

CHAPTER XLVIII.

SHERMAN'S CAMPAIGN.—THE MARCH TO THE SEA.

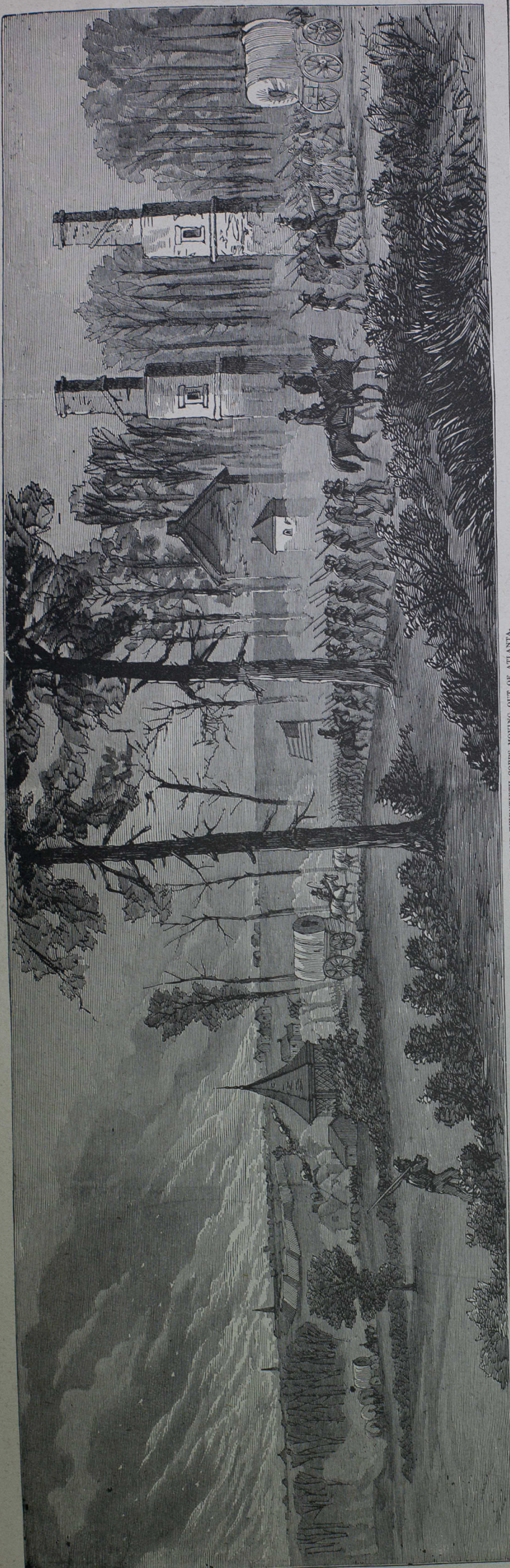
After the Battle of Nashville the East becomes the Theatre of the War.—Estimate of General Sherman's Generalship.—He marches from Atlanta.—Constitution of his Army.—The Order of March.—The Movement not simply "a big Raid."—The Country traversed.—Occupation of Milledgeville.—Action at Griswoldville.—Crossing of the Oconee.—Sandersville occupied.—Kilpatrick's Movement on Millen.—Destruction of Railroads.—Apprehension in the North.—Crossing of the Ogeechee.—The Approaches to Savannah.—Capture of Fort McAllister, and communication with Dahlgren's Fleet.—Investment of Savannah.—Sherman demands a Surrender.—Hardee declines.—Movement against the Charleston and Savannah Railroad.—Hardee's Retreat.—Sherman enters Savannah.—Results of the March.—The Amount of Property captured or destroyed.—Character of the Defenses of Savannah.—Conduct of Sherman's Army on the March.

BY Thomas's victory at Nashville the Confederate army of Tennessee had been eliminated from the problem of the war. After this event the continuance of the struggle on the part of the Confederate government involved a useless waste of human life. The interest of the war from this point is transferred to the East. With the exception of the conflict terminating in the capture of Mobile, there were, after the battle of Nashville, no great military operations in the West. We are therefore prepared to follow Sherman's March to the Sea, and thence to Goldsborough in North Carolina.

Since General Sherman had been given an independent command in the West, he had fully illustrated his characteristic qualities as a great captain. As a subordinate he had shown these qualities only in a limited degree, because in that capacity he could only display his power to execute operations which were conceived and planned by others. No officer had so completely won the confidence of General Grant. At Shiloh his military talents were so conspicuous that Grant afterward acknowledged that the final triumph of the national arms on that occasion was chiefly due to Sherman. Of course, in this acknowledgment, we must make large allowances on the score of General Grant's natural modesty; but, if he was modest, he was also just. Sherman's prompt and unquestioning obedience to the orders of his superior officer ought not, perhaps, to be remarkable, but it was, nevertheless. He was never behind time. His comprehension of the task assigned him made misconception or mistake impossible, and he never lacked in vigor of execution. It is true that he sometimes failed in the object sought. His assault on the Confederate works at Chickasaw Bayou has been frequently adduced as proof of his indiscretion. But it must be remembered, in the first place, that he was acting in obedience of positive orders, and, secondly, that he was ignorant of the failure that had attended General Grant's movement in the rear, and it was this latter circumstance alone which made the assault indiscreet, or its success impossible. The assault on Kennesaw has also been adduced for a similar purpose. But here, too, the critics have a losing case, unless they can withstand the testimony of General Thomas and the best officers of Sherman's army, who assert that success must have followed the attempt but for the fall of Harker and McCook at a critical moment. The popular conception of General Sherman is greatly at fault. It has been the fashion to accord him brilliancy of conception—great strategic powers—and to ignore those characteristic qualities of his mind without which his strategy would have been ludicrous and useless.

