

ALBERT SIDNEY JOHNSTON AT SHILOH.†

BY HIS SON, WILLIAM PRESTON JOHNSTON, COLONEL, C. S. A.



ALBERT SIDNEY JOHNSTON AT THE AGE OF 35.
FROM A MINIATURE BY THOMAS CAMPBELL, PAINTED IN
LOUISVILLE, KY., IN 1838 OR 1839.

DURING the angry political strife which preceded the contest of arms, General Albert Sidney Johnston † remained silent, stern, and sorrowful. He determined to stand at his post in San Francisco, performing his full duty as an officer of the United States, until events should require a decision as to his course. When Texas—his adopted State—passed the ordinance of secession from the Union, the alternative was presented, and, on the day he heard the news, he resigned his commission in the army. He kept the fact concealed, however, lest it might stir up disaffection among the turbulent population of the Pacific Coast. He said, "I shall do my duty to the last, and, when absolved, shall take my course." All honest and competent witnesses now accord that he carried out this purpose in letter and spirit. General Sumner, who relieved him, reported that he found him "carrying out the orders of the Government."

Mr. Lincoln's Administration treated General Johnston with a distrust which wounded his pride to the quick, but afterward made such amends as it could, by sending him a major-general's commission. He was also assured through confidential sources that he would receive the highest command in the Federal Army. But he declined to take part against his own people, and retired to Los Angeles with the intention of farming. There he was subjected to an irritating surveillance; while at the same time there came

†For extended treatment of this subject, see "The Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston," by William Preston Johnston (D. Appleton & Co.), upon which Colonel Johnston has drawn freely in the preparation of this paper.—EDITORS.

† General Johnston was of New England descent, though both he and his mother were of pioneer stock and natives of Kentucky. His father was the village physician. He was born February 3d, 1803, in Mason County, Kentucky. He was "a handsome, proud, manly, earnest, and self-reliant boy," "grave and thoughtful." His early education was desultory, but was continued at Transylvania and at West Point, where he evinced superior talents for mathematics, and was graduated in 1826. He was a lieutenant of the 6th Infantry, from 1827 to 1834, when he resigned. His only active service during this period was the Black Hawk war, in which he won considerable distinction. In 1829 he married Miss Henrietta Preston, who died in 1835. In 1836 he joined the army of the young republic of Texas,

and rapidly rose to the chief command. In 1839 he was Secretary of War, and expelled the intruding United States Indians, after two battles on the River Neches. He served one campaign in Mexico under General Taylor, and was recommended by that commander as a brigadier-general for his conduct at Monterey, but was allowed no command by the Administration. In 1843 he married Miss Eliza Griffin, and retired to a plantation in Brazoria County, Texas, where he spent three years in seclusion and straitened circumstances. In 1849 he was appointed a paymaster by President Taylor, and served in Texas until 1855, when he was made colonel of the 2d Cavalry by President Pierce. In 1857 he conducted the remarkable expedition to Utah, in which he saved the United States army there from a frightful disaster by his prudence and executive ability. He remained in command in Utah until the summer of 1860, which he passed with his family in Kentucky. In December of that year he was assigned to the command of the Pacific Coast.—W. P. J.

across mountain and desert the voice of the Southern people calling to him for help in their extremity. † His heart and intellect both recognized their claim upon his services, and he obeyed. At this time he wrote, "No one could feel more sensibly the calamitous condition of our country than myself, and whatever part I may take hereafter, it will always be a subject of gratulation with me that no act of mine ever contributed to bring it about. I suppose the difficulties now will only be adjusted by the sword. In my humble judgment, that was not the remedy."

When he arrived in the new Confederacy, his coming was welcomed with a spontaneous outburst of popular enthusiasm, and deputations from the West preceded him to Richmond, entreating his assignment to that department. President Davis said that he regarded his coming as of more worth than the accession of an army of ten thousand men; and on the 10th of September, 1861, he was intrusted with the defense of that part of the Confederate States which lay west of the Alleghany Mountains, except the Gulf Coast (Bragg having control of the coast of West Florida and Alabama, and Mansfield Lovell of the coast of Mississippi and Louisiana). His command was

† The following statement was written in response to an inquiry by the editors as to the details of the offer of high command referred to by Colonel Johnston:

"The circumstances which gave rise to the expressed desire of the Administration in 1861 to retain General Albert Sidney Johnston in the Federal army were as follows:

"Early in April, 1861, while on duty in the adjutant-general's office in Washington, I learned that Colonel Sumner had been dispatched *incog.* to California, with secret orders to assume command of the Department of the Pacific, and that this unusual course had been prompted by the fear that the forts and arsenals and garrisons on that coast would be placed in the hands of the secessionists by General Johnston, the then commander, who was reported to be arranging to do so.

"I had just received a letter from General Johnston expressing his pleasure at the large and handsome parade of State troops in San Francisco, on February 22d, and at the undoubted loyalty to the Union cause of the whole Pacific coast, and also his earnest hope that the patriotic spirit manifested in California existed as strongly in all other States, and would as surely be maintained by them as it would be in the Pacific States in case of attempted secession.

"Fearing the effect of the superseding orders upon a high-toned and sensitive officer, one whom I esteemed as a brother, and earnestly desired to be secured to our cause, I induced Major McDowell to show the letter to Secretary Cameron, and to urge every effort to keep General Johnston from leaving the service. His superior qualifications, his influence among prominent citizens at the South, and especially among his relatives in his native State, Kentucky,— which it was exceedingly desirable to keep in the Union,— were strong

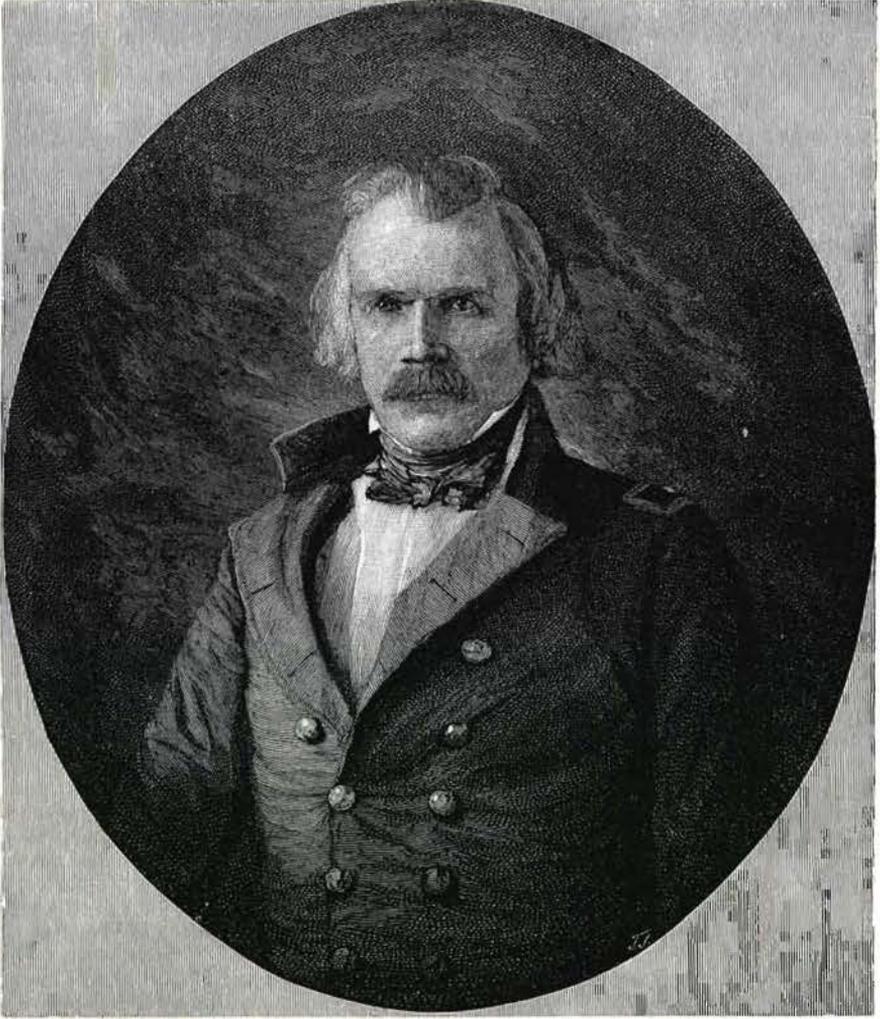
inducements to these efforts. My desire was met as cordially and earnestly as it existed, and I was authorized to send, as I did through my friend 'Ben' Holliday, in New York, for transmission by telegraph to St. Louis, and thence by his 'pony express' to San Francisco, the following message: 'I take the greatest pleasure in assuring you, for the Secretary of War, that he has the utmost confidence in you, and will give you the most important command and trust on your arrival here. Sidney is appointed to the Military Academy.' This message reached General Johnston after the arrival of Colonel Sumner.

"In response to the above, and by the same channel of communication, I received this message: 'I thank you and my friends for efforts in my behalf. I have resigned, and resolved to follow the fortunes of my State.' His letter of resignation was soon received, and put an end to all hope, especially as Texas—which had then seceded— was his adopted State.

"I felt in 1861, as I now know, that the assertion that General Johnston intended to turn over to the secessionists the defenses of California, or any part of the regular army, was false and absurd. Under no circumstances, even if intended, could such a plan have succeeded, especially with the regular army. But no such breach of trust was intended, nor would any graduate of West Point in the army have committed or permitted it. It had no better foundation than the statement of Senator Conness of California, who three years later urged and secured the assignment of General McDowell to command on the Pacific coast, on the ground that after the war for the Union should have ended there would be in California a more powerful rebellion than that then existing among the Southern States.

"FITZ JOHN PORTER.

"NEW YORK, December 8, 1884."



