SOME NEW BOOKS.

The March to the Sea—Franklin and Nashville.

Gen. JACOB D. COX of Ohio has published his second contribution to the history of the civil war, and his book is noticed here principally because its author, in addition to being a gentleman and a scholar, was also fortunate enough to acquire a reputation during the rebellion as one of the best of our volunteer Generals. It was, therefore, to be expected that he would not only write history truthfully and fairly, but also with such critical independence and ability as to instruct students of the military art in the right application of the principles of war to the campaigns under consideration. But this he has failed to do, for, in the higher sense, he has written neither truthful history nor sound criticism. His work is superficial, and his criticisms crude and pedantic; but, worse than all, his judgment seems to have been biassed at the outstart against Gen. Thomas and the Army of the Cumberland. The result is that he has arrayed himself covertly, but unmistakably, with Badeau and the other so-called historians who have endeavored to build up the reputation of their heroes by belittling the services of Thomas and his subordinates.

The book before us seems to have been inspired by the desire to exalt the credit of Schofield, and to make it appear that the Army of the Ohio, so called, performed services during Hood's invasion of Tennessee proportioned to the magnitude of its title; whereas all there was of the Army of the Ohio engaged in the campaign against Hood, was the Twenty-third Corps, composed of two divisions commanded respectively by Gen. Cox and Gen. Couch. In short, Schofield, during the campaign against Hood, was simply a corps commander, with no independent powers except such as fell to his lot by seniority or as the head of a military department, when he came in contact with other corps commanders in the field, during the absence of Gen. Thomas from the front. This fundamental fact should not be lost sight of by the reader for a moment, if he would avoid a distorted view of what actually took place. The Department and Army of the Ohio existed only for purposes of administration during the march to the sea and the campaign of Franklin and Nashville. The troops belonging to them were either marching with Sherman or serving in the Department of the Cumberland, under the actual control of Gen. Thomas and constituting a part of the army commanded by him. They were gallant and worthy soldiers, and did their whole duty when properly called upon; but they neither gained honor nor lost it by belonging to an independent department. Their performances during the period treated of should be considered merely as those of a constituent part of a great army, for which Grant, Sherman, and Thomas in the order named were primarily responsible, while Schofield held only a subordinate position, and was answerable to Thomas, his immediate superior, for the zeal and ability with which he obeyed orders or met the emergencies of the campaign when he was left without orders. Considered from this point of view, it is not difficult to assign to the Twenty-third Corps and its successive commanders their true share of credit and blame for the part taken by them in the events described by Gen. Cox.

It cannot be too frequently stated that when Sherman marched down to the sea he took with him the élite of the troops serving in his military division; and the fact that any organization was not selected to go with him, but was left behind, is evidence that, if infantry, it was not up to Sherman's standard of efficiency in organization and discipline, and if cavalry, that it was not properly mounted and equipped. This statement is just as true of the Twenty-third Corps as of the Fourth Corps, or the cavalry. The simple truth is, the best were taken, the inferior were left behind, and Thomas had to collect and organize the latter into an efficient force with which at the same time to resist the advance of a well-organized and thoroughly seasoned army, under one of the Confederacy's ablest and most aggressive leaders. We have before pointed out in these columns the fatuity of Sherman's proposal to move on Pensacola and the Gulf coast, and the fallacy of his march to Savannah instead of through Augusta by the shortest line to a junction with Grant; and the great and unnecessary advantage of interior lines actually left open to the rebels. We have also shown how Hood's campaign failed merely because his army lacked weight and supplies, and had to deal with the prudent and thorough Thomas, who would not fight till he had concentrated his forces, remounted his cavalry, and made all proper preparation for victory. We have called attention more than once to the urgency of the claims put forth by Sherman in his own behalf and by Badeau in behalf of Grant for the credit of devising the march to the sea, and to the further fact that had Thomas been defeated by Hood, the contention would probably have been to fix the responsibility for that march rather than to divide the honor of its conception. Cox, without going fully into details, assigns the credit to Sherman, and declares that in "thus fixing his purpose he had no assistance," adding that the purpose was "to strike for the very heart of the Confederacy," to completely "turn the tables upon the enterprising Southern General, and make his very audacity prove at once his own ruin and the ruin of the cause for which he fought." We do not doubt that Sherman was doing what he thought was for the best, and he was fairly entitled to hope for good results; but the sentence just quoted credits him with a degree of confidence, and attributes to him a clearness of vision, that he has never to our knowledge claimed for himself. The truth is, this sentence was written after the facts which justified Sherman's march had taken place, and is colored by a knowledge that neither Sherman nor the author possessed at the time referred to. It illustrates as well as any sentence we can now recall, the practice too frequently resorted to in both official reports and historical writings, by which the unforeseen and unexpected is made to appear as having been intended and duly provided for. Nothing can be more fallacious or misleading than such writing, and nothing should be more sharply condemned. We have had enough and to spare of it. There is no excuse for an author who writes hurriedly or does not take time for research, or who fails to test the statements of his own narration by the official records and the recollection of the surviving actors in the great drama. It is a truism that no one should aspire to write history without taking every possible precaution to write with absolute fidelity to the truth. When these precautions are not observed, the result is not likely to be valuable or to elucidate any question except such as may relate to the author's own services.

