

## THE FIRST BATTLE OF BULL RUN.

BY G. T. BEAUREGARD, GENERAL, C. S. A.



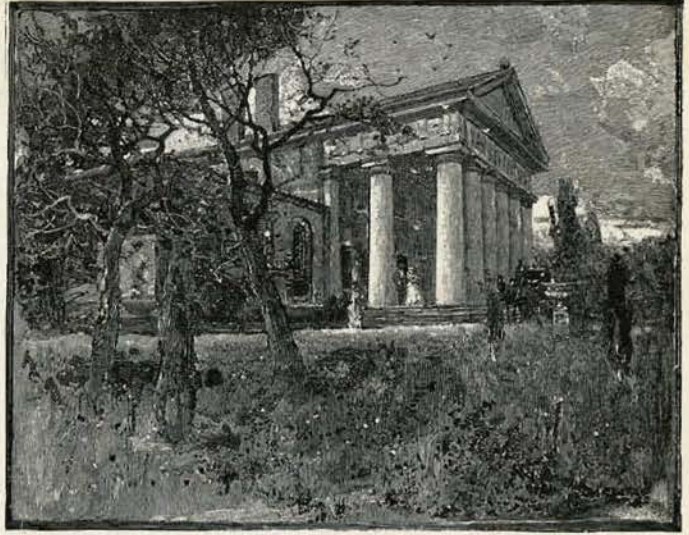
A LOUISIANA "TIGER."

SOON after the first conflict between the authorities of the Federal Union and those of the Confederate States had occurred in Charleston Harbor, by the bombardment of Fort Sumter,—which, beginning at 4:30 A. M. on the 12th of April, 1861, forced the surrender of that fortress within thirty hours thereafter into my hands,—I was called to Richmond, which by that time had become the Confederate seat of government, and was directed to “assume command of the Confederate troops on the Alexandria line.” Arriving at Manassas Junction, I took command on the 2d of June, forty-nine days after the evacuation of Fort Sumter.

Although the position at the time was strategically of commanding importance to the Confederates, the mere *terrain* was not only without natural defensive advantages, but, on the contrary, was absolutely unfavorable. Its strategic value was that, being close to the Federal capital, it held in observation the chief army then being assembled near Arlington by General McDowell, under the immediate eye of the commander-in-chief, General Scott, for an offensive movement against Richmond; and while it had a railway approach in its rear for the easy accumulation of reënforcements and all the necessary munitions of war from the southward, at the same time another (the Manassas Gap) railway, diverging laterally to the left from that point, gave rapid communications with the fertile valley of the Shenandoah, then teeming with live stock and cereal subsistence, as well as with other resources essential to the Confederates. There was this further value in the position to the Confederate army: that during the period of accumulation, seasoning, and training, it might be fed from the fat fields, pastures, and garners of Loudoun, Fauquier, and the Lower Shenandoah Valley counties, which otherwise must have fallen into the hands of the enemy. But, on the other hand, Bull Run, a petty stream, was of little or no defensive strength; for it abounded in fords, and although for the most part its banks were rocky and abrupt, the side from which it would be approached offensively in most places commanded the opposite ground.

At the time of my arrival at Manassas, a Confederate army under General Joseph E. Johnston was in occupation of the Lower Shenandoah Valley, along the line of the Upper Potomac, chiefly at Harper's Ferry, which was regarded as the gateway of the valley and of one of the possible approaches to Richmond; a position from which he was speedily forced to retire, however, by a flank movement of a Federal army, under the veteran General Patterson, thrown across the Potomac at or about Martinsburg. On my other or right flank, so to speak, a Confederate force of some 2500 men under General

Holmes occupied the position of Aquia Creek on the lower Potomac, upon the line of approach to Richmond from that direction through Fredericksburg. (The other approach, that by way of the James River, was held by Confederate troops under Generals Huger and Magruder. Establishing small outposts at Leesburg to observe the crossings of the Potomac in that quarter, and at Fairfax Court House in observation of Arlington, with other detachments in advance of Manassas toward Alexandria on the south side of the railroad, from the very outset I was anxiously aware that the sole military advantage at the moment to the Confederates was that of holding the *interior lines*. On the Federal or hostile side were all material advantages, including superior numbers, largely drawn from the old militia organizations of the great cities of the North, decidedly better armed and equipped than the troops under me, and strengthened by a small but incomparable body of regular infantry as well as a number of batteries of regular field artillery of the highest class, and a very large and thoroughly organized staff corps, besides a numerous body of professionally educated officers in command of volunteer regiments, — all precious military elements at such a juncture.



ARLINGTON, THE HOME OF GENERAL ROBERT E. LEE.

Happily, through the foresight of Colonel Thomas Jordan, — whom General Lee had placed as the adjutant-general of the forces there assembled before my arrival, — arrangements were made which enabled me to receive regularly, from private persons at the Federal capital, most accurate information, of which politicians high in council, as well as War Department clerks, were the unconscious ducts. On the 4th of July, my pickets happened upon and captured a soldier of the regulars, who proved to be a clerk in the adjutant-general's office of General McDowell, intrusted with the special duty of compiling returns of his army — a work which he confessed, without reluctance, he had just executed, showing the forces under McDowell about the 1st of July. His statement of the strength and composition of that force tallied so closely with that which had been acquired through my Washington agencies, already mentioned, as well as through the leading Northern newspapers (regular files of which were also transmitted to my headquarters from the Federal capital), that I could not doubt them.

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‡ The professionally educated officers on the Confederate side at Bull Run included Generals Johnston, Beauregard, Stonewall Jackson, Longstreet, Kirby Smith, Ewell, Early, Bee, D. R. Jones, Holmes, Evans, Elzey, and Jordan, all in high positions, besides others not so prominent. — EDITORS.

In these several ways, therefore, I was almost as well advised of the strength of the hostile army in my front as its commander, who, I may mention, had been a classmate of mine at West Point. Under those circumstances I had become satisfied that a well-equipped, well-constituted Federal army at least 50,000 strong, of all arms, confronted me at or about Arlington, ready and on the very eve of an offensive operation against me, and to meet which I could muster barely 18,000 men with 29 field-guns. †

Previously,—indeed, as early as the middle of June,—it had become apparent to my mind that through only one course of action could there be a well-grounded hope of ability on the part of the Confederates to encounter successfully the offensive operations for which the Federal authorities were then vigorously preparing in my immediate front, with so consummate a strategist and military administrator as Lieutenant-General Scott in general command at Washington, aided by his accomplished heads of the large General Staff Corps of the United States Army. This course was to make the most enterprising, warlike use of the interior lines which we possessed, for the swift concentration at the critical instant of every available Confederate force upon the menaced position, at the risk, if need were, of sacrificing all minor places to the one clearly of major military value—there to meet our adversary so offensively as to overwhelm him, under circumstances that must assure immediate ability to assume the general offensive even upon his territory, and thus conquer an early peace by a few well-delivered blows.

My views of such import had been already earnestly communicated to the proper authorities; but about the middle of July, satisfied that McDowell was on the eve of taking the offensive against me, I dispatched Colonel James Chesnut, of South Carolina, a volunteer aide-de-camp on my staff who had served on an intimate footing with Mr. Davis in the Senate of the United States, to urge in substance the necessity for the immediate concentration of the larger part of the forces of Johnston and Holmes at Manassas, so that the moment McDowell should be sufficiently far detached from Washington, I would be enabled to move rapidly round his more convenient flank upon his rear and his communications, and attack him in reverse, or get between his forces, then separated, thus cutting off his retreat upon Arlington in the event of his defeat, and insuring as an immediate consequence the crushing of Patterson, the liberation of Maryland, and the capture of Washington.

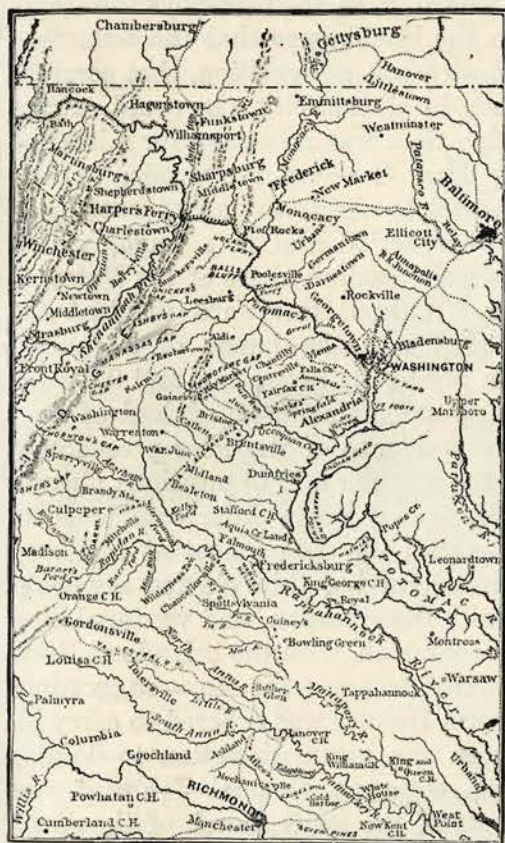
This plan was rejected by Mr. Davis and his military advisers (Adjutant-General Cooper and General Lee), who characterized it as “brilliant and comprehensive,” but essentially impracticable. Furthermore, Colonel Chesnut came back impressed with the views entertained at Richmond,—as he communicated at once to my adjutant-general,—that should the Federal army soon move offensively upon my position, my best course would be to retire behind the Rappahannock and accept battle there instead of at Manassas. In effect, it was regarded as best to sever communications between the two chief Confederate armies, that of the Potomac and that of the Shenandoah, with the

† For the forces actually engaged in the campaign and on the field, see pp. 194-5.—EDITORS.

inevitable immediate result that Johnston would be forced to leave Patterson in possession of the Lower Shenandoah Valley, abandoning to the enemy so

large a part of the most resourceful sections of Virginia, and to retreat southward by way of the Luray Valley, pass across the Blue Ridge at Thornton's Gap and unite with me after all, but at Fredericksburg, much nearer Richmond than Manassas. These views, however, were not made known to me at the time, and happily my mind was left free to the grave problem imposed upon me by the rejection of my plan for the immediate concentration of a materially larger force,—*i. e.*, the problem of placing and using my resources for a successful encounter behind Bull Run with the Federal army, which I was not permitted to doubt was about to take the field against me.

