

On the 28th of April Steele abandoned Camden, crossed the Washita, and, continually skirmishing with the enemy's cavalry, proceeded to the Sabine. By this retreat he had just escaped disaster. Kirby Smith, having thrust back General Banks, was now prepared to strike Steele. As it was, Smith assailed the rear of the retreating column as the latter was crossing the Sabine at Jenkins's Ferry. A portion of the army was already across the river, and thus the brunt of the attack fell upon the two rear brigades until re-enforcements were brought up by General Rice. The enemy succeeded finally in turning the left, but the line was restored, and by noon the attack was repulsed, and the army crossed the bridge. No artillery could be used on account of the nature of the ground. The Federal loss was 700 killed and wounded. That of the enemy was estimated as over three times that number.

With Fagan in his front menacing Little Rock, Steele's position was one of great peril. His animals were starving, compelling the destruction of nearly all his wagons. The roads were next to impassable, and over these the exhausted and hungry troops dragged their guns. Notwithstanding these difficulties, Steele succeeded in reaching Little Rock on the 2d of May.

By Steele's reverses about two thirds of the state were recovered by the Confederates, whose cavalry and partisan rangers, avoiding the few Federal strong-holds, ravaged the country without molestation or resistance. This situation was full of discomforts to those who had previously, encouraged by the prospects of restoration, which had been so flattering at the time of the capture of Little Rock in the previous autumn, committed themselves to the Union cause. During the winter of 1863-4 measures had been taken to restore the state to the Union. A Constitutional Convention was assembled at Little Rock on the 8th of January, in which 42 out of 54 counties were represented. A new State Constitution was framed, in which slavery was forever prohibited. Dr. Isaac Murphy was inaugurated provisional governor on the 22d of January. In March the new Constitution was submitted to the people, and ratified by over 12,000 votes; and state officers, three members of Congress, and a Legislature were elected. In April the Legislature convened, and elected United States senators. But all these acts were in great measure annulled by the helplessness of Steele's military force. In the autumn of 1864 a Confederate Legislature met at Washington, in Southwestern Arkansas. A message was sent to it by the Confederate Governor Hannigan, and A. P. Garland was elected to represent the state in the Confederate Senate at Richmond.

The command of the entire trans-Mississippi military division was in 1864 given to General Canby. The garrison at Matagorda had been withdrawn. After the Red River campaign, with the exception of Price's raid into Missouri in the autumn, there was no military campaign of any importance undertaken before the close of the war in 1865. Although this raid overlaps the Atlantic campaign, this is the proper connection in which it should be placed before the reader.

CHAPTER XL.

PRICE'S MISSOURI RAID.

Rosecrans assumes Command of the Department of the Missouri January 28, 1864.—Extent and Distribution of his Command.—The "Paw-paw" Militia.—Feud between Radicals and Conservatives.—Secret Organizations in Northern Missouri.—Price advances northward in September.—Rosecrans is re-enforced by A. J. Smith's Division.—Defense of St. Louis.—Price attacks Pilot Knob; Ewing retreats upon Rolla.—Rosecrans assumes the Offensive.—Pleasanton takes command of the Cavalry.—Progress of Price westward, and Movements of the Federal Forces.—General Curtis is attacked at Marshall and driven.—A good Opportunity thrown away by the Federals.—Pleasanton's Pursuit of Price.—Fight on the Big Blue.—Price is defeated, but escapes Southward.—Fight with his Rear-guard on the Osage.—Criticisms of the Campaign.

ROSECRANS, after having been superseded by Thomas as commander of the Department of the Cumberland, was, on the 28th of January, 1864, assigned to the command of the Department of the Missouri. His force consisted of about 12,000 men, mainly composed of state militia, out of ten regiments of which all but one were mounted men. To this there were added four regiments of three-years' volunteers, and a similar force of cavalry. There was also in process of organization a regiment (the Second Missouri) of heavy artillery. This command was distributed through the state at the most important posts—at Springfield, Rolla, Pilot Knob, Cape Girardeau, Jefferson City, Sedalia, Macon City, and north of the Missouri River, at St. Joseph.

