the east of the Mississippi, by the Yazoo Pass route, had at first for its object only the destruction of the enemy's transports on the Yazoo, and the gun-boats which were being built on that stream. Eight miles below Helena (but on the opposite bank) a canal was cut into Moon Lake, from which, by Yazoo Pass and the Coldwater and Tallahatchie Rivers, there was a passage into the Yazoo. The navigation by this route proving better than was expected, Grant entertained a hope of gaining in this way a foothold on the high land above Haines's Bluff. Major General J. B. McPherson, commanding the Seventeenth Corps, was directed to hold his men in readiness to move by this route, and he was re-enforced by one



BREAK IN THE MISSISSIPPI LEVEE, NEAR THE CANAL.

division from McClernand's and another from Sherman's corps. "But," says General Grant, "while my forces were opening one end of the pass, the enemy was diligently closing the other end, and in this way succeeded in gaining time to strongly fortify Greenwood, below the junction of the Tallahatchie and Yalabusha." The passage into the Coldwater River was an affair of great difficulty. The flood which had been occasioned by the cutting of the canal, the swift current of the stream, and the gigantic branches of the cypress and sycamore overhanging the boats and obstructing their passage,

rendered the progress of the expedition very slow, the rate of speed being about one mile in four hours. The boats were greatly damaged, but the expedition succeeded in reaching the junction at Greenwood, where Fort Pemberton opposed such a resistance that it was compelled finally to withdraw. An unsuccessful attempt was made by the gun-boats to reduce the fort, which they bombarded for two days. The land about the fort was loose, and at this time flooded with water, a circumstance which debarred the army from co-operation in the attack. The Confederate force was estimated at over



IN THE SWAMPS.



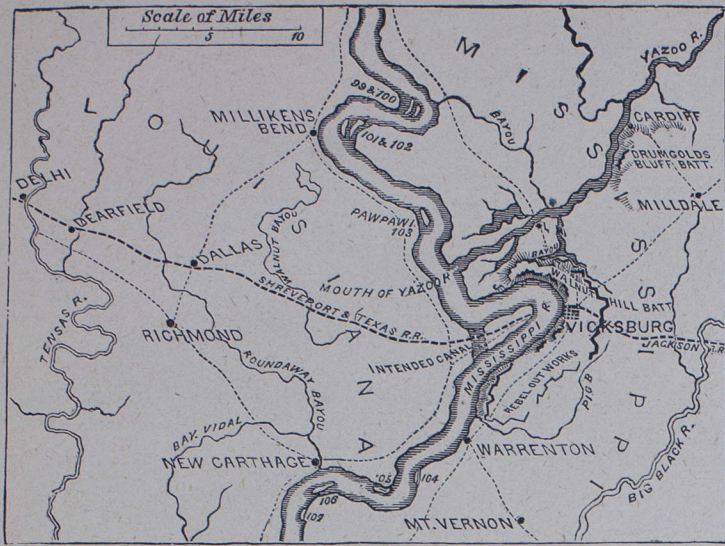
BAYOU NAVIGATION.



ALONG THE BAYOUS.



MCCLERNAND'S CORPS MARCHING THROUGH THE BOGS.



FROM MILLIKEN'S BEND TO NEW CARTHAGE.

5000 men, under the command of General Tilghman, who a year before had been captured at Fort Henry, in Kentucky.

Another plan was then attempted by which Fort Greenwood might be avoided and left in the rear. This was to be effected by a passage up the Yazoo River to Cypress Bayou (opposite the position occupied by Sherman in the attack on Chickasaw Bluffs the previous December), thence into Steele's Bayou, and through Little Black Fork into the Big Sunflower River, and turning at Rolling Fork southward into Deer Creek, which empties into the Yazoo above Haines's Bluff. The expedition, commanded by Admiral Porter, consisted of the gun-boats Pittsburg, Louisville, Mound City, Cincinnati, and Carondelet, with a number of small transports. Porter found a co-operating military force essential, and a column was sent under Sherman. "The expedition failed," says Grant, "probably more from want of knowledge as to what would be required to open this route than from any impracticability in the navigation of the streams and bayous through which it was proposed to pass. Want of this knowledge led the expedition on until difficulties were encountered, and then it would become necessary to send back to Young's Point for the means of removing them. This gave the enemy time to move forces to effectually checkmate farther progress, and the expedition was withdrawn when within a few hundred yards of free and open navigation to the Yazoo."