GENERAL ALBERT SIDNEY JOHNSTON AT THE AGE OF FIFTY-SEVEN.
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN SALT LAKE CITY IN 1860.

The appearance of General Albert Sidney Johnston before the war is described as both commanding and attractive. In some respects the bust of Alexander Hamilton is the best extant likeness of him, a resemblance very frequently remarked. His cheek-bones were rather high, and with his nose and complexion gave him a Scotch look. His chin was delicate and handsome; his teeth were white and regular, and his mouth was square and firm. In the portrait by Bush taken about this time, his lips seem rather full, but as they are best remembered, they were somewhat thin and very

firmly set. Light-brown hair clustered over a noble forehead, and from under heavy brows his deep-set but clear, steady eyes looked straight at you with a regard kind and sincere, yet penetrating. In repose his eyes were as blue as the sky, but in excitement they flashed to a steel-gray, and exerted a remarkable power over men. He was six feet and an inch in height, of about one hundred and eighty pounds weight, straight as an arrow, with broad, square shoulders and a massive chest. He was strong and active, and of a military bearing.—W. P. J.

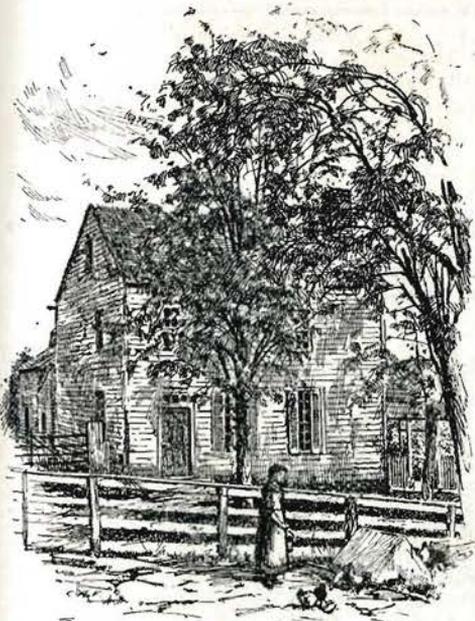
imperial in extent, and his powers and discretion as large as the theory of the Confederate Government permitted. He lacked nothing except men, munitions of war, and the means of obtaining them. He had the right to ask for anything, and the State Executives had the power to withhold everything.

The Mississippi River divided his department into two distinct theaters of war. West of the river, Frémont held Missouri with a force of from 60,000 to 80,000 Federals, confronted by Price and McCulloch in the extreme south-

west corner of the State with 6000 men, and by Hardee, in north-eastern Arkansas, with about as many raw recruits down with camp diseases and unable to move. East of the Mississippi, the northern boundary of Tennessee was barely in his possession, and was held under sufferance from an enemy who, for various reasons, hesitated to advance. The Mississippi opened the way to a ruinous naval invasion unless it could be defended and held. Grant was at Cairo and Paducah with 20,000 men; and Polk, to oppose his invasion, had seized Columbus, Ky., with about 11,000 Confederates, and had fortified it. Tennessee was twice divided: first by the Tennessee River, and then by the Cumberland, both of which invited the advance of a hostile force. Some small pretense of fortifications had been made on both rivers at Forts Henry and Donelson, near the boundary line, but practically there was nothing to prevent the Federal army from capturing Nashville, then the most important depot of supplies west of the Alleghanies. Hence the immediate and pressing question for General Johnston was the defense of the Tennessee border. The mock neutrality of Kentucky, which had served as a paper barrier, was terminated, on the 13th of September, by a formal defiance from the Union Legislature of Kentucky. The United States Government had about 34,000 volunteers and about 6000 Kentucky Home Guards assembled in the State

A S Johnston
3^d April 62
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AUTOGRAPH FOUND INSIDE THE COVER OF GENERAL JOHNSTON'S POCKET-MAP OF TENNESSEE, AND WRITTEN THREE DAYS BEFORE THE BATTLE OF SHILOH—PROBABLY HIS LAST AUTOGRAPH.

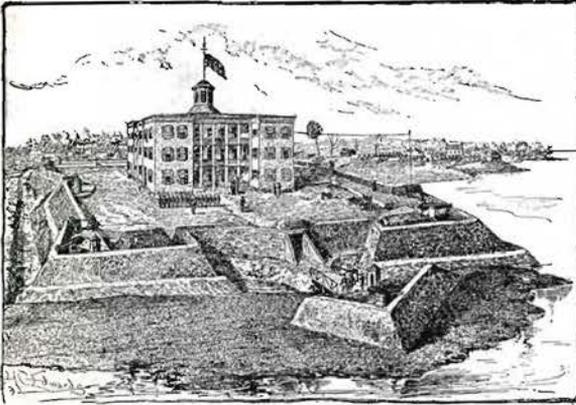


BIRTHPLACE OF ALBERT SIDNEY JOHNSTON, WASHINGTON, KY. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

under General Robert Anderson, of Fort Sumter fame, who had with him such enterprising corps commanders as Sherman, Thomas, and Nelson.

The Confederacy had some four thousand ill-armed and ill-equipped troops at Cumberland Gap under General Zollicoffer, guarding the only line of railroad communication between Virginia and Tennessee, and overawing the Union population of East Tennessee. This hostile section penetrated the heart of the Confederacy like a wedge and flanked and weakened General Johnston's line of defense, requiring, as it did, constant vigilance and repression.

Besides Zollicoffer's force, General Johnston found only 4000 men available to protect his whole line against 40,000 Federal troops. There were, it is true, some four thousand more raw recruits in camps of

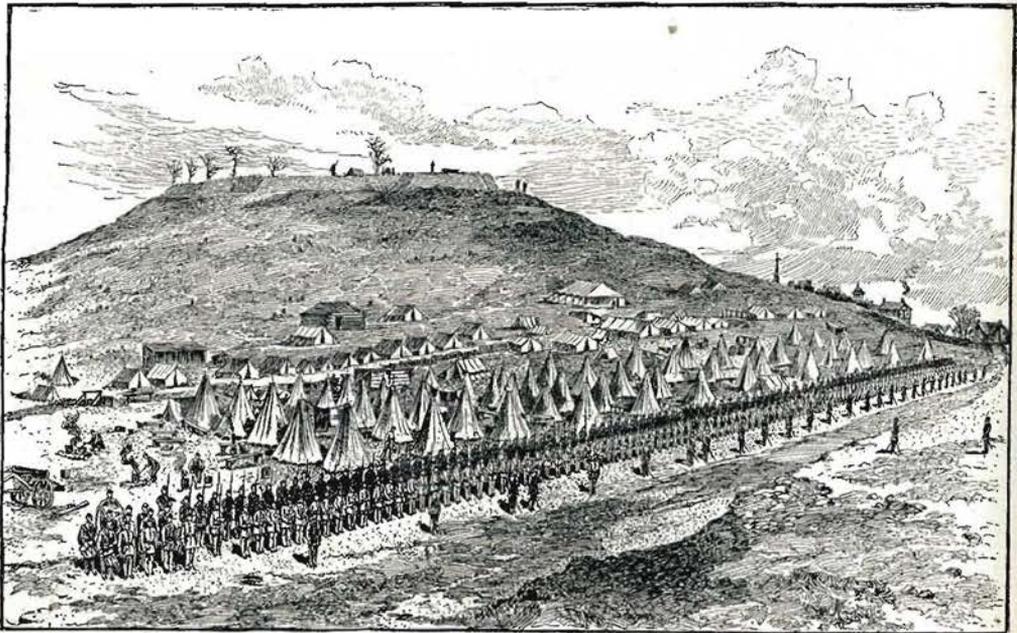


FORT ANDERSON, PADUCAH, IN APRIL, 1862. FROM A LITHOGRAPH.

instruction, but they were sick and not half armed. Of course he might have abandoned the Mississippi River to Grant and brought Polk to his aid, but he had no thought of that; that would have been all which the Federals could have asked. The boldest policy seemed to him the best, and he resolved on a daring step. On September 17th he threw forward his whole force of four thousand men under Buckner by rail

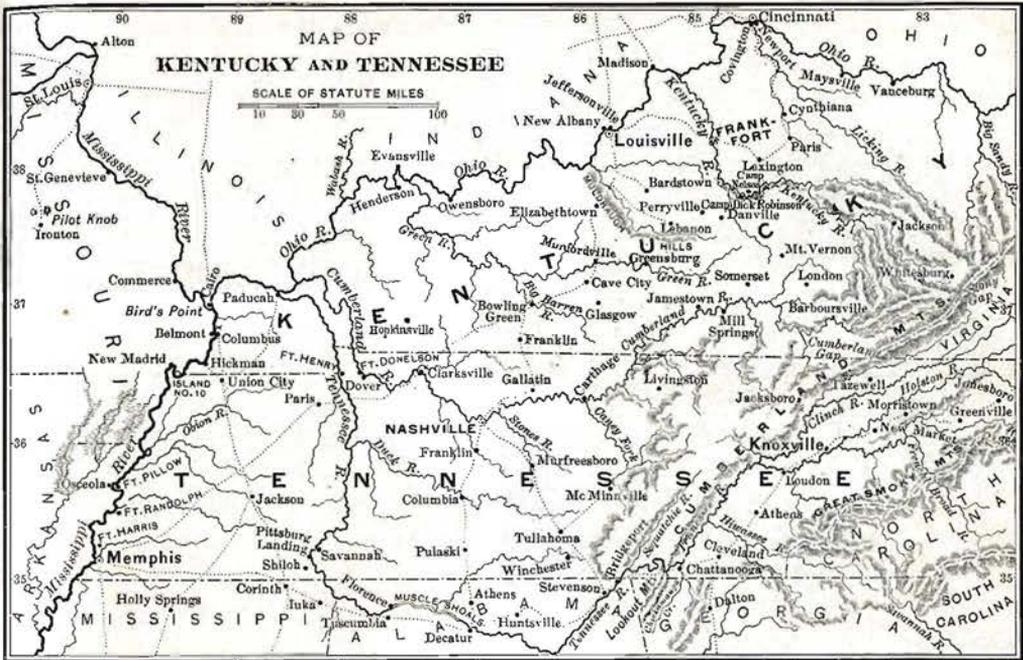
into Kentucky and seized Bowling Green. It was a mere skirmish line to mask his own weakness. But if he could maintain it, even temporarily, it gave him immense strategic and political advantages, and, most of all, time to collect or create an army. And then (I hold in spite of some dilettante criticism) it gave him a formidable line, with Cumberland Gap and Columbus as the extremities and Bowling Green as the salient.