In the first place, a factitious distinction has been made between *strategy* and *tactics*, and Sherman has been pronounced a great strategist, but an inferior tactician. Strategy properly includes tactics. The commander who can so determine and control the movements of his army as to, in the surest way, and with the least friction and waste, accomplish the object in view, is a great strategist.<sup>1</sup> If we confine these movements to the disposition of an army upon the field of battle, then we have what is properly termed tactics. Of course the original conception of the object and plan of a campaign is back of both strategy and tactics, and depends upon the speculative side of military genius—the power of ideal combination. This power of combination may exist without the practical knowledge or experience necessary to successful strategy or to successful tactics. But this is rarely the case, for the very practicability of the theoretical scheme must be determined by a knowledge of the material elements involved. So also it might happen that a great strategist should not be a great tactician—that a commander might be successful in large movements, and fail in his combinations on the battle-field and in the presence of the foe. But such cases must of necessity be very exceptional; for the skillful disposition of an army on a large scale would naturally involve its skillful manipulation on a limited field of operations. The exception could only occur by reason of certain elements involved in actual battle which demand peculiar qualities in the commander. Thus a general might exhibit brilliant strategic powers in bringing his army upon a well-chosen field of battle, or in forcing a battle upon his antagonist, and yet utterly fail in the battle itself through a lack either of promptness or of self-control in the presence of the enemy. Certainly Sherman lacked none of the qualities demanded upon the battle-field. In what, then, did his poor tactics consist? Was it for his strategy or his tactics that Grant commended him at Shiloh? Or upon what battle-field did he illustrate his weakness in tactics? If the battle of Chickasaw Bayou was a failure, that certainly was not Sherman's fault. No general on earth could have succeeded there, and Sherman only obeyed orders in fighting there. Under the circumstances he had no discretion, any more than he had at Tunnel Hill, in the battle of Chattanooga. But if we consider the tactics displayed by Sherman in the Atlanta campaign, where he had an independent command, do we find him deficient? It is true that, at Resaca, Sherman failed to destroy Johnston's army, where that result was possible. But why? Simply because his orders were not executed. But the order given is to decide his tactical ability, and not its execution by a subordinate. Surely all the op-

<sup>1</sup> This is clear from the very etymology of the term *strategy*, which is from two Greek words—*stratos*, an army, and *ago*, to move.



THE FOURTEENTH AND TWENTY-SEVENTH CORPS MOVING OUT OF ATLANTA.



Mower.

Slocum. Blair.

Jeff. C. Davis.

Sherman.

SHERMAN AND HIS GENERALS.

Hazen.

Kilpatrick. Logan.

Howard.

erations of the Atlanta campaign were tactical as well as strategic, and the success of these operations was as much due to skillful tactics as it was to skillful strategy.

It must be admitted that Johnston, by leaving open the approach to Resaca through Snake Creek Gap at the beginning of the campaign, afforded Sherman a splendid opportunity to destroy the Confederate army. And Sherman designed to accomplish this. He only failed through the excessive caution of McPherson. A similar opportunity was offered by Hood at the close of the Atlanta campaign by the division of his army. And here again, while Sherman's tactics were faultless, his subordinate officers failed him. But in both cases—at Resaca and Jonesborough—if Sherman's orders had been executed, the result would have involved the annihilation of the Confederate army.

It has also been said that Sherman could not organize and discipline an army. To this we only need reply that, so far as the purposes of war are concerned, Sherman's army was as well disciplined and efficient as any other. Beyond that it would be too curious to inquire.

General Sherman's conceptions were always bold, and his daring was only equalled by his confidence in ultimate success. No movement ever made by General Thomas or General Grant surpassed that by which Sherman transferred the bulk of his army to Jonesborough. Sherman was never vacillating or irresolute. His plans, once formed, were immutable. He was also as remarkable for discretion as for boldness. Thus his audacity never verged upon rashness. He was the Centaur general, being at once the fiery horse and the curbing rider. No pet military project could infatuate him. No better illustration of Sherman's caution can be given than his manner of undertaking the boldest movement of the war—his March to the Sea. With Hood in his front, he would not attempt the movement without an objective point on the coast already secured and awaiting his arrival. And even when Hood moved to the rear, leaving him an open path eastward, Sherman followed him, and, driving him far westward, waited and watched until he was over 200 miles west of Atlanta, and Thomas was prepared to meet his invasion.

Sherman's foresight was almost prophetic. At the beginning of the war he discerned the gigantic proportions which it would assume. He was laughed at, and thought insane, when he asserted that 200,000 men were necessary to prosecute the first great Western campaign; but time proved that he was right, and that the insanity with which he had been charged was lodged in other brains than his. He predicted Butler's failure at Fort Fisher. No military man ever had a clearer discernment between the practicable and the impracticable, or as to what might be accomplished with given means. He was as sure of the success of his grand march before he set out as when he reached its termination; he predicted the time of his arrival upon the coast, and anticipated the full effect of the movement in its bearings upon the war.

This foresight is not so strange when we consider Sherman's wonderful knowledge of the minute details of the conflict. He had been not only a careful student of military science, but also a careful observer of the country in which the war was conducted. He knew its mountains, its rivers, its railroads, its resources, and its people. His experience in regard to all these matters had been large before the war began, but since that time he had made them an especial study. What he once learned he never forgot. The movements of Cape Fear River were as well known to him as those of the Red River, upon whose banks he had lived. The whole Southern country was a grand chart before his mind; no geographical feature escaped him; he knew the natural products of each district, its population, its proportion of slaves, its cattle, its horses, its factories. This kind of knowledge his mind seemed to absorb and retain almost without effort. Yet, with all this attention to the *minutiae* of campaigning, Sherman always based his plans upon general principles. Therefore, while he knew perfectly how to feed, march, and fight an army of a hundred thousand men, the conceptions which controlled him in the use of this army, and which formed the basis of his campaign, were calculated to accomplish the grandest results possible with the means employed. Sherman's military economy, as illustrated in the Atlanta campaign, and the operations which were its natural sequel, will hereafter be to the military student the most instructive portion of the American Civil War. The greatest results were accomplished with the smallest possible waste of force.

