supposed and presumed they were originally intended to be—active offensive movements—to the slower but not less effective advances of a regular siege, is apparent to those who look upon the scenes as they transpire, if not so plain to those who in the distance judge from hearsay. His later movements have been made upon evidence, strong and convincing, of the strength of the enemy in his position at Corinth. These reports have been obtained from numerous deserters, one of whom, a topographical engineer, has furnished a map of the works and a full statement of the rebel force. This latter statement has received hundreds of confirmations. Desertions are numerous enough to satisfy any one of the demoralized condition of Beauregard's forces. But at the same time such is his strength, such his force, so strong his position, that General Halleck has determined to bring on no general engagement.

THE REBEL FORCE AT CORINTH.

I had hoped to get you a full statement of the different divisions of the five grand *corps d'armee* of the rebel general in chief. Such a statement is in camp, and is mine by promise; but the party promising it has not been enabled, up to this time, to give it to me, and I am compelled, consequently, to defer sending it. It will state that the five corps are nearly equal in strength, each corps being subdivided into three grand divisions, each of which contains three brigades, averaging about two thousand men, and making the whole effective force of Beauregard about 90,000. His army consists of not less than seven formerly distinct armies, at different times operating in districts far remote from each other, but now concentrated for the purpose, as they assert, of driving Halleck into the Tennessee, and pushing the war beyond the Ohio, and in this delusive hope they have followers who indulge; but nobody suspects Beauregard of indulging in it. The seven armies which I have stated as thus concentrated are those of Bishop Polk, Crittenden, Bragg, Lovell, Van Dorn' Price, and that formerly commanded by A. Sidney Johnston. The great army, of Bowling Green which, for such a length of time, kept central Kentucky in terror, is now commanded, at least one division of it, by Major General John C. Breckinridge, who was nominated to that position for his gallant conduct at Shiloh. In the corps of General Bragg there is the Pensacola army, with Anderson in command of one division and Brooks commanding another, composed of Tennessee recruits and impressed men. Brooks is a Tennessee State Major General, and raised his troops under Harris' last call. He is of small calibre. Polk, Price, Van Dorn, Lovell and Crittenden have about the same organizations as formerly. The organization of this force into five corps is rather a weakness than a strength added to it. The *corps d'armee* will not number more than 18,000 men each, if so many, and it is pretty nearly positively ascertained that their whole force will not aggregate over 95,000 or 100,000 men. The brigades of four and five regiments do not aggregate 2,000 effectives. It was said that the impressed men were forced into incomplete regiments, and no new ones were being formed; but this, if true, will not bring them up to the maximum. The regiments may average 500 men, but it is doubtful.

We have two rumors in regard to rebel commanders. One is that Beauregard has gone East, leaving Bragg as the senior Major General in command; but this is doubtful. In going to the East Beauregard could obtain no superior command, as both Lee and Johnston are his superiors. He is now, since Johnston's death, the fourth General in rank in the confederacy—Cooper, Lee and Johnston ranking him. The other is that Price is dead—killed at the battle of Farmington; but there is no telling this for the truth. Price may be dead or may not be. We only know that his corps is on the right of the enemy, forming their right wing for the defence of the approach via the Farmington and Corinth roads, and that he is antagonistic to Pope's corps and will have to fight Sigel and Jeff. Davis, whose divisions have just taken position on the left of Pope and at Farimngton. If you have a Stanton censor in your compositors' room who objects to the last portion of the preceding sentence, please remind him that the Cairo special correspondents to the Western papers have stated, over and over again, that reinforcements are being sent here, naming the regiments even. It will do no harm to tell that these reinforcements are Davis' and Sigel's divisions. Will it not rather create dismay in the rebel ranks of Price to find that they are again to fight the men who turned the scale at Pea Ridge and drove them from Missouri, and is it not a neat bit of poetical justice that these old enemies should meet again!

THE REBEL FORTIFICATIONS BEFORE CORINTH.

I am told this forest in which we now are, and in which we have been since Pittsburg Landing, was left in the rear, and the horrors of its battle field no longer present to the eye, is almost interminable, and as far as it concerns General Halleck's movements, might as well be absolutely so. It extends, dense, dark and boundless as it is, to the outer works of the rebels (which are one and a half mile from Corinth), and, felled for some distance in their front, forms a terrible abattis and formidable barrier to our approach. The rebels intend to fight behind their works. There is no doubt of this—General Bragg has said so—and our near approach would have doubtless tempted them from their works sooner had they intended to make an attack. They have consequently strengthened their works so as to render them as formidable as possible. In default of a ground plan, and dispensing with the aid of the woodcutter, let me try and give you an idea of these defences.

Imagine a road—a country road such as are usually designated as dirt roads—running from Farmington to Corinth, five miles in length, and running nearly due east and west. Farmington is east from Corinth, and on the map this road runs in the direction I have stated, varying its course, however, to glide around ridges, to avoid swamps and to avoid the necessity of bridge building. Then imagine a road running from Purdy to Corinth—a road of the same character—and as its course is due south from Purdy, it runs, of course, at right angles with the Farmington and Corinth road, the latter point being that of the convergence of the two roads. A third road must be fixed in the mind. It runs from Corinth northeast through Monterey to Pittsburg Landing, and is known as the "Main Corinth road," or the "Ridge road to Corinth." As the former is the name in common use in the army, I shall call it by that name. At a point on the Farmington road two miles and a half, or thereabouts, the road is crossed by a small stream, called "Seven Mile Creek," and which extends to beyond the Purdy road, at distances from Corinth varied at from one and a half to three miles. Its head waters are in the ridges west of Corinth, and it makes almost a complete semi-circle about this little city of rebeldom. This stream is perhaps not more than five feet in width at its widest point, and not over two feet in depth—not a very formidable stream behind which to build works you will say. But on either side of this stream there stretches a swamp as wide as Broadway, and as miry as were the roads to Manassas during the winter solstice, so memorable as the season in which "all was quiet on the Potomac." This swamp is represented to be similar to those which we have left in our rear, and which, I venture to say, have no counterpart in creation. It is impossible to cross them without bridging them. A horse sinks to his knees, flounders, exerts himself, and at last ceases his efforts to find himself up to his hips in the mire. After one has been bridged, or corduroyed, for the second or third time, a caisson, or ammunition wagon, or even a piece of artillery, may succeed in crossing them. Such is the natural moat or ditch in front of the rebel works at Corinth.