The result more than answered his expectations. Buckner's advance produced the wildest consternation in the Federal lines. Even Sherman, writing thirteen years later, speaks of a picket which burned a bridge thirty miles from Louisville as a "division." As late as November 10th, 1861, he said: "If Johnston chooses, he could march into Louisville any day." The effect of the movement was for a time to paralyze the Federal army and put it on the defensive.



CAMP BURGESS, BOWLING GREEN — THE 70TH INDIANA ON DRESS PARADE. FROM A LITHOGRAPH.

On the hill are seen the Confederate fortifications erected by General Buckner.



General Johnston had made the opportunity required by the South, if it meant seriously to maintain its independence. He had secured time for preparation; but it neglected the chance, and never recovered it. He at once strongly fortified Bowling Green, and used every measure to stir up and rally the Kentuckians to his standard. He brought Hardee with four thousand men from Arkansas, and kept his little force in such constant motion as to produce the impression of a large army menacing an attack. Even before Buckner advanced, General Johnston had sent to the Southern governors an appeal for arms and a call for fifty thousand men. Harris of Tennessee alone responded heartily, and the Government at Richmond seemed unable to reënforce him or to arm the troops he had. Many difficulties embarrassed it, and not half his men were armed that winter; while up to the middle of November he received only three new regiments. General Johnston realized the magnitude of the struggle, but the people of the South only awoke to it when it was too late. Calamity then stirred them to an ineffectual resistance, the heroism of which removed the reproach of their early vainglory and apathy. General Johnston never was able to assemble more than 22,000 men at Bowling Green, to confront the 100,000 troops opposed to him on that line.

The only battle of note that occurred that fall was at Belmont, opposite Columbus, in which Polk scored a victory over Grant. General Johnston wrote as follows to the Secretary of War, on Christmas Day, from Bowling Green: "The position of General Zollicoffer on the Cumberland holds in check the meditated invasion and hoped-for revolt in East Tennessee; but I can neither order Zollicoffer to join me here nor withdraw any more force from Columbus without imperiling our communications toward Richmond



COL. SPEED S. FRY.

DEATH OF GENERAL ZOLLIFFER.

BATTLE OF LOGAN'S CROSS ROADS, OR MILL SPRINGS (SEE MAP, PAGE 388). FROM A LITHOGRAPH.

or endangering Tennessee and the Mississippi Valley. This I have resolved not to do, but have chosen, on the contrary, to post my inadequate force in such a manner as to hold the enemy in check, guard the frontier, and hold the Barren [River] till the winter terminates the campaign; or, if any fault in his movements is committed, or his lines become exposed when his force is developed, to attack him as opportunity offers." This sums the situation.

In January, 1862, General Johnston found himself confronted by Halleck in the West, and by Buell, who had succeeded Sherman, in Kentucky. With the exception of the army under Curtis in Missouri, about twelve thousand strong, the whole resources of the North-west, from Pennsylvania to the plains, were turned against General Johnston's lines in Kentucky. Halleck, with armies at Cairo and Paducah, under Grant and C. F. Smith, threatened equally Columbus, the key of the Mississippi River, and the water-lines of the Cumberland and Tennessee, with their defenses, at Forts Donelson and Henry. Buell's right wing also menaced Donelson and Henry, while his center was directed against Bowling Green, and his left was advancing against Zollicoffer at Mill Springs, on the Upper Cumberland. If this last-named position could be forced, the way seemed open to East Tennessee on the one hand, and to Nashville on the other.

The campaign opened with the defeat of the Confederates under Crittenden and Zollicoffer, January 19th, 1862, by General Thomas, at Mill Springs, or Fishing Creek. The fighting was forced by the Confederates, but the whole affair was in disregard of General Johnston's orders. The loss was not severe, but it ended in a rout which left General Johnston's right flank exposed.

There has been much discussion as to who originated the movement up the Tennessee River. Grant *made* it, and it made Grant. It was obvious enough to all the leaders on both sides. General Johnston wrote, January 22d :

“To suppose, with the facilities of movement by water which the well-filled rivers of the Ohio, Cumberland, and Tennessee give for active operations, that they will suspend them in Tennessee and Kentucky during the winter months is a delusion. All the resources of the Confederacy are now needed for the defense of Tennessee.”

Great efforts were made to guard against it, but the popular fatuity and apathy prevented adequate preparations. General Polk says in a report, “The principal difficulty in the way of a successful defense of the rivers in question was the want of an adequate force.” It was only one of a number of possible and equally fatal movements, which could not have been properly met and resisted except by a larger force than was to be had. General Johnston could not reduce the force at Columbus without imperiling the Mississippi River, and this was not even debatable. Nor could he hazard the loss of Nashville, if it could be saved. He was compelled, therefore, to take the risk at Forts Henry and Donelson. The thrust was made at Henry, and it fell.

As soon as General Johnston learned of the movement against Fort Henry he resolved to fall back to the line of the Cumberland, and make the defense of Nashville at Donelson. Buell was in his front with 90,000 men, and to save Nashville—Buell’s objective point—he had to fall back upon it with part of his army. He kept for this purpose 14,000 men, including his sick,—only 8500 effectives in all,—to confront Buell’s 90,000 men, and concentrated at Fort Donelson 17,000 men under Floyd, Pillow, and Buckner, his three most experienced generals, to meet Grant, who had 28,000 troops, but was reported



COLONEL SCHOEPF'S TROOPS CROSSING FISHING CREEK ON THE WAY TO JOIN GENERAL THOMAS AT LOGAN'S CROSS ROADS, OR MILL SPRINGS. FROM A LITHOGRAPH.

as having only 12,000. He certainly reserved for himself the more difficult task, the place of greater hazard, leaving the chance of glory to others. The proposition that he should have left Nashville open to capture by Buell, and should have taken all his troops to Donelson, could not have been seriously considered by any general of even moderate military capacity. General Beauregard alleges that he urged General Johnston to concentrate all



CONFEDERATE TYPES OF 1862.

his available forces and attack Grant at Fort Henry. Conclusive contemporary evidence demonstrates that General Beauregard's memory is at fault. But, this aside, no more fatal plan of campaign could have been proposed. Such a concentration was impracticable within the limits of the time required for success. The Confederates would have been met by a superior force under General Grant, whose position, flanked by the batteries of Fort Henry, covered by gun-boats, and to be approached only over causeways not then con-

structed, was absolutely impregnable. It requires an utter disregard of facts seriously to consider such a project. Moreover, this movement would have been an abandonment to Buell of Nashville, the objective point of the Federal campaign. And, finally, this desperate project, commended by General Beauregard, was exactly what the Union generals were striving, hoping, planning, to compel General Johnston to do. The answer to any criticism as to the loss of the army at Donelson is *that it ought not to have been lost*. That is all there is of it.

At midnight of February 15th-16th General Johnston received a telegram announcing a great victory at Donelson, and before daylight information that it would be surrendered. His last troops were then arriving at Nashville from Bowling Green. His first words were: "I must save this army." He at once determined to abandon the line of the Cumberland, and concentrate all available forces at Corinth, Mississippi, for a renewed struggle. He had indicated this movement as a probable event to several distinguished officers some time previous; it was now to be carried into effect. He had remaining only his little army from Bowling Green, together with the fragments of

Crittenden's army, and the fugitives from Donelson. These he reorganized at Murfreesboro' within a week. He saved the most of his valuable stores and munitions, which fully absorbed his railroad transportation to Stevenson, Alabama, and moved his men over the mud roads to Corinth, Mississippi, by way of Decatur, in a wet and stormy season. Nevertheless, he assembled his army of 23,000—about 16,000 effectives—at Corinth, on the 25th day of March, full of enthusiasm and the spirit of combat. In the meantime the Confederate Government lent him all the aid in its power, reënforcing him with an army ten thousand strong, from the Southern coast, under General Braxton Bragg, who had been in command at Pensacola [see note, page 32], and with such arms as could be procured.

General Beauregard has claimed that he raised, concentrated, and organized the army which fought at Shiloh; that he persuaded General Johnston to turn aside from a retreat toward Stevenson and join him at Corinth, and substituted an offensive campaign for a defensive one projected by General Johnston; and that he likewise planned the battle of Shiloh, induced General Johnston to fight it, and executed all the general movements on the field, and that General Johnston was merely the ostensible commander. I have elsewhere fully confuted each of these absurd pretenses; and as this rapid survey is historical, not controversial, the space at my disposal does not permit me to argue here the points involved; I shall, therefore, merely state the facts, which rest upon unimpeachable contemporary evidence. The final verdict I am satisfied to leave to the soldiers of both armies who fought there, to the careful analysis of impartial military criticism, or to the ultimate arbitrament of history.

When the capture of Fort Henry separated Tennessee into two distinct theaters of war, General Johnston assigned the district west of the Tennessee River to General Beauregard, who had been sent to him for duty. This officer had suddenly acquired a high reputation at the battle of Bull Run, and General Johnston naturally intrusted him with a large discretion. He sent him with instructions to concentrate all available forces near Corinth, a movement previously begun. His own plan was to defend Columbus to the last extremity with a reduced garrison, and withdraw Polk and his army for active movements. Beauregard made the mistake, however, of evacuating Columbus, and making his defense of the Mississippi River at Island Number Ten, which proved untenable and soon surrendered with a garrison of 6000 or 7000 men. He was ill most of the time and intrusted the actual command to Bragg, but did what he could from his sick-bed.

