



GEORGE G. MEADE.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE INVASION OF PENNSYLVANIA.—GETTYSBURG.

Hooker's Plans.—The President's Views.—Pleasanton's Cavalry Reconnoissance.—Lee's Plans.—Reasons for invading the North.—Elections at the North.—State of public Feeling.—Opinion of the British Minister.—Strength of the Confederate Army.—Route of Milroy.—The Advance into Pennsylvania.—Cavalry Encounters.—Hooker's Policy.—Halleck and Hooker.—Hooker resigns.—Meade appointed to the Command.—His Antecedents.—Lee's Movements.—The President calls for Militia.—The Armies concentrate toward Gettysburg.—Meade selects a Position on Pipe Creek.—Pleasanton marks Gettysburg as the Battle-field.—*Battle of July 1*: Topography of Gettysburg.—Reynolds and Hill approach.—Reynolds killed.—Howard takes Command.—Meade sends Hancock to the Field.—The Federals driven back.—Hancock decides to accept Battle.—The Position chosen.—Lee's Dilemma.—*Battle of July 2*: Meade's Line of Battle.—Sickles goes too far in advance.—Hood's Attack upon Round Top.—The Attack repulsed by Vincent.—Sickles and Hood wounded.—Birney attacked and driven back.—Crawford checks the Confederate Attack.—Humphreys assailed and falls back.—The Union Line re-formed.—The Confederates fall back.—Confederate Advantage on the Right.—The Situation at Night.—*Battle of July 3*: Lee's Plan of Attack.—Ewell forced back on the Right.—The Cannonade on the Centre.—Pickett and Pettigrew advance.—Lieutenant Haskell.—The Confederate Rout.—Cavalry Attack.—Close of the Fight.—Order for Pursuit given and countermanded.—The third of July at Gettysburg and Vicksburg.—Meade holds a Council of War.—Lee retreats to the Potomac.—Meade slowly advances.—Lee recrosses the Potomac.—Losses at Gettysburg.—Criticism on the Battle.

FROM Chancellorsville and the Wilderness both armies returned to their old positions on opposite banks of the Rappahannock.¹ Hooker meditated repeating, with some modifications, the attempt in which Burnside had failed.² He proposed to pass the river at Franklin's Crossing, and assail the enemy's intrenchments in front; for he could not anticipate that with their inferior force they would come out of their strong works, and meet him on

¹ For this campaign and the ensuing ones in Virginia, the full reports of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia are wanting. If they were ever made, I have not been able to gain access to them. I presume that they were among the lost archives of the Confederacy. General Lee, a few days after the battles of Gettysburg, made a Preliminary Report, which will be found in the *Rebellion Record*, vol. vii. Some months later he made a somewhat more detailed report. This, I believe, has never been printed. For a MS. copy of it I am indebted to Mr. William Swinton. It, however, adds little to the information contained in the earlier Report. I find no reports from corps, division, and brigade commanders. The testimony given before the Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War is the best authority upon the Union side. This (cited as *Com. Rep.*, ii.) will be found in the first volume of the second series of this Report. Not a few of the newspaper accounts of this battle, Northern and Southern, are very accurate. From these sources the following account has been mainly drawn.

² "As soon as I heard that General Sedgwick had recrossed the river, seeing no object in maintaining my position where it was, and believing that it would be much more to my advantage to hazard an engagement with the enemy at Franklin's Crossing, where I had elbow-room, than where I was, the army on the right was directed to recross the river."—Hooker, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 134.

the open plain. This was an enterprise which he had before pronounced to be wholly impracticable. It is vain to inquire what had happened within the week to make the project more feasible. His army had been much reduced by the departure of the nine-months' and two-years' men. On the 13th of May he informed the President that his "marching force of infantry was cut down to 80,000 men;" he added, "I hope to commence my movement to-morrow; but this must not be spoken of to any one." Lincoln replied that he did not think any thing was to be gained by an early renewal of the attempt to cross the Rappahannock; still, if Hooker believed that he could renew the attack successfully, he would not restrain him.¹ Whatever the proposed movement was, it was not attempted.

The result at Chancellorsville had inspired the Confederates with the most unbounded confidence. There was a universal clamor that the invincible army of Virginia should assume the offensive, carry the war beyond the bounds of the Confederacy, and conquer a peace upon Federal soil. To do this, it was necessary that the entire force, except what was engaged upon the Mississippi, should be concentrated in Northern Virginia. Before the close of May it became evident to Hooker that some great operation was in contemplation. Longstreet's three divisions, which had been engaged south of Richmond, were brought up one by one toward the Rappahannock. During the month of April he had been besieging Peck at Suffolk. But on the 2d of May, the ominous tidings that Hooker had advanced upon Lee caused Longstreet to abandon the siege, and put his force upon the march northward. The issue at Chancellorsville caused the movement to be suspended, and the force moved slowly by separate divisions. During the first week of June the whole army was concentrated near Culpepper, with the exception of A. P. Hill's division, which was left at Fredericksburg to mask the contemplated movement. Hooker, discovering that something was in progress, sent over on the 5th of June a part of Sedgwick's corps for the purpose of observation. Hill made such a display of his troops as to convince Hooker that the force in his front was not seriously diminished. Prisoners reported that the movements were merely a change of camps. Hooker indeed suspected that the van of the Confederate column would be heading toward the Potomac, while its rear was still left at Fredericksburg. He asked permission in that case to cross the river and fall upon their rear: this was refused, Halleck deeming that it would be perilous to permit the main force of Lee to move upon the Potomac, while the Union army was attacking a part of it in an intrenched position. The President concurred in this view, couching his opinion in his own quaint language.² But if it was Hooker's purpose to cross at Banks's Ford or the United States Ford, instead of marching right upon the front of the Confederate intrenchments, one can hardly see how he could have failed to inflict serious damage upon their rear, which would be thus severed from the main body at Culpepper, sixty miles away. Hooker in the mean time had learned that the Confederate cavalry at least was concentrated at Culpepper, and, in order to break up their camps, sent Pleasanton with two brigades of cavalry and 3000 infantry in that direction. This force ascended the north bank of the Rappahannock on the 9th of June, and marched in two columns toward Culpepper. The columns soon found themselves in presence of the enemy in large force, both of cavalry and infantry. A succession of sharp skirmishes ensued, lasting from early morning until late in the afternoon. The loss was about equal, four or five hundred on each side; but Pleasanton, finding himself confronted by superior numbers of both arms, retreated. Lee claims to have taken 400 prisoners; Pleasanton claims to have taken 200. This movement, and subsequent reconnaissances, which showed that the enemy were moving into and down the Valley of the Shenandoah, clearly indicated that they were bent either upon interposing between Hooker's army and Washington, or crossing the Potomac and invading the North.

Lee's design was first to detach Hooker from his strong position at Fredericksburg, then to free the Valley of the Shenandoah from the Union force which had occupied it during the winter and spring, "and, if practicable, to transfer the scene of hostilities north of the Potomac." He also hoped that there would be an "opportunity to strike a blow at the army commanded by Hooker;" or, in any case, that "this army would be compelled to leave Virginia, and perhaps would draw with it troops from other quarters; and so their plans of the campaign would be disarranged, and a part of the season for active operations would be consumed in forming new combinations."³

Apart from these purely military reasons, there were grave political motives for an invasion of the North. A numerous party, and one active even beyond its numerical strength, had bitterly opposed the war. The Emancipation Proclamation had concentrated and intensified this opposition. During the hundred days which intervened between the announcement of Lincoln's purpose to put forth this proclamation and its actual issue, elections had been held in ten of the states of the Union. In these states Mr. Lincoln had, in 1860, a majority of more than 200,000; now the opposition majority was 35,000. In 1860 these states had sent 78 Republican and 37 Democratic representatives to Congress; now they elected 51 Administration and 67 Opposition members. This change was specially notable in the large states. New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, which had sent 65 Republicans and 34 Democrats, now returned 40 Administration and 59 Opposition members. In Ohio Clement C. Vallandigham had been arrested on account of a speech in bitter denunciation of the war; had been tried by a

court-martial, and sentenced to imprisonment in a fortress until the close of the war. This sentence was commuted by the President to banishment into the Confederacy. A great Democratic meeting was held at Albany, in which the leaders of the party in the State of New York inveighed bitterly against this proceeding; and at home Vallandigham was nominated by acclamation as the Democratic candidate for Governor of Ohio. At the time no one doubted that he would be elected. No one could dream that a state which had just sent to Congress 14 Opposition and but 5 Administration representatives would in a few months give a majority of a hundred thousand for the administration; nor could any one presume that a very large portion of the members of Congress elected as opposition would range themselves on the side of the administration in upholding the war. The draft, moreover, which was soon to go into effect, was vehemently denounced, declared to be unconstitutional, and threats were openly made that its enforcement would be violently resisted. There was fair occasion for the South to be persuaded that any great success gained over the Union army would elicit such a feeling throughout the North that the government would be compelled to desist from the prosecution of the war. "It was hoped," says Lee, "that, in addition to military advantages, other results might be attained by the success of our army." Nor was this opinion that the people of the North were becoming weary of the war confined to those whose interests and feelings were so strongly enlisted. The British minister at Washington had six months before shared in this opinion, and so informed his government.¹ Since then an almost uninterrupted series of successes had been gained by the Confederates. They had defeated Burnside at Fredericksburg, and foiled Hooker at Chancellorsville; Vicksburg and Charleston still held out against all the Federal assaults; none of the operations on the Lower Mississippi and the Gulf had succeeded; the capture of Galveston had given all Texas into the hands of the Confederates; the Alabama and the Florida had swept American commerce from the high seas. Saving the few miles occupied by the main armies, the Union forces actually held no part of the Confederate territory of which they had taken possession. During the first six months of the year 1863 it seemed as though the tide of success had fully set in favor of the Confederacy, and it appeared that nothing but a successful invasion of the North was wanting to secure its final triumph, recognized by all the great powers of Europe.

The invasion once determined upon, the entire disposable strength of the Confederacy was placed at the disposal of Lee. Southern Virginia and North Carolina were almost stripped of troops, to augment the Army of Northern Virginia. By the middle of June, when the movement toward the North was fairly commenced, Lee found himself in command of a force of fully 100,000 men of all arms.² This was divided into three corps, commanded by Longstreet, A. P. Hill, and Ewell, the cavalry being under Stuart. The advance of this great army was made with a deliberation in strong contrast with the hurried invasion of Maryland the year before.

Hooker, having learned of the advancing movement on the 12th of June, withdrew his army from opposite Fredericksburg, and moved northward so

¹ "The success of the Democratic—or, as it now styles itself, the Conservative party—has been so great as to manifest a change in public feeling among the most rapid and the most complete that has ever been witnessed even in this country. . . . The Conservative leaders seemed to be persuaded that the result of the elections would be accepted by the President as the will of the people; that he would seek to terminate the war, not to push it to extremity; that he would endeavor to effect a reconciliation with the South, and renounce the idea of subjecting or exterminating them." (*Dispatch of Lord Lyons*, November 17, 1862.)—The minister indeed goes on to say that at that moment "the Conservative party were calling loudly for a more vigorous prosecution of the war;" but he adds, "I thought I perceived a desire to put an end to the war, even at the risk of losing the Southern States altogether." He goes on to affirm that while they "would, if possible, obtain an armistice without the aid of foreign governments, they would be disposed to accept an offer of mediation, if it appeared to be the only means of putting a stop to hostilities."

² Pollard (*Lost Cause*, 402) gives the numbers as 75,000 infantry and 15,000 cavalry. But as the Confederate government never published official returns of the strength of its armies, this statement must be conjectural. I think it fully 100,000 too low. The captured returns (*Ante*, p. 383) are wanting for Lee's army for the month of June, which would have given its strength when this movement commenced. At the close of May the numbers of this army were 88,754 "present," of whom 68,352 were "present for duty." But it is clear that during the ensuing weeks it was considerably augmented. The statement in the text is based upon the following data:

I. It has been shown that after the close of the actions at Chancellorsville, Lee had with him, exclusive of 9000 wounded, 47,000 infantry and artillery, and 3000 cavalry. It may be assumed that of the wounded 5000 would in the ensuing six weeks be able to return to duty. This would give him, apart from re-enforcements, 55,000 men. The re-enforcements consisted mainly of Longstreet's three corps, which had been sent south of Richmond, and rejoined the Army of Northern Virginia late in May and early in June. The captured returns show that in March there were under Longstreet "present for duty," in the Department of North Carolina and South Virginia, 45,103, and in the Department of Richmond, under Elzey, 5789. In June there were in these departments, that of North Carolina now being under D. H. Hill, 25,997, a diminution of almost 25,000. These were all sent to Lee, and, added to his 55,000, would give him 80,000 infantry, apart from new levies raised in the interim. The number of these new levies was certainly very considerable, for we find that the cavalry, which at the close of April numbered less than 3000, had by the middle of June swelled, according to Pollard, to 15,000. It is certain, also, that under the stringent conscription laws very considerable accessions were made to the infantry. For example, we find it specially noted that Pettigrew's entire division, which acted so important a part at Gettysburg, were "raw troops from North Carolina, who had never been under fire," and consequently formed no part of the former Army of Northern Virginia, which had fought on the Peninsula, at Groveton, Antietam, and Fredericksburg. If we allow only 10,000 for the absolute increase of infantry during May and early June, these, added to Lee's 80,000 and the 10,000 new cavalry, would give a sum of 100,000, the number set down.