It is within our knowledge that in at least one instance before the publication of his book Gen. Cox was asked, by an officer capable of giving valuable information, for the privilege of correcting him, but the request was declined, in substance, for the reason that the book was already in the hands of the publisher and could not be materially changed. In view of the fact that he had sent Gen. Schofield to that officer only a few days before for corroboratory evidence in regard to claims made by Schofield touching his own conduct on the second day of the battle of Nashville, and kept his book unfinished till Schofield could be heard from, his refusal was, to say the least of it, somewhat surprising. It is understood that Gen. Cox purposely refrained from showing his narrative to any of the leading Generals concerned in it or conferring with them because he wanted to be free to express himself according to his own judgment, and to leave them free to criticise him as they might think best. Assuming this to be true, we shall proceed to show that his history abounds in misstatements, and that his criticisms in many cases are unsound and unjust, especially with reference to Thomas, and several of the Generals who served under him. We shall also show that the author at the same time persistently shuts his eyes to the glaring blunders of his immediate commander, Gen. Schofield.

A summary of the principal facts connected with Hood's advance into Tennessee, and of the efforts made by the Union forces to resist him, will make it apparent, even to the non-professional reader, that Schofield was guilty of serious mistakes, while the subordinate commanders, when left to their own resources, rarely, if ever, went astray.

It is quite clearly established by the author, from the official returns of both sides, now in the archives of the War Department, that Hood began his advance from Florence with 41,185 infantry and artillery, and 3,544 cavalry, or an aggregate of 44,729 men, and that he was joined soon after by Forrest with his cavalry corps, numbering 9,200 present, thus increasing his aggregate to 53,928; and that Thomas had an available force of only 23,813 infantry and artillery, and 5,551 cavalry, with which to resist the rebel advance. It is true that Sherman had left behind him a wide territorial command extending from the Mississippi River to the Cumberland Mountains, with a number of detachments scattered throughout this region from Clarksville and Fort Donelson to Bridgeport and Chattanooga, and that Grant, seeing that Sherman had carried away with him the most efficient part of his three armies, had ordered A. J. Smith from Missouri to join Thomas in Tennessee; but the aggregate, counting these present, for duty equipped, within reach on Nov. 20, 1864, was only 57,025, and on Dec. 10, after Smith had joined, 67,185. Bearing in mind that Hood had his entire command assembled into one compact army operating on interior lines, and that Thomas's force was widely scattered, as above stated, and could not be assembled till after the 1st of December, it will be seen that the former had a great preponderance of infantry and double the force of cavalry at every stage of the campaign up to the investment of Nashville. When it is also considered that many of Thomas's detachments had to use exterior lines in order to join the main body of his army, it will be admitted that the chances were vastly in Hood's favor. Under these circumstances, which were, or should have been, fully understood at Washington, the pressure which was thence exerted to force Thomas to fight before the arrival of A. J. Smith and the concentration of his outlying detachments, must be regarded as in absolute disregard of the first principles of the art of war. Had the War Department and Gen. Grant displayed their solicitude by hurrying Smith from Missouri, or by sending forward reinforcements, recruits, absentees, and cavalry horses, or even by urging Thomas to give up all his outlying posts and withdraw all his detachments to Nashville, and not to risk a battle till all these forces could be united with his army, their interference although unnecessary, if not impertinent, might have been excused and their anxiety turned to good account. Fortunately for the country, Thomas understood the situation perfectly. He knew also the quality of Hood's army and its fierce and coherent method of fighting. He seems to have understood more fully than his subordinates that it was the only great army besides Lee's left to uphold the Confederacy's falling fortunes, and that it would be criminal folly to attack it with an inferior force of disorganized infantry and dismounted cavalry. The more fully this question is investigated the more certain does it become that he acted wisely in determining to gain time by a strictly defensive campaign, to concentrate and organize his infantry and remount his cavalry, and not to take the offensive till he could do so with the absolute certainty of victory. In carrying out this policy, so far as was then made known, he had the absolute support of all his corps commanders. Not one of them ever ventured to advise him to follow a different course, even up to and after the very day of Hood's final overthrow. If any one thought a different course should have been adopted he concealed it in his own bosom or covertly communicated it to the authorities in Washington. The only possible chance for advantageously changing the policy adopted by Thomas was after the battle of Franklin, when a counter attack, if promptly and vigorously made, might possibly have resulted in a complete victory; but it will be remembered that Thomas was then at Nashville, and that the General in actual command of the troops was Schofield, who had no time, even if he had thought of it, to communicate with Thomas, twenty miles away, and get his orders for an advance. If the counter blow was to be struck, it was Schofield's duty to assume the responsibility and strike it vigorously, without a moment's delay, so that it might fall upon the enemy before he recovered from his confusion or had time to reform his shattered columns. Had Schofield been a great captain, and actually present on the field at the supreme moment of the conflict, he might have made a counter attack and gained a great victory; but being absent, on the north side of the Harpeth River, and out of reach of the field of battle, the supreme moment passed without its being possible for him to take advantage of it. Perhaps it is fortunate that he was absent, where he could not be tempted to venture upon a counter attack; for notwithstanding Hood's heavy losses he had still a very much larger force than Schofield had in the fight, and as it was composed of veterans not easily shaken, the chances would even then have been very much in his favor. The part of prudence was still to delay till Smith and Steadman could join, and the cavalry could be collected and remounted. That this was Schofield's opinion, as well as that of all the other corps commanders, is fortunately not a matter of doubt. On the morning of Nov. 30 Thomas concluded a telegram to Schofield as follows:

> If you can prevent Hood from turning your position at Franklin, it should be held. But I do not wish you to risk too much.

At 12 M. the same day Schofield replied:

> Your despatch of 10:25 A. M. is received. I am satisfied I have heretofore run too much risk in trying to hold Hood in check while so far inferior to him in both infantry and cavalry. The slightest mistake on my part or failure of a subordinate during the last three days might have proved disastrous. I don't want to get into such a tight place again. Yet I will cheerfully act in accordance with your views of expediency, if you think it important to hold Hood back as long as possible. When you get all your troops together and the cavalry in effective condition, we can whip Hood easily, and I believe make the campaign a decisive one. Before that, the most we can do is to husband our strength and increase it as much as possible.

This, it will be observed, was on the same day, but before the battle at Franklin had begun. Thomas asked again by telegraph immediately:

> Do you think you can hold Hood at Franklin three days longer? Answer, giving your views, and I should like to know what Wilson thinks he can do to aid you in holding Hood.

To this Schofield replied at 3 P. M.:

> I do not believe I can. I can doubtless hold him one day, but will hazard something in doing that. He now has a large force, probably two corps, in my front, and seems prepared to cross the river above and below. I think he can effect a crossing to-morrow, in spite of all my efforts, and probably to-night if he attempts it. A worse position than this for an inferior force could hardly be found. I will refer your question to Gen. Wilson this evening. I think he can do very little. I have no doubt Forrest will be in my rear to-morrow or doing some greater mischief. It appears to me that I ought to take position at Brentwood at once. If A. J. Smith and the Murfreesboro garrison join me there I ought to be able to hold Hood in check for some time. I have just learned that the enemy's cavalry is already crossing three miles below. I will have lively times with my trains again.

This was an hour before Hood began his assault, and was conclusive. Thomas at once directed Schofield to send the trains to Nashville, and to "hold the troops in readiness to march to Brentwood and thence to Nashville" as soon as the wagons were fairly on the way.

At about 4 P. M. Hood assaulted, and at 7:10 P. M. the battle was over, and Schofield telegraphed Thomas as follows:

> The enemy made a heavy and persistent attack with about two corps, commencing at 4 P. M. and lasting till after dark. He was repulsed at all points with very heavy loss—probably 5,000 or 6,000 men. Our loss is not, probably, more than one-fourth that number. We have captured about 1,000 prisoners, including one Brigadier-General. Your despatch of this P. M. is received. I had already given the orders you direct, and am now executing them.

This telegraphic correspondence shows: first—that up to the very hour of battle Thomas wanted to hold Hood back as long as possible, and Schofield thought he could not safely hold on any longer; secondly—that up to that hour Schofield agreed entirely with Thomas as to the policy of prudence and caution; thirdly—that Schofield also, up to that hour, believed in the necessity of assembling all the troops and remounting the cavalry and getting it into an "efficient condition;" fourthly—that immediately after the great victory he had gained he had not changed his mind, and did not recommend an offensive movement, but before the receipt of Thomas's orders—issued prior to the victory and in ignorance of it—had begun the retreat to Brentwood and Nashville.

So far there is not the slightest evidence of a divergence of opinion between Schofield and Thomas. On the contrary, they were in perfect accord as to the policy to be pursued, and that policy was to get back slowly, concentrate the entire force, remount the cavalry and put it into an "efficient condition," and then fight to win.

The questions arise, when did the difference of opinion begin, what was it based upon, and who was right, Schofield or Thomas? We shall endeavor to answer these questions further on, but before doing so let us consider the circumstances of Schofield's retreat from Columbia to Franklin, as they will doubtless throw a strong light upon the characteristics of both Thomas and Schofield, showing that the former was farsighted and wise, swift withal to move when necessary, and slow only to become alarmed and stampeded, or to take risks which prudence forbade, while the latter was sluggish, unready, and stupidly imprudent even in the presence of the greatest danger. It is curious that all the corps and division commanders except Gen. Cox should have discerned and commented upon this long before Schofield wrote his letter of Sept. 15, 1880, or the author had prepared and published the volume now under consideration.