Besides the reënforcements brought by Bragg, General Beauregard found in the western district 17,500 effectives under Polk, and at or near Corinth 3000 men under Pope Walker and Chalmers, and 5000 under Ruggles sent from Louisiana by Lovell. He made eloquent appeals, which brought him several regiments more. Thus he had nearly 40,000 men collected for him, 10,000 of whom he disposed in river defenses, and the remainder to protect the railroads from Grant's force which was concentrating at Pittsburg

Landing. General Johnston's arrival increased the force at Corinth to about 50,000 men, about 40,000 of whom were effectives.

After the surrender at Donelson, the South, but especially the important State of Tennessee, was in a delirium of rage and terror. As the retreat from Nashville to the Tennessee River went on, the popular fury rose to a storm everywhere. The people who had refused to listen to his warnings, or answer his appeals for aid, now denounced General Johnston as an idiot, coward, and traitor. Demagogues joined in the wild hunt for a victim, and deputations waited on President Davis to demand his removal. To such a committee of congressmen he replied: "If Sidney Johnston is not a general, I have none." General Johnston was too calm, too just, and too magnanimous to misapprehend so natural a manifestation. His whole life had been a training for this occasion. To encounter suddenly and endure calmly the obloquy of a whole nation is, to any man, a great burden. To do this with a serenity that shall not only not falter in duty, but restore confidence and organize victory, is conclusive proof of greatness of soul.

But while the storm of execration raged around him, the men who came into immediate contact with General Johnston never for a moment doubted his ability to perform all that was possible to man in the circumstances. To a friend who urged him to publish an explanation of his course he replied: "I cannot correspond with the people. What the people want is a battle and a victory. That is the best explanation I can make. I require no vindication. I trust that to the future." †

General Johnston's plan of campaign may be summed up in a phrase. It was to concentrate at Corinth and interpose his whole force in front of the great bend of the Tennessee, the natural base of the Federal army: this effected, to crush Grant in battle before the arrival of Buell. This meant immediate and decisive action. The army he had brought from Nashville was ready for the contest, but Generals Beauregard and Bragg represented to him that the troops collected by them were unable to move without thorough reorganization. Ten days were consumed in this work of reorganization. Moments were precious, but there was the hope of reënforcement by Van Dorn's army, which might arrive before Buell joined Grant, and which did arrive only a day or two later. [See page 277.] But Buell's movements were closely watched, and, hearing of his approach on the 2d of April, General Johnston resolved to delay no longer, but to strike at once a decisive blow.

In the reorganization of the army, he assigned General Bragg as chief of staff, with command of a corps. To Beauregard he tendered the immediate command of the army in the impending battle. Though General Beauregard declined the offer, he evidently misinterpreted its spirit and intention. He imagined it was a confession of inadequacy for the duty, in which case he ought to have accepted it. The truth was that, coming into this district which he had assigned to Beauregard, Johnston felt disinclined to deprive him of any reputation he might acquire from a victory. He had not the

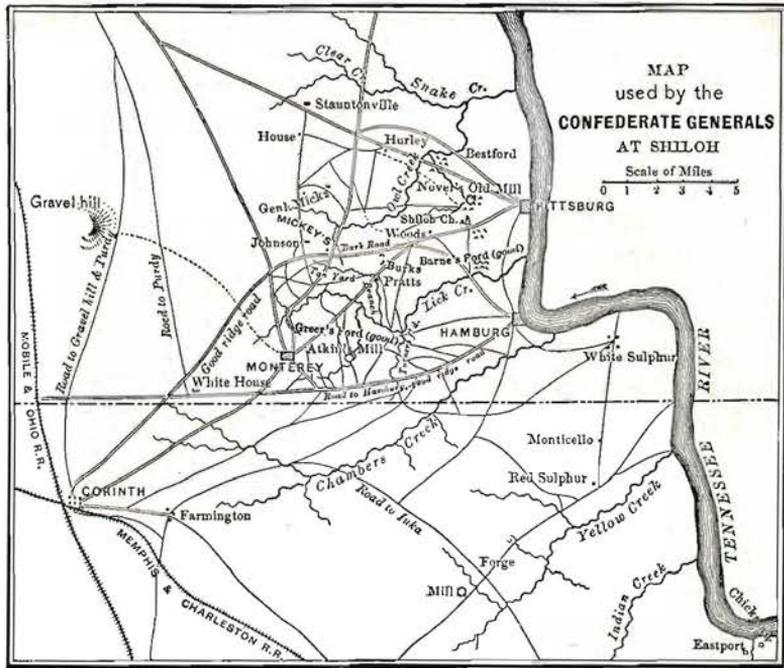
† For part of his much-quoted letter of March 18th to President Davis, written at Decatur, in regard to the loss of Donelson, see foot-note, page 399.—EDITORS.

slightest idea, however, of abdicating the supreme command, and said to friends who remonstrated with him: "I will be there to see that all goes right." He was willing to yield to another the glory, if thereby was added to the chance of victory. The offer was rather quixotic, but characteristic; he

had done the same thing in his victories on the Neches in 1840. He then gave General Beauregard the position of second in command, without special assignment. Indeed, as is shown by his own frequent statements, General Beauregard was, from severe and protracted ill-health, inadequate to any more serious duty.

General Grant's army had been moved up the Tennessee River by boat, and had taken position on its left bank at Pittsburg Landing. It had been landed by divisions, and Bragg had proposed to Beauregard to attack Grant before he assembled his whole force. Beauregard forbade this, intending to await events, and attack him away from his base if possible, though he now insists that his plan of campaign was offensive. Grant's first object was to destroy the railroads which centered at Corinth, and, indeed, to capture that place if he could. But his advance was only a part of a grand plan for a combined movement of his own and Buell's army. With Pittsburg Landing as a base, this army was to occupy North Mississippi and Alabama, command the entire railroad system of that section, and take Memphis in the rear, while Halleck forced his way down the Mississippi River. General Johnston divined the movement before it was begun, and was there to frustrate it. Indeed, Grant's army was assembled at Pittsburg Landing only one week before Johnston completed the concentration.

Grant has been severely criticised for placing his army with the river at its back. But he was there to take the initiative. He had the larger army, under cover, too, of his gun-boats; he was expecting Buell daily; and the ground was admirable for defense. Indeed, his position was a natural stronghold. Flanked by Owl and Lick creeks, with their marshy margins, and with his front protected by a swampy valley, he occupied a quadrilateral of great



FROM THE "LIFE OF GENERAL A. S. JOHNSTON," BY W. P. JOHNSTON. (G. APPLETON & CO.)

strength. His troops were stationed on wooded heights, generally screened by heavy undergrowth and approached across boggy ravines or open fields. Each camp was a fortress in itself, and the line of retreat afforded at each step some like point to rally on. He did not fortify his camps, it is true; but he was not there for defense, but for attack. It must be admitted that he undervalued his enemy's daring and celerity; but he was a young general, exultant in his overwhelming victory at Donelson; and his generals and army shared his sense of security. He had an army of 58,000 men in camp, nearly 50,000 of whom were effectives. Buell was near at hand with 37,000 more, and Mitchel was moving against the railroad at Florence, Alabama, not far distant, with an additional force of 18,000. In all Grant had 105,000 effectives. Opposed to him were 50,000 Confederate troops, less than 40,000 of whom were available for combat. General Johnston's aggregate was 60,000 men, opposed to about 200,000 Federals in all, but the effective forces were as above. As these figures are disputed I invite a rigid examination of the Official Records.¶

Such was the position on April 2d, when General Johnston, learning that Buell was rapidly approaching, resolved to advance next day and attack Grant before his arrival. His general plan was very simple in outline. It seems to have been to march out and attack the Federals by columns of corps, to make the battle a decisive test, and to crush Grant utterly or lose all in the attempt; this effected, to contend with Buell for the possession of Tennessee, Kentucky, and possibly the North-west.

General Beauregard also, it seems, had a plan, which, however, must have differed widely from that of General Johnston, as it was evidently tentative in its nature,—“a reconnoissance in force,” with a retreat on Corinth as one of its features,—and which admitted the possibility of finishing on Monday a battle which had to be won on Sunday or never. This was not in any sense General Johnston's plan, and much useless discussion has arisen from a confusion of the two. But, as General Johnston intended to fight, and did fight, on his own plan as long as he lived, the battle may be considered his until Beauregard's order of retreat, about 5 o'clock Sunday evening, substituted “the reconnoissance in force” in place of the decisive test of victory or defeat.

General Beauregard had been on the ground some six weeks, and his prestige as an engineer and a victor of Bull Run warranted General Johnston in committing to him the elaboration of the details of the march and order of battle. Unfortunately he changed what seems evidently General Johnston's original purpose of an assault by columns of corps into an array in three parallel lines of battle, which produced extreme confusion when the second and third lines advanced to support the first and intermingled with it. Johnston's original plan is summed up in the following dispatch to President Davis:

“CORINTH, April 3d, 1862. General Buell in motion thirty thousand strong, rapidly from Columbia by Clifton to Savannah. Mitchel behind him with ten thousand. Confederate forces—forty thousand—ordered forward to offer battle near Pittsburg. Division from Bethel, main

¶ By careful and thorough examination of the Official Records we have not been able to verify Colonel Johnston's estimates of forces. In important particulars the Records are not explicit, and in places they indicate that Colonel Johnston

greatly overestimates the Union strength. Before January, 1863 (when a new form was adopted), the Union returns did not show the number of *effectives* separate from the “present for duty,” a term that included the non-combatants.—EDITORS.

body from Corinth, reserve from Burnsville, converging to-morrow near Monterey on Pittsburg. Beauregard second in command, Polk the left, Bragg the center, Hardee the right wing, Breckinridge the reserve. *Hope engagement before Buell can form junction.*"

In the original dispatch, the words italicised are in General Johnston's own handwriting. The words, "the left," "the center," "the right wing," "the reserve," clearly point to a formation by columns of corps. Moreover, owing to ignorance of the country, the march was so ordered that the corps interfered with each other in their advance, and by a detention the battle was delayed an entire day, an almost fatal loss of time.