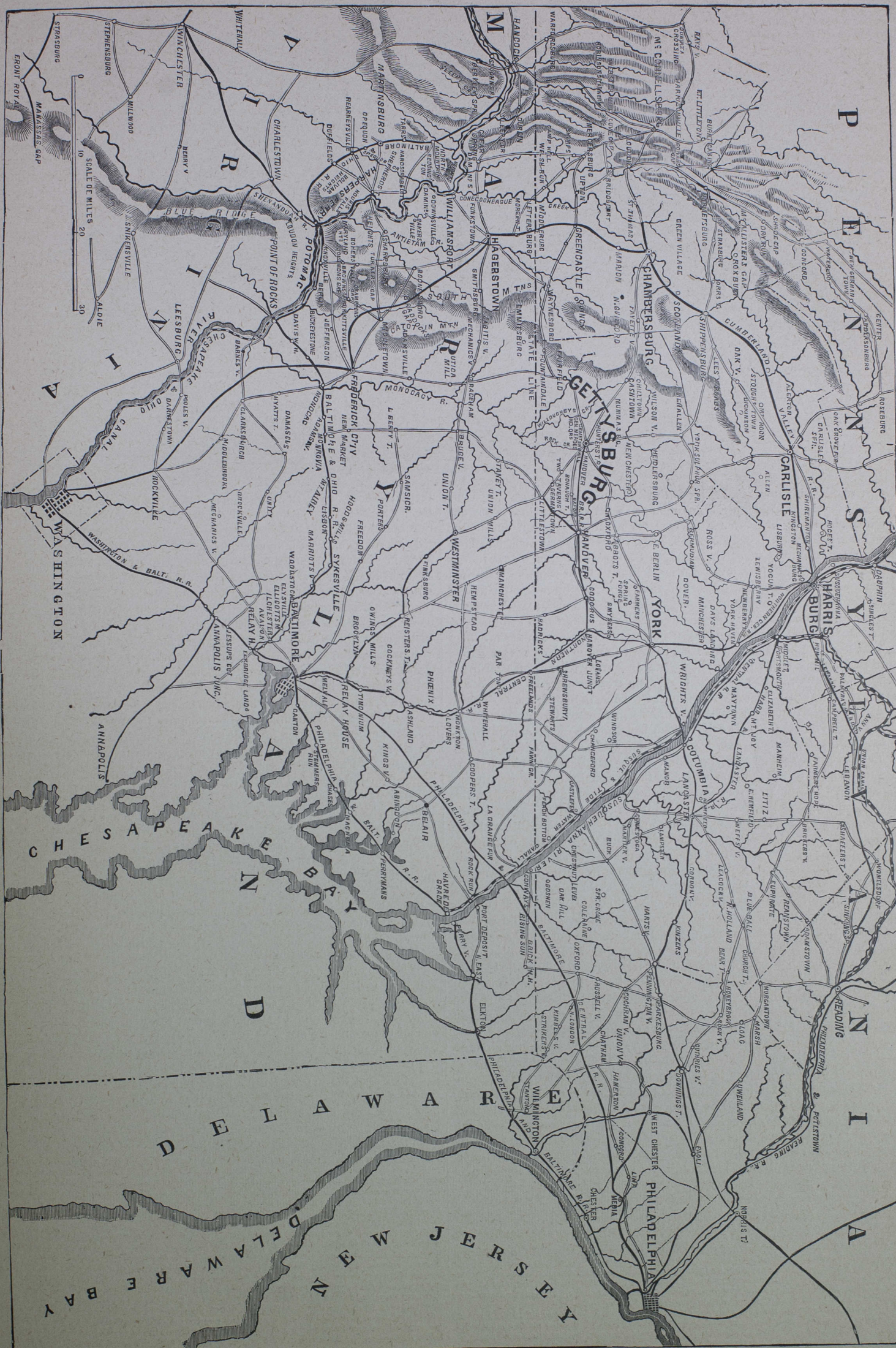
II. Longstreet (*Swinton's Army of the Potomac*, 310) says that when the army was concentrated at Chambersburg, in Pennsylvania, it numbered 67,000 "bayonets," that is, privates; adding to these the officers, there would be a total of fully 75,000 infantry and artillery, besides about 5000 cavalry, the remaining 10,000 having been sent elsewhere. This would make the whole force which crossed the Potomac 90,000. As there was a long line, from the Rappahannock to the Potomac, to guard, a considerable number must have been left behind for that purpose. Estimating these at only 10,000, we have fully 100,000 as the original number.

III. As the army passed through Hagerstown it was carefully counted. Of the results of this count we have two reports. Hooker says (*Com. Rep.*, ii, 173): "With regard to the enemy's force I had reliable information. Two Union men counted them as they passed through Hagerstown. In round numbers Lee had 91,000 infantry and 280 pieces of artillery; marching with that column were about 6000 cavalry; a portion of the enemy's cavalry crossed the Potomac below Edwards's Ferry; this column numbered about 5000 men." Butterfield, now his chief of staff, as he had been of Hooker's, reported this to Meade (*Ibid.*, 420), who seems to have adopted it as the basis of his estimate (*Ibid.*, 337) of the force opposed to him, although on the day after he took command he had telegraphed to Washington (*Ibid.*, 479) that "Mr. Logan, Register of Wills, and Mr. Preston, very fine men in Hagerstown, have taken pains to count the rebels, and could not make them over 80,000;" they counted the artillery, made it 275 guns; 2000 comprise the mounted artillery and cavalry." These two counts, apparently independent of each other, confirm our estimate that the Confederate force which entered Pennsylvania numbered of all arms fully 90,000 men.

¹ *Com. Rep.*, ii, 105.

² "In case you find Lee coming to the north of the Rappahannock, I would by no means cross to the south of it. If he should leave a rear force at Fredericksburg, tempting you to fall upon it, he would fight in intrenchments, and have you at disadvantage; and so, man for man, worst you at that point, while his main force would in some way be getting an advantage of you northward. In one word, I would not take any risk of being entangled up on the river, like an ox jumped half way over a fence and liable to be torn by dogs, front and rear, without a fair chance to gore one way or kick the other."—*Com. Rep.*, ii, 155.

³ *Lee's Rep.*





BURNING THE BRIDGE OVER THE SUSQUEHANNA, COLUMBIA, PENN.

as to cover Washington. A. P. Hill forthwith left Fredericksburg, and joined the main army at Culpepper. Lee then pushed forward his divisions one by one, and by different routes, all centring upon Winchester, the key of the lower valley of the Shenandoah. Milroy, with 7000 men, had been long lying at Winchester. On the 12th of June he began to get tidings that the enemy were pressing down upon him, in what force he could not learn; but on the next day his doubts were solved by authentic tidings that the Confederates were advancing in overwhelming force. Then was the time to retreat; but this was delayed until the 15th, when, before dawn, he destroyed what he could of his stores, spiked his guns, and started for Harper's Ferry; the Confederates having in the mean while sent a strong force, which gained his rear, while he was also attacked in front. Milroy's whole force was dispersed, and 2300 of them were captured.¹ The others made their way, utterly broken, to and across the Potomac; some of them never halted in their wild flight until they had reached Chambersburg, far into Pennsylvania. Ewell's corps, which had gone on in advance, followed on and entered Maryland, the cavalry pushing as far as Chambersburg.

Lee had supposed that this partial movement would cause Hooker to leave Virginia and cross the Potomac to defend the threatened North, rendering an attack upon Washington feasible. But Hooker was not entrapped by this manoeuvre, and kept his army near the old battle-field of Manassas, effectually covering Washington. Lee now began to move the corps of Hill and Longstreet down the Valley of the Shenandoah, along the west side of the Blue Ridge, Hooker being on the east side. The cavalry of each army, sent out as feelers, came into frequent collision, sometimes in considerable force, the advantage, on the whole, being with the Federals.² Lee hoped by all these movements to draw Hooker farther from Washington, which had now become his base, and even to induce him to pass the Blue Ridge and venture an attack. The opportunity seemed, indeed, a favorable one. For some days the Confederate army was stretched from Culpepper a hundred miles to the Potomac. To strike that long line somewhere seemed feasible. So thought the President. "If," he wrote to Hooker, "the head of Lee's army is at Martinsburg, and the tail of it on the plank road between Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, the animal must be very slim somewhere; could you not break him?"³ But Hooker determined not to make the attempt. In his view, the wisest course was to move his army on a concentric but inner circle to that followed by the main body of the enemy, and thus be enabled to thwart his general design, whatever that should prove to be. Any slight advantages which he might hope to gain over portions of the hostile force would be more than counterbalanced by the necessity which would be involved of marching his army away from the point where it was most needed. Although the rear of the Confederate army was so far away from its front, it was moving to unite, and there was no probability that a Union force could strike it strongly any where without encountering a superior force. For the time

the true policy was that adopted by Hooker, and thereafter for a time by Meade, to be governed in his operations by those of the main body of the hostile army.¹

Lee having failed in finding an opportunity to strike a blow at the Union army in Virginia, or inducing Hooker to assail him upon unfavorable terms, now resolved to transform the raiding operations in Pennsylvania into a serious invasion by his whole army. Longstreet's and Hill's corps pushed rapidly to the Potomac. On the 24th and 25th, the river, now so low as to be easily fordable, was passed at Williamsport and Shepherdstown, almost within sight of the battle-field of Antietam, and the columns, uniting at Hagerstown, pressed forward toward Chambersburg. Hooker's course was now clear. On the 26th his army crossed the Potomac at Edwards's Ferry, the point where Lee had crossed into Maryland nine months before, and headed toward Frederick City. Lee had advanced so far from the Potomac as to leave his base of communications and supply greatly exposed. Hooker's plan was in the first place to assail these rather than to precipitate a battle; for every day would weaken the invaders, while it would give him new strength. He now, more urgently than ever, urged that every soldier within reach should be added to his available army.

It so happened that there were 10,000 men at Harper's Ferry, under French, who had not long before been put in command there. The place, as we have before seen, was utterly worthless for either side. For all military purposes, these men might as well have been a thousand miles away as at Harper's Ferry. The strength of the two opposed armies was so nearly equal that 10,000 men might make the difference between victory and defeat. The force at Harper's Ferry had been in a manner placed under the command of Hooker; but, in reply to an inquiry whether there was any reason why the place should not be abandoned, and the troops there brought into use, Halleck rejoined that much expense and labor had been incurred in fortifying the works there and thereabout, and he could not approve of their abandonment except in case of absolute necessity. Hooker thereupon sent back to Halleck two dispatches at the same time. One, which was to be shown to the President and the Secretary of War, briefly reiterated his views as to the retention of Harper's Ferry; the other contained his resignation of the command of the Army of the Potomac,² evidently intended to be acted upon in case the former should be unavailing. Halleck replied forthwith that Hooker had been appointed to the command by the President, to whom the application for being relieved must be referred. Brief time was taken for consideration, for on that same day, already far advanced into the afternoon, Hooker's resignation had been accepted, and the command of the Army of the Potomac formally assigned to General Meade.

Viewed simply as an isolated act, this sudden resignation of Hooker at a moment when the two armies were inevitably approaching a decisive con-

¹ "In a short time the whole infantry force, amounting to more than 2300 men, with eleven stand of colors, surrendered, the cavalry alone escaping. These operations resulted in the expulsion of the enemy from the Valley, the capture of 4000 prisoners with a corresponding number of small-arms, 28 pieces of superior artillery, about 300 wagons, and as many horses. Our entire loss was 47 killed, 219 wounded, and 3 missing."—*Lee's Rep., MS.*

² "On the 17th the enemy's cavalry encountered two brigades of ours under General Stuart, near Aldie, and was driven back with loss. The next day the engagement was renewed, the Federal cavalry being strongly supported by infantry, and General Stuart was in turn compelled to retire."—*Lee's Rep.* "On the 21st the enemy attacked with infantry and cavalry, and obliged General Stuart to fall back to the gaps of the mountains. In these engagements the cavalry sustained a loss of 510 killed, wounded, and missing."—*Ibid., MS.*

³ Lincoln to Hooker, June 14th (*Com. Rep., ii., 260*). Two days later (*Ibid., 160*) Lincoln recurs to the same topic: "Your idea may be right, probably is; still, it pains me to abandon the fair chance presented of breaking the enemy's lengthy and necessarily slow line, stretched now from the Rappahannock to Pennsylvania."

¹ When A. P. Hill's corps "took up its line of march, following those of Ewell and Longstreet, I was clearly of the opinion that it was my duty to be governed in my operations by those of the whole rebel army, and not a part of it, and accordingly I directed my marches with that view."—Hooker, in *Com. Rep., ii., 161*.

² These dispatches both bear date June 27, 1 P.M. They were received almost at the same moment, 2.55 and 3 P.M. (See *Com. Rep., ii., 174, 292*).—No. 1. "I have received your telegram in regard to Harper's Ferry. I found 10,000 men here in condition to take the field. Here they are of no earthly account. They can not defend a ford of the river; and, as far as Harper's Ferry is concerned, there is nothing of it. As for the fortifications, the work of the troops, they remain when the troops are withdrawn. No enemy will ever take possession of them. This is my opinion. All the public property could have been secured to-night, and the troops marched to where they could have been of some service. Now they are but a bait for the rebels, should they return. I beg that this may be presented to the Secretary of War and his Excellency the President."—No. 2. "My original instructions require me to cover Harper's Ferry and Washington. I have now imposed upon me, in addition, an enemy in my front of more than my number. I beg to be understood that I am unable to comply with this condition with the means at my disposal, and earnestly request that I may at once be relieved from the position that I occupy."

flict would seem uncalled for and unjustifiable. The immediate occasion was not of sufficient consequence to warrant a step which involved such grave consequences. But the question now mooted as to the troops at Harper's Ferry was but the culminating point of a long course of discord. Hooker knew that Halleck had opposed and twice defeated his appointment to the command of the Army of the Potomac. He perceived, or thought he perceived, a fixed determination to thwart him in every way.¹ This ill feeling had by this time grown to such a height, and assumed a form so personal, that it was clearly out of the question for the two men to act together in the positions which they occupied. Halleck took early occasion to vent his spite. There was an order prohibiting officers from visiting Washington without permission. Hooker, four days after his supercedure, went to the capital. He had hardly left his carriage ten minutes when he was put under arrest by order of the general-in-chief. How many opportunities were lost, and how many lives sacrificed by the personal ill feeling and professional jealousy which had sprung up among officers high in rank in the army, it would be vain to inquire.