There was also a force of Missouri militia, 2800 in number, in the north-western part of the state, "provisionally enrolled," and armed by the state government. It was composed in great proportion of disloyal citizens, a large number of whom had returned home from Price's army. Pledged to obey the laws of the state and of the general government, their especial business, as they understood it, was to take care of the peaceful sympathizers with rebellion, protecting them against the indignation of the Unionists. They were called the "Paw-paw militia," to identify them with "bush-whackers"—the paw-paw being the sort of fruit upon which this class of rebel sympathizers was supposed to subsist when it took to the bush.

This Paw-paw militia was a great element of disturbance in Missouri. There was a feud at this time between the two classes of citizens in the state known respectively as Radicals, or Abolitionists, and Conservatives—the latter class being generally understood to entertain a secret preference in favor of the Confederacy. It was confidently believed that the Paw-paws were, together with the Conservatives, in league with General Price, and that they only waited his approach to throw aside their assumed disguise. The disguise, after all, seemed only partial, especially in the great slaveholding

counties on the river, where the so-called Conservatives, evidently expecting a visit shortly from Price's army, warned the Union citizens "that the Loyalists had pretty nearly had their time, and that it would soon come to an end, and then the Disloyalists would have their time." Carefully observing these indications, and finding that arms were plentifully coming into the northern part of the state, Rosecrans felt that the apprehensions of the Unionists were well grounded, and, determined to be on his guard, he in the mean time quietly investigated the situation. Of course Rosecrans succeeded in detecting the whole plot. If the Confederates had been leagued with the powers of darkness, Rosecrans's spies would in some way have ferreted out their machinations; and even if the delicate business had required a trip to Hades, they would surely have accomplished it and reported to headquarters!

Rosecrans soon found that the basis of the hopes of the Confederate sympathizers in Missouri was a secret society. The organization of this society took the shape of lodges, in Northern Missouri mainly. The leaders proved to be Confederates. There seemed to be no limit to the organization, which existed even in Union settlements, and extended to the backwoods. It was apparent that its designs were military in character as well as political. An intelligent physician was employed by Rosecrans, and sent into Northern Missouri with a roving commission. This man made his way into one of the lodges, and advanced in degree until finally he obtained a ritual from the grand commander of the state. A closer scrutiny detected an extension of the organization into Indiana, Kentucky, and Illinois, and finally traced it to New York. In Missouri it was designated "The Order of American Knights," or "Sons of Liberty." The exiled Vallandigham was the supreme commander in the North, and General Sterling Price in the South. It was found that about 23,000 men were sworn to join Price on his appearance in Missouri. Under the auspices of this secret society, Vallandigham was to return to Ohio to attend the Democratic Convention at Chicago on the 4th of July. Simultaneously a rising was to occur in all the states in which the order existed, the existing officials were to be put out of the way, and the arsenals, forts, and public property were to be seized. A general Northern invasion was to be made at the same time by the Confederates.

In view of these developments, Rosecrans asked for an augmentation of his force in Missouri. General Hunt was sent by General Grant to that state on a tour of observation, and reported his belief that the inhabitants would behave themselves, that Rosecrans was too apprehensive, and that the force already in the department was larger than was needed.

Rosecrans went on with his investigation, and having accumulated 1000 pages of testimony, wrote a note to General Garfield at Washington, asking the latter to state to President Lincoln that he had this testimony, and obtain permission for him to send on a staff officer to lay the whole matter before the President.¹ President Lincoln requested Rosecrans to send his depositions by mail or express. Rosecrans replied that that would not be safe. The President then sent one of his private secretaries, Major Hay, to Missouri. He read the testimony, and reported to the President. No especial notice at this time seems to have been taken of the affair at Washington.