It is almost needless to say that I had caused to be made a thorough reconnoissance of all the ground in my front and flanks, and had made myself personally acquainted with the most material points, including the region of Sudley's Church on my left,



MAP OF THE BULL RUN CAMPAIGN.

where a small detachment was posted in observation. Left now to my own resources, of course the contingency of defeat had to be considered and provided for. Among the measures of precaution for such a result, I ordered the destruction of the railroad bridge across Bull Run at Union Mills, on my right, in order that the enemy, in the event of my defeat, should not have the immediate use of the railroad in following up their movement against Richmond—a railroad which could have had no corresponding value to us eastward beyond Manassas in any operations on our side with Washington as the objective, inasmuch as any such operations must have been made by the way of the Upper Potomac and upon the rear of that city.

Just before Colonel Chesnut was dispatched on the mission of which I have spoken, a former clerk in one of the departments at Washington, well known to him, had volunteered to return thither and bring back the latest information of the military and political situation from our most trusted friends. His loyalty to our cause, his intelligence, and his desire to be of service being vouched for, he was at once sent across the Potomac below Alexandria, merely accredited by a small scrap of paper bearing in Colonel Jordan's cipher the two words, "Trust bearer," with which he was to call at a certain house in

Washington within easy rifle-range of the White House, ask for the lady of the house, and present it only to her. This delicate mission was as fortunately as it was deftly executed. In the early morning, as the newsboys were crying in the empty streets of Washington the intelligence that the order was given for the Federal army to move at once upon my position, that scrap of paper reached the hands of the one person in all that city who could extract any meaning from it. With no more delay than was necessary for a hurried breakfast and the writing in cipher by Mrs. G— of the words, "Order issued for McDowell to march upon Manassas to-night," my agent was placed in communication with another friend, who carried him in a buggy with a relay of horses as swiftly as possible down the eastern shore of the Potomac to our regular ferry across that river. Without untoward incident the momentous dispatch was quickly delivered into the hands of a cavalry courier, and by means of relays it was in my hands between 8 and 9 o'clock that night. Within half an hour my outpost commanders, advised of what was impending, were directed, at the first evidence of the near presence of the enemy in their front, to fall back in the manner and to positions already prescribed in anticipation of such a contingency in an order confidentially communicated to them four weeks before, and the detachment at Leesburg was directed to join me by forced marches. Having thus cleared my decks for action, I next acquainted Mr. Davis with the situation, and ventured once more to suggest that the Army of the Shenandoah, with the brigade at Fredericksburg or Aquia Creek, should be ordered to reënforce me,— suggestions that were at once heeded so far that General Holmes was ordered to carry his command to my aid, and General Johnston was given discretion to do likewise. After some telegraphic discussion with me, General Johnston was induced to exercise this discretion in favor of the swift march of the Army of the Shenandoah to my relief; and to facilitate that vital movement, I hastened to accumulate all possible means of railway transport at a designated point on the Manassas Gap railroad at the eastern foot of the Blue Ridge, to which Johnston's troops directed their march. However, at the same time, I had submitted the alternative proposition to General Johnston, that, having passed the Blue Ridge, he should assemble his forces, press forward by way of Aldie, north-west of Manassas, and fall upon McDowell's right rear; while I, prepared for the operation, at the first sound of the conflict, should strenuously assume the offensive in my front. The situation and circumstances specially favored the signal success of such an operation. The march to the point of attack could have been accomplished as soon as the forces were brought ultimately by rail to Manassas Junction; our enemy, thus attacked so nearly simultaneously on his right flank, his rear, and his front, naturally would suppose that I had been able to turn his flank while attacking him in front, and therefore, that I must have an overwhelming superiority of numbers; and his forces, being new troops, most of them under fire for the first time, must have soon fallen into a disastrous panic. Moreover, such an operation must have resulted advantageously to the Confederates, in the event that McDowell should, as might have been antici-

pated, attempt to strike the Manassas Gap railway to my left, and thus cut off railway communications between Johnston's forces and my own, instead of the mere effort to strike my left flank which he actually essayed.↓

It seemed, however, as though the deferred attempt at concentration was to go for naught, for on the morning of the 18th the Federal forces

were massed around Centreville, but three miles from Mitchell's Ford, and soon were seen advancing upon the roads leading to that and Blackburn's Ford. [See map, page 180.] My order of battle, issued in the night of the 17th, contemplated an offensive return, particularly from the strong brigades on the right and right center. The Federal artillery opened in front of both fords, and the infantry,



THE MCLEAN HOUSE, GENERAL BEAUREGARD'S HEADQUARTERS NEAR MANASSAS. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

while demonstrating in front of Mitchell's Ford, endeavored to force a passage at Blackburn's. Their column of attack, Tyler's division, was opposed by Longstreet's forces, to the reënforcement of which Early's brigade, the reserve line at McLean's Ford, was ordered up. The Federals, after several attempts to force a passage, met a final repulse and retreated.¶ After their infantry attack had ceased, about 1 o'clock, the contest lapsed into an artillery duel, in which the Washington Artillery of New Orleans won credit against the renowned batteries of the United States regular army. A comical effect of this artillery fight was the destruction of the dinner of myself and staff by a Federal shell that fell into the fire-place of my headquarters at the McLean House.

Our success in this first limited collision was of special prestige to my army of new troops, and, moreover, of decisive importance by so increasing General McDowell's caution as to give time for the arrival of some of General

↓ "I am, however, inclined to believe he [the enemy] may attempt to turn my left flank by a movement in the direction of Vienna, Fryingspan Church, and, possibly, Gum Spring, and thus cut off Johnston's line of retreat and communication with this place [Manassas Junction] via the Manassas Gap railroad, while threatening my own communications with Richmond and depots of supply by the Alexandria and Orange railroad, and opening his communica-

tions with the Potomac through Leesburg and Edward's Ferry."—(Extract from a letter addressed by General Beauregard to Jefferson Davis, July 11th, 1861.)

¶ It is denied that a serious attempt "to force a passage" was made on the 18th. (See page 178.) This engagement was called by the Confederates the battle of Bull Run, the main fight on the 21st being known in the South as the battle of Manassas (pronounced Ma-nass'-sa).—EDITORS.

Johnston's forces. But while on the 19th I was awaiting a renewed and general attack by the Federal army, I received a telegram from the Richmond military authorities, urging me to withdraw my call on General Johnston on account of the supposed impracticability of the concentration — an abiding conviction which had been but momentarily shaken by the alarm caused by McDowell's march upon Richmond. As this was not an order in terms, but an urgency which, notwithstanding its superior source, left me technically free and could define me as responsible for any misevent, I preferred to keep both the situation and the responsibility, and continued every effort for the prompt arrival of the Shenandoah forces, being resolved, should they come before General McDowell again attacked, to take myself the offensive. General McDowell, fortunately for my plans, spent the 19th and 20th in reconnaissances; and, meanwhile, General Johnston brought 8340 men from the Shenandoah Valley, with 20 guns, and General Holmes 1265 rank and file, with 6 pieces of artillery, from Aquia Creek. As these forces arrived (most of them in the afternoon of the 20th) I placed them chiefly so as to strengthen my left center and left, the latter being weak from lack of available troops.

The disposition of the entire force was now as follows [see map, page 180]: At Union Mills Ford, Ewell's brigade, supported by Holmes's; at McLean's Ford, D. R. Jones's brigade, supported by Early's; at Blackburn's Ford, Longstreet's brigade; at Mitchell's Ford, Bonham's brigade. Cöcke's brigade held the line in front and rear of Bull Run from Bonham's left, covering Lewis's, Ball's, and Island fords, to the right of Evans's demi-brigade, which covered the Stone Bridge and a farm ford about a mile above, and formed part also of Cöcke's command. The Shenandoah forces were placed in reserve — Bee's and Bartow's brigades between McLean's and Blackburn's fords, and Jackson's between Blackburn's and Mitchell's fords. This force mustered 29,188 rank and file and 55 guns, of which 21,923 infantry, cavalry, and artillery, with 29 guns, belonged to my immediate forces, *i. e.*, the Army of the Potomac.

The preparation, in front of an ever-threatening enemy, of a wholly volunteer army, composed of men very few of whom had ever belonged to any military organization, had been a work of many cares not incident to the command of a regular army. These were increased by the insufficiency of my staff organization, an inefficient management of the quartermaster's department at Richmond, and the preposterous mismanagement of the commissary-general, who not only failed to furnish rations, but caused the removal of the army commissaries, who, under my orders, procured food from

^ [TELEGRAM.] RICHMOND, July 19, 1861.  
GENERAL BEAUREGARD, Manassas, Va.

We have no intelligence from General Johnston. If the enemy in front of you has abandoned an immediate attack, and General Johnston has not moved, you had better withdraw your call upon him, so that he may be left to his full discretion. All the troops arriving at Lynchburg are ordered to join you. From this place we will send as fast

as transportation permits. The enemy is advised at Washington of the projected movement of Generals Johnston and Holmes, and may vary his plans in conformity thereto.

S. COOPER, Adjutant-General.

☆ Lack of rations, as well as the necessity for information, detained McDowell at Centreville during these two days.—EDITORS.

the country in front of us to keep the army from absolute want—supplies that were otherwise exposed to be gathered by the enemy. So specially severe had been the recent duties at headquarters, aggravated not a little by night alarms arising from the enemy's immediate presence, that, in the evening of the 20th, I found my chief-of-staff sunken upon the papers that covered his table, asleep in sheer exhaustion from the overstraining and almost slumberless labor of the last days and nights. I covered his door with a guard to secure his rest against any interruption, after which the army had the benefit of his usual active and provident services.

There was much in this decisive conflict about to open, not involved in any after battle, which pervaded the two armies and the people behind them and colored the responsibility of the respective commanders. The political hostilities of a generation were now face to face with weapons instead of words. Defeat to either side would be a deep mortification, but defeat to the South must turn its claim of independence into an empty vaunt; and the defeated commander on either side might expect, though not the personal fate awarded by the Carthaginians to an unfortunate commander, at least a moral fate quite similar. Though disappointed that the concentration I had sought had not been permitted at the moment and for the purpose preferred by me, and notwithstanding the non-arrival of some five thousand troops of the Shenandoah forces, my strength was now so increased that I had good hope of successfully meeting my adversary.