The country and the army were astounded on the 28th of June by the announcement that the command of the Army of the Potomac had been relinquished by Hooker and was conferred upon Meade. Despite the misadventure at Chancellorsville, Hooker still retained the confidence of the soldiers who served under him. There was a kind of self-assured confidence in the man which begat confidence in others. Of Meade, who was so suddenly called upon to replace him, less had been heard than of almost any other corps commander in the army. Just a year before he had commanded a brigade at Cold Harbor. Four days later his brigade made its mark at Frazier's Farm. Glimpses were caught of him at South Mountain and Antietam. At Fredericksburg he won a partial success, but this was lost sight of in the disasters which accompanied and followed. At Chancellorsville, his corps, through no fault of his, hardly touched the fight. He had little of that imposing personal presence to which McClellan owed all, and Hooker much of power. His aspect was that of a scholar rather than of a captain. Those who knew him best could only say that wherever tried he had never been found wanting, but that he had never been subjected to a great trial. If the question had been simply whether Meade should replace Hooker, it would have been difficult to find a man to favor the change. But things had suddenly come to such a condition that a great change must be made at a critical moment. Either Halleck must be displaced as general-in-chief, or Hooker must vacate the command of the Army of the Potomac. The smaller the change at the urgent crisis involved the less of apparent peril, and so Hooker's request to be released from command was promptly granted. What special reasons fixed the choice upon Meade as his successor can only be conjectured. There were no open cliques of generals in his favor, and consequently no ostensible ones against him. Herein, perhaps, lies the secret.²

No man in or out of the army could have been more surprised than was Meade when the tidings came that he was appointed to the command. He took upon himself his new duties in a quiet way, which strongly contrasted with the self-distrust of Burnside and the self-assertion of Hooker. The movements planned by his predecessor were carried out by the same staff. Only that the orders were issued over a new name, the army would scarcely have known that it had a new commander. The only important changes made were that Hancock was placed in command of the Second Corps, vacated by Couch's appointment to the Department of the Susquehanna, and Sykes took the Fifth, formerly led by Meade. Reynolds retained the First Corps, Sickles the Third, Sedgwick the Sixth, Howard the Eleventh, and Slocum the Twelfth.

Lee, having crossed the Potomac, pushed rapidly forward into Pennsylvania with his whole force. Cutting loose from its supplies, his army was to live upon the country. But Lee ordered that supplies should be extorted in an orderly manner, upon formal requisitions duly made, payment being tendered in Confederate notes; if these were declined, certificates were to be given showing the amount and value of the property thus taken. If the local authorities neglected to meet these requisitions, the required supplies were to be seized. These requisitions were frequently onerous. Thus the town of York, with but 7000 inhabitants, was called upon, among other things, for 165 barrels of flour, 3500 pounds of sugar, 32,000 pounds of beef, 2000 pairs of boots or shoes, and \$100,000 in cash. Probably the whole borough did not contain this amount of stores and money. At all events, only a quarter of the money could be raised.

¹ "Almost every request I made of General Halleck was refused. It was often remarked that it was of no use for me to make a request, as that of itself would be sufficient cause for General Halleck to refuse it. . . . I may add as my conviction that if the general-in-chief had been in the rebel interest, it would have been impossible for him, restrained as he was by the President and the Secretary of War, to have added to the embarrassment he caused me from the moment I took command of the Army of the Potomac to the time I surrendered it."—Hooker, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 175.

² "I have said that there were no 'open' cliques in favor of Meade as opposed to Hooker. That there was some secret opposition to Hooker's retention of the command soon after Chancellorsville is clear. On the 14th of May the President writes to Hooker (*Com. Rep.*, ii., 150): 'I have some painful intimations that some of your corps and division commanders are not giving you their entire confidence. This would be ruinous if true.'—General Couch was the ranking officer of the corps commanders. But early in June he was detached from the Army of the Potomac and placed in command of the 'Department of the Susquehanna,' that is, of Pennsylvania. This change seems to have been quite acceptable to Hooker: 'I can give a command to General Couch,' telegraphed the Secretary of War to Hooker on the 9th of June; 'I can spare General Couch,' returned Hooker at once (*Com. Rep.*, ii., 252). Just after the battle of Gettysburg, Halleck notified Couch that Meade had the command of all the troops in the Department of the Susquehanna, and that his orders must be obeyed. To which Couch rejoined: 'General Meade's wishes, instructions, and recommendations have been carried out so far as practicable. As I prominently mentioned that officer for his present position, it may be inferred that I would show no lukewarmness in carrying out his orders' (*Com. Rep.*, ii., 501).—Now, as there seems to have been no time between the resignation of Hooker and the appointment of Meade in which Couch, then in Pennsylvania, could have been consulted, it must be presumed that this 'prominent mention' by Couch was made at an earlier day.

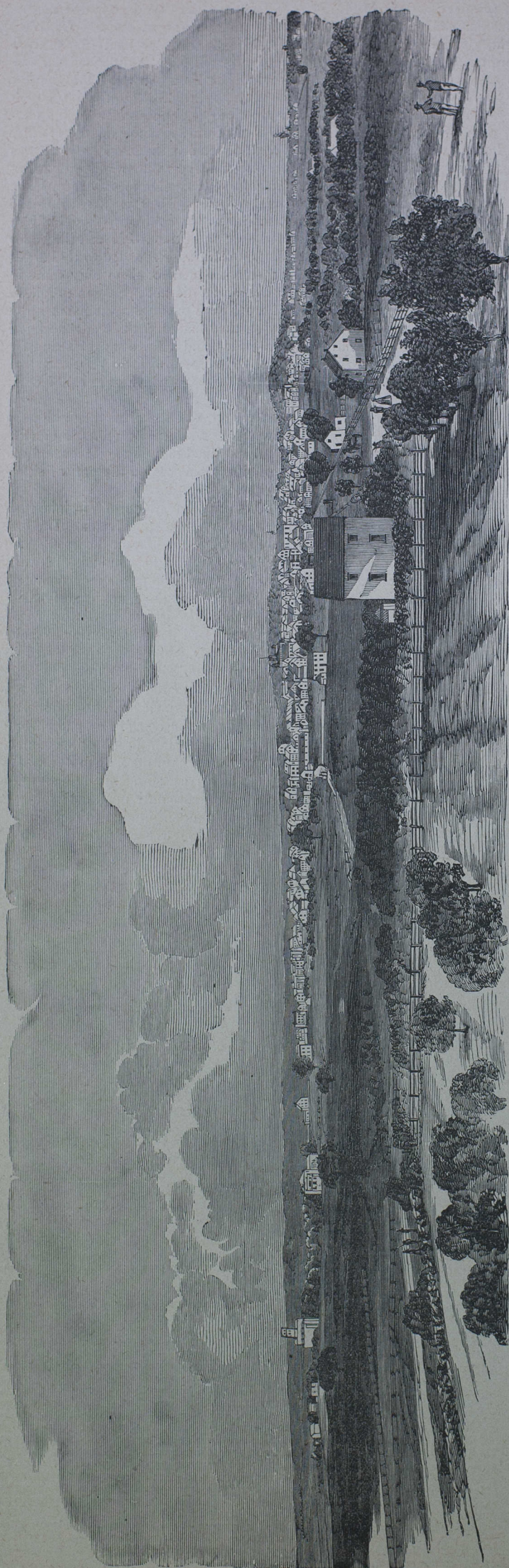
This formidable invasion aroused the most intense apprehension. Directly after the rout of Milroy at Winchester, the President issued a proclamation calling for 100,000 militia from the nearest states. Of these, Pennsylvania was to furnish 50,000, Ohio 30,000, Maryland 10,000, West Virginia 10,000. These were called out for six months, unless sooner discharged. Besides these, the Governor of New York was asked to order out 20,000. Within a few days New York sent nearly 16,000, of whom 14,000 were from the Empire City. Their absence gave opportunity for the fearful riots which ensued in the city of New York about the middle of July. In Pennsylvania, which was immediately threatened, the President's call was slightly responded to. In that state the militia system was so imperfect that there was not a brigade or regimental organization in existence. The governor called for 60,000 volunteers, who would be "mustered into the service of the state for ninety days, but would be required to serve only so much of the period of the muster as the safety of the people and the honor of the state should require." About 25,000 in all responded to these calls from Pennsylvania, but so tardily that not a man of them ever came in sight of the enemy. The Pennsylvania militia did not fire a gun to relieve their state from invasion. Some of the New York regiments came up in time to touch the van of the enemy as they halted in their advance. In New Jersey a few thousand men were raised, and a few companies actually went as far as Harrisburg. About 2000 were furnished by Delaware to guard the railroads in Maryland. The other states which were called upon did absolutely nothing. Before, indeed, any of the militia could be brought up, the battle of Gettysburg had been fought, and the crisis was past; for events had been so shaping themselves as to render a great battle inevitable. The time and place of this was determined more by accident and the physical character of the region than by any purpose on the part of either commander.

The South Mountain, a continuation of the Blue Ridge of Virginia, runs northward through a corner of Maryland far into Pennsylvania. Lee had crossed the Potomac on the west of this ridge, Hooker on the east. The line of march of the two armies was nearly parallel, the mountains between them, and each commander for a few days knew little of the movements of the other. Meade in the mean time followed out the plans conceived by Hooker. Lee, having some days the start, was considerably northward of Meade; Ewell, in the advance, was as far as Carlisle, and preparing to move toward Harrisburg, the capital of Pennsylvania, while Longstreet and Hill halted at Chambersburg. Meade had gone about half as far from the Potomac, and was in such a position that, by a rapid march to the west through the unobstructed passes of the South Mountain, which his left column had almost reached, he could throw himself right in the rear of Lee, and effectually cut him off from his supplies, wholly isolating him in a hostile country. Tidings of this movement reached Lee on the night of the 28th of June. He saw at once that the great invasion could be carried no farther, at least until he had destroyed the army which thus hung menacingly upon his flank and rear. The whole Confederate army was thereupon ordered to concentrate toward the enemy. The point of concentration was Gettysburg, beyond South Mountain. Thither Longstreet and Hill were to march eastward from Chambersburg, and Ewell southward from Carlisle.¹ Now Meade's left column, consisting of the corps of Reynolds and Howard—Sickles's corps, though not so far in advance, forming part thereof, with Buford's cavalry, had advanced farther northward than the remainder of the army, and on the 30th were close by Gettysburg. On that morning Meade learned that the enemy were moving against him. He thereupon resolved to concentrate his forces, which were now spread over many miles of country. The natural mode was to withdraw his advance, and bring up his centre and rear. His leading purposes were to compel the enemy to withdraw from the Susquehanna, and then to give or receive battle at the first favorable opportunity. The position which he selected as most likely to be the scene of conflict was on Pipe Creek, a little stream fifteen miles southeast from Gettysburg.²

When Lee appointed Gettysburg as the place of rendezvous for his army, he knew nothing of its supreme strategical importance. Meade, also, knew

¹ "Preparations were made for the advance upon Harrisburg; but on the night of the 29th [so printed, but it should clearly be the night of the 28th; that is, the night before the 29th] information was received that the Federal army, having crossed the Potomac, was advancing northward, and that the head of the column had reached the South Mountain. As our communications with the Potomac were thus menaced, it was resolved to prevent his farther progress in that direction by concentrating our army on the east side of the mountains. Accordingly, Longstreet and Hill were directed to proceed from Chambersburg to Gettysburg, to which point Ewell was also instructed to march from Carlisle."—*Lee's Rep.*

² "I determined to move my army as promptly as possible on the main line from Frederick to Harrisburg, extending my wings on both sides of that line as far as I could consistently with the safety and rapid concentration of that army, and to continue my movement until I either encountered the enemy or had reason to believe that he was about to advance upon me; my object being, at all hazards, to force him to loose his hold on the Susquehanna, and meet me in battle at some point. It was my firm determination to give battle wherever and as soon as I could possibly find the enemy, modified, of course, by such considerations as must govern every general officer. On the night of the 30th I had become satisfied that the enemy was apprised of my movements; that he had relinquished his hold on the Susquehanna; that he was concentrating his forces, and that I might expect to come in contact with him in a very short time—when and where I could not at that moment tell. I instructed my engineers to select some general ground, having reference to the existing position of the army, by which, in case the enemy should advance upon me across the South Mountain, I might be able, by rapid movement of concentration, to occupy this position, and be prepared to give him battle upon my own terms. The general line of Pipe Creek was selected, and a preliminary order issued notifying the corps commanders that such line might possibly be adopted, and directing them how they might move their corps, and what their positions should be along this line. This order was issued on the night of the 30th of June, possibly on the morning of the 1st of July; certainly before any positive information had reached me that the enemy had crossed the mountain and were in conflict with any part of my force." (Meade, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 330.)—This statement is given in full, as it sets at rest the assertion often made that Meade proposed to retreat before the enemy, and that he was forced to fight at Gettysburg by an unauthorized attack made by Reynolds. His purpose of assuming the line of Pipe Creek was contingent upon circumstances which might or might not arise. It was, as will be seen, accident, so far as any previous purpose on the part of either commander was concerned, that made Gettysburg the scene of the conflict—the speedy occurrence of which, somewhere hard by, had become inevitable, unless, indeed, Lee should consent to retreat without having fairly attempted any thing—and this he was by no means inclined to do.