The aim has been, of course, to strengthen the works at the points of advance by the three roads. On their right, at a point two miles and a half on the Farmington and Corinth road, or equi-distant between the two places, the rebels have built forts and breastworks to defend that approach. Lunettes and demi-lunes in front of immense bastions frown upon the road, while breastworks of every description have been thrown up in front of these to enable the protected sharpshooters to harass our gunners. In these forts are mounted the largest guns used in field operations—thirty-two pounders, I believe; but it is not true that they have larger guns, as has been stated. At the point of crossing of the swamp by the Pittsburg Landing or main Corinth road, they have erected other forts, and on the Purdy and Corinth there are similar forts. These works are of the most substantial character; the ditches deep and steep; the moat or swamp such as I have described; the breastworks strongly rivetted, and in some cases sodded. The three forts, or series of forts, guarding these approaches are connected one with another by continuous rifle pits and occasional batteries. These are represented to be of a most formidable character, and will give General Halleck considerable trouble to reduce them. The camps have all been retired within the works, and "Seven Mile creek" is unmolested, save by the occasional rencontres of rebel and loyal pickets and scouts.

THE SIEGE BEGINS.

And now what can I say of Gen. Halleck's movements and position that will not be contraband? Two months nearly gone since the great fight fifteen miles in our rear, and what has been accomplished? Let us see. A new army has been organized. You know all that I do of that organization. You know all that I know of Pope's arrival. The army which fought on Sunday and was defeated has been reorganized, and, under Major General G. H. Thomas, as the Army of West Tennessee, it now forms the right wing of the Army of the Southwest And the Kentucky army of Gen. Buell, minus two divisions and a brigade. Thomas' old division added to his new corps, Mitchel's operating in North Alabama and Negley's brigade in Central Tennessee, the old Kentucky army still under Buell, and still called the Army of the Ohio, now forms the centre. On the left is Pope with his Army of the Mississippi, which has lately been reinforced by those divisions of Sigel and Davis, which formerly belonged to it, have been operating with Curtis, and with a grand army in the rear under Gen. McClernand the force is completely named. With these troops in their several respective positions as named, General Halleck has slowly marched forward until he has assumed his present position and has thrown up his works and began the siege. The advance has been slow. I know no reason for it. I need not detail that march. I need not tell how it advanced as if in line of battle. There is no necessity for explaining how each corps—each division—became connected by telegraph with the headquarters of General Halleck, and he watched the progress with anxiety, beholding everything at a glance. The topographical engineers, taking advantage of every advance, mapped the country and laid it before the master mind in his quarters in the rear. And then it became necessary to change the base of operations, and the whole line deflected to the left until they came within four miles of Corinth; and then again deflecting to the right, after an armed reconnoissance along the whole line on May 20, threw up their first line of intrenchments, one and a half miles from the outer works of the rebels and within three miles of Corinth.

THE FIRST PARALLEL.

When the first works were thrown up the right of General Thomas—the right wing—rested on the Purdy road, and his left on the main Corinth road. Buell's right was on the main Corinth road, and extended to Pope's right—the latter's left resting one mile from Farmington, on the Farmington and Hamburg road, a continuation of the Corinth and Farmington road. The advance was made, and the position being found secure and tenable, the work of intrenching began. With their arms stacked near and the artillery in position, the whole line went to work and had soon completed its labors. One who has not watched the process can have no idea how soon a regiment will intrench its entire line. The great sapling trees are felled with a rapidity that is astonishing, and practiced woodsmen ply the axe upon the fallen trees, cutting them to the correct length, as busy hands place the timbers in their position. The brushwood is piled upon it, and the spades and shovels quickly bury the mass in the clay and soil thrown up from the rear. This is the side that Pillow was accused of ditching upon; but I imagine the renegade old rascal knew what he was about. You have no idea how strong these works are after they have had a few hours to settle. A six-pounder would hardly penetrate a foot, if discharged at only half a mile distance. At the right of each brigade (except that on the extreme right), a battery of artillery was to be looked to, and the infantry regiments on either side of them had the labor to perform. In some instances mere breastworks were thrown up, but in most cases neat, strong and extensive demi lune forts have been constructed with embrazures for the six pieces. This gives an enfilading fire which the rebels will find quite dangerous should they conclude to attack. Siege guns were also put in position, the telegraph connected the different headquarters, the camps were moved forward, and peaceable possession taken of the new position. Peaceable! I was looking for "Agate," of the Cincinnati *Gazette*, in the camp of the Fourteenth Ohio, when a shell took off the top of Colonel Steadman's tent, and exploded fifty feet from us. You could have heard the Colonel order the boys to "fall in" had you been at Corinth. But that was the only disturbance of our peace which I saw or of which I heard.

THE SECOND PARALLEL.

But we rested in peace only a day. Our generals disturbed us this time, and another advance was ordered. We had been encamped two regiments deep behind the first parallel—that is, a brigade formed in camp in a square of four regiments. But when we rested behind the second works I found we had advanced a quarter of a mile further forward, more than that distance to the right, and now all fronted the line. General Sherman's works extended beyond the Purdy road. General Buell's right, General Wood's division, crossed the main Corinth road, but Pope's left rested where it had been before, save that it was a mile in the advance. By this you will understand that the line was lengthened—lengthened the length of a division, about half a mile. Do you see what it threatened? The left flank of the rebels. Do you see what it exposed? Our own right flank. And so forward moved the right reserve, two divisions, and protected it.