Perhaps the most characteristic point of Sherman's generalship was his perfect appreciation of the American soldier and of the discipline best adapted to his peculiarities. He was *par excellence* the American general, and his army was the military microcosm of the republic, for the maintenance of which it fought and marched. Both on the part of the general and his army there was perfect military subordination; but there was, at the same time, absolute freedom from conventional or arbitrary restraint in minor details. The martial enthusiasm of the soldier was not held in check by petty restrictions. Sherman scouted the idea that the American army must be made a mere machine. In the place of a purely mechanical discipline he substituted one which recognized the intelligence, not only of his subordinate officers, but of every private in the army. To inspire his soldiers with his own ideas appeared to him a more efficient means of control than the establishment over them of a military autocracy. The result fully vindicated his peculiar mode of discipline. His army moved as if by in-

spiration; but its movements, like that of the tides, were mathematically accurate and certain. There was no lagging from the march, there was no shrinking from battle.

It was a grand moment for Sherman when he had been, by Hood's folly, released from his dependence upon the railroad in his rear. In the event of an advance upon an army in his front, this long line of communication was a serious and unavoidable perplexity. From Atlanta to Allatoona, Sherman's sub-base was 40 miles. Thence to Chattanooga was 98 miles. But Chattanooga itself was only a *dépôt*, and was exposed to siege and capture, unless a large portion of the army was detached for its protection. Thus Sherman's real base of supplies is pushed back to Nashville, 290 miles from Atlanta, and, in the case of a successful Confederate attack on Nashville, back to Louisville, nearly 500 miles. This perplexity, as we have seen, was removed by Hood's invasion of Tennessee; and by giving Thomas an army sufficient to meet Hood, Sherman was permitted to ignore his connection with the North, and move eastward with from 60,000 to 70,000 men.

On the 16th of November, Sherman's army, with the smoking ruins of Atlanta in his rear, began its great march.<sup>1</sup> The right wing of the army, under General Howard, with Kilpatrick's cavalry, was put in motion in the direction of Jonesborough, and McDonough, with orders to make a strong feint on Macon, to cross the Ocmulgee near Planter's Mills, and rendezvous in the neighborhood of Gordon in seven days. At the same time, Slocum, with the Twelfth Corps of the left wing, moved by Decatur, with orders to tear up the railroad from Social Circle to Madison, to burn the railroad bridge across the Oconee, east of Madison, and, turning south, to reach Milledgeville on the same day that Howard should reach Gordon. General Sherman in person accompanied Jeff. C. Davis's corps—the Fourteenth—on the road through Covington, directly to Milledgeville. All the troops were provided with good wagon trains, loaded with ammunition and supplies, approximating 20 days' bread, 40 days' sugar and coffee, with a double allowance of salt, and beef-cattle sufficient for 40 days' supplies. The wagons were supplied with three days' rations in grain. Each brigade commander was instructed to organize a foraging party, to gather near the route corn, forage, meat, and vegetables, aiming at all times to keep in the wagon trains at least 10 days' provisions and three days' forage. The cavalry was to receive orders direct from General Sherman. Soldiers were forbidden to enter the dwellings of the inhabitants or to commit any trespass, but were permitted, during a halt or when in camp, to gather vegetables, and to drive in stock in their front. On the march the gathering of provisions was to be left entirely to regular foraging parties. Army commanders were permitted to destroy mills, houses, cotton-gins, etc., but such destruction must only take place in regions where the army should be molested. Horses, mules, and wagons were to be appropriated as they were needed, but discrimination must be made in these captures, the rich rather than the poor being made the victims. No family was to be deprived of any thing necessary to its maintenance. Able-bodied negroes might be taken along, in so far as this would not cause embarrassment in the matter of supplies. The troops were to start each morning at 7 o'clock, and make about 15 miles per day.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Major Nichols thus describes the spectacle of Atlanta in flames: "A grand and awful spectacle is presented to the beholder in this beautiful city, now in flames. By order, the chief engineer has destroyed by powder and fire all the store-houses, *dépôt* buildings, and machine-shops. The heaven is one expanse of lurid fire; the air is filled with flying, burning cinders; buildings covering two hundred acres are in ruins or in flames; every instant there is the sharp detonation or the smothered booming sound of exploding shells and powder concealed in the buildings, and then the sparks and flame shoot away up into the black and red roof, scattering cinders far and wide.

"These are the machine-shops where have been forged and cast the rebel cannon, shot and shell that have carried death to many a brave defender of our nation's honor. These warehouses have been the receptacle of munitions of war, stored to be used for our destruction. The city, which, next to Richmond, has furnished more material for prosecuting the war than any other in the South, exists no more as a means for injury to be used by the enemies of the Union.

"A brigade of Massachusetts soldiers are the only troops now left in the town: they will be the last to leave it. To-night I heard the really fine band of the Thirty-third Massachusetts playing 'John Brown's soul goes marching on,' by the light of the burning buildings. I have never heard that noble anthem when it was so grand, so solemn, so inspiring."

<sup>2</sup> The following is a copy of the general orders for the march, issued by General Sherman at Kingston, November 9th:

"I. For the purpose of military operations, this army is divided into two wings, viz., the right wing, Major General O. O. Howard commanding, the Fifteenth and Seventeenth Corps; the left wing, Major General H. W. Slocum commanding, the Fourteenth and Twentieth Corps.

"II. The habitual order of march will be, whenever practicable, by four roads, as nearly parallel



ATLANTA IN RUINS.



JUDSON C. KILPATRICK.

The line of march of the several corps of Sherman's army we shall not attempt to follow in detail, but will merely trace the general features of the movement. In the first place, it must be distinctly asserted that Sherman's

as possible, and converging at points hereafter to be indicated in orders. The cavalry, Brigadier General Kilpatrick commanding, will receive special orders from the commander-in-chief.