GETTYSBURG.

quite as little thereof. "It was a place," as he told the Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War, "which I had never seen in my life, and had no more knowledge of than you have now." Yet it would seem that a glance at a map should have revealed its importance. This little town occupies, as it were, the hub of a wheel, from which roads, or spokes, radiate in every direction: northwestward toward Chambersburg; northeastward toward Harrisburg and Philadelphia; southwestward toward the Potomac; southeastward toward Baltimore. Whosoever held Gettysburg, held, if he knew it, the key to a campaign. It so chanced that one soldier had happened to study the topographical features of this region, and he had made up his mind that Gettysburg was the one spot whereat, if so it could be, to have a fight. And it so happened, also, that this man was the only one, who, as things stood, could have so ordered events that the fight should have happened just then and there. That man was Alfred Pleasonton, now commanding the cavalry corps; the man to whom primarily it was owing that the fierce rush of Jackson had been stayed at Chancellorsville. In the distribution of his troopers, he had sent the strongest division, that of Buford, to cover the left flank of the army, that is, Reynolds's column, which was nearest the enemy. His order to Buford was to hold Gettysburg to the last extremity, until the army could be concentrated there.¹ Buford reached Gettysburg early on the morning of the last day of June, in advance of the infantry of Reynolds's column, whereof the First Corps, properly his own, but now under the immediate command of Doubleday, and the Eleventh, Howard's, encamped that night four miles from Gettysburg.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 1.

On the morning of the 1st of July Buford pushed his troopers northwestward. At the same time the advance of the Confederate army was approaching from that direction. Lee had moved his force slowly from Chambersburg and Carlisle, not imagining that any considerable Union force was in the neighborhood of Gettysburg, for, as it chanced, Stuart, with his vigilant cavalry, was far away. He had been left behind in Virginia to harass the Union rear, and was then to cross into Maryland. This crossing was made far to the south of the point where Hooker went over, so that Stuart found the whole Union army between him and Lee, and he could reach Carlisle, the place appointed for rendezvous, only by making a wide circuit. When he came there on the 1st of July, he found the place evacuated, and the army on the way to Gettysburg, whither he hastened, but not in time to take any part in the action of the first two days. Reynolds set his command in motion toward Gettysburg. He had evidently discerned the supreme necessity of preventing the enemy from seizing this point.² No one who looked upon the ground could fail to perceive this.

The quiet town of Gettysburg nestles in a little hollow ten miles east of the South Mountain range. The surrounding country is rough and broken, granite ridges cropping up all around. This granite had been, in the formative period of the earth's history, flung up through the soft shale, which, worn away by water-currents, left exposed the bare ridges of the harder stone. The general course of these ridges is north and south; they are not continuous for any great extent, and are not unfrequently cast into irregular forms. Looking westward from the town at a distance of half a mile, one sees a long, wooded height, its centre crowned by the buildings of a Theological Seminary, whence it receives the name of Seminary Ridge. Looking southward, at the distance of a mile, is the rounded extremity of another ridge, broken into several separate hills. Ascending the nearest of these, the ridge is seen falling away for a space, then, at the distance of three miles, rising again into a broken spur, closing in a rocky, wooded peak. This whole range bears the name of Cemetery Ridge, for upon it was the burying-ground where rest generations of the dwellers of the quiet town. But now, hard by is a great City of the Dead, made populous in three short days. This ridge, running first northward, then, with a sharp curve, eastward, then, again, bending to the south, is, in shape, not unlike a fish-hook. Each of the rugged hills which rise from the clearly-marked line of the crest bears its own name. That at the extremity of the stem of the hook is Round Top, with Little Round Top its prolongation. Cemetery Hill is at the bend; Culp's Hill forms the barb. These two ridges are now historic, for on Cemetery Ridge the Union Army took its position, the Confederate force being drawn up on Seminary Ridge. The valley between them, half a mile wide at its narrowest point, near the town, then gradually spreading southward to twice that breadth, consists of cultivated fields, interspersed with patches of woodland. In these fields and woodlands, and up the rough slopes of Cemetery Ridge, was waged for two days the mightiest conflict of the war.

On Wednesday morning, July 1, Hill, who, leading the Confederate advance, had encamped the previous night half a dozen miles west of Gettysburg, learned, to his surprise, that the town was occupied by the Union cavalry. What force of infantry lay behind he could not know. He put his divisions in motion, and sent back to urge forward Longstreet's corps, which was yet fifteen miles in the rear. Buford had meanwhile gone out two

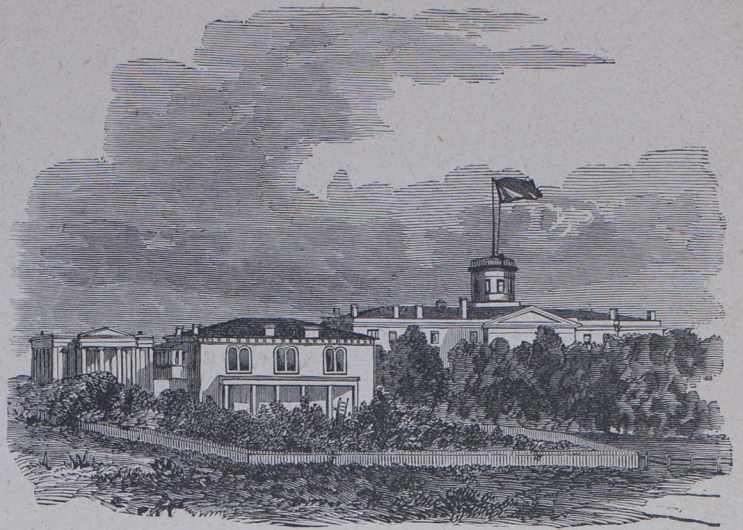
¹ Pleasonton, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 359.

² Otherwise we can not explain his conduct in acting in direct contradiction to the order which he had just received to fall back in the opposite direction to Pipe Creek. It was clearly one of those cases in which a subordinate commander was justified in disregarding a positive order, which he knew must have been given in ignorance of the real position of affairs. Sickles, later in the day, did precisely the same thing. He was some fourteen miles behind Reynolds, and had also been ordered to fall back; but, learning that an action was going on at Gettysburg, he marched directly thither. "I assumed," he says, "that this new fact [the action then going on] was not known to General Meade when the order to retreat was issued. The emergency did not admit of the delay that would have been required to communicate with General Meade, who was ten miles distant. I moved to Gettysburg on my own responsibility. As soon as I had determined to do that, I sent to General Meade informing him of what I had done, and expressed my anxiety to have his sanction of it. I received a communication from him informing me that he approved of my course."—*Com. Rep.*, ii., 296.



JOHN BUFORD.

miles in that direction, crossing Seminary Ridge. At nine o'clock Hill's leading division, that of Heth, came upon Buford, who, knowing that Reynolds was on the march, resolved to contest the Confederate advance. Unlimbering the guns of his horse artillery, and deploying his troopers, he held the enemy briefly in check, but was soon forced back to the crest of the ridge. The sound of his guns quickened the march of Reynolds, whose leading division, under Wadsworth, 4000 strong, was now within a mile of Gettysburg. These were soon formed, under fire, in line of battle. The action had scarcely opened when Reynolds fell dead, shot through the head by a rifle-ball. There were but few men who could not have been better spared. There were not wanting those who had begun to look upon him as the most promising general in the Union army. Doubleday, who had come up, now took command; but he brought no re-enforcements to Wadsworth, for the other divisions of Reynolds's corps, and the whole of Howard's, were yet two hours' march behind. For two hours this one division maintained the fight, and then began slowly to give way. The enemy pressed on, a part of Archer's brigade so eagerly that they were isolated. Meredith swung round his "Iron Brigade," and captured 800 men, includ-

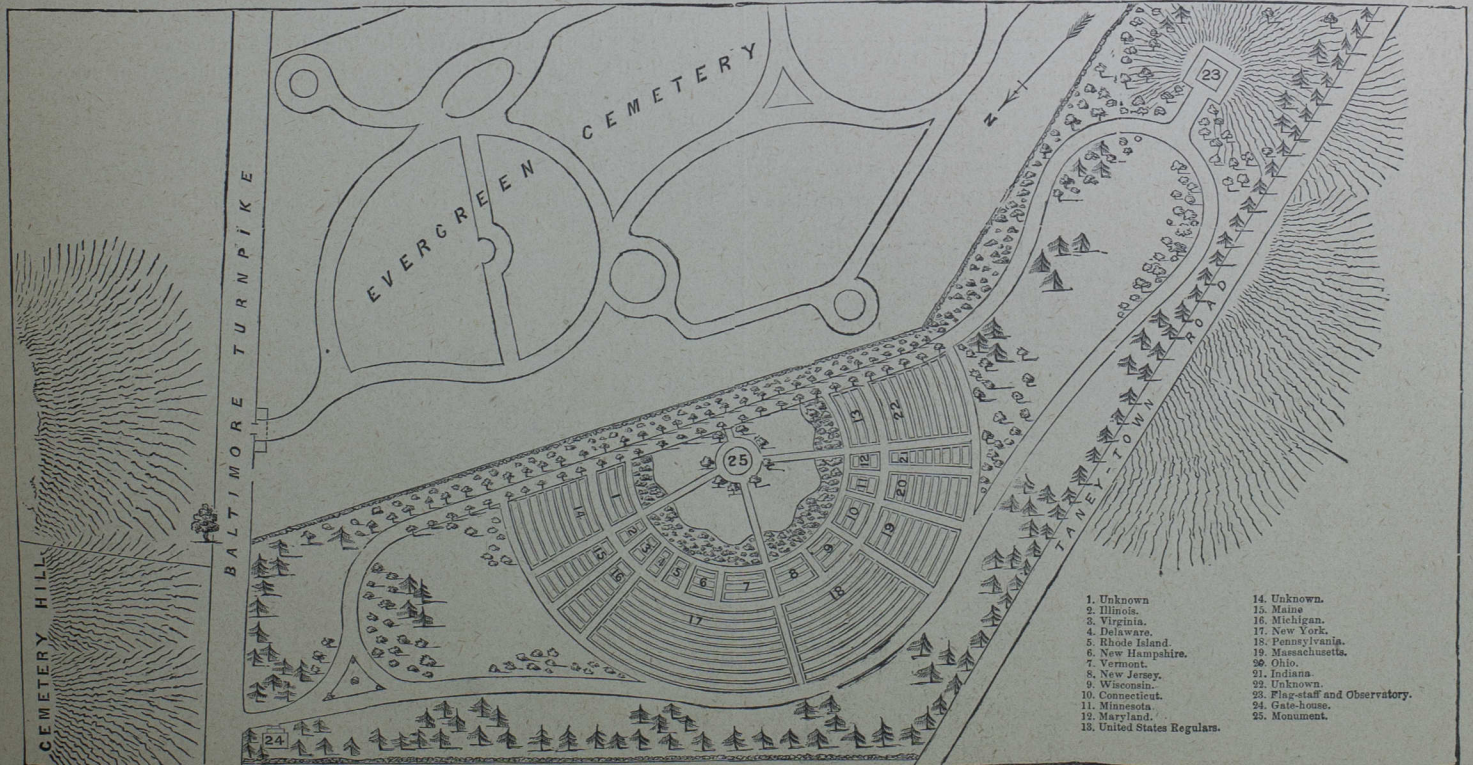


THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, GETTYSBURG.

ing their commander. Cutler's brigade of this division was now sorely pressed, and fell back; but two regiments of the Confederates, advancing along a deep cutting for an unfinished railway, were swept upon by a flank movement, and, shut up in this gorge, were forced to surrender. Thus far the contest had been waged between a single division on each side. The balance of success was against the Confederates. The two remaining divisions of Reynolds's corps now came up, closely followed by Howard's corps. Howard assumed command of the field.

But still heavier re-enforcements were coming up to the aid of Heth. First came Pender's division of Hill's corps, northwestward from toward Chambersburg; then from the north, Ewell from toward Carlisle, pressing down upon the Union right. They struck Robinson's division of Reynolds's corps. Their first blow was unsuccessful, and three North Carolina regiments were captured. Howard, leaving Steinwehr's division of his corps in reserve on the Cemetery Ridge behind Gettysburg, pushed Schurz and Barlow forward to meet the advance of Ewell. The roads by which the Federal troops had advanced diverge from Gettysburg like the spokes of a wheel, so that at each step the line grew thinner and thinner; while the Confederates, coming to the centre along these same spokes, were concentrating at every moment. As the afternoon wore away, Ewell's whole corps, and two thirds of that of Hill, fully 50,000 strong, were steadily pressing down upon the two corps of Reynolds and Howard, numbering at the outset not more than 21,000 men, including the division of 4000 left in reserve, which was not brought forward.¹ Howard now sent back to Sickles, a dozen miles away to the south, urging him to come up to his relief. Sickles

¹ "I do not believe that our force actually engaged, belonging to the two corps, amounted to over 14,000 men. There was a reserve of 3000 or 4000 of the Eleventh Corps, which did not join actively in the fight. It fired some shots from Cemetery Hill, but the most of them fell short into our own front line." (Doubleday, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 309.)—Doubleday adds: "According to the reports rendered to me, we [i. e., apparently Reynolds's corps] entered the fight with 8500 men, and came out with 2450." I suspect that there is here some error in the printing of these figures; for Wadsworth states that in his division "about 4000 men went into action," and that of these, on the next morning, he had but about 1600 men to answer to their names. It is hardly to be supposed that the two remaining divisions of this corps were so greatly inferior in numbers to any of the others. I think it safer, on many grounds, to estimate the six divisions of these two corps at 3500 each.



PLAN OF THE SOLDIERS' CEMETERY AT GETTYSBURG.



THE WHEAT-FIELD WHERE REYNOLDS FELL.

put his corps in motion, but a forced march only enabled him to reach Gettysburg after the action was over.

