

CHAPTER XII.

VICKSBURG.

JANUARY TO JULY, 1863.

THE campaign of 1863, resulting in the capture of Vicksburg, was so important, that its history has been well studied and well described in all the books treating of the civil war, more especially by Dr. Draper, in his "History of the Civil War in America," and in Badeau's "Military History of General Grant." In the latter it is more fully and accurately given than in any other, and is well illustrated by maps and original documents. I now need only attempt to further illustrate Badeau's account by some additional details. When our expedition came out of the Arkansas River, January 18, 1863, and rendezvoused at the river-bank, in front of the town of Napoleon, Arkansas, we were visited by General Grant in person, who had come down from Memphis in a steamboat. Although at this time Major-General J. A. McClernand was in command of the Army of the Mississippi, by virtue of a confidential order of the War Department, dated October 21, 1862, which order bore the indorsement of President Lincoln, General Grant still exercised a command over him, by reason of his general command of the Department of the Tennessee. By an order (No. 210) of December 18, 1862, from the War Department, received at Arkansas Post, the Western armies had been grouped into five *corps d'armée*, viz.: the Thirteenth, Major-General McClernand; the Fourteenth, Major-General George H. Thomas, in Middle Tennessee; the Fifteenth, Major-General W. T. Sherman; the Sixteenth, Major-General Hurlbut, then at or near Memphis; and the Seventeenth, Major-General

ignored the action of Porter's fleet altogether. This was unfair, for I know that the admiral led his fleet in person in the river-attack, and that his guns silenced those of Fort Hindman, and drove the gunners into the ditch.

The aggregate loss in my corps at Arkansas Post was five hundred and nineteen, viz., four officers and seventy-five men killed, thirty-four officers and four hundred and six men wounded. I never knew the losses in the gunboat fleet, or in Morgan's corps; but they must have been less than in mine, which was more exposed. The number of rebel dead must have been nearly one hundred and fifty; of prisoners, by actual count, we secured four thousand seven hundred and ninety-one, and sent them north to St. Louis.

McPherson, also at and back of Memphis. General Grant when at Napoleon, on the 18th of January, ordered McClelland with his own and my corps to return to Vicksburg, to disembark on the west bank, and to resume work on a canal across the peninsula, which had been begun by General Thomas Williams the summer before, the object being to turn the Mississippi River at that point, or at least to make a passage for our fleet of gunboats and transports across the peninsula, opposite Vicksburg. General Grant then returned to Memphis, ordered to Lake Providence, about sixty miles above us, McPherson's corps, the Seventeenth, and then came down again to give his personal supervision to the whole movement.

The Mississippi River was very high and rising, and we began that system of canals on which we expended so much hard work fruitlessly: first, the canal at Young's plantation, opposite Vicksburg; second, that at Lake Providence; and third, at the Yazoo Pass, leading into the head-waters of the Yazoo River. Early in February the gunboats *Indianola* and *Queen of the West* ran the batteries of Vicksburg. The latter was afterward crippled in Red River, and was captured by the rebels; and the *Indianola* was butted and sunk about forty miles below Vicksburg. We heard the booming of the guns, but did not know of her loss till some days after. During the months of January and February, we were digging the canal and fighting off the water of the Mississippi, which continued to rise and threatened to drown us. We had no sure place of refuge except the narrow levee, and such steamboats as remained abreast of our camps. My two divisions furnished alternately a detail of five hundred men a day, to work on the canal. So high was the water in the beginning of March, that McClelland's corps was moved to higher ground, at Milliken's Bend, but I remained at Young's plantation, laid off a due proportion of the levee for each subdivision of my command, and assigned other parts to such steamboats as lay at the levee. My own headquarters were in Mrs. Grove's house, which had the water all around it, and could only be reached by a plank-walk from the levee, built on posts.

General Frederick Steele commanded the first division, and General D. Stuart the second; this latter division had been reinforced by General Hugh Ewing's brigade, which had arrived from West Virginia.

At the time of its date I received the following note from General Grant:

MILLIKEN'S BEND, *March 16, 1863*

General SHERMAN.

DEAR SIR: I have just returned from a reconnoissance up Steele's Bayou, with the admiral (Porter), and five of his gunboats. With some labor in cutting tree-tops out of the way, it will be navigable for any class of steamers.

I want you to have your pioneer corps, or one regiment of good men for such work, detailed, and at the landing as soon as possible.

The party will want to take with them their rations, arms, and sufficient camp and garrison equipage for a few days. I will have a boat at any place you may designate, as early as the men can be there. The Eighth Missouri (being many of them boatmen) would be excellent men for this purpose.

As soon as you give directions for these men to be in readiness, come up and see me, and I will explain fully. The tug that takes this is instructed to wait for you. A full supply of axes will be required.

Very respectfully,

U. S. GRANT, *Major-General.*

This letter was instantly (8 A. M.) sent to Colonel Giles A. Smith, commanding the Eighth Missouri, with orders to prepare immediately. He returned it at 9.15, with an answer that the regiment was all ready. I went up to Milliken's Bend in the tug, and had a conference with the general, resulting in these orders:

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE TENNESSEE, }
BEFORE VICKSBURG, *March 16, 1863.* }

Major-General W. T. SHERMAN, commanding Fifteenth Army Corps.

GENERAL: You will proceed as early as practicable up Steele's Bayou, and through Black Bayou to Deer Creek, and thence with the gunboats now there by any route they may take to get into the Yazoo River, for the purpose of determining the feasibility of getting an army through that route to the east bank of that river, and at a point from which they can act advantageously against Vicksburg.

Make such details from your army corps as may be required to clear out the channel of the various bayous through which transports would have to run, and to hold such points as in your judgment should be occupied.

I place at your disposal to-day the steamers Diligent and Silver Wave, the only two suitable for the present navigation of this route. Others will be supplied you as fast as required, and they can be got.

I have given directions (and you may repeat them) that the party going on board the steamer Diligent push on until they reach Black Bayou, only stopping sufficiently long at any point before reaching there to remove such obstructions as prevent their own progress. Captain Kossak, of the Engineers, will go with this party. The other boat-load will commence their work in Steele's Bayou, and make the navigation as free as possible all the way through.

There is but little work to be done in Steele's Bayou, except for about five miles about midway of the bayou. In this portion many overhanging trees will have to be removed, and should be dragged out of the channel.

Very respectfully,

U. S. GRANT, *Major-General.*

On returning to my camp at Young's Point, I started these two boats up the Yazoo and Steele's Bayou, with the Eighth Missouri and some pioneers, with axes, saws, and all the tools necessary. I gave orders for a part of Stuart's division to proceed in the large boats up the Mississippi River to a point at Gwin's plantation, where a bend of Steele's Bayou neared the main river; and the next day, with one or two staff-officers and orderlies, got a navy-tug, and hurried up to overtake Admiral Porter. About sixty miles up Steele's Bayou we came to the gunboat Price, Lieutenant Woodworth, United States Navy, commanding, and then turned into Black Bayou, a narrow, crooked channel, obstructed by overhanging oaks, and filled with cypress and cotton-wood trees. The gunboats had forced their way through, pushing aside trees a foot in diameter. In about four miles we overtook the gunboat fleet just as it was emerging into Deer Creek. Along Deer Creek the alluvium was higher, and there was a large cotton-plantation belonging to a Mr. Hill, who was absent, and the negroes were in charge of the place. Here I overtook Admiral Porter, and accompanied him a couple of miles up Deer Creek, which was much wider and more free of

trees, with plantations on both sides at intervals. Admiral Porter thought he had passed the worst, and that he would be able to reach the Rolling Fork and Sunflower. He requested me to return and use all possible means to clear out Black Bayou. I returned to Hill's plantation, which was soon reached by Major Coleman, with a part of the Eighth Missouri; the bulk of the regiment and the pioneers had been distributed along the bayous, and set to work under the general supervision of Captain Kossak. The Diligent and Silver Wave then returned to Gwin's plantation and brought up Brigadier-General Giles A. Smith, with the Sixth Missouri, and part of the One Hundred and Sixteenth Illinois. Admiral Porter was then working up Deer Creek with his iron-clads, but he had left me a tug, which enabled me to reconnoitre the country, which was all under water except the narrow strip along Deer Creek. During the 19th I heard the heavy navy-guns booming more frequently than seemed consistent with mere guerrilla operations; and that night I got a message from Porter, written on tissue-paper, brought me through the swamp by a negro, who had it concealed in a piece of tobacco.

The admiral stated that he had met a force of infantry and artillery which gave him great trouble by killing the men who had to expose themselves outside the iron armor to shove off the bows of the boats, which had so little headway that they would not steer. He begged me to come to his rescue as quickly as possible. Giles A. Smith had only about eight hundred men with him, but I ordered him to start up Deer Creek at once, crossing to the east side by an old bridge at Hill's plantation, which we had repaired for the purpose; to work his way up to the gunboat-fleet, and to report to the admiral that I would come up with every man I could raise as soon as possible. I was almost alone at Hill's, but took a canoe, paddled down Black Bayou to the gunboat Price, and there, luckily, found the Silver Wave with a load of men just arrived from Gwin's plantation. Taking some of the parties who were at work along the bayou into an empty coal-barge, we tugged it up by a navy-tug, followed by the Silver Wave, crashing through the trees, carrying away pilot-house, smoke-stacks, and every thing above-deck; but the captain

(McMillan, of Pittsburg) was a brave fellow, and realized the necessity. The night was absolutely black, and we could only make two and a half of the four miles. We then disembarked, and marched through the canebrake, carrying lighted candles in our hands, till we got into the open cotton-fields at Hill's plantation, where we lay down for a few hours' rest. These men were a part of Giles A. Smith's brigade, and part belonged to the brigade of T. Kilby Smith, the senior officer present being Lieutenant-Colonel Rice, Fifty-fourth Ohio, an excellent young officer. We had no horses.

On Sunday morning, March 21st, as soon as daylight appeared, we started, following the same route which Giles A. Smith had taken the day before; the battalion of the Thirteenth United States Regulars, Major Chase, in the lead. We could hear Porter's guns, and knew that moments were precious. Being on foot myself, no man could complain, and we generally went at the double-quick, with occasional rests. The road lay along Deer Creek, passing several plantations; and occasionally, at the bends, it crossed the swamp, where the water came above my hips. The smaller drummer-boys had to carry their drums on their heads, and most of the men slung their cartridge-boxes around their necks. The soldiers generally were glad to have their general and field officers afoot, but we gave them a fair specimen of marching, accomplishing about twenty-one miles by noon. Of course, our speed was accelerated by the sounds of the navy-guns, which became more and more distinct, though we could see nothing. At a plantation near some Indian mounds we met a detachment of the Eighth Missouri, that had been up to the fleet, and had been sent down as a picket to prevent any obstructions below. This picket reported that Admiral Porter had found Deer Creek badly obstructed, had turned back; that there was a rebel force beyond the fleet, with some six-pounders, and nothing between us and the fleet. So I sat down on the door-sill of a cabin to rest, but had not been seated ten minutes when, in the wood just ahead, not three hundred yards off, I heard quick and rapid firing of musketry. Jumping up, I ran up the road, and found Lieutenant-Colonel Rice, who said

the head of his column had struck a small force of rebels with a working gang of negroes, provided with axes, who on the first fire had broken and run back into the swamp. I ordered Rice to deploy his brigade, his left on the road, and extending as far into the swamp as the ground would permit, and then to sweep forward until he uncovered the gunboats. The movement was rapid and well executed, and we soon came to some large cotton-fields and could see our gunboats in Deer Creek, occasionally firing a heavy eight-inch gun across the cotton-field into the swamp behind. About that time a Major Kirby, of the Eighth Missouri, galloped down the road on a horse he had picked up the night before, and met me. He explained the situation of affairs, and offered me his horse. I got on *bareback*, and rode up the levee, the sailors coming out of their iron-clads and cheering most vociferously as I rode by, and as our men swept forward across the cotton-field in full view. I soon found Admiral Porter, who was on the deck of one of his iron-clads, with a shield made of the section of a smoke-stack, and I doubt if he was ever more glad to meet a friend than he was to see me. He explained that he had almost reached the Rolling Fork, when the woods became full of sharpshooters, who, taking advantage of trees, stumps, and the levee, would shoot down every man that poked his nose outside the protection of their armor; so that he could not handle his clumsy boats in the narrow channel. The rebels had evidently dispatched a force from Haines's Bluff up the Sunflower to the Rolling Fork, had anticipated the movement of Admiral Porter's fleet, and had completely obstructed the channel of the upper part of Deer Creek by felling trees into it, so that further progress in that direction was simply impossible. It also happened that, at the instant of my arrival, a party of about four hundred rebels, armed and supplied with axes, had passed around the fleet and had got below it, intending in like manner to block up the channel by the felling of trees, so as to cut off retreat. This was the force we had struck so opportunely at the time before described. I inquired of Admiral Porter what he proposed to do, and he said he wanted to get out of that scrape as quickly as possible. He was actually

working back when I met him, and, as we then had a sufficient force to cover his movement completely, he continued to back down Deer Creek. He informed me at one time things looked so critical that he had made up his mind to blow up the gun-boats, and to escape with his men through the swamp to the Mississippi River. There being no longer any sharp-shooters to bother the sailors, they made good progress; still, it took three full days for the fleet to back out of Deer Creek into Black Bayou, at Hill's plantation, whence Admiral Porter proceeded to his post at the mouth of the Yazoo, leaving Captain Owen in command of the fleet. I reported the facts to General Grant, who was sadly disappointed at the failure of the fleet to get through to the Yazoo above Haines's Bluff, and ordered us all to resume our camps at Young's Point. We accordingly steamed down, and regained our camps on the 27th. As this expedition up Deer Creek was but one of many efforts to secure a footing from which to operate against Vicksburg, I add the report of Brigadier-General Giles A. Smith, who was the first to reach the fleet:

HEADQUARTERS FIRST BRIGADE, SECOND DIVISION,
FIFTEENTH ARMY CORPS, YOUNG'S POINT, LOUISIANA, March 28, 1863. }

Captain L. M. DAYTON, Assistant Adjutant-General.

CAPTAIN: I have the honor to report the movements of the First Brigade in the expedition up Steele's Bayou, Black Bayou, and Deer Creek.

The Sixth Missouri and One Hundred and Sixteenth Illinois regiments embarked at the mouth of Muddy Bayou on the evening of Thursday, the 18th of March, and proceeded up Steele's Bayou to the mouth of Black; thence up Black Bayou to Hill's plantation, at its junction with Deer Creek, where we arrived on Friday at four o'clock P. M., and joined the Eighth Missouri, Lieutenant-Colonel Coleman commanding, which had arrived at that point two days before. General Sherman had also established his headquarters there, having preceded the Eighth Missouri in a tug, with no other escort than two or three of his staff, reconnoitring all the different bayous and branches, thereby greatly facilitating the movements of the troops, but at the same time exposing himself beyond precedent in a commanding general. At three o'clock of Saturday morning, the 20th instant, General Sherman having received a communication from Admiral Porter at the mouth of Rolling Fork, asking for a speedy coöperation of the land forces with his fleet, I was ordered by General Sherman to be ready, with all the available

force at that point, to accompany him to his relief; but before starting it was arranged that I should proceed with the force at hand (eight hundred men), while he remained, again entirely unprotected, to hurry up the troops expected to arrive that night, consisting of the Thirteenth Infantry and One Hundred and Thirteenth Illinois Volunteers, completing my brigade, and the Second Brigade, Colonel T. Kilby Smith commanding.

This, as the sequel showed, proved a very wise measure, and resulted in the safety of the whole fleet. At daybreak we were in motion, with a regular guide. We had proceeded but about six miles, when we found the enemy had been very busy felling trees to obstruct the creek.

All the negroes along the route had been notified to be ready at night-fall to continue the work. To prevent this as much as possible, I ordered all able-bodied negroes to be taken along, and warned some of the principal inhabitants that they would be held responsible for any more obstructions being placed across the creek. We reached the admiral about four o'clock P. M., with no opposition save my advance-guard (Company A, Sixth Missouri) being fired into from the opposite side of the creek, killing one man, and slightly wounding another; having no way of crossing, we had to content ourselves with driving them beyond musket-range. Proceeding with as little loss of time as possible, I found the fleet obstructed in front by fallen trees, in rear by a sunken coal-barge, and surrounded by a large force of rebels with an abundant supply of artillery, but wisely keeping their main force out of range of the admiral's guns. Every tree and stump covered a sharp-shooter, ready to pick off any luckless marine who showed his head above-decks, and entirely preventing the working-parties from removing obstructions.

In pursuance of orders from General Sherman, I reported to Admiral Porter for orders, who turned over to me all the land-forces in his fleet (about one hundred and fifty men), together with two howitzers, and I was instructed by him to retain a sufficient force to clear out the sharp-shooters, and to distribute the remainder along the creek for six or seven miles below, to prevent any more obstructions being placed in it during the night. This was speedily arranged, our skirmishers capturing three prisoners. Immediate steps were now taken to remove the coal-barge, which was accomplished about daylight on Sunday morning, when the fleet moved back toward Black Bayou. By three o'clock P. M. we had only made about six miles, owing to the large number of trees to be removed; at this point, where our progress was very slow, we discovered a long line of the enemy filing along the edge of the woods, and taking position on the creek below us, and about one mile ahead of our advance. Shortly after, they opened fire on the gunboats from batteries behind the cavalry and infantry. The boats not only replied to the batteries, which they soon silenced, but poured a destructive fire into their lines. Heavy skirmishing was also heard in our

front, supposed to be by three companies from the Sixth and Eighth Missouri, whose position, taken the previous night to guard the creek, was beyond the point reached by the enemy, and consequently liable to be cut off or captured. Captain Owen, of the Louisville, the leading boat, made every effort to go through the obstructions and aid in the rescuing of the men. I ordered Major Kirby, with four companies of the Sixth Missouri, forward, with two companies deployed. He soon met General Sherman, with the Thirteenth Infantry and One Hundred and Thirteenth Illinois, driving the enemy before them, and opening communication along the creek with the gunboats. Instead of our three companies referred to as engaging the enemy, General Sherman had arrived at a very opportune moment with the two regiments mentioned above, and the Second Brigade. The enemy, not expecting an attack from that quarter, after some hot skirmishing, retreated. General Sherman immediately ordered the Thirteenth Infantry and One Hundred and Thirteenth Illinois to pursue; but, after following their trace for about two miles, they were recalled.

We continued our march for about two miles, when we bivouacked for the night. Early on Monday morning (March 22d) we continued our march, but owing to the slow progress of the gunboats did not reach Hill's plantation until Tuesday, the 23d instant, where we remained until the 25th; we then reëmbarked, and arrived at Young's Point on Friday, the 27th instant.

Below you will find a list of casualties. Very respectfully,

GILES A. SMITH,

Colonel Eighth Missouri, commanding First Brigade.

P. S.—I forgot to state above that the Thirteenth Infantry and One Hundred and Thirteenth Illinois being under the immediate command of General Sherman, he can mention them as their conduct deserves.

On the 3d of April, a division of troops, commanded by Brigadier-General J. M. Tuttle, was assigned to my corps, and was designated the Third Division; and, on the 4th of April, Brigadier-General D. Stuart was relieved from the command of the Second Division, to which Major-General Frank P. Blair was appointed by an order from General Grant's headquarters. Stuart had been with me from the time we were at Benton Barracks, in command of the Fifty-fifth Illinois, then of a brigade, and finally of a division; but he had failed in securing a confirmation by the Senate to his nomination as brigadier-general, by reason of some old affair at Chicago, and, having resigned his commission as colonel, he was out of service. I esteemed him

very highly, and was actually mortified that the service should thus be deprived of so excellent and gallant an officer. He afterward settled in New Orleans as a lawyer, and died about 1867 or 1868.

On the 6th of April, my command, the Fifteenth Corps, was composed of three divisions :

The First Division, commanded by Major-General Fred Steele; and his three brigades by Colonel Manter, Colonel Charles R. Wood, and Brigadier-General John M. Thayer.

The Second Division, commanded by Major-General Frank P. Blair; and his three brigades by Colonel Giles A. Smith, Colonel Thomas Kilby Smith, and Brigadier-General Hugh Ewing.

The Third Division, commanded by Brigadier-General J. M. Tuttle; and his three brigades by Brigadier-General R. P. Buckland, Colonel J. A. Mower, and Brigadier-General John E. Smith.

My own staff then embraced: Dayton, McCoy, and Hill, aides; J. H. Hammond, assistant adjutant-general; Sanger, inspector-general; McFeeley, commissary; J. Condit Smith, quartermaster; Charles McMillan, medical director; Ezra Taylor, chief of artillery; — Neely, ordnance-officer; Jenney and Pitzman, engineers.

By this time it had become thoroughly demonstrated that we could not divert the main river Mississippi, or get practicable access to the east bank of the Yazoo, in the rear of Vicksburg, by any of the passes; and we were all in the habit of discussing the various chances of the future. General Grant's headquarters were at Milliken's Bend, in tents, and his army was strung along the river all the way from Young's Point up to Lake Providence, at least sixty miles. I had always contended that the best way to take Vicksburg was to resume the movement which had been so well begun the previous November, viz., for the main army to march by land down the country inland of the Mississippi River; while the gunboat-fleet and a minor land-force should threaten Vicksburg on its river-front.

I reasoned that, with the large force then subject to Gen-

eral Grant's orders—viz., four army corps—he could easily resume the movement from Memphis, by way of Oxford and Grenada, to Jackson, Mississippi, or down the ridge between the Yazoo and Big Black; but General Grant would not, for reasons other than military, take any course which looked like a step backward; and he himself concluded on the river movement below Vicksburg, so as to appear like connecting with General Banks, who at the same time was besieging Port Hudson from the direction of New Orleans.

Preliminary orders had already been given, looking to the digging of a canal, to connect the river at Duckport with Willow Bayou, back of Milliken's Bend, so as to form a channel for the conveyance of supplies, by way of Richmond, to New Carthage; and several steam dredge-boats had come from the upper rivers to assist in the work. One day early in April, I was up at General Grant's headquarters, and we talked over all these things with absolute freedom. Charles A. Dana, Assistant Secretary of War, was there, and Wilson, Rawlins, Frank Blair, McPherson, etc. We all knew, what was notorious, that General McClelland was still intriguing against General Grant, in hopes to regain the command of the whole expedition, and that others were raising a clamor against General Grant in the newspapers at the North. Even Mr. Lincoln and General Halleck seemed to be shaken; but at no instant of time did we (his personal friends) slacken in our loyalty to him. One night, after such a discussion, and believing that General McClelland had no real plan of action shaped in his mind, I wrote my letter of April 8, 1863, to Colonel Rawlins, which letter is embraced in full at page 616 of Badeau's book, and which I now reproduce here:

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH ARMY CORPS, }
CAMP NEAR VICKSBURG, April 8, 1863. }

Colonel J. A. RAWLINS, Assistant Adjutant-General to General GRANT.

SIR: I would most respectfully suggest (for reasons which I will not name) that General Grant call on his corps commanders for their opinions, concise and positive, on the best general plan of a campaign. Unless this be done, there are men who will, in any result falling below the popular

standard, claim that *their* advice was unheeded, and that fatal consequence resulted therefrom. My own opinions are—

First. That the Army of the Tennessee is now far in advance of the other grand armies of the United States.

Second. That a corps from Missouri should forthwith be moved from St. Louis to the vicinity of Little Rock, Arkansas; supplies collected there while the river is full, and land communication with Memphis opened *via* Des Arc on the White, and Madison on the St. Francis River.

Third. That as much of the Yazoo Pass, Coldwater, and Tallahatchie Rivers, as can be gained and fortified, be held, and the main army be transported thither by land and water; that the road back to Memphis be secured and reopened, and, as soon as the waters subside, Grenada be attacked, and the swamp-road across to Helena be patrolled by cavalry.

Fourth. That the line of the Yalabusha be the base from which to operate against the points where the Mississippi Central crosses Big Black, above Canton; and, lastly, where the Vicksburg & Jackson Railroad crosses the same river (Big Black). The capture of Vicksburg would result.

Fifth. That a minor force be left in this vicinity, not to exceed ten thousand men, with only enough steamboats to float and transport them to any desired point; this force to be held always near enough to act with the gunboats when the main army is known to be near Vicksburg—Haines's Bluff or Yazoo City.

Sixth. I do doubt the capacity of Willow Bayou (which I estimate to be fifty miles long and very tortuous) as a military channel, to supply an army large enough to operate against Jackson, Mississippi, or the Black River Bridge; and such a channel will be very vulnerable to a force coming from the west, which we must expect. Yet this canal will be most useful as the way to convey coals and supplies to a fleet that should navigate the lower reach of the Mississippi between Vicksburg and the Red River.