I rode along the line yesterday despite of provost marshals and my doctor. The works are of the same character as those described under the preceding head—they are built in the same manner, is what I mean. It must not be supposed that they are built on scientific plans, from drawings by "topogs;" but each colonel of a regiment throws up his breastwork to suit the ground in his front—thus the line is often broken and unconnected. One of the division commanders here—Port Royal Sherman—made his brigadier generals sign a document, binding themselves to attend to the duty of throwing up the works in their front, and retired to Russell's house, to partake of certain luxuries derived from a neighboring sutler. On my trip along the line I got into Nelson's division, and found my eye gladdened by an open field—almost a prairie. But in the midst of it an unaccountable growth of small timber caught my eye, and I rode towards it; approached and passed around it. Six terrible black thirty-twos were behind it. "A masked battery of siege guns," said the guard in reply to an inquiry. A little farther on I found four other guns, and near by, completely hidden, an entire regimental camp. Crossing, afterwards, to the right I found similar masks, behind one of which I found "Lady Halleck," "Lady Buell," "Old Abe," and some other thirty-two pounders, standing stately and silently in a heavy demi lune, and looking grimly on Corinth. There are hundreds of other matters of interest along the line which I cannot give at this time. The division and brigade organizations of the three grand corps have been sent you for use at the proper time.

WHEN THE BALL IS TO OPEN.

And thus resting before Corinth the question comes up, When will the ball open? Three weeks ago I came from Pittsburg Landing to the advance, because I understood that the army was ordered to be in line of battle at three o'clock the following morning. I believe I have heard the same story every morning and evening since, and yet no general engagement. It is told this afternoon, as coming from General Thomas, that the left will open to-morrow morning. If there is no postcript stating that fact you can consider it all false, as I have no doubt it is. Indeed, the near approach to the rebels appears to have produced a rather fraternal feeling. The pickets in front of Nelson's division had quite a pleasant conversation with the rebel pickets yesterday, and exchanged coffee of the Union persuasion for rebel sugar, of which the "burners" have left a quantity on hand. For the past two days everything has been unusually quiet. There has been no picket shooting or any skirmishing along the line, whereas a few days since the whole line was engaged at it. These skirmishes have cost us daily not less than twenty-five men in killed and wounded. We know not what has been the effect on the rebels. A deserter told me that a shell, a few days since, interrupted a pleasant game of poker, in the rebel ranks, by summarily disposing of the four captains who were indulging in it. I saw a Second Minnesota boy pick off a rebel sharpshooter who had posted himself in a tree, and who was easily discernible with a marine glass.

I said the line had been quiet, but since writing the above General Pope has opened a brisk cannonading on the left, and is keeping it up with vigor as I write. Perhaps he is playing the overture for to-morrow's operations. I am not inclined to think we shall have a fight until we advance. I went out about half a mile in the advance yesterday, and found a topographical engineer sketching the topography of a bridge which runs nearly parallel with our works. He told me that we were then just three-quarters of a mile from Corinth, which was south-southwest from that position—the centre of the army. I think the third parallel will be thrown up on this ridge, or else, under cover of the seige guns from our present position, we shall advance and ——?

The result may well be called questionable. If we are defeated our breastworks will be the terminus of our retreat. We shall retire for a second conflict. But where are the rebels going? Not to Grand Junction. We are under no obligations to follow them there. They can only retreat further South. The Mississippi must be avoided by them, and if they must retreat further we can well afford to follow them. Our base can be removed to Florence, Ala., or, upon the consequent fall of Memphis and Fort Pillow, we can begin a new campaign, with the Mississippi for a base, and push eastward until Louis Napoleon beholds a probable junction of Buell and Burnside. But surmise, anticipation, imagination itself cannot picture the extent of such a disaster to the rebels as their defeat in their stronghold of Corinth. But in them they must be defeated. That at least is unquestionable.

A NEW ORGANIZATION.

We hear of new plans of organization here, one of which has the laudable design of saving Uncle Sam's pocket; but it is likely to be productive otherwise of considerable trouble. The plan is to compose the brigades of troops from the same State, and divisions of the same. All regiments not numbering five hundred men, effectives, are to be consolidated into full regiments and the officers appointed. It is calculated that this would save many hundreds of thousand dollars to the government, but would never pay for the trouble which it would occasion. There would be, of course, thirty-four dissatisfied officers for every regiment under five hundred men, and they would produce almost mutiny among their men. It is not supposed the plan will go into operation, at this time at least.

WORKS BEFORE CORINTH, May 27, 1862.

A Strong Doubt Entertained, and Why—The Rebels are Clamorous for Rations—A Third Parallel—A Partial Evacuation—How Beauregard Fires the Rebel Soldiers with Confederate Patriotism—A Bombardment—An Achievement is Signalized—What Is It? &c., &c.

HAVE THE REBELS EVACUATED?

"Do the rebels intend to fight?" has become a question of some moment, and army officers are seriously doubting the probability of an encounter at all. It is doubted that they are there in force, and, to tell the truth, it does look probable that they have left. Indeed, the probabilities of an evacuation having been accomplished without harm by them are much greater than that they still remain. The conflict may open to-morrow, but I record to-night my earnest conviction that the works of the rebels are deserted, and that they are "Quaker guns" which frown upon us. My reasons for this belief are manifold. There is no doubt of the fact that the rebels have been on short rations. Their men have suffered terribly from this cause, but less even than their animals. It is established as a certainty that provender of all kinds is very difficult to obtain, and we can readily conceive how absolutely impossible it would be to do without animals or the animals to do without their food. They have sent us all the prisoners in their hands at Corinth, releasing them on parole, any way, so as to get rid of them; and the released prisoners tell the same stories of want and suffering in the ranks of the rebels. *One hundred and thirteen of them, lately released, acquiesced and agreed in a story to the effect that they had been fed on a meat which they never remembered to have tasted before, and the ribs of which, as large as those of a hog, were perfectly round.* Perhaps some of your scientific naturalists can tell us what delicacy the Commissariat of the rebels furnishes to its troops.