At an hour past noon, Meade, who, with his column of the centre, was at Taneytown, fourteen miles southeast of Gettysburg, learned that a fight was going on, and that Reynolds had fallen. He perceived "that the matter was being precipitated very heavily upon him." Of Gettysburg himself he knew nothing, and the first thing to be done was to ascertain whether it was a place whereat to give or receive battle. Calling to Hancock, the corps commander in whom he most confided, he ordered him to hurry to the field and take command there. Hancock was outranked by Howard, who was there, and by Sickles, who might be there; but it was no time to regard the niceties of military etiquette. Hancock sprang into an ambulance, that he might study the maps on his way, and in two hours was on the field, in time to see a lost battle, which, indeed, bore the aspect of a rout;¹ for Rodes's division of Ewell's corps had thrust itself right into a wide gap between the right of the First and the left of the Eleventh Union Corps, folding completely around the right of the First, pressing it back toward the Seminary. Here, behind a slight rail intrenchment, a stand was made long enough to permit the trains and ambulances to get off. Doubleday threw his personal guard of twoscore men into the Seminary building, whose quiet walls had never before witnessed any thing more stirring than debates upon points of theological controversy. But by this time the whole region was filled with the advancing lines of the enemy, double, sometimes triple. When the remnants of this gallant corps finally abandoned their position, they fell back to Gettysburg, right between two lines of the enemy. The Eleventh Corps at the same time was driven back to the same point, and the two retreating columns became entangled in the streets. The First Corps, being a little in advance, got well through. The Eleventh was struck heavily by Ewell's advance, and three fourths of the survivors of its two divisions engaged were made prisoners.² This battle cost the two Union corps not less than 10,000 men, of whom half were killed or wounded. Well-nigh half of the killed and wounded fell upon Wadsworth's division of 4000, which had for six hours withstood the enemy. The loss of the Confederates was very heavy. Wadsworth thought that his division inflicted more injury than it received.³

¹ "I arrived on the ground not later than half past three o'clock. I found that, practically, the fight was then over. The rear of our column, with the enemy in pursuit, was then coming through the town of Gettysburg. General Howard was on Cemetery Hill, and there had evidently been an attempt on his part to stop and form some of his troops there."—Hancock, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 405.

² Lee claims to have taken here 5000 prisoners; these must have been mainly from the Eleventh, for Wadsworth says (*Com. Rep.*, ii., 413): "Very few of my division were taken prisoners; but a great many prisoners were taken on the right from the Eleventh Corps, and from one division of the First Corps that went into position on the right."

³ "I am sure that the slaughter on the side of the enemy was greater than on our own side on

When Hancock rode up to Gettysburg, he bore with him the responsibility of all that was to follow; for he was charged not only to take the command of whatever force he should find there, but to decide whether that force should fall back, or whether the whole army should be brought forward and concentrated there. In a brief interval, what remained of the First and Eleventh Corps were assembled on the rocky ridge fronting Gettysburg, and presented so imposing an appearance as to cause Lee to hesitate to assail them. Looking back in the light of what is now known, the decision of the Confederate commander was most erroneous; but for one knowing only what he could then have known, it was the only safe one. Of his three corps only two had come up—Longstreet's, the strongest of all, was still behind. What part of the Union force lay upon and behind that rugged ridge he could not know. So the attack was suspended, and the Confederate army paused, waiting to see what the next day should bring forth. Hancock sent back to Meade such a report as to determine him to fight at Gettysburg, and during the night all the army was set in motion for that point. Sickles had already arrived two hours before night set in. Hancock's corps, and Slocum's, with that of Meade, now commanded by Sykes, came up in the morning. Sedgwick's did not reach the ground till afternoon, after a fatiguing march of thirty-five miles.

When the Federal army was finally posted, Slocum was on the extreme right, on Culp's Hill, the barb of the fish-hook; next was the remnant of Wadsworth's division, Howard's corps, on Cemetery Hill; then, along the stem of the hook, the corps of Hancock and Sickles, with Sykes's and Sedgwick's on the extreme left, behind the rocky rampart of the Round Tops. Reynolds's corps, to the command of which Newton had now been appointed, was in reserve behind the centre of the whole line, which was three miles in extent, measured along the ridge; but, owing to its curving form, no part of it was an hour's march from any other. As the line was intended by Meade, two thirds of the entire force could in half an hour have been concentrated upon any point; but by a misapprehension, arising from the nature of the ground, Sickles took a position considerably in advance, and upon this movement hinged the battle of the day. The bulk of the Confederate force was drawn up upon the opposite Seminary Ridge, Longstreet's corps on the right, then Hill's in the centre, that of Ewell on the extreme left, being at the foot of Culp's Hill. This line, forming an exterior curve, was fully five miles long, there being, however, an interval of a mile between Ewell's right and Hill's left. The forces were about equal, each numbering from 70,000 to 80,000 infantry and artillery.¹ The Federal posture the first day. I know that we almost annihilated one or two brigades that came against us." (*Com. Rep.*, ii., 415.)—More than 2000 prisoners are claimed to have been taken from the Confederates.

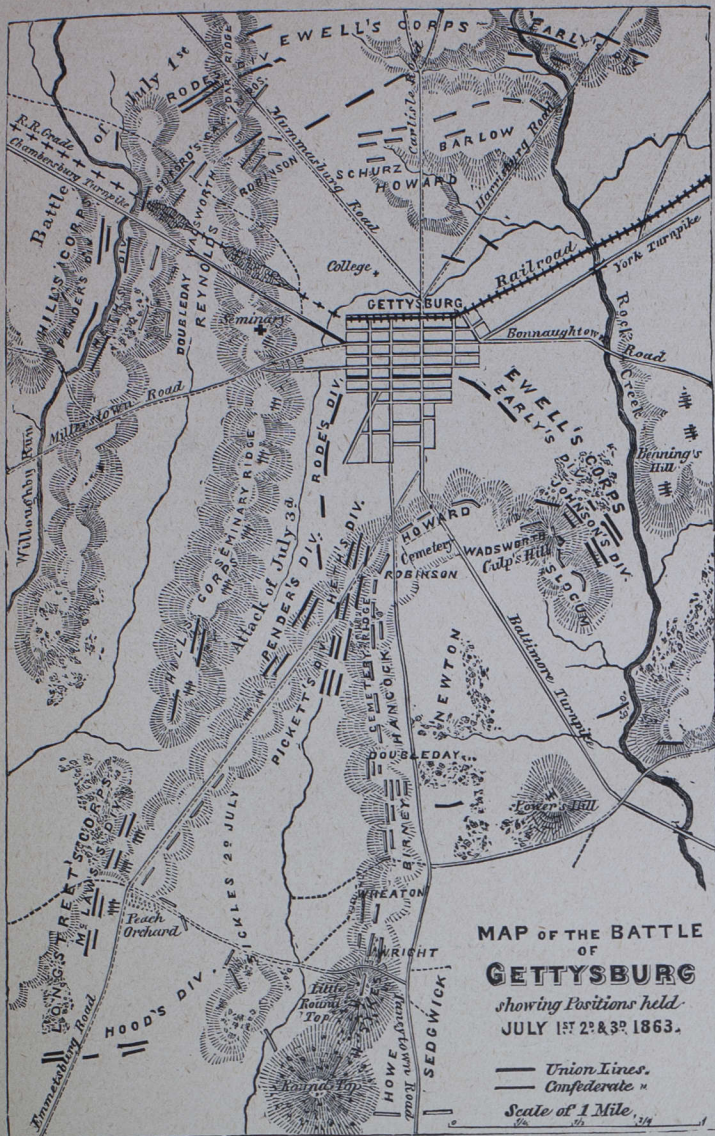
¹ Meade (in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 337) says: "Including all arms of the service, my strength was



MEADE'S HEADQUARTERS, CEMETERY RIDGE.



LEE'S HEADQUARTERS, SEMINARY RIDGE.



sition was very strong, its chief disadvantage being that a great portion of it was so broken and rocky as to allow not more than a third of the artillery to be brought into position. But this was counterbalanced by the advantage which it gave for infantry.

It was evident that Lee could not, for any time, retain his present position. He was far from his base of supply, and the country around would not long subsist his great army, even could he forage at will, as he had done in the fertile valley of the Cumberland; and, moreover, his foraging parties would be likely to be cut off in the mountain passes.¹ He was then shut up to a choice of one of three things. He must attack the enemy in their strong position, or he must draw them from it by continuing his march, and threatening Washington and Baltimore, or he must retreat to Virginia. The third course would be a complete abandonment of the enterprise which had been so deliberately undertaken; the second was strongly urged by Hood, but it would only be prolonging the suspense, for an action must soon take place somewhere, and the enemy would, beyond all doubt, become stronger every day.² He decided upon the first. The controlling reason is doubtless to be found in the temper of his army. They had won a series of great victories; among these they even counted Antietam. At Fredericksburg, with but a fraction of their available force, they had beaten Burnside, though here they had position in their favor. At Chancellorsville, with two thirds of their present numbers, they had foiled and driven off Hooker, whose force was known to be much larger than that now led by Meade. There they had successfully attacked the enemy in his intrenchments; why should they not do so now with equal success? Besides, it would seem that Lee, not without reason, greatly under-estimated the numbers in his front. The force which he had driven back the day before was certainly small, and there was nothing to indicate the great army which had been concentrated during the night, and now lay hidden behind that rocky crest.³ So Longstreet was ordered to assail the extreme Federal left, while Ewell was at the same time to make

about 95,000." This I understand to be the entire force at the commencement of operations; but the losses on the previous day reduced this number by 10,000; the cavalry numbered about 10,000, but these took no part in the action of this day. Longstreet (see ante, p. 502) states that when the three Confederate corps were concentrated at Chambersburg, "the morning reports showed 67,000 bayonets," equivalent to about 75,000 officers and men; they had lost on the previous day not far from 5000. The Confederate artillery formed a separate corps, probably 5000 strong. I am not certain whether these are to be included in the 67,000 "bayonets." If they are not, then Lee's infantry and artillery would number about 75,000. Some thousands on each side were left behind with the trains. Thus, of the Confederates, Pickett's division was in the rear, and was not brought upon the field until the next day.

¹ "The enemy are here," said Lee to Hood, "and if we do not whip him he will whip us." Longstreet was opposed to making an attack this day; he wished to wait until Pickett's division should come up. "He did not want to walk with one boot off."—These facts were narrated after the close of the war by General Hood to General Crawford, from whom I receive them.

² We infer that Lee under-estimated the force of Meade, not only from the fact that he nowhere speaks of the "superior numbers of the enemy," but also from the nature of the attacks which he made on this and the following day.

a "demonstration on the right, to be converted into a real attack should opportunity offer."¹ The points of attack were fully five miles apart.

Meade had intended, and so ordered, that his line should occupy the ridge directly between Cemetery Hill and Round Top; and from the point where he was, the course of this ridge was plain enough; but this crest, at its centre, where Sickles was to take position, is low, and, sinking down into a valley in front, rises at a few hundred yards into another wooded ridge, running diagonally to the one in its rear. To Sickles this seemed the position contemplated in the order, so he marched out upon it. This movement left a wide gap between him and Hancock, who was to have connected with his right. But he was also to rest his left upon Round Top. Now, as the course of this ridge is such that its extremity is a mile in advance of this hill, Sickles could only fulfill this condition by bending his left back, so that his line described two sides of a triangle. Birney's division formed the left, facing southwestward; Humphreys's division the right, facing northwestward. The Confederate right overlapped the Union left, and, swinging round to attack, completely enveloped it. At four o'clock, Meade, coming to the front, saw the perilous position in which Sickles had placed his corps, and commenced an order to withdraw, but before the sentence was completed the Confederates opened the attack, and it was thought that it was too late for any change of position. Meade determined to support Sickles, even at the hazard of disarranging all his carefully-formed plans. Troops were hurried up from every part of the field: from Slocum on the extreme right, Hancock in the centre, Sykes on the left; Sedgwick, whose corps, wearied by their long march of twenty hours, had been halted in the rear. Hood, in the mean time, had swung round his overlapping right, and penetrated the interval which separated Birney's extreme left from Little Round Top. This steep, rocky ridge, strangely enough, was not occupied. It was the key to the whole position; for, if the enemy could gain it, they could hold it, and a few guns planted there would enfilade the whole line² as far as Cemetery Hill. It was to Gettysburg what Hazle Grove was to Chancellorsville. They commenced scaling its rugged sides, for a time meeting no opposition except from its steep ascent. But it so happened that Warren, who, with no troops, had gone out as engineer to survey the field, reached the summit just in time to take in the peril of the situation. Hurrying back, he encountered Barnes's division of Sykes's corps marching out to the aid of Sickles. From this, Vincent's brigade and a single regiment of Ayres's were directed to scale the ridge on the side opposite to that up which the Confederates were climbing. The crest was reached from each side almost at once, the Federals a moment in advance. A fierce hand-to-hand fight ensued among the gray granite boulders piled up in wild confusion. The Confederates were flung back from the face of the hill, but, working around through the ravine at its base, some of them penetrated between the two Round Tops. Vincent's ammunition was exhausted, but the enemy were driven back by a bayonet charge, and, as darkness began to close in, this vital point was safe. Regiments from the Eastern, the Western, and the Central States were among the little band who, on this barren cliff, rendered possible the victory which was finally to crown the heights of Gettysburg.³

¹ Lee's Rep.