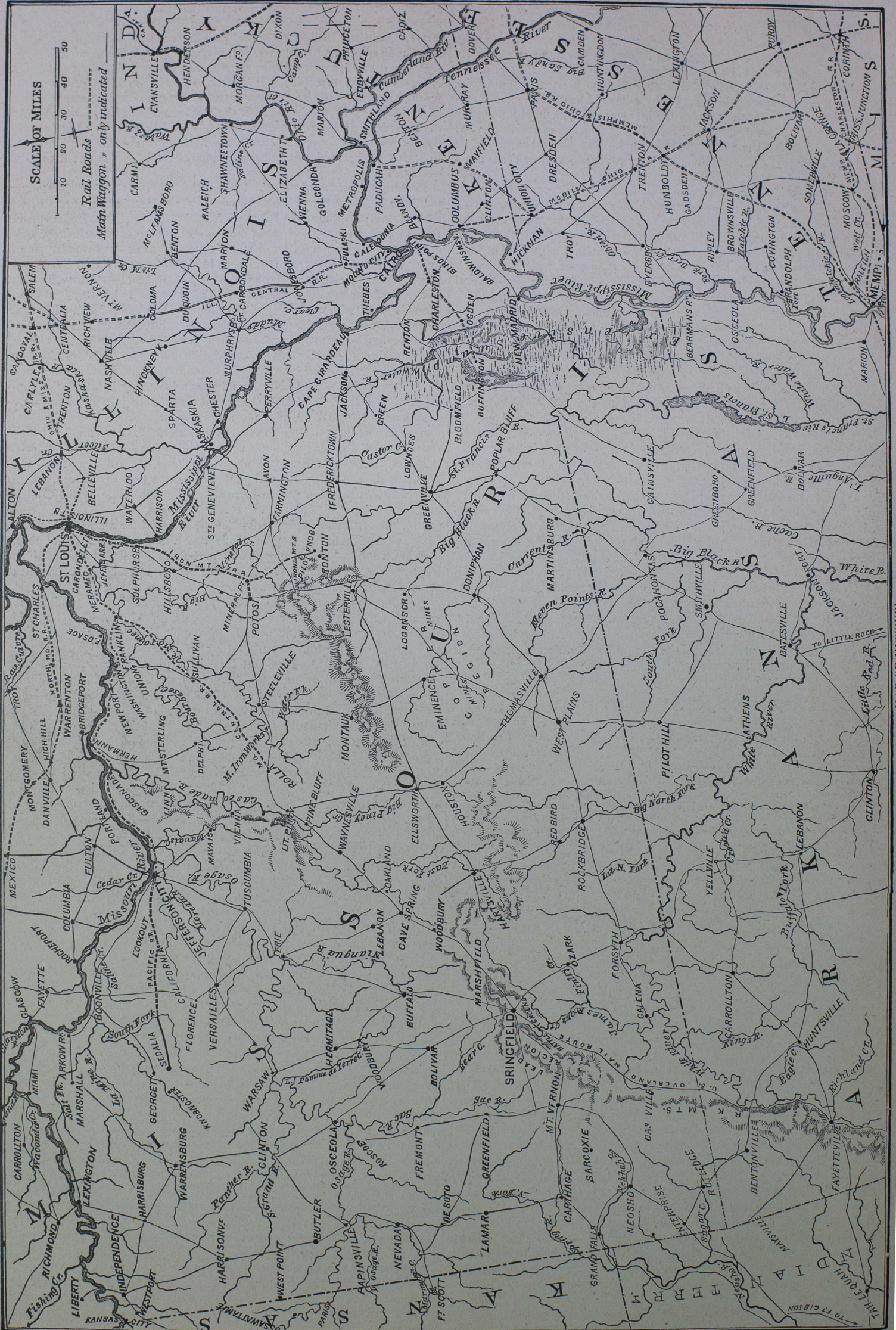
In the mean time, it was boldly proposed in one of the lodges of the Order of American Knights to commence the assassination of Union officers in St. Louis, "beginning with the provost-marshal, and then wind up with a grab at department headquarters." This startling proposition was laid over to the next meeting. Rosecrans immediately arrested the state commander of the society—the Belgian consul at St. Louis—the deputy commander, grand secretary, lecturer, and thirty or forty leading members, and committed them to prison. A dispatch was soon received from the War Department ordering the release of the Belgian consul. Rosecrans refused to comply with the order, knowing that it would not have been given if the government had been acquainted with all the facts of the case. A full representation of the matter having been laid before the President upon the return of Major Hay, the order of release was countermanded. Rosecrans was so impressed with the necessity of his action that he would have sooner resigned his command than have released the consul.