Grant then reverted to his original plan of moving his transports to the south of Vicksburg. His engineers had prospected a route through the bayous which ran from near Milliken's Bend on the north and New Carthage on the south, through Roundabout Bayou into Tensas River. The route was opened, and one small steamer and a number of barges were taken through the channel. But about the middle of April, the river beginning to fall rapidly, the roads became passable between Milliken's Bend and New Carthage, and communication by water was out of the question.

In the course of the Deer Creek raid a Federal soldier is reported to have been captured and taken before a Confederate officer, when the following colloquy took place: "What in the devil is Grant in here for? what does he expect to do?" "To take Vicksburg," was the reply. "Well, hasn't the old fool tried this ditching and flanking five times already?" "Yes," replied the soldier, "but he has got thirty-seven more plans in his pocket." It is quite impossible to conceive what these other thirty-seven plans could have been, for certainly, with the exception of that which was next put in operation, and which resulted in the capture of Vicksburg, it seems that every possible mode of approaching, turning, or avoiding the city had been tried.

Grant's idea, from his first arrival at Young's Point, was to get his army across the river at a point below Vicksburg, having effected which, he proposed to attack the city from the rear. He was now able to set about this work in earnest. It was with this view that he had sought to open a water communication between Milliken's Bend and New Carthage. At the same time, he had determined to occupy the latter place with his troops. New Carthage was the first point below Vicksburg that could be reached by land at the stage of water then existing. On the 29th of March, McClernand, with his corps, was ordered to advance and occupy this position, to be followed by Sherman's and McPherson's corps as soon as supplies and ammunition for them could be transported. The roads, though level, were intolerably bad, and as McClernand's advance reached Smith's Plantation, two miles from New Carthage, it was found that the levee of Bayou Vidal was broken in several places, and New Carthage had been insulated. The troops were therefore compelled to take a more circuitous route by marching twelve miles around the bayou to Perkins's Plantation. Supplies of provisions, ammunition, and ordnance for the troops had to be hauled

over bad roads for a distance of thirty-five miles from Milliken's Bend. McClernand's advance was therefore one of extreme difficulty.

As the water fell it was found necessary to get the transports which were to convey the army across the Mississippi down the river by running the Vicksburg batteries. The gun-boats selected to convoy the transports were the Benton, Lafayette, Price, Louisville, Carondelet, Pittsburg, Tuscumbia, and Mound City—all iron-clad except the Price. Three transports were selected—the Forest Queen, Henry Clay, and Silver Wave—their machinery being protected by cotton bales. They were laden with supplies. On the night of April 16th the expedition set out. The iron-clads were to pass down in single file, and when abreast of the batteries were to engage the latter, covering the transports with the smoke of their cannonade. Fire was not opened upon the fleet until it was squarely in front of Vicksburg, and then the gun-boats responded, pouring their full broadside of twenty-five guns into the city. Into the cloud of smoke which now rolled heavily above the gun-boats the three transports entered. The Forest Queen, in the advance, received a shot in the hull and another through the steam-drum, which disabled her instantly. The Henry Clay, next in order, was stopped to prevent her running into the crippled vessel, and at the same moment received a shell which set fire to her cotton. Her demoralized crew launched the yawl and made for the shore, while the transport, in a blaze of flame, floated down the river, finally disappearing below Warrenton. The Forest Queen was towed down by a gun-boat, and the Silver Wave escaped uninjured.

Succeeding in getting these two transports down, Grant ordered six more to be sent in the same manner. Five of these, on the 22d, succeeded in passing the batteries with slight damage; the other was sunk just after passing the last battery.

