

The Wilderness Campaign

By JOHN McELROY.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Grant's Regrets for the Assault.

Gen. Grant, who was the soul of truthfulness, frankly admits the mistake of the assault. In his "Memoirs" he says:

"I have always regretted that the last assault at Cold Harbor was ever made. I might say the same thing of the assault of May 22, 1863, at Vicksburg. At Cold Harbor no advantage whatever was gained to compensate for the heavy loss we sustained. Indeed,

which collected later data, found that there were 1,769 killed and 1,547 missing, a large portion of whom must have been killed on June 1 and 2. Adding to these the wounded, there is a total of casualties of 8,248. If we include, as Medical Director McParlin does, all the casualties after crossing the Pamunkey and take in those of the Eighteenth Corps, we have a grand total of 14,129.

A Heavy Toll of Life.

Gen. Horace Porter estimates that from the time the Army of the Potomac crossed the Rapidan to its crossing of the James, June 12, the total casualties,

men as we did. This view is confirmed by Lee's report of his severe loss in general officers. Nearly all of his brigade and division commanders were killed or wounded.

Did the Army Refuse to Renew the Attack?

In this connection it may be well to again recall the much-disputed question as to whether the Army of the Potomac silently refused to obey the order to renew the attack. According to the testimony of the man who had the most knowledge, Gen. Humphreys, the Adjutant-General of the Army of the Potomac, Gen. Meade suspended his orders to the commanders of the Second, Sixth and Eighteenth Corps, but they were ready to renew the movement, and this upon Gen. Smith's suggestion, with good military reasons. At that time Gen. Burnside was moving Potter and Wilcox upon Lee's left; Gen. Wilson, with his cavalry, was striking Early's rear, and Gen. Warren, co-operating with Burnside, was attacking and driving Rodes's and Heth's Divisions from the Shady Grove Church road. All these offensive movements were probably in motion when the order arresting them was received.

Lee Tries the Offensive.

As a terrific thunderstorm finally subsided into less deafening crashes and

DISCIPLINE IN THE NAVY.

Secretary Meyer Swings the Big Stick With Force—A Tremendous Upheaval in the Department—Will the Changes be for the Benefit of the Service?

Special to The National Tribune.

The big stick swings. A great military arm of the Government beholds the salutary discipline. Those upon whom the blows fall take their punishment like military men. But a thousand and ten thousand tongues are set to wagging. The blighting of ambitious careers stirs up compassion. But the discipline is maintained, and in the end the service will profit.

It has not been the President swinging the big stick; it has been his Secretary of the Navy. He began weeks ago, and since Congress adjourned, at which date his naval appropriation bill was safely upon the statute books, he has been swinging the big stick frequently. Right in the closing Congressional days he forced Paymaster-General Eustace B. Rogers, head of the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts, to retire. Now he has forced Admiral Washington Lee Capps, Chief of the great and very important Bureau of Construction and Repair, to scurry to the retired list, and last, but not least, he has ordered the head officers of the Marine Corps away to distant posts. This has all been done in the interest of discipline. It was sharp, decisive work, once conclusions had been reached. The Navy Department has known nothing like it for many, many years, but apparently drastic and almost unprecedented action was indispensable.

Walks the Quarter Deck.

Now Secretary of the Navy George von L. Meyer has cleared his path of obstacles. The cause of opposition in the Navy Department is dead. Secretary Meyer walks the quarter deck, the undisputed master of the situation. He has ideas about the administration of the Navy. When he went to the head of the Department he found two factions there. The existence of factions had well-nigh demoralized the naval organization. The head men of both factions deplored the condition, but it had sprung up; fundamental ideas of naval administration were at issue. In brief, one idea was a virtual continuation of existing conditions; another was reform in methods and administration. One was for the old Navy of the last 20 years; the other was for a new Navy, more closely following the developments of the great fighting navies of European powers. The advocates of the two lines of procedure fought to the finish, and the advocates of the older and settled conditions have been ousted.

Some of the men have gone down. Rogers and Capps are two of them. No able and more conscientious naval officers have served under the flag. As Secretary Meyer's reforms are being carried out, the Navy is being reorganized. The old Navy is being replaced by a new Navy, more closely following the developments of the great fighting navies of European powers. The advocates of the two lines of procedure fought to the finish, and the advocates of the older and settled conditions have been ousted.

In a Murders Deadlock.