If it be asked why General Johnston accepted and issued an order of march and battle which he had not contemplated, the reply is that it had been prepared by his second in command, who was presumably more familiar with the country and the roads than himself, and hence with the necessities of the case. But the overruling reason was the question of *time*. Buell was at hand, and Johnston's plan was not to manœuvre, but to attack; and *any* plan which put him front to front with Grant was better than the best two days later. Besides, the written orders were not shown him until the morning of

the 4th, after he had mounted to start to the front, and when his advance was near its position on the field. It was then obviously too late to apply a remedy.

General Johnston did not undervalue the importance of details. No man regarded more closely all the details subsidiary to a great result than he. But, important as were the preliminaries,—the maps, the roads, the methods of putting his army face to face with the enemy, which General Johnston had to take on trust,—he knew that the chief *strategy* of the battle was in the decision to fight. Once in the presence of the enemy, he knew that the result would depend *on the way in which his troops were handled*. This was his part of the work, and he felt full confidence in his own ability to carry it out successfully. The order was issued, as elaborated by Beauregard, and the army was moved against the enemy, April 3d, 1862. Said General Bragg:

"The details of that plan, arranged after General Sidney Johnston decided on delivering battle, and had given his instructions, were made up and published to the army in full from the adjutant-general's office. My first knowledge of them was derived from this general order, the authorship of which has been claimed by General Beauregard. . . . In this case, as I understood then, and still believe, Johnston gave verbal instructions for the general movement. . . . Over his [Colonel Jordan, the adjutant-general's] signature, they reached the army. The general plan (General Johnston's) was admirable — *the elaboration simply execrable*.

"When the time arrived for execution, you know well what occurred. In spite of opposition and prediction of failure, Johnston firmly and decidedly ordered and led the attack in the execution of his general plan, and, notwithstanding the faulty arrangement of troops, was eminently successful up to the moment of his fall. *The victory was won*. How it was lost, the official reports will show, and history has recorded." [Bragg to W. P. Johnston, December 16th, 1874.]



LIEUTENANT-GENERAL W. J. HARDEE, C. S. A.
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

The President of the Confederate States has repeatedly and positively asserted that he received from General Johnston a dispatch which gave the plan of battle, exactly as it was fought, and that this dispatch was not that of April 3d already quoted, but was lost. General Beauregard and his staff-officer, Colonel Jordan, have taken issue with Mr. Davis on this point, vehemently insisting that no such dispatch was, or could have been, sent. Their denial rests merely upon *a priori* objections to the probability of Mr. Davis's assertion. On the other hand, Mr. Davis's clear and positive statement made many years ago, and often repeated since, is confirmed by contemporary documentary evidence. On April 5th he sent a telegram to General Johnston, in which he acknowledges his telegram of "yesterday," April 4th. This telegram of "yesterday" was plainly the "lost dispatch," for "yesterday" was April 4th, not April 3d. If, as I have sought to show, important changes had occurred in the plan of battle, nothing could be more natural and proper for the commanding general than instantly to inform his friend and commander-in-chief; and even if no change had occurred, still it would have been right for him to keep his chief fully advised of the progress of the movement. I have always said that General Johnston's *original* plan was probably to attack by columns of corps, as indicated in his telegram of April 3d. Special Orders, No. 8 directed an attack in three lines parallel to the enemy's front. Jordan tells us General Johnston did not see these orders as published until the morning of the 4th. What more natural than that he should then communicate the changes made, and add his purpose to turn the enemy's left, not mentioned in the telegram of April 3d. A curious corroboration, hitherto unobserved, occurs in Mr. Davis's telegram of April 5th, that it was in reply to a lost dispatch. On April 2d General Beauregard wrote to General Johnston, saying that he had telegraphed to the War Department for generals, and adding, "Would it not be well for you to telegraph also for the generals you may require?" We have no record of any such request made upon this suggestion, but Mr. Davis, in his telegram of April 5th, says: "Brigadiers have been recently appointed; among them, Bowen. Do you require others?" This seems to be a response to a request; Bowen was commanding a brigade in General Johnston's army. But as there was no request in General Johnston's telegram of April 3d, it is reasonable to suppose that it was contained in one of the 4th, which has been lost. But I am giving an importance to this question which it would not merit except for the prominence given it in the pages of "The Century Magazine." Whether sent or not, it is entirely irrelevant to the main issue. Its whole importance consists in showing, not who made the plan of battle, but that the plan having been given to his subordinates, General Johnston, so long as he lived, held them to the steady and successful execution of it. When General Beauregard succeeded to the command he abandoned the vital principle of that plan, which was to push the contest to a final decision that day, and took a course of his own, not embraced or contemplated in General Johnston's designs — a policy of withdrawal and delay which led to defeat instead of victory.

General Johnston gave orders about 1 o'clock on the night of Wednesday, the 2d of April, for the advance. But much time was spent in their elaboration, and the troops did not receive them from the adjutant-general's office until the next afternoon. When the soldiers learned that they were going out to fight, their long-restrained ardor burst into a blaze of enthusiasm, and they did all that was possible for inexperienced troops in both marching and fighting. Some of the arms were not distributed till that afternoon. With hasty preparations the movement began, and Hardee's corps was at Mickyey's, within four or five miles of Pittsburg, next morning. But some of the troops did not move until the morning of Saturday, the 5th, owing to a still further delay in the delivery of orders by the adjutant-general's office, and all were impeded by the heavy condition of the roads, through a dense forest, and across sloughs and marshes.

The order was to attack at 3 o'clock on the morning of Saturday, the 5th; but the troops were not in position until late that afternoon. All day Friday the advancing columns had pushed on over the tangled, miry roads, hindered and embarrassed by a pelting rain. After midnight a violent storm broke upon them as they stood under arms in the pitch darkness, with no shelter but the trees. From detention by the rain, ignorance of the roads, and a confusion produced by the order of march, some divisions failed to get into line, and the day was wasted.

As they were waiting the disposition of troops late Saturday afternoon, a council of war occurred, in which Johnston, Beauregard, Bragg, Polk, Breckinridge and Gilmer took part, which added greatly to General Johnston's responsibilities, and the heavy burden he had already incurred by his experiment of concentration, and his resolve to fight a pitched battle. The Confederate army was in full battle array, within two miles of Shiloh Church and Grant's line, when General Beauregard suddenly proposed that the army should be withdrawn and retreat to Corinth. He maintained that the delay and noise must have given the enemy notice, and that they would be found intrenched "to their eyes" and ready for attack. General Johnston seemed to be much surprised at the suggestion. Polk and Bragg differed with Beauregard, and a warm discussion ensued between him and Polk, in which General Johnston took little part, but closed it with the simple remark, "Gentlemen, we shall attack at daylight to-morrow," which he uttered with great decision. Turning to one of his staff-officers, he said, "I would fight them if they were a million. They can present no greater front between these two creeks than we can, and the more men they crowd in there, the worse we can make it for them. Polk is a true soldier and a friend."

General Bragg, in a monograph prepared for the use of the writer, says: "The meeting then dispersed upon an invitation of the commanding general to meet at his tent that evening. At that meeting a further discussion elicited the same views, and the same firm, decided determination. The next morning, about dawn of day, the 6th, as the troops were being put in motion, several generals again met at the camp-fire of the general-in-chief. The discussion was renewed, General Beauregard

scene, and welcomed with exultant joy the long-desired day. His presence inspired all who came near him. His sentences, sharp, terse, and clear, had the ring of victory in them. Turning to his staff, as he mounted, he exclaimed: "To-night we will water our horses in the Tennessee River." It was thus that he formulated his plan of battle; it must not stop short of entire victory. To Randall L. Gibson, who was commanding a Louisiana brigade, he said: "I hope you may get through safely to-day, but *we must win a victory.*" To Colonel John S. Marmaduke, who had served under him in Utah, he said, placing his hand on his shoulder: "My son, we must this day conquer or perish." To the ambitious Hindman, who had been in the vanguard from the beginning, he said: "You have *earned* your spurs as a major-general. Let this day's work win them." With such words, as he rode from point to point, he raised a spirit in that host which swept away the serried lines of the conquerors of Donelson. Friend and foe alike testify to the enthusiastic courage and ardor of the Southern soldiers that day.

General Johnston's strategy was completed. He was face to face with his foe, and that foe all unaware of his coming. His front line, composed of the Third Corps and Gladden's brigade, was under Hardee, and extended from Owl Creek to Lick Creek, more than three miles. (See maps.) Hindman's division of two brigades occupied the center, Cleburne's brigade had the left, and Gladden's the right wing—an effective total in the front line of 9024. The second line was commanded by Bragg. He had two divisions: Withers's, of two brigades, on the right, and Ruggles's, of three brigades, on the left. The brigades were, in order from right to left, as follows: Chalmers, Jackson, Gibson, Anderson, Pond. This second line was 10,731 strong. The third line, or reserve, was composed of the First Corps, under Polk, and three brigades under Breckinridge. Polk's command was massed in columns of brigades on the Bark road near Mickey's, and Breckinridge's on the road from Monterey toward the same point. Polk was to advance on the left of the Bark road, at an interval of about eight hundred paces from Bragg's line; and Breckinridge, to the right of that road, was to give support wherever it should become necessary. Polk's corps, 9136 strong in infantry and artillery, was composed of two divisions: Cheatham's on the left, made up of Bushrod R. Johnson's and Stephens's brigades, and Clark's on his right, formed of A. P. Stewart's and Russell's brigades. It followed Bragg's line at a distance of about eight hundred yards. Breckinridge's reserve was composed of Tra-bue's, Bowen's, and Statham's brigades, with a total, infantry and artillery, of 6439. The cavalry, about 4300 strong, guarded the flanks or was detached on outpost duty; but, both from the newness and imperfection of their organization, equipment, and drill, and from the rough and wooded character of the ground, they could do little service that day. The effectives of all arms that marched out to battle were about 39,630, or, exclusive of cavalry, 35,330.