On the 27th of November, Schofield having become convinced that Hood, then confronting him at Columbia, would begin an advance immediately, withdrew almost all of his infantry to a position on the north side of Duck River. The cavalry force under Wilson had already taken up its position on the north side of that river, and was watching all the crossings for a considerable distance up and down the stream. In the afternoon of the 28th Wilson's pickets discovered and reported that the enemy were crossing about five miles above Columbia. This was promptly reported to Gen. Schofield, and Wilson at once moved out with his escort in person to verify the information and take such further action as circumstances might require. The afternoon and night were crowded with events and information. It was soon discovered, as was to be expected, that the rebel advance could not be checked at the river, and that it would be necessary for the cavalry to abandon that line and call in the detachments preparatory to falling back. Accordingly Wilson, with considerable trouble, succeeded in assembling his force at Hurt's Cross Roads, on the Lewisburg turnpike, by or before 10 o'clock that night. As soon as he had concluded that the rebel advance had begun in earnest, he notified Schofield by courier of his own movements and intentions, as well as those of the rebels, so far as he could make them out. The conduct of this officer during the 28th and 29th of November has been criticised and misrepresented; hence we have taken the trouble to consult the records in regard to it. We find that at 10 P. M. of the 28th he notified Schofield that he had succeeded in concentrating his command on the Lewisburg pike, the rebel cavalry having forced a crossing of the Duck River at Davis Ford and driven in his detachments. This despatch concludes as follows:

> The force of the enemy is believed to be all of Forrest's command, moving in this direction. The orderly who left your headquarters late this evening * * * saw nothing of the enemy moving toward the Franklin pike. He is evidently aiming for this road or Murfreesboro. The Sixth Illinois is at Chapel Hill to-night, having found no enemy at Shelbyville. I have sent for them to come here at once, and have also sent a party to Spring Hill for Col. Stewart's and Gen. Hammond's brigades. I'll communicate from here again as soon as the movements of the enemy can be determined. Prisoners say Hood is going to flank us on one side or the other.

He was not kept long in suspense, for, although the night was very dark and the country covered with cedar brakes, was a difficult one to get through, the entire cavalry force was on the alert, and quite a number of rebels were taken prisoners and brought in. The cavalry commander, as was his duty, examined each one in person, and by midnight or shortly after had satisfied himself of the enemy's movements and plans. At 1 o'clock A. M., Nov. 29, he sent Gen. Schofield from Hurt's Cross Roads, on the Lewisburg pike, the following message in triplicate by couriers:

> I have a prisoner who came with Gen. Forrest from Columbia. The rebel cavalry (Buford's, Chalmers', and Jackson's divisions, a part of Reddy's division, and Biffle's regiment, Forrest's escort) crossed Duck River by swimming above Huey's Mill. Forrest himself left Columbia at 4:30 P. M. The whole (of Hood's) infantry were then expecting to march. They were building three pontoon bridges just above Huey's when my prisoner crossed; expected to be ready by 10 o'clock to-night. The whole rebel cavalry force, except Buford's division, is encamped near Widow Shannon's to-night—on the Columbia and Shelbyville pike. Buford is in my front, about Rally Hill. I think it very clear that they are aiming for Franklin, and that you ought to get to Spring Hill by 10 A. M.
>
> I will keep on this road and resist the enemy all I can. If I had Hammond and Stewart here, I think they could not make anything till their infantry caught up. Communicate with me by Thompson's Station or Spring Hill, and thence eastward. I'll try to get no further back to-morrow than the Ridge Meeting House, due east from Thompson's, on this road. I shall probably leave this pike there, and move toward Nashville.
>
> Another prisoner confirms the above. Jackson's division is also at or near Rally Hill. There may be no strong advance of the enemy's cavalry till the infantry has crossed, which will be between now and daylight. Get back to Franklin without delay, leaving a small force to detain the enemy. The rebels will move by this road to-wards that point.

At 3 A. M. the cavalry commander sent Gen. Thomas at Nashville the substance of the foregoing despatch. The following are extracts:

> I have kept Gen. Schofield fully informed—and at 1 A. M. sent him the information above, advising him to get back to Franklin at once. * * * I am sure from what prisoners tell me that the enemy is aiming for Nashville via Franklin. His present direction, the location of his bridges, and all the circumstances point clearly to that conclusion.

At least two copies of the despatch of 1 A. M. reached Schofield by or before 3 A. M., and not "after daylight," as stated by Gen. Cox. On the receipt of the first, Major J. A. Campbell, his Chief of Staff, read it to Schofield, whom he aroused from sleep for that purpose, without apparently producing any impression. After waiting a short time for Schofield's instructions, Campbell said, "Gen. Wilson says there is not an hour to lose." Whereupon Schofield replied, "It is not a question of hours, but of minutes, and I am considering what is best to be done." It will be remembered that at 3½ A. M. Thomas, who had also been kept duly informed by Gen. Wilson of everything he learned, telegraphed Schofield:

> I desire you to fall back from Columbia, and take up your position at Franklin, leaving a sufficient force at Spring Hill to contest the enemy's progress until you are securely posted at Franklin.