General Johnston was the ranking officer, and entitled, therefore, to assume command of the united forces; but as the extensive field of operations was one which I had occupied since the beginning of June, and with which I was thoroughly familiar in all its extent and military bearings, while he was wholly unacquainted with it, and, moreover, as I had made my plans and dispositions for the maintenance of the position, General Johnston, in view of the gravity of the impending issue, preferred not to assume the responsibilities of the chief direction of the forces during the battle, but to assist me upon the field. Thereupon, I explained my plans and purposes, to which he agreed.‡

SUNDAY, July 21st, bearing the fate of the new-born Confederacy, broke brightly over the fields and woods that held the hostile forces. My scouts, thrown out in the night toward Centreville along the Warrenton Turnpike, had reported that the enemy was concentrating along the latter. This fact, together with the failure of the Federals in their attack upon my center at Mitchell's and Blackburn's fords, had caused me to apprehend that they would attempt my left flank at the Stone Bridge, and orders were accordingly issued by half-past 4 o'clock to the brigade commanders to hold their forces in readiness to move at a moment's notice, together with the suggestion that the Federal attack might be expected in that quarter. Shortly afterward the enemy was reported to be advancing from Centreville on the Warrenton

‡See General Beauregard's postscript (page 226), and General Johnston's consideration of the same topic in the paper to follow (page 245), and his postscript (page 258).—EDITORS.





TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP OF THE BULL RUN BATTLE-FIELD.

The original of this map was made for General Beauregard, soon after the battle, from actual surveys by Captain D. B. Harris, assisted by Mr. John Grant.

Turnpike, and at half-past 5 o'clock as deploying a force in front of Evans. As their movement against my left developed the opportunity I desired, I immediately sent orders to the brigade commanders, both front and reserves, on my right and center to advance and vigorously attack the Federal left flank and rear at Centreville, while my left, under Cocks and Evans with their supports, would sustain the Federal attack in the quarter of the Stone Bridge, which they were directed to do to the last extremity. The center was likewise to advance and engage the enemy in front, and directions were given to the reserves, when without orders, to move toward the sound of the heaviest firing. The ground in our front on the other side of Bull Run afforded particular advantage for these tactics. Centreville was the apex of a triangle—its short side running by the Warrenton Turnpike to Stone Bridge, its base Bull Run, its long side a road that ran from Union Mills along the front of my other Bull Run positions and trended off to the rear of Centreville, where McDowell had massed his main forces; branch roads led up to this one from the fords between Union Mills and Mitchell's. My forces to the right of the latter ford were to advance, pivoting on that position; Bonham was in advance from Mitchell's Ford, Longstreet from Blackburn's, D. R. Jones from McLean's, and Ewell from Union Mills by the Centreville road. Ewell, as having the longest march, was to begin the movement, and each brigade was to be followed by its reserve. In anticipation of this method of attack, and to prevent accidents, the subordinate commanders had been carefully instructed in the movement by me, as they were all new to the responsibilities of command. They were to establish close communication with each other before making the attack. About half-past 8 o'clock I set out with General Johnston for a convenient position,—a hill in rear of Mitchell's Ford,—where we waited for the opening of the attack on our right, from which I expected a decisive victory by midday, with the result of cutting off the Federal army from retreat upon Washington.

Meanwhile, about half-past 5 o'clock, the peal of a heavy rifled gun was heard in front of the Stone Bridge, its second shot striking through the tent of my signal-officer, Captain E. P. Alexander; and at 6 o'clock a full rifled battery opened against Evans and then against Cocks, to which our artillery remained dumb, as it had not sufficient range to reply. But later, as the Federal skirmish-line advanced, it was engaged by ours, thrown well forward on the other side of the Run. A scattering musketry fire followed, and meanwhile, about 7 o'clock, I ordered Jackson's brigade, with Imboden's and five guns of Walton's battery, to the left, with orders to support Cocks as well as Bonham; and the brigades of Bee and Bartow, under the command of the former, were also sent to the support of the left.

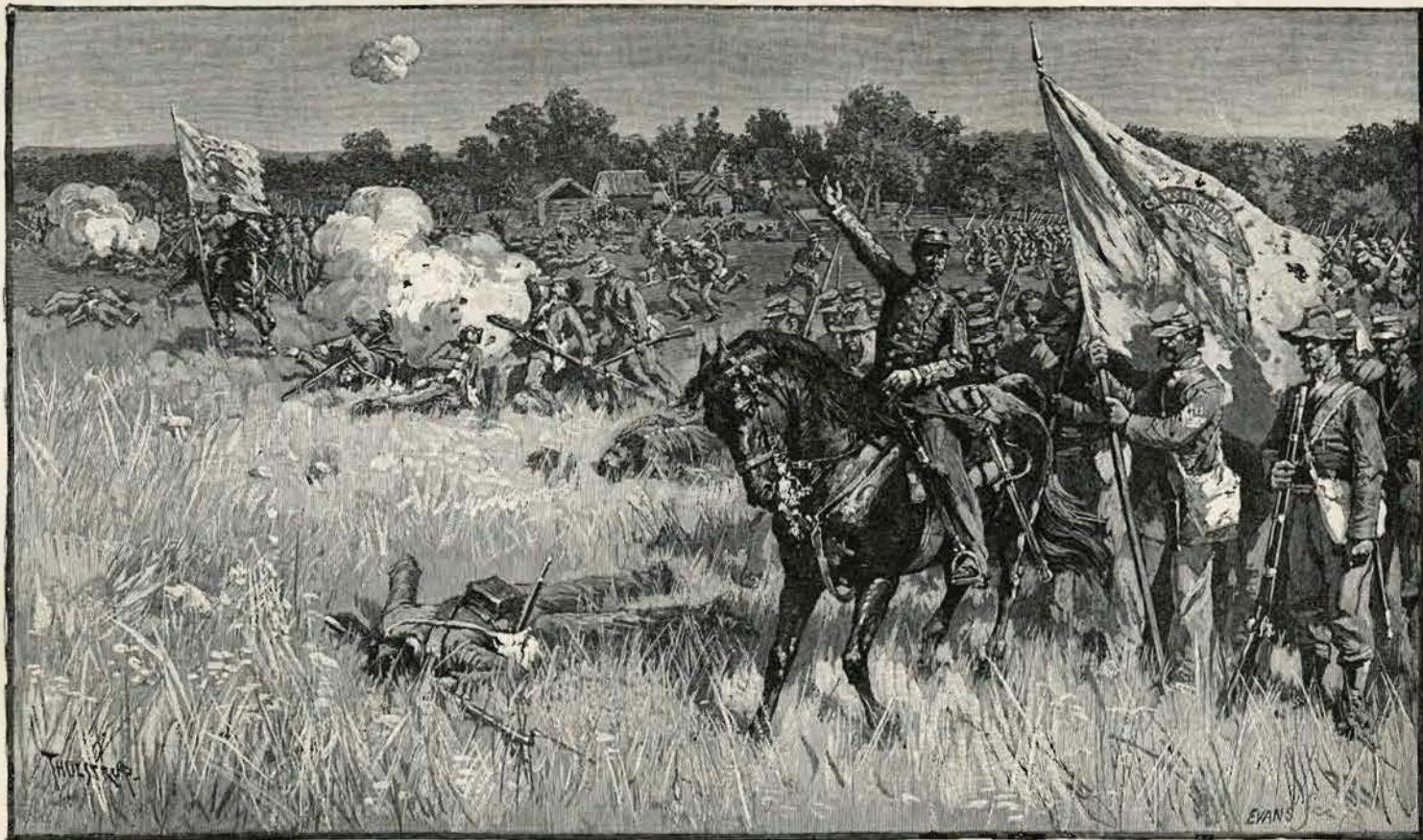
At half-past 8 o'clock Evans, seeing that the Federal attack did not increase in boldness and vigor, and observing a lengthening line of dust above the trees to the left of the Warrenton Turnpike, became satisfied that the attack in his front was but a feint, and that a column of the enemy was moving around through the woods to fall on his flank from the direction of Sudley Ford. Informing his immediate commander, Cocks, of the enemy's move-

ment, and of his own dispositions to meet it, he left 4 companies under cover at the Stone Bridge, and led the remainder of his force, 6 companies of Sloan's 4th South Carolina and Wheat's battalion of Louisiana Tigers, with 2 6-pounder howitzers, across the valley of Young's Branch to the high ground beyond it. Resting his left on the Sudley road, he distributed his troops on each side of a small copse, with such cover as the ground afforded, and looking over the open fields and a reach of the Sudley road which the Federals must cover in their approach. His two howitzers were placed one at each end of his position, and here he silently awaited the enemy now drawing near.

The Federal turning column, about 18,000 strong, with 24 pieces of artillery, had moved down from Centreville by the Warrenton Turnpike, and after passing Cub Run had struck to the right by a forest road to cross Bull Run at Sudley Ford, about 3 miles above the Stone Bridge, moving by a long circuit for the purpose of attacking my left flank. The head of the column, Burnside's brigade of Hunter's division, at about 9:45 A. M. debouched from the woods into the open fields, in front of Evans. Wheat at once engaged their skirmishers, and as the Second Rhode Island regiment advanced, supported by its splendid battery of 6 rifled guns, the fronting thicket held by Evans's South Carolinians poured forth its sudden volleys, while the 2 howitzers flung their grape-shot upon the attacking line, which was soon shattered and driven back into the woods behind. Major Wheat, after handling his battalion with the utmost determination, had fallen severely wounded in the lungs. Burnside's entire brigade was now sent forward in a second charge, supported by 8 guns; but they encountered again the unflinching fire of Evans's line, and were once more driven back to the woods, from the cover of which they continued the attack, reënforced after a time by the arrival of 8 companies of United States regular infantry, under Major Sykes, with 6 pieces of artillery, quickly followed by the remaining regiments of Andrew Porter's brigade of the same division. The contest here lasted fully an hour; meanwhile Wheat's battalion, having lost its leader, had gradually lost its organization, and Evans, though still opposing these heavy odds with undiminished firmness, sought reënforcement from the troops in his rear.