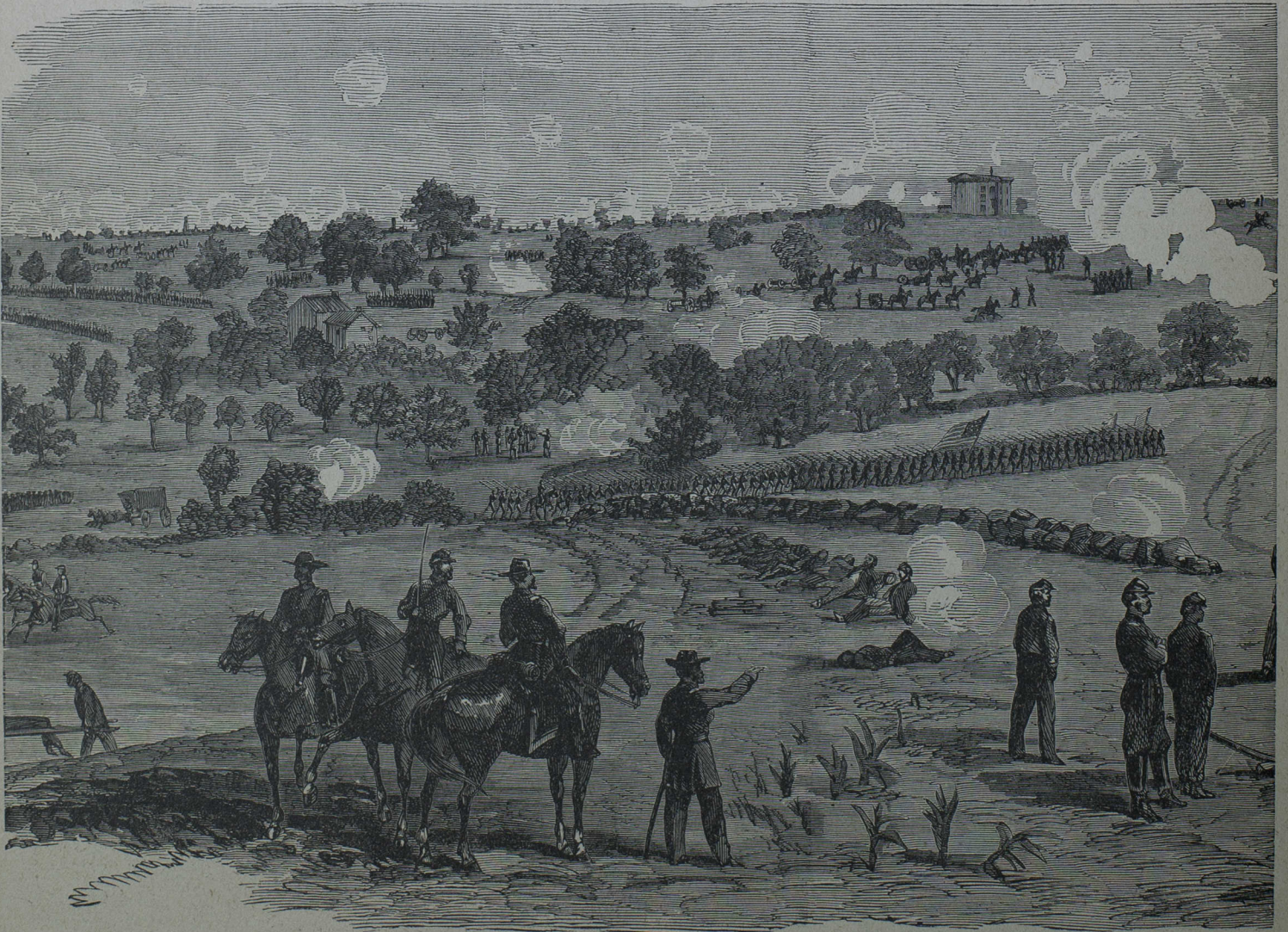
² "The enemy threw immense masses upon General Sickles's corps, which, advanced and isolated in this way, it was not in my power to support promptly. At the same time that they threw these immense masses upon General Sickles, a heavy column was thrown upon the Round Top Mountain, which was the key-point of my whole position. If they had succeeded in occupying that, it would have prevented me from holding any of the ground which I subsequently held to the last. Immediately upon the batteries opening I sent several staff officers to hurry up the column under General Sykes, of the Fifth Corps, then on its way, and which I had expected would have been there by that time. This column advanced, reached the ground in a short time, and fortunately General Sickles was enabled, by throwing a strong force upon Round Top Mountain, where a most desperate and bloody struggle ensued, to drive the enemy from it, and secure our foothold upon that important position." (Meade, in *Com. Rep.*, 332.)—"I went to what is called Bald Top, and from that point I could see the enemy's line of battle. I sent word to General Meade that we would at once have to occupy that place very strongly. He sent, as quickly as possible, a division of General Sykes's corps; but, before they arrived, the enemy's line of battle, I should think a mile and a half long, began to advance. The troops under General Sykes arrived barely in time to save Round Top Hill, and they had a very desperate fight to hold it."—Warren, *Ibid.*, 377. See also Crawford, *Ibid.*, 470.

³ The regiments which repelled the attack here were the 16th Michigan, the 44th and 140th New York, the 33d Pennsylvania, and the 20th Maine. Vincent was mortally wounded. Early next morning Meade telegraphed to Halleck: "I would respectfully request that Colonel Strong Vincent, 33d Pennsylvania Regiment, be made a brigadier general of volunteers for his gallant conduct on the field yesterday. He is mortally wounded, and it would gratify his friends as well as myself. It was my intention to have recommended him with others, should he live." The Secretary of War replied: "According to your request, Colonel Vincent has been appointed brigadier general for gallant conduct on the field."—*Com. Rep.*, ii., 492.





BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG -



UNION POSITION NEAR THE CENTER



SUMMIT OF LITTLE ROUND TOP, JULY 2.



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Longstreet, with the remainder of Hood's division, soon joined by that of McLaws, was pressing fiercely upon Birney's division.¹ Sickles was borne from the field with his right leg shattered. Hood was also wounded, losing an arm. Birney's line was so thin that when the enemy attacked any point he was forced to draw regiments thither from other places. Caldwell and Ayres, of Sykes's corps, were sent to his support. They held the ground stubbornly, but were forced back, and their retreat soon became almost a rout.² Crawford, with the Pennsylvania Reserves, was now coming up. He ordered a charge with his whole division, himself leading. The color-bearer of his leading regiment had been shot down; Crawford leaned from his horse, snatched the flag, and, waving it over his head, shouting "Forward, Reserves!" dashed down the slope, and met the enemy's skirmishers advancing through the open wheat-field. They recoiled, and then fled back to their line of battle, posted behind a stone wall. Here they made a brief stand, but were driven back, with heavy loss, to a ridge in their rear. Crawford, having advanced without supports, halted, and took position behind the stone wall, the enemy holding the ridge in front and the woods on his left. It was now dusk, and the action closed upon the extreme left.

For a time Humphreys, whose division had formed Sickles's extreme right, had hardly been molested, but in front of him lay Hill's whole corps, ready to be launched upon him at any moment. When Birney found that he could no longer hold his ground, he ordered Humphreys to change front, so as to join with him upon a new line, or rather upon that from which the corps had originally advanced. Just then the enemy, who had opened a sharp artillery fire, pressed down upon his front and both flanks. Humphreys fell back deliberately, although suffering fearfully. In a few minutes he lost 2000 out of his 5000 men. By the time he reached the crest of the Cemetery Ridge the enemy were close upon him. Birney's broken force streamed beyond the crest. But the line had now been formed, patched up, indeed, by brigades from almost every corps. Some of these, as well as Birney's, had been fearfully cut up. The Confederates surged up against this line, but were encountered with a fire so fierce that they halted, then recoiled. Hancock now ordered a counter-charge. Humphreys's men, who had never broken, turned and joined in the charge. The enemy had exhausted the impulse of their onset, and were driven back to the position where they had fallen upon Sickles.

Ewell's demonstration on the right was delayed until the fight on the left was drawing to a close. Most of Slocum's corps had been brought away from Culp's Hill, and the Confederates succeeded in effecting a lodgment within the exterior intrenchments of the extreme Union right. Elsewhere the assault was repelled.

The Federal losses on this day were fully 10,000 men, of which three fifths fell upon Sickles's corps, which lost fully half its numbers.³ The Confederate loss could not have been less, and was probably somewhat greater. The action of this day had decided nothing as to the ultimate issue. Lee indeed held the advanced line from which Sickles had been driven, but it was a line which Meade had never intended to occupy, and from which he would gladly have receded without a fight. Ewell's foothold upon the left had no significance unless it could be extended. Cemetery Ridge, from Round Top to Culp's Hill, remained intact. Still these "partial successes" encouraged Lee to hope that a stronger assault the next day might prove successful.⁴

FRIDAY, JULY 3.

Lee's general plan of attack was the same as that on the preceding day. Ewell was to press his advantage on the extreme right, while the main assault was to be upon the centre. But at daybreak Meade assumed the offensive against Ewell, and after a sharp contest, which lasted all the morning, drove him from the foothold which he had won within the Federal intrenchments on the extreme right. Now this point was fully two miles from the Seminary, where Lee had taken his post, and wholly hidden from it by the intervening heights. By some strange accident he received no tidings of the mishap which had befallen Ewell, and which, in the result, neutralized that third of the Confederate army on their left, leaving Meade at liberty to use almost his whole force, if need were, at any point. Supposing that Ewell would be able to aid by a strong demonstration, if not by a direct attack, upon the Union right, Lee resolved to assail the left centre, which held the low ridge between Cemetery Hill and Round Top.

All the morning was spent in preparation. The Confederate line along Seminary Ridge afforded an admirable position for artillery. Here, directly in front of the Union centre, at the distance of a mile, were concentrated a hundred and twenty guns. A great part of the Union line was so rugged that artillery could not be brought upon it, so that, although Meade had three hundred guns, he could reply with only about eighty at the same time. At an hour past noon the Confederates opened with all their batteries. For two hours, from a space of less than two miles, there was an incessant cannonade from two hundred guns. Upon no battle-field in the

world's history had such a bombardment been witnessed. The Confederate fire told fearfully upon the Federal guns; many were disabled, but their place, as well as that of those which had expended their ammunition, was supplied by others brought up from the rear. The infantry, sheltered behind the crests, suffered little. The contest was not to be decided by artillery. At length Hunt, the chief of artillery, ordered the fire to be slowly slackened, partly "to see what the enemy were going to do, and also to make sure that there should be a sufficient supply of ammunition to meet the attack,"¹ of which this cannonade was the sure prelude.

It was now three o'clock. Lee, supposing that the Federal batteries had been silenced and the infantry disordered, now slackened his fire, and at the instant his infantry columns emerged from the woods which crown Seminary Hill and advanced down its slope. Pickett's strong division of Longstreet's corps had early that morning come upon the field. They were veteran Virginians, and had not been engaged. To them, supported by Wilcox, was assigned the right of the attacking force; Heth's division, supported by two brigades, had the left.² Lee had proposed to advance his artillery to the support of his infantry, but found too late that it had expended its ammunition.³ In all, the attacking columns numbered about 18,000 men. They marched down the slope and across the plain in compact order and swiftly, but not with the fierce rush and wild yells which were wont to mark the Confederate onset. Never upon any stricken field since when, at Wagram, Massena wedged his column between the Austrian lines, was a more imposing spectacle than that now presented to friend and foe, watching from opposite crests, as this great column pressed on. All the Federal batteries from Round Top to Cemetery Hill opened upon them. Great gaps were plowed in their lines only to be closed again. At first the column headed for the left of the Union centre. Here Doubleday was posted. His division, which had suffered fearfully on the first day, had been strengthened by Stannard's Vermont brigade, and now numbered 2500 men. They were in lines five deep, and well strengthened by hasty intrenchments of rails and stones. The Confederates turned a little to their left, where Hancock's corps lay only two lines deep. In making this movement, Pickett's right wing, bending to his left, exposed his centre to a flank fire from Stannard, which threw it into some confusion,⁴ and was the first of the disasters crowded into the space of a few minutes. Still the column pressed on, galled by artillery in front, and obliquely from batteries on Round Top and Cemetery Hill. Hancock's infantry withheld their fire until the enemy were within three hundred yards, and then poured in volley after volley. Pettigrew's division, on the left, first met this sheet of flame, melted away before it like a snow-bank, and in five minutes were streaming back in wild confusion, leaving, besides their dead, a third of their numbers prisoners. Wilcox, meanwhile, had not advanced, and, Pettigrew being routed, Pickett's division was left alone, but undaunted. Their fierce onset struck first upon Webb's brigade, which, posted behind a low stone wall, occupied Gibbon's front line.⁵ They broke this, and charged right among the batteries, where a fierce hand-to-hand struggle took place. The officers on each side fought pistol to pistol, the men with clubbed muskets. Gibbon, as it chanced, was a little to the right, urging the regiments there to follow Pettigrew's routed troops, and was struck down. Webb's brigade fell back from the stone wall over which the assailants were surging, but only to the second line behind the crest. Gibbon had a little before sent Lieutenant Haskell to Meade with tidings that the enemy were upon him. He was returning, and had just reached the brow of the hill, when he met Webb's brigade falling back. Without waiting to find Gibbon, Haskell rode to the left, and ordered the whole division to the right to meet the advancing foe. At that critical moment the virtual command was exercised by this young lieutenant.⁶ The troops "came up helter-skelter, every body for himself, their officers among them," the only thought being to throw themselves into the breach. All that mortal men could do to win victory was done by Pickett's veterans in the five or ten immortal minutes which followed the instant when their battle-flags flaunted above the stone wall. Of his three brigade commanders, Garnet lay dead and Armistead fatally wounded within the Union lines, and Kemper was borne off to die; of fifteen field officers but one was unhurt. But all was vain; they were checked in front, and a murderous fire was poured into their flank. To advance, stand, or retreat was impossible; they flung themselves upon the ground with hands uplifted in token of surrender. Of that gallant band not one in four escaped; the others were dead or prisoners.

The few shattered remains of Pickett's and Pettigrew's commands were flying wildly to the rear, pelted by the Federal artillery and by that of the Confederates, who opened fire from all their batteries.⁷ Wilcox, who had

¹ Hunt, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 451.

² Heth's division was now commanded by Pettigrew.

³ "The enemy's fire slackening, Longstreet ordered forward the column of attack, consisting of Pickett's and Heth's divisions in two lines, Pickett's division on the right; Wilcox's brigade marched in rear of Pickett's right to guard that flank, and Heth's was supported by Lane's and Scale's brigades, under General Trimble. . . . Our batteries, having nearly exhausted their ammunition in the protracted cannonade that preceded the advance of the infantry, were unable to reply, or render the necessary support to the attacking party. This fact was unknown to me when the assault took place."—*Lee's Rep.*, MS.

⁴ "The prisoners state that what ruined them was Stannard's brigade on their flank, as they found it impossible to contend with them in that position, and they drew off all in a huddle to get away from it."—Doubleday, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 310.