The Democratic Convention at Chicago was postponed, but the Confederate schemes in Missouri were so fully matured that they could not be thus postponed. The hostile flag was hoisted in Platte County on the 7th of July, and these peculiar exemplars of American knighthood commenced their operations. "From that time," says Rosecrans, "until after the expiration of the invasion and the expulsion of Price, there was nothing but murder and rapine wherever they could operate."

After the Fort Pillow massacre, the four regiments of three-years' volun-

¹ "Having about a thousand pages of testimony, obtained in the way I have just mentioned, I wrote a note to General Garfield, in Washington, requesting him to state to the President that I had this, and to say that, as the time for the dénouement was approaching rapidly, and that as the thing was not in a sufficiently perfect state to take action on without submitting it to him, more particularly as it concerned not only my own department, but the whole West of the nation, I wished permission from him to send a staff officer, who understood the subject, with the fragments of the testimony we had collected, to lay the whole matter before him, and answer such questions as the President desired to put; that I made this request, not because I doubted my right to send a staff officer to Washington, but because, when I had before sent a staff officer on a similar occasion, on a business of importance, he had been arrested by the Secretary of War, and I did not wish to subject another officer unnecessarily to the same indignity."—*Testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, Rosecrans's Campaign*, p. 52.

In regard to the arrest by the Secretary of War of one of his staff officers, General Rosecrans testified: "He [the secretary] arrested my senior aid, who brought letters to General Halleck and General Grant respecting the condition of Missouri, and the measures which I thought immediately necessary there to be of advantage to the government and to the state. He was arrested on the pretense that he had no permission to come here, under an old order that no officer should visit Washington without permission from the Secretary of War. Major Bond returned home under arrest; and, considering that the shortest way to get rid of his arrest would be to have him tried, I ordered his trial by a court composed of the highest officers in Missouri, Major General Pleasanton being president. That court unanimously and honorably acquitted him."—P. 54, *ibidem*.



MAP OF MISSOURI.



REFUGEES FROM NORTHERN MISSOURI ENTERING ST. LOUIS.

teers which Rosecrans had at St. Louis were withdrawn from his department, as was also most of his three-years' cavalry. To supply their place, eleven regiments of twelve-months' volunteers were raised during the summer. Price's movement did not commence as early as Rosecrans had been led to anticipate. Perhaps he was deceived as to the extent and intimacy of the correspondence between the Confederate military leaders and the "Sons of Liberty;" but as to the existence of some connection between them, or as to its intent, there could be no doubt. The first sign of the invasion appeared in Arkansas early in September, 1864. On the 3d Washburn warned Rosecrans that a junction was about to be formed of Shelby's cavalry at Batesville with Price's army for the invasion of Missouri. At this time A. J. Smith's command was passing Cairo on its way to Sherman's army in Northern Georgia. At Rosecrans's request, this division was halted by order of General Halleck, and sent to St. Louis. It was decided to await Price's movements instead of advancing against him before he should cross the border.