General Bee, of South Carolina, a man of marked character, whose command lay in reserve in rear of Cocks, near the Stone Bridge, intelligently applying the general order given to the reserves, had already moved toward the neighboring point of conflict, and taken a position with his own and Bartow's brigades on the high plateau which stands in rear of Bull Run in the quarter of the Stone Bridge, and overlooking the scene of engagement upon the stretch of high ground from which it was separated by the valley of Young's Branch. This plateau is inclosed on three sides by two small water-courses, which empty into Bull Run within a few yards of each other, a half mile to the south of the Stone Bridge. Rising to an elevation of quite 100 feet above the level of Bull Run at the bridge, it falls off on three sides to the level of the inclosing streams in gentle slopes, but furrowed by ravines of

irregular directions and length, and studded with clumps and patches of young pine and oaks. The general direction of the crest of the plateau is oblique to the course of Bull Run in that quarter and to the Sudley and turnpike roads, which intersect each other at right angles. On the north-western brow, overlooking Young's Branch, and near the Sudley road, as the latter climbs over the plateau, stood the house of the widow Henry, while to its right and forward on a projecting spur stood the house and sheds of the free negro Robinson, just behind the turnpike, densely embowered in trees and shrubbery and environed by a double row of fences on two sides. Around the eastern and southern brow of the plateau an almost unbroken fringe of second-growth pines gave excellent shelter for our marksmen, who availed themselves of it with the most satisfactory skill. To the west, adjoining the fields that surrounded the houses mentioned, a broad belt of oaks extends directly across the crest on both sides of the Sudley road, in which, during the battle, the hostile forces contended for the mastery. General Bee, with a soldier's eye to the situation, skillfully disposed his forces. His two brigades on either side of Imboden's battery — which he had borrowed from his neighboring reserve, Jackson's brigade — were placed in a small depression of the plateau in advance of the Henry house, whence he had a full view of the contest on the opposite height across the valley of Young's Branch. Opening with his artillery upon the Federal batteries, he answered Evans's request by advising him to withdraw to his own position on the height; but Evans, full of the spirit that would not retreat, renewed his appeal that the forces in rear would come to help him hold his ground. The newly arrived forces had given the Federals such superiority at this point as to dwarf Evans's means of resistance, and General Bee, generously yielding his own better judgment to Evans's persistence, led the two brigades across the valley under the fire of the enemy's artillery, and threw them into action — 1 regiment in the copse held by Colonel Evans, 2 along a fence on the right, and 2 under General Bartow on the prolonged right of this line, but extended forward at a right angle and along the edge of a wood not more than 100 yards from that held by the enemy's left, where the contest at short range became sharp and deadly, bringing many casualties to both sides. The Federal infantry, though still in superior numbers, failed to make any headway against this sturdy van, notwithstanding Bee's whole line was hammered also by the enemy's powerful batteries, until Heintzelman's division of 2 strong brigades, arriving from Sudley Ford, extended the fire on the Federal right, while its battery of 6 10-pounder rifled guns took an immediately effective part from a position behind the Sudley road. Against these odds the Confederate force was still endeavoring to hold its ground, when a new enemy came into the field upon its right. Major Wheat, with characteristic daring and restlessness, had crossed Bull Run alone by a small ford above the Stone Bridge, in order to reconnoiter, when he and Evans had first moved to the left, and, falling on some Federal scouts, had shouted a taunting defiance and withdrawn, not, however, without his place of crossing having been observed. This dis-



RALLYING THE TROOPS OF BEE, BARTOW, AND EVANS, BEHIND THE ROBINSON HOUSE.

closure was now utilized by Sherman's (W. T.) and Keyes's brigades of Tyler's division; crossing at this point, they appeared over the high bank of the stream and moved into position on the Federal left. There was no choice now for Bee but to retire — a movement, however, to be accomplished under different circumstances than when urged by him upon Evans. The three leaders endeavored to preserve the steadiness of the ranks as they withdrew over the open fields, aided by the fire of Imboden's guns on the plateau and the retiring howitzers; but the troops were thrown into confusion, and the greater part soon fell into rout across Young's Branch and around the base of the height in the rear of the Stone Bridge.

Meanwhile, in rear of Mitchell's Ford, I had been waiting with General Johnston for the sound of conflict to open in the quarter of Centreville upon the Federal left flank and rear (making allowance, however, for the delays possible to commands unused to battle), when I was chagrined to hear from General D. R. Jones that, while he had been long ready for the movement upon Centreville, General Ewell had not come up to form on his right, though he had sent him between 7 and 8 o'clock a copy of his own order which recited that Ewell had been already ordered to begin the movement. I dispatched an immediate order to Ewell to advance; but within a quarter of an hour, just as I received a dispatch from him informing me that he had received no order to advance in the morning, the firing on the left began to increase so intensely as to indicate a severe attack, whereupon General Johnston said that he would go personally to that quarter.

After weighing attentively the firing, which seemed rapidly and heavily increasing, it appeared to me that the troops on the right would be unable to get into position before the Federal offensive should have made too much progress on our left, and that it would be better to abandon it altogether, maintaining only a strong demonstration so as to detain the enemy in front of our right and center, and hurry up all available reinforcements — including the reserves that were to have moved upon Centreville — to our left and fight the battle out in that quarter. Communicating this view to General Johnston, who approved it (giving his advice, as he said, for what it was



A LOUISIANA "PELICAN."

worth, as he was not acquainted with the country), I ordered Ewell, Jones, and Longstreet to make a strong demonstration all along their front on the other side of the Run, and ordered the reserves below our position, Holmes's brigade with 6 guns, and Early's brigade, also 2 regiments of Bonham's brigade, near at hand, to move swiftly to the left. General Johnston and I now set out at full speed for the point of conflict. We arrived there just as Bee's troops, after giving way, were fleeing in disorder behind the height in rear of the Stone Bridge. They had come around between the base of the hill and the Stone Bridge into a shallow ravine which ran up to a point on the crest where Jackson had already formed his brigade along the edge of the woods. We found the commanders resolutely stemming the further flight of the routed forces, but vainly endeavoring to restore order, and our own efforts were as futile. Every segment of line we succeeded in forming was again dissolved while another was being formed; more than two thousand men were shouting each some suggestion to his neighbor, their voices mingling with the noise of the shells hurtling through the trees overhead, and all word of command drowned in the confusion and uproar. It was at this moment that General Bee used the famous expression, "Look at Jackson's brigade! It stands there like a stone wall"—a name that passed from the brigade to its immortal commander. The disorder seemed irretrievable, but happily the thought came to me that if their colors were planted out to the front the men might rally on them, and I gave the order to carry the standards forward some forty yards, which was promptly executed by the regimental officers, thus drawing the common eye of the troops. They now received easily the orders to advance and form on the line of their colors, which they obeyed with a general movement; and as General Johnston and myself rode forward shortly after with the colors of the 4th Alabama by our side, the line that had fought all morning, and had fled, routed and disordered, now advanced again into position as steadily as veterans. The 4th Alabama had previously lost all its field-officers; and noticing Colonel S. R. Gist, an aide to General Bee, a young man whom I had known as adjutant-general of South Carolina, and whom I greatly esteemed, I presented him as an able and brave commander to the stricken regiment, who cheered their new leader, and maintained under him, to the end of the day, their previous gallant behavior. We had come none too soon, as the enemy's forces, flushed with the belief of accomplished victory, were already advancing across the valley of Young's Branch and up the slope, where they had encountered for a while the fire of the Hampton Legion, which had been led forward toward the Robinson house and the turnpike in front, covering the retreat and helping materially to check the panic of Bee's routed forces.

As soon as order was restored I requested General Johnston to go back to Portici (the Lewis house), and from that point—which I considered most favorable for the purpose—forward me the reënforcements as they would come from the Bull Run lines below and those that were expected to arrive from Manassas, while I should direct the field. General Johnston was disinclined to leave the battle-field for that position. As I had been compelled to

leave my chief-of-staff, Colonel Jordan, at Manassas to forward any troops arriving there, I felt it was a necessity that one of us should go to this duty, and that it was his place to do so, as I felt I was responsible for the battle. He considerably yielded to my urgency, and we had the benefit of his energy and sagacity in so directing the reinforcements toward the field, as to be readily and effectively assistant to my pressing needs and insure the success of the day.

As General Johnston departed for Portici, I hastened to form our line of battle against the on-coming enemy. I ordered up the 49th and 8th Virginia regiments from Cocks's neighboring brigade in the Bull Run lines. Gartrell's 7th Georgia I placed in position on the left of Jackson's brigade, along the belt of pines occupied by the latter on the eastern rim of the plateau. As the 49th Virginia rapidly came up, its colonel, ex-Governor William Smith, was encouraging them with cheery word and manner, and, as they approached, indicated to them the immediate presence of the commander. As the regiment raised a loud cheer, the name was caught by some of the troops of Jackson's brigade in the immediate wood, who rushed out, calling for General Beauregard. Hastily acknowledging these happy signs of sympathy and confidence, which reinforce alike the capacity of commander and troops, I placed the 49th Virginia in position on the extreme left next to Gartrell, and as I paused to say a few words to Jackson, while hurrying back to the right, my horse was killed under me by a bursting shell, a fragment of which carried away part of the heel of my boot. The Hampton Legion, which had suffered greatly, was placed on the right of Jackson's brigade, and Hunton's 8th Virginia, as it arrived, upon the right of Hampton; the two latter being drawn somewhat to the rear so as to form with Jackson's right regiment a reserve, and be ready likewise to make defense against any advance from the direction of the Stone Bridge, whence there was imminent peril from the enemy's heavy forces, as I had just stripped that position almost entirely of troops to meet the active crisis on the plateau, leaving this quarter now covered only by a few men, whose defense was otherwise assisted solely by the obstruction of an abatis.