With all this information, and it is difficult to imagine how more or better information could have been wished for or obtained, with the urgent suggestion to Schofield that he should get back to Spring Hill by 10 o'clock, and with the positive orders from Thomas to the same effect, Schofield's delay is inexplicable, and indeed neither he nor Gen. Cox has ever given a rational explanation of it. The author shows that Schofield had become convinced on the 27th that Hood would turn his position at Columbia, and cross Duck River either above or below him; and that to be ready for such a movement the Union forces crossed to the north side of the river on that day. There was nothing whatever to prevent a further retirement toward Franklin, but every consideration of prudence demanded that such a movement should begin the very moment it became certain that Hood had thrown his cavalry to the north side of the river. At that time Wilson's forces on that flank did not exceed 4,500 men, while Forrest's entire corps, at least 10,000 strong, according to the figures given by the author, was in his front. Instead of falling back with his entire force, Schofield sent Stanley's division to Spring Hill, and began a reconnoissance after 8 o'clock A. M., with a portion of his remaining infantry, to verify the information sent him several hours before. Fortunately Stanley, a most capable and gallant soldier, reached Spring Hill before the head of Hood's columns, and taking up a favorable position, compelled the latter to delay his further advance and to develop his lines. A sharp fight took place, but Stanley, making a great show of his slender forces, firmly held his ground. Meanwhile Schofield was loitering twelve miles in the rear, and did not begin to withdraw the bulk of his command from its perilous position till after nightfall of the 29th, or over sixteen hours after Wilson had told him exactly what the rebels would do and did do, and what he ought to do to avoid all unnecessary peril.

Why or how Hood let such a splendid opportunity to annihilate his opponent slip by unimproved is still one of the mysteries of the rebellion. He put the principal blame upon Cheatham, commanding his leading corps, and whom he ordered after dark to take position on the turnpike, along which Schofield must pass in order to reach Franklin, and bar it. The most reasonable explanation of his failure to do this is that Cheatham did not receive this order till after Schofield had marched by him and reached a position of safety. It has been stated by Federal officers, who got it from rebel citizens a few days later, that Cheatham was on a visit to a lady of his acquaintance during the night, and that his Adjutant-General endeavored to carry the order into effect, but could not do so. This statement was corroborated to us by no less a person than Gen. Forrest. But, whether true or not, the fact remains that Hood lost the fruits of his brilliant turning movements twelve miles to the rear of Schofield by the absence or incompetence of Cheatham, and the Union army was thereby enabled to escape with but trifling loss. The author touches all of this very lightly, and it is worthy of note that he has no word of condemnation, nor even of criticism, for Schofield. He suppresses Gen. Wilson's despatches, criticises him for falling back upon the Lewisburg pike toward Franklin, and says he should have gone to Spring Hill instead, by the turnpike leading from Rally Hill to that place.

Now let us consider this proposition. In the first place, there is no turnpike from Rally Hill to Spring Hill; the road was at that time a common earth road, and a poor one at that. The Lewisburg turnpike, passing through Hurt's Cross Roads, at which Wilson had concentrated his command, runs nearly north to Franklin, and is the first broad hard road east of the Franklin and Columbia turnpike, upon which Schofield's entire force of infantry was supposed to be marching. Had Wilson abandoned the Lewisburg turnpike, in face of the information he had obtained and had sent to Schofield, there is no room to doubt that Forrest would have taken possession of it and moved rapidly to Franklin, arriving there before either Wilson or Schofield could possibly do so. That Wilson was right in his conclusion is shown clearly by the fact that Forrest attacked him on the Lewisburg turnpike early on the morning of the 29th, and pressed heavily upon him, by a preponderance of force, first turning one flank and then the other, till late in the day. Finding it impossible to drive Wilson from that road, or to get on it in his rear, and that every foot of the rebel march was stubbornly contested, Forrest turned off under cover of the dense woods abreast of Spring Hill, and moved to that place, about five miles away. Had he found the Lewisburg turnpike uncovered, it is reasonable to suppose that he would have notified Hood, who could also have turned his columns to it and moved rapidly toward Franklin. As it was, with Wilson marching upon it and holding it, and Schofield on the Columbia turnpike, there was nothing for the rebel leader to do but to cajole Schofield into holding on at Columbia, which he did, while he moved the mass of his army to Schofield's rear by the earth roads to Spring Hill. The manœuvres of Hood in carrying out this plan were excellent, and were executed with great precision, but his own corps commanders failed him when victory was within his grasp. Finally, it will be observed that the despatches quoted above suggested to Schofield just how to communicate with Wilson during the 29th, and if he did not approve that officer's determination to cover the Lewisburg pike, it was entirely practicable, and fully within his province to send him orders to move on and cover Spring Hill, as Cox thinks he should have done, even without orders. In view of the fact, however, that Stanley had gone to that place, and Schofield had an unobstructed road to it, such orders for the cavalry would have been strategically wrong, inasmuch as it has been shown that they would have left the best road open to Franklin, a place of far greater strategic importance than Spring Hill. In consideration of all the circumstances, the country may well be thankful that Schofield did not interfere with the cavalry, and that Cox did not have the opportunity of imposing his ideas of strategy upon its commander. They would have put the cavalry in front of Hood's infantry, while most practical soldiers will agree with us that Schofield's infantry should have been in that place. Had Wilson's suggestions and Thomas's positive orders been promptly acted upon by Schofield, the perils of Spring Hill would have been entirely avoided, and ample time would have been gained to take position at Franklin and fortify it, or at least to so place his troops in position in front of it as to enable them to resist the assault which overwhelmed Wagner and, but for the timely and heroic advance of Opdycke, would have swept our entire infantry line from the field.