⁵ Hancock in this action took charge of the whole line of battle, leaving Gibbon in command of the Second Corps.

⁶ "There was one young man on my staff who has been in every battle with me, and who did more than any other one man to repulse that last assault at Gettysburg, and he did the part of a general there, yet he has been [April, 1864] only a first lieutenant until within a few weeks. I have now succeeded in getting the Governor of Wisconsin to appoint him to a colonelcy, and I have no doubt he will before long come before the Senate for a star."—Gibbon, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 445.—He never came before the Senate for a star; among the killed at Cold Harbor not two months later we read the name of the gallant Colonel Franklin A. Haskell, 36th Wisconsin.

⁷ "As soon as that attack was over, and the enemy saw that their men had given up, they opened their batteries at once, upon their own men and ours at the same time, and after that cannonade they formed another column of attack, which advanced, but more upon our left."—Hunt, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 451.

¹ It must be borne in mind that a "division" in the Confederate army corresponded nearly to a "corps" in the Federal army.

² "I heard the cheers of the enemy, and looking in front across a low ground, I saw our men retreating in confusion; fugitives were flying across in every direction; some of them rushed through my lines. The plain in front was covered with the flying men. A wheat-field lay between two masses of wood directly in my front. The enemy in masses were coming across this field, driving every thing before them."—Crawford, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 470.

³ On the 10th of June this corps numbered 11,898; on the 4th of July there were but 5766, a loss of 6132. It took no active part in the action of July 3.—*Com. Rep.*, ii., 428.

⁴ "In front of General Longstreet the enemy held [that is, on Thursday] a position from which, if he could be driven, it was thought that our army could be used to advantage in assailing the more elevated ground beyond, and thus enable us to reach the crest of the ridge. After a severe struggle Longstreet succeeded in getting possession of and holding the desired ground. Ewell also carried some of the strong positions which he assailed, and the result was such as to lead to the belief that he would ultimately be able to dislodge the enemy. These partial successes determined me to continue the assault the next day."—*Lee's Rep.*

not advanced, moved forward as if to renew the assault. But he was checked by a hot artillery fire, and never came within musket-shot of the Union line. To Stannard, who had struck the first sharp blow in this fight, it was reserved to strike the last. He launched two regiments upon the retreating force, and cut off some hundreds from its rear.

Meanwhile Ewell on the Confederate left, and Hood and McLaws upon the right, lay wholly inactive. Hood had been held in check by Kilpatrick's cavalry upon his rear, and by Crawford upon what was now his flank. The cavalry had indeed made a sharp attack upon Hood, which, though disastrous to them, had much to do with the fortune of the day. Farnsworth's brigade leaped a fence and charged up to the very muzzles of a Confederate battery, from which they were repulsed with heavy loss, their commander being among the killed.¹

After the decisive repulse of the Confederate assault there were yet three hours of daylight. Meade rode to the left of his line and ordered Sykes to advance his corps. Crawford, who had held the position which he had won the night before, pushed a few regiments into the wood in his front. They struck Hood's foremost brigade, which broke and fled, running over another brigade which had thrown up strong intrenchments. These also fled without firing a shot, and Hood's whole division fell back a mile, leaving two or three hundred prisoners and 7000 stand of arms. Many of these had been flung away the previous day by Sickles's corps; these were piled up in heaps in order to be burnt.² But before the widely-scattered corps could be concentrated night was approaching, and the order for pursuit was countermanded.

Another scene in the great drama of the war was being enacted twelve hundred miles away. At the very moment when the Confederate column started upon its march to death two guns were fired from the confronting lines at Vicksburg. They were the signal that Grant and Pemberton were approaching to confer upon the terms of surrender for that strong-hold. During that hour in which two armies were struggling upon the heights of Gettysburg, those two men, seated apart in the shade of a great oak, were debating upon the conditions upon which the great Western prize should pass from the hands of those who had so long and stoutly held it into the hands of those who had so long and stoutly sought to win it. At the moment when the fragments of the Southern army streamed back in wild rout from the Northern cliffs, the great river of the West was permitted to run unvexed to the sea. The same shadow on the dial marked the time of the defeat at Gettysburg and the virtual surrender of Vicksburg.

When the Confederate army had, apparently, firmly established itself in Pennsylvania, it was thought that a favorable opportunity was presented to open negotiations with the Federal government. Alexander H. Stephens, the Vice-President, had offered to proceed to Washington as a military commissioner. On this 3d of July he set out, bearing a letter signed by Jefferson Davis as Commander-in-Chief of the Confederate forces, addressed to Abraham Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief of the army and navy of the United States. In case the President should refuse to receive a letter thus addressed, Mr. Stephens was to procure a duplicate of it, addressed to Lincoln as President of the United States, and signed by Davis as President of the Confederacy. Apparently there was no political purpose involved in this mission. Its ostensible object was to enter into stipulations by which the rigors of war might be mitigated; but it can not be doubted that it was undertaken just at this time in the confident persuasion that Lee had met with such success in the invasion of Pennsylvania as would dispose the Federal government to consent to negotiations of wider scope. But, while Stephens was awaiting permission to pass the Union lines, tidings came of the great victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, and the government refused to receive the commissioner, declaring that "the customary agents and channels are adequate for all needed communications and conference between the United States forces and the insurgents."

When Lee saw the remnants of Pickett and Pettigrew rushing back from their fruitless assault, he perceived that all hope of successful offensive operations had vanished. "We can not expect always to win great victories," he said. He could only hope to avoid a total rout. He contracted his lines from the right and left toward the centre, expecting and perhaps hoping to be attacked in turn.

When morning broke it became a matter of grave doubt with Meade what course to pursue. That the enemy had suffered severely was certain, but how severely could not be known. His own losses were great, and were supposed to be greater than they were. The corps commanders made hurried estimates of their remaining force. These summed up only 51,514 infantry.³ A council of war was held, to which Meade propounded four ques-

tions: Shall the army remain at Gettysburg? If we remain, shall we resume the offensive? Shall we move upon him by way of Emmettsburg? If the enemy is retreating, shall we pursue on his direct line of retreat? The decision was to remain.¹ During the day a heavy rain set in, and at nightfall Lee, finding that an attack would not be ventured upon his position, began his retreat to the Potomac. This having been discovered on the morning of the 5th, Sedgwick's corps, which had not been engaged, was dispatched to follow him up and ascertain his whereabouts. After a march of eight miles he found their rear-guard strongly posted in the mountain passes, where a small force could hold him in check for a long time, and thought it unadvisable to pursue upon that road. Meade thereupon decided, on the 6th, to follow Lee by a flank movement, by way of Frederick and Boonesboro, involving a march of eighty miles, to Williamsport, on the Potomac, whither Lee was clearly heading. Lee, having but forty miles to march, reached the river on the 7th. But the stream which he had crossed almost dry-shod a fortnight before had been swollen by the heavy rain, and was unfordable. A bridge which he had flung across had been destroyed by a sudden cavalry dash made by French from Harper's Ferry, and Lee had no alternative but to intrench himself, with his back to the river, and await an attack.

Meade marched slowly, feeling the way with his cavalry, but on the 12th his army came in front of the Confederate lines. He had been strengthened by French with 8000 men from Harper's Ferry; Couch had sent 5000 militia, under W. F. Smith, from Carlisle, and, moreover, considerable numbers were close at hand from Baltimore and elsewhere; but these were nine months' men, just brought from North Carolina and the Peninsula, who had only one or two days more to serve. Meade judged that these would add nothing to the real strength of his army for attack, and left them behind. Still his actual numbers exceeded those of the enemy by quite a half. Meade, although he supposed the enemy to be nearly of his own strength, was disposed to attack at once, but submitted the question to his seven corps commanders. Wadsworth and Howard were in favor of attack, the other five were opposed to it until after farther examination of the position. Meade yielded his opinion, and the next day was spent in reconnaissances. The result was that in the evening an order was issued for an advance of the whole army at daylight. But when morning broke the enemy had disappeared. Lee had succeeded in patching up a bridge, and the river had fallen so that it was barely fordable at a single point. Ewell crossed by the ford, Hill and Longstreet by the bridge. The Confederate army stood once more in Virginia, and the invasion of Pennsylvania, upon which so much had been staked, was at an end.

The Federal loss at Gettysburg was 23,190, of whom 2834 were killed, 13,733 wounded, and 6643 missing. The Confederate loss was about 36,000, of whom 13,733, wounded and unwounded, remained as prisoners. The entire loss to this army during the six weeks from the middle of June, when it set forth from Culpepper to invade the North, to the close of July, when it returned to the starting-point, was about 60,000.²

The Confederates were slow to admit the great disaster at Gettysburg. Three weeks after the battle Alexander H. Stephens, in a speech at Charlotte, N. C., declared that "General Lee's army had whipped the enemy on their own soil, and obtained vast supplies for our own men, and was now ready to again meet the enemy on a new field. Whatever might be the movements and objects of General Lee, he had entire confidence in his ability to accomplish what he undertook. He would come out all right in the end. The loss of Vicksburg was not an occurrence to cause discouragement or gloom. It was not as severe a blow as the loss of Fort Pillow, Island No. 10, or New Orleans. The Confederacy had survived the loss of these points, and would survive the loss of Port Hudson and other places. If we were to lose Mobile, Charleston, and Richmond, it would not affect the heart of the Confederacy. After two years' war the enemy had utterly failed, and if the war continued two years longer they would fail. So far they had not broken the shell of the Confederacy."³

Meade, having determined "to act on the defensive, and receive the attack of the enemy, if practicable," his dispositions for the battle were to be mainly determined by the movements of the enemy. He must place his force so as to meet the assault, at whatever point it should be made, only, of course, holding the strong points of his position. It is incomprehensible, therefore, why, during all the day of July 2, the Round Tops were left wholly unguarded; for this, as Meade clearly states, was "the key-point of my whole position. If the enemy had succeeded in occupying that, it would

¹ Birney, Sedgwick, Sykes, Hays, and Warren were for remaining for a day, and await the development of the enemy's plans; Slocum and Pleasonton were for a direct pursuit of the enemy, if he were retreating; Newton would move by way of Emmettsburg; Howard was doubtful.—See Butterfield, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 427; Birney, *Ibid.*, 368.

² The statement of the Union loss and of the number of Confederate prisoners is unquestionable, being given in Meade's official report. Of the Confederate losses no reports were published, and probably none were ever rendered, for Lee, in his report, says that he is not able to give them. Recourse must therefore be had to collateral evidence. The only point absolutely fixed is the report of numbers on July 31 (*ante*, p. 383), which shows that on July 31 there were "present for duty 41,000 men." If we accept Pollard's statement that this army set out 90,000 strong, the loss would be nearly 49,000. If our estimate of 100,000 as the original strength be accepted, the loss will be 60,000. This includes not only the losses at Gettysburg, but those incurred by casualty and wastage in the march from Culpepper to Gettysburg and back, which must have amounted to many thousands. Lee especially notes that the cavalry suffered severely from toil and privation. Further, if we accept the estimate of the forces actually present at Gettysburg, based upon Longstreet's statement (*ante*, p. 502), at 80,000, the losses of all kinds from July 1 to 31 would be 39,000, including those incurred from wastage and skirmishes on the way back from the Potomac to the Rappahannock; allowing 3000 for these, there remain 36,000 for Gettysburg and the days immediately following. Of this 14,000 prisoners, we judge from various indications that 8000 were unwounded—1500 captured on the field on the 1st of July, 5000 on the 2d, and 1500 in the pursuit. This leaves 28,000 for killed and wounded. Apportioning these in the same ratio as in the Union loss, there will be about 5000 killed and 23,000 wounded of the Confederate army.

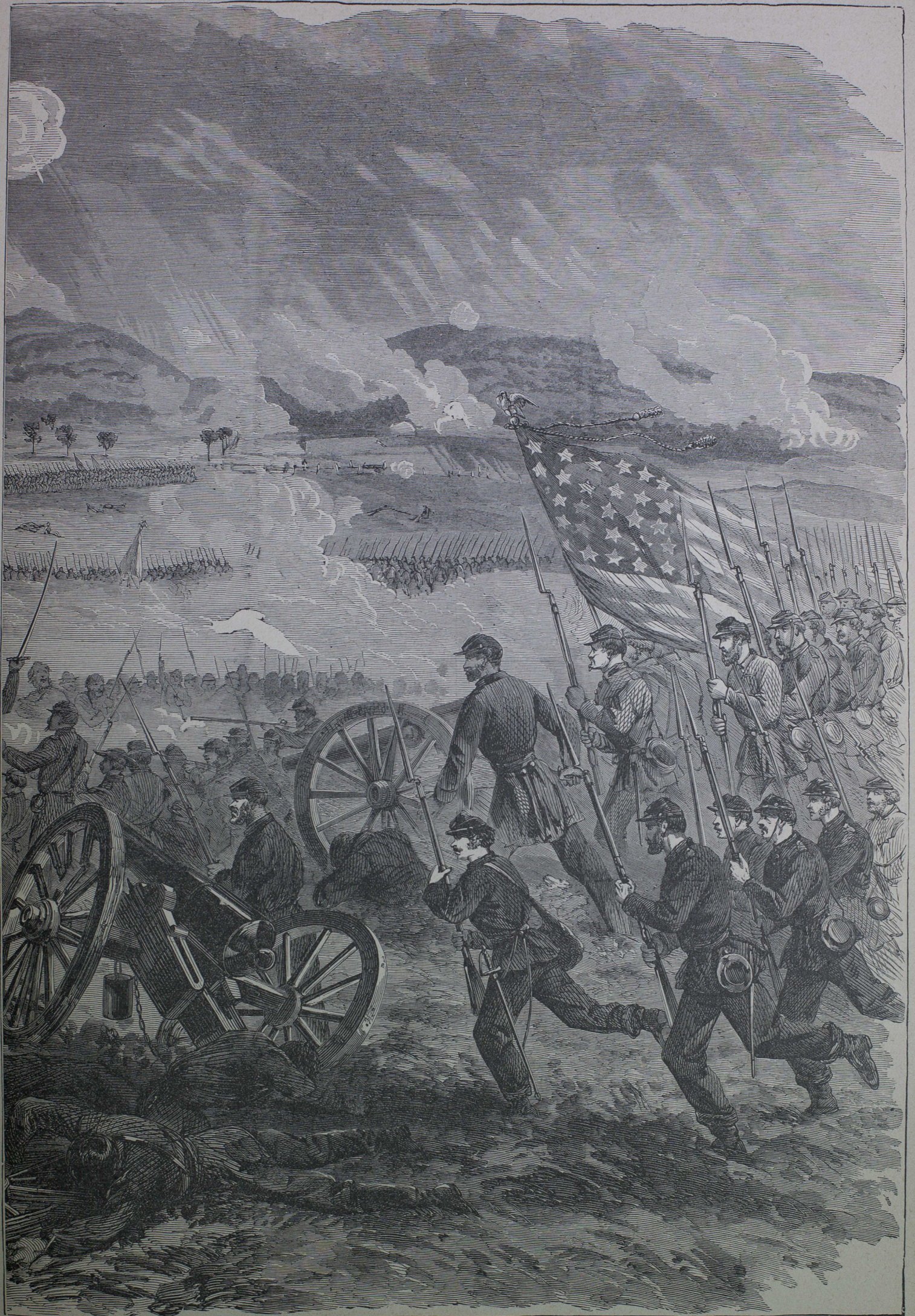
³ *Richmond Dispatch*, June 25.