With 6500 men and 13 pieces of artillery, I now awaited the onset of the enemy, who were pressing forward 20,000 strong, † with 24 pieces of superior artillery and 7 companies of regular cavalry. They soon appeared over the farther rim of the plateau, seizing the Robinson house on my right and the Henry house opposite my left center. Near the latter they placed in position the two powerful batteries of Ricketts and Griffin of the regular army, and pushed forward up the Sudley road, the slope of which was cut so deep below the adjacent ground as to afford a covered way up to the plateau. Supported by the formidable lines of Federal musketry, these 2 batteries lost no time in making themselves felt, while 3 more batteries in rear on the high ground beyond the Sudley and Warrenton cross-roads swelled the shower of shell that fell among our ranks.

† According to General Fry (page 188), the Union force in the seizure of the Henry hill consisted of four brigades, a cavalry battalion, and two batteries, or (as we deduce from General Fry's statements of the strength of McDowell's forces, page 195) about 11,000 men.—EDITORS.



Our own batteries, Imboden's, Stanard's, five of Walton's guns, reënforced later by Pendleton's and Alburtis's (their disadvantage being reduced by the shortness of range), swept the surface of the plateau from their position on the eastern rim. I felt that, after the accidents of the morning, much depended on maintaining the steadiness of the troops against the first heavy onslaught, and rode along the lines encouraging the men to unflinching behavior, meeting, as I passed each command, a cheering response. The steady fire of their musketry told severely on the Federal ranks, and the splendid action of our batteries was a fit preface to the marked skill exhibited by our artillerists during the war. The enemy suffered particularly from the musketry on our left, now further reënforced by the 2d Mississippi—the troops in this quarter confronting each other at very short range. Here two companies of Stuart's cavalry charged through the Federal ranks that filled the Sudley road, increasing the disorder wrought upon that flank of the enemy. But with superior numbers the Federals were pushing on new regiments in the attempt to flank my position, and several guns, in the effort to enfilade ours, were thrust forward so near the 33d Virginia that some of its men sprang forward and captured them, but were driven back by an overpowering force of Federal musketry. Although the enemy were held well at bay, their pressure became so strong that I resolved to take the offensive, and ordered a charge on my right for the purpose of recovering the plateau. The movement, made with alacrity and force by the commands of Bee, Bartow, Evans, and Hampton, thrilled the entire line, Jackson's brigade piercing the enemy's center, and the left of the line under Gartrell and Smith following up the charge, also, in that quarter, so that the whole of the open surface of the plateau was swept clear of the Federals.

Apart from its impressions on the enemy, the effect of this brilliant onset was to give a short breathing-spell to our troops from the immediate strain of conflict, and encourage them in withstanding the still more strenuous offensive that was soon to bear upon them. Reorganizing our line of battle under the unremitting fire of the Federal batteries opposite, I prepared to meet the new attack which the enemy were about to make, largely reënforced by the troops of Howard's brigade, newly arrived on the field. The Federals again pushed up the slope, the face of which partly afforded good cover by the numerous ravines that scored it and the clumps of young pines and oaks with which it was studded, while the sunken Sudley road formed a good ditch and parapet for their aggressive advance upon my left flank and rear. Gradually they pressed our lines back and regained possession of their lost ground and guns. With the Henry and Robinson houses once more in their possession, they resumed the offensive, urged forward by their commanders with conspicuous gallantry.

The conflict now became very severe for the final possession of this position, which was the key to victory. The Federal numbers enabled them so to extend their lines through the woods beyond the Sudley road as to outreach my left flank, which I was compelled partly to throw back, so as to meet the attack from that quarter; meanwhile their numbers equally enabled them to outflank my right in the direction of the Stone Bridge, imposing anxious

watchfulness in that direction. I knew that I was safe if I could hold out till the arrival of reënforcements, which was but a matter of time; and, with the full sense of my own responsibility, I was determined to hold the line of the plateau, even if surrounded on all sides, until assistance should come, unless my forces were sooner overtaken by annihilation.

It was now between half-past 2 and 3 o'clock; a scorching sun increased the oppression of the troops, exhausted from incessant fighting, many of



THE ROBINSON HOUSE. FROM A WAR-TIME PHOTOGRAPH.

them having been engaged since the morning. Fearing lest the Federal offensive should secure too firm a grip, and knowing the fatal result that might spring from any grave infraction of my line, I determined to make another effort for the recovery of the plateau, and ordered a charge of the entire line of battle, including the reserves, which at this

crisis I myself led into action. The movement was made with such keeping and dash that the whole plateau was swept clear of the enemy, who were driven down the slope and across the turnpike on our right and the valley of Young's Branch on our left, leaving in our final possession the Robinson and Henry houses, with most of Ricketts's and Griffin's batteries, the men of which were mostly shot down where they bravely stood by their guns. Fisher's 6th North Carolina, directed to the Lewis house by Colonel Jordan from Manassas, where it had just arrived, and thence to the field by General Johnston, came up in happy time to join in this charge on the left. Withers's 18th Virginia, which I had ordered up from Cocks's brigade, was also on hand in time to follow and give additional effect to the charge, capturing, by aid of the Hampton Legion, several guns, which were immediately turned and served upon the broken ranks of the enemy by some of our officers. This handsome work, which broke the Federal fortunes of the day, was done, however, at severe cost. The soldierly Bee, and the gallant, impetuous Bartow, whose day of strong deeds was about to close with such credit, fell a few rods back of the Henry house, near the very spot whence in the morning they had first looked forth upon Evans's struggle with the enemy. Colonel Fisher also fell at the very head of his troops. Seeing Captain Ricketts, who was badly wounded in the leg, and having known him in the old army, I paused from my anxious duties to ask him whether I could

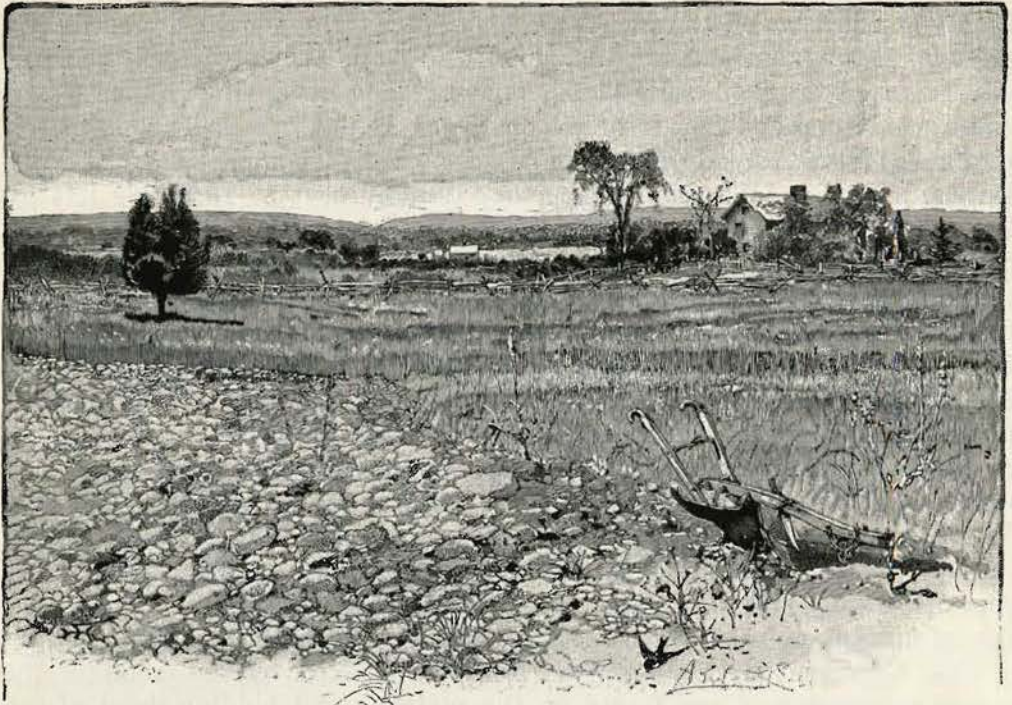
do anything for him. He answered that he wanted to be sent back to Washington. As some of our prisoners were there held under threats of not being treated as prisoners of war, I replied that that must depend upon how our prisoners were treated, and ordered him to be carried to the rear. I mention this, because the report of the Federal Committee on the Conduct of the War exhibits Captain Ricketts as testifying that I only approached him to say that he would be treated as our prisoners might be treated. I sent my own surgeons to care for him, and allowed his wife to cross the lines and accompany him to Richmond; and my adjutant-general, Colonel Jordan, escorting her to the car that carried them to that city, personally attended to the comfortable placing of the wounded enemy for the journey.

That part of the enemy who occupied the woods beyond our left and across the Sudley road had not been reached by the headlong charge which had swept their comrades from the plateau; but the now arriving reënforcements (Kershaw's 2d and Cash's 8th South Carolina) were led into that quarter. Kemper's battery also came up, preceded by its commander, who, while alone, fell into the hands of a number of the enemy, who took him prisoner, until a few moments later, when he handed them over to some of our own troops accompanying his battery. A small plateau, within the south-west angle of the Sudley and turnpike cross-roads, was still held by a strong Federal brigade—Howard's troops, together with Sykes's battalion of regulars; and while Kershaw and Cash, after passing through the skirts of the oak wood along the Sudley road, engaged this force, Kemper's battery was sent forward by Kershaw along the same road, into position near where a hostile battery had been captured, and whence it played upon the enemy in the open field.