"III. There will be no general trains of supplies, but each corps will have its ammunition and provision train, distributed habitually as follows: Behind each regiment should follow one wagon and one ambulance; behind each brigade should follow a due proportion of ammunition wagons, provision wagons and ambulances. In case of danger, each army corps should change this order of march by having his advance and rear brigade unencumbered by wheels. The separate columns will start habitually at seven A.M., and make about fifteen miles per day, unless otherwise fixed in orders.

"IV. The army will forage liberally on the country during the march. To this end, each brigade commander will organize a good and sufficient foraging party, under the command of one or more discreet officers, who will gather near the route traveled corn or forage of any kind, meat of any kind, vegetables, corn meal, or whatever is needed by the command; aiming at all times to keep in the wagon trains at least ten days' provisions for the command and three days' forage. Soldiers must not enter the dwellings of the inhabitants or commit any trespass; during the halt or a camp they may be permitted to gather turnips, potatoes, and other vegetables, and drive in stock in front of their camps. To regular foraging parties must be intrusted the gathering of provisions and forage at any distance from the road traveled.

"V. To army corps commanders is intrusted the power to destroy mills, houses, cotton-gins, etc., and for them this general principle is laid down: In districts and neighborhoods where the army is unmolested, no destruction of such property should be permitted; but should guerrillas or bushwhackers molest our march, or should the inhabitants burn bridges, obstruct roads, or otherwise manifest local hostility, then army corps commanders should order and enforce a devastation more or less relentless, according to the measure of such hostility.

"VI. As for horses, mules, wagons, etc., belonging to the inhabitants, the cavalry and artillery may appropriate freely and without limit; discriminating, however, between the rich, who are usually hostile, and the poor or industrious, who are usually neutral or friendly. Foraging parties may also take mules or horses to replace the jaded animals of their trains, or to serve as pack mules for the regiments or brigades. In all foraging, of whatever kind, the parties engaged will refrain from abusive or threatening language, and may, when the officer in command thinks proper, give written certificates of the facts, but no receipts; and they will endeavor to leave with each family a reasonable portion for their maintenance.

"VII. Negroes who are able-bodied, and can be of service to the several columns, may be taken along; but each army commander will bear in mind that the question of supplies is a very important one, and that his first duty is to see to those who bear arms.

"VIII. The organization at once of a good pioneer battalion for each corps, composed, if possible, of negroes, should be attended to. This battalion should follow the advance-guard, should repair roads and double them if possible, so that the columns will not be delayed after reaching bad places. Also, army commanders should study the habit of giving the artillery and wagons the road, and marching their troops on one side; and also instruct their troops to assist wagons at steep hills or bad crossings of streams.

"IX. Captain O. M. Poe, Chief Engineer, will assign to each wing of the army a pontoon train, fully equipped and organized, and the commanders thereof will see to its being properly protected at all times."

Sherman's army on the march, besides Kilpatrick's cavalry, 5500 strong, included the following forces:

march was not simply "a big raid." It accomplished all the purposes of a raid—the destruction of railroads and supplies. The large force with which Sherman marched of course more effectually accomplished these purposes than could have been done by a cavalry expedition. To destroy the railroads by which Georgia was connected with the Carolinas and with Virginia, and to consume the supplies upon which the Confederate armies depended, was a very important object. But, after all, this was only incidental. The Grand March was at once a magnificent raid and a decisive campaign. Sherman was conducting offensive operations against Lee's army, threatening his rear and flank.

Again, it was not Sherman's object to capture important strategic point upon his route to Savannah. Macon and Augusta were the main point likely to be defended by the enemy. Sherman could not afford to delay his columns in consideration of the results to be gained by the capture of either place; accordingly, he determined to demonstrate against each and avoid both. Kilpatrick, therefore, until the army was past Macon, kept on the right flank, and from that point covered the left wing, demonstrating again at Augusta. Sherman's line of march followed the Georgia Central Railroad, covering a wide belt on either side, and, east of Louisville, extended over the entire tract—the most fertile in Georgia—between the Ogeechee and Savannah Rivers.

On the 23d of November Slocum occupied Milledgeville, the capital of Georgia, and Howard had reached Gordon. Slocum gained possession of

	Corps.	Divisions.
RIGHT WING, Major General O. O. HOWARD.	Fifteenth, Major General P. J. OSTERHAUS.	Brigadier General C. R. WOOD'S. " " W. B. HAZEN'S. " " J. E. SMITH'S.
	Seventeenth, Major General FRANK P. BLAIR, JR.*	" " J. M. CORNELL'S. Major General T. A. MOWER'S. Brigadier General M. D. LEGGETT'S. " " G. A. SMITH'S.
	LEFT WING, Major General H. W. SLOCUM.	Brigadier General W. P. CARLIN'S. " " J. D. MORGAN'S. " " A. BAIRD'S. Brigadier General N. T. JACKSON'S. " " J. W. GEARY'S. " " W. T. WARD'S.

Brigadier General Judson C. Kilpatrick's cavalry division consisted of two brigades, commanded by Colonels Eli H. Murray and Smith D. Atkins.

\* Brigadier General T. E. G. Ransom had commanded this corps during the pursuit of Hood though suffering from a severe attack of dysentery, and too weak to mount his horse. He died at Rome, October 29, 1864, aged thirty years.