Seventh. The chief reason for operating *solely* by water was the season of the year and high water in the Tallahatchie and Yalabusha Rivers. The spring is now here, and soon these streams will be no serious obstacle, save in the ambuscades of the forest, and whatever works the enemy may have erected at or near Grenada. North Mississippi is too valuable for us to allow the enemy to hold it and make crops this year.

I make these suggestions, with the request that General Grant will read them and give them, as I know he will, a share of his thoughts. I would prefer that he should not answer this letter, but merely give it as much or as little weight as it deserves. Whatever plan of action he may adopt will receive from me the same zealous coöperation and energetic support as though conceived by myself. I do not believe General Banks will make any serious attack on Port Hudson this spring. I am, etc.,

W. T. SHERMAN, *Major-General.*

This is the letter which some critics have styled a "protest." We never had a council of war at any time during the Vicksburg campaign. We often met casually, regardless of rank or power, and talked and gossiped of things in general, as officers do and should. But my letter speaks for itself. It shows my opinions clearly at that stage of the game, and was meant partially to induce General Grant to call on General McClelland for a similar expression of opinion, but, so far as I know, he did not. He went on quietly to work out his own designs; and he has told me, since the war, that had we possessed in December, 1862, the experience of marching and maintaining armies without a regular base, which we afterward acquired, he would have gone on from Oxford as first contemplated, and would not have turned back because of the destruction of his depot at Holly Springs by Van Dorn. The distance from Oxford to the rear of Vicksburg is little greater than by the circuitous route we afterward followed, from Bruinsburg to Jackson and Vicksburg, during which we had neither depot nor train of supplies. I have never criticised General Grant's strategy on this or any other occasion, but I thought then that he had lost an opportunity, which cost him and us six months' extra-hard work, for we might have captured Vicksburg from the direction of Oxford in January; quite as easily as was afterward done in July, 1863.

General Grant's orders for the general movement past Vicksburg, by Richmond and Carthage, were dated April 20, 1863. McClelland was to lead off with his corps, McPherson next, and my corps (the Fifteenth) to bring up the rear. Preliminary thereto, on the night of April 16th, seven iron-clads led by Admiral Porter in person, in the Benton, with three transports, and ten barges in tow, ran the Vicksburg batteries by night. Anticipating a scene, I had four yawl-boats hauled across the swamp, to the reach of the river below Vicksburg, and manned them with soldiers, ready to pick up any of the disabled wrecks as they floated by. I was out in the stream when the fleet passed Vicksburg, and the scene was truly sublime. As soon as the rebel gunners detected the Benton, which was in the lead, they

opened on her, and on the others in succession, with shot and shell ; houses on the Vicksburg side and on the opposite shore were set on fire, which lighted up the whole river ; and the roar of cannon, the bursting of shells, and finally the burning of the Henry Clay, drifting with the current, made up a picture of the terrible not often seen. Each gunboat returned the fire as she passed the town, while the transports hugged the opposite shore. When the Benton had got abreast of us, I pulled off to her, boarded, had a few words with Admiral Porter, and as she was drifting rapidly toward the lower batteries at Warrenton, I left, and pulled back toward the shore, meeting the gunboat Tusculum towing the transport Forest Queen into the bank out of the range of fire. The Forest Queen, Captain Conway, had been my flag-boat up the Arkansas, and for some time after, and I was very friendly with her officers. This was the only transport whose captain would not receive volunteers as a crew, but her own officers and *crew* stuck to their boat, and carried her safely below the Vicksburg batteries, and afterward rendered splendid service in ferrying troops across the river at Grand Gulf and Bruinsburg. In passing Vicksburg, she was damaged in the hull and had a steam-pipe cut away, but this was soon repaired. The Henry Clay was set on fire by bursting shells, and burned up ; one of my yawls picked up her pilot floating on a piece of wreck, and the bulk of her crew escaped in their own yawl-boat to the shore above. The Silver Wave, Captain McMillan, the same that was with us up Steele's Bayou, passed safely, and she also rendered good service afterward.

Subsequently, on the night of April 26th, six other transports with numerous barges loaded with hay, corn, freight, and provisions, were drifted past Vicksburg ; of these the Tigress was hit, and sunk just as she reached the river-bank below, on our side. I was there with my yawls, and saw Colonel Lagow, of General Grant's staff, who had passed the batteries in the Tigress, and I think he was satisfied never to attempt such a thing again. Thus General Grant's army had below Vicksburg an abundance of stores, and boats with

which to cross the river. The road by which the troops marched was very bad, and it was not until the 1st of May that it was clear for my corps. While waiting my turn to march, I received a letter from General Grant, written at Carthage, saying that he proposed to cross over and attack Grand Gulf, about the end of April, and he thought I could put in my time usefully by making a "feint" on Haines's Bluff, but he did not like to order me to do it, because it might be reported at the North that I had again been "repulsed, etc." Thus we had to fight a senseless clamor at the North, as well as a determined foe and the obstacles of Nature. Of course, I answered him that I would make the "feint," regardless of public clamor at a distance, and I did make it most effectually; using all the old boats I could get about Milliken's Bend and the mouth of the Yazoo, but taking only ten small regiments, selected out of Blair's division, to make a show of force. We afterward learned that General Pemberton in Vicksburg had previously dispatched a large force to the assistance of General Bowen, at Grand Gulf and Port Gibson, which force had proceeded as far as Hankinson's Ferry, when he discovered our ostentatious movement up the Yazoo, and recalled his men, and sent them up to Haines's Bluff to meet us. This detachment of rebel troops must have marched nearly sixty miles without rest, for afterward, on reaching Vicksburg, I heard that the men were perfectly exhausted, and lay along the road in groups, completely fagged out. This diversion, made with so much pomp and display, therefore completely fulfilled its purpose, by leaving General Grant to contend with a minor force, on landing at Bruinsburg, and afterward at Port Gibson and Grand Gulf.

In May the waters of the Mississippi had so far subsided that all our canals were useless, and the roads had become practicable. After McPherson's corps had passed Richmond, I took up the route of march, with Steele's and Tuttle's divisions. Blair's division remained at Milliken's Bend to protect our depots there, till relieved by troops from Memphis, and then he was ordered to follow us. Our route lay by Richmond and Roundabout Bayou; then, following Bayou Vidal we struck the Mississippi

at Perkins's plantation. Thence the route followed Lake St. Joseph to a plantation called Hard Times, about five miles above Grand Gulf. The road was more or less occupied by wagons and detachments belonging to McPherson's corps; still we marched rapidly and reached Hard Times on the 6th of May. Along the Bayou or Lake St. Joseph were many very fine cotton-plantations, and I recall that of a Mr. Bowie, brother-in-law of the Hon. Reverdy Johnson, of Baltimore. The house was very handsome, with a fine, extensive grass-plot in front. We entered the yard, and, leaving our horses with the headquarters escort, walked to the house. On the front-porch I found a magnificent grand-piano, with several satin-covered arm-chairs, in one of which sat a Union soldier (one of McPherson's men), with his feet on the keys of the piano, and his musket and knapsack lying on the porch. I asked him what he was doing there, and he answered that he was "taking a rest;" this was manifest and I started him in a hurry to overtake his command. The house was tenantless, and had been completely ransacked; articles of dress and books were strewed about, and a handsome boudoir with mirror front had been cast down, striking a French bedstead, shivering the glass. The library was extensive, with a fine collection of books; and hanging on the wall were two full-length portraits of Reverdy Johnson and his wife, one of the most beautiful ladies of our country, with whom I had been acquainted in Washington at the time of General Taylor's administration. Behind the mansion was the usual double row of cabins called the "quarters." There I found an old negro (a family servant) with several women, whom I sent to the house to put things in order; telling the old man that other troops would follow, and he must stand on the porch to tell any officers who came along that the property belonged to Mr. Bowie, who was the brother-in-law of our friend Mr. Reverdy Johnson, of Baltimore, asking them to see that no further harm was done. Soon after we left the house I saw some negroes carrying away furniture which manifestly belonged to the house, and compelled them to carry it back; and after reaching camp that night, at Hard Times, I sent a wagon back to

Bowie's plantation, to bring up to Dr. Hollingsworth's house the two portraits for safe keeping; but before the wagon had reached Bowie's the house was burned, whether by some of our men or by negroes I have never learned.

At the river there was a good deal of scrambling to get across, because the means of ferriage were inadequate; but by the aid of the Forest Queen and several gunboats I got my command across during the 7th of May, and marched out to Hankinson's Ferry (eighteen miles), relieving General Crocker's division of McPherson's corps. McClelland's corps and McPherson's were still ahead, and had fought the battle of Port Gibson, on the 11th. I overtook General Grant in person at Auburn, and he accompanied my corps all the way into Jackson, which we reached May 14th. McClelland's corps had been left in observation toward Edwards's Ferry. McPherson had fought at Raymond, and taken the left-hand road toward Jackson, *via* Clinton, while my troops were ordered by General Grant in person to take the right-hand road leading through Mississippi Springs. We reached Jackson at the same time; McPherson fighting on the Clinton road, and my troops fighting just outside the town, on the Raymond road, where we captured three entire field-batteries, and about two hundred prisoners of war. The rebels, under General Joe Johnston, had retreated through the town northward on the Canton road. Generals Grant, McPherson, and I, met in the large hotel facing the State-House, where the former explained to us that he had intercepted dispatches from Pemberton to Johnston, which made it important for us to work smart to prevent a junction of their respective forces. McPherson was ordered to march back early the next day on the Clinton road to make junction with McClelland, and I was ordered to remain one day to break up railroads, to destroy the arsenal, a foundery, the cotton-factory of the Messrs. Green, etc., etc., and then to follow McPherson.

McPherson left Jackson early on the 15th, and General Grant during the same day. I kept my troops busy in tearing up railroad-tracks, etc., but early on the morning of the 16th received notice from General Grant that a battle was imminent

near Edwards's Depot; that he wanted me to dispatch one or my divisions immediately, and to follow with the other as soon as I had completed the work of destruction. Steele's division started immediately, and later in the day I followed with the other division (Tuttle's). Just as I was leaving Jackson, a very fat man came to see me, to inquire if his hotel, a large, frame-building near the depot, were doomed to be burned. I told him we had no intention to burn it, or any other house, except the machine-shops, and such buildings as could easily be converted to hostile uses. He professed to be a law-abiding Union man, and I remember to have said that this fact was manifest from the sign of his hotel, which was the "Confederate Hotel;" the sign "United States" being faintly painted out, and "Confederate" painted over it! I remembered that hotel, as it was the supper-station for the New Orleans trains when I used to travel the road before the war. I had not the least purpose, however, of burning it, but, just as we were leaving the town, it burst out in flames and was burned to the ground. I never found out exactly who set it on fire, but was told that in one of our batteries were some officers and men who had been made prisoners at Shiloh, with Prentiss's division, and had been carried past Jackson in a railroad-train; they had been permitted by the guard to go to this very hotel for supper, and had nothing to pay but greenbacks, which were refused, with insult, by this same law-abiding landlord. These men, it was said, had quietly and stealthily applied the fire underneath the hotel just as we were leaving the town.

About dark we met General Grant's staff-officer near Bolton Station, who turned us to the right, with orders to push on to Vicksburg by what was known as the upper Jackson Road, which crossed the Big Black at Bridgeport. During that day (May 16th) the battle of Champion Hills had been fought and won by McClelland's and McPherson's corps, aided by one division of mine (Blair's), under the immediate command of General Grant; and McPherson was then following the mass of Pemberton's army, disordered and retreating toward Vicksburg by the Edwards's Ferry road. General Blair's division had

come up from the rear, was temporarily attached to McClelland's corps, taking part with it in the battle of Champion Hills, but on the 17th it was ordered by General Grant across to Bridgeport, to join me there.

Just beyond Bolton there was a small hewn-log house, standing back in a yard, in which was a well; at this some of our soldiers were drawing water. I rode in to get a drink, and, seeing a book on the ground, asked some soldier to hand it to me. It was a volume of the Constitution of the United States, and on the title-page was written the name of Jefferson Davis. On inquiry of a negro, I learned that the place belonged to the then President of the Southern Confederation. His brother Joe Davis's plantation was not far off; one of my staff-officers went there, with a few soldiers, and took a pair of carriage-horses, without my knowledge at the time. He found Joe Davis at home, an old man, attended by a young and affectionate niece; but they were overwhelmed with grief to see their country overrun and swarming with Federal troops.

We pushed on, and reached the Big Black early, Blair's troops having preceded us by an hour or so. I found General Blair in person, and he reported that there was no bridge across the Big Black; that it was swimming-deep; and that there was a rebel force on the opposite side, intrenched. He had ordered a detachment of the Thirteenth United States Regulars, under Captain Charles Ewing, to strip some artillery-horses, mount the men, and swim the river above the ferry, to attack and drive away the party on the opposite bank. I did not approve of this risky attempt, but crept down close to the brink of the river-bank, behind a corn-crib belonging to a plantation-house near by, and saw the parapet on the opposite bank. Ordering a section of guns to be brought forward by hand behind this corn-crib, a few well-directed shells brought out of their holes the little party that was covering the crossing, viz., a lieutenant and ten men, who came down to the river-bank and surrendered. Blair's pontoon-train was brought up, consisting of India-rubber boats, one of which was inflated, used as a boat, and brought over the prisoners. A pontoon-bridge was at once begun, finished by

night, and the troops began the passage. After dark, the whole scene was lit up with fires of pitch-pine. General Grant joined me there, and we sat on a log, looking at the passage of the troops by the light of those fires; the bridge swayed to and fro under the passing feet, and made a fine war-picture. At daybreak we moved on, ascending the ridge, and by 10 A. M. the head of my column, long drawn out, reached the Benton road, and gave us command of the peninsula between the Yazoo and Big Black. I dispatched Colonel Swan, of the Fourth Iowa Cavalry, to Haines's Bluff, to capture that battery from the rear, and he afterward reported that he found it abandoned, its garrison having hastily retreated into Vicksburg, leaving their guns partially disabled, a magazine full of ammunition, and a hospital full of wounded and sick men. Colonel Swan saw one of our gunboats lying about two miles below in the Yazoo, to which he signaled. She steamed up, and to its commander the cavalry turned over the battery at Haines's Bluff, and rejoined me in front of Vicksburg. Allowing a couple of hours for rest and to close up the column, I resumed the march straight on Vicksburg. About two miles before reaching the forts, the road forked; the left was the main Jackson road, and the right was the "graveyard" road, which entered Vicksburg near a large cemetery. General Grant in person directed me to take the right-hand road, but, as McPherson had not yet got up from the direction of the railroad-bridge at Big Black, I sent the Eighth Missouri on the main Jackson road, to push the rebel skirmishers into town, and to remain until relieved by McPherson's advance, which happened late that evening, May 18th. The battalion of the Thirteenth United States Regulars, commanded by Captain Washington, was at the head of the column on the right-hand road, and pushed the rebels close behind their parapets; one of my staff, Captain Pitzman, receiving a dangerous wound in the hip, which apparently disabled him for life. By night Blair's whole division had closed up against the defenses of Vicksburg, which were found to be strong and well manned; and, on General Steele's head of column arriving, I turned it still more to the right, with orders to

work its way down the bluff, so as to make connection with our fleet in the Mississippi River. There was a good deal of desultory fighting that evening, and a man was killed by the side of General Grant and myself, as we sat by the road-side looking at Steele's division passing to the right. General Steele's men reached the road which led from Vicksburg up to Haines's Bluff, which road lay at the foot of the hills, and intercepted some prisoners and wagons which were coming down from Haines's Bluff.

All that night McPherson's troops were arriving by the main Jackson road, and McClelland's by another near the railroad, deploying forward as fast as they struck the rebel works. My corps (the Fifteenth) had the right of the line of investment; McPherson's (the Seventeenth) the centre; and McClelland's (the Thirteenth) the left, reaching from the river above to the railroad below. Our lines connected, and invested about three-quarters of the land-front of the fortifications of Vicksburg. On the supposition that the garrison of Vicksburg was demoralized by the defeats at Champion Hills and at the railroad crossing of the Big Black, General Grant ordered an assault at our respective fronts on the 19th. My troops reached the top of the parapet, but could not cross over. The rebel parapets were strongly manned, and the enemy fought hard and well. My loss was pretty heavy, falling chiefly on the Thirteenth Regulars, whose commanding officer, Captain Washington, was killed, and several other regiments were pretty badly cut up. We, however, held the ground up to the ditch till night, and then drew back only a short distance, and began to counter-trench. On the graveyard road, our parapet was within less than fifty yards of the rebel ditch.

On the 20th of May, General Grant called the three corps commanders together, viz., McClelland, McPherson, and Sherman. We compared notes, and agreed that the assault of the day before had failed, by reason of the natural strength of the position, and because we were forced by the nature of the ground to limit our attacks to the strongest parts of the enemy's line, viz., where the three principal roads entered the city

It was not a council of war, but a mere consultation, resulting in orders from General Grant for us to make all possible preparations for a renewed assault on the 22d, simultaneously, at 10 A. M. I reconnoitred my front thoroughly in person, from right to left, and concluded to make my real attack at the right flank of the bastion, where the graveyard road entered the enemy's intrenchments, and at another point in the curtain about a hundred yards to its right (our left); also to make a strong demonstration by Steele's division, about a mile to our right, toward the river. All our field-batteries were put in position, and were covered by good epaulements; the troops were brought forward, in easy support, concealed by the shape of the ground; and to the minute, viz., 10 A. M. of May 22d, the troops sprang to the assault. A small party, that might be called a forlorn hope, provided with plank to cross the ditch, advanced at a run, up to the very ditch; the lines of infantry sprang from cover, and advanced rapidly in line of battle. I took a position within two hundred yards of the rebel parapet, on the off slope of a spur of ground, where by advancing two or three steps I could see every thing. The rebel line, concealed by the parapet, showed no sign of unusual activity, but as our troops came in fair view, the enemy rose behind their parapet and poured a furious fire upon our lines; and, for about two hours, we had a severe and bloody battle, but at every point we were repulsed. In the very midst of this, when shell and shot fell furious and fast, occurred that little episode which has been celebrated in song and story, of the boy Orion P. Howe, badly wounded, bearing me a message for cartridges, calibre 54, described in my letter to the Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War. This boy was afterward appointed a cadet to the United States Naval Academy, at Annapolis, but he could not graduate, and I do not now know what has become of him.

After our men had been fairly beaten back from off the parapet, and had got cover behind the spurs of ground close up to the rebel works, General Grant came to where I was, on foot, having left his horse some distance to the rear. I pointed out to him the rebel works, admitted that my assault had failed, and he said

the result with McPherson and McClelland was about the same. While he was with me, an orderly or staff-officer came and handed him a piece of paper, which he read and handed to me. I think the writing was in pencil, on a loose piece of paper, and was in General McClelland's handwriting, to the effect that "his troops had captured the rebel parapet in his front," that "the flag of the Union waved over the stronghold of Vicksburg," and asking him (General Grant) to give renewed orders to McPherson and Sherman to press their attacks on their respective fronts, lest the enemy should concentrate on him (McClelland). General Grant said, "I don't believe a word of it;" but I reasoned with him, that this note was official, and must be credited, and I offered to renew the assault at once with new troops. He said he would instantly ride down the line to McClelland's front, and if I did not receive orders to the contrary, by 3 o'clock p. m., I might try it again. Mower's fresh brigade was brought up under cover, and some changes were made in Giles Smith's brigade; and, punctually at 3 p. m., hearing heavy firing down along the line to my left, I ordered the second assault. It was a repetition of the first, equally unsuccessful and bloody. It also transpired that the same thing had occurred with General McPherson, who lost in this second assault some most valuable officers and men, without adequate result; and that General McClelland, instead of having taken any single point of the rebel main parapet, had only taken one or two small outlying lunettes open to the rear, where his men were at the mercy of the rebels behind their main parapet, and most of them were actually thus captured. This affair caused great feeling with us, and severe criticisms on General McClelland, which led finally to his removal from the command of the Thirteenth Corps, to which General Ord succeeded. The immediate cause, however, of General McClelland's removal was the publication of a sort of congratulatory order addressed to his troops, first published in St. Louis, in which he claimed that he had actually succeeded in making a lodgment in Vicksburg, but had lost it, owing to the fact that McPherson and Sherman did not fulfill their parts of the gen-

eral plan of attack. This was simply untrue. The two several assaults made May 22d, on the lines of Vicksburg, had failed, by reason of the great strength of the position and the determined fighting of its garrison. I have since seen the position at Sevastopol, and without hesitation I declare that at Vicksburg to have been the more difficult of the two.

Thereafter our proceedings were all in the nature of a siege. General Grant drew more troops from Memphis, to prolong our general line to the left, so as completely to invest the place on its land-side, while the navy held the river both above and below. General Mower's brigade of Tuttle's division was also sent across the river to the peninsula, so that by May 31st Vicksburg was completely beleaguered. Good roads were constructed from our camps to the several landing-places on the Yazoo River, to which points our boats brought us ample supplies; so that we were in a splendid condition for a siege, while our enemy was shut up in a close fort, with a large civil population of men, women, and children to feed, in addition to his combatant force. If we could prevent sallies, or relief from the outside, the fate of the garrison of Vicksburg was merely a question of time.

I had my headquarters camp close up to the works, near the centre of my corps, and General Grant had his bivouac behind a ravine to my rear. We estimated Pemberton's whole force in Vicksburg at thirty thousand men, and it was well known that the rebel General Joseph E. Johnston was engaged in collecting another strong force near the Big Black, with the intention to attack our rear, and thus to afford Pemberton an opportunity to escape with his men. Even then the ability of General Johnston was recognized, and General Grant told me that he was about the only general on that side whom he feared. Each corps kept strong pickets well to the rear; but, as the rumors of Johnston's accumulating force reached us, General Grant concluded to take stronger measures. He had received from the North General J. G. Parkes's corps (Ninth), which had been posted at Haines's Bluff; then, detailing one division from each of the three *corps d'armée* investing Vicksburg, he

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ordered me to go out, take a general command of all, and to counteract any movement on the part of General Johnston to relieve Vicksburg. I reconnoitred the whole country, from Haines's Bluff to the railroad bridge, and posted the troops thus: Parkes's two divisions from Haines's Bluff out to the Benton or ridge road; Tuttle's division, of my corps, joining on and extending to a plantation called Young's, overlooking Bear Creek valley, which empties into the Big Black above Messinger's Ferry; then McArthur's division, of McPherson's corps, took up the line, and reached to Osterhaus's division of McClermand's corps, which held a strong fortified position at the railroad-crossing of the Big Black River. I was of opinion that, if Johnston should cross the Big Black, he could by the favorable nature of the country be held in check till a concentration could be effected by us at the point threatened. From the best information we could gather, General Johnston had about thirty or forty thousand men. I took post near a plantation of one Tribble, near Markham's, and frequently reconnoitred the whole line, and could see the enemy engaged in like manner, on the east side of Big Black; but he never attempted actually to cross over, except with some cavalry, just above Bear Creek, which was easily driven back. I was there from June 20th to the 4th of July. In a small log-house near Markham's was the family of Mr. Klein, whose wife was the daughter of Mrs. Day, of New Orleans, who in turn was the sister of Judge T. W. Bartley, my brother-in-law. I used frequently to drop in and take a meal with them, and Mrs. Klein was generally known as the general's cousin, which doubtless saved her and her family from molestation, too common on the part of our men.

One day, as I was riding the line near a farm known as Parson Fox's, I heard that the family of a Mr. Wilkinson, of New Orleans, was "refugeeing" at a house near by. I rode up, inquired, and found two young girls of that name, who said they were the children of General Wilkinson, of Louisiana, and that their brother had been at the Military School at Alexandria. Inquiring for their mother, I was told she was spending the day

at Parson Fox's. As this house was on my route, I rode there, went through a large gate into the yard, followed by my staff and escort, and found quite a number of ladies sitting on the porch. I rode up and inquired if that were Parson Fox's. The parson, a fine-looking, venerable old man, rose, and said that he was Parson Fox. I then inquired for Mrs. Wilkinson, when an elderly lady answered that she was the person. I asked her if she were from Plaquemine Parish, Louisiana, and she said she was. I then inquired if she had a son who had been a cadet at Alexandria when General Sherman was superintendent, and she answered yes. I then announced myself, inquired after the boy, and she said he was inside of Vicksburg, an artillery lieutenant. I then asked about her husband, whom I had known, when she burst into tears, and cried out in agony, "You killed him at Bull Run, where he was fighting for his country!" I disclaimed killing anybody at Bull Run; but all the women present (nearly a dozen) burst into loud lamentations, which made it most uncomfortable for me, and I rode away. On the 3d of July, as I sat at my bivouac by the road-side near Tribble's, I saw a poor, miserable horse, carrying a lady, and led by a little negro boy, coming across a cotton-field toward me; as they approached I recognized poor Mrs. Wilkinson, and helped her to dismount. I inquired what had brought her to me in that style, and she answered that she *knew* Vicksburg was going to surrender, and she wanted to go right away to see her boy. I had a telegraph-wire to General Grant's headquarters, and had heard that there were symptoms of surrender, but as yet nothing definite. I tried to console and dissuade her, but she was resolved, and I could not help giving her a letter to General Grant, explaining to him who she was, and asking him to give her the earliest opportunity to see her son. The distance was fully twenty miles, but off she started, and I afterward learned that my letter had enabled her to see her son, who had escaped unharmed. Later in the day I got by telegraph General Grant's notice of the negotiations for surrender; and, by his directions, gave general orders to my troops to be ready at a moment's notice to cross the Big Black, and go for Joe Johnston.