A second reason is that they have allowed us to approach within three-quarters of a mile of their main works without having thrown a single shell into our camps. They have allowed us to throw up works at that distance, some of which have been made in clear open fields, and though crowds have been engaged in broad daylight in doing this they have not been disturbed. These batteries, thus erected, have been deliberately made and the largest siege guns have been mounted in them. Pickets are posted within half a mile of the works and see no one, give no alarms, and are not fired on. When one mile further to the rear we could distinctly hear their drums at tattoo and reveille; now we hear none, though they may be too wise to sound them as formerly. We could hear, too, the shrill whistle of their locomotives, but that sound is only occasionally distinguishable in the lull of our own drums and bugles. The cars a week since were quite busy. Tennessee conscripts, who had deserted, tell us that baggage and stores were being removed to Aberdeen, Miss.

Great fires have for days past been distinguishable along the rebel lines, or in that direction. They destroyed, as they fell back, and have doubtless completed the work of destruction, all that could be valuable to us. These and many other significant movements indicate that a partial, if not full, evacuation has taken place. I am convinced it is what General Halleck has been striving at, and what he will eventually accomplish. That he has no desire to fight the force for another two days, as he did at Pittsburg, I am also positive. He thinks, as Colonel Willich of the Thirty-second Indiana, has remarked of the Pittsburg Landing battle, "Dat is just so hard fighting as I wants."

A MAP OF THE REBEL POSITION.

I have imposed on the good nature of a friendly captain of topographers for a sketch of the rebel position, which I send enclosed with this. I wrote you a description of the position yesterday, which letter you will find accompanying this. I failed to send it previously, as I had hoped to do, as the individual who was to have taken it did not go. It is dangerous sending it by the mail, as it is said General Halleck quietly drops all such letters into a waste bag, and I have no ambition to fall into his hands to be similarly disposed of. The map does not pretend to give a true outline of the rebel works; but the topography is correct, and indeed so are the main forts on the right and left. The whole will give your readers a fair and correct idea of the rebel position. It will be the more welcome from the fact that the maps of the country in our front have given no idea whatever of the topography of this region. I refer you to the text of my letter of yesterday for the letter-press of the map.

A THIRD PARALLEL.

A third parallel of works is approaching completion in our front, three or four hundred yards nearer the enemy. Going along the line to-day, I found batteries being built in the advance of our works and within thirteen hundred yards of the enemy, in which siege guns were being planted. These preparations are of the most formidable character, and ought to reduce the rebels' works in a short time and cause an evacuation, if one has not already taken place. In front of Port Royal Sherman's division I found Robert McCook's brigade engaged in throwing up protection for four thirty-two-pounders, which looked directly upon the rebel centre. Similar batteries approach completion, and I hope to hear the opening of the cannonading to-morrow. Whether the enemy be there or not, the bombardment will not be long. The siege will quickly terminate when once the preparations are ended and the conflict opens with the vigor which those preparations promise.

THE PARTIAL EVACUATION.

And as General Halleck knows the "good people and dear public" are likely to look upon a successful evacuation of Corinth as a rebel victory, he is not soon likely to admit by telegraph that the evacuation began several days since, and that at this time, in all probability, it is only the division of General Cheatham which remains in the rebel works. But this fact must become apparent ere long. That it is a fact, many circumstances and the statements of deserters amply testify. The circumstances are in our unobstructed approach over a country at any point of which an enemy or a small force would have proved a terrible obstacle. The crossing of the swamps and morass, which abound here, could have been prevented by any force half our own strength. But no obstacle to our march to within three-quarters of a mile of their works has ever been made. Branches of Seven Mile creek are in some places in our possession, and we will soon have the main stream, only half a mile from the rebel works; and, remaining in quiet possession, we are allowed by the rebels to throw up works which must reduce theirs in a short time. Sharpshooters have disappeared, and our pickets are no longer molested. Regiments make fortifications for siege guns, and no shell disperses them and delays the labor. A force intimately acquainted with the country allows us to take peaceable possession of points of importance to us and affecting the safety of vulnerable points of their own.

Beauregard dares not cope with the force which he knows is being brought against him. He has not the force to do it, even behind his works. I have put his force at 90,000, but I meant it for the outside statement. It is not, nor has it ever been more, and many entertain the opinion that it is not 70,000. The conscription has added little to the effective force, for the conscripts have but taken the weapons and places of less abler men. Despite of the Nashville and her cargo, there exists a scarcity of arms which they cannot supply. If with Nashville and New Orleans in our possession, we shall at once take Memphis and Richmond, the rebels will never be able to manufacture a weapon of any kind, not even submarine batteries, in which article Memphis is said to have been so prolific.

HOW TO FIRE THE REBEL SOLDIERS' HEARTS.

This morning the pickets of the Tenth Indiana, lying in hearing of the rebel camps, heard an officer making a speech to the Southern soldiers, and heard very distinctly their shouts of applause. They were not able to distinguish what language was used by the speaker, but supposed it to be an apology for quitting Corinth. The men, by their cheering, would seem to approve such a course; or the speech may have been an inflammatory appeal to them to stand by the sinking cause. When speeches have to be made to encourage soldiers to fight, the cause is desperate indeed.

GENERAL SIGEL'S DIVISION.

The divisions which have joined Pope from Curtis army are those of Jeff. C. Davis and that of Sigel, now commanded by General Asboth. I was mistaken in saying that Sigel had arrived.