Admiral Porter repaired the damaged transports, five of which were brought into running order, while the other two were in a fit condition to serve as barges. The limited number of transports in his possession led Grant to extend his line of movement to Hard Times, in Louisiana, seventy-five miles from Milliken's Bend. Here, before the end of April, the Thirteenth Corps (McClernand's) was in readiness for the campaign about to be undertaken across the river.

It was at this crisis that Colonel Grierson's raid was undertaken, under directions from General Grant. The entire Confederate force in the states bordering on the Mississippi was now being gathered together to meet the blows which Grant was preparing to strike. Thus the way was open for one of those bold cavalry incursions for which hitherto only the Confederates had distinguished themselves, but which, from this time, became a prominent feature in the national conduct of the war. Morgan, Forrest, and Van Dorn had set the example, which was to be followed now by Colonel Grierson in a bold movement from La Grange, in Tennessee, through the State of Mississippi to Baton Rouge, in Louisiana.

At the outbreak of the war, Colonel Grierson, a native of Illinois, entered the army as an aid to General Prentiss. Subsequently colonel of the Sixth Illinois, he soon rose to the command of a brigade in Grant's army. The force placed at his disposal for his celebrated raid consisted of a brigade 1700 strong, composed of the Sixth and Seventh Illinois and Second Iowa Cavalry.

La Grange, the starting-point of the expedition, is an inland town, about fifty miles east from Memphis, on the southern border of Tennessee. Grierson's command set out from this place on the morning of April 17th, the Sixth Illinois in the advance. At night the head of the column encamped within four miles of Ripley, the first town reached after crossing the Mississippi border. The route of the expedition through Mississippi, as will be seen from the following map, passed entirely around Pemberton's army, between the Ohio and Mobile and the New Orleans and Jackson Railroads, crossing the railroad leading east from Vicksburg a little south of Decatur, and the New Orleans Railroad just in the rear of Natchez. After three days of adventurous riding, and meeting only inconsiderable detachments of the enemy, which were easily scattered, the command on the night of the 19th reached Mr. Wetherall's plantation, eight miles south of Pontotoc, and



GRANT'S TRANSPORTS RUNNING THE BATTERIES.

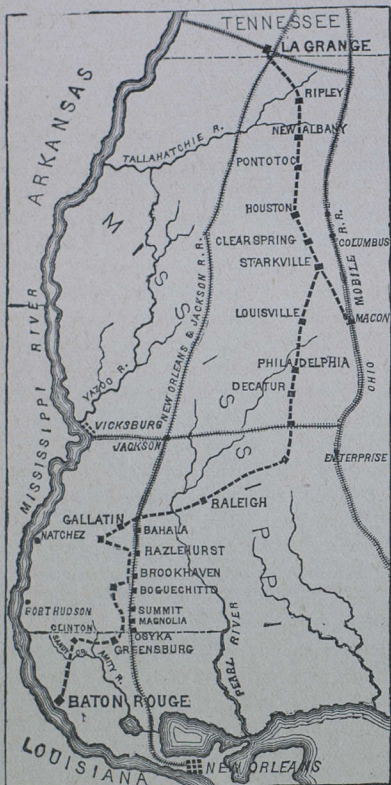
¹ Iowa Colonels and Regiments, p. 223.