The next day (July 4, 1863) Vicksburg surrendered, and orders were given for at once attacking General Johnston. The Thirteenth Corps (General Ord) was ordered to march rapidly, and cross the Big Black at the railroad-bridge; the Fifteenth by Messinger's, and the Ninth (General Parkes) by Birdsong's Ferry—all to converge on Bolton. My corps crossed the Big Black during the 5th and 6th of July, and marched for Bolton, where we came in with General Ord's troops; but the Ninth Corps was delayed in crossing at Birdsong's. Johnston had received timely notice of Pemberton's surrender, and was in full retreat for Jackson. On the 8th all our troops reached the neighborhood of Clinton, the weather fearfully hot, and water scarce. Johnston had marched rapidly, and in retreating had caused cattle, hogs, and sheep, to be driven into the ponds of water, and there shot down; so that we had to haul their dead and stinking carcasses out to use the water. On the 10th of July we had driven the rebel army into Jackson, where it turned at bay behind the intrenchments, which had been enlarged and strengthened since our former visit in May. We closed our lines about Jackson; my corps (Fifteenth) held the centre, extending from the Clinton to the Raymond road; Ord's (Thirteenth) on the right, reaching Pearl River below the town; and Parkes's (Ninth) the left, above the town.

On the 11th we pressed close in, and shelled the town from every direction. One of Ord's brigades (Lauman's) got too close, and was very roughly handled and driven back in disorder. General Ord accused the commander (General Lauman) of having disregarded his orders, and attributed to him personally the disaster and heavy loss of men. He requested his relief, which I granted, and General Lauman went to the rear, and never regained his division. He died after the war, in Iowa, much respected, as before that time he had been universally esteemed a most gallant and excellent officer. The weather was fearfully hot, but we continued to press the siege day and night, using our artillery pretty freely; and on the morning of July 17th the place was found evacuated. General Steele's division was sent in pursuit as far as Brandon (fourteen miles), but General

Johnston had carried his army safely off, and pursuit in that hot weather would have been fatal to my command.

Reporting the fact to General Grant, he ordered me to return, to send General Parkes's corps to Haines's Bluff, General Ord's back to Vicksburg, and he consented that I should encamp my whole corps near the Big Black, pretty much on the same ground we had occupied before the movement, and with the prospect of a period of rest for the remainder of the summer. We reached our camps on the 27th of July.

Meantime, a division of troops, commanded by Brigadier-General W. Sooy Smith, had been added to my corps. General Smith applied for and received a sick-leave on the 20th of July; Brigadier-General Hugh Ewing was assigned to its command; and from that time it constituted the Fourth Division of the Fifteenth Army Corps.

Port Hudson had surrendered to General Banks on the 8th of July (a necessary consequence of the fall of Vicksburg), and thus terminated probably the most important enterprise of the civil war—the recovery of the complete control of the Mississippi River, from its source to its mouth—or, in the language of Mr. Lincoln, the Mississippi went “unvexed to the sea.”

I put my four divisions into handsome, clean camps, looking to health and comfort alone, and had my headquarters in a beautiful grove near the house of that same Parson Fox where I had found the crowd of weeping rebel women waiting for the fate of their friends in Vicksburg.

The loss sustained by the Fifteenth Corps in the assault of May 19th, at Vicksburg, was mostly confined to the battalion of the Thirteenth Regulars, whose commanding officer, Captain Washington, was mortally wounded, and afterward died in the hands of the enemy, which battalion lost seventy-seven men out of the two hundred and fifty engaged; the Eighty-third Indiana (Colonel Spooner), and the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh Illinois (Lieutenant-Colonel Eldridge), the aggregate being about two hundred.

In the assaults of the 22d, the loss in the Fifteenth Corps was about six hundred.

In the attack on Jackson, Mississippi, during the 11th-16th of July, General Ord reported the loss in the Thirteenth Army Corps seven hundred and sixty-two, of which five hundred and thirty-three were confined to Lauman's division; General Parkes reported, in the Ninth Corps, thirty-seven killed, two hundred and fifty-eight wounded, and thirty-three missing: total, three hundred and twenty-eight. In the Fifteenth Corps the loss was less; so that, in the aggregate, the loss as reported by me at the time was less than a thousand men, while we took that number alone of prisoners.

In General Grant's entire army before Vicksburg, composed of the Ninth, part of the Sixteenth, and the whole of the Thirteenth, Fifteenth, and Seventeenth Corps, the aggregate loss, as stated by Badeau, was—

Killed.....	1,243
Wounded.....	7,095
Missing.....	535
Total.....	8,873

Whereas the Confederate loss, as stated by the same author, was:

Surrendered at Vicksburg.....	32,000
Captured at Champion Hills.....	3,000
Captured at Big Black Bridge.....	2,000
Captured at Port Gibson.....	2,000
Captured with Loring.....	4,000
Killed and wounded.....	10,000
Stragglers.....	3,000
Total.....	56,000

Besides which, "a large amount of public property, consisting of railroads, locomotives, cars, steamers, cotton, guns, muskets, ammunition, etc., etc., was captured in Vicksburg."

The value of the capture of Vicksburg, however, was not measured by the list of prisoners, guns, and small-arms, but by the fact that its possession secured the navigation of the great central river of the continent, bisected fatally the Southern Con-

federacy, and set the armies which had been used in its conquest free for other purposes ; and it so happened that the event coincided as to time with another great victory which crowned our arms far away, at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. That was a defensive battle, whereas ours was offensive in the highest acceptance of the term, and the two, occurring at the same moment of time, should have ended the war ; but the rebel leaders were mad, and seemed determined that their people should drink of the very lowest dregs of the cup of war, which they themselves had prepared.

The campaign of Vicksburg, in its conception and execution, belonged exclusively to General Grant, not only in the great whole, but in the thousands of its details. I still retain many of his letters and notes, all in his own handwriting, prescribing the routes of march for divisions and detachments, specifying even the amount of food and tools to be carried along. Many persons gave his adjutant-general, Rawlins, the credit for these things, but they were in error ; for no commanding general of an army ever gave more of his personal attention to details, or wrote so many of his own orders, reports, and letters, as General Grant. His success at Vicksburg justly gave him great fame at home and abroad. The President conferred on him the rank of major-general in the regular army, the highest grade then existing by law ; and General McPherson and I shared in his success by receiving similar commissions as brigadier-generals in the regular army.

But our success at Vicksburg produced other results not so favorable to our cause—a general relaxation of effort, and desire to escape the hard drudgery of camp : officers sought leaves of absence to visit their homes, and soldiers obtained furloughs and discharges on the most slender pretexts ; even the General Government seemed to relax in its efforts to replenish our ranks with new men, or to enforce the draft, and the politicians were pressing their schemes to reorganize or patch up some form of civil government, as fast as the armies gained partial possession of the States.

In order to illustrate this peculiar phase of our civil war, I

give at this place copies of certain letters which have not heretofore been published :

[PRIVATE.]

WASHINGTON, August 29, 1863.

Major-General W. T. SHERMAN, Vicksburg, Mississippi.

MY DEAR GENERAL: The question of reconstruction in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Arkansas, will soon come up for decision of the Government, and not only the length of the war, but our ultimate and complete success, will depend upon its decision. It is a difficult matter, but I believe it can be successfully solved, if the President will consult opinions of cool and discreet men, who are capable of looking at it in all its bearings and effects. I think he is disposed to receive the advice of our generals who have been in these States, and know much more of their condition than gassy politicians in Congress. General Banks has written pretty fully on the subject. I wrote to General Grant, immediately after the fall of Vicksburg, for his views in regard to Mississippi, but he has not yet answered.

I wish you would consult with Grant, McPherson, and others of cool, good judgment, and write me your views fully, as I may wish to use them with the President. You had better write me unofficially, and then your letter will not be put on file, and cannot hereafter be used against you. You have been in Washington enough to know how every thing a man writes or says is picked up by his enemies and misconstrued. With kind wishes for your further success,

I am yours truly,

H. W. HALLECK.

[PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL.]

HEADQUARTERS, FIFTEENTH ARMY CORPS,
CAMP ON BIG BLACK, MISSISSIPPI, September 17, 1863. }

H. W. HALLECK, *Commander-in-Chief, Washington, D. C.*

DEAR GENERAL: I have received your letter of August 29th, and with pleasure confide to you fully my thoughts on the important matters you suggest, with absolute confidence that you will use what is valuable, and reject the useless or superfluous.

That part of the continent of North America known as Louisiana, Mississippi, and Arkansas, is in my judgment the key to the whole interior. The valley of the Mississippi is America, and, although railroads have changed the economy of intercommunication, yet the water-channels still mark the lines of fertile land, and afford cheap carriage to the heavy products of it.

The inhabitants of the country on the Monongahela, the Illinois, the Minnesota, the Yellowstone, and Osage, are as directly concerned in the security of the Lower Mississippi as are those who dwell on its very banks

in Louisiana; and now that the nation has recovered its possession, this generation of men will make a fearful mistake if they again commit its charge to a people liable to misuse their position, and assert, as was recently done, that, because they dwelt on the banks of this mighty stream, they had a right to control its navigation.

I would deem it very unwise at this time, or for years to come, to revive the State governments of Louisiana, etc., or to institute in this quarter any civil government in which the local people have much to say. They had a government so mild and paternal that they gradually forgot they had any at all, save what they themselves controlled; they asserted an absolute right to seize public moneys, forts, arms, and even to shut up the natural avenues of travel and commerce. They chose *war*—they ignored and denied all the obligations of the solemn contract of government and appealed to force.

We accepted the issue, and now they begin to realize that war is a two-edged sword, and it may be that many of the inhabitants cry for *peace*. I know them well, and the very impulses of their nature; and to deal with the inhabitants of that part of the South which borders on the great river, we must recognize the classes into which they have divided themselves:

First. The large planters, owning lands, slaves, and all kinds of personal property. These are, on the whole, the ruling class. They are educated, wealthy, and easily approached. In some districts they are bitter as gall, and have given up slaves, plantations, and all, serving in the armies of the Confederacy; whereas, in others, they are conservative. None dare admit a friendship for us, though they say freely that they were at the outset opposed to war and disunion. I *know* we can manage this class, but only by *action*. Argument is exhausted, and words have lost their usual meaning. Nothing but the logic of events touches their understanding; but, of late, this has worked a wonderful change. If our country were like Europe, crowded with people, I would say it would be easier to replace this class than to reconstruct it, subordinate to the policy of the nation; but, as this is not the case, it is better to allow the planters, with individual exceptions, gradually to recover their plantations, to hire any species of labor, and to adapt themselves to the new order of things. Still, their friendship and assistance to reconstruct order out of the present ruin cannot be depended on. They watch the operations of our armies, and hope still for a Southern Confederacy that will restore to them the slaves and privileges which they feel are otherwise lost forever. In my judgment, we have two more battles to win before we should even bother our minds with the idea of restoring civil order—viz., one near Meridian, in November, and one near Shreveport, in February and March next, when Red River is navigable by our gunboats. When these are done, then, and not until then, will the planters of Louisiana, Arkansas, and Mississippi, submit. Slavery is already gone, and, to cal-

tivate the land, negro or other labor must be hired. This, of itself, is a vast revolution, and time must be afforded to allow men to adjust their minds and habits to this new order of things. A civil government of the representative type would suit this class far less than a pure military rule, readily adapting itself to actual occurrences, and able to enforce its laws and orders promptly and emphatically.

Second. The smaller farmers, mechanics, merchants, and laborers. This class will probably number three-quarters of the whole; have, in fact, no real interest in the establishment of a Southern Confederacy, and have been led or driven into war on the false theory that they were to be benefited somehow—they knew not how. They are essentially tired of the war, and would slink back home if they could. These are the real *tiers état* of the South, and are hardly worthy a thought; for they swerve to and fro according to events which they do not comprehend or attempt to shape. When the time for reconstruction comes, they will want the old political system of caucuses, Legislatures, etc., to amuse them and make them believe they are real sovereigns; but in all things they will follow blindly the lead of the planters. The Southern politicians, who understand this class, use them as the French do their masses—seemingly consult their prejudices, while they make their orders and enforce them. We should do the same.

Third. The Union men of the South. I must confess I have little respect for this class. They allowed a clamorous set of demagogues to muzzle and drive them as a pack of curs. Afraid of shadows, they submit tamely to squads of dragoons, and permit them, without a murmur, to burn their cotton, take their horses, corn, and every thing; and, when we reach them, they are full of complaints if our men take a few fence-rails for fire, or corn to feed our horses. They give us no assistance or information, and are loudest in their complaints at the smallest excesses of our soldiers. Their sons, horses, arms, and every thing useful, are in the army against us, and they stay at home, claiming all the exemptions of peaceful citizens. I account them as nothing in this great game of war.

Fourth. The young bloods of the South: sons of planters, lawyers about towns, good billiard-players and sportsmen, men who never did work and never will. War suits them, and the rascals are brave, fine riders, bold to rashness, and dangerous subjects in every sense. They care not a sou for niggers, land, or any thing. They hate Yankees *per se*, and don't bother their brains about the past, present, or future. As long as they have good horses, plenty of forage, and an open country, they are happy. This is a larger class than most men suppose, and they are the most dangerous set of men that this war has turned loose upon the world. They are splendid riders, first-rate shots, and utterly reckless. Stewart, John Morgan, Forrest, and Jackson, are the types and leaders of this class. These men must all be killed or employed by us before we can hope for peace. They have no prop-

erty or future, and therefore cannot be influenced by any thing, except personal considerations. I have two brigades of these fellows in my front, commanded by Cosby, of the old army, and Whitfield, of Texas. Stephen D. Lee is in command of the whole. I have frequent interviews with their officers, a good understanding with them, and am inclined to think, when the resources of their country are exhausted, we must employ them. They are the best cavalry in the world, but it will tax Mr. Chase's genius for finance to supply them with horses. At present horses cost them nothing; for they take where they find, and don't bother their brains as to who is to pay for them; the same may be said of the cornfields, which have, as they believe, been cultivated by a good-natured people for their special benefit. We propose to share with them the free use of these cornfields, planted by willing hands, that will never gather the crops.

Now that I have sketched the people who inhabit the district of country under consideration, I will proceed to discuss the future.

A civil government now, for any part of it, would be simply ridiculous. The people would not regard it, and even the military commanders of the antagonistic parties would treat it lightly. Governors would be simply petitioners for military assistance, to protect supposed friendly interests, and military commanders would refuse to disperse and weaken their armies for military reasons. Jealousies would arise between the two conflicting powers, and, instead of contributing to the end of the war, would actually defer it. Therefore, I contend that the interests of the United States, and of the real parties concerned, demand the continuance of the simple military rule, till after *all* the organized armies of the South are dispersed, conquered, and subjugated.

The people of all this region are represented in the Army of Virginia, at Charleston, Mobile, and Chattanooga. They have sons and relations in each of the rebel armies, and naturally are interested in their fate. Though we hold military possession of the key-points of their country, still they contend, and naturally, that should Lee succeed in Virginia, or Bragg at Chattanooga, a change will occur here also. We cannot for this reason attempt to reconstruct parts of the South as we conquer it, till all idea of the establishment of a Southern Confederacy is abandoned. We should avail ourselves of the present lull to secure the strategical points that will give us an advantage in the future military movements, and we should treat the idea of civil government as one in which we as a nation have a minor or subordinate interest. The opportunity is good to impress on the population the truth that they are more interested in civil government than we are; and that, to enjoy the protection of laws, they must not be passive observers of events, but must aid and sustain the constituted authorities in enforcing the laws; they must not only submit themselves, but should pay their share of taxes, and render personal services when called on.

It seems to me, in contemplating the history of the past two years, that all the people of our country, North, South, East, and West, have been undergoing a salutary political schooling, learning lessons which might have been acquired from the experience of other people; but we had all become so wise in our own conceit that we would only learn by actual experience of our own. The people even of small and unimportant localities, North as well as South, had reasoned themselves into the belief that their opinions were superior to the aggregated interest of the whole nation. Half our territorial nation rebelled, on a doctrine of secession that they themselves now scout; and a real numerical majority actually believed that a little State was endowed with such sovereignty that it could defeat the policy of the great whole. I think the present war has exploded that notion, and were this war to cease now, the experience gained, though dear, would be worth the expense.

Another great and important natural truth is still in contest, and can only be solved by war. Numerical majorities by vote have been our great arbiter. Heretofore all men have cheerfully submitted to it in questions left open, but numerical majorities are not necessarily physical majorities. The South, though numerically inferior, contend they can whip the Northern superiority of numbers, and therefore by natural law they contend that they are not bound to submit. This issue is the only real one, and in my judgment all else should be deferred to it. War alone can decide it, and it is the only question now left for us as a people to decide. Can we whip the South? If we can, our numerical majority has both the natural and constitutional right to govern them. If we cannot whip them, they contend for the natural right to select their own government, and they have the argument. Our armies must prevail over theirs; our officers, marshals, and courts, must penetrate into the innermost recesses of their land, before we have the natural right to demand their submission.

I would banish all minor questions, assert the broad doctrine that as a nation the United States has the right, and also the physical power, to penetrate to every part of our national domain, and that we will do it—that we will do it in our own time and in our own way; that it makes no difference whether it be in one year, or two, or ten, or twenty; that we will remove and destroy every obstacle, if need be, take every life, every acre of land, every particle of property, every thing that to us seems proper; that we will not cease till the end is attained; that all who do not aid us are enemies, and that we will not account to them for our acts. If the people of the South oppose, they do so at their peril; and if they stand by, mere lookers-on in this domestic tragedy, they have no right to immunity, protection, or share in the final results.

I even believe and contend further that, in the North, every member of the nation is bound by both natural and constitutional law to “maintain

and defend the Government against all its enemies and opposers whomsoever." If they fail to do it they are derelict, and can be punished, or deprived of all advantages arising from the labors of those who do. If any man, North or South, withholds his share of taxes, or his physical assistance in this, the crisis of our history, he should be deprived of all voice in the future elections of this country, and might be banished, or reduced to the condition of a mere denizen of the land.

War is upon us, none can deny it. It is not the choice of the Government of the United States, but of a faction; the Government was forced to accept the issue, or to submit to a degradation fatal and disgraceful to all the inhabitants. In accepting war, it should be "pure and simple" as applied to the belligerents. I would keep it so, till all traces of the war are effaced; till those who appealed to it are sick and tired of it, and come to the emblem of our nation, and sue for peace. I would not coax them, or even meet them half-way, but make them so sick of war that generations would pass away before they would again appeal to it.

I know what I say when I repeat that the insurgents of the South sneer at all overtures looking to their interests. They scorn the alliance with the Copperheads; they tell me to my face that they respect Grant, McPherson, and our brave associates who fight manfully and well for a principle, but despise the Copperheads and sneaks at the North, who profess friendship for the South and opposition to the war, as mere covers for their knavery and poltroonery.

God knows that I deplore this fratricidal war as much as any man living, but it is upon us, a physical fact; and there is only one honorable issue from it. We must fight it out, army against army, and man against man; and I know, and you know, and civilians begin to realize the fact, that reconciliation and reconstruction will be easier through and by means of strong, well-equipped, and organized armies than through any species of conventions that can be framed. The issues are made, and all discussion is out of place and ridiculous. The section of thirty-pounder Parrott rifles now drilling before my tent is a more convincing argument than the largest Democratic meeting the State of New York can possibly assemble at Albany; and a simple order of the War Department to draft enough men to fill our skeleton regiments would be more convincing as to our national perpetuity than an humble pardon to Jeff. Davis and all his misled host.

The only government needed or deserved by the States of Louisiana, Arkansas, and Mississippi, now exists in Grant's army. This needs, simply, enough privates to fill its ranks; all else will follow in due season. This army has its well-defined code of laws and practice, and can adapt itself to the wants and necessities of a city, the country, the rivers, the sea, indeed to all parts of this land. It better subverts the interest and policy of the General Government, and the people here prefer it to any weak or ser-

vile combination that would at once, from force of habit, revive and perpetuate local prejudices and passions. The people of this country have forfeited all right to a voice in the councils of the nation. They know it and feel it, and in after-years they will be the better citizens from the dear-bought experience of the present crisis. Let them learn now, and learn it well, that good citizens must obey as well as command. Obedience to law, absolute—yea, even abject—is the lesson that this war, under Providence, will teach the free and enlightened American citizen. As a nation, we shall be the better for it.

I never have apprehended foreign interference in our family quarrel. Of course, governments founded on a different and it may be an antagonistic principle with ours naturally feel a pleasure at our complications, and, it may be, wish our downfall; but in the end England and France will join with us in jubilation at the triumph of constitutional government over faction. Even now the English manifest this. I do not profess to understand Napoleon's design in Mexico, and I do not see that his taking military possession of Mexico concerns us. We have as much territory now as we want. The Mexicans have failed in self-government, and it was a question as to what nation she should fall a prey. That is now solved, and I don't see that we are damaged. We have the finest part of the North American Continent, all we can people and can take care of; and, if we can suppress rebellion in our own land, and compose the strife generated by it, we shall have enough people, resources, and wealth, if well combined, to defy interference from any and every quarter.

I therefore hope the Government of the United States will continue, as heretofore, to collect, in well-organized armies, the physical strength of the nation; applying it, as heretofore, in asserting the national authority; and in persevering, without relaxation, to the end. This, whether near or far off, is not for us to say; but, fortunately, we have no choice. We must succeed—no other choice is left us except degradation. The South must be ruled by us, or she will rule us. We must conquer them, or ourselves be conquered. There is no middle course. They ask, and will have, nothing else, and talk of compromise is bosh; for we know they would even scorn the offer.

I wish the war could have been deferred for twenty years, till the superabundant population of the North could flow in and replace the losses sustained by war; but this could not be, and we are forced to take things as they are.

All therefore I can now venture to advise is to raise the draft to its maximum, fill the present regiments to as large a standard as possible, and push the war, pure and simple. Great attention should be paid to the discipline of our armies, for on them may be founded the future stability of the Government.

The cost of the war is, of course, to be considered, but finances will adjust themselves to the actual state of affairs; and, even if we would, we could not change the cost. Indeed, the larger the cost now, the less will it be in the end; for the end must be attained somehow, regardless of loss of life and treasure, and is merely a question of time.

Excuse so long a letter. With great respect, etc.,

W. T. SHERMAN, *Major-General.*

General Halleck, on receipt of this letter, telegraphed me that Mr. Lincoln had read it carefully, and had instructed him to obtain my consent to have it published. At the time, I preferred not to be drawn into any newspaper controversy, and so wrote to General Halleck; and the above letter has never been, to my knowledge, published; though Mr. Lincoln more than once referred to it with marks of approval.

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH ARMY CORPS, }
CAMP ON BIG BLACK, September 17, 1863. }

*Brigadier-General J. A. RAWLINS, Acting Assistant Adjutant-General,
Vicksburg.*

DEAR GENERAL: I inclose for your perusal, and for you to read to General Grant such parts as you deem interesting, letters received by me from Prof. Mahan and General Halleck, with my answers. After you have read my answer to General Halleck, I beg you to inclose it to its address, and return me the others.