Price by the 23d of September had crossed the Arkansas River, and was reported to be near Batesville with two divisions of mounted men, three bat-

teries, and a large wagon train; his force probably numbered 15,000 men. He entered the southeastern portion of Missouri, and advanced northward toward Rolla, with a detachment thrown out toward Pilot Knob. General Ewing was now ordered to concentrate the troops of his district at Pilot Knob and Cape Girardeau, and two of Smith's brigades were pushed out toward the front so far as seemed consistent with the safety of St. Louis. St. Louis must be protected at all hazards, being the great *dépôt* of supplies for the trans-Mississippi armies. This city has three approaches by railroad south of the Missouri River: one from the east, *via* Independence and Jefferson City; another, that against which Price was marching, from the southwest, *via* Rolla; and a third from Memphis, *via* Pilot Knob. It was important to maintain Springfield, Rolla, Jefferson City, and Pilot Knob if possible, but the capture of either of these positions by the enemy must be suffered rather than that, by a general engagement at any of these points, the safety of St. Louis should be endangered. The Federal General Mower's division was daily expected from Arkansas, but, until the arrival of this re-enforcement, it was evident that Price had a free course open to him through the state.

A portion of Price's army on the 27th of September attacked Pilot Knob, which was held by one brigade under General Ewing. The fortifications at this post were rude, but sufficiently strong to enable the garrison of 1200 men to maintain an obstinate and successful stand against several times that number. But the enemy gained commanding positions, which would have finally compelled the surrender of the post. Therefore, during the night, Ewing, having blown up his magazines and spiked his heavy guns, retreated toward Rolla. In the repulse at Pilot Knob the enemy lost over 1000 men (Ewing says 1500), while the Federal loss was less than 100. Price had already a column at Potosi, little more than twenty miles north of Pilot Knob, thus compelling Ewing to retreat in the direction of Rolla, and apparently threatening St. Louis.

Perhaps it was on account of the lesson which he had learned at Pilot Knob that Price did not make an attempt to capture St. Louis. Certainly he did not continue his advance in that direction, but turned westward, and moved on Jefferson City. Ewing retreated rapidly to Webster, and there veered northward, and struck the railroad at Springfield at Harrison, having marched about sixty-six miles in thirty-nine hours, pursued by Shelby's cavalry. The latter made an attack at this point, but Ewing held his ground for thirty hours, until re-enforced by a detachment of Sanborn's cavalry, sent from Rolla to his assistance. The apparent helplessness of Rosecrans encouraged the "conservative" guerrillas in Northern Missouri, who now grew bolder in their work of murder and plunder.¹

It was at first hard to tell whether Price would strike for St. Louis, or for Jefferson City, or for Rolla. His delay to strike a decisive blow enabled Rosecrans to accumulate a force large enough for offensive operations. Five regiments of 100-days' men were brought from Illinois before the 1st of October, and were placed in the fortifications of St. Louis, relieving General Smith's command. A cavalry force had been raised of about 1500 men. Out of the East Missouri militia about 5000 men were organized into an effective division under General Pike. Besides these, under the direction of the mayor of St. Louis, about 5000 citizen soldiers volunteered for the defense of the city. A. J. Smith's command numbered 4500 men. General Mower's veteran division, 5000 strong, arrived at Cape Girardeau on the 5th of October. Adding to these the detachments at Rolla and Jefferson City, with Ewing's force, Rosecrans must, during the first week of October, have had a veteran army full 20,000 strong, besides over 12,000 citizen soldiers.