This brings us to a consideration of the battle of Franklin, the details of which we must omit, but the salient points of which must be mentioned in order that the reader may understand wherein the author is at fault. It will be remembered that all the infantry of Schofield's command had taken position at that place before noon of Nov. 30, and that two brigades of Wagner's division were left to take up a position about a half mile outside of the principal line; that when the rebels advanced to the assault, they speedily overthrew these outlying brigades, and, following close upon the heels of their flying opponent, with great impetuosity rushed upon and captured that portion of our main defensive line in rear of the outlying force; and that Opdycke, without waiting for orders, dashed forward with his gallant brigade, from a position in the rear, and reestablished our line. Cox lays the whole blame of the enemy's first success upon Wagner, and while it cannot be contended that he was blameless for holding on instead of retiring, the natural inquiry arises, Why did not Schofield, the army commander, or Cox, the commander of the corps to which Wagner was attached, see that Wagner's brigades, as well as the rest of the army, were properly formed and posted to resist an assault? The author states that Wagner was left where he was, to "remain in observation only till Hood should show a disposition to advance in force, and then to retire within the lines to Opdycke's position and act as a general reserve." If these instructions were given, it was clearly Wagner's duty to obey them; but it was to a still greater degree Cox and Schofield's duty to see that he obeyed them. The instructions, however, were entirely wrong. Two brigades were too many troops "to remain in observation" in front of a fortified position, from any point of which the rebel army could be plainly seen. Two companies properly employed in picketing the approaches to the Union lines would have been ample to give timely warning, if any had been needed, of the enemy's advance. Nobody should have known better than Schofield that all military precedent was opposed to such a disposition of Wagner's division, or that the authorities have given warning after warning against posting a force in front of a position to be defended so large that, when overthrown, the attacking force would be able to enter the defences with it after throwing it into confusion by a successful assault. This mistake has been made a thousand times, and it gave the enemy in this case just the advantage necessary to insure his success. Cox has no word of censure for himself or Schofield; yet it is absolutely certain that Schofield, instead of riding his lines to see that his troops were properly disposed, rode through the town of Franklin and established himself two miles in rear of where they must fight, if they were attacked, leaving his most important duties to be performed by Cox, his second in command, who also failed to give proper attention to the formation of the troops to resist the impending attack. He admits that Wagner's brigades sent word at 3 o'clock (fully an hour before the battle actually began) that the enemy were forming "at the foot of the hills in heavy force," but claims that he reiterated "to Gen. Wagner the directions already given him," namely, to remain in observation only till Hood should show a disposition to advance. If Hood's "formation in heavy force" did not show a "disposition to advance," it is difficult to imagine what it did show; and hence it is difficult to imagine why Wagner should remain any longer in observation. These statements are incoherent and absurd. If the facts are as stated by Cox, and we doubt it, instead of reiterating the orders to Wagner "to remain in observation," he should have ordered him to retire at once to the main line and not wait for the enemy to attack. The orders "to remain in observation," if they meant anything under the circumstances as described, meant that Wagner's brigades should stay where they were, and this they did. So the responsibility for that blunder was Cox's and no one else's, while the blunder of leaving Wagner "in observation" was Schofield's first and Cox's afterward. But this is not the end of Schofield's blunders. He blundered most seriously in dividing his army, and putting one part on the north to fight a battle, and the other on the south side of the Harpeth River. He also blundered in taking up a position two miles to the rear of any possible battlefield. The author justifies him in this by stating that Schofield's "headquarters not only commanded a view of the field but were nearest the bridges by which communication was kept up, and where alone he could see the cavalry demonstrations on the left, where Wilson and Forrest were already engaged." We happen to know that it did not command a view of the ground upon which Wilson and Forrest were engaged, for that view was then and is doubtless to-day obstructed by a plentiful growth of trees; but whether it did or not is immaterial, since no order which Schofield could have sent over so great a distance could have reached them in time or been of the slightest advantage to Wilson or Cox, and still less to Opdycke after the action had begun. But Opdycke, who had been stationed at Franklin for months in 1863, and had ridden his picket line in front of that town nightly, says that everything in front, clear to the forest, in which Hood prepared for the attack, was best and easiest seen from Carter's Hill on the south side of the river, immediately in rear of the line of battle.