I think Prof. Mahan's very marked encomium upon the campaign of Vicksburg is so flattering to General Grant, that you may offer to let him keep the letter, if he values such a testimonial. I have never written a word to General Halleck since my report of last December, after the affair at Chickasaw, except a short letter a few days ago, thanking him for the kind manner of his transmitting to me the appointment of brigadier-general. I know that in Washington I am incomprehensible, because at the outset of the war I would not go it blind and rush headlong into a war unprepared and with an utter ignorance of its extent and purpose. I was then construed *unsound*; and now that I insist on war pure and simple, with no admixture of civil compromises, I am supposed vindictive. You remember what *Polonius* said to his son *Laertes*: "Beware of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in, bear it, that the opposed may beware of thee." What is true of the single man, is equally true of a nation. Our leaders seemed at first to thirst for the quarrel, willing, even anxious, to array against us all possible elements of opposition; and now, being in, they would hasten to quit long before the "opposed" has received that lesson which he needs. I

would make this war as severe as possible, and show no symptoms of tiring till the South begs for mercy ; indeed, I know, and you know, that the end would be reached quicker by such a course than by any seeming yielding on our part. I don't want our Government to be bothered by patching up local governments, or by trying to reconcile any class of men. The South has done her worst, and now is the time for us to pile on our blows thick and fast.

Instead of postponing the draft till after the elections, we ought now to have our ranks full of drafted men ; and, at best, if they come at all, they will reach us when we should be in motion.

I think General Halleck would like to have the honest, candid opinions of all of us, viz., Grant, McPherson, and Sherman. I have given mine, and would prefer, of course, that it should coincide with the others. Still, no matter what my opinion may be, I can easily adapt my conduct to the plans of others, and am only too happy when I find theirs better than mine.

If no trouble, please show Halleck's letter to McPherson, and ask him to write also. I know his regiments are like mine (mere squads), and need filling up. Yours truly,

W. T. SHERMAN, *Major-General.*

CHAPTER XIII.

CHATTANOOGA AND KNOXVILLE.

JULY TO DECEMBER, 1863.

AFTER the fall of Vicksburg, and its corollary, Port Hudson, the Mississippi River was wholly in the possession of the Union forces, and formed a perfect line of separation in the territories of our opponents. Thenceforth, they could not cross it save by stealth, and the military affairs on its west bank became unimportant. Grant's army had seemingly completed its share of the work of war, and lay, as it were, idle for a time. In person General Grant went to New Orleans to confer with General Banks, and his victorious army was somewhat dispersed. Parke's corps (Ninth) returned to Kentucky, and afterward formed part of the Army of the Ohio, under General Burnside; Ord's corps (Thirteenth) was sent down to Natchez, and gradually drifted to New Orleans and Texas; McPherson's (Seventeenth) remained in and near Vicksburg; Hurlbut's (Sixteenth) was at Memphis; and mine (Fifteenth) was encamped along the Big Black, about twenty miles east of Vicksburg. This corps was composed of four divisions: Steele's (the First) was posted at and near the railroad-bridge; Blair's (the Second), next in order, near Parson Fox's; the Third Division (Tuttle's) was on the ridge about the head of Bear Creek; and the Fourth (Ewing's) was at Messinger's Ford. My own headquarters were in tents in a fine grove of old oaks near Parson Fox's house, and the battalion of the Thirteenth Regulars was the headquarters guard.

All the camps were arranged for health, comfort, rest, and

drill. It being midsummer, we did not expect any change till the autumn months, and accordingly made ourselves as comfortable as possible. There was a short railroad in operation from Vicksburg to the bridge across the Big Black, whence supplies in abundance were hauled to our respective camps. With a knowledge of this fact Mrs. Sherman came down from Ohio with Minnie, Lizzie, Willie, and Tom, to pay us a visit in our camp at Parson Fox's. Willie was then nine years old, was well advanced for his years, and took the most intense interest in the affairs of the army. He was a great favorite with the soldiers, and used to ride with me on horseback in the numerous drills and reviews of the time. He then had the promise of as long a life as any of my children, and displayed more interest in the war than any of them. He was called a "sergeant" in the regular battalion, learned the manual of arms, and regularly attended the parade and guard-mounting of the Thirteenth, back of my camp. We made frequent visits to Vicksburg, and always stopped with General McPherson, who had a large house, and boarded with a family (Mrs. Edwards's) in which were several interesting young ladies. General Grant occupied another house (Mrs. Lum's) in Vicksburg during that summer, and also had his family with him. The time passed very agreeably, diversified only by little events of not much significance, among which I will recount only one.

While we occupied the west bank of the Big Black, the east bank was watched by a rebel cavalry-division, commanded by General Armstrong. He had four brigades, commanded by Generals Whitfield, Stark, Cosby, and Wirt Adams. Quite frequently they communicated with us by flags of truce on trivial matters, and we reciprocated, merely to observe them. One day a flag of truce, borne by a Captain B——, of Louisville, Kentucky, escorted by about twenty-five men, was reported at Messinger's Ferry, and I sent orders to let them come right into my tent. This brought them through the camps of the Fourth Division, and part of the Second; and as they drew up in front of my tent, I invited Captain B—— and another officer with him (a major from Mobile) to dismount, to enter my tent, and to make

themselves at home. Their escort was sent to join mine, with orders to furnish them forage and every thing they wanted. B—— had brought a sealed letter for General Grant at Vicksburg, which was dispatched to him. In the evening we had a good supper, with wine and cigars, and, as we sat talking, B—— spoke of his father and mother, in Louisville, got leave to write them a long letter without its being read by any one, and then we talked about the war. He said: "What is the use of your persevering? It is simply impossible to subdue eight millions of people;" asserting that "the feeling in the South had become so embittered that a reconciliation was impossible." I answered that, "sitting as we then were, we appeared very comfortable, and surely there was no trouble in our becoming friends." "Yes," said he, "that is very true of us, but we are gentlemen of education, and can easily adapt ourselves to any condition of things; but this would not apply equally well to the common people, or to the common soldiers." I took him out to the camp-fires behind the tent, and there were the men of his escort and mine mingled together, drinking their coffee, and happy as soldiers always seem. I asked B—— what he thought of that, and he admitted that I had the best of the argument. Before I dismissed this flag of truce, his companion consulted me confidentially as to what disposition he ought to make of his family, then in Mobile, and I frankly gave him the best advice I could.

While we were thus lying idle in camp on the Big Black, the Army of the Cumberland, under General Rosecrans, was moving against Bragg at Chattanooga; and the Army of the Ohio, General Burnside, was marching toward East Tennessee. General Rosecrans was so confident of success that he somewhat scattered his command, seemingly to surround and capture Bragg in Chattanooga; but the latter, reinforced from Virginia, drew out of Chattanooga, concentrated his army at Lafayette, and at Chickamauga fell on Rosecrans, defeated him, and drove him into Chattanooga. The whole country seemed paralyzed by this unhappy event; and the authorities in Washington were thoroughly stampeded. From the East the

Eleventh Corps (Slocum), and the Twelfth Corps (Howard), were sent by rail to Nashville, and forward under command of General Hooker; orders were also sent to General Grant, by Halleck, to send what reënforcements he could spare immediately toward Chattanooga.

Bragg had completely driven Rosecrans's army into Chattanooga; the latter was in actual danger of starvation, and the railroad to his rear seemed inadequate to his supply. The first intimation which I got of this disaster was on the 22d of September, by an order from General Grant to dispatch one of my divisions immediately into Vicksburg, to go toward Chattanooga, and I designated the First, General Osterhaus—Steele meantime having been appointed to the command of the Department of Arkansas, and had gone to Little Rock. General Osterhaus marched the same day, and on the 23d I was summoned to Vicksburg in person, where General Grant showed me the alarming dispatches from General Halleck, which had been sent from Memphis by General Hurlbut, and said, on further thought, that he would send me and my whole corps. But, inasmuch as one division of McPherson's corps (John E. Smith's) had already started, he instructed me to leave one of my divisions on the Big Black, and to get the other two ready to follow at once. I designated the Second, then commanded by Brigadier-General Giles A. Smith, and the Fourth, commanded by Brigadier-General Corse.

On the 25th I returned to my camp on Big Black, gave all the necessary orders for these divisions to move, and for the Third (Tuttle's) to remain, and went into Vicksburg with my family. The last of my corps designed for this expedition started from camp on the 27th, reached Vicksburg the 28th, and were embarked on boats provided for them. General Halleck's dispatches dwelt upon the fact that General Rosecrans's routes of supply were overtaxed, and that we should move from Memphis eastward, repairing railroads as we progressed, as far as Athens, Alabama, whence I was to report to General Rosecrans, at Chattanooga, by letter.

I took passage for myself and family in the steamer Atlan-

tic, Captain Henry McDougall. When the boat was ready to start, Willie was missing. Mrs. Sherman supposed him to have been with me, whereas I supposed he was with her. An officer of the Thirteenth went up to General McPherson's house for him, and soon returned, with Captain Clift leading him, carrying in his hands a small double-barreled shot-gun; and I joked him about carrying away captured property. In a short time we got off. As we all stood on the guards to look at our old camps at Young's Point, I remarked that Willie was not well, and he admitted that he was sick. His mother put him to bed, and consulted Dr. Roler, of the Fifty-fifth Illinois, who found symptoms of typhoid fever. The river was low; we made slow progress till above Helena; and, as we approached Memphis, Dr. Roler told me that Willie's life was in danger, and he was extremely anxious to reach Memphis for certain medicines and for consultation. We arrived at Memphis on the 2d of October, carried Willie up to the Gayoso Hotel, and got the most experienced physician there, who acted with Dr. Roler, but he sank rapidly, and died the evening of the 3d of October. The blow was a terrible one to us all, so sudden and so unexpected, that I could not help reproaching myself for having consented to his visit in that sickly region in the summer-time. Of all my children, he seemed the most precious. Born in San Francisco, I had watched with intense interest his development, and he seemed more than any of the children to take an interest in my special profession. Mrs. Sherman, Minnie, Lizzie, and Tom, were with him at the time, and we all, helpless and overwhelmed, saw him die. Being in the very midst of an important military enterprise, I had hardly time to pause and think of my personal loss. We procured a metallic casket, and had a military funeral, the battalion of the Thirteenth United States Regulars acting as escort from the Gayoso Hotel to the steamboat *Grey Eagle*, which conveyed him and my family up to Cairo, whence they proceeded to our home at Lancaster, Ohio, where he was buried. I here give my letter to Captain C. C. Smith, who commanded the battalion at the time, as exhibiting our intense feelings:

GAYOSO HOUSE, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE, }
October 4, 1863—Midnight. }

Captain C. C. SMITH, commanding Battalion Thirteenth United States Regulars.

MY DEAR FRIEND: I cannot sleep to-night till I record an expression of the deep feelings of my heart to you, and to the officers and soldiers of the battalion, for their kind behavior to my poor child. I realize that you all feel for my family the attachment of kindred, and I assure you of full reciprocity.

Consistent with a sense of duty to my profession and office, I could not leave my post, and sent for the family to come to me in that fatal climate, and in that sickly period of the year, and behold the result! The child that bore my name, and in whose future I reposed with more confidence than I did in my own plan of life, now floats a mere corpse, seeking a grave in a distant land, with a weeping mother, brother, and sisters, clustered about him. For myself, I ask no sympathy. On, on I must go, to meet a soldier's fate, or live to see our country rise superior to all factions, till its flag is adored and respected by ourselves and by all the powers of the earth.

But Willie was, or thought he was, a sergeant in the Thirteenth. I have seen his eye brighten, his heart beat, as he beheld the battalion under arms, and asked me if they were not *real* soldiers. Child as he was, he had the enthusiasm, the pure love of truth, honor, and love of country, which should animate all soldiers.

God only knows why he should die thus young. He is dead, but will not be forgotten till those who knew him in life have followed him to that same mysterious end.

Please convey to the battalion my heart-felt thanks, and assure each and all that if in after-years they call on me or mine, and mention that they were of the Thirteenth Regulars when Willie was a sergeant, they will have a key to the affections of my family that will open all it has; that we will share with them our last blanket, our last crust! Your friend,

W. T. SHERMAN, *Major-General.*

Long afterward, in the spring of 1867, we had his body disinterred and brought to St. Louis, where he is now buried in a beautiful spot, in Calvary Cemetery, by the side of another child, "Charles," who was born at Lancaster, in the summer of 1864, died early, and was buried at Notre Dame, Indiana. His body was transferred at the same time to the same spot. Over Willie's grave is erected a beautiful marble monument, designed and executed by the officers and soldiers of that battalion which claimed him as a sergeant and comrade.

During the summer and fall of 1863 Major-General S. A. Hurlbut was in command at Memphis. He supplied me copies of all dispatches from Washington, and all the information he possessed of the events about Chattanooga. Two of these dispatches cover all essential points :

WASHINGTON CITY, *September 15, 1863—5 P. M.*

Major-General S. A. HURLBUT, Memphis :

All the troops that can possibly be spared in West Tennessee and on the Mississippi River should be sent without delay to assist General Rosecrans on the Tennessee River.

Urge Sherman to act with all possible promptness.

If you have boats, send them down to bring up his troops.

Information just received indicates that a part of Lee's army has been sent to reinforce Bragg.

H. W. HALLECK, *General-in-Chief.*

WASHINGTON, *September 19, 1863—4 P. M.*

Major-General S. A. HURLBUT, Memphis, Tennessee :

Give me definite information of the number of troops sent toward Decatur, and where they are. Also, what other troops are to follow, and when.

Has any thing been heard from the troops ordered from Vicksburg?

No efforts must be spared to support Rosecrans's right, and to guard the crossings of the Tennessee River.

H. W. HALLECK, *General-in-Chief.*

My special orders were to repair the Memphis & Charleston Railroad eastward as I progressed, as far as Athens, Alabama, to draw supplies by that route, so that, on reaching Athens, we should not be dependent on the roads back to Nashville, already overtaxed by the demand of Rosecrans's army.

On reaching Memphis, October 2d, I found that Osterhaus's division had already gone by rail as far as Corinth, and that John E. Smith's division was in the act of starting by cars. The Second Division, then commanded by Brigadier-General Giles A. Smith, reached Memphis at the same time with me; and the Fourth Division, commanded by Brigadier-General John M. Corse, arrived a day or two after. The railroad was in

fair condition as far as Corinth, ninety-six miles, but the road was badly stocked with locomotives and cars, so that it took until the 9th to get off the Second Division, when I gave orders for the Fourth Division and wagon-trains to march by the common road.

On Sunday morning, October 11th, with a special train loaded with our orderlies and clerks, the horses of our staff, the battalion of the Thirteenth United States Regulars, and a few officers going forward to join their commands, among them Brigadier-General Hugh Ewing, I started for Corinth.

At Germantown, eight miles, we passed Corse's division (Fourth) on the march, and about noon the train ran by the depot at Colliersville, twenty-six miles out. I was in the rear car with my staff, dozing, but observed the train slackening speed and stopping about half a mile beyond the depot. I noticed some soldiers running to and fro, got out at the end of the car, and soon Colonel Anthony (Sixty-sixth Indiana), who commanded the post, rode up and said that his pickets had just been driven in, and there was an appearance of an attack by a large force of cavalry coming from the southeast. I ordered the men to get off the train, to form on the knoll near the railroad-cut, and soon observed a rebel officer riding toward us with a white flag. Colonel Anthony and Colonel Dayton (one of my aides) were sent to meet him, and to keep him in conversation as long as possible. They soon returned, saying it was the adjutant of the rebel general Chalmers, who demanded the surrender of the place. I instructed them to return and give a negative answer, but to delay him as much as possible, so as to give us time for preparation. I saw Anthony, Dayton, and the rebel bearer of the flag, in conversation, and the latter turn his horse to ride back, when I ordered Colonel McCoy to run to the station, and get a message over the wires as quick as possible to Memphis and Germantown, to hurry forward Corse's division. I then ordered the train to back to the depot, and drew back the battalion of regulars to the small earth redoubt near it. The depot-building was of brick, and had been punctured with loop-holes. To its east, about two hundred

yards, was a small square earthwork or fort, into which were put a part of the regulars along with the company of the Sixty-sixth Indiana already there. The rest of the men were distributed into the railroad-cut, and in some shallow rifle-trenches near the depot. We had hardly made these preparations when the enemy was seen forming in a long line on the ridge to the south, about four hundred yards off, and soon after two parties of cavalry passed the railroad on both sides of us, cutting the wires and tearing up some rails. Soon they opened on us with artillery (of which we had none), and their men were dismounting and preparing to assault. To the south of us was an extensive cornfield, with the corn still standing, and on the other side was the town of Colliersville. All the houses near, that could give shelter to the enemy, were ordered to be set on fire, and the men were instructed to keep well under cover and to reserve their fire for the assault, which seemed inevitable. A long line of rebel skirmishers came down through the cornfield, and two other parties approached us along the railroad on both sides.

In the fort was a small magazine containing some cartridges. Lieutenant James, a fine, gallant fellow, who was ordnance-officer on my staff, asked leave to arm the orderlies and clerks with some muskets which he had found in the depot, to which I consented; he marched them into the magazine, issued cartridges, and marched back to the depot to assist in its defense. Afterward he came to me, said a party of the enemy had got into the woods near the depot, and was annoying him, and he wanted to charge and drive it away. I advised him to be extremely cautious, as our enemy vastly outnumbered us, and had every advantage in position and artillery; but instructed him, if they got too near, he might make a sally. Soon after, I heard a rapid fire in that quarter; and Lieutenant James was brought in on a stretcher, with a ball through his breast, which I supposed to be fatal.¹ The enemy closed down on us several times,

¹ After the fight we sent him back to Memphis, where his mother and father came from their home on the North River to nurse him. Young James was recovering from his wound, but was afterward killed by a fall from his horse, near his home, when riding with the daughters of Mr. Hamilton Fish, now Secretary of State.

and got possession of the rear of our train, from which they succeeded in getting five of our horses, among them my favorite mare Dolly; but our men were cool and practised shots (with great experience acquired at Vicksburg), and drove them back. With their artillery they knocked to pieces our locomotive and several of the cars, and set fire to the train; but we managed to get possession again, and extinguished the fire. Colonel Audenreid, aide-de-camp, was provoked to find that his valise of nice shirts had been used to kindle the fire. The fighting continued all round us for three or four hours, when we observed signs of drawing off, which I attributed to the rightful cause, the rapid approach of Corse's division, which arrived about dark, having marched the whole distance from Memphis, twenty-six miles, on the double-quick. The next day we repaired damages to the railroad and locomotive, and went on to Corinth.

At Corinth, on the 16th, I received the following important dispatches:

MEMPHIS, *October 14, 1863—11 A. M.*

Arrived this morning. Will be off in a few hours. My orders are only to go to Cairo, and report from there by telegraph. McPherson will be in Canton to-day. He will remain there until Sunday or Monday next, and reconnoitre as far eastward as possible with cavalry, in the mean time.

U. S. GRANT, *Major-General.*

WASHINGTON, *October 14, 1863—1 P. M.*

Major-General W. T. SHERMAN, Corinth:

Yours of the 10th is received. The important matter to be attended to is that of supplies. When Eastport can be reached by boats, the use of the railroad can be dispensed with; but until that time it must be guarded as far as used. The Kentucky Railroad can barely supply General Rosecrans. All these matters must be left to your judgment as circumstances may arise. Should the enemy be so strong as to prevent your going to Athens, or connecting with General Rosecrans, you will nevertheless have assisted him greatly by drawing away a part of the enemy's forces.

H. W. HALLECK, *Major-General.*

On the 18th, with my staff and a small escort, I rode forward to Burnsville, and on the 19th to Iuka, where, on the next day, I was most agreeably surprised to hear of the arrival at Eastport

(only ten miles off) of two gunboats, under the command of Captain Phelps, which had been sent up the Tennessee River by Admiral Porter, to help us.

Satisfied that, to reach Athens and to communicate with General Rosecrans, we should have to take the route north of the Tennessee River, on the 24th I ordered the Fourth Division to cross at Eastport with the aid of the gunboats, and to move to Florence. About the same time, I received the general orders assigning General Grant to command the Military Division of the Mississippi, authorizing him, on reaching Chattanooga, to supersede General Rosecrans by General George H. Thomas, with other and complete authority, as set forth in the following letters of General Halleck, which were sent to me by General Grant; and the same orders devolved on me the command of the Department and Army of the Tennessee.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY, }
WASHINGTON, D. C., October 16, 1863. }

Major-General U. S. GRANT, Louisville.

GENERAL: You will receive herewith the orders of the President of the United States, placing you in command of the Departments of the Ohio, Cumberland, and Tennessee. The organization of these departments will be changed as you may deem most practicable. You will immediately proceed to Chattanooga, and relieve General Rosecrans. You can communicate with Generals Burnside and Sherman by telegraph. A summary of the orders sent to these officers will be sent to you immediately. It is left optional with you to supersede General Rosecrans by General G. H. Thomas or not. Any other changes will be made on your request by telegram.

One of the first objects requiring your attention is the supply of your armies. Another is the security of the passes in the Georgia mountains, to shut out the enemy from Tennessee and Kentucky. You will consult with General Meigs and Colonel Scott in regard to transportation and supplies.

Should circumstances permit, I will visit you personally in a few days for consultation.

H. W. HALLECK, *General-in-Chief.*

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY, }
WASHINGTON, D. C., October 20, 1863. }

Major-General GRANT, Louisville.

GENERAL: In compliance with my promise, I now proceed to give you

a brief statement of the objects aimed at by General Rosecrans and General Burnside's movement into East Tennessee, and of the measures directed to be taken to attain these objects.

It has been the constant desire of the government, from the beginning of the war, to rescue the loyal inhabitants of East Tennessee from the hands of the rebels, who fully appreciated the importance of continuing their hold upon that country. In addition to the large amount of agricultural products drawn from the upper valley of the Tennessee, they also obtained iron and other materials from the vicinity of Chattanooga. The possession of East Tennessee would cut off one of their most important railroad communications, and threaten their manufactories at Rome, Atlanta, etc.

When General Buell was ordered into East Tennessee in the summer of 1862, Chattanooga was comparatively unprotected; but Bragg reached there before Buell, and, by threatening his communications, forced him to retreat on Nashville and Louisville. Again, after the battle of Perryville, General Buell was urged to pursue Bragg's defeated army, and drive it from East Tennessee. The same was urged upon his successor, but the lateness of the season or other causes prevented further operations after the battle of Stone River.

Last spring, when your movements on the Mississippi River had drawn out of Tennessee a large force of the enemy, I again urged General Rosecrans to take advantage of that opportunity to carry out his projected plan of campaign, General Burnside being ready to coöperate, with a diminished but still efficient force. But he could not be persuaded to act in time, preferring to lie still till your campaign should be terminated. I represented to him, but without avail, that by this delay Johnston might be able to reënforce Bragg with the troops then operating against you.

When General Rosecrans finally determined to advance, he was allowed to select his own lines and plans for carrying out the objects of the expedition. He was directed, however, to report his movements daily, till he crossed the Tennessee, and to connect his left, so far as possible, with General Burnside's right. General Burnside was directed to move simultaneously, connecting his right, as far as possible, with General Rosecrans's left, so that, if the enemy concentrated upon either army, the other could move to its assistance. When General Burnside reached Kingston and Knoxville, and found no considerable number of the enemy in East Tennessee, he was instructed to move down the river and coöperate with General Rosecrans.

These instructions were repeated some fifteen times, but were not carried out, General Burnside alleging as an excuse that he believed that Bragg was in retreat, and that General Rosecrans needed no reënforcements. When the latter had gained possession of Chattanooga he was directed not to move on Rome as he proposed, but simply to hold the moun-

tain-passes, so as to prevent the ingress of the rebels into East Tennessee. That object accomplished, I considered the campaign as ended, at least for the present. Future operations would depend upon the ascertained strength and movements of the enemy. In other words, the main objects of the campaign were the restoration of East Tennessee to the Union, and by holding the two extremities of the valley to secure it from rebel invasion.

The moment I received reliable information of the departure of Longstreet's corps from the Army of the Potomac, I ordered forward to General Rosecrans every available man in the Department of the Ohio, and again urged General Burnside to move to his assistance. I also telegraphed to Generals Hurlbut, Sherman, and yourself, to send forward all available troops in your department. If these forces had been sent to General Rosecrans by Nashville, they could not have been supplied; I therefore directed them to move by Corinth and the Tennessee River. The necessity of this has been proved by the fact that the reinforcements sent to him from the Army of the Potomac have not been able, for the want of railroad transportation, to reach General Rosecrans's army in the field.

In regard to the relative strength of the opposing armies, it is believed that General Rosecrans when he first moved against Bragg had double, if not treble, his force. General Burnside, also, had more than double the force of Buckner; and, even when Bragg and Buckner united, Rosecrans's army was very greatly superior in number. Even the eighteen thousand men sent from Virginia, under Longstreet, would not have given the enemy the superiority. It is now ascertained that the greater part of the prisoners parolled by you at Vicksburg, and General Banks at Port Hudson, were illegally and improperly declared exchanged, and forced into the ranks to swell the rebel numbers at Chickamauga. This outrageous act, in violation of the laws of war, of the cartel entered into by the rebel authorities, and of all sense of honor, gives us a useful lesson in regard to the character of the enemy with whom we are contending. He neither regards the rules of civilized warfare, nor even his most solemn engagements. You may, therefore, expect to meet in arms thousands of unexchanged prisoners released by you and others on parole, not to serve again till duly exchanged.