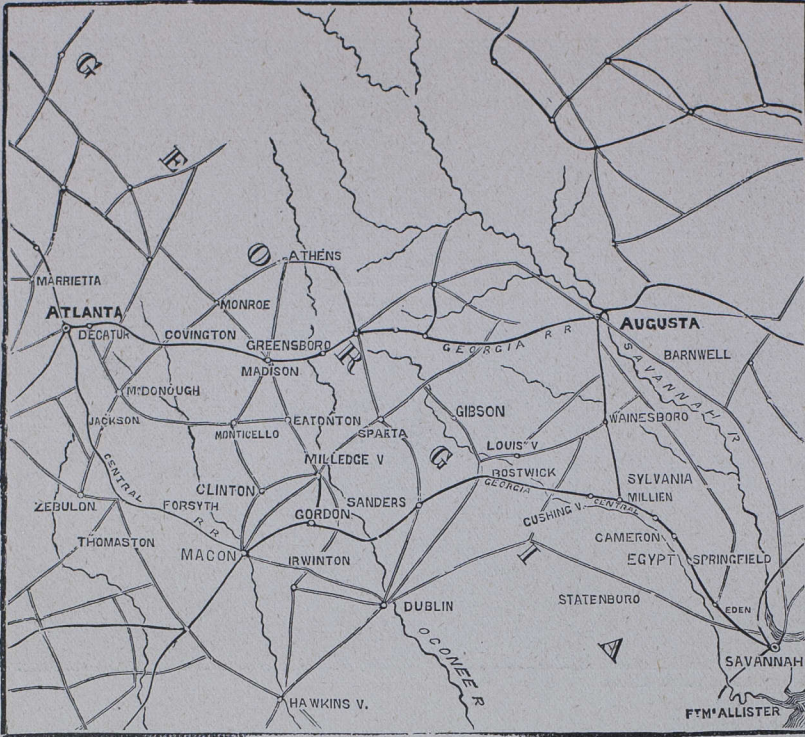
EXTERIOR VIEW OF THE PRISON PEN AT MILLEN.



INTERIOR VIEW OF THE PRISON PEN AT MILLEN.



DESTRUCTION OF MILLEN JUNCTION.

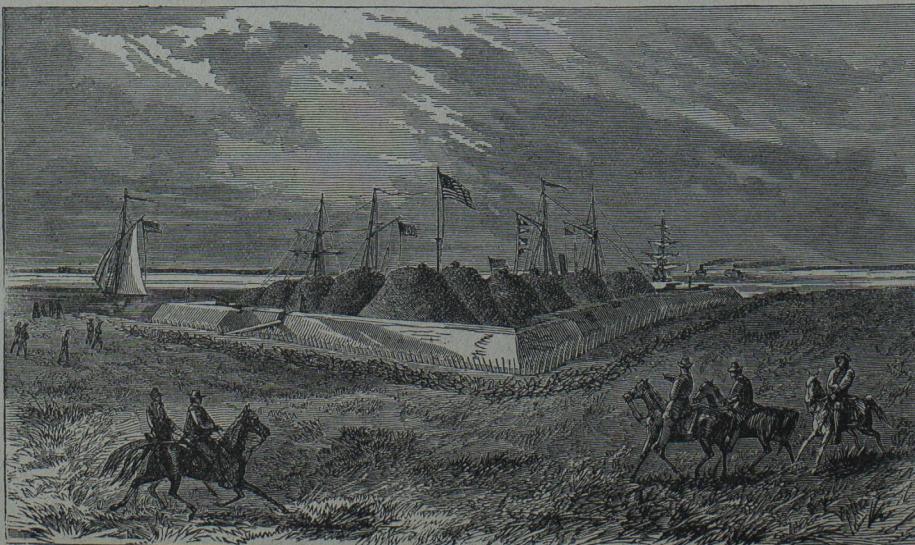


MAP ILLUSTRATING THE MARCH TO THE SEA.

the bridge across the Oconee. The day before, a force of the enemy, consisting mainly of Cobb's militia, had advanced from Macon to Griswoldville, and attacked Walcott's infantry brigade and a portion of Kilpatrick's cavalry, but was severely punished, losing over 2000 men. In this affair General Walcott was wounded. A few days before Slocum's occupation of Milledgeville, the State Legislature, then assembled at the capital, had hurriedly absconded on hearing of Sherman's approach. The panic seems to have spread to the citizens, and the trains out of Milledgeville were crowded to overflowing, and at the most extravagant prices private vehicles were also pressed into service by the fugitives. Only a few of the Union troops entered Milledgeville. The magazines, arsenals, dépôts, factories, and storehouses, containing property belonging to the Confederate government, were burned; also some 1700 bales of cotton. Private dwellings were respected, and no instances occurred of pillage or of insult to the citizens. Sherman occupied the executive mansion of Governor Brown, who had not waited to receive the compliments of his distinguished visitor, but had removed his furniture, taking good care, it is said, to ship even his cabbages.

Slocum continued his progress eastward, crossing the Oconee, when it was discovered that Wheeler, with a large body of Confederate cavalry, had also crossed, and was covering the approaches to Sandersville, to which point he was driven by the advancing Federal column. On the 26th the Fourteenth and Twentieth Corps entered the town. Howard, in the mean time, accomplished the passage of the Oconee lower down, in the face of a Confederate cavalry force under Wayne, and proceeded to Tennille Station, opposite Sandersville.

Before reaching Milledgeville, Kilpatrick had been ordered to move rapidly eastward to break the railroad from Augusta to Millen, and, turning upon the latter place, to rescue the Union prisoners there confined. He skirmished with Wheeler all the way to Waynesborough, destroying there the railroad bridge across Brier Creek, between Augusta and Millen. But at Millen he found only the empty prison pens in which the Union soldiers had been confined. For some time past the Confederates had been removing these prisoners to points far remote from Sherman's line of march. But they had left behind the traces of their cruel neglect. The corpses of several of those who had died in the prison were found yet unburied on the



FORT McALLISTER.

cold ground, while near by lay the graves of 700 dead, marked only by head-boards designating them by the fifties.

By the last of November Sherman's army had crossed the Ogeechee River, still covered by Kilpatrick's cavalry—an impenetrable cloud to the enemy. The railroad was destroyed all along the line of march.<sup>1</sup> In the mean while the Confederates have been predicting the ruin of Sherman's army. They do not seem to have had any accurate knowledge of its numbers. Hood and Beauregard estimated it as about 36,000 strong. In the North there was great anxiety for Sherman's fate. Both the confidence of the enemy and the apprehensions of the loyal are indications of the impression which then prevailed as to the audacity of Sherman's movement.