The Federal army numbered present 49,232, and present for duty 41,543. But at Crump's Landing, five or six miles distant, was General Lew Wallace's division with 8820 present, and 7771 men present for duty. [See page 538.] General Nelson's division of Buell's army had arrived at Savannah on Satur-

day morning, and was now about five miles distant; Crittenden's division also had arrived on the morning of the 6th. So that Grant, with these three divisions, may be considered as having about 22,000 men in immediate reserve, without counting the remainder of Buell's army, which was near by.†

As General Johnston and his staff were taking their coffee, the first gun of the battle sounded. "Note the hour, if you please, gentlemen," said General Johnston. It was fourteen minutes past 5. They immediately mounted and galloped to the front.

Some skirmishing on Friday between the Confederate cavalry and the Federal outposts, in which a few men were killed, wounded, and captured on both sides, had aroused the vigilance of the Northern commanders to some extent. Sherman reported on the 5th to Grant that two regiments of infantry and one of cavalry were in his front, and added: "I have no doubt that nothing will occur to-day more than some picket-firing. . . . I do not apprehend anything like an attack on our position." In his "Memoirs" he says: "I did not believe they designed anything but a strong demonstration." He said to Major Ricker that an advance of Beauregard's army "could not be possible. Beauregard was not such a fool as to leave his base of operations and attack us in ours,—*mere reconnoissance in force.*" This shows a curious coincidence with the actual state of General Beauregard's mind on that day. And Grant telegraphed Halleck on Saturday night: "The main force of the enemy is at Corinth. . . . One division of Buell's column arrived yesterday. . . . I have scarcely the faintest idea of an attack (general one) being made upon us."

Nevertheless, some apprehension was felt among the officers and men of the Federal army, and General Prentiss had thrown forward Colonel Moore, with the 21st Missouri regiment, on the Corinth road. Moore, feeling his way cautiously, encountered Hardee's skirmish-line under Major Hardcastle, and, thinking it an outpost, assailed it vigorously. Thus really the Federals began the fight. The struggle was brief, but spirited. The 8th and 9th Arkansas came up. Moore fell wounded. The Missourians gave way, and Shaver's brigade pursued them. Hindman's whole division moved on, following the ridge and drifting to the right, and drove in the grand guards and outposts until they struck Prentiss's camps. Into these they burst, overthrowing all before them.

To appreciate the suddenness and violence of the blow, one must read the testimony of eye-witnesses. General Bragg says, in a sketch of Shiloh made for the writer: "Contrary to the views of such as urged an abandonment of the attack, the enemy was found utterly unprepared, many being surprised and captured in their tents, and others, though on the outside, in costumes better fitted to the bedchamber than to the battle-field." General Preston says: "General Johnston then went to the camp assailed, which was carried between 7 and 8 o'clock. The enemy were evidently surprised. The breakfasts were

† General Grant takes no account of these in his narratives of the battle, and talks as though he were outnumbered instead of outgeneraled. It was his business to get these troops there in time, especially if he was not surprised.—W. P. J.

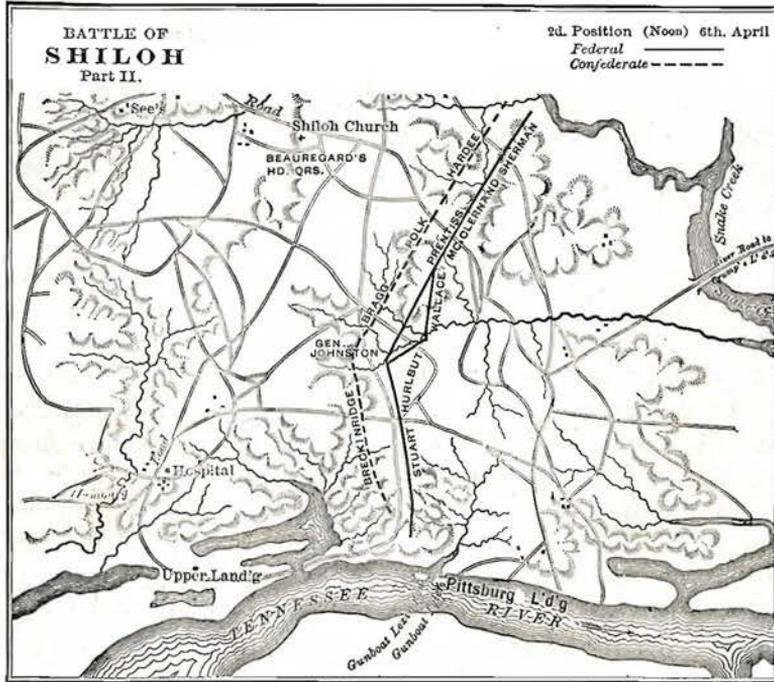
on the mess tables, the baggage unpacked, the knapsacks, stores, colors, and ammunition abandoned."

The essential feature of General Johnston's strategy had been to get at his enemy as quickly as possible, and in as good order. In this he had succeeded. His plan of battle was as simple as his strategy. It had been made known in his order of battle, and was thoroughly understood by every brigade commander. The orders of the 3d of April were, that "every effort should be made to turn the *left flank of the enemy*, so as to cut off his line of retreat to the Tennessee River and *throw him back on Owl Creek, where he will be obliged to surrender.*" It is seen that, from the first, these orders were carried out in letter and spirit; and, so long as General Johnston lived, the success of this movement was complete. *The battle was fought precisely as it was planned.* The first, and almost only, censure of this plan was made by Colonel Jordan, confidential adviser and historian of General Beauregard, who now claims to have made this plan. The instructions delivered to General Johnston's subordinates on the previous day were found sufficient for their conduct on the battle-field. But, to accomplish this, his own personal presence and inspiration and direction were often necessary with these enthusiastic but raw troops. He had personal conference on the field with most of his generals, and led several brigades into battle. The criticism upon this conduct, that he exposed himself unnecessarily, is absurd to those who know how important rapid decision and instantaneous action are in the crisis of conflict.

His lines of battle were pushed rapidly to the front, and as gaps widened in the first lines, they were filled by brigades of the second and third. One of Breckinridge's brigades (Trabue's) was sent to the left to support Cleburne and fought under Polk the rest of the day; and the other two were led to the extreme right, only Chalmers being beyond them. Gladden, who was on Hindman's right, and had a longer distance to traverse to strike some of Prentiss's brigades further to the left, found them better prepared, but, after a sanguinary resistance, drove them from their camps. In this bitter struggle Gladden fell mortally wounded. Chalmers's brigade, of Bragg's line, came in on Gladden's right, and his Mississippians drove the enemy, under Stuart, with the bayonet half a mile. He was about to charge again, when General Johnston came up, and moved him to the right, and brought John K. Jackson's brigade into the interval. Prentiss's left and Stuart's brigade retreated sullenly, not routed, but badly hammered.

With Hindman as a pivot, the turning movement began from the moment of the overthrow of Prentiss's camps. While the front attacks were made all along the line with a desperate courage which would have swept any ordinary resistance from the field, and with a loss which told fearfully on the assailants, they were seconded by assaults in flank which invariably resulted in crushing the Federal line with destructive force and strewing the field with the wounded and the dead. The Federal reports complain that they were flanked and outnumbered, which is true; for, though fewer, the Confederates were probably stronger at every given point throughout the day except at the center called the Hornets' Nest, where the Federals eventually massed

nearly two divisions. The iron flail of war beat upon the Federal front and right flank with the regular and ponderous pulsations of some great engine, and these assaults resulted in a crumbling process which was continually but slowly going on, as regiment and brigade and division yielded to the continuous and successive blows. There has been criticism that there were no grand assaults by divisions and corps. In a broken, densely wooded and unknown country, and with the mode of attack in parallel lines, this was impossible,



FROM THE "LIFE OF GENERAL A. S. JOHNSTON," BY W. P. JOHNSTON. (D. APPLETON & CO.)

but the attack was unremitting and the fact is that there were but few lulls in the contest. The fighting was a grapple and a death-struggle all day long, and, as one brigade after another wilted before the deadly fire of the stubborn Federals, still another was pushed into the combat and kept up the fierce assault. A breathing-spell, and

the shattered command would gather itself up and resume its work of destruction. These were the general aspects of the battle.

When the battle began Hindman, following the ridge, had easy ground to traverse; but Cleburne's large brigade, on his left, with its supports, moving over a more difficult country, was slower in getting upon Sherman's front. That general and his command were aroused by the long roll, the advancing musketry, and the rush of troops to his left, and he got his division in line of battle and was ready for the assault of Cleburne, which was made about 8 o'clock. General Johnston, who had followed close after Hindman, urging on his attack, saw Cleburne's brigade begin its advance, and then returned to where Hindman was gathering his force for another assault. Hardee said of Cleburne that he "moved quickly through the fields, and, though far outflanked by the enemy on our left, rushed forward under a terrific fire from the serried ranks drawn up in front of the camp. A morass covered his front, and, being difficult to pass, caused a break in this brigade. Deadly volleys were poured upon the men from behind bales of hay and other defenses, as they advanced; and after a series of desperate charges they were compelled to fall back.