Although the enemy by this disgraceful means has been able to concentrate in Georgia and Alabama a much larger force than we anticipated, your armies will be abundantly able to defeat him. Your difficulty will not be in the want of men, but in the means of supplying them at this season of the year. A single-track railroad can supply an army of sixty or seventy thousand men, with the usual number of cavalry and artillery; but beyond that number, or with a large mounted force, the difficulty of supply is very great.

I do not know the present condition of the road from Nashville to Decatur, but, if practicable to repair it, the use of that triangle will be of

great assistance to you. I hope, also, that the recent rise of water in the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers will enable you to employ water transportation to Nashville, Eastport, or Florence.

If you reoccupy the passes of Lookout Mountain, which should never have been given up, you will be able to use the railroad and river from Bridgeport to Chattanooga. This seems to me a matter of vital importance, and should receive your early attention.

I submit this summary in the hope that it will assist you in fully understanding the objects of the campaign, and the means of attaining these objects. Probably the Secretary of War, in his interviews with you at Louisville, has gone over the same ground.

Whatever measures you may deem proper to adopt under existing circumstances, you will receive all possible assistance from the authorities at Washington. You have never, heretofore, complained that such assistance has not been afforded you in your operations, and I think you will have no cause of complaint in your present campaign. Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. W. HALLECK, *General-in-Chief*.

General Frank P. Blair, who was then ahead with the two divisions of Osterhaus and John E. Smith, was temporarily assigned to the command of the Fifteenth Corps. General Hurlbut remained at Memphis in command of the Sixteenth Corps, and General McPherson at Vicksburg with the Seventeenth. These three corps made up the Army of the Tennessee.

I was still busy in pushing forward the repairs to the railroad-bridge at Bear Creek, and in patching up the many breaks between it and Tuscumbia, when on the 27th of October, as I sat on the porch of a house, I was approached by a dirty, black-haired individual with mixed dress and strange demeanor, who inquired for me, and, on being assured that I was in fact the man, he handed me a letter from General Blair at Tuscumbia, and another short one, which was a telegraph-message from General Grant at Chattanooga, addressed to me through General George Crook, commanding at Huntsville, Alabama, to this effect :

Drop all work on Memphis & Charleston Railroad, cross the Tennessee, and hurry eastward with all possible dispatch toward Bridgeport, till you meet further orders from me.

U. S. GRANT.

The bearer of this message was Corporal Pike, who de-

scribed to me, in his peculiar way, that General Crook had sent him in a canoe; that he had paddled down the Tennessee River, over Muscle Shoals, was fired at all the way by guerrillas, but on reaching Tuscumbia he had providentially found it in possession of our troops. He had reported to General Blair, who sent him on to me at Iuka. This Pike proved to be a singular character; his manner attracted my notice at once, and I got him a horse, and had him travel with us eastward to about Elkton, whence I sent him back to General Crook at Huntsville; but told him, if I could ever do him a personal service, he might apply to me. The next spring when I was in Chattanooga, preparing for the Atlanta campaign, Corporal Pike made his appearance and asked a fulfillment of my promise. I inquired what he wanted, and he said he wanted to do something *bold*, something that would make him a hero. I explained to him, that we were getting ready to go for Joe Johnston at Dalton, that I expected to be in the neighborhood of Atlanta about the 4th of July, and wanted the bridge across the Savannah River at Augusta, Georgia, to be burnt about that time, to produce alarm and confusion behind the rebel army. I explained to Pike that the chances were three to one that he would be caught and hanged; but the greater the danger the greater seemed to be his desire to attempt it. I told him to select a companion, to disguise himself as an East Tennessee refugee, work his way over the mountains into North Carolina, and at the time appointed to float down the Savannah River and burn that bridge. In a few days he had made his preparations and took his departure. The bridge was not burnt, and I supposed that Pike had been caught and hanged.

When we reached Columbia, South Carolina, in February, 1865, just as we were leaving the town, in passing near the asylum, I heard my name called, and saw a very dirty fellow followed by a file of men running toward me, and as they got near I recognized Pike. He called to me to identify him as one of *my* men; he was then a prisoner under guard, and I instructed the guard to bring him that night to my camp some fifteen miles up the road, which was done. Pike gave me a

graphic narrative of his adventures, which would have filled a volume; told me how he had made two attempts to burn the bridge, and failed; and said that at the time of our entering Columbia he was a prisoner in the hands of the rebels, under trial for his life, but in the confusion of their retreat he made his escape and got into our lines, where he was again made a prisoner by our troops because of his looks. Pike got some clothes, cleaned up, and I used him afterward to communicate with Wilmington, North Carolina. Some time after the war, he was appointed a lieutenant of the Regular Cavalry, and was killed in Oregon, by the accidental discharge of a pistol. Just before his death he wrote me, saying that he was tired of the monotony of garrison-life, and wanted to turn Indian, join the Cheyennes on the Plains, who were then giving us great trouble, and, after he had gained their confidence, he would betray them into our hands. Of course I wrote him that he must try and settle down and become a gentleman as well as an officer, apply himself to his duties, and forget the wild desires of his nature, which were well enough in time of war, but not suited to his new condition as an officer; but, poor fellow! he was killed by an accident, which probably saved him from a slower but harder fate.

At Iuka I issued all the orders to McPherson and Hurlbut necessary for the Department of the Tennessee during my absence, and, further, ordered the collection of a force out of the Sixteenth Corps, of about eight thousand men, to be commanded by General G. M. Dodge, with orders to follow as far east as Athens, Tennessee, there to await instructions. We instantly discontinued all attempts to repair the Charleston Railroad; and the remaining three divisions of the Fifteenth Corps marched to Eastport, crossed the Tennessee River by the aid of the gunboats, a ferry-boat, and a couple of transports which had come up, and hurried eastward.

In person I crossed on the 1st of November, and rode forward to Florence, where I overtook Ewing's division. The other divisions followed rapidly. On the road to Florence I was accompanied by my staff, some clerks, and mounted orderlies.

Major Ezra Taylor was chief of artillery, and one of his sons was a clerk at headquarters. The latter seems to have dropped out of the column, and gone to a farm-house near the road. There was no organized force of the rebel army north of the Tennessee River, but the country was full of guerrillas. A party of these pounced down on the farm, caught young Taylor and another of the clerks, and after reaching Florence, Major Taylor heard of the capture of his son, and learned that when last seen he was stripped of his hat and coat, was tied to the tail-board of a wagon, and driven rapidly to the north of the road we had traveled. The major appealed to me to do something for his rescue. I had no cavalry to send in pursuit, but knowing that there was always an understanding between these guerrillas and their friends who staid at home, I sent for three or four of the principal men of Florence (among them a Mr. Foster, who had once been a Senator in Congress), explained to them the capture of young Taylor and his comrade, and demanded their immediate restoration. They, of course, remonstrated, denied all knowledge of the acts of these guerrillas, and claimed to be peaceful citizens of Alabama, residing at home. I insisted that these guerrillas were their own sons and neighbors; that they knew their haunts, and could reach them if they wanted, and they could effect the restoration to us of these men; and I said, moreover, they must do it within twenty-four hours, or I would take them, strip them of their hats and coats, and tie them to the tail-boards of our wagons till they were produced. They sent off messengers at once, and young Taylor and his comrade were brought back the next day.

Resuming our march eastward by the large road, we soon reached Elk River, which was wide and deep, and could only be crossed by a ferry, a process entirely too slow for the occasion; so I changed the route more by the north, to Elkton, Winchester, and Deckerd. At this point we came in communication with the Army of the Cumberland, and by telegraph with General Grant, who was at Chattanooga. He reiterated his orders for me and my command to hurry forward with all possible dispatch, and in person I reached Bridgeport during the night of November

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13th, my troops following behind by several roads. At Bridgeport I found a garrison guarding the railroad-bridge and pontoon-bridge there, and staid with the quartermaster, Colonel William G. Le Duc (who was my school-mate at How's School in 1836). There I received a dispatch from General Grant, at Chattanooga, to come up in person, leaving my troops to follow as fast as possible. At that time there were two or three small steamboats on the river, engaged in carrying stores up as far as Kelly's Ferry. In one of these I took passage, and on reaching Kelly's Ferry found orderlies, with one of General Grant's private horses, waiting for me, on which I rode into Chattanooga, November 14th. Of course, I was heartily welcomed by Generals Grant, Thomas, and all, who realized the extraordinary efforts we had made to come to their relief.

The next morning we walked out to Fort Wood, a prominent salient of the defenses of the place, and from its parapet we had a magnificent view of the panorama. Lookout Mountain, with its rebel flags and batteries, stood out boldly, and an occasional shot fired toward Wauhatchee or Moccasin Point gave life to the scene. These shots could barely reach Chattanooga, and I was told that one or more shot had struck a hospital inside the lines. All along Missionary Ridge were the tents of the rebel beleaguering force; the lines of trench from Lookout up toward the Chickamauga were plainly visible; and rebel sentinels, in a continuous chain, were walking their posts in plain view, not a thousand yards off. "Why," said I, "General Grant, you are besieged;" and he said, "It is too true." Up to that moment I had no idea that things were so bad. The rebel lines actually extended from the river, below the town, to the river above, and the Army of the Cumberland was closely held to the town and its immediate defenses. General Grant pointed out to me a house on Missionary Ridge, where General Bragg's headquarters were known to be. He also explained the situation of affairs generally; that the mules and horses of Thomas's army were so starved that they could not haul his guns; that forage, corn, and provisions, were so scarce that the men in hunger stole the few grains of corn that were given to

favorite horses; that the men of Thomas's army had been so demoralized by the battle of Chickamauga that he feared they could not be got out of their trenches to assume the offensive; that Bragg had detached Longstreet with a considerable force up into East Tennessee, to defeat and capture Burnside; that Burnside was in danger, etc.; and that he (Grant) was extremely anxious to attack Bragg in position, to defeat him, or at least to force him to recall Longstreet. The Army of the Cumberland had so long been in the trenches that he wanted my troops to hurry up, to take the offensive *first*; after which, he had no doubt the Cumberland army would fight well. Meantime the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps, under General Hooker, had been advanced from Bridgeport along the railroad to Wauhatchee, but could not as yet pass Lookout Mountain. A pontoon-bridge had been thrown across the Tennessee River at Brown's Ferry, by which supplies were hauled into Chattanooga from Kelly's and Wauhatchee.

Another bridge was in course of construction at Chattanooga, under the immediate direction of Quartermaster-General Meigs, but at the time all wagons, etc., had to be ferried across by a flying-bridge. Men were busy and hard at work everywhere inside our lines, and boats for another pontoon-bridge were being rapidly constructed under Brigadier-General W. F. Smith, familiarly known as "Baldy Smith," and this bridge was destined to be used by my troops, at a point of the river about four miles above Chattanooga, just below the mouth of the Chickamauga River. General Grant explained to me that he had reconnoitred the rebel line from Lookout Mountain up to Chickamauga, and he believed that the northern portion of Missionary Ridge was not fortified at all; and he wanted me, as soon as my troops got up, to lay the new pontoon-bridge by night, cross over, and attack Bragg's right flank on that part of the ridge abutting on Chickamauga Creek, near the tunnel; and he proposed that we should go at once to look at the ground. In company with Generals Thomas, W. F. Smith, Brannan, and others, we crossed by the flying-bridge, rode back of the hills some four miles, left our horses, and got on a hill overlooking the whole ground about the

mouth of the Chickamauga River, and across to the Missionary Hills near the tunnel. Smith and I crept down behind a fringe of trees that lined the river-bank, to the very point selected for the new bridge, where we sat for some time, seeing the rebel pickets on the opposite bank, and almost hearing their words.

Having seen enough, we returned to Chattanooga; and in order to hurry up my command, on which so much depended, I started back to Kelly's in hopes to catch the steamboat that same evening; but on my arrival the boat had gone. I applied to the commanding officer, got a rough boat manned by four soldiers, and started down the river by night. I occasionally took a turn at the oars to relieve some tired man, and about midnight we reached Shell Mound, where General Whittaker, of Kentucky, furnished us a new and good crew, with which we reached Bridgeport by daylight. I started Ewing's division in advance, with orders to turn aside toward Trenton, to make the enemy believe we were going to turn Bragg's left by pretty much the same road Rosecrans had followed; but with the other three divisions I followed the main road, *via* the Big Trestle at Whitesides, and reached General Hooker's headquarters, just above Wauhatchee, on the 20th; my troops strung all the way back to Bridgeport. It was on this occasion that the Fifteenth Corps gained its peculiar badge: as the men were trudging along the deeply-cut, muddy road, of a cold, drizzly day, one of our Western soldiers left his ranks and joined a party of the Twelfth Corps at their camp-fire. They got into conversation, the Twelfth-Corps men asking what troops we were, etc., etc. In turn, our fellow (who had never seen a corps-badge, and noticed that every thing was marked with a star) asked if they were all brigadier-generals. Of course they were not, but the star was their corps-badge, and every wagon, tent, hat, etc., had its star. Then the Twelfth-Corps men inquired what corps he belonged to, and he answered, "The Fifteenth Corps." "What is your badge?" "Why," said he (and he was an Irishman), suiting the action to the word, "forty rounds in the cartridge-box, and twenty in the pocket!" At that time Blair commanded the corps; but Logan succeeded soon after, and, hearing the

story, adopted the cartridge-box and forty rounds as the corps badge.

The condition of the roads was such, and the bridge at Brown's so frail, that it was not until the 23d that we got three of my divisions behind the hills near the point indicated above Chattanooga for crossing the river. It was determined to begin the battle with these three divisions, aided by a division of Thomas's army, commanded by General Jeff. C. Davis, that was already near that point. All the details of the battle of Chattanooga, so far as I was a witness, are so fully given in my official report herewith, that I need add nothing to it. It was a magnificent battle in its conception, in its execution, and in its glorious results; hastened somewhat by the supposed danger of Burnside, at Knoxville, yet so completely successful, that nothing is left for cavil or fault-finding. The first day was lowering and overcast, favoring us greatly, because we wanted to be concealed from Bragg, whose position on the mountain-tops completely overlooked us and our movements. The second day was beautifully clear, and many a time, in the midst of its carnage and noise, I could not help stopping to look across that vast field of battle, to admire its sublimity.

The object of General Hooker's and my attacks on the extreme flanks of Bragg's position was, to disturb him to such an extent, that he would naturally detach from his centre as against us, so that Thomas's army could break through his centre. The whole plan succeeded admirably; but it was not until after dark that I learned the complete success at the centre, and received General Grant's orders to pursue on the north side of Chickamauga Creek.

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI, }
CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE, November 25, 1863. }

Major-General SHERMAN.

GENERAL: No doubt you witnessed the handsome manner in which Thomas's troops carried Missionary Ridge this afternoon, and can feel a just pride, too, in the part taken by the forces under your command in taking first so much of the same range of hills, and then in attracting the attention of so many of the enemy as to make Thomas's part certain of success. The next thing now will be to relieve Burnside. I have heard from him to the

evening of the 23d. At that time he had from ten to twelve days' supplies, and spoke hopefully of being able to hold out that length of time.

My plan is to move your forces out gradually until they reach the railroad between Cleveland and Dalton. Granger will move up the south side of the Tennessee with a column of twenty thousand men, taking no wagons, or but few, with him. His men will carry four days' rations, and the steamer Chattanooga, loaded with rations, will accompany the expedition.

I take it for granted that Bragg's entire force has left. If not, of course, the first thing is to dispose of him. If he has gone, the only thing necessary to do to-morrow will be to send out a reconnoissance to ascertain the whereabouts of the enemy. Yours truly,

U. S. GRANT, *Major-General*.

P. S.—On reflection, I think we will push Bragg with all our strength to-morrow, and try if we cannot cut off a good portion of his rear troops and trains. His men have manifested a strong disposition to desert for some time past, and we will now give them a chance. I will instruct Thomas accordingly. Move the advance force early, on the most easterly road taken by the enemy.

U. S. G.

This compelled me to reverse our column, so as to use the bridge across the Chickamauga at its mouth. The next day we struck the rebel rear at Chickamauga Station, and again near Graysville. There we came in contact with Hooker's and Palmer's troops, who had reached Ringgold. There I detached Howard to cross Taylor's Ridge, and strike the railroad which comes from the north by Cleveland to Dalton. Hooker's troops were roughly handled at Ringgold, and the pursuit was checked. Receiving a note from General Hooker, asking help, I rode forward to Ringgold to explain the movement of Howard; where I met General Grant, and learned that the rebels had again retreated toward Dalton. He gave orders to discontinue the pursuit, as he meant to turn his attention to General Burnside, supposed to be in great danger at Knoxville, about one hundred and thirty miles northeast. General Grant returned and spent part of the night with me, at Graysville. We talked over matters generally, and he explained that he had ordered General Gordon Granger, with the Fourth Corps, to move forward rapidly to Burnside's help, and that he must return to Chattanooga to push him. By reason of the scarcity of food, especially of

forage, he consented that, instead of going back, I might keep out in the country; for in motion I could pick up some forage and food, especially on the Hiawassee River, whereas none remained in Chattanooga.

Accordingly, on the 29th of November, my several columns marched to Cleveland, and the next day we reached the Hiawassee at Charleston, where the Chattanooga & Knoxville Railroad crosses it. The railroad-bridge was partially damaged by the enemy in retreating, but we found some abandoned stores. There and thereabouts I expected some rest for my weary troops and horses; but, as I rode into town, I met Colonel J. H. Wilson and C. A. Dana (Assistant Secretary of War), who had ridden out from Chattanooga to find me, with the following letter from General Grant, and copies of several dispatches from General Burnside, the last which had been received from him by way of Cumberland Gap:

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI, }
CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE, November 29, 1863. }

Major-General W. T. SHERMAN:

News are received from Knoxville to the morning of the 27th. At that time the place was still invested, but the attack on it was not vigorous. Longstreet evidently determined to starve the garrison out. Granger is on the way to Burnside's relief, but I have lost all faith in his energy or capacity to manage an expedition of the importance of this one. I am inclined to think, therefore, I shall have to send you. Push as rapidly as you can to the Hiawassee, and determine for yourself what force to take with you from that point. Granger has his corps with him, from which you will select in conjunction with the force now with you. In plain words, you will assume command of all the forces now moving up the Tennessee, including the garrison at Kingston, and from that force organize what you deem proper to relieve Burnside. The balance send back to Chattanooga. Granger has a boat loaded with provisions, which you can issue, and return the boat. I will have another loaded, to follow you. Use, of course, as sparingly as possible from the rations taken with you, and subsist off the country all you can.

It is expected that Foster is moving, by this time, from Cumberland Gap on Knoxville. I do not know what force he will have with him, but presume it will range from three thousand five hundred to five thousand. I leave this matter to you, knowing that you will do better acting upon

your discretion than you could trammelled with instructions. I will only add, that the last advices from Burnside himself indicated his ability to hold out with rations only to about the 3d of December.

Very respectfully,

U. S. GRANT, *Major-General commanding.*

This showed that, on the 27th of November, General Burnside was in Knoxville, closely besieged by the rebel General Longstreet; that his provisions were short, and that, unless relieved by December 3d, he might have to surrender. General Grant further wrote that General Granger, instead of moving with great rapidity as ordered, seemed to move "slowly, and with reluctance;" and, although he (General Grant) hated to call on me and on my tired troops, there was no alternative. He wanted me to take command of every thing within reach, and to hurry forward to Knoxville.

All the details of our march to Knoxville are also given in my official report. By extraordinary efforts Long's small brigade of cavalry reached Knoxville during the night of the 3d, purposely to let Burnside know that I was rapidly approaching with an adequate force to raise the siege.

With the head of my infantry column I reached Marysville, about fifteen miles short of Knoxville, on the 5th of December, when I received official notice from Burnside that Longstreet had raised the siege, and had started in retreat up the valley toward Virginia. Halting all the army, except Granger's two divisions, on the morning of the 6th, with General Granger and some of my staff I rode into Knoxville. Approaching from the south and west, we crossed the Holston on a pontoon-bridge, and in a large pen on the Knoxville side I saw a fine lot of cattle, which did not look much like starvation. I found General Burnside and staff domiciled in a large, fine mansion, looking very comfortable, and in a few words he described to me the leading events of the previous few days, and said he had already given orders looking to the pursuit of Longstreet. I offered to join in the pursuit, though in fact my men were worn out, and suffering in that cold season and climate.

Indeed, on our way up I personally was almost frozen, and had to beg leave to sleep in the house of a family at Athens.

Burnside explained to me that, reënforced by Granger's two divisions of ten thousand men, he would be able to push Longstreet out of East Tennessee, and he hoped to capture much of his artillery and trains. Granger was present at our conversation, and most unreasonably, I thought, remonstrated against being left; complaining bitterly of what he thought was hard treatment to his men and himself. I know that his language and manner at that time produced on my mind a bad impression, and it was one of the causes which led me to relieve him as a corps commander in the campaign of the next spring. I asked General Burnside to reduce his wishes to writing, which he did in the letter of December 7th, embodied in my official report. General Burnside and I then walked along his lines and examined the salient, known as Fort Sanders, where, some days before, Longstreet had made his assault, and had sustained a bloody repulse.

Returning to Burnside's quarters, we all sat down to a good dinner, embracing roast-turkey. There was a regular dining-table, with clean table-cloth, dishes, knives, forks, spoons, etc., etc. I had seen nothing of this kind in my field experience, and could not help exclaiming that I thought "they were starving," etc.; but Burnside explained that Longstreet had at no time completely invested the place, and that he had kept open communication with the country on the south side of the river Holston, more especially with the French Broad settlements, from whose Union inhabitants he had received a good supply of beef, bacon, and corn-meal. Had I known of this, I should not have hurried my men so fast; but until I reached Knoxville I thought our troops there were actually in danger of starvation. Having supplied General Burnside all the help he wanted, we began our leisurely return to Chattanooga, which we reached on the 16th; when General Grant in person ordered me to restore to General Thomas the divisions of Howard and Davis, which belonged to his army, and to conduct my own corps (the Fifteenth) to North Alabama for winter-quarters.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT AND ARMY OF THE TENNESSEE, }
BRIDGEPORT, ALABAMA, December 19, 1863. }

Brigadier-General JOHN A. RAWLINS, Chief of Staff to General GRANT, Chattanooga.

GENERAL: For the first time, I am now at leisure to make an official record of events with which the troops under my command have been connected during the eventful campaign which has just closed.

During the month of September last, the Fifteenth Army Corps, which I had the honor to command, lay in camps along the Big Black, about twenty miles east of Vicksburg, Mississippi. It consisted of four divisions. The First, commanded by Brigadier-General P. J. Osterhaus, was composed of two brigades, led by Brigadier-General C. R. Woods and Colonel J. A. Williamson (of the Fourth Iowa).

The Second, commanded by Brigadier-General Morgan L. Smith, was composed of two brigades, led by Brigadier-Generals Giles A. Smith and J. A. J. Lightburn.

The Third, commanded by Brigadier-General J. M. Tuttle, was composed of three brigades, led by Brigadier-Generals J. A. Mower and R. P. Buckland, and Colonel J. J. Wood (of the Twelfth Iowa).

The Fourth, commanded by Brigadier-General Hugh Ewing, was composed of three brigades, led by Brigadier-General J. M. Corse, Colonel Loomis (Twenty-sixth Illinois), and Colonel J. R. Cockerill (of the Seventieth Ohio).

On the 22d day of September I received a telegraphic dispatch from General Grant, then at Vicksburg, commanding the Department of the Tennessee, requiring me to detach one of my divisions to march to Vicksburg, there to embark for Memphis, where it was to form a part of an army to be sent to Chattanooga, to reënforce General Rosecrans. I designated the First Division, and at 4 p. m. the same day it marched for Vicksburg, and embarked the next day.

On the 23d of September I was summoned to Vicksburg by the general commanding, who showed me several dispatches from the general-in-chief, which led him to suppose he would have to send me and my whole corps to Memphis and eastward, and I was instructed to prepare for such orders. It was explained to me that, in consequence of the low stage of water in the Mississippi, boats had arrived irregularly, and had brought dispatches that seemed to conflict in their meaning, and that General John E. Smith's division (of General McPherson's corps) had been ordered up to Memphis, and that I should take that division and leave one of my own in its stead, to hold the line of the Big Black. I detailed my third division (General Tuttle) to remain and report to Major-General McPherson, commanding the Seventeenth Corps, at Vicksburg; and that of General John E. Smith, already started for Memphis, was styled the Third Division, Fifteenth Corps, though

it still belongs to the Seventeenth Army Corps. This division is also composed of three brigades, commanded by General Matthias, Colonel J. B. Raum (of the Fifty-sixth Illinois), and Colonel J. I. Alexander (of the Fifty-ninth Indiana).