MAY 28, 1862.

A DISTANT BOMBARDMENT.

I was awakened early this morning by the loud voices of men near the door of the quarters in which I have been so hospitably entertained and sheltered from provost marshals, the said voices being engaged in speculating as to the cause and meaning of distant firing of heavy artillery. I got up, and found that, by intent listening, we could plainly distinguish the rapid firing of artillery in the far distance. Though just discernible, each separate report was distinctly heard, and we came to the conclusion that Farragut and Foote were effecting a juncture, and that Fort Pillow was suffering in consequence. The firing was certainly not along our own line.

AN ACHIEVEMENT IS SIGNALIZED.

But having felt more interest in an incident of the past night, I sallied forth to find an explanation of the discharge of rockets immediately in our front about midnight of last night. I had been awakened by the discharge of a cannon near my quarters, and immediately after heard the discharge of a "sky rocket." This was followed by another report of artillery and a second rocket. I passed the works of the second parallel, and pushed through the dense and pathless woods towards the open field on our left, where McCook had been engaged the day previously in erecting a battery. I found that the work was now finished, and from the four embrazures of the little fork looked four huge, black thirty-two pounder rifles. The battery garrison was in possession and offered objections to my minute examination of the work, and, taking advantage of the fact that General McCook and staff were galloping off in the direction of the creek, I followed on, and immediately in their rear passed unmolested through the outposts, who, I find from experience, never halt a man who pushes ahead as if he knew where he was going and what he was going far. It is only your modest and delicate individuals who are ever halted.

General McCook halted on the bank of Seven Mile creek. I found, on halting at the same point, that the Thirty-ninth Indiana regiment was in possession of that point, and that the bridge or corduroy road by which I had been enabled to cross the swamp to the pretty little stream flowing near by, had been made during the night by the same regiment. I here found a solution to the rocket problem. It appears that the expedition had been undertaken by General William Nelson, and the purpose had been, if possible, to bridge a road across the swamp of Seven Mile creek to enable his division to make a reconnoissance beyond the swamp and under the very walls of their fortifications. On gaining possession of the creek the General, as ordered, had discharged the cannon and rockets as a signal to the whole line of his success.

I am told that this position will be held and that the whole line will advance and take possession of the creek to-day. Gen. Nelson has encountered no pickets—no opposition. He has half bridged the swamp and has not been molested. We are in undisputed possession of Seven Mile creek and so near the rebel forts that it is doubtful if their guns can be so deflected as to reach the gallant Thirty-ninth, which was the first to taste the water of this running brook—the first water not stagnant since we left the Springs of Pea Ridge in our rear.

REBEL FORT ON LEFT OF THE MAIN CORINTH ROAD, ONE AND A HALF MILE FROM CORINTH, May 30, 1862.

Inside of the Rebel Works at Last—The Reconnoissance of the Twenty-Eighth—Work on the Left Wing—Our Troops Bivouac on the Field—Pope Plants a Battery—The Fight With the Rebel Battery—The Rebels Strike their Flag—Joy of the Union Troops—A Night's Rest in the Swamp—The March into the Town—Description of the Enemy's Works—Scenes and Incidents, &c.

INTO THE REBEL WORKS.

All our doubts are cleared up. Operations before Corinth are ended. The last reconnoissance has been made, and we are in the evacuated works of the rebels. The story of two days is to be told. I did not furnish that of the 28th. Be content with what little you will get of *minutiæ*. Along a line of five miles in extent you can well imagine a man could see but little. But I have heard enough, such as it is. You can hear of exploits as great as those of the 6th and 7th at Pittsburg—wonderful achievements in the face of a foe Heaven only knows how many miles away. But give the men credit. They went forward in works where they saw danger and a foe, and no man flinched. Oh, if we had such generals as we have volunteers!

THE RECONNOISSANCE OF THE 28TH.

It was nine o'clock on the morning of the 28th, which was Wednesday, before Pope opened on the left and began the reconnoissance, which, it was soon evident, was general from the rapid firing in McKeon's division, and further to the right in (Kentucky) Sherman's. I had from the first anticipated that the work would be on the right—that Thomas, corps would have to do the labor, and I pushed from the right of Buell—the centre—towards the right. I found myself shortly after in front of the division of Sherman (Port Royal), and concluded that it would be wisdom to retire to his rear ere he became engaged. I passed McKeon, who was marching forward in splendid style, in line of battle, unbroken except where his left brigade filed around a demi-curve in the third parallel and again formed in a broad open field to the right of the house which the topographical engineers have not dignified by a name. I fell in with a battery of artillery belonging to Major Cavender's battalion, and saw some excellent practice at the tops of tall and distant beech and hickory trees. They told me the shells which were trimming the tops of the trees were falling in the works at Corinth, to which in silence I acquiesced. Sherman and Hurlburt were quiet. Infantry and artillery were advancing down the Purdy road and the thousand and one roads which have been made in the past few days, but they had encountered no enemy as yet. Indeed the right and centre have had a comparatively easy time of it; but Pope, on the left, has suffered in his advance. The right and centre encountered no enemy until they had reached the swamp and pushed through it towards the creek. Pope, on the contrary, met a determined resistance, and I found at night that his line has but little further advanced than the third parallel of the centre and right. Operating in an open space of some miles in extent, he has not been able to advance his lines as rapidly as did Buell and Thomas. But the engagement—if the skirmishing of the day can be called such—began when the right and centre had reached the swamp, and while yet the left was trying to obtain the same position. There was no distinguishing anything. A reporter had need to have the hundred eyes of an Argus to behold all that was going on. Along the whole line—a hundred yards in my front—the fight was raging. You could hear the sharp reports and the shouts, the commands, the cheers, the loud laughter. But what more could be seen, save occasionally the white smoke rising from the levelled weapon which had just been discharged? The ambulances were being slowly filled. The wounded bodies were being brought from the swamps, and the surgeons would gather around the subject. You could hear cries of pain, and curses, and groans, mingling with the wilder cries of the excited combatants, who were hidden in the woods that encircled them. This style of skirmishing was kept up during the whole day. The combatants on the right and centre maintained their original position, and Thomas and Buell bivouacked where they had fought—in the damp, miry swamps. The night was spent in preparations for an advance in the morning. Was it not plain that no force was at Corinth?