After Sherman crossed the Ogeechee there was no opportunity for the enemy to oppose his march to the city of Savannah. "No opposition from the enemy worth speaking of," says Sherman, "was encountered until the heads of the columns were within fifteen miles of Savannah, where all the roads leading to the city were obstructed more or less by felled timber, with earth-works and artillery. But these were easily turned and the enemy driven away, so that by the 10th of December the enemy was driven within his lines at Savannah." There were five approaches to the city—the two railroads and three dirt pikes—but they were narrow causeways through otherwise impassable swamps, and were strongly guarded by artillery. The entrance of the Ogeechee River to Ossibaw Sound was guarded by Fort McAllister. To invest the city and to reduce the fort, so as to command an outlet to the sea, were the next things to be accomplished. Admiral Dahlgren's fleet was awaiting Sherman off Tybee, Warsaw, and Ossibaw Sounds; and, although the latter had an abundant supply of beef-cattle and breadstuffs, still he held it of the utmost importance that he should connect with the

fleet outside. Captain Duncan, one of Howard's best scouts, had passed down the Ogeechee in a canoe to Dahlgren's fleet, giving full information of Sherman's present situation. But, in order to establish a line of communication with the sea by way of the Ogeechee River, it was necessary to reduce Fort McAllister.



CAPITOL AT MILLEDGEVILLE.

To Hazen's division of the Fifteenth Corps was allotted this work. On the 13th of December this division crossed to the southwest bank of the Ogeechee. The fort was commanded by Major Anderson, who had a garrison of about 200 men; it was mounted by 23 guns *en barbette*, and one mortar. As Hazen was crossing the Ogeechee, Generals Sherman and Howard went to Dr. Cheves's rice-mill on the river bank, whence they had a full view of the fort.

About noon they heard the guns of the fort open in answer to the shells of the Union gunboats, and Hazen's skirmishers were seen firing in response. By means of signals, Hazen was ordered to take up the work that day, if possible. He soon accomplished his mission. The guns, being *en barbette*, were not available for defense. With a loss of only about 90 men, the Union troops carried the work by assault and captured the garrison. That very night Sherman and Howard, in a small boat, passed down the river to the fort, and then down to a steamer which during the conflict had passed up from the fleet within view of the army.

<sup>1</sup> "The destruction of railroads in this campaign has been most thorough. The work of demolition on such long lines of road necessarily requires time, but the process is performed as expeditiously as possible in order to prevent any serious delay of the movement of the army. The method of destruction is simple, but very effective. Two ingenious instruments have been made for this purpose. One of them is a chain which locks under the rail. It has a ring in the top, into which is inserted a long lever, and the rail is thus ripped from the sleepers. The sleepers are then piled in a heap and set on fire, the rails roasting in flames until they bend by their own weight. When sufficiently heated each rail is taken off by wrenches fitting closely over the ends, and, turning in opposite directions, it is so twisted that even a rolling-machine could not bring it back into shape. In this manner we have destroyed thirty miles of rail which lay in the city of Atlanta, and all on the Augusta and Atlanta Road from the last-named place to Madison, besides the entire track of the Central Georgia line, from a point a few miles east of Macon to the station where I am now writing."—Nichols's Story of the Great March.

ASSAULT ON FORT McALISTER.





WILLIAM B. HAZEN.

By the route thus opened abundant supplies were soon brought from Hilton Head, and heavy ordnance for the reduction of Savannah. Sherman's army had already invested the city, shutting up every avenue of supply, and the only possible way of retreat left to General Hardee, who now, with about 10,000 men, mostly militia, conducted the defense of Savannah, was in the northeast toward Charleston. On the 17th General Sherman demanded the surrender of the city. He wrote to Hardee that he held all the avenues by which Savannah was supplied, and that if the city was surrendered he would grant liberal terms to the garrison, while, if he was compelled to assault, or depend upon the slower process of starvation, he should feel justified in resorting to the harshest measures, and should make little effort to restrain his army, "burning to avenge the great national wrong

they attach to Savannah and other large cities, which have been so prominent in dragging our country into civil war." To this communication Sherman added: "I inclose you a copy of General Hood's demand for the surrender of the town of Resaca, to be used by you for what it is worth."

General Hardee declined to surrender on the ground that he still maintained his line of defense, and was in communication with his superior officer. In order to complete the investment of Savannah on the north, and across the plank road on the South Carolina shore, known as the "Union causeway," it would be necessary for Sherman to throw his left across the Savannah River. This would be scarcely safe, since the enemy still held the river opposite the city with gun-boats, and could easily destroy the ponton bridge and isolate any force which might cross to that side. General Foster, with Admiral Dahlgren's co-operation, had established a division of troops on the narrow neck between the Coosawatchee and Tullifiny Creeks at the head of Broad River, threatening the Savannah and Charleston Railroad, which was within easy range of his artillery. On the 20th Sherman started for Port Royal by water to confer with Foster and Dahlgren. He intended to increase the forces operating up Broad River, which would thus be able to break the railroad, and then turn upon the single line of retreat held by Hardee. He left instructions for his army commanders to prepare for an attack on the enemy's lines before Savannah.

But, before Sherman's arrangements were concluded, Hardee evacuated the city, retreating to Charleston, and on the morning of the 21st the Federal army took possession of the enemy's lines. The next morning Sherman, having returned up the Ogeechee, rode into the city of Savannah. Then, in a brief note to President Lincoln, Sherman thus announced the termination of his campaign:

"I beg to present you, as a Christmas gift, the city of Savannah, with 15 heavy guns and plenty of ammunition, and also about 25,000 bales of cotton."