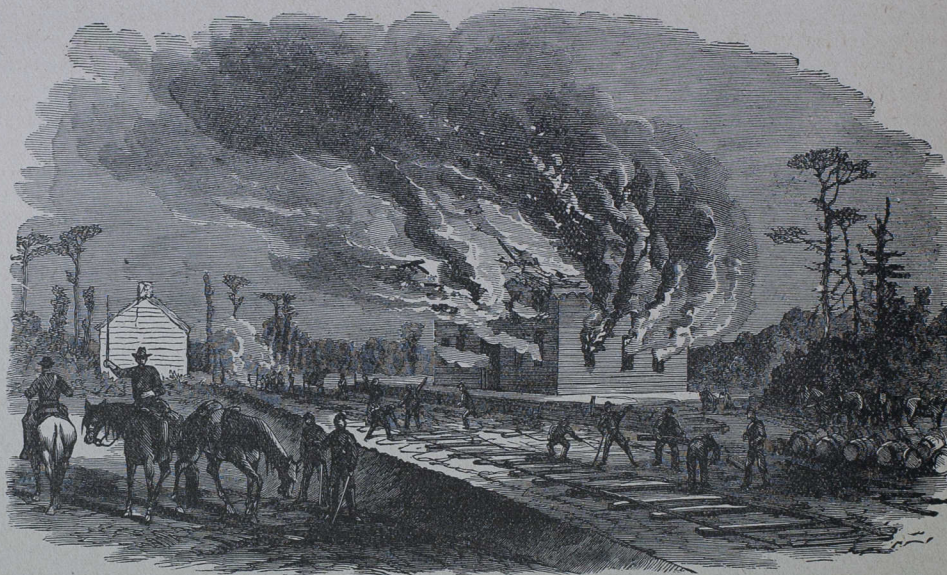
BENJAMIN H. GRIERSON



SAVING THE BRIDGE ACROSS PEARL RIVER.



ROUTE OF GRIERSON'S RAID.



DESTROYING RAILROADS.

sixty miles from its first night's encampment. Forty miles were made the next day; and on the 21st, Colonel Hatch, with the Iowa regiment, in an excursion, the object of which was the destruction of the Mobile Railroad at Columbus, was confronted by a superior force of the enemy. In the fight which ensued Colonel Hatch was seriously wounded, and his command dispersed. On the 27th the expedition reached Pearl River, where it was joined by a detachment of thirty-five men who about a week before had been sent from the main column to cut the telegraph running northward from Macon. This little party had succeeded in marching to Macon and safely returning to the main column, under the leadership of Captain Forbes. It had been in great peril, for the whole state was now alarmed. Unable to capture Macon, it was misled by false information to Enterprise, where, but for the boldness of Captain Forbes, it would have fallen into the hands of three thousand Confederate soldiers. The captain, understanding his danger, tried to bluff the enemy, and succeeded. He rode boldly up to the town with a flag of truce, and demanded the instant surrender of the place to Colonel Grierson. Colonel Goodwin, commanding the Confederate force, asked an hour to consider the proposition, to which request Forbes was only too willing to accede. That hour, with rapid riding, delivered his little company from its embarrassing situation.

In the mean time, the main column, which, after Hatch's defeat, only numbered 1000 men, had been rescued from imminent peril by a deliverance still more remarkable, because it was providential rather than strategic. During the 22d and the following night, the expedition made the most difficult march of the raid. Waiting in the morning for the return of a battalion which had been detailed to destroy a large shoe factory near Starkville, it had been delayed, and toward night found itself entangled in the swamps of the Okanoxubee River, a few miles south of Louisville. The water in many



GRIERSON'S COMMAND ENTERING BATON ROUGE.

places on the roads was four or five feet deep, and the tired horses, after a march already accomplished of over fifty miles, and now confronted by a waste of water, without the light of day to guide their path, were many of them drowned. Fortunately not a man was lost, and the next morning (that of the 23d) the entire column hurrying forward to reach the bridge across Pearl River. Confederate scouts had gone before them, and if the bridge should be destroyed there was no hope of escape. It was not till late in the afternoon that Colonel Prime, with the Seventh Illinois, neared the bridge. Upon a closer approach it was discovered that the enemy's scouts were already engaged in the destruction of the bridge, stripping up the planks and hurling them into the river. The scouts were driven from the bridge, which in a few minutes more would have been rendered useless. This was near Decatur, where, on the next day, Grierson destroyed two warehouses full of commissary stores, several carloads of ammunition, and burned the railroad bridges and trestle-work, besides capturing two trains of cars