The Second and Fourth Divisions were started for Vicksburg the moment I was notified that boats were in readiness, and on the 27th of September I embarked in person in the steamer *Atlantic*, for Memphis, followed by a fleet of boats conveying these two divisions. Our progress was slow, on account of the unprecedentedly low water in the Mississippi, and the scarcity of coal and wood. We were compelled at places to gather fence-rails, and to land wagons and haul wood from the interior to the boats; but I reached Memphis during the night of the 2d of October, and the other boats came in on the 3d and 4th.

On arrival at Memphis I saw General Hurlbut, and read all the dispatches and letters of instruction of General Halleck, and therein derived my instructions, which I construed to be as follows:

To conduct the Fifteenth Army Corps, and all other troops which could be spared from the line of the Memphis & Charleston Railroad, to Athens, Alabama, and thence report by letter for orders to General Rosecrans, commanding the Army of the Cumberland, at Chattanooga; to follow substantially the railroad eastward, repairing it as I moved; to look to my own line for supplies; and in no event to depend on General Rosecrans for supplies, as the roads to his rear were already overtaxed to supply his present army.

I learned from General Hurlbut that General Osterhaus's division was already out in front of Corinth, and that General John E. Smith was still at Memphis, moving his troops and material by railroad as fast as its limited stock would carry them. General J. D. Webster was superintendent of the railroad, and was enjoined to work night and day, and to expedite the movement as rapidly as possible; but the capacity of the road was so small, that I soon saw that I could move horses, mules, and wagons faster by land, and therefore I dispatched the artillery and wagons by the road under escort, and finally moved the entire Fourth Division by land.

The enemy seems to have had early notice of this movement, and he endeavored to thwart us from the start. A considerable force assembled in a threatening attitude at Salem, south of Salisbury Station; and General Carr, who commanded at Corinth, felt compelled to turn back and use a part of my troops, that had already reached Corinth, to resist the threatened attack.

On Sunday, October 11th, having put in motion my whole force, I started myself for Corinth, in a special train, with the battalion of the Thirtieth United States Regulars as escort. We reached Collierville Station about noon, just in time to take part in the defense made of that station by Colonel D. C. Anthony, of the Sixty-sixth Indiana, against an attack made

by General Chalmers with a force of about three thousand cavalry, with eight pieces of artillery. He was beaten off, the damage to the road repaired, and we resumed our journey the next day, reaching Corinth at night.

I immediately ordered General Blair forward to Iuka, with the First Division, and, as fast as I got troops up, pushed them forward of Bear Creek, the bridge of which was completely destroyed, and an engineer regiment, under command of Colonel Flad, was engaged in its repairs.

Quite a considerable force of the enemy was assembled in our front, near Tusculumbia, to resist our advance. It was commanded by General Stephen D. Lee, and composed of Roddy's and Ferguson's brigades, with irregular cavalry, amounting in the aggregate to about five thousand.

In person I moved from Corinth to Burnsville on the 18th, and to Iuka on the 19th of October.

Osterhaus's division was in the advance, constantly skirmishing with the enemy; he was supported by General Morgan L. Smith's, both divisions under the general command of Major-General Blair. General John E. Smith's division covered the working-party engaged in rebuilding the railroad.

Foreseeing difficulty in crossing the Tennessee River, I had written to Admiral Porter, at Cairo, asking him to watch the Tennessee and send up some gunboats the moment the stage of water admitted; and had also requested General Allen, quartermaster at St. Louis, to dispatch to Eastport a steam ferry-boat.

The admiral, ever prompt and ready to assist us, had two fine gunboats at Eastport, under Captain Phelps, the very day after my arrival at Iuka; and Captain Phelps had a coal-barge decked over, with which to cross our horses and wagons before the arrival of the ferry-boat.

Still following literally the instructions of General Halleck, I pushed forward the repairs of the railroad, and ordered General Blair, with the two leading divisions, to drive the enemy beyond Tusculumbia. This he did successfully, after a pretty severe fight at Cane Creek, occupying Tusculumbia on the 27th of October.

In the mean time many important changes in command had occurred, which I must note here, to a proper understanding of the case.

General Grant had been called from Vicksburg, and sent to Chattanooga to command the military division of the Mississippi, composed of the three Departments of the Ohio, Cumberland, and Tennessee; and the Department of the Tennessee had been devolved on me, with instructions, however, to retain command of the army in the field. At Iuka I made what appeared to me the best disposition of matters relating to the department, giving General McPherson full powers in Mississippi and General Hurlbut in West Tennessee, and assigned General Blair to the command of

the Fifteenth Army Corps; and summoned General Hurlbut from Memphis, and General Dodge from Corinth, and selected out of the Sixteenth Corps a force of about eight thousand men, which I directed General Dodge to organize with all expedition, and with it to follow me eastward.

On the 27th of October, when General Blair, with two divisions, was at Tusculmbia, I ordered General Ewing, with the Fourth Division, to cross the Tennessee (by means of the gunboats and scow) as rapidly as possible at Eastport, and push forward to Florence, which he did; and the same day a messenger from General Grant floated down the Tennessee over Muscle Shoals, landed at Tusculmbia, and was sent to me at Iuka. He bore a short message from the general to this effect: "Drop all work on the railroad east of Bear Creek; push your command toward Bridgeport till you meet orders;" etc. Instantly the order was executed; the order of march was reversed, and all the columns were directed to Eastport, the only place where we could cross the Tennessee. At first we only had the gunboats and coal-barge; but the ferry-boat and two transports arrived on the 31st of October, and the work of crossing was pushed with all the vigor possible. In person I crossed, and passed to the head of the column at Florence on the 1st of November, leaving the rear divisions to be conducted by General Blair, and marched to Rogersville and Elk River. This was found impassable. To ferry would have consumed too much time, and to build a bridge still more; so there was no alternative but to turn up Elk River by way of Gilbertsboro, Elkton, etc., to the stone bridge at Fayetteville, where we crossed the Elk, and proceeded to Winchester and Deckerd.

At Fayetteville I received orders from General Grant to come to Bridgeport with the Fifteenth Army Corps, and to leave General Dodge's command at Pulaski, and along the railroad from Columbia to Decatur. I instructed General Blair to follow with the Second and First Divisions by way of New Market, Larkinsville, and Bellefonte, while I conducted the other two divisions by way of Deckerd; the Fourth Division crossing the mountain to Stevenson, and the Third by University Place and Swedon's Cove.

In person I proceeded by Swedon's Cove and Battle Creek, reaching Bridgeport on the night of November 13th. I immediately telegraphed to the commanding general my arrival, and the positions of my several divisions, and was summoned to Chattanooga. I took the first steamboat during the night of the 14th for Kelly's Ferry, and rode into Chattanooga on the 15th. I then learned the part assigned me in the coming drama, was supplied with the necessary maps and information, and rode, during the 16th, in company with Generals Grant, Thomas, W. F. Smith, Brannan, and others, to the positions occupied on the west bank of the Tennessee, from which could be seen the camps of the enemy, compassing Chattanooga and the line of Missionary Hills, with its terminus on Chickamauga Creek, the point that I was expected to take, hold, and fortify. Pontoons, with a full

supply of balks and chesses, had been prepared for the bridge over the Tennessee, and all things had been prearranged with a foresight that elicited my admiration. From the hills we looked down on the amphitheatre of Chattanooga as on a map, and nothing remained but for me to put my troops in the desired position. The plan contemplated that, in addition to crossing the Tennessee River and making a lodgment on the terminus of Missionary Ridge, I should demonstrate against Lookout Mountain, near Trenton, with a part of my command.

All in Chattanooga were impatient for action, rendered almost acute by the natural apprehensions felt for the safety of General Burnside in East Tennessee.

My command had marched from Memphis, three hundred and thirty miles, and I had pushed them as fast as the roads and distance would admit, but I saw enough of the condition of men and animals in Chattanooga to inspire me with renewed energy. I immediately ordered my leading division (General Ewing's) to march *via* Shellmound to Trenton, demonstrating against Lookout Ridge, but to be prepared to turn quickly and follow me to Chattanooga and in person I returned to Bridgeport, rowing a boat down the Tennessee from Kelly's Ferry, and immediately on arrival put in motion my divisions in the order in which they had arrived. The bridge of boats at Bridgeport was frail, and, though used day and night, our passage was slow; and the road thence to Chattanooga was dreadfully cut up and encumbered with the wagons of the other troops stationed along the road. I reached General Hooker's headquarters during a rain, in the afternoon of the 20th, and met General Grant's orders for the general attack on the next day. It was simply impossible for me to fulfill my part in time; only one division (General John E. Smith's) was in position. General Ewing was still at Trenton, and the other two were toiling along the terrible road from Shellmound to Chattanooga. No troops ever were or could be in better condition than mine, or who labored harder to fulfill their part. On a proper representation, General Grant postponed the attack. On the 21st I got the Second Division over Brown's-Ferry Bridge, and General Ewing got up; but the bridge broke repeatedly, and delays occurred which no human sagacity could prevent. All labored night and day, and General Ewing got over on the 23d; but my rear division was cut off by the broken bridge at Brown's Ferry, and could not join me. I offered to go into action with my three divisions, supported by General Jeff. C. Davis, leaving one of my best divisions (Osterhaus's) to act with General Hooker against Lookout Mountain. That division has not joined me yet, but I know and feel that it has served the country well, and that it has reflected honor on the Fifteenth Army Corps and the Army of the Tennessee. I leave the record of its history to General Hooker, or whomsoever has had its services during the late memorable events, confident that all will do it merited honor.

At last, on the 23d of November, my three divisions lay behind the hills opposite the mouth of the Chickamauga. I dispatched the brigade of the Second Division, commanded by General Giles A. Smith, under cover of the hills, to North Chickamauga Creek, to man the boats designed for the pontoon-bridge, with orders (at midnight) to drop down silently to a point above the mouth of the South Chickamauga, there land two regiments, who were to move along the river-bank quietly, and capture the enemy's river-pickets.

General Giles A. Smith then was to drop rapidly below the mouth of the Chickamauga, disembark the rest of his brigade, and dispatch the boats across for fresh loads. These orders were skillfully executed, and every rebel picket but one was captured. The balance of General Morgan L. Smith's division was then rapidly ferried across; that of General John E. Smith followed, and by daylight of November 24th two divisions of about eight thousand men were on the east bank of the Tennessee, and had thrown up a very respectable rifle-trench as a *tête du pont*. As soon as the day dawned, some of the boats were taken from the use of ferrying, and a pontoon-bridge was begun, under the immediate direction of Captain Dresser, the whole planned and supervised by General William F. Smith in person. A pontoon-bridge was also built at the same time over Chickamauga Creek, near its mouth, giving communication with the two regiments which had been left on the north side, and fulfilling a most important purpose at a later stage of the drama. I will here bear my willing testimony to the completeness of this whole business. All the officers charged with the work were present, and manifested a skill which I cannot praise too highly. I have never beheld any work done so quietly, so well; and I doubt if the history of war can show a bridge of that extent (viz., thirteen hundred and fifty feet) laid so noiselessly and well, in so short a time. I attribute it to the genius and intelligence of General William F. Smith. The steamer Dunbar arrived up in the course of the morning, and relieved Ewing's division of the labor of rowing across; but by noon the pontoon-bridge was done, and my three divisions were across, with men, horses, artillery, and every thing.

General Jeff. C. Davis's division was ready to take the bridge, and I ordered the columns to form in order to carry the Missionary Hills. The movement had been carefully explained to all division commanders, and at 1 p. m. we marched from the river in three columns in echelon: the left, General Morgan L. Smith, the column of direction, following substantially Chickamauga Creek; the centre, General John E. Smith, in columns, doubled on the centre, at one brigade interval to the right and rear; the right, General Ewing, in column at the same distance to the right rear, prepared to deploy to the right, on the supposition that we would meet an enemy in that direction. Each head of column was covered by a good line

of skirmishers, with supports. A light drizzling rain prevailed, and the clouds hung low, cloaking our movement from the enemy's tower of observation on Lookout Mountain. We soon gained the foot-hills; our skirmishers crept up the face of the hills, followed by their supports, and at 3.30 P. M. we had gained, with no loss, the desired point. A brigade of each division was pushed rapidly to the top of the hill, and the enemy for the first time seemed to realize the movement, but too late, for we were in possession. He opened with artillery, but General Ewing soon got some of Captain Richardson's guns up that steep hill and gave back artillery, and the enemy's skirmishers made one or two ineffectual dashes at General Lightburn, who had swept round and got a farther hill, which was the real continuation of the ridge. From studying all the maps, I had inferred that Missionary Ridge was a continuous hill; but we found ourselves on two high points, with a deep depression between us and the one immediately over the tunnel, which was my chief objective point. The ground we had gained, however, was so important, that I could leave nothing to chance, and ordered it to be fortified during the night. One brigade of each division was left on the hill, one of General Morgan L. Smith's closed the gap to Chickamauga Creek, two of General John E. Smith's were drawn back to the base in reserve, and General Ewing's right was extended down into the plain, thus crossing the ridge in a general line, facing southeast.

The enemy felt our left flank about 4 P. M., and a pretty smart engagement with artillery and muskets ensued, when he drew off; but it cost us dear, for General Giles A. Smith was severely wounded, and had to go to the rear; and the command of the brigade devolved on Colonel Tupper (One Hundred and Sixteenth Illinois), who managed it with skill during the rest of the operations. At the moment of my crossing the bridge, General Howard appeared, having come with three regiments from Chattanooga, along the east bank of the Tennessee, connecting my new position with that of the main army in Chattanooga. He left the three regiments attached temporarily to General Ewing's right, and returned to his own corps at Chattanooga. As night closed in, I ordered General Jeff. C. Davis to keep one of his brigades at the bridge, one close up to my position, and one intermediate. Thus we passed the night, heavy details being kept busy at work on the intrenchments on the hill. During the night the sky cleared away bright, a cold frost filled the air, and our camp-fires revealed to the enemy and to our friends in Chattanooga our position on Missionary Ridge. About midnight I received, at the hands of Major Rowley (of General Grant's staff), orders to attack the enemy at "dawn of day," with notice that General Thomas would attack in force *early* in the day. Accordingly, before day I was in the saddle, attended by all my staff; rode to the extreme left of our position near Chickamauga Creek; thence up the hill, held by General Lightburn; and round to the extreme right of General Ewing.

Catching as accurate an idea of the ground as possible by the dim light of morning, I saw that our line of attack was in the direction of Missionary Ridge, with wings supporting on either flank. Quite a valley lay between us and the next hill of the series, and this hill presented steep sides, the one to the west partially cleared, but the other covered with the native forest. The crest of the ridge was narrow and wooded. The farther point of this hill was held by the enemy with a breastwork of logs and fresh earth, filled with men and two guns. The enemy was also seen in great force on a still higher hill beyond the tunnel, from which he had a fine plunging fire on the hill in dispute. The gorge between, through which several roads and the railroad-tunnel pass, could not be seen from our position, but formed the natural *place d'armes*, where the enemy covered his masses to resist our contemplated movement of turning his right flank and endangering his communications with his depot at Chickamauga Station.

As soon as possible, the following dispositions were made: The brigades of Colonels Cockrell and Alexander, and General Lightburn, were to hold our hill as the key-point. General Corse, with as much of his brigade as could operate along the narrow ridge, was to attack from our right centre. General Lightburn was to dispatch a good regiment from his position to coöperate with General Corse; and General Morgan L. Smith was to move along the east base of Missionary Ridge, connecting with General Corse; and Colonel Loomis, in like manner, to move along the west base, supported by the two reserve brigades of General John E. Smith.

The sun had hardly risen before General Corse had completed his preparations and his bugle sounded the "forward!" The Fortieth Illinois, supported by the Forty-sixth Ohio, on our right centre, with the Thirtieth Ohio (Colonel Jones), moved down the face of our hill, and up that held by the enemy. The line advanced to within about eighty yards of the intrenched position, where General Corse found a secondary crest, which he gained and held. To this point he called his reserves, and asked for reinforcements, which were sent; but the space was narrow, and it was not well to crowd the men, as the enemy's artillery and musketry fire swept the approach to his position, giving him great advantage. As soon as General Corse had made his preparations, he assaulted, and a close, severe contest ensued, which lasted more than an hour, gaining and losing ground, but never the position first obtained, from which the enemy in vain attempted to drive him. General Morgan L. Smith kept gaining ground on the left spurs of Missionary Ridge, and Colonel Loomis got abreast of the tunnel and railroad embankment on his side, drawing the enemy's fire, and to that extent relieving the assaulting party on the hill-crest. Captain Callender had four of his guns on General Ewing's hill, and Captain Woods his Napoleon battery on General Lightburn's; also, two guns of Dillon's battery were with Colonel Alexander's brigade. All directed their fire as

carefully as possible, to clear the hill to our front, without endangering our own men. The fight raged furiously about 10 A. M., when General Corse received a severe wound, was brought off the field, and the command of the brigade and of the assault at that key-point devolved on that fine young, gallant officer, Colonel Walcutt, of the Forty-sixth Ohio, who fulfilled his part manfully. He continued the contest, pressing forward at all points. Colonel Loomis had made good progress to the right, and about 2 P. M. General John E. Smith, judging the battle to be most severe on the hill, and being required to support General Ewing, ordered up Colonel Raum's and General Matthias's brigades across the field to the summit that was being fought for. They moved up under a heavy fire of cannon and musketry, and joined Colonel Walcutt; but the crest was so narrow that they necessarily occupied the west face of the hill. The enemy, at the time being massed in great strength in the tunnel-gorge, moved a large force under cover of the ground and the thick bushes, and suddenly appeared on the right rear of this command. The suddenness of the attack disconcerted the men, exposed as they were in the open field; they fell back in some disorder to the lower edge of the field, and reformed. These two brigades were in the nature of supports, and did not constitute a part of the real attack. The movement, seen from Chattanooga (five miles off) with spy-glasses, gave rise to the report, which even General Meigs has repeated, that we were repulsed on the left. It was *not so*. The real attacking columns of General Corse, Colonel Loomis, and General Smith, were not repulsed. They engaged in a close struggle all day persistently, stubbornly, and well. When the two reserve brigades of General John E. Smith fell back as described, the enemy made a show of pursuit, but were in their turn caught in flank by the well-directed fire of our brigade on the wooded crest, and hastily sought cover behind the hill.

Thus matters stood about 3 P. M. The day was bright and clear, and the amphitheatre of Chattanooga lay in beauty at our feet. I had watched for the attack of General Thomas "*early in the day*."

Column after column of the enemy was streaming toward me; gun after gun poured its concentric shot on us, from every hill and spur that gave a view of any part of the ground held by us. An occasional shot from Fort Wood and Orchard Knoll, and some musketry-fire and artillery over about Lookout Mountain, was all that I could detect on our side; but about 3 P. M. I noticed the white line of musketry-fire in front of Orchard Knoll extending farther and farther right and left and on. We could only hear a faint echo of sound, but enough was seen to satisfy me that General Thomas was at last moving on the *centre*. I knew that our attack had drawn vast masses of the enemy to our flank, and felt sure of the result. Some guns which had been firing on us all day were silent, or were turned in a different direction.

The advancing line of musketry-fire from Orchard Knoll disappeared to us behind a spur of the hill, and could no longer be seen; and it was not until night closed in that I knew that the troops in Chattanooga had swept across Missionary Ridge and broken the enemy's centre. Of course, the victory was won, and pursuit was the next step.

I ordered General Morgan L. Smith to feel to the tunnel, and it was found vacant, save by the dead and wounded of our own and the enemy commingled. The reserve of General Jeff. C. Davis was ordered to march at once by the pontoon-bridge across Chickamauga Creek, at its mouth, and push forward for the depot.

General Howard had reported to me in the early part of the day, with the remainder of his army corps (the Eleventh), and had been posted to connect my left with Chickamauga Creek. He was ordered to repair an old broken bridge about two miles up the Chickamauga, and to follow General Davis at 4 A. M., and the Fifteenth Army Corps was ordered to follow at daylight. But General Howard found that to repair the bridge was more of a task than was at first supposed, and we were all compelled to cross the Chickamauga on the new pontoon-bridge at its mouth. By about 11 A. M. General Jeff. C. Davis's division reached the depot, just in time to see it in flames. He found the enemy occupying two hills, partially intrenched, just beyond the depot. These he soon drove away. The depot presented a scene of desolation that war alone exhibits—corn-meal and corn in huge burning piles, broken wagons, abandoned caissons, two thirty-two-pounder rifled-guns with carriages burned, pieces of pontoons, barks and chasses, etc., destined doubtless for the famous invasion of Kentucky, and all manner of things, burning and broken. Still, the enemy kindly left us a good supply of forage for our horses, and meal, beans, etc., for our men.

Pausing but a short while, we passed on, the road filled with broken wagons and abandoned caissons, till night. Just as the head of the column emerged from a dark, miry swamp, we encountered the rear-guard of the retreating enemy. The fight was sharp, but the night closed in so dark that we could not move. General Grant came up to us there. At daylight we resumed the march, and at Graysville, where a good bridge spanned the Chickamauga, we found the corps of General Palmer on the south bank, who informed us that General Hooker was on a road still farther south, and we could hear his guns near Ringgold.

As the roads were filled with all the troops they could possibly accommodate, I turned to the east, to fulfill another part of the general plan, viz., to break up all communication between Bragg and Longstreet.

We had all sorts of rumors as to the latter, but it was manifest that we should interpose a proper force between these two armies. I therefore directed General Howard to move to Parker's Gap, and thence send rapidly a competent force to Red Clay, or the Council-Ground, there to destroy

a large section of the railroad which connects Dalton and Cleveland. This work was most successfully and fully accomplished that day. The division of General Jeff. C. Davis was moved close up to Ringgold, to assist General Hooker if needed, and the Fifteenth Corps was held at Graysville, for any thing that might turn up. About noon I had a message from General Hooker, saying he had had a pretty hard fight at the mountain-pass just beyond Ringgold, and he wanted me to come forward to turn the position. He was not aware at the time that Howard, by moving through Parker's Gap toward Red Clay, had already turned it. So I rode forward to Ringgold in person, and found the enemy had already fallen back to Tunnel Hill. He was already out of the valley of the Chickamauga, and on ground whence the waters flow to the Coosa. He was out of Tennessee.

I found General Grant at Ringgold, and, after some explanations as to breaking up the railroad from Ringgold back to the State line, as soon as some cars loaded with wounded men could be pushed back to Chickamauga depot, I was ordered to move slowly and leisurely back to Chattanooga.

On the following day the Fifteenth Corps destroyed absolutely and effectually the railroad from a point half-way between Ringgold and Graysville, back to the State line; and General Grant, coming to Graysville, consented that, instead of returning direct to Chattanooga, I might send back all my artillery-wagons and impediments, and make a circuit by the north as far as the Hiawassee River.

Accordingly, on the morning of November 29th, General Howard moved from Parker's Gap to Cleveland, General Davis by way of McDaniel's Gap, and General Blair with two divisions of the Fifteenth Corps by way of Julien's Gap, all meeting at Cleveland that night. Here another good break was made in the Dalton & Cleveland road. On the 30th the army moved to Charleston, General Howard approaching so rapidly that the enemy evacuated with haste, leaving the bridge but partially damaged, and five car-loads of flour and provisions on the north bank of the Hiawassee.

This was to have been the limit of our operations. Officers and men had brought no baggage or provisions, and the weather was bitter cold. I had already reached the town of Charleston, when General Wilson arrived with a letter from General Grant, at Chattanooga, informing me that the latest authentic accounts from Knoxville were to the 27th, at which time General Burnside was completely invested, and had provisions only to include the 3d of December; that General Granger had left Chattanooga for Knoxville, by the river-road, with a steamboat following him in the river; but he feared that General Granger could not reach Knoxville in time, and ordered me to take command of all troops moving for the relief of Knoxville, and hasten to General Burnside. Seven days before, we had left our camps on the other side of the Tennessee with two days' rations, without a change of clothing—stripped for the fight, with but a single blanket or coat per man, from myself to the private included.