VICINITY OF THE "HORNETS' NEST."
FROM PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN IN 1885.

The stump in the field on the right is said to mark the spot where General Albert Sidney Johnston was killed. The point of woods beyond the field is supposed to be the place which the Confederates called the "Hornets' Nest." The "peach orchard" was a little to the left of the field in the middle ground, and behind the house (in the lower picture) which is across the road from the field in which General Johnston was killed.—EDITORS.

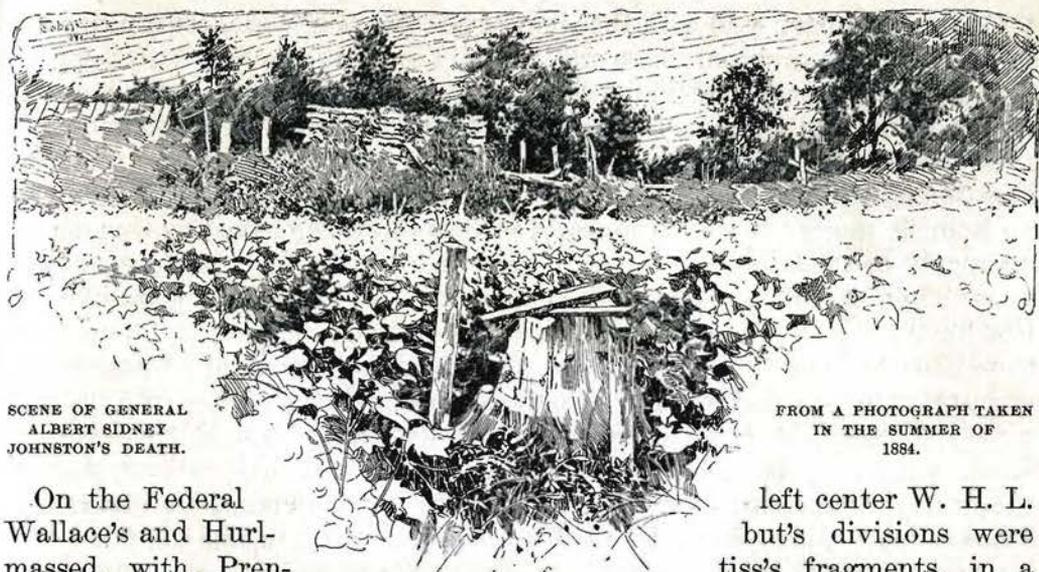
Supported by the arrival of the second line, Cleburne, with the remainder of his troops, . . . entered the enemy's encampment, which had been forced on the center and right by . . . Gladden's, Wood's, and Hindman's brigades."

While Sherman was repelling Cleburne's attack, McClernand sent up three Illinois regiments to reinforce his left. But General Polk led forward Bushrod R. Johnson's brigade, and General Charles Clark led Russell's brigade, against Sherman's left, while General Johnston himself put A. P. Stewart's brigade in position on their right. Supported by part of Cleburne's line, they attacked Sherman and McClernand fiercely. Polk said: "The resistance at this point was as stubborn as at any other point on the field." Clark and Bushrod R. Johnson fell badly wounded. Hildebrand's Federal brigade was swept from the field, losing in the onslaught 300 killed and wounded, and 94 missing.

Wood's brigade, of Hindman's division, joined in this charge on the right. As they hesitated at the crest of a hill, General Johnston came to the front and urged them to the attack. They rushed forward with the inspiring "rebel yell," and with Stewart's brigade enveloped the Illinois troops. In ten minutes the latter melted away under the fire, and were forced from the field. In this engagement John A. McDowell's and Veatch's Federal brigades, as well as Hildebrand's, were demolished and heard of no more. Buckland retreated and took position with McClernand. In these attacks Anderson's and Pond's Confederate brigades joined with great vigor and severe loss, but with unequal fortune. The former had one success after

another; the latter suffered a series of disasters; and yet an equal courage animated them. Gladden's brigade made a final desperate and successful charge on Prentiss's line. The whole Federal front, which had been broken here and there, and was getting ragged, gave way under this hammering process on front and flank, and fell back across a ravine to another strong position behind the Hamburg and Purdy road in rear of Shiloh. Sherman's route of retreat was marked by the thick-strewn corpses of his soldiers. At last, pressed back toward both Owl Creek and the river, Sherman and McClernand found safety by the interposition on their left flank of W. H. L. Wallace's fresh division. Hurlbut and Wallace had advanced about 8 o'clock, so that Prentiss's command found a refuge in the intervals of the new and formidable Federal line, with Stuart on the left and Sherman's shattered division on the right.

General Johnston had pushed Chalmers to the right and front, sweeping down the left bank of Lick Creek, driving in pickets, until he encountered Stuart's Federal brigade on the Pittsburg and Hamburg road. Stuart was strongly posted on a steep hill near the river, covered with thick undergrowth, and with an open field in front. McArthur was to his right and rear in the woods. Jackson attacked McArthur, who fell back; and Chalmers went at Stuart's brigade. This command reserved its fire until Chalmers's men were within forty yards, and then delivered a heavy and destructive volley; but, after a hard fight, the Federals were driven back. Chalmers's right rested on the Tennessee River bottom-lands, and he fought down the bank toward Pittsburg Landing. The enemy's left was completely turned, and the Federal army was now crowded on a shorter line, a mile or more to the rear of its first position, with many of their brigades *hors de combat*. The new line of battle was established before 10 o'clock. All the Confederate troops were then in the front line, except two of Breckinridge's brigades, Bowen's and Statham's, which were moving to the Confederate right, and soon occupied the interval to the left of Chalmers and Jackson. Hardee, with Cleburne and Pond, was pressing Sherman slowly but steadily back. Bragg and Polk met about half-past 10 o'clock, and by agreement Polk led his troops against McClernand, while Bragg directed the operations against the Federal center. A gigantic contest now began which lasted more than five hours. In the impetuous rush forward of regiments to fill the gaps in the front line, even the brigade organization was broken; but, though there was dislocation of commands, there was little loss of effective force. The Confederate assaults were made by rapid and often unconnected charges along the line. They were repeatedly checked, and often repulsed. Sometimes counter-charges drove them back for short distances; but, whether in assault or recoil, both sides saw their bravest soldiers fall in frightful numbers. The Confederates came on in motley garb, varying from the favorite gray and domestic "butternut" to the blue of certain Louisiana regiments, which paid dearly the penalty of doubtful colors. Over them waved flags and pennons as various as their uniforms. At each charge there went up a wild yell, heard above the roar of artillery; only the Kentuckians, advancing with measured step, sang in chorus their war-song: "Cheer, boys, cheer; we'll march away to battle."



SCENE OF GENERAL
ALBERT SIDNEY
JOHNSTON'S DEATH.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN
IN THE SUMMER OF
1884.

On the Federal Wallace's and Hurlmassed, with Prentiss's divisions were left center W. H. L. but's divisions were tiss's fragments, in a position so impregnable, and thronged with such fierce defenders, that it won from the Confederates the memorable title of the "Hornets' Nest." [See pages 504-5, 510, and 588.] Here, behind a dense thicket on the crest of a hill, was posted a strong force of as hardy troops as ever fought, almost perfectly protected by the conformation of the ground, and by logs and other rude and hastily prepared defenses. To assail it an open field had to be passed, enfiladed by the fire of its batteries. No figure of speech would be too strong to express the deadly peril of assault upon this natural fortress. For five hours brigade after brigade was led against it. Hindman's brigades, which earlier had swept everything before them, were reduced to fragments, and paralyzed for the remainder of the day. A. P. Stewart's regiments made fruitless assaults. Then Bragg ordered up Gibson's brigade. Gibson himself, a knightly soldier, was aided by colonels three of whom afterward became generals. The brigade made a gallant charge; but, like the others, recoiled from the fire it encountered. Under a cross-fire of artillery and musketry it at last fell back with very heavy loss. Gibson asked that artillery should be sent him; but it was not at hand, and Bragg sent orders to charge again. The colonels thought it hopeless; but Gibson led them again to the attack, and again they suffered a bloody repulse.

The brigade was four times repulsed, but maintained its ground steadily, until W. H. L. Wallace's position was turned, when, renewing its forward movement in conjunction with Cheatham's command, it helped to drive back its stout opponents. Cheatham, charging with Stephens's brigade on Gibson's right, across an open field, had been caught under a murderous cross-fire, but fell back in good order, and, later in the day, came in on Breckinridge's left in the last assault when Prentiss was captured. This bloody fray lasted till nearly 4 o'clock, without making any visible impression on the Federal center. But when its flanks were turned, these assaulting columns, crowding in on its front, aided in its capture.

General Johnston was with the right of Statham's brigade, confronting the left of Hurlbut's division, which was behind the crest of a hill, with a depression filled with chaparral in its front. Bowen's brigade was further to the right in line with Statham's, touching it near this point. The Confederates held the parallel ridge in easy musket-range; and "as heavy fire as I ever saw during the war," says Governor Harris, was kept up on both sides for an hour or more. It was necessary to cross the valley raked by this deadly ambuscade and assail the opposite ridge in order to drive the enemy from his stronghold. When General Johnston came up and saw the situation, he said to his staff: "They are offering stubborn resistance here. I shall have to put the bayonet to them." It was the crisis of the conflict. The Federal key was in his front. If his assault were successful, their left would be completely turned, and the victory won. He determined to charge. He sent Governor Harris, of his staff, to lead a Tennessee regiment; and, after a brief conference with Breckinridge, whom he loved and admired, that officer, followed by his staff, appealed to the soldiers. As he encouraged them with his fine voice and manly bearing, General Johnston rode out in front and slowly down the line. His hat was off. His sword rested in its scabbard. In his right hand he held a little tin cup, the memorial of an incident that had occurred earlier in the day. Passing through a captured camp, he had taken this toy, saying, "Let this be my share of the spoils to-day." It was this plaything which, holding it between two fingers, he employed more effectively in his natural and simple gesticulation than most men could have used a sword. His presence was full of inspiration. He sat his thoroughbred bay, "Fire-eater," with easy command. His voice was persuasive, encouraging, and compelling. His words were few; he said: "Men! they are stubborn; we must use the bayonet." When he reached the center of the line, he turned. "I will lead you!" he cried, and moved toward the enemy. The line was already thrilling and trembling with that irresistible ardor which in battle decides the day. With a mighty shout Bowen's and Statham's brigades moved forward at a charge. A sheet of flame and a mighty roar burst from the Federal stronghold. The Confederate line withered; but there was not an instant's pause. The crest was gained. The enemy were in flight.