In the mean time the enemy, moving by Potosi, had advanced across the Meramee to Richwood, only 40 miles distant from St. Louis. Between this force and the city was A. J. Smith's command and 1500 cavalry. Demonstrating against Smith with a portion of his army, Price, on the 1st of October, after burning the railroad bridge across the Meramee at Moselle, turned toward Jefferson City, having crossed the Gasconade and the Osage by the 6th, burning Herman and the railroad bridge on his way. On the 7th he appeared before Jefferson City, garrisoned by troops from Rolla under Sanborn and McNeil, and fortified by hastily-constructed intrenchments. The garrison consisted of about 7000 men, nearly three fifths of whom was cavalry. Price drew up his forces, forming a line of battle three or four miles long about the city, but did not venture to assault; for, in addition to the intrenched force in his front, Smith, and Mower, and Winslow's cavalry were rapidly following, and would soon be upon his rear. Waiting only for his train to get a fair start, he resumed his march westward. On the 8th the Federal General Pleasonton, who had distinguished himself as a cavalry leader in Virginia, arrived at Jefferson City and assumed command. He dispatched Sanborn's cavalry with instructions to harass and delay the enemy until Mower and Smith could join the forces then in the capital. Sanborn advanced, and, in accordance with these orders, attacked Price's rear-

¹ "Rebel agents, amnesty oath-takers, recruits, 'sympathizers,' O. A. K.'s, and traitors of every hue and stripe, had warmed into life at the approach of the great invasion. Women's fingers were busy making clothes for rebel soldiers out of goods plundered by the guerrillas; women's tongues were busy telling Union neighbors 'their time was now coming.' General Fisk, with all his force, had been scouring the bush for weeks in the river counties in pursuit of hostile bands, composed largely of recruits from among that class of the inhabitants who claim protection, yet decline to perform the full duties of citizens, on the ground that they 'never truck no sides.' A few facts will convey some idea of this warfare, carried on by Confederate agents here, while the agents abroad of their bloody and hypocritical despotism—Mason, Slidell, and Mann in Europe—have the effrontery to tell the nations of Christendom our government 'carries on the war with increasing ferocity, regardless of the laws of civilized warfare.' These gangs of rebels, whose families had been living in peace among their loyal neighbors, committed the most cold-blooded and diabolical murders, such as riding up to a farm-house, asking for water, and, while receiving it, shooting down the giver, an aged, inoffensive farmer, because he was a radical 'Union man.' In the single sub-district of Mexico the commanding officer furnished a list of near 100 Union men who, in the course of six weeks, had been killed, maimed, or 'run off' because they were 'radical Union men' or d-d Abolitionists. About the 1st of September Anderson's gang attacked a railroad train on the North Missouri, took from it twenty-two unarmed soldiers—many of them were on sick-leave—and, after robbing, placed them in a row and shot them in cold blood; some of the bodies they scalped, and put others across the track and ran the engine over them. On the 27th, this gang, with numbers swollen to 300 or 400 men, attacked Major Johnson, with about 120 men of the Thirty-ninth Missouri Volunteer Infantry, raw recruits, and, after stampeding their horses, shot every man, most of them in cold blood. Anderson, a few days later, was recognized by General Price at Booneville as a Confederate captain, and, with a verbal admonition to behave himself, ordered by Colonel Maclane, chief of Price's staff, to proceed to North Missouri and destroy the railroads, which orders were found on the miscreant when killed by Lieutenant Colonel Cox, about the 27th of October."—Rosecrans's Report.

guard at Versailles, and found that the enemy was moving to Booneville, on the Missouri. Pushing his attack with vigor, he compelled the enemy to form in line of battle; but soon finding that if he remained he would probably be surrounded, Sanborn fell back a few miles to California, where he was joined by Colonel Catherwood with A. J. Smith's cavalry on the 14th. Smith's infantry in the mean time reached Jefferson City, followed on the 16th by Winslow's cavalry, and on the 17th by nearly all of Mower's division.

By this time Price had reached Marshall, 25 miles west of Booneville. A detachment of cavalry under Shelby had crossed the Missouri at Arrow Rock, about midway between the two places last mentioned, and, moving up the river to Glasgow, which he took after a fight of seven hours, captured a part of Colonel Harding's regiment—the Forty-third Missouri—with small detachments of the Ninth Missouri militia and Seventeenth Illinois Cavalry. The Federal forces were fast closing in upon the enemy's rear, and more vigorous movement on their part ought to have resulted in an important and decisive victory. Smith and Mower had reached the Lamine River, and on the 18th and 19th the former advanced westward to Dunksburg, while still farther to the left General Pleasonton, now in command of the entire cavalry force, extended to Warrensburg.