Between the 16th of November and the 10th of December, Sherman's entire army had marched 255 miles.<sup>1</sup> For the greater portion of the army, the march really commenced at Rome and Kingston, and extended over 300 miles. The railroads had been rendered completely useless along the line of march, and a belt of country from Atlanta to Savannah, thirty miles wide, had been exhausted of supplies. If we include the devastation involved in the Atlanta campaign, Sherman's immense army had spread itself over more than one third of the State of Georgia. Georgia, as a feeder of the Confederacy, had been wholly annihilated. Sherman estimates the damage done to the state as fully \$100,000,000, one fifth of which had been of use to the

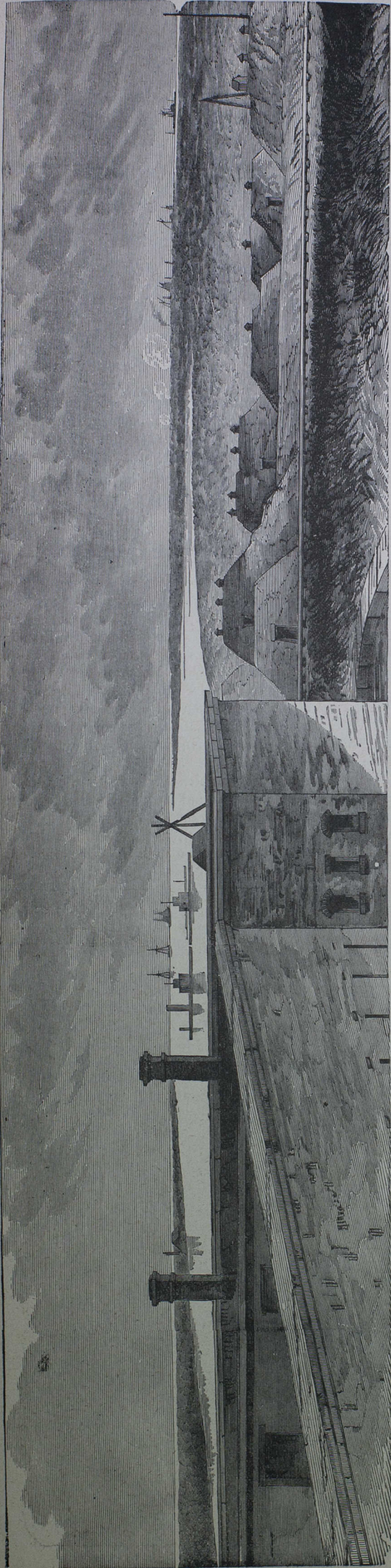
<sup>1</sup> It is 190 miles in a straight line from Atlanta to Savannah. The following is a table of distances on the road followed by the Twentieth Corps:

	Miles.		Miles.
Atlanta to Decatur	7	Milledgeville to Hebron	18
Decatur to Rockbridge	14	Hebron to Sandersville	10
Rockbridge to Sheffield	13	Sandersville to Davisboro'	10
Sheffield to Social Circle	14	Davisboro' to Louisville	12
Social Circle to Rutledge	7	Louisville to Millen	30
Rutledge to Madison	9	Millen to Springfield	40
Madison to Eatonton	20	Springfield to Savannah	30
Eatonton to Milledgeville	21	Atlanta to Savannah	255



SHERMAN'S ARMY ENTERING SAVANNAH.





FORT JACKSON, SAVANNAH



REBELS EVACUATING SAVANNAH, DEC. 21/64

CONFEDERATES EVACUATING SAVANNAH

own army, and the rest sheer waste and destruction. "This," he adds, "may seem a hard species of warfare, but it brings the sad realities of war home to those who have been directly or indirectly instrumental in involving us in its attendant calamities." About 7000 negroes followed the march through to the coast, and General Slocum estimates that as many more joined the Federal columns, but through weakness or old age were unable to hold out to the end. Over 10,000 horses and mules were captured on the march. A large quantity of cotton, estimated at about 20,000 bales, was destroyed before reaching Savannah. As regards the provisions captured, the estimate given is almost incredible, including 10,000,000 pounds of corn, and an equal amount of fodder. Slocum reports the capture of 1,217,527 rations of meat, 919,000 of bread, 483,000 of coffee, 581,534 of sugar, 1,146,500 of soap, and

137,000 of salt. Howard estimates the breadstuffs, beef, sugar, and coffee captured by the Fifteenth and Seventeenth corps as amounting in value, at the government cost of rations at Louisville, to \$283,202.<sup>1</sup>

The grand prize of the campaign, however, was the city of Savannah. This was indeed a precious "Christmas gift" to the nation. It had been gained—if we count out the assault on Fort McAllister—without a battle. The whole number of casualties on the march had not amounted to 1000 in killed and wounded. With Savannah were captured 25,000 bales of cotton, and, as was found on a careful reckoning, about 200 guns. The city was almost impregnable against a purely naval attack. Both the north and the south branch of the Savannah River, at the head of Elba Island, were obstructed by a double line of cribs, to remove which, so as to allow a channel in each branch a little over 100 feet wide, occupied the navy for

<sup>1</sup> Howard's report includes the following statistics of property captured and destroyed, negroes freed, and prisoners taken by the right wing:

Negroes set free (estimated number).....		3,000
Prisoners captured.—By Fifteenth Army Corps:		
Commissioned officers.....	32	547
Enlisted men.....	515	
By Seventeenth Army Corps:		
Commissioned officers.....	2	119
Enlisted men.....	117	666
Total prisoners captured.....		
Escaped Federal prisoners:		
Commissioned officers.....	6	49
Enlisted men.....	43	3,523
Bales of cotton burned.....		
Ocmulgee Mills, 1500. Spindles and large amount of cotton cloth burned, value not known.....		
Subsistence captured; namely, breadstuffs, beef, sugar, and coffee, at government cost of ration in Louisville.....	\$283,202	
Command started from Atlanta with head cattle.....	1,000	11,500
Took up as captured.....	10,500	
Consumed on the trip.....	9,000	
Balance on hand December 18, 1864.....		2,500
Horses captured.—By the Fifteenth Army Corps.....	369	931
By the Seventeenth Army Corps.....	562	
Mules captured.—By the Fifteenth Army Corps.....	786	1,850
By the Seventeenth Army Corps.....	1,064	
Corn.—By the Fifteenth Army Corps..... lbs.	2,500,000	
By the Seventeenth Army Corps.....	2,000,000	4,500,000
Fodder.—By the Fifteenth Army Corps.....	2,500,000	
By the Seventeenth Army Corps.....	2,000,000	4,500,000
Miles of railroad destroyed.....		191