We do not propose going into the details of the battle, nor to discuss the relative value of the services rendered by the officers present, but merely to point out that Cox has evidently changed his own mind in regard to that matter. The purpose of his account of that battle is apparently to relieve Schofield from blame and to divide the honors about equally between Opdycke and White; but we are informed that immediately after the broken line was restored Cox rode to Opdycke, and, shaking him warmly by the hand, said: "Opdycke, that charge saved the day," and that in 1876, and finally only a few days before the publication of his book, he reiterated this statement in letters, which can be produced whenever necessary to support the truth of this averment. In view of the further fact that Schofield has been heard repeatedly to say that Opdycke was one of the bravest men and best soldiers it was ever his good fortune to meet, it is difficult to understand why either Cox or Schofield should now wish to qualify the unstinted praise they gave to Opdycke in the days before either of them began to write history. Can it be that his energetic protest against an order received by him to go into position with Wagner's two advanced brigades, or the disposition manifested by him to tell the actual facts of that campaign, have in any way modified the favorable opinions of Cox and Schofield in regard to him? Be this as it may, the publication of his vigorous and exhaustive monograph in the *New York Times* upon the campaign now under consideration, and its republication, enlarged and in permanent form, is likely, in conjunction with Van Horn's "Life of Thomas," to throw a flood of light upon all points in controversy in regard to the retreat from Columbia and the battle of Franklin, if not entirely to settle them. It settles for good and all the fact that Opdycke made his advance at the critical moment of that battle without orders from any one and entirely on his own responsibility, and remained in ignorance for several days that any orders had been sent him, as alleged by Cox. It is worthy of remark that Schofield, in his official report and Cox, in the volume before us, omit to mention the important fact that the defeat of Forrest by Wilson, occurring simultaneously with the defeat of Hood, enabled Schofield to withdraw from his perilous position without molestation, and that had Wilson been defeated and driven back, Schofield would have been in great danger of losing his entire force, notwithstanding the bloody repulse of Hood.

We have hitherto, in the review of Van Horn's "Life of Thomas," shown how the final victory over Hood was gained at Nashville mainly by the precision with which Smith, Wood, Steadman, and Wilson cooperated with each other in carrying out the admirable plan of battle conceived and adopted by Gen. Thomas. In these operations an important part was assigned to Schofield; but, through an excess of caution or a lack of celerity in his movements, he failed to do what was reasonably to be expected of him, and finally saw the victory won by those who had taken the place left open for him, in the grand turning movement, so happily crowned by an overwhelming victory on the second day of the battle. It is therefore unnecessary for us to dwell longer upon the narrative relating to these events. It should not be forgotten, however, that the delay which Thomas insisted upon making, after the concentration of his army at Nashville, first in order to remount and put the cavalry into an "efficient condition," as approved by Schofield the day before, and later because of ice and inclement weather, gave rise to great dissatisfaction on the part of Gen. Grant and the Washington authorities with Gen. Thomas. The story has been told over and over again, and at last the truth has been fully brought out in Van Horn's "Life of Thomas." We therefore advert to it here only for the purpose of calling attention to the fact that it is now claimed by Schofield that he did not approve the delay. And the tone of the narrative now before us shows that Cox has also concluded that the facts thus far developed from both sides tend to justify the impatience at Washington as to the delays between the 1st and 15th of December. So far as Schofield is concerned, the foregoing analysis of the facts shows that if he had changed his mind as to the policy of concentrating the army and remounting the cavalry it must have taken place after only one of these essential objects had been attained. When the cavalry reached Nashville it did not number over 6,000, mounted, equipped, and present for duty. Ten days thereafter it numbered nearly 12,000 mounted, including Lagrange's brigade of McCook's division, then absent in Kentucky in pursuit of Crossland's rebel brigade, and over 1,500 dismounted, but armed and equipped and serving as infantry. It must therefore be that Schofield had changed his mind as to the necessity of getting the cavalry into an "efficient condition," or that he was ready to attack without their help, and in spite of the ice and bad weather. Whatever may have been the cause or occasion of this change of opinion, it is, according to his own statement, certain that neither he nor any one else made it known to Gen. Thomas or the world till long after complete and overwhelming victory had indicated the wisdom of Thomas's policy.