Quickly following these regiments came Preston's 28th Virginia, which, passing through the woods, encountered and drove back some Michigan troops, capturing Brigadier-General Willecox. It was now about 3 o'clock, when another important reënforcement came to our aid—Elzey's brigade, 1700 strong, of the Army of the Shenandoah, which, coming from Piedmont by railroad, had arrived at Manassas station, 6 miles in rear of the battle-field, at noon, and had been without delay directed thence toward the field by Colonel Jordan, aided by Major T. G. Rhett, who that morning had passed from General Bonham's to General Johnston's staff. Upon nearing the vicinity of the Lewis house, the brigade was directed by a staff-officer sent by General Johnston toward the left of the field. As it reached the oak wood, just across the Sudley road, led by General Kirby Smith, the latter fell severely wounded; but the command devolved upon Colonel Elzey, an excellent officer, who was now guided by Captain D. B. Harris of the Engineers, a highly accomplished officer of my staff, still farther to the left and through the woods, so as to form in extension of the line of the preceding reënforcements. Beckham's battery, of the same command, was hurried forward by the Sudley road and around the woods into position near the Chinn house; from a well-selected point of action, in full view of the enemy that filled the open fields west of the Sudley road, it played with

deadly and decisive effect upon their ranks, already under the fire of Elzey's brigade. Keyes's Federal brigade, which had made its way across the turnpike in rear of the Stone Bridge, was lurking along under cover of the ridges and a wood in order to turn my line on the right, but was easily repulsed by Latham's battery, already placed in position over that approach by Captain Harris, aided by Alburtis's battery, opportunely sent to Latham's left by General Jackson, and supported by fragments of troops collected by staff-officers. Meanwhile, the enemy had formed a line of battle of formidable proportions on the opposite height, and stretching in crescent outline, with flanks advanced, from the Pittsylvania (Carter) mansion on their left across the Sudley road in rear of Dogan's and reaching toward the Chinn house. They offered a fine spectacle as they threw forward a cloud of skirmishers down the opposite slope, preparatory to a new assault against the line on the plateau. But their right was now severely pressed by the troops that had successively arrived; the force in the south-west angle of the Sudley and Warrenton cross-roads were driven from their position, and, as Early's brigade, which, by direction of General Johnston, had swept around by the rear of the woods through which Elzey had passed, appeared on the field, his line of march bore upon the flank of the enemy, now retiring in that quarter.

This movement by my extreme left was masked by the trend of the woods from many of our forces on the plateau; and bidding those of my staff and escort around me raise a loud cheer, I dispatched the information to the several commands, with orders to go forward in a common charge. Before the full advance of the Confederate ranks the enemy's whole line, whose right was already yielding, irretrievably broke, fleeing across Bull Run by every available direction. Major Sykes's regulars, aided by Sherman's brigade, made a steady and handsome withdrawal, protecting the rear of the routed forces, and enabling many to escape by the Stone Bridge. Having ordered in pursuit all the troops on the field, I went to the Lewis house, and, the battle being ended, turned over the command to General Johnston. Mounting a fresh horse,—the fourth on that day,—I started to press the pursuit which was being made by our infantry and cavalry, some of the latter having been sent by General Johnston from Lewis's Ford to intercept the enemy on the turnpike. I was soon overtaken, however, by a courier bearing a message from Major T. G. Rhett, General Johnston's chief-of-staff on duty at Manassas railroad station, informing me of a report that a large Federal force, having pierced our lower line on Bull Run, was moving upon Camp Pickens, my depot of supplies near Manassas. I returned, and communicated this important news to General Johnston. Upon consultation it was deemed best that I should take Ewell's and Holmes's brigades, which were hastening up to the battle-field, but too late for the action, and fall on this force of the enemy, while reënforcements should be sent me from the pursuing forces, who were to be recalled for that purpose. To head off the danger and gain time, I hastily mounted a force of infantry behind the cavalrymen then present, but, on approaching the line of march near McLean's Ford, which the Federals must have taken, I learned that the news



THE MAIN BATTLE-GROUND.—NO. 1.

View of the Henry house, looking west from the spot where General Bee fell. The Bull Run mountains and Thoroughfare Gap appear in the distance. The Sudley road, a few rods beyond the house, under the hill, runs parallel with the rail fence (in the middle ground on the left). Just within the rail fence is where Griffin's and Ricketts's batteries were planted. Near the house stands the Union Monument, commemorating the battle.

was a false alarm caught from the return of General Jones's forces to this side of the Run, the similarity of the uniforms and the direction of their march having convinced some nervous person that they were a force of the enemy. It was now almost dark, and too late to resume the broken pursuit; on my return I met the coming forces, and, as they were very tired, I ordered them to halt and bivouac for the night where they were. After giving such attention as I could to the troops, I started for Manassas, where I arrived about 10 o'clock, and found Mr. Davis at my headquarters with General Johnston. Arriving from Richmond late in the afternoon, Mr. Davis had immediately galloped to the field, accompanied by Colonel Jordan. They had met between Manassas and the battle-field the usual number of stragglers to the rear, whose appearance belied the determined array then sweeping the enemy before it, but Mr. Davis had the happiness to arrive in time to witness the last of the Federals disappearing beyond Bull Run. The next morning I received from his hand at our breakfast-table my commission, dated July 21st, as General in the Army of the Confederate States, and after his return to Richmond the kind congratulations of the Secretary of War and of General Lee, then acting as military adviser to the President.

It was a point made at the time at the North that, just as the Confederate troops were about to break and flee, the Federal troops anticipated them by doing so, being struck into this precipitation by the arrival upon their flank



THE MAIN BATTLE-GROUND.—No. 2.

View of the Robinson house, looking north from the spot on the Henry plateau where General Bee fell. At 1 P. M. this ground lay between the hostile lines, which were (roughly speaking) parallel with the sides of the picture: Confederates on the right, Union forces on the

left. The foreground was between the centers of the positions.

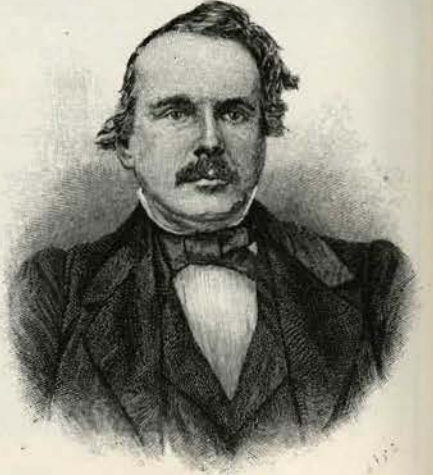
As these two views are taken from the same spot, the reader will best understand their relation by holding the pages at a right angle to each other.

of the Shenandoah forces marching from railroad trains halted *en route* with that aim—errors that have been repeated by a number of writers, and by an ambitious but superficial French author.

There were certain sentiments of a personal character clustering about this first battle, and personal anxiety as to its issue, that gladly accepted this theory. To this may be added the general readiness to accept a sentimental or ultra-dramatic explanation—a sorcery wrought by the delay or arrival of some force, or the death or coming of somebody, or any other single magical event—whereby history is easily caught, rather than to seek an understanding of that which is but the gradual result of the operation of many forces, both of opposing design and actual collision, modified more or less by the falls of chance. The personal sentiment, though natural enough at the time, has no place in any military estimate, or place of any kind at this day. The battle of Manassas was, like any other battle, a progression and development from the deliberate counter-employment of the military resources in hand, affected by accidents, as always, but of a kind very different from those referred to. My line of battle, which twice had not only withstood the enemy's attack, but had taken the offensive and driven him back in disorder, was becoming momentarily stronger from the arrival, at last, of the reënforcements provided for; and if the enemy had remained on the field till the arrival of Ewell and

Holmes, they would have been so strongly outflanked that many who escaped would have been destroyed or captured.

Though my adversary's plan of battle was a good one as against a passive defensive opponent, such as he may have deemed I must be from the respective numbers and positions of our forces, it would, in my judgment, have been much better if, with more dash, the flank attack had been made by the Stone Bridge itself and the ford immediately above it. The plan adopted, however, favored above all things the easy execution of the offensive operations I had designed and ordered against his left flank and rear at Centreville. His turning column—18,000 strong, and presumably his best troops—was thrown off by a long ellipse through a narrow forest road to Sudley Ford, from which it moved down upon my left flank, and was thus dislocated from his main body. This severed movement of his forces not only left his exposed left and rear at Centreville weak against the simultaneous offensive of my heaviest forces upon it, which I had ordered, but the movement of his returning column would have been disconcerted and paralyzed by the early sound of this heavy conflict in its rear, and it could not even have made its way back so as to be available for manœuvre before the Centreville fraction had been thrown back upon it in disorder. A new army is very liable to panic, and, in view of the actual result of the battle, the conclusion can hardly be resisted that the panic which fell on the Federal army would thus have seized it early in the day, and with my forces in such a position as wholly to cut off its retreat upon Washington. But the commander of the front line on my right, who had been ordered to hold himself in readiness to initiate the offensive at a moment's notice, did not make the move expected of him because through accident he failed to receive his own immediate order to advance. † The Federal commander's flanking movement, being thus uninterrupted by such a counter-movement as I had projected, was further assisted through the rawness and inadequacy of our staff organization through which I was left unacquainted with the actual state of affairs on my left. The Federal attack, already thus greatly favored, and encouraged, moreover, by the rout of General Bee's advanced line, failed for two reasons: their forces were not handled with concert of masses (a fault often made later on both sides), and the individual action of the Confederate troops was superior, and for a very palpable reason. That one army was fighting for union and the other for disunion is a political expression; the actual fact on the battle-field, in the face of cannon and musket, was that the Federal troops came as invaders,



COLONEL F. S. BARTOW. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

† General R. S. Ewell. See statement of Major Campbell Brown, page 259.—EDITORS.

and the Southern troops stood as defenders of their homes, and further than this we need not go. The armies were vastly greater than had ever before fought on this continent, and were the largest volunteer armies ever assembled since the era of regular armies. The personal material on both sides was of exceptionally good character, and collectively superior to that of any subsequent period of the war.† The Confederate army was filled with generous youths who had answered the first call to arms. For certain kinds of field duty they were not as yet adapted, many of them having at first come with their baggage and servants; these they had to dispense with, but, not to offend their susceptibilities, I then exacted the least work from them, apart from military drills, even to the prejudice of important field-works, when I could not get sufficient negro labor; they "had come to fight, and not to handle the pick and shovel," and their fighting redeemed well their shortcomings as intrenchers. Before I left that gallant army, however, it had learned how readily the humbler could aid the nobler duty.

As to immediate results and trophies, we captured a great many stands of arms, batteries, equipments, standards, and flags, one of which was sent to me, through General Longstreet, as a personal compliment by the Texan "crack shot," Colonel B. F. Terry, who lowered it from its mast at Fairfax Court House, by cutting the halyards by means of his unerring rifle, as our troops next morning reoccupied that place. We captured also many prisoners, including a number of surgeons, whom (the first time in war) we treated not as prisoners, but as guests. Calling attention to their brave devotion to their wounded, I recommended to the War Department that they be sent home without exchange, together with some other prisoners, who had shown personal kindness to Colonel Jones, of the 4th Alabama, who had been mortally wounded early in the day.