Of course, we then had no provisions save what we gathered by the road, and were ill supplied for such a march. But we learned that twelve thousand of our fellow-soldiers were beleaguered in the mountain town of Knoxville, eighty-four miles distant; that they needed relief, and must have it in three days. This was enough—and it had to be done. General Howard that night repaired and planked the railroad-bridge, and at daylight the army passed over the Hiawassee and marched to Athens, fifteen miles. I had supposed rightly that General Granger was about the mouth of the Hiawassee, and had sent him notice of my orders; that General Grant had sent me a copy of his written instructions, which were full and complete, and that he must push for Kingston, near which we would make a junction. But by the time I reached Athens I had better studied the geography, and sent him orders, which found him at Decatur, that Kingston was out of our way; that he should send his boat to Kingston, but with his command strike across to Philadelphia, and report to me there. I had but a small force of cavalry, which was, at the time of my receipt of General Grant's orders, scouting over about Benton and Columbus. I left my aide, Major McCoy, at Charleston, to communicate with this cavalry and hurry it forward. It overtook me in the night at Athens.

On the 2d of December the army moved rapidly north toward Loudon, twenty-six miles distant. About 11 A. M. the cavalry passed to the head of the column, was ordered to push to Loudon, and, if possible, to save a pontoon-bridge across the Tennessee, held by a brigade of the enemy commanded by General Vaughn. The cavalry moved with such rapidity as to capture every picket; but the brigade of Vaughn had artillery in position, covered by earthworks, and displayed a force too respectable to be carried by a cavalry dash, so that darkness closed in before General Howard's infantry got up. The enemy abandoned the place in the night, destroying the pontoons, running three locomotives and forty-eight cars into the Tennessee River, and abandoned much provision, four guns, and other material, which General Howard took at daylight. But the bridge was gone, and we were forced to turn east and trust to General Burnside's bridge at Knoxville. It was all-important that General Burnside should have notice of our coming, and but one day of the time remained.

Accordingly, at Philadelphia, during the night of the 2d of December, I sent my aide (Major Audenried) forward to Colonel Long, commanding the brigade of cavalry at Loudon, to explain to him how all-important it was that notice of our approach should reach General Burnside within twenty-four hours, ordering him to select the best materials of his command, to start at once, ford the Little Tennessee, and push into Knoxville at whatever cost of life and horse-flesh. Major Audenried was ordered to go along. The distance to be traveled was about forty miles, and the roads villainous. Before day they were off, and at daylight the Fifteenth Corps was turned

from Philadelphia for the Little Tennessee at Morgantown, where my maps represented the river as being very shallow; but it was found too deep for fording, and the water was freezing cold—width two hundred and forty yards, depth from two to five feet; horses could ford, but artillery and men could not. A bridge was indispensable. General Wilson (who accompanied me) undertook to superintend the bridge, and I am under many obligations to him, as I was without an engineer, having sent Captain Jenny back from Graysville to survey our field of battle. We had our pioneers, but only such tools as axes, picks, and spades. General Wilson, working partly with cut wood and partly with square trestles (made of the houses of the late town of Morgantown), progressed apace, and by dark of December 4th troops and animals passed over the bridge, and by daybreak of the 5th the Fifteenth Corps (General Blair's) was over, and Generals Granger's and Davis's divisions were ready to pass; but the diagonal bracing was imperfect for want of spikes, and the bridge broke, causing delay. I had ordered General Blair to move out on the Marysville road five miles, there to await notice that General Granger was on a parallel road abreast of him, and in person I was at a house where the roads parted, when a messenger rode up, bringing me a few words from General Burnside, to the effect that Colonel Long had arrived at Knoxville with his cavalry, and that all was well with him there; Longstreet still lay before the place, but there were symptoms of his speedy departure.

I felt that I had accomplished the first great step in the problem for the relief of General Burnside's army, but still urged on the work. As soon as the bridge was mended, all the troops moved forward. General Howard had marched from Loudon, had found a pretty good ford for his horses and wagons at Davis's, seven miles below Morgantown, and had made an ingenious bridge of the wagons left by General Vaughn at Loudon, on which to pass his men. He marched by Unitia and Louisville. On the night of the 5th all the heads of columns communicated at Marysville, where I met Major Van Buren (of General Burnside's staff), who announced that Longstreet had the night before retreated on the Rutledge, Rogersville, and Bristol road, leading to Virginia; that General Burnside's cavalry was on his heels; and that the general desired to see me in person as soon as I could come to Knoxville. I ordered all the troops to halt and rest, except the two divisions of General Granger, which were ordered to move forward to Little River, and General Granger to report in person to General Burnside for orders. His was the force originally designed to reënforce General Burnside, and it was eminently proper that it should join in the stern-chase after Longstreet.

On the morning of December 6th I rode from Marysville into Knoxville, and met General Burnside. General Granger arrived later in the day. We examined his lines of fortifications, which were a wonderful production for

the short time allowed in their selection of ground and construction of work. It seemed to me that they were nearly impregnable. We examined the redoubt named "Sanders," where, on the Sunday previous, three brigades of the enemy had assaulted and met a bloody repulse. Now, all was peaceful and quiet; but a few hours before, the deadly bullet sought its victim all round about that hilly barrier.

The general explained to me fully and frankly what he had done, and what he proposed to do. He asked of me nothing but General Granger's command; and suggested, in view of the large force I had brought from Chattanooga, that I should return with due expedition to the line of the Hiawassee, lest Bragg, reinforced, might take advantage of our absence to resume the offensive. I asked him to reduce this to writing, which he did, and I here introduce it as part of my report:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE OHIO, }
KNOXVILLE, December 7, 1863. }

Major-General W. T. SHERMAN, commanding, etc.

GENERAL: I desire to express to you and your command my most hearty thanks and gratitude for your promptness in coming to our relief during the siege of Knoxville, and I am satisfied your approach served to raise the siege. The emergency having passed, I do not deem, for the present, any other portion of your command but the corps of General Granger necessary for operations in this section; and, inasmuch as General Grant has weakened the forces immediately with him in order to relieve us (thereby rendering the position of General Thomas less secure), I deem it advisable that all the troops now here, save those commanded by General Granger, should return at once to within supporting distance of the forces in front of Bragg's army. In behalf of my command, I desire again to thank you and your command for the kindness you have done us.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. E. BURNSIDE, *Major-General commanding.*

Accordingly, having seen General Burnside's forces move out of Knoxville in pursuit of Longstreet, and General Granger's move in, I put in motion my own command to return. General Howard was ordered to move, *via* Davis's Ford and Sweetwater, to Athens, with a guard forward at Charleston, to hold and repair the bridge which the enemy had retaken after our passage up. General Jeff. C. Davis moved to Columbus, on the Hiawassee, *via* Madisonville, and the two divisions of the Fifteenth Corps moved to Tellico Plains, to cover a movement of cavalry across the mountains into Georgia, to overtake a wagon-train which had dodged us on our way up, and had escaped by way of Murphy. Subsequently, on a report from General Howard that the enemy held Charleston, I diverted General Ewing's division to Athens, and went in person to Tellico with General Morgan L. Smith's division. By the 9th all our troops were in position, and we held the rich country between the Little Tennessee and the Hiawassee. The cavalry, under Colonel Long, passed the mountain at Tellico, and proceeded about

seventeen miles beyond Murphy, when Colonel Long, deeming his farther pursuit of the wagon-train useless, returned on the 12th to Tellico. I then ordered him and the division of General Morgan L. Smith to move to Charleston, to which point I had previously ordered the corps of General Howard.

On the 14th of December all of my command in the field lay along the Hiawassee. Having communicated to General Grant the actual state of affairs, I received orders to leave, on the line of the Hiawassee, all the cavalry, and come to Chattanooga with the rest of my command. I left the brigade of cavalry commanded by Colonel Long, reënforced by the Fifth Ohio Cavalry (Lieutenant-Colonel Heath)—the only cavalry properly belonging to the Fifteenth Army Corps—at Charleston, and with the remainder moved by easy marches, by Cleveland and Tyner's Depot, into Chattanooga, where I received in person from General Grant orders to transfer back to their appropriate commands the corps of General Howard and the division commanded by General Jeff. C. Davis, and to conduct the Fifteenth Army Corps to its new field of operations.

It will thus appear that we have been constantly in motion since our departure from the Big Black, in Mississippi, until the present moment. I have been unable to receive from subordinate commanders the usual full, detailed reports of events, and have therefore been compelled to make up this report from my own personal memory; but, as soon as possible, subordinate reports will be received and duly forwarded.

In reviewing the facts, I must do justice to the men of my command for the patience, cheerfulness, and courage which officers and men have displayed throughout, in battle, on the march, and in camp. For long periods, without regular rations or supplies of any kind, they have marched through mud and over rocks, sometimes barefooted, without a murmur. Without a moment's rest after a march of over four hundred miles, without sleep for three successive nights, we crossed the Tennessee, fought our part of the battle of Chattanooga, pursued the enemy out of Tennessee, and then turned more than a hundred and twenty miles north and compelled Longstreet to raise the siege of Knoxville, which gave so much anxiety to the whole country. It is hard to realize the importance of these events without recalling the memory of the general feeling which pervaded all minds at Chattanooga prior to our arrival. I cannot speak of the Fifteenth Army Corps without a seeming vanity; but as I am no longer its commander, I assert that there is no better body of soldiers in America than it. I wish all to feel a just pride in its real honors.

To General Howard and his command, to General Jeff. C. Davis and his, I am more than usually indebted for the intelligence of commanders and fidelity of commands. The brigade of Colonel Bushbeck, belonging to the Eleventh Corps, which was the first to come out of Chattanooga to my

flank, fought at the Tunnel Hill, in connection with General Ewing's division, and displayed a courage almost amounting to rashness. Following the enemy almost to the tunnel-gorge, it lost many valuable lives, prominent among them Lieutenant-Colonel Taft, spoken of as a most gallant soldier.

In General Howard throughout I found a polished and Christian gentleman, exhibiting the highest and most chivalric traits of the soldier. General Davis handled his division with artistic skill, more especially at the moment we encountered the enemy's rear-guard, near Graysville, at night-fall. I must award to this division the credit of the best order during our movement through East Tennessee, when long marches and the necessity of foraging to the right and left gave some reason for disordered ranks.

Inasmuch as exception may be taken to my explanation of the temporary confusion, during the battle of Chattanooga, of the two brigades of General Matthias and Colonel Raum, I will here state that I saw the whole, and attach no blame to any one. Accidents will happen in battle, as elsewhere; and at the point where they so manfully went to relieve the pressure on other parts of our assaulting line, they exposed themselves unconsciously to an enemy vastly superior in force, and favored by the shape of the ground. Had that enemy come out on equal terms, those brigades would have shown their mettle, which has been tried more than once before and *stood* the test of fire. They reformed their ranks, and were ready to support General Ewing's division in a very few minutes; and the circumstance would have hardly called for notice on my part, had not others reported what was seen from Chattanooga, a distance of nearly five miles, from where could only be seen the troops in the open field in which this affair occurred.

I now subjoin the best report of casualties I am able to compile from the records thus far received:

CORPS, DIVISIONS, ETC.	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.	Total.
FIFTEENTH ARMY CORPS:				
First Division.....	67	364	66	497
Second Division.....	No report.	62 (in hosp.)	62
Third Division.....	89	288	122	499
Fourth Division.....	72	585	21	628
Total.....				1,686
ELEVENTH ARMY CORPS:				
Bushbeck's Brigade.....	37	145	81	263
Aggregate Loss.....				1,949

No report from General Davis's division, but loss is small.

Among the killed were some of our most valuable officers: Colonels Putnam, Ninety-third Illinois; O'Meara, Ninetieth Illinois; and Torrence,

Thirtieth Iowa; Lieutenant-Colonel Taft, of the Eleventh Corps; and Major Bushnell, Thirteenth Illinois.

Among the wounded are Brigadier-Generals Giles A. Smith, Corse, and Matthias; Colonel Raum; Colonel Waugelin, Twelfth Missouri; Lieutenant-Colonel Partridge, Thirteenth Illinois; Major P. I. Welsh, Fifty-sixth Illinois; and Major Nathan McAlla, Tenth Iowa.

Among the missing is Lieutenant-Colonel Archer, Seventeenth Iowa.

My report is already so long, that I must forbear mentioning acts of individual merit. These will be recorded in the reports of division commanders, which I will cheerfully indorse; but I must say that it is but justice that colonels of regiments, who have so long and so well commanded brigades, as in the following cases, should be commissioned to the grade which they have filled with so much usefulness and credit to the public service, viz.: Colonel J. R. Cockerell, Seventieth Ohio; Colonel J. M. Loomis, Twenty-sixth Illinois; Colonel C. C. Walcutt, Forty-sixth Ohio; Colonel J. A. Williamson, Fourth Iowa; Colonel G. B. Raum, Fifty-sixth Illinois; Colonel J. I. Alexander, Fifty-ninth Indiana.

My personal staff, as usual, have served their country with fidelity, and credit to themselves, throughout these events, and have received my personal thanks.

Inclosed you will please find a map of that part of the battle-field of Chattanooga fought over by the troops under my command, surveyed and drawn by Captain Jenney, engineer on my staff. I have the honor to be, your obedient servant, W. T. SHERMAN, *Major-General commanding.*

[General Order No. 68.]

WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE, }
WASHINGTON, February 21, 1864. }

PUBLIC RESOLUTION—No. 12.

Joint resolution tendering the thanks of Congress to Major-General W. T. Sherman and others.

Be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the thanks of Congress and of the people of the United States are due, and that the same are hereby tendered, to Major-General W. T. Sherman, commander of the Department and Army of the Tennessee, and the officers and soldiers who served under him, for their gallant and arduous services in marching to the relief of the Army of the Cumberland, and for their gallantry and heroism in the battle of Chattanooga, which contributed in a great degree to the success of our arms in that glorious victory.

Approved February 19, 1864.

By order of the Secretary of War:

E. D. TOWNSEND, *Assistant Adjutant-General.*

On the 19th of December I was at Bridgeport, and gave all the orders necessary for the distribution of the four divisions of the Fifteenth Corps along the railroad from Stevenson to Decatur, and the part of the Sixteenth Corps, commanded by General Dodge, along the railroad from Decatur to Nashville, to make the needed repairs, and to be in readiness for the campaign of the succeeding year; and on the 21st I went up to Nashville, to confer with General Grant and conclude the arrangements for the winter. At that time General Grant was under the impression that the next campaign would be up the valley of East Tennessee, in the direction of Virginia; and as it was likely to be the last and most important campaign of the war, it became necessary to set free as many of the old troops serving along the Mississippi River as possible. This was the real object and purpose of the Meridian campaign, and of Banks's expedition up Red River to Shreveport during that winter.

CHAPTER XIV.

MERIDIAN CAMPAIGN.

JANUARY AND FEBRUARY, 1864.

THE winter of 1863-'64 opened very cold and severe; and it was manifest after the battle of Chattanooga, November 25, 1863, and the raising of the siege of Knoxville, December 5th, that military operations in that quarter must in a measure cease, or be limited to Burnside's force beyond Knoxville. On the 21st of December General Grant had removed his headquarters to Nashville, Tennessee, leaving General George H. Thomas at Chattanooga, in command of the Department of the Cumberland, and of the army round about that place; and I was at Bridgeport, with orders to distribute my troops along the railroad from Stevenson to Decatur, Alabama, and from Decatur up toward Nashville.

General G. M. Dodge, who was in command of the detachment of the Sixteenth Corps, numbering about eight thousand men, had not participated with us in the battle of Chattanooga, but had remained at and near Pulaski, Tennessee, engaged in repairing that railroad, as auxiliary to the main line which led from Nashville to Stevenson, and Chattanooga. General John A. Logan had succeeded to the command of the Fifteenth Corps, by regular appointment of the President of the United States, and had relieved General Frank P. Blair, who had been temporarily in command of that corps during the Chattanooga and Knoxville movement.

At that time I was in command of the Department of the Tennessee, which embraced substantially the territory on the

east bank of the Mississippi River, from Natchez up to the Ohio River, and thence along the Tennessee River as high as Decatur and Bellefonte, Alabama. General McPherson was at Vicksburg and General Hurlbut at Memphis, and from them I had the regular reports of affairs in that quarter of my command. The rebels still maintained a considerable force of infantry and cavalry in the State of Mississippi, threatening the river, whose navigation had become to us so delicate and important a matter. Satisfied that I could check this by one or two quick moves inland, and thereby set free a considerable body of men held as local garrisons, I went up to Nashville and represented the case to General Grant, who consented that I might go down the Mississippi River, where the bulk of my command lay, and strike a blow on the east of the river, while General Banks from New Orleans should in like manner strike another to the west; thus preventing any further molestation of the boats navigating the main river, and thereby widening the gap in the Southern Confederacy.

After having given all the necessary orders for the distribution, during the winter months, of that part of my command which was in Southern and Middle Tennessee, I went to Cincinnati and Lancaster, Ohio, to spend Christmas with my family; and on my return I took Minnie with me down to a convent at Reading, near Cincinnati, where I left her, and took the cars for Cairo, Illinois, which I reached January 3d, a very cold and bitter day. The ice was forming fast, and there was great danger that the Mississippi River would become closed to navigation. Admiral Porter, who was at Cairo, gave me a small gunboat (the Juliet), with which I went up to Paducah, to inspect that place, garrisoned by a small force, commanded by Colonel S. G. Hicks, Fortieth Illinois, who had been with me and was severely wounded at Shiloh. Returning to Cairo, we started down the Mississippi River, which was full of floating ice. With the utmost difficulty we made our way through it, for hours floating in the midst of immense cakes, that chafed and ground our boat so that at times we were in danger of sinking. But about the 10th of January we reached Memphis,

where I found General Hurlbut, and explained to him my purpose to collect from his garrisons and those of McPherson about twenty thousand men, with which in February to march out from Vicksburg as far as Meridian, break up the Mobile & Ohio Railroad, and also the one leading from Vicksburg to Selma, Alabama. I instructed him to select two good divisions, and to be ready with them to go along. At Memphis I found Brigadier-General W. Sooy Smith, with a force of about twenty-five hundred cavalry, which he had by General Grant's orders brought across from Middle Tennessee, to assist in our general purpose, as well as to punish the rebel General Forrest, who had been most active in harassing our garrisons in West Tennessee and Mississippi.

After staying a couple of days at Memphis, we continued on in the gunboat *Silver Cloud* to Vicksburg, where I found General McPherson, and, giving him similar orders, instructed him to send out spies to ascertain and bring back timely information of the strength and location of the enemy. The winter continued so severe that the river at Vicksburg was full of floating ice, but in the *Silver Cloud* we breasted it manfully, and got back to Memphis by the 20th. A chief part of the enterprise was to destroy the rebel cavalry commanded by General Forrest, who were a constant threat to our railway communications in Middle Tennessee, and I committed this task to Brigadier-General W. Sooy Smith. General Hurlbut had in his command about seven thousand five hundred cavalry, scattered from Columbus, Kentucky, to Corinth, Mississippi, and we proposed to make up an aggregate cavalry force of about seven thousand "effective," out of these and the twenty-five hundred which General Smith had brought with him from Middle Tennessee. With this force General Smith was ordered to move from Memphis straight for Meridian, Mississippi, and to start by February 1st. I explained to him personally the nature of Forrest as a man, and of his peculiar force; told him that in his route he was sure to encounter Forrest, who always attacked with a vehemence for which he must be prepared, and that, after he had repelled the first attack, he must in turn assume

the most determined offensive, overwhelm him and utterly destroy his whole force. I knew that Forrest could not have more than four thousand cavalry, and my own movement would give employment to every other man of the rebel army not immediately present with him, so that he (General Smith) might safely act on the hypothesis I have stated.

Having completed all these preparations in Memphis, being satisfied that the cavalry force would be ready to start by the 1st of February, and having seen General Hurlbut with his two divisions embark in steamers for Vicksburg, I also reëmbarked for the same destination on the 27th of January.

On the 1st of February we rendezvoused in Vicksburg, where I found a spy who had been sent out two weeks before, had been to Meridian, and brought back correct information of the state of facts in the interior of Mississippi. Lieutenant-General (Bishop) Polk was in chief command, with headquarters at Meridian, and had two divisions of infantry, one of which (General Loring's) was posted at Canton, Mississippi, the other (General French's) at Brandon. He had also two divisions of cavalry—Armstrong's, composed of the three brigades of Ross, Stark, and Wirt Adams, which were scattered from the neighborhood of Yazoo City to Jackson and below; and Forrest's, which was united, toward Memphis, with headquarters at Como. General Polk seemed to have no suspicion of our intentions to disturb his serenity.

Accordingly, on the morning of February 3d, we started in two columns, each of two divisions, preceded by a light force of cavalry, commanded by Colonel E. F. Winslow. General McPherson commanded the right column, and General Hurlbut the left. The former crossed the Big Black at the railroad-bridge, and the latter seven miles above, at Messinger's. We were lightly equipped as to wagons, and marched without deployment straight for Meridian, distant one hundred and fifty miles. We struck the rebel cavalry beyond the Big Black, and pushed them pell-mell into and beyond Jackson during the 6th. The next day we reached Brandon, and on the 9th Morton, where we perceived signs of an infantry concentration, but the enemy did not

give us battle, and retreated before us. The rebel cavalry were all around us, so we kept our columns compact and offered few or no chances for their dashes. As far as Morton we had occupied two roads, but there we were forced into one. Toward evening of the 12th, Hurlbut's column passed through Decatur, with orders to go into camp four miles beyond at a creek. McPherson's head of column was some four miles behind, and I personally detached one of Hurlbut's regiments to guard the cross-roads at Decatur till the head of McPherson's column should come in sight. Intending to spend the night in Decatur, I went to a double log-house, and arranged with the lady for some supper. We unsaddled our horses, tied them to the fence inside the yard, and, being tired, I lay down on a bed and fell asleep. Presently I heard shouts and hallooming, and then heard pistol-shots close to the house. My aide, Major Audenried, called me and said we were attacked by rebel cavalry, who were all around us. I jumped up and inquired where was the regiment of infantry I had myself posted at the cross-roads. He said a few moments before it had marched past the house, following the road by which General Hurlbut had gone, and I told him to run, overtake it, and bring it back. Meantime, I went out into the back-yard, saw wagons passing at a run down the road, and horsemen dashing about in a cloud of dust, firing their pistols, their shots reaching the house in which we were. Gathering the few orderlies and clerks that were about, I was preparing to get into a corn-crib at the back side of the lot, wherein to defend ourselves, when I saw Audenried coming back with the regiment, on a run, deploying forward as they came. This regiment soon cleared the place and drove the rebel cavalry back toward the south, whence they had come.

It transpired that the colonel of this infantry regiment, whose name I do not recall, had seen some officers of McPherson's staff (among them Inspector-General Strong) coming up the road at a gallop, raising a cloud of dust; supposing them to be the head of McPherson's column, and being anxious to get into camp before dark, he had called in his pickets and started down the road, leaving me perfectly exposed. Some straggling

wagons, escorted by a New Jersey regiment, were passing at the time, and composed the rear of Hurlbut's train. The rebel cavalry, seeing the road clear of troops, and these wagons passing, struck them in flank, shot down the mules of three or four wagons, broke the column, and began a general skirmish. The escort defended their wagons as well as they could, and thus diverted their attention; otherwise I would surely have been captured. In a short time the head of McPherson's column came up, went into camp, and we spent the night in Decatur.

The next day we pushed on, and on the 14th entered Meridian, the enemy retreating before us toward Demopolis, Alabama. We at once set to work to destroy an arsenal, immense storehouses, and the railroad in every direction. We staid in Meridian five days, expecting every hour to hear of General Sooy Smith, but could get no tidings of him whatever. A large force of infantry was kept at work all the time in breaking up the Mobile & Ohio Railroad south and north; also the Jackson & Selma Railroad, east and west. I was determined to damage these roads so that they could not be used again for hostile purposes during the rest of the war. I never had the remotest idea of going to Mobile, but had purposely given out that idea to the people of the country, so as to deceive the enemy and to divert their attention. Many persons still insist that, because we did not go to Mobile on this occasion, I had failed; but in the following letter to General Banks, of January 31st, written from Vicksburg before starting for Meridian, it will be seen clearly that I indicated my intention to keep up the delusion of an attack on Mobile by land, whereas I promised him to be back to Vicksburg by the 1st of March, so as to coöperate with him in his contemplated attack on Shreveport:

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE TENNESSEE, }
VICKSBURG, *January 31, 1864.* }

Major-General N. P. BANKS, commanding Department of the Gulf, New Orleans.

GENERAL: I received yesterday, at the hands of Captain Dunham, aide-de-camp, your letter of the 25th inst., and hasten to reply. Captain Dunham has gone to the mouth of White River, *en route* for Little Rock, and

the other officers who accompanied him have gone up to Cairo, as I understand, to charter twenty-five steamboats for the Red River trip. The Mississippi River, though low for the season, is free of ice and in good boating order; but I understand that Red River is still low. I had a man in from Alexandria yesterday, who reported the falls or rapids at that place impassable save by the smallest boats. My inland expedition is now moving, and I will be off for Jackson and Meridian to-morrow. The only fear I have is in the weather. All the other combinations are good. I want to keep up the delusion of an attack on Mobile and the Alabama River, and therefore would be obliged if you would keep up an irritating foraging or other expedition in that direction.