The author gives great praise to Gen. Wilson for his management of the campaign into central Alabama and Georgia, and especially for the capture of Selma and the defeat of Forrest, after another delay which had enabled him to increase the cavalry to 17,000 men mounted and 10,000 dismounted, and to still further increase its efficiency by drill, equipment, and organization; but, true to his disposition to criticise the subordinates and to spare those in authority over him, he says: "The march to Macon had none of the military significance of the brilliant and instructive campaign against Forrest. In a strategic point of view, it was a departure from the sound principles which had guided the preceding part of the campaign. Two-thirds of Forrest's corps was still intact between the Cahawba and the Tombigbee Rivers, and Mobile was not yet taken. His true objective was west and south, and not east and north." Let us consider this statement. It should be remembered that Wilson had already defeated Forrest and eviscerated central Alabama, destroying the last and most important Confederate depot for the manufacture of military munitions; that he was cut off from all communication with the north; that, so far as he knew or could learn, Lee's army was still intact, and that the great and final battle of the war must of necessity be fought "east and north" of him, and not south and west. He knew and had notified Canby by courier that the war was substantially over in Alabama, and that he could safely march inland and leave Mobile to fall of itself; he also knew that to march "west and south" would take him out of, instead of into, the last great theatre of war; that Forrest and Dick Taylor were alike powerless to do him essential harm, and that their only chance to serve the Confederacy would be by going to North Carolina, and Virginia also, if possible to get there. He knew that Montgomery, West Point, Columbus, Macon, Milledgeville, and Augusta, and most of the rich region between the Alabama and the Oconee, had so far escaped the hand of punishment; and finally, that Sherman, in marching to the sea, had spared them, except from the harmless spoliation of the bummer. In view of all this, it will probably be admitted that it was again fortunate that the cavalry commander was left free to exercise the discretion of an independent commander rather than to be compelled to take his ideas of strategy from the author of the volume before us. It will not be forgotten that Gen. Grant, with a truer appreciation of where the final struggle was to be, had already ordered Schofield and Cox, by rail and sea, to North Carolina, "east and north," instead of leaving them free to go "south and west." Wilson's campaign resulted in the capture of all the cities above named, as well as of many guns and prisoners, and in the destruction of immense quantities of cotton and military supplies, besides the paroling of 59,000 rebel soldiers, and the capture of the President, Vice-President, and other high officers of the Confederacy. The testimony of Gen. Johnston, Beauregard, and Hardee, as to the hopelessness of longer continuing the struggle in face of this destruction was within the reach of intelligent research, and is conclusive as to the soundness of the principles which guided Wilson in the course he adopted.

Finally, the testimony of the distinguished English military critic, Col. Chesney, as to the value of the lesson taught by the reorganization of the cavalry in the West, and of the services rendered by it in the closing days of the rebellion, is much more worthy of consideration than the ill-considered criticisms of Cox and Badeau. Col. Chesney says in substance (we quote from memory) that the history of the organization and services of the cavalry corps of the Military Division of the Mississippi, under Gen. Wilson, constitutes the most valuable military lesson of modern times, and, while this is high praise, we submit that, coming from the source it does, it is worthy of the thoughtful consideration of military students.

Toward the end of his volume the author states that Mr. Stanton, after the war was over, gave evidence of his sorrow for setting aside Sherman's agreement with Johnston, but fails to point out what that evidence was. The statement is not in accordance with the fact. It is well known and established that Stanton acted on a carefully considered purpose, and never retracted it. He was determined, and so was Mr. Lincoln, that the final terms made with the rebellion and its leaders should be made by the civil Government, and not by the Generals. He was resolved that there should not be after the war any military coterie assuming to rule the country Mexican fashion. Sherman and Johnston's celebrated articles of capitulation were political quite as much as military; in fact, more so, and it was therefore promptly and most properly knocked in the head by the great Secretary of War. It is now equally certain that Mr. Lincoln was in perfect harmony with Mr. Stanton in that view of the whole subject.

Gen. Cox's book has a number of minor faults, and, as already shown, is not free from serious errors, and we regret therefore that want of space compels us to draw this notice to a conclusion. It would require a volume almost as large as the one before us for the exposure of all its shortcomings, inaccuracies, and misrepresentations. The maps, as well as the plans of battles, are nearly as bad as they can be—so bad, indeed, that it would have been better to omit several of them entirely for any help the reader can get from them in following the text. It is not to be denied that Gen. Cox has a pleasing and animated style, and is a gentleman of excellent attainments. He was, withal, fairly successful as a division and corps commander, but it will be some time before he can justly claim the rank of a first-class strategist, or of a fair, impartial, and trustworthy historian. J. H. W.

A Life of Charles H. Spurgeon.

The most conspicuous figure among the living English preachers who stand outside the pale of the Established Church is unquestionably Charles H. Spurgeon, and a great many persons in this country will be glad to have some authentic and detailed information about the distinguished pulpit orator and philanthropist. A sketch of his *Life and Labors* has been compiled by GEORGE C. NEEDHAM, and published in Boston by D. L. Guernsey. The materials have been drawn partly from a biography by Mr. Stevenson, and partly from Mr. Spurgeon's letters and writings. A somewhat indiscriminate tone of eulogy pervades the book, and impartial readers will value it less for the editor's comments than for the tolerably full and satisfactory account of a remarkable man.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon was born in the village of Kelvenon, in Essex, on June 19, 1834. He was of an old non-conformist family which could trace its descent straight down from the Independents who, under Cromwell, became the dominant religious sect in England. His grandfather was the pastor of an Independent church at Stanbourne, in Essex, and his father, John Spurgeon, who was engaged in business at Colchester until he had reached the prime of life, subsequently entered the ministry. The boy Charles received no college instruction, but, at the age of eleven, was sent to a school at Colchester,