ON THE LEFT WING.

The resistance of the rebels to Pope's advance was more stubborn and the conflict during the day was more determined, more exciting, and resulted in greater loss than perhaps in both the other corps. Not only was he opposed by infantry but artillery, and so exposed was his position that the latter, I am told has occasioned quite a heavy loss. It is said Pope's killed will alone amount to one hundred and fifty; but I think the statement exaggerated by the camp rumors. The point of crossing of the creek was defended by a battery of rifled guns which Pope had found exceedingly effective, and he was content when night came to rest in the plain and make his preparations for reducing the battery at early dawn of the following day. The troops of the three divisions bivouacked on the field, where they had stood mostly inactive the whole day, Hamilton's left resting on the Farmington road.

A BIVOUAC ON THE FIELD.

I chanced, during the afternoon, to find myself near the Eleventh Kentucky, and I spread my blanket and shared the repose of the Kentuckians on the field. Supperless to bed, I found myself soon dosing, falling to sleep at last with my ears full of the speculations of those around me as to the final result of the conflict of the next morning. They had waited for the day with patience, and they knew that it dawned with the rising of the next sun. Men grow serious under such circumstances. They talk, however; there is a fascination in the subject, and they talk it over. Many and many was the speech I heard that night, beginning, "If I get killed, boys." Strange and odd, comical and melancholy, unnatural, foolish, tender and loving were the wishes they made and the messages they sent home. One wished that his body might be sent home if it was possible, and he wanted to be buried with his feet to the east. Another had a horror of being buried in a pit. One near me sent home his watch to his sister. "If I die to-morrow," said one, "and you get out of it, tell father he had better plant the old orchard field in hemp." And thus around me were expressed in strongest terms and uncouth language the many strange ideas that haunted the brains which pondered on probable death on the morrow. And above all this din of voices you could hear from distant parts of the field—dark and dismal field—the monotonous but not unmusical chaunting of the old church melodies and psalms. I had heard them in the old church near which childhood had been spent, and in many a scene of later years, but never did they strike so clearly and melodeously in my ear as on that night of our bivouac.

POPE ERECTS A BATTERY.

There was bustle in the field long before the sun was up. Arms, which had served for pillows the night before, were newly burnished, to preserve from rust. The contents of the haversacks were quickly despatched, and the cartridge boxes filled anew; and there had been busy hands during the night; but the labor which they had done had been accomplished quietly. Picks and shovels had been brought into requisition, and in the advance of the line and near the road I saw that a new fortification—a new battery—had sprung into existence. I passed the line, going down the road, and reached this new work, on which I found four thirty-two pounders—thirty-two's or twenty-four's, I am not sure which. The garrison of the little fort peeked through the embrasures, eagerly expecting, with the dawning sun, to be fired on. I saw dimly, through the trees, the flag which was waving over the rebel battery, against which our new work had been designed to operate. It was the old "stars and bars" of the rebels. I have heard of different flags which are said to have been captured along the line, but I have seen no other than the old rebel flag with which all are so familiar. With a glass which I obtained at the little fort I could plainly see the rebel fortification. It was a single demi-lune, mounting three guns, and just beyond the moat of Seven mile creek. The artillerists informed me that the reconnoissance had developed the fact that it had been erected for the defence of the bridge on the Farmington road to Corinth. Between us and the rebel works there yawned this chasm of the creek and two or three ridges and their intervening swamps. It had been expected that as a matter of course the rebels would open upon us as soon as morning should discover our position. But the work on the unfinished fortification continued uninterruptedly until about eight o'clock, when it was announced that they were finished and ready for work.

THE REBEL RESISTANCE TO THE ADVANCE OF OUR LEFT.

Along our whole line the silence of the past night had been maintained. We knew on the left that Buell and Thomas held the creek, that Sherman had crossed the bridge on the Purdy road and Nelson that on the main Corinth road. The work of bridging the swamp had begun and had been finished during the night, and all waited for Pope. He is not a man to delay any one, and he quickly went to work to bring his line forward with that of the rebels. It had been hoped that the line would be so advanced on Wednesday night that the storming could be begun and finished on Thursday. But eight and nine o'clock came, and still the enemy opposed the left. It is now apparent why the resistance was so great on this wing. The retreat is said to have been by the Mobile and Ohio railroad, and the purpose had been to obstruct the marching upon that point as long as possible. If rumors were to be believed, the rebels have found serious obstructions in the way of their retreat by that road. I heard on Wednesday night, and again on yesterday, that General James S. Jackson, in command of a brigade of cavalry, consisting of his own Kentucky regiment, the Second Ohio and the First Ohio, had pushed south for the purpose of obstructing the Mobile and Ohio Railroad; but you cannot be sure of anything you hear in the camp. If this be true and the expedition shall succeed, the division, which it is now ascertained we have been fighting, may be captured.

THE FIGHT WITH THE REBEL BATTERY.