Stocum's report gives the following estimate for the left wing:

"It was thirty-four days from the date my command left Atlanta to the day supplies were received from the fleet. The total number of rations required during this period was 1,360,000. Of this amount there were issued by the Subsistence Department 440,900 rations of bread, 142,473 rations of meat, 876,800 of coffee and tea, 778,466 of sugar, 213,500 of soap, and 1,123,000 of salt. As the troops were well supplied at all times, if we deduct the above issues from the amount actually due the soldiers, we have the approximate quantities taken from the country, namely, rations of bread, 919,000; meat, 1,217,527; coffee, 488,000; sugar, 581,534; soap, 1,146,500; salt, 137,000. The above is the actual saving to the government in issue of rations during the campaign, and it is probable that even more than the equivalent of the above supplies was obtained by the soldiers from the country. Four thousand and ninety (4090) valuable horses and mules were captured during the march, and turned over to the Quartermaster's Department. Our transportation was in far better condition on our arrival at Savannah than it was at the commencement of the campaign.

"The average number of horses and mules with my command, including those of the pontoon train and a part of the Michigan engineers, was fourteen thousand five hundred. We started from Atlanta with four days' grain in wagons. Estimating the amount fed the animals at the regulation allowance, and deducting the amount on hand on leaving Atlanta, I estimate the amount of grain taken from the country at five million pounds; fodder, six million pounds; besides the forage consumed by the immense herds of cattle that were driven with the different columns. It is very difficult to estimate the amount of damage done the enemy by the operations of the troops under my command. During the campaign one hundred and nineteen (119) miles of railroad were thoroughly and effectually destroyed, scarcely a tie or rail, a bridge or culvert, on the entire line being left in a condition to be of use again. At Rutledge, Madison, Eatonton, Milledgeville, Tennille, and Davisboro', machine-shops, turn-tables, depôts, water-tanks, and much other valuable property was destroyed. The quantity of cotton destroyed is estimated by my subordinate commanders at seventeen thousand bales. A very large number of cotton-gins and presses were also destroyed.

"Negro men, women, and children joined the column at every mile of our march, many of them bringing horses and mules, which they cheerfully turned over to the officers of the Quartermaster's Department. I think at least fourteen thousand of these people joined the two columns at different points on the march; but many of them were too old and infirm, and others too young, to endure the fatigues of the march, and were therefore left in the rear. More than one half of the above number, however, reached the coast with us. Many of the able-bodied men were transferred to the officers of the Quartermaster and Subsistence Departments, and others were employed in the two corps as teamsters, cooks, and servants."

nearly three weeks. These obstructions were commanded by four works—Forts Lee and Jackson, Battery Lawton, and a water battery—mounted with 26 heavy guns, of which 13 were Columbiads. The river is so completely lined with marshes that the attack in front could have no co-operation from troops on either side. To guard against the approach by St. Augustine Creek there were also formidable batteries—Turner's Rocks, Thunderbolt, and Barton, with its outpost Causton's Bluff—mounting 34 heavy cannon; and obstructions were sunk in the narrow channel of the creek. But this entire net-work of defenses could be turned by troops landing on the Vernon and Ogeechee Rivers. To prevent this, the former was closed with obstructions commanded by Fort Beaulieu, 9 guns, while Big Ogeechee, in addition to the obstructions, was guarded by Fort McAllister with 23 guns. On the Little Ogeechee stood Fort Rosedew, with 6 guns. In the land works around the city there were 116 cannon of less calibre. Altogether the defensive works of Savannah mounted 229 cannon. It is clear, therefore, that, without a great sacrifice of life, Savannah could not have been captured in any other way than that adopted by General Sherman.

In justice to General Sherman and to the United States government, it is necessary that we should, in our comments upon the Great March, allude to the conduct of the army. It must be candidly admitted that many outrages were committed, or, to use the words of General Sherman, his soldiers "did some things they ought not to have done." We can safely affirm, however, that, with the same opportunities for wantonness, no European and no other American army would have accomplished the march with less violence. The only way in which outrage could have been absolutely prevented by the commander would have been the disbandment before the march of every soldier who would, under strong temptation, disobey the Decalogue. It is simply nonsense to attribute the violence of scattered foraging parties to the lack of discipline in Sherman's army. The strictest orders were given forbidding soldiers to enter the dwellings of the inhabitants, or to commit any trespass. If General Sherman could have been every where present these orders would have been obeyed. It must be remembered that whatever supplies could in any way assist the Confederates in prolonging the war were a legitimate prize. In many cases there was wanton plunder. Many of the wealthy planters had fled suddenly on the approach of Sherman's army, and had hastily concealed their treasures of gold, silver, and precious stones in the earth. Aided by the disclosures of the negroes, these places were diligently sought and rifled wherever opportunity offered. This gave color to extravagant reports, which had no other basis of credibility than the imagination of those who circulated them. But the violence actually perpetrated was far less than, under the circumstances, might have been expected. While we do not exculpate the wrong, we entirely exonerate General Sherman in the matter. No restrictions imposed by discipline would have prevented the evil done; and that there was no serious want of discipline in Sherman's army is clearly shown by the promptness with which the march was accomplished, and the perfect efficiency of the army as an organization when it reached Savannah. This would have been impossible if the army had not been held under restraint. There is universal and undisputed testimony that, in connection with the occupation of Savannah, there was no breach of good order.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In regard to this, General Sherman reports: "The behavior of our troops in Savannah has been so manly, so quiet, so perfect, that I take it as the best evidence of discipline and true courage. Never was a hostile city, filled with women and children, occupied by a large army with less disorder, or more system, order, and good government. The same general and generous spirit of confidence and good feeling pervades the army which it has ever afforded me especial pleasure to report on former occasions."



SHERMAN'S HEADQUARTERS AT SAVANNAH.