#### SUBSEQUENT RELATIONS OF MR. DAVIS AND THE WRITER.

THE military result of the victory was far short of what it should have been. It established as an accomplished fact, on the indispensable basis of military success, the Government of the Confederate States, which before was but a political assertion; but it should have reached much further. The immediate pursuit, but for the false alarm which checked it, would have continued as far as the Potomac, but must have stopped there with no greater result than the capture of more prisoners and material. The true immediate fruits of the victory should have been the dispersion of all the Federal forces south of Baltimore and east of the Alleghanies, the liberation of the State of Maryland, and the capture of Washington, which could have been made only by the Upper Potomac. And from the high source of this achievement other decisive results would have continued to flow. From my experience in the

† This battle was noteworthy for the number of participants whose names are now prominently associated with the war. On the Confederate side, besides Generals Johnston and Beauregard, were Generals Stonewall Jackson, Longstreet, Ewell, Early, J. E. B. Stuart, Kirby Smith, Wade Hamp-

ton, Fitzhugh Lee, Thomas Jordan, R. E. Rodes, E. P. Alexander, and others. On the Federal side were Generals McDowell, W. T. Sherman, Burnside, Hunter, Heintzelman, Howard, Franklin, Slocum, Keyes, Hunt, Barry, Fry, Sykes, Barnard, Wadsworth, and others. —EDITORS.



Mexican war I had great confidence in intelligent volunteer troops, if rightly handled; and with such an active and victorious war-engine as the Confederate Army of the Potomac could have immediately been made,—reënforced, as time went, by numbers and discipline,—the Federal military power in the East could never have reached the head it took when McClellan was allowed to organize and discipline at leisure the powerful army that, in the end, wore out the South. In war one success makes another easier, and its right use is as the step to another, until final achievement. This was the use besought by me in the plan of campaign I have mentioned as presented to Mr. Davis on the 14th of July, a few days before the battle, but rejected by him as impracticable, and as rather offering opportunity



FAIRFAX COURT HOUSE. FROM A WAR-TIME PHOTOGRAPH.

to the enemy to crush us. To supply the deficiency of transportation (our vehicles being few in number, and many so poor as to break down in ordinary camp service), I myself had assigned to special duty Colonel (since Governor) James L. Kemper, of Virginia, who quickly obtained for me some two hundred good wagons, to which number I had limited him so as not to arouse again the jealousy of the President's staff. If my plan of operations for the capture of Washington had been adopted, I should have considered myself thereby authorized and free to obtain, as I readily could have done, the transportation necessary. As it was—though the difficult part of this "impracticable" plan of operations had been proven feasible, that is, the concentration of the Shenandoah forces with mine (wrung later than the eleventh hour through the alarm over the march upon Richmond, and discountenanced again nervously at the twelfth hour by another alarm as to how "the enemy may vary his plans" in consequence), followed by the decisive defeat of the main Federal forces—nevertheless the army remained rooted in the spot, although we had more than fifteen thousand troops who had been not at all or but little in the battle and were perfectly organized, while the remaining commands, in the high spirits of victory, could have been reorganized at the tap of the drum, and many with improved captured arms and equipments. I had already urged my views with unusual persistency, and acted on them against all but an express order to the contrary; and as they had been deliberately

rejected in their ultimate scope by Mr. Davis as the commander-in-chief, I did not feel authorized to urge them further than their execution had been allowed, unless the subject were broached anew by himself. But there was no intimation of any such change of purpose, and the army, consistently with this inertia, was left unprovided for manœuvre with transportation for its ammunition; its fortitude, moreover, as a new and volunteer army, while spending sometimes 24 hours without food, being only less wonderful than the commissary administration at Richmond, from which such a state of affairs could proceed even two weeks after the battle of Manassas. Although certain political superstitions about not consolidating the North may then have weighed against the action I proposed, they would have been light against a true military policy, if such had existed in the head of the Government. Apart from an active material ally, such as the colonies had afield and on sea in the War of Independence with Great Britain, a country in fatal war must depend on the vigor of its warfare; the more inferior the country, the bolder and more enterprising the use of its resources, especially if its frontiers are convenient to the enemy. I was convinced that our success lay in a short, quick war of decisive blows, before the Federals, with their vast resources, could build up a great military power; to which end a concerted use of our forces, immediate and sustained, was necessary, so that, weaker though we were at all separate points, we might nevertheless strike with superior strength at some chosen decisive point, and after victory there reach for victory now made easier elsewhere, and thus sum up success. Instead of this, which in war we call concentration, our actual policy was diffusion, an inferior Confederate force at each separate point defensively confronting a superior Federal force; our power daily shrinking, that of the enemy increasing; the avowed Federal policy being that of "attrition," their bigger masses grinding our smaller, one by one, to naught. Out of this state we never emerged, when the direction of the Government was, as almost always, necessary, excepting when "Richmond" was immediately in danger.

Thus, in the fall of 1861, about three months after the battle of Manassas,—after throwing my whole force forward to Fairfax Court House, with outposts flaunting our flags on the hills in sight of Washington, in order to chafe the Federals to another battle, but without success,—I proposed that the army should be raised to an effective of 60,000 men, by drawing 20,000 for the immediate enterprise from several points along the seaboard, not even at that time threatened, and from our advanced position be swiftly thrown across the Potomac at a point which I had had carefully surveyed for that purpose, and moved upon the rear of Washington, thus forcing McClellan to a decisive engagement before his organization (new enlistments) was completed, and while our own army had the advantage of discipline and prestige—seasoned soldiers, whose term, however, would expire in the early part of the coming summer. This plan, approved by General Gustavus W. Smith (then immediately commanding General Johnston's own forces) as well as by General Johnston, was submitted to Mr. Davis in a conference at my headquarters, but rejected because he would not venture to strip those points of the troops

we required. Even if those points had been captured, though none were then even threatened, they must have reverted as a direct consequence to so decisive a success. I was willing, then, should it have come to that, to exchange even Richmond temporarily for Washington. Yet it was precisely from similar combinations and elements that the army was made up, to enable it the next spring, under General Lee, to encounter McClellan at the very door of Richmond. If that which was accepted as a last defensive resort against an overwhelming aggressive army had been used in an enterprising offensive against that same army while yet in the raw, the same venture had been made at less general risk, less cost of valuable lives, and with greater certain results. The Federal army would have had no chance meanwhile to become tempered to that magnificent military machine which, through all its defeats and losses, remained sound, and was stronger, with its readily assimilating new strength, at the end of the war than ever before; the pressure would have been lifted from Kentucky and Missouri, and we should have maintained what is called an active defensive warfare, that is, should have taken and kept the offensive against the enemy, enforcing peace.

No people ever warred for independence with more relative advantages than the Confederates; and if, as a military question, they must have failed, then no country must aim at freedom by means of war. We were one in sentiment as in territory, starting out, not with a struggling administration of doubtful authority, but with our ancient State governments and a fully organized central government. As a military question, it was in no sense a civil war, but a war between two countries—for conquest on one side, for self-preservation on the other. The South, with its great material resources, its defensive means of mountains, rivers, railroads, and telegraph, with the immense advantage of the interior lines of war, would be open to discredit as a people if its failure could not be explained otherwise than by mere material contrast. The great Frederick, at the head of a little people, not only beat back a combination of several great military powers, but conquered and kept territory; and Napoleon held combined Europe at the feet of France till his blind ambition overleaped itself. It may be said that the South had no Fredericks or Napoleons; but it had at least as good commanders as its adversary. Nor was it the fault of our soldiers or people. Our soldiers were as brave and intelligent as ever bore arms; and, if only for reasons already mentioned, they did not lack in determination. Our people bore a devotion to the cause never surpassed, and which no war-making monarch ever had for his support; they gave their all—even the last striplings under the family roofs filling the ranks voided by the fall of their fathers and brothers. But the narrow military view of the head of the Government, which illustrated itself at the outset by ordering from Europe, not 100,000 or 1,000,000, but 10,000 stands of arms, as an increase upon 8000, its first estimate, was equally narrow and timid in its employment of our armies.

The moral and material forces actually engaged in the war made our success a moral certainty, but for the timid policy which—ignoring strategy as a science and boldness of enterprise as its ally—could never be brought to

view the whole theater of war as one subject, of which all points were but integral parts, or to hazard for the time points relatively unimportant for the purpose of gathering for an overwhelming and rapid stroke at some decisive point; and which, again, with characteristic mis-elation, would push a victorious force directly forward into unsupported and disastrous operations, instead of using its victory to spare from it strength sufficient to secure an equally important success in another quarter. The great principles of war are truths, and the same to-day as in the time of Cæsar or Napoleon, notwithstanding the ideas of some thoughtless persons—their applications being but intensified by the scientific discoveries affecting transportation and communication of intelligence. These principles are few and simple, however various their deductions and application. Skill in strategy consists in seeing through the intricacies of the whole situation, and bringing into proper combination forces and influences, though seemingly unrelated, so as to apply these principles, and with boldness of decision and execution appearing with the utmost force, and, if possible, superior odds, before the enemy at some strategic, that is, decisive point. And although a sound military plan may not be always so readily conceived, yet any plan that offers decisive results, if it agree with the principles of war, is as plain and intelligible as these principles themselves, and no more to be rejected than they. There still remains, of course, the hazard of accident in execution, and the apprehension of the enemy's movements upsetting your own; but hazard may also favor as well as disfavor, and will not unbefriend the enterprising any more than the timid. It was this fear of possible consequences that kept our forces scattered in inferior relative strength at all points of the compass, each holding its bit of ground till by slow local process our territory was taken and our separate forces destroyed, or, if captured, retained by the enemy without exchange in their process of attrition. To stop the slow consumption of this passive mode of warfare I tried my part, and, at certain critical junctures, proposed to the Government active plans of operation looking to such results as I have described,—sometimes, it is true, in relation to the employment of forces not under my control, as I was the soldier of a cause and people, not of a monarch nor even of a government. Two occasions there were when certain of the most noted Federal operations, from their isolated or opportune character, might, with energy and intelligent venture on the Confederate side, have been turned into fatal disaster; among them Grant's movement in front of Vicksburg, and his change of base from the north to the south of the James River, where I was in command, in his last campaign against Richmond. I urged particularly that our warfare was sure of final defeat unless we attempted decisive strokes that might be followed up to the end, and that, even if earlier defeat might chance from the risk involved in the execution of the necessary combinations, we ought to take that risk and thereby either win or end an otherwise useless struggle. But, in addition to the radical divergence of military ideas,—the passive defensive of an intellect timid of risk and not at home in war, and the active defensive reaching for success through enterprise and boldness, according to the lessons taught us in the campaigns of the great masters,—there was a personal feeling that now gave



RUINS OF THE STONE BRIDGE, LOOKING ALONG THE WARRENTON TURNPIKE TOWARD THE BATTLE-FIELD.