The rebel battery allowed us to make our works under their very nose. It also allowed us to strike the first blow, and the first fire of the morning came from our battery on the left and roused the whole line from its lethargy. There are practiced artillerists in our ranks—a year's schooling has made many of them efficient in the art, and with unerring aim the black monsters hurled the hissing bombs into the works of the rebels. The first one served the rebels laid dormant, and he soon began to reply, but not with the skill of his practiced opponent. The infantry stood listlessly watching the interesting duel, and noting intensely the dreadful effect of the shells. The guns of the enemy were twelve-pounders, and no match for our superior and larger guns. The effect of our shots soon became plainly visible. The glasses of the officers revealed and their voices proclaimed with oaths, drawn forth by the excitement of the moment, that guns had been dismounted and breaches made. But still the rebels continued to reply; and, to increase the interest of the occasion, the infantry of Gen. Hamilton's division, marching on the right of the battery, reached the swamp and became engaged. The skirmishing companies had hardly succeeded in deploying as they reached the swamp before they met the rebel skirmishers, and the fight at long range continued. The division was halted and awaited the result. The intervening swamp kept the foes from reaching each other, and Gen. Hamilton had to content himself with relieving the skirmishers occasionally and giving other companies a taste of sharpshooters' practice. Patience had to be exercised until the rebel fort at the bridge should fall.

THE REBELS STRIKE THEIR FLAG.

Was it one, two or five hours before it struck? I had no idea of time—I have hardly recovered my faculties enough to distinguish the hour by the sun at this time. But at last the flag was struck and the rebels fell back. In the dim distance, two hundred yards beyond the fort which had fallen, we had seen their heavier works, and to this we naturally supposed they had fallen back. The firing on the fort ceased, but a few shells were sent after the retreating rebels and into the works beyond. General Paine, on the left of the road, pushed forward a strong reconnoitering party, while General Hamilton did the same from the right, and the skirmishers met at the bridge. Here was an instance given of the superior quality of our troops. The skirmishers met, face to face, each rushing forward for the same goal, but from opposite directions. They halted, formed, but did not fire. Their coolness saved them from the danger, and they soon recognized each other as friends; and, mingling together, they pushed rapidly forward, and crossed the corduroyed bridge at a double quick. Up the steep hill they rushed, and sprang, with a shout, into the fort—deserted, save by the dead bodies which lay around and the huge monster, which, spiked and useless, remained to them as trophies.

THURSDAY'S WORK OF BRIDGE BUILDING.

The shout which told of the victory was echoed with tenfold force by the corps of General Pope, and in the distance we could hear the shouts of Buell's and Thomas' armies, congratulatory of the achievement. General Pope immediately ordered an advance. The Thirty-ninth Ohio reinforced the skirmishing bands which had gone into the fort, and the entire divisions of General Pope's corps advanced to the edge of the swamp. I have often described the swamps which abound here. Imagine this to be a similar one on a grand scale. The work of bridging it was hastily begun, and all the rest of that long day of Thursday was consumed in the work. I need not tell again how these bridges of corduroy are made from the sapling trees of this in terminable forest.

A NIGHT'S REST IN THE SWAMP.

All the remainder of the line was silent on Thursday, but not idle, and when the night came bridges spanned the swamp for every brigade in the army. How wonderfully the line has been contracted since we commenced this approach! I rode along its whole length on Thursday, and found it not more, I should imagine, than four miles. But a few days ago it must have been seven or eight. The army rested on the south side of the creek and its swamp. The water of the creek furnished the men with a drinkable beverage, something for the want of which they had endured great suffering. They drank their fill. They had now possession of it—nine points of the law—and they anticipated that the coming struggle would leave them undisputed owners of the stream. I do not know with what feelings others awoke this morning; but I firmly resolved that, whether we took Corinth or not, I should sleep no more in that swamp with the great green and black lizards crawling over and chilling my body, and the gross and hideous frogs perched near my head and croaking in my ears. If such is the sacred soil of Mississippi, the day of its invasion will need be remembered by many a Northern soldier unacclimated to swamps of stagnant water and unaccustomed to social intercourse with frogs and lizards.

OUR LINE AS IT EXISTED ON THURSDAY NIGHT.

On Thursday night we rested in possession of Seven Mile creek, and within three hundred yards of the enemy's works. On the left the Thirty-ninth Ohio held the bridge of the road, by which General Payne's Illinois division crossed during the night. On the main Corinth road the Eighteenth regulars and the Ninth Ohio shared the honor of taking the bridge with one of Wood's regiments. I did not learn it. Sherman had placed the brigade of Stuart, of the Fifty-fifth Illinois, on the southern side of the bridge on the Purdy road, and the rest of his division were engaged in building roads for the several brigades composing it. It was then evident that the morning must end the conflict; and, with that anticipation, I retired, but not to sleep.

THE REVEILLE OF FRIDAY MORNING.

This morning dawned beautifully clear, pleasant and cool. In the gray of the morning our labors began, and the advance was sounded along the whole line. The morning reveille had not been omitted. The first streak of coming light had aroused the drummer boys on the left—Pope's—away two miles to the east, and we heard his drums and the accompanying fife play the inspiring air which has lost so much of its spirit by its too common use in camp. The next division caught up the sound and nearer it came. The twang of the horn in the camps of the artillery and cavalry mingled with the drums of the infantry in pleasing melody, and the whole army woke to the pleasant strain—pleasing on this morn, waking them, as it did, to the labor whose danger only makes it the more exciting and delightful. There were rations of grog, with the meat and hard bread ("Lincoln platforms," as the boys call the crackers); and each man, no doubt, felt the better for the draught; quickly, indeed, was that meal despatched. There was a desire on the part of the men to get out of the swamp. For two nights they had slept in their trenches. They thirsted to sleep in those of the enemy.

IN LINE OF BATTLE.

Noiselessly into line they formed in the centre. I had rested with the veterans of Mill Spring, and watched them in the morning as they came into line. The "bully Dutch" of McCook toed the mark with the Kentuckians of the Tenth, and the tall, spare Minnesotians of the Second regiment formed on their left. There was silence and awe, and the men were serious as they stood there at a "rest;" but there was no flinching. Pipes were lighted after the morning meal, and still protruded from the lips of the brave fellows who puffed and looked serious. Men put huge chaws of tobacco in their mouths, as if they thought it might be their last, or that that chew would have to last them all day. The human face is a wonderful study in such an hour as that of this morning's dawn. Would I were adept at language to picture the contradictory expressions which played upon them; to tell how plainly their thoughts were expressed on their features. There was little talking. Faces grew handsome as compressed lips and arched brows and intently staring eyes looking on vacancy, told plainly of the intensity of thought which occupied the brain of that motley multitude.