Price leisurely proceeded to Lexington, 40 miles west of Marshall, where on the 19th he attacked General Curtis, who, after a slight skirmish, retreated to Independence. The enemy pursued to the Little Blue, where he struck General Blunt's Kansas division with such force that the retreat was continued to the Big Blue. When Rosecrans learned that the enemy was at Lexington, he ordered Pleasonton, who was demonstrating toward Waverly, to push on to Lexington, and Smith to follow. Of course the enemy had left before their arrival. Supposing that Price would be unable to cross the Big Blue in the face of Curtis's force, and would therefore move southward, Rosecrans ordered Pleasonton to harass the enemy's rear with McNeil's brigade, moving the remainder of his command to Lone Jack, to which point Smith was hurrying, having returned from his mistaken chase after the enemy. This order was unfortunately conditional; and Pleasonton, instead of complying with it, supposing that the enemy would continue his flight westward, kept on in pursuit, crossing Little Blue on the 22d, and, driving Price's rear-guard to Independence, made a charge at nightfall, capturing the place and taking two guns. Dispatching McNeil's brigade to Santa Fé to intercept the enemy, he telegraphed to Rosecrans requesting him to send Smith to Lexington. Rosecrans reluctantly complied with his request. On the morning of the 23d Pleasonton moved against the enemy at the crossing of the Big Blue, where a general engagement was fought, beginning at 7 A.M., and lasting until 1 P.M., when Shelby, finding that Marmaduke and Fagan were giving way, turned on Pleasonton, and for a moment shook Sanborn's brigade; but the skillful use of artillery and a gallant charge of the cavalry decided the fortunes of the day against the enemy, who now retired, pursued by Pleasonton and Curtis. Smith, reaching Independence at 5 P.M., was ordered to move by a forced march that night to Hickman's Mill, to strike the enemy in flank while passing that point. "Had he been ordered," reports Rosecrans, "and marched for that point instead of Independence the day before, General Smith would have arrived in time to strike the enemy's compact column and train with 9000 infantry and five batteries; but it was too late. He did not reach the mill until long after not only the enemy's, but our own columns had passed there."

Pleasonton continued the pursuit, the infantry following as rapidly as possible for support. On the banks of the Osage Price's rear-guard, composed of Marmaduke's cavalry, was overtaken, after a chase of 60 miles, on the 25th. Pleasonton here, by a furious charge, routed this Confederate force, capturing eight guns, several wagons, and nearly 1000 prisoners, including Generals Marmaduke and Cabell.

This campaign had lasted 48 days. Rosecrans reports his loss as 174 killed, 336 wounded, and 171 prisoners. Price had lost 1958 prisoners and 10 guns, and had succeeded in none of the objects for which his expedition had been undertaken. Missouri remained henceforth undisturbed by the enemy, and Price's invasion was the last important event of the war west of the Mississippi River.

Strategically the campaign on Rosecrans's part was not managed with that vigor and comprehension which we should have expected. But it was so ably conducted that, while the enemy was not made to suffer the full extent of punishment to which his audacity exposed him, he did not, on the other hand, inflict any material damage upon the Federal cause.¹

¹ General Grant says of this campaign:

"The impunity with which Price was enabled to roam over the State of Missouri for a long time, and the incalculable mischief done by him, shows to how little purpose a superior force may be used. There is no reason why General Rosecrans should not have concentrated his forces, and beaten and driven Price before the latter reached Pilot Knob."

In view of all the circumstances of the case, and especially considering the domestic difficulties which Rosecrans encountered in Missouri, this criticism, notwithstanding its high military authority, does not seem to us to be quite fairly sustained by facts.