My orders from General Grant will not, as yet, justify me in embarking for Red River, though I am very anxious to move in that direction. The moment I learned that you were preparing for it, I sent a communication to Admiral Porter, and dispatched to General Grant at Chattanooga, asking if he wanted me and Steele to cooperate with you against Shreveport; and I will have his answer in time, for you cannot do any thing till Red River has twelve feet of water on the rapids at Alexandria. That will be from March to June. I have lived on Red River, and know somewhat of the phases of that stream. The expedition on Shreveport should be made rapidly, with simultaneous movements from Little Rock on Shreveport, from Opelousas on Alexandria, and a combined force of gunboats and transports directly up Red River. Admiral Porter will be able to have a splendid fleet by March 1st. I think Steele could move with ten thousand infantry and five thousand cavalry. I could take about ten thousand, and you could, I suppose, have the same. Your movement from Opelousas, simultaneous with mine up the river, would compel Dick Taylor to leave Fort De Russy (near Marksville), and the whole combined force could appear at Shreveport about a day appointed beforehand.

I doubt if the enemy will risk a siege at Shreveport, although I am informed they are fortifying the place, and placing many heavy guns in position. It would be better for us that they should stand there, as we might make large and important captures. But I do not believe the enemy will fight a force of thirty thousand men, acting in concert with gunboats.

I will be most happy to take part in the proposed expedition, and hope, before you have made your final dispositions, that I will have the necessary permission. Half the Army of the Tennessee is near the Tennessee River, beyond Huntsville, Alabama, awaiting the completion of the railroad, and, by present orders, I will be compelled to hasten there to command it in person, unless meantime General Grant modifies the plan. I have now in this department only the force left to hold the river and the posts, and I am seriously embarrassed by the promises made the veteran volunteers for furlough. I think, by March 1st, I can put afloat for Shreveport ten thousand

men, provided I succeed in my present movement in cleaning out the State of Mississippi, and in breaking up the railroads about Meridian.

I am, with great respect, your obedient servant,

W. T. SHERMAN, *Major-General commanding.*

The object of the Meridian expedition was to strike the roads inland, so to paralyze the rebel forces that we could take from the defense of the Mississippi River the equivalent of a corps of twenty thousand men, to be used in the next Georgia campaign; and this was actually done. At the same time, I wanted to destroy General Forrest, who, with an irregular force of cavalry, was constantly threatening Memphis and the river above, as well as our routes of supply in Middle Tennessee. In this we failed utterly, because General W. Sooy Smith did not fulfill his orders, which were clear and specific, as contained in my letter of instructions to him of January 27th, at Memphis, and my personal explanations to him at the same time. Instead of starting at the date ordered, February 1st, he did not leave Memphis till the 11th, waiting for some regiment that was ice-bound near Columbus, Kentucky; and then, when he did start, he allowed General Forrest to head him off and to defeat him with an inferior force, near West Point, below Okalona, on the Mobile & Ohio Railroad.

We waited at Meridian till the 20th to hear from General Smith, but hearing nothing whatever, and having utterly destroyed the railroads in and around that junction, I ordered General McPherson to move back slowly toward Canton. With Winslow's cavalry, and Hurlbut's infantry, I turned north to Marion, and thence to a place called "Union," whence I dispatched the cavalry farther north to Philadelphia and Louisville, to feel as it were for General Smith, and then turned all the infantry columns toward Canton, Mississippi. On the 26th we all reached Canton, but we had not heard a word of General Smith, nor was it until some time after (at Vicksburg) that I learned the whole truth of General Smith's movement and of his failure. Of course I did not and could not approve of his conduct, and I know that he yet chafes under the censure. I had set so much store on his part of the project that I was disappointed, and so

reported officially to General Grant. General Smith never regained my confidence as a soldier, though I still regard him as a most accomplished gentleman and a skillful engineer. Since the close of the war he has appealed to me to relieve him of that censure, but I could not do it, because it would falsify history.

Having assembled all my troops in and about Canton, on the 27th of February I left them under the command of the senior major-general, Hurlbut, with orders to remain till about the 3d of March, and then to come into Vicksburg leisurely; and, escorted by Winslow's cavalry, I rode into Vicksburg on the last day of February. There I found letters from General Grant, at Nashville, and General Banks, at New Orleans, concerning his (General Banks's) projected movement up Red River. I was authorized by the former to contribute aid to General Banks for a limited time; but General Grant insisted on my returning in person to my own command about Huntsville, Alabama, as soon as possible, to prepare for the spring campaign.

About this time we were much embarrassed by a general order of the War Department, promising a thirty-days furlough to all soldiers who would "veteranize"—viz., reenlist for the rest of the war. This was a judicious and wise measure, because it doubtless secured the services of a very large portion of the men who had almost completed a three-years enlistment, and were therefore veteran soldiers in feeling and in habit. But to furlough so many of our men at that instant of time was like disbanding an army in the very midst of battle.

In order to come to a perfect understanding with General Banks, I took the steamer *Diana* and ran down to New Orleans to see him. Among the many letters which I found in Vicksburg on my return from Meridian was one from Captain D. F. Boyd, of Louisiana, written from the jail in Natchez, telling me that he was a prisoner of war in our hands; had been captured in Louisiana by some of our scouts; and he bespoke my friendly assistance. Boyd was Professor of Ancient Languages at the Louisiana Seminary of Learning during my administration in 1859-'60; was an accomplished scholar, of moderate

views in politics, but, being a Virginian, was drawn, like all others of his kind, into the vortex of the rebellion by the events of 1861, which broke up colleges and every thing at the South. Natchez, at this time, was in my command, and was held by a strong division, commanded by Brigadier-General J. W. Davidson. In the *Diana* we stopped at Natchez, and I made a hasty inspection of the place. I sent for Boyd, who was in good health, but quite dirty, and begged me to take him out of prison, and to effect his exchange. I receipted for him; took him along with me to New Orleans; offered him money, which he declined; allowed him to go free in the city; and obtained from General Banks a promise to effect his exchange, which was afterward done. Boyd is now my legitimate successor in Louisiana, viz., President of the Louisiana University, which is the present title of what had been the Seminary of Learning. After the war was over, Boyd went back to Alexandria, reorganized the old institution, which I visited in 1866; but the building was burnt down by an accident or by an incendiary about 1868, and the institution was then removed to Baton Rouge, where it now is, under its new title of the University of Louisiana.

We reached New Orleans on the 2d of March. I found General Banks, with his wife and daughter, living in a good house, and he explained to me fully the position and strength of his troops, and his plans of action for the approaching campaign. I dined with him, and, rough as I was—just out of the woods—attended, that night, a very pleasant party at the house of a lady, whose name I cannot recall, but who is now the wife of Captain Arnold, Fifth United States Artillery. At this party were also Mr. and Mrs. Frank Howe. I found New Orleans much changed since I had been familiar with it in 1853 and in 1860-'61. It was full of officers and soldiers. Among the former were General T. W. Sherman, who had lost a leg at Port Hudson, and General Charles P. Stone, whom I knew so well in California, and who is now in the Egyptian service as chief of staff. The bulk of General Banks's army was about Opelousas, under command of General Franklin, ready to move

on Alexandria. General Banks seemed to be all ready, but intended to delay his departure a few days to assist in the inauguration of a civil government for Louisiana, under Governor Hahn. In Lafayette Square I saw the arrangements of scaffolding for the fireworks and benches for the audience. General Banks urged me to remain over the 4th of March, to participate in the ceremonies, which he explained would include the performance of the "Anvil Chorus" by all the bands of his army, and during the performance the church-bells were to be rung, and cannons were to be fired by electricity. I regarded all such ceremonies as out of place at a time when it seemed to me every hour and every minute were due to the war. General Banks's movement, however, contemplated my sending a force of ten thousand men in boats up Red River from Vicksburg, and that a junction should occur at Alexandria by March 17th. I therefore had no time to wait for the grand pageant of the 4th of March, but took my departure from New Orleans in the *Diana* the evening of March 3d.

On the next day, March 4th, I wrote to General Banks a letter, which was extremely minute in conveying to him how far I felt authorized to go under my orders from General Grant. At that time General Grant commanded the Military Division of the Mississippi, embracing my own Department of the Tennessee and that of General Steele in Arkansas, but not that of General Banks in Louisiana. General Banks was acting on his own powers, or under the instructions of General Halleck in Washington, and our assistance to him was designed as a loan of ten thousand men for a period of thirty days. The instructions of March 6th to General A. J. Smith, who commanded this detachment, were full and explicit on this point. The *Diana* reached Vicksburg on the 6th, where I found that the expeditionary army had come in from Canton. One division of five thousand men was made up out of Hurlbut's command, and placed under Brigadier-General T. Kilby Smith; and a similar division was made out of McPherson's and Hurlbut's troops, and placed under Brigadier-General Joseph A. Mower; the whole commanded by Brigadier-General A. J. Smith. General Hurlbut, with the rest

of his command, returned to Memphis, and General McPherson remained at Vicksburg. General A. J. Smith's command was in due season embarked, and proceeded to Red River, which it ascended, convoyed by Admiral Porter's fleet. General Mower's division was landed near the outlet of the Atchafalaya, marched up by land and captured the fort below Alexandria known as Fort De Russy, and the whole fleet then proceeded up to Alexandria, reaching it on the day appointed, viz., March 17th, where it waited for the arrival of General Banks, who, however, did not come till some days after. These two divisions participated in the whole of General Banks's unfortunate Red River expedition, and were delayed so long up Red River, and subsequently on the Mississippi, that they did not share with their comrades the successes and glories of the Atlanta campaign, for which I had designed them; and, indeed, they did not join our army till just in time to assist General George H. Thomas to defeat General Hood before Nashville, on the 15th and 16th of December, 1864.

General Grant's letter of instructions, which was brought me by General Butterfield, who had followed me to New Orleans, enjoined on me, after concluding with General Banks the details for his Red River expedition, to make all necessary arrangements for furloughing the men entitled to that privilege, and to hurry back to the army at Huntsville, Alabama. I accordingly gave the necessary orders to General McPherson, at Vicksburg, and continued up the river toward Memphis. On our way we met Captain Badeau, of General Grant's staff, bearing the following letter, of March 4th, which I answered on the 10th, and sent the answer by General Butterfield, who had accompanied me up from New Orleans. Copies of both were also sent to General McPherson, at Vicksburg.

[PRIVATE.]

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE, *March 4, 1864.*

DEAR SHERMAN: The bill reviving the grade of lieutenant-general in the army has become a law, and my name has been sent to the Senate for the place.

I now receive orders to report at Washington immediately, *in person*,

which indicates either a confirmation or a likelihood of confirmation. I start in the morning to comply with the order, but I shall say very distinctly on my arrival there that I shall accept no appointment which will require me to make that city my headquarters. This, however, is not what I started out to write about.

While I have been eminently successful in this war, in at least gaining the confidence of the public, no one feels more than I how much of this success is due to the energy, skill, and the harmonious putting forth of that energy and skill, of those whom it has been my good fortune to have occupying subordinate positions under me.

There are many officers to whom these remarks are applicable to a greater or less degree, proportionate to their ability as soldiers; but what I want is to express my thanks to you and McPherson, as *the men* to whom, above all others, I feel indebted for whatever I have had of success. How far your advice and suggestions have been of assistance, you know. How far your execution of whatever has been given you to do entitles you to the reward I am receiving, you cannot know as well as I do. I feel all the gratitude this letter would express, giving it the most flattering construction.

The word *you* I use in the plural, intending it for McPherson also. I should write to him, and will some day, but, starting in the morning, I do not know that I will find time just now. Your friend,

U. S. GRANT, *Major-General.*

[PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL.]

NEAR MEMPHIS, *March 10, 1864.*

General GRANT

DEAR GENERAL: I have your more than kind and characteristic letter of the 4th, and will send a copy of it to General McPherson at once.

You do yourself injustice and us too much honor in assigning to us so large a share of the merits which have led to your high advancement. I know you approve the friendship I have ever professed to you, and will permit me to continue as heretofore to manifest it on all proper occasions.

You are now Washington's legitimate successor, and occupy a position of almost dangerous elevation; but if you can continue as heretofore to be yourself, simple, honest, and unpretending, you will enjoy through life the respect and love of friends, and the homage of millions of human beings who will award to you a large share for securing to them and their descendants a government of law and stability.

I repeat, you do General McPherson and myself too much honor. At Belmont you manifested your traits, neither of us being near; at Donelson also you illustrated your whole character. I was not near, and General McPherson in too subordinate a capacity to influence you.

Until you had won Donelson, I confess I was almost cowed by the terrible array of anarchical elements that presented themselves at every point; but that victory admitted the ray of light which I have followed ever since.

I believe you are as brave, patriotic, and just, as the great prototype Washington; as unselfish, kind-hearted, and honest, as a man should be; but the chief characteristic in your nature is the simple faith in success you have always manifested, which I can liken to nothing else than the faith a Christian has in his Saviour.

This faith gave you victory at Shiloh and Vicksburg. Also, when you have completed your best preparations, you go into battle without hesitation, as at Chattanooga—no doubts, no reserve; and I tell you that it was this that made us act with confidence. I knew wherever I was that you thought of me, and if I got in a tight place you would come—if alive.

My only points of doubt were as to your knowledge of grand strategy, and of books of science and history; but I confess your common-sense seems to have supplied all this.

Now as to the future. Do not stay in Washington. Halleck is better qualified than you are to stand the buffets of intrigue and policy. Come out West; take to yourself the whole Mississippi Valley; let us make it dead-sure, and I tell you the Atlantic slope and Pacific shores will follow its destiny as sure as the limbs of a tree live or die with the main trunk! We have done much; still much remains to be done. Time and time's influences are all with us; we could almost afford to sit still and let these influences work. Even in the seceded States your word *now* would go further than a President's proclamation, or an act of Congress.

For God's sake and for your country's sake, come out of Washington! I foretold to General Halleck, before he left Corinth, the inevitable result to him, and I now exhort you to come out West. Here lies the seat of the coming empire; and from the West, when our task is done, we will make short work of Charleston and Richmond, and the impoverished coast of the Atlantic. Your sincere friend,

W. T. SHERMAN.

We reached Memphis on the 13th, where I remained some days, but on the 14th of March received from General Grant a dispatch to hurry to Nashville in person by the 17th, if possible. Disposing of all matters then pending, I took a steamboat to Cairo, the cars thence to Louisville and Nashville, reaching that place on the 17th of March, 1864.

I found General Grant there. He had been to Washington and back, and was ordered to return East to command all the

armies of the United States, and personally the Army of the Potomac. I was to succeed him in command of the Military Division of the Mississippi, embracing the Departments of the Ohio, Cumberland, Tennessee, and Arkansas. General Grant was of course very busy in winding up all matters of business, in transferring his command to me, and in preparing for what was manifest would be the great and closing campaign of our civil war. Mrs. Grant and some of their children were with him, and occupied a large house in Nashville, which was used as an office, dwelling, and every thing combined.

On the 18th of March I had issued orders assuming command of the Military Division of the Mississippi, and was seated in the office, when the general came in and said they were about to present him a sword, inviting me to come and see the ceremony. I went back into what was the dining-room of the house; on the table lay a rose-wood box, containing a sword, sash, spurs, etc., and round about the table were grouped Mrs. Grant, Nelly, and one or two of the boys. I was introduced to a large, corpulent gentleman, as the mayor, and another citizen, who had come down from Galena to make this presentation of a sword to their fellow-townsmen. I think that Rawlins, Bowers, Badeau, and one or more of General Grant's personal staff, were present. The mayor rose and in the most dignified way read a finished speech to General Grant, who stood, as usual, very awkwardly; and the mayor closed his speech by handing him the resolutions of the City Council engrossed on parchment, with a broad ribbon and large seal attached. After the mayor had fulfilled his office so well, General Grant said: "Mr. Mayor, as I knew that this ceremony was to occur, and as I am not used to speaking, I have written something in reply." He then began to fumble in his pockets, first his breast-coat pocket, then his pants, vest, etc., and after considerable delay he pulled out a crumpled piece of common yellow cartridge-paper, which he handed to the mayor. His whole manner was awkward in the extreme, yet perfectly characteristic, and in strong contrast with the elegant parchment and speech of the mayor. When read, however, the substance of his

answer was most excellent, short, concise, and, if it had been delivered by word of mouth, would have been all that the occasion required.

I could not help laughing at a scene so characteristic of the man who then stood prominent before the country, and to whom all had turned as the only one qualified to guide the nation in a war that had become painfully critical. With copies of the few letters referred to, and which seem necessary to illustrate the subject-matter, I close this chapter.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE TENNESSEE,
STEAMER DIANA (UNDER WEIGH), *March 4, 1864.* }

Major-General N. P. BANKS, commanding Department of the Gulf, New Orleans.

GENERAL: I had the honor to receive your letter of the 2d instant yesterday at New Orleans, but was unable to answer, except verbally, and I now reduce it to writing.

I will arrive at Vicksburg the 6th instant, and I expect to meet there my command from Canton, out of which I will select two divisions of about ten thousand men, embark them under a good commander, and order him:

1st. To rendezvous at the mouth of Red River, and, in concert with Admiral Porter (if he agree), to strike Harrisonburg a *hard* blow.

2d. To return to Red River and ascend it, aiming to reach Alexandria on the 17th of March, to report to you.

3d. That, as this command is designed to operate by water, it will not be encumbered with much land transportation, say two wagons to a regiment, but with an ample supply of stores, including mortars and heavy rifled guns, to be used against fortified places.

4th. That I have calculated, and so reported to General Grant, that this detachment of his forces in no event is to go beyond Shreveport, and that you will spare them the moment you can, trying to get them back to the Mississippi River in thirty days from the time they actually enter Red River.

The year is wearing away fast, and I would like to carry to General Grant at Huntsville, Alabama, every man of his military division, as early in April as possible, for I am sure we ought to move from the base of the Tennessee River to the south before the season is too far advanced, say as early as April 15th next.

I feel certain of your complete success, provided you make the concentration in time, to assure which I will see in person to the embarkation and dispatch of my quota, and I will write to General Steele, conveying to him my personal and professional opinion that the present opportunity is

the most perfect one that will ever offer itself to him to clean out his enemies in Arkansas.

Wishing you all honor and success, I am, with respect, your friend and servant,
W. T. SHERMAN, *Major-General.*

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE TENNESSEE, }
VICKSBURG, *March 6, 1864.* }

Brigadier-General A. J. SMITH, commanding Expedition up Red River, Vicksburg, Mississippi.

GENERAL: By an order this day issued, you are to command a strong, well-appointed detachment of the Army of the Tennessee, sent to reënforce a movement up Red River, but more especially against the fortified position at Shreveport.

You will embark your command as soon as possible, little encumbered with wagons or wheeled vehicles, but well supplied with fuel, provisions, and ammunition. Take with you the twelve mortars, with their ammunition, and all the thirty-pound Parrotts the ordnance-officer will supply. Proceed to the mouth of Red River and confer with Admiral Porter. Consult with him, and in all the expedition rely on him implicitly, as he is the approved friend of the Army of the Tennessee, and has been associated with us from the beginning. I have undertaken with General Banks that you will be at Alexandria, Louisiana, on or before the 17th day of March; and you will, if time allows, coöperate with the navy in destroying Harrisonburg, up Black River; but as I passed Red River yesterday I saw Admiral Porter, and he told me he had already sent an expedition to Harrisonburg, so that I suppose that part of the plan will be accomplished before you reach Red River; but, in any event, be careful to reach Alexandria about the 17th of March.

General Banks will start by land from Franklin, in the Têche country, either the 5th or 7th, and will march *via* Opelousas to Alexandria. You will meet him there, report to him, and act under his orders. My understanding with him is that his forces will move by land, *via* Natchitoches, to Shreveport, while the gunboat-fleet is to ascend the river with your transports in company. Red River is very low for the season, and I doubt if any of the boats can pass the falls or rapids at Alexandria. What General Banks proposes to do in that event I do not know; but my own judgment is that Shreveport ought not to be attacked until the gunboats can reach it. Not that a force marching by land cannot do it alone, but it would be bad economy in war to invest the place with an army so far from heavy guns, mortars, ammunition, and provisions, which can alone reach Shreveport by water. Still, I do not know about General Banks's plans in that event; and whatever they may be, your duty will be to conform, in the most hearty manner.

My understanding with General Banks is that he will not need the co-operation of your force beyond thirty days from the date you reach Red River. As soon as he has taken Shreveport, or as soon as he can spare you, return to Vicksburg with all dispatch, gather up your detachments, wagons, tents, transportation, and all property pertaining to so much of the command as belongs to the Sixteenth Army Corps, and conduct it to Memphis, where orders will await you. My present belief is your division, entire, will be needed with the Army of the Tennessee, about Huntsville or Bridgeport. Still, I will leave orders with General Hurlbut, at Memphis, for you on your return.

I believe if water will enable the gunboats to cross the rapids at Alexandria, you will be able to make a quick, strong, and effective blow at our enemy in the West, thus widening the belt of our territory, and making the breach between the Confederate Government and its outlying trans-Mississippi Department more perfect.

It is understood that General Steele makes a simultaneous move from Little Rock, on Shreveport or Natchitoches, with a force of about ten thousand men. Banks will have seventeen thousand, and you ten thousand. If these can act concentrically and simultaneously, you will make short work of it, and then General Banks will have enough force to hold as much of the Red River country as he deems wise, leaving you to bring to General Grant's main army the seven thousand five hundred men of the Sixteenth Corps now with you. Having faith in your sound judgment and experience, I confide this important and delicate command to you, with certainty that you will harmonize perfectly with Admiral Porter and General Banks, with whom you are to act, and thereby insure success.

I am, with respect, your obedient servant,

W. T. SHERMAN, *Major-General commanding.*

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE TENNESSEE, }
MEMPHIS, March 14, 1864. }

Major-General McPHERSON, commanding, etc., Vicksburg, Mississippi.

DEAR GENERAL: I wrote you at length on the 11th, by a special bearer of dispatches, and now make special orders to cover the movements therein indicated. It was my purpose to await your answer, but I am summoned by General Grant to be in Nashville on the 17th, and it will keep me moving night and day to get there by that date. I must rely on you, for you understand that we *must* reinforce the great army at the centre (Chattanooga) as much as possible, at the same time not risking the safety of any point on the Mississippi which is fortified and armed with heavy guns. I want you to push matters as rapidly as possible, and to do all you can to put two handsome divisions of your own corps at Cairo, ready to embark up the Tennessee River by the 20th or 30th of April at the *very furthest*. I wish

it could be done quicker; but the promise of these thirty-days furloughs in the States of enlistment, though politic, is very unmilitary. It deprives us of our ability to calculate as to time; but do the best you can. Hurlbut can do nothing till A. J. Smith returns from Red River. I will then order him to occupy Grenada temporarily, and to try and get those locomotives that we need here. I may also order him with cavalry and infantry to march toward Tuscaloosa, at the same time that we move from the Tennessee River about Chattanooga.

I don't know as yet the grand strategy of the next campaign, but on arrival at Nashville I will soon catch the main points, and will advise you of them.

Steal a furlough and run to Baltimore *incog.*; but get back in time to take part in the next grand move.

Write me fully and frequently of your progress. I have ordered the quartermaster to send down as many boats as he can get, to facilitate your movements. Mules, wagons, etc., can come up afterward by transient boats. I am truly your friend,

W. T. SHERMAN, *Major-General commanding.*

[Special Field Order No. 28.]

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE TENNESSEE, }
MEMPHIS, TENN., *March 14, 1864.* }

1. Major-General McPherson will organize two good divisions of his corps (Seventeenth) of about five thousand men, each embracing in part the reënlisted veterans of his corps whose furloughs will expire in April, which he will command in person, and will rendezvous at Cairo, Illinois, and report by telegraph and letter to the general commanding at department headquarters, wherever they may be. These divisions will be provided with new arms and accoutrements, and land transportation (wagons and mules) out of the supplies now at Vicksburg, which will be conveyed to Cairo by or before April 15th.

4. During the absence of General McPherson from the district of Vicksburg, Major-General Hurlbut will exercise command over all the troops in the Department of the Tennessee from Cairo to Natchez, inclusive, and will receive special instructions from department headquarters.

By order of Major-General W. T. Sherman:

L. M. DAYTON, *Aide-de-Camp.*