INTO THE ENEMY'S WORKS.

And the knapsacks were thrown from the shoulders and placed in huge piles in the rear. Men threw their blankets tied about them from their loins, and coats were dispensed with and shirt sleeves rolled up. You could see the old crumpled letters taken from knapsacks and put into the pockets of the gray shirts which they wore, and there were letters, newly written and carefully directed disposed of so that by them the body, if it should be lifeless when the sun set, might be identified. And then came the bugle, and men started as if startled from thought or sleep. The quick command—clear and loud—and all came to an "order arms." The preliminaries were gone through with and the line moved slowly forward. You know the rest—I have promised it in my preface to this letter. Up the hill at a double quick—silently and swiftly, over the rifle pit, on to the heavier works, across the ditch, over the walls with a spring and into the works with a cheer which told the story to the rest of the line. The works were empty. The rebels were gone, and left but the sign of their devastation behind them.

AND THE CONSEQUENCES.

I have been along the whole line. It is a scene of ruin and desolation. Corinth is not demolished, but it is very much deteriorated, about as bad as the Corinth of old. There are tents still unstruck on the numberless hills that abound here. A hospital—I presume it is a hospital—of tents, some hundred in number, are south of the town, but I am told they are vacant. In the town the scene is dismal indeed—nothing is occupied, all is vacant. The flag of the Thirty-ninth is flying over a depopulated city. In the fields north of the town, where the rebel camps have been, there are the common evidences of their late presence, but nothing uncommon. Arms are being picked up in all parts of the field. A few pieces of artillery have fallen into our possession, and a few hundred prisoners, who, if the truth were known, are deserters. Cavalry has gone in pursuit of the rebels, but I know not with what success. There is reason to be contented with what we have gained. Dislodging them from the "works" which they have at this point is an achievement which, under the circumstances, there is reason for General Halleck to pride himself upon.

REBEL ACCOUNTS FROM CORINTH.

[Correspondence of the Mobile News, May 26.]

CORINTH, May 23—Night.

Yesterday was one of great excitement and expectation. Our army had marched out to the trenches with the fullest confidence that they would meet the hosts of Halleck, and that the God of battles ere this would have crowned with victory the hills of Corinth. But hour after hour passed away without any important demonstration being made, until about three P. M., when our wearied soldiers, who had been under arms since three o'clock in the morning, returned once more to their camps.

There was light skirmishing all along our lines, and the enemy's pickets were driven back beyond Farmington; but few casualties occurred. It is now evident that Halleck does not intend to risk a battle until he has completely fortified his position, and made his chances of retreat safe in case of a defeat. A Tennessee countryman, who had been held a prisoner by Halleck for some weeks and who arrived here to-day, reports that the enemy is fortifying his position in the vicinity of Monterey, and that he had nine heavy siege guns, thirty-two pounders, placed in battery. Let him pursue what course he will I feel confident that every day's delay is only making more certain his defeat. I am aware that our people are awaiting the issue with breathless anxiety. But let them be of good cheer, and with patience rely confidently on the result. There is luck in leisure, while delays to the enemy are dangerous. With full hope in an overruling destiny, and trusting to a merciful divinity to shape out our ends, let us abide our time, but be vigilant and wary. For as Timoleon, with his braves of Corinth, delivered Syracuse from the hands of the Carthagenian tyrants, and put the barbarians to flight with great slaughter, restoring that city to its people—so shall Beauregard, with his army of Corinth, drive back the abolition tyrants from Tennessee and Kentucky, and restore these States once more to their own people.

There was a little skirmishing early this morning, which was attended by the loss of one man on our side, belonging to the Twenty-ninth Tennessee, and several of the enemy. We also took five prisoners, who were caught under the following circumstances:—It seems that the enemy had been playing a Yankee trick on our pickets by sending their men through the underbrush of the thick woods in order to approach as near as possible to our works. To delude our pickets and effect this object they wore cow bells around their necks, and when they supposed their movements through the brush attracted the attention of our men they would tinkle the bells so as to lead one to suppose it was but a stray cow grazing. Our pickets, suspecting something wrong, determined on this occasion to look after these horned cattle, and, to make matters certain, by a flank movement gained the rear of the bellringers, when they came suddenly upon five of the cowbellians, who, not belonging to the Mobile fraternity, were immediately captured.

One of our men who was captured at Island No. 10 made his escape from Camp Chase, near Columbus, Ohio, on the 29th ult., and arrived here yesterday. All the prisoners, who were doing well, were being removed to Johnson's Island, near Sandusky, Ohio, when he managed to mix in with the crowd of spectators and eloped. He reports that Lieutenant Tidmarsh, well known on the theatrical boards of New Orleans and Mobile as "Old Tid," was as jolly and gay as ever, but seriously objected to the Northern climate. My informant states that there is a strong anti-Lincoln party growing up in the Northwest, which is making itself seriously felt through every town in that country. They look upon the abolition of slavery as putting the negro on a par with the poor white man, and forcing a competition of labor between the two races, which the overrunning of our slaves in the North, if emancipated, would be sure to effect; consequently a general indisposition and apathy is felt against carrying on the war against slavery, the now openly avowed object of the Lincoln dynasty.

Western men who believed that the capture of New Orleans would re-open trade and afford them a market for their produce, now see the contrary effect, and that all commerce is totally destroyed. Besides this, however strong may have been their fanaticism against slavery, they are forced now to acknowledge, by the