General Johnston had passed through the ordeal seemingly unhurt. His horse was shot in four places; his clothes were pierced by missiles; his boot-sole was cut and torn by a minie; but if he himself had received any severe wound, he did not know it. At this moment Governor Harris rode up from the right. After a few words, General Johnston sent him with an order to Colonel Statham, which having delivered, he speedily returned. In the meantime, knots and groups of Federal soldiers kept up a desultory fire as they retreated upon their supports, and their last line, now yielding, delivered volley after volley as they sullenly retired. By the chance of war, a minie-ball from one of these did its fatal work. As he sat there, after his wound, Captain Wickham says that Colonel O'Hara, of his staff, rode up, and General Johnston said to him, "We must go to the left, where the firing is heaviest,"

and then gave him an order, which O'Hara rode off to obey. Governor Harris returned, and, finding him very pale, asked him, "General, are you wounded?" He answered, in a very deliberate and emphatic tone: "Yes, and, I fear, seriously." These were his last words. Harris and Wickham led his horse back under cover of the hill, and lifted him from it. They searched at random for the wound, which had cut an artery in his leg, the blood flowing into his boot. When his brother-in-law, Preston, lifted his head, and addressed him with passionate grief, he smiled faintly, but uttered no word. His life rapidly ebbed away, and in a few moments he was dead.

His wound was not necessarily fatal. General Johnston's own knowledge of military surgery was adequate for its control by an extemporized tourniquet had he been aware or regardful of its nature. Dr. D. W. Yandell, his surgeon, had attended his person during most of the morning; but, finding a large number of wounded men, including many Federals, at one point, General Johnston had ordered Yandell to stop there, establish a hospital, and give them his services. He said to Yandell: "These men were our enemies a moment ago; they are our prisoners now. Take care of them." Yandell remonstrated against leaving him, but he was peremptory. Had Yandell remained with him, he would have had little difficulty with the wound.

Governor Harris, and others of General Johnston's staff, promptly informed General Beauregard of his death, and General Beauregard assumed command, remaining at Shiloh Church, awaiting the issue of events.

Up to the moment of the death of the commander-in-chief, in spite of the dislocation of the commands, there was the most perfect regularity in the development of the plan of battle. In all the seeming confusion there was the predominance of intelligent design; a master mind, keeping in clear view its purpose, sought the weak point in the defense, and, by massing his troops upon the enemy's left, kept turning that flank. With the disadvantage of inferior numbers, General Johnston brought to bear a superior force on each particular point, and, by a series of rapid and powerful blows, broke the Federal army to pieces.

Now was the time for the Confederates to push their advantage, and, closing in on the rear of Prentiss and Wallace, to finish the battle. But, on the contrary, there came a lull in the conflict on the right, lasting more than an hour from half-past 2, the time at which General Johnston fell. It is true that the Federals fell back and left the field, making some desultory resistance, and the Confederates went forward deliberately, occupying their positions, and thus helping to envelop the Federal center; but Breckinridge's two brigades did not make another charge that day, and there was no further general direction or concerted movement. The determinate purpose to capture Grant that day was lost sight of. The strong arm was withdrawn, and the bow remained unbent. Elsewhere there were bloody, desultory combats, but they tended to nothing.

About half-past 3 the contest, which had throbbed with fitful violence for five hours, was renewed with the utmost fury. While an ineffectual struggle was going on at the center, a number of batteries opened upon

His men "watered their horses in the Tennessee River." All now felt that the victory was won. Bragg, Polk, Hardee, Breckinridge, all the corps commanders, were at the front, and in communication. Their generals were around them. The hand that had launched the thunder-bolt of war was cold, but its influence still nerved this host and its commanders. A line of battle was formed, and all was ready for the last fell swoop, to compel an "unconditional surrender" by General Grant.

The only position on the high grounds left to the Federals was held by Colonel Webster, of Grant's staff, who had collected some twenty guns or more and manned them with volunteers. Soon after 4 o'clock Chalmers and Jackson, proceeding down the river-bank while Prentiss's surrender was going on, came upon this position. The approaches were bad from that direction; nevertheless, they attacked resolutely, and, though repeatedly repulsed, kept up their assaults till nightfall. At one time they drove some gunners from their guns, and their attack has been generally mistaken by Federal writers for the final assault of the Confederate army—*which was never made*. The Federal generals and writers attribute their salvation to the repulse of Chalmers, and the honor is claimed respectively for Webster's artillery and for Ammen's brigade of Buell's army, which came up at the last moment. But neither they nor all that was left of the Federal army could have withstood five minutes the united advance of the Confederate line, which was at hand and ready to deal the death-stroke. Their salvation came from a different quarter. Bragg, in his monograph written for the use of the writer in preparing the "Life of A. S. Johnston," gives the following account of the close of the battle:

"Concurring testimony, especially that of the prisoners on both sides,—our captured being present and witnesses to the demoralization of the enemy, and their eagerness to escape or avoid further slaughter by surrender,—left no doubt but that a persistent, energetic assault would soon have been crowned by a general yielding of his whole force. About one hour of daylight was left to us. The enemy's gun-boats, his last hope, took position opposite us in the river, and commenced a furious cannonade at our supposed position. From the elevation necessary to reach the high bluff on which we were operating, this proved 'all sound and fury signifying nothing,' and did not in the slightest degree mar our prospects or our progress. Not so, however, in our rear, where these heavy shells fell among the reserves and stragglers; and to the utter dismay of the commanders on the field, the troops were seen to abandon their inspiring work, and to retire sullenly from the contest when danger was almost past, and victory, so dearly purchased, was almost certain."

Polk, Hardee, Breckinridge, Withers, Gibson, Gilmer, and all who were there confirm this statement. General Buell says of Grant's army that there were "not more than five thousand men in ranks and available on the battlefield at nightfall. . . . The rest were either killed, wounded, captured, or scattered in inextricable and hopeless confusion for miles along the banks of the river." General Nelson describes them as "cowering under the river-bank, . . . frantic with fright and utterly demoralized."

At this crisis came from General Beauregard an order for the withdrawal of the troops, of which his chief of staff says: "General Beauregard, in the meantime, observing the exhausted, widely scattered condition of his army, directed it to be brought out of battle, collected and restored to order as far

as practicable, and to occupy for the night the captured encampments of the enemy. This, however, had been done in chief part by the officers in immediate command of the troops before the order was generally distributed." For this last allegation, or that the army was exhausted, there is not the slightest warrant. When Beauregard's staff-officer gave Bragg this order he said: "Have you promulgated this order to the command?" The officer replied: "I have." General Bragg then said: "If you had not I would not obey it. *The battle is lost.*"

The concurrent testimony of the generals and soldiers *at the front* is at one on all essential points. General Beauregard at Shiloh, two miles in the rear, with the *débris* of the army surging back upon him, the shells bursting around him, sick with his two months' previous malady, pictured in his imagination a wreck at the front, totally different from the actual condition there. Had this officer been with Bragg, and not greatly prostrated and suffering from severe sickness, I firmly believe his order would have been to advance, not to retire. And this in spite of his theory of his plan of battle, which he sums up as follows, and which is so different from General Johnston's: "By a rapid and vigorous attack on General Grant, it was expected he would be beaten back into his transports and the river, or captured in time to enable us to profit by the victory, and remove to the rear all the stores and munitions that would fall into our hands in such an event before the arrival of General Buell's army on the scene. It was never contemplated, however, to retain the position thus gained and abandon *Corinth, the strategic point of the campaign.*" Why, then, did General Beauregard stop short in his career? Sunday evening it was not a question of retaining, but of gaining, Pittsburg Landing. Complete victory was in his grasp, and he threw it away. General Gibson says: "General Johnston's death was a tremendous catastrophe. There are no words adequate to express my own conception of the immensity of the loss to our country. Sometimes the hopes of millions of people depend upon one head and one arm. The West perished with Albert Sidney Johnston, and the Southern country followed."

Monday was General Beauregard's battle, and it was well fought. But in recalling his troops from the heights which commanded the enemy's landing, he gave away a position which during the night was occupied by Buell's twenty thousand fresh troops, who thus regained the high grounds that had been won at such a cost. Lew Wallace, too, had come up 6500 strong.☆ Moreover, the orders had been conveyed by Beauregard's staff to brigades and even regiments to withdraw, and the troops wandered back over the field, without coherence, direction, or purpose, and encamped where chance provided for them. All array was lost, and, in the morning, they met the attack of nearly thirty thousand fresh and organized troops, with no hope of success except from their native valor and the resolute purpose roused by the triumph of Sunday. Their fortitude, their courage, and the free offering of their lives were equal to the day before. But it was a retreat, not an assault. They retired slowly and sullenly, shattered, but not overthrown, to Corinth, *the strategic point of General Beauregard's campaign.*

☆ General Wallace, in his report to General Halleck, says that his whole command "did not exceed 5000 men of all arms."—EDITORS.