Gen. Grant's first thought was to advance on Lee's army by regular siege approaches. This would keep the enemy in front of him and actively engaged, while the advances could be pushed with little loss until the enemy's line was pierced, when he would be destroyed in the tangle of the Chickahominy swamps. Orders were sent to the men to develop the swamp, and when they lay into regular works, and

less vivid lightning, so the main battle gradually calmed down to minor affairs, bloody enough for those engaged, but small compared to the supreme effort. Lee seems to have understood how terribly the Army of the Potomac was hurt, and he leveled some return blows in hopes to make them effective in the demoralization which he incorporated in his plan. His assaulting columns found no demoralization, however, and were beaten back with heavy loss. At 8 o'clock in the evening Longstreet's men came out on the right of Barlow and left of Gibbon like a rolling avalanche, but were repulsed with the unflinching steadiness of the Second Corps lying behind shallow rifle pits and firing with deadly coolness.

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"You can lead the horse to water, but"

forth as the principal backer of Paymaster-General Rogers and Admiral Capps. They kept him informed of the movements of the "other crowd," and enabled him to confound the Secretary of the Navy in many well-laid plans. Their two Bureaus of the Department were in reality more loyal to Senator Hale than to the Secretary of the Navy. But the last of the recalcitrant Bureau Chiefs has fallen, and Senator Hale has also been forced to retire from public life. His retirement after long and arduous service in the Navy is due to other causes than his demand for less extravagance in naval expenditures; but the "reform" forces, who clamor for more superfluities and more millions for the Navy, on specious pleas that it is good for the people and good for the country, are rejoicing that their plans will have less opposition hereafter in the Senate. For while Senator Hale has many followers in the Senate, none of them has his information about the Navy or his prestige with the other members of the Senate. Therefore it is that Secretary Meyer has fallen upon a promising course for the execution of his schemes for the reform of the Navy. The Navy officers are given more latitude than ever before, but the claim is made that it is all in the interest of military efficiency. Many believe the Secretary is right, and that he is certain to make a record as one of the most successful and efficient of the many men who have been at the head of the Navy Department since the days of Secretary Whitney. No one questions Mr. Meyer's high purpose, but the main doubt seems to arise as to the ultimate cost. For it is true that the Navy Department has cleared for the creation of a Navy that will cost the taxpayers \$200,000,000 a year.

President Harrison's Visit.

The people gave him a royal welcome wherever they were afforded the opportunity. Presidents were not strange to the people here at the greatest fashion resort of the New England Coast. President Harrison came to Bar Harbor by train and stayed a week one Summer. Before that time President Harrison made a visit here, and while an ex-President came here with some of his intimate men friends. They still tell a story of how President Harrison greeted a Grand Army man, and that he was stopping at a cottage some distance from the wharf. A Grand Army veteran by the name of Smith was one of the many drivers of buckboards here, the buckboard being the favorite vehicle for transportation about the island on which the village is located. He was engaged to drive a wealthy woman and her daughter to this cottage.

"I drove down there," said this veteran, telling the story during President Harrison's visit, "and we pulled up in front of the door. I saw a little, short man standing near by, and as I went to the horses' head to hold them I passed him. He eyed me closely, and noticed both me and I were in the lap of my coat."

"How are you, comrade," said he, extending his hand. "And how are you, sir," I said. Well, as soon as I had spoken I saw it was the President. "The lady who had engaged me to drive her over to the cottage gave me the old boy while we were returning. She said it was presumptuous in me to shake hands with President Harrison. I stood it as long as I could, and then I asked her what she expected me to do when the President spoke to me. Did she think I was going to turn my back on Gen. Harrison when he spoke and extended his hand?"

A Delightful Cruise.

President and Mrs. Taft have had a very enjoyable cruise in the Mayflower along the Maine coast. During most of the trip they were accompanied by the sceneries along the Maine coast is exceedingly rugged and picturesque. The numerous islands, where there are resorts, are thronged with Summer visitors, and the season is at its height of gaiety. In fact, of the many thousands who lined every wharf where the Mayflower touched there were almost as many Summer visitors as natives. At Eastport there was an especially impressive demonstration. It was not of the wild hurrah sort, for the people in these parts are prone to shyness and reserve in expressing their admiration. But they clapped hands at every turn of the way, and filled his carriage with wild flowers. The local committeemen always had a plan mapped out by which the President was driven thru all the principal residence and commercial streets. This gave the people very good opportunities to see him. They gathered on their lawns, bearing flags and wild flowers.