¹ "I have always been of the opinion," says Pleasonton (*Com. Rep.*, ii., 360), "that the demonstration of cavalry on our left materially checked the attack of the enemy on the 3d of July, for General Hood was attempting to turn our flank when he met Farnsworth's and Merritt's brigades of cavalry; and the officers reported to me that at least two divisions of infantry and a number of batteries were held back, expecting an attack from us on that flank."—Gregg, also on the right, engaged Stuart's troopers, who had now, after a wide detour, come upon the field in that quarter. In modern warfare, the great results of a campaign, when brought to an issue upon a stricken field, are decided by the shock of infantry and artillery—the hands of an army; the services of cavalry—its eyes, being mainly preliminary. If, in narrating a great campaign, the historian could detail every striking episode, he would find in this campaign nearly a score of cavalry encounters, any one of which in the earlier stages of the war would have ranked as a battle.

² Crawford, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 471, and private statement.
³ First Corps, 5000; Second, 5000; Third, 5676; Fifth, 10,000; Sixth, 12,500; Eleventh, 5500; Twelfth, 7838. These corps had marched from the Rappahannock 78,245 strong (Butterfield, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 428), and had been re-enforced by fully 6000. This would give a loss of fully 33,000, besides that of the cavalry, which had been considerable, Buford's division having been so severely cut up on the first day that it had been sent to Westminster, twenty miles to the rear, to protect the trains and to recruit. (Pleasonton, *Ibid.*, 359.)—This estimated loss was, however, half greater than it actually proved to be. "This," says Butterfield (*Ibid.*, 427), "is always the case after a battle. A great many commanders come in and say that half their force is gone; the colonel reports that half his regiment is gone; that is reported to the brigade commander, who reports that half his brigade is gone, and so on."



GETTYSBURG.



have prevented me from holding any of the ground which I subsequently held to the last;" and it was only "fortunately that General Sykes was enabled, by throwing a strong force upon Round Top Mountain, where a most desperate and bloody struggle ensued, to drive the enemy from it, and secure our foothold upon that important position."¹ It was, indeed, a fortunate accident that a division of Sykes's corps, who were marching in quite a different direction, happened to be near enough to reach the summit of Round Top as the enemy were on the point of gaining it. "They arrived barely in time to save it, and they had a very desperate fight to hold it."² Again, if the advanced position taken by Sickles was as disadvantageous as it seemed to Meade, one may wonder why he was not withdrawn. The enemy were indeed advancing to the attack, but there was as yet some space between, and it would seem to have been easier to withdraw from an untenable position than to be driven from it.³ It is not easy to comprehend why Sedgwick's corps, stronger by half than any other one in the army, took no active part in the action of either day,⁴ or, at least, was not held in such a position that, when the enemy broke and fled at the close of the action, it could have been launched in pursuit,⁵ for there was yet three hours of daylight.

But, granting that it was not advisable to pursue and assail the enemy in the position of unknown strength which he occupied on the evening of the 31d, there can be little hesitancy in condemning Meade's failure to follow when it had been ascertained that Lee was in full retreat toward the Potomac. To make a wide detour with the expectation of striking him on the flank was equivalent to declining a battle; for Lee had so far the start that he reached the river at the same time that Meade began his flank march of eighty miles. He would have crossed at once, had he been able; but the stream, swollen by rains, was not fordable, and his only bridge had been destroyed. The Confederate army was in bad plight, and looked eagerly for the falling of the waters.⁶ When, upon the 12th, Meade came up with the enemy, he had every chance in his favor. He was in superior force; his army was in excellent condition and in high spirits; the enemy could not be other than wearied and disheartened. If the attack was unsuccessful, it could amount to no more than a check, for he could fall back to the South Mountain, where he would be unassailable; but if the assault was successful, the Confederates would be ruined, for they had at their back a swollen river, which they had no means of crossing. Meade was minded to fight; he had come for that purpose; but, unfortunately, he submitted the question to a council of war. He had been hardly a fortnight in command, and would not assume the responsibility of acting in opposition to the views of his corps commanders, so he yielded his opinion to theirs;⁷ unwisely as it seems to us, wisely as he was himself afterward convinced.⁸ When, after spending a day or two in reconnoitring, he ordered the attack to be made at daybreak on the 14th, he was too late. The enemy had crossed, and the swollen Potomac lay between. "The fruit was so ripe, so ready for plucking," said Lincoln, "that it was very hard to lose it." The President, indeed, expressed himself in terms of censure so sharp that Meade asked to be relieved from the command of the army.⁹ The request was refused.

¹ Meade, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 332.

² Warren, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 377. See also Crawford, *Ibid.*, 469.

³ Sickles indeed affirms that the position which he took was a good one. He says (*Com. Rep.*, ii., 298): "I took up that line, because it enabled me to hold commanding ground, which, if the enemy had been allowed to take—as they would have taken it if I had not occupied it in force—would have rendered our position on the left untenable, and, in my judgment, would have turned the fortunes of the day hopelessly against us." But the enemy did actually take the position held for a time by Sickles at the cost of half his corps, and were only repelled from the very line which Meade had proposed to hold.

⁴ "My corps did not take any important part in the battle of Gettysburg. It was frequently sent to different parts of the field to re-enforce and support other troops that were more vigorously engaged."—Sedgwick, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 460.

⁵ "I think that our lines should have advanced immediately, and I believe that we should have won a great victory. I was very confident that the attack would be made. General Meade told me before the fight that, if the enemy attacked me, he intended to put the Fifth and Sixth Corps on the enemy's flank. I therefore, when I was wounded, and lying down in my ambulance, and about leaving the field, dictated a note to General Meade, and told him if he would put in the Fifth and Sixth Corps, I believed he would win a great victory. I asked him afterward, when I returned to the army, what he had done in the premises. He said he had ordered the movement, but the troops were slow in collecting, and moved so slowly that nothing was done before night, except that some of the Pennsylvania Reserves went out and met Hood's division, and actually overthrew it. There were only two divisions of the enemy on our extreme left, opposite Round Top, and there was a gap of one mile that their assault had left; and I believe that if our whole line had advanced with spirit, it is not unlikely that we should have taken all their artillery at that point. I think that we should have pushed the enemy there, for we do not often catch them in that position; and the rule is, and it is natural, that when you defeat and repulse an enemy, you should pursue him."—Hancock, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 408.

⁶ "The Potomac was found to be so much swollen by the recent rains as to be unfordable. Our communications with the south side were thus interrupted, and it was difficult to procure either ammunition or subsistence. The enemy had not yet made his appearance, but, as he was in condition to obtain large re-enforcements, and our situation, for the reasons above mentioned, was becoming daily more embarrassing, it was deemed advisable to recross the river. Part of the pontoon bridge was recovered, and new boats built. Our preparations being completed, and the river, though still deep, being pronounced fordable, the army commenced to withdraw to the south side on the night of the 13th."—Lee's *Rep.*

⁷ The objections of the council were not to fighting, but to attacking them. "We all," says Pleasanton (*Com. Rep.*, ii., 361), "wanted to fight. There was one general, General French, I think, who remarked, after General Meade declared that he would not order an attack against the vote of the council, 'Why, it does not make any difference what our opinions are. If you give the order to attack, we will fight just as well under it as if our opinions were not against it.'"

⁸ Testimony, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 336.

⁹ Halleck to Meade, July 14: "I need hardly say to you that the escape of Lee's army without another battle has created great dissatisfaction in the mind of the President, and it will require an active and energetic pursuit on your part to remove the impression that it has not been sufficiently active heretofore." Meade to Halleck: "Having performed my duty conscientiously and

The operations of Lee at Gettysburg can be justified, or even explained, only upon the supposition that he was wholly deceived as to the strength of the enemy in his front. He had, indeed, very good reasons to suppose himself to be in greatly superior force. On Wednesday, when he had won a decided advantage, he had clearly two to one on the field. On Thursday morning he was, after his losses, stronger by more than half, and there was nothing in the operations of that day to evince that the Federals had been greatly strengthened. He had, indeed, gained important apparent advantages at two points. Ewell had effected a lodgment within the intrenchments on the Union right. On their left, the Federals had been driven back from what seemed to be a strong part of their chosen line; and though the attack had been finally repelled, still the ground contended for had been won, and was held. Owing to two accidents—the temporary withdrawal of Slocum's corps on the right, and the advance of Sickles on the left beyond the main lines—the Confederates had seen only a force inferior to their own, and it was reasonable to infer that this formed all which could have been brought into action by the enemy. On Friday, every thing, up to the moment of the final charge, confirmed this impression. Lee was ignorant that by noon Ewell had been driven out of the intrenchments which he had won the night before. The fierce cannonade, which was opened an hour after noon, was replied to by little more than half the number of guns, and of these the fire was slackened in such a way as to indicate that the Union batteries were effectually silenced. To suppose that Lee assailed the heights of Gettysburg knowing, or imagining that they were held by an army fully equal in numbers to his own, is to attribute to him a degree of rashness which is belied by his whole military career.

Lee's attack on the last day has been subjected to grave censure. If it was made with a knowledge of the numbers opposed to him, it was wholly indefensible. But it must be judged in the light of what he knew at the time. He was under no necessity of giving or even of receiving battle. The main object of the invasion had indeed failed. There was no chance that he could seize Baltimore or Philadelphia; none, indeed, that he could hold his position in Pennsylvania. But the way of return to Virginia was open to him. He was in a position where a battle which should be less than a victory so great as to involve the destruction of the army opposed to him would have been useless, while a defeat could hardly be other than ruinous. Having decided to attack, the assault should have been made with his whole force. After all his losses he had certainly 60,000 men; his plan of attack involved the use of hardly half of these, including Ewell's proposed demonstration. The main assault was committed to only 18,000.¹ What, asked Longstreet, would have been the result if the assault had been made by 30,000 men instead of 15,000? There can be no doubt that if this attack was to be made, it should have been made by twice the force. Yet, in the light of what we now know, it was well that this was not done. If twice as many men had been sent in they must have equally failed, and with twice the loss. The Confederates only just succeeded in touching the Union line of defense, and from this they were repelled in utter rout by less than a fifth of the force which could have been brought there in another twenty minutes. Only two divisions of Hancock's corps, with a single other brigade, were really engaged.² The other division of that corps, together with the corps of Howard, Reynolds, and Sickles, which had been badly cut up during the two previous days, were at hand; Slocum's corps had cleared itself from Ewell at Culp's Hill, on the right, and could have been brought into action on the left; moreover, there was Sedgwick's whole corps, which had not yet even touched the fight. Meade, while holding his right and left, could easily, if need were, have brought 50,000 men to the defense of his centre. What with his artillery, which swept the approach, it is safe to say that no 50,000 or 80,000 men, if they could have been hurled at once upon the Cemetery Ridge, could ever have carried it. "The conduct of the troops," says Lee, "was all that I could desire or expect, and they deserved success so far as it can be deserved by heroic valor and fortitude. More may have been required of them than they were able to perform, but my admiration of their noble qualities, and confidence in their ability to cope successfully with the enemy, has suffered no abatement from the issue of this protracted and sanguinary conflict." This task, "more than they were able to perform," was imposed upon his votaries by Lee. Upon him, therefore, must rest the blame for the failure to execute it.

to the best of my ability, the censure of the President is in my judgment so undeserved that I feel compelled most respectfully to ask to be immediately relieved from the command of this army." Halleck to Meade: "My telegram stating the disappointment of the President at the escape of Lee's army was not intended as a censure, but as a stimulus to an active pursuit. It is not deemed a sufficient cause for your application to be relieved."

¹ It is indeed said that McLaws and Hood, with some 15,000 more, were to have taken part, and that Lee was bitterly indignant at the "slow-footed McLaws" for not coming up. But there is in his report no indication that such was any part of his plan. The wording of it, indeed, seems to exclude any such purpose, and implies that the carrying of Cemetery Heights was intrusted to Pickett and Pettigrew.

² "The shock of the assault fell upon the second and third divisions of the Second Corps, and these were the troops, together with the artillery of our line, which fired from Round Top to Cemetery Hill at the enemy as they advanced, whenever they had the opportunity. Those were the troops that really met the assault. No doubt there were other troops that fired a little, but these were the troops that really withstood the shock of the assault and repulsed it. The attack of the enemy was met by about six small brigades of our troops, and was finally repulsed after a very terrific contest at very close quarters."—Hancock, in *Com. Rep.*, ii., 408.