This view is from a photograph taken in March, 1862, the region having been left open to the Union forces by the withdrawal of the Confederates. The Confederate battery which in the first battle of Bull Run commanded

the bridge was placed on the left in the felled timber, which formed an abatis across the road. The battle was opened from beyond the small house, Van Pelt's, on the right, by the Rhode Island troops.—EDITORS.

cold hearing, or none, to any recommendations of mine. Mr. Davis's friendship, warm at the early period of the war, was changed, some time after the battle of Manassas, to a corresponding hostility from several personal causes, direct and indirect, of which I need mention but one. My report of Manassas having contained, as part of its history, a statement of the submission of the full plan of campaign for concentrating our forces, crushing successively McDowell and Patterson and capturing Washington, Mr. Davis strangely took offense thereat; and, now that events had demonstrated the practicability of that plan, he sought to get rid of his self-accused responsibility for rejecting it, by denying that any such had been submitted—an issue, for that matter, easily settled by my production of the contemporaneous report of Colonel James Chesnut, the bearer of the mission, who, moreover, at the time of this controversy was on Mr. Davis's own staff, where he remained. Mr. Davis made an endeavor to suppress the publication of my report of the battle of Manassas. The matter came up in a secret debate in the Confederate Congress, where a host of friends were ready to sustain me; but I sent a telegram disclaiming any desire for its publication, and advising that the safety of the country should be our solicitude, and not personal ends.

Thenceforth Mr. Davis's hostility was watchful and adroit, neglecting no opportunity, great or small; and though, from motives all its opposite, it was

not exposed during the war by any murmurs of mine, it bruited sometimes in certain quarters of its own force. Thus, when in January, 1862, the Western representatives expressed a desire that I should separate myself for a time from my Virginia forces and go to the defense of the Mississippi Valley from the impending offensive of Halleck and Grant, it was furthered by the Executive with inducements which I trusted,—in disregard of Senator Toombs's sagacious warning, that under this furtherance lurked a purpose to effect my downfall, urged in one of his communications through his son-in-law, Mr. Alexander, in words as impressive as they proved prophetic: "Urge General Beauregard to decline all proposals and solicitations. The Blade of Joab. *Verbum Sapienti.*" After going through the campaign of Shiloh and Corinth, not only with those inducements unfulfilled, but with vital drawbacks from the Government, including the refusal of necessary rank to competent subordinates to assist in organizing my hastily collected and mostly raw troops, I was forced, the following June, in deferred obedience to the positive order of my physicians, to withdraw from my immediate camp to another point in my department for recovery from illness, leaving under the care of my lieutenant, General Bragg, my army, then unmenaced and under reorganization with a view to an immediate offensive I had purposed. In anticipation and exclusion of the receipt of full dispatches following my telegram, the latter was tortuously misread, in a manner not creditable to a school-boy and repugnant to Mr. Davis's exact knowledge of syntax, so as to give pretext to the shocking charge that I had abandoned my army, and a telegram was sent in naked haste directly to General Bragg, telling him to retain the permanent command of the army. The "Blade of Joab" had given its thrust. The representatives in Congress from the West and South-west applied to Mr. Davis in a body for my restoration; and when, disregarding his sheer pretext that I had abandoned my army, they still insisted, Mr. Davis declared that I should not be restored *if the whole world should ask it!* This machination went to such length that it was given out in Richmond that I had softening of the brain and had gone crazy. So carefully was this report fostered (one of its tales being that I would sit all day stroking a pheasant \) that a friend of mine, a member of the Confederate Congress, thought it his duty to write me a special letter respecting the device, advising me to come directly to Richmond to confound it by my presence—a proceeding which I disdained to take. I had not only then, but from later, still more offensive provocation, imperative cause to resign, and would have done so but for a sense of public obligation. Indeed, in my after fields of action the same hostility was more and more active in its various embarrassments, reckless that the strains inflicted upon me bore upon the troops and country depending on me and relatively upon the cause, so that I often

\ This silly tale was borrowed from an incident of Shiloh. Toward the end of the first day's battle a soldier had found a pheasant cowering, apparently paralyzed under the ceaseless din, and brought it to my headquarters as a present to me. It was a beautiful bird, and I gave directions

to place it in a cage, as I intended sending it as a pleasant token of the battle to the family of Judge Milton Brown, of Jackson, Tennessee, from whom I had received as their guest, while occupying that place, the kindest attentions; but in the second day's conflict the poor waif was lost.—G. T. B.

dreaded failure more from my own Government behind me than from the enemy in my front; and, when success came in spite of this, it was acknowledged only by some censorious official "inquiry" contrasting with the repeated thanks of the Congress. I was, however, not the only one of the highest military rank with whom Mr. Davis's relations were habitually unwholesome. It is an extraordinary fact that during the four years of war Mr. Davis did not call together the five generals [see page 241] with a view to determining the best military policy or settling upon a decisive plan of operations involving the whole theater of war, though there was often ample opportunity for it. We needed for President either a military man of a high order, or a politician of the first class without military pretensions, such as Howell Cobb. The South did not fall crushed by the mere weight of the North; but it was nibbled away at all sides and ends because its executive head never gathered and wielded its great strength under the ready advantages that greatly reduced or neutralized its adversary's naked physical superiority. It is but another of the many proofs that timid direction may readily go with physical courage, and that the passive defensive policy may make a long agony, but can never win a war.

POSTSCRIPT.—Since the publication of the foregoing pages in "The Century" for November, 1884, General J. E. Johnston, in the course of a paper also contributed to "The Century" [see page 240], took occasion, for the first time, to set up with positiveness and circumstantiality the claim to having exercised a controlling connection with the tactics of all the phases of the battle of the 21st of July, 1861. Respecting such a pretension I shall be content for the present to recall that, while entirely at variance with the part I have ascribed to him in relation to that field, it is logically untenable, at this day, when confronted with the records of the period. In my own official report of the battle closely contemporaneous with the events narrated—a report that was placed in his hands for perusal before transmission—it is distinctly related that for certain reasons, chiefly military, General Johnston had left in my hands for the impending conflict the command of the Confederate forces. The precise circumstances of my direct conduct of and responsibility for the battle are stated in such terms that, had I not been in actual direction of the day's operations on the part of the Confederates, General Johnston must have made the issue squarely then and there in his own official report. And all the more incumbent upon him was the making of such an issue, it seems to me, then or never, in view of the fact that the Confederate Secretary of War on the 24th of July, 1861, wrote me in these words:

"MY DEAR GENERAL: Accept my congratulations for the glorious and most brilliant victory achieved by you. The country will bless and honor you for it. Believe me, dear General,

"Truly your friend, L. P. WALKER."

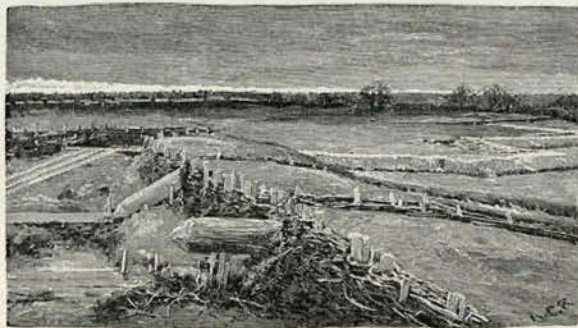
Further, General Lee thus addressed me:

"MY DEAR GENERAL: I cannot express the joy I feel at the brilliant victory of the 21st. The skill, courage, and endurance displayed by yourself excite my highest admiration. You and your troops have the gratitude of the whole country, and I offer to all my heartfelt congratulations at their success. . . . Very truly yours, R. E. LEE."

Of the exact purport of these two letters General Johnston could not have been ignorant when he wrote his report of the battle. Nor could he have been unaware that the leading Southern newspapers had in effect attributed to me the chief direction of that battle on the Confederate side. Therefore, if it were the gross historical error which, twenty odd years after the affair, General Johnston characterizes it to be, and one that imputed to him the shirking of a duty which he could not have left unassumed without personal baseness, certainly that was the time for him by a few explicit words in his official report to dispose of so affronting an error. In that report, however, no such exigent, peremptory statement of his relation to the battle is to be found. On the other hand, upon page 57 of his "Narrative" published in 1874 (D. Appleton & Co.), may be found, I fear, the clew to the motive of his actual waiver of command in this curious paragraph:

"If the tactics of the Federals had been equal to their strategy, we should have been beaten. If, instead of being brought into action in detail, their troops had been formed in two lines, with a proper reserve, and had assailed Bee and Jackson in that order, the two Southern brigades must have been swept from the field in a few minutes, or enveloped. General McDowell would have made such a formation, probably, had he not greatly underestimated the strength of his enemy."

Coupled with the disquieting, ever-apprehensive tenor of his whole correspondence with the Confederate War Department, from the day he assumed command in the Valley of Virginia in May, 1861, down to the close of the struggle in 1865, the fair inference from such language as that just cited from his "Narrative" is that General Johnston came to Manassas beset with the idea that our united forces would not be able to cope with the Federal army, and that we should be beaten—a catastrophe in which he was not solicitous to figure on the pages of history as the leading and responsible actor. Originally and until 1875, I had regarded it as a generous though natural act on the part of General Johnston, in such a juncture, to leave me in command and responsible for what might occur. The history of military operations abounds in instances of notable soldiers who have found it proper to waive chief command under similar conditions.



CONFEDERATE QUAKER GUNS. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

Confederate fortifications, near Centreville, after their evacuation in the spring of 1862. The muzzle of the log was painted black and the breech was covered with brush to conceal its character from observation by balloon.