A very notable incident of the Eastport trip was the President's drive out to Tindall's Head, several miles from the town, where E. M. Bullins, a Grand Army veteran, 84 years old, was waiting on the lawn with his children, grandchildren and neighbors—a number of two or three score. It was a rugged, weather-beaten place, but exceedingly pretty for a view out over the bay and across the Cobscook River. The aged veteran, wearing a new Grand Army uniform, was presented to the President.

Another incident of note at Eastport was the firing of the salute of 21 guns to the President as soon as the Mayflower anchored out in the harbor. The town possessed an ancient piece of ordnance, but the local authorities were a little averse to discharging it. The veterans of Meade Post, 40, insisted that they could fire the salute, and, under the direction of their Commander, Morris Carney, took care of that feature of the ceremony. Commander Carney handled the watch, and his firing squad discharged the piece with splendid regularity. The red-hot end of a long iron rod was used to ignite the powder.

The President and Mrs. Taft participated in many social functions during the trip, and the President had several good games of golf. He returns to the White House with a very unusual and interesting voyage of 10 days upon the beautiful yacht Mayflower.



SETTLING DOWN TO STEADY PLUGGING.

the advantages other than those of relative losses were on the Confederate side. Before the Army of Northern Virginia seemed to have acquired a wholesome regard for the courage, endurance and soldierly qualities generally of the Army of the Potomac. They no longer wanted to fight them "one Confederate to five Yanks." Indeed, they seemed to have given up any idea of gaining any advantage of their antagonist in the open field. They had come to much prefer breakfasts in their front to the Army of the Potomac. This charge seemed to revive their hopes temporarily, but it was of short duration. The effect upon the Army of the Potomac was the reverse. When we reached the James River, however, all effects of the battle of Cold Harbor seemed to have disappeared."

The Ten Most Sanguinary Minutes.

In attempting to give in detail the assaults of the different corps and divisions the reader will not forget that all these were concentrated into a very few minutes of that fateful day. In the ordinary days of living a minute and an hour are definitely comprehended, and our ideas coincide with the marks on the clock's dial. On such occasions as Cold Harbor a minute may

become as full of all that makes up the sum of human life as decades of ordinary days. The heart, swelling with the strongest emotions the mind can experience, may crowd the thrills of an hour into each second. Such perfect fighting machines had the Armies of the Potomac and Northern Virginia become that their collisions were as swift, brief and deadly as the dart of the serpent's fangs.

Most writers say that the Army of the Potomac lost 10,000 in 20 minutes. Others reduce this time to 10, and still others make it but eight minutes. At all events every moment from the instant the charge began until the defeated men recoiled to the first shelter was deluged by more blood than any other such period of time in American history, possibly in the history of the world. To say that the Army of the Potomac lost 10,000 men is no exaggeration. Medical Director McParlin reports that 4,617 wounded were brought to his hospitals June 2. This number does not include the dead, but it is evident that there were very many who did not come into the Medical Director's reports. The Adjutant-General's Office,

including Sheridan's Cavalry and Burnside's command, had been: Killed, 7,621; wounded, 28,339; captured or missing, 8,966; total, 54,926. This does not mean, however, that all these men were permanently lost to the service. Many of them were prisoners who were afterwards exchanged, and many had been only slightly wounded and were soon able to return to duty. Some of them may also have been counted twice, as, for instance, a man who was wounded and afterward died. Indeed, there is a proneness to exaggerate the losses of a battle at first, the early reports seldom being substantiated. This was particularly the case at Shiloh, and Gen. Porter tells an amusing story illustrative of this. He says:

"At the close of the first day's fight Sherman met a Colonel of one of his regiments with only about 100 of his soldiers in ranks, and said to him: 'Why, where are your men?'

"The Colonel cast his eyes sadly along the line, wiped a tear from his cheek, and replied in a whimpering voice: 'We went in 800 strong, and that's all that's left of us.'

"'You don't tell me,' exclaimed Sherman, beginning to be deeply affected by the fearful result of the carnage.

"'Yes,' said the Colonel; 'the rebels

appeared to have a special spite against us.'

Sherman passed along some hours afterward, when the Commissary was issuing rations, and found that the Colonel's men were returning on the column under the bank of the river, where they had taken shelter from the firing, and in a few minutes nearly all of the lost 700 had rejoined, and were boiling coffee and eating a hearty meal with an appetite that showed they were still very much alive."

The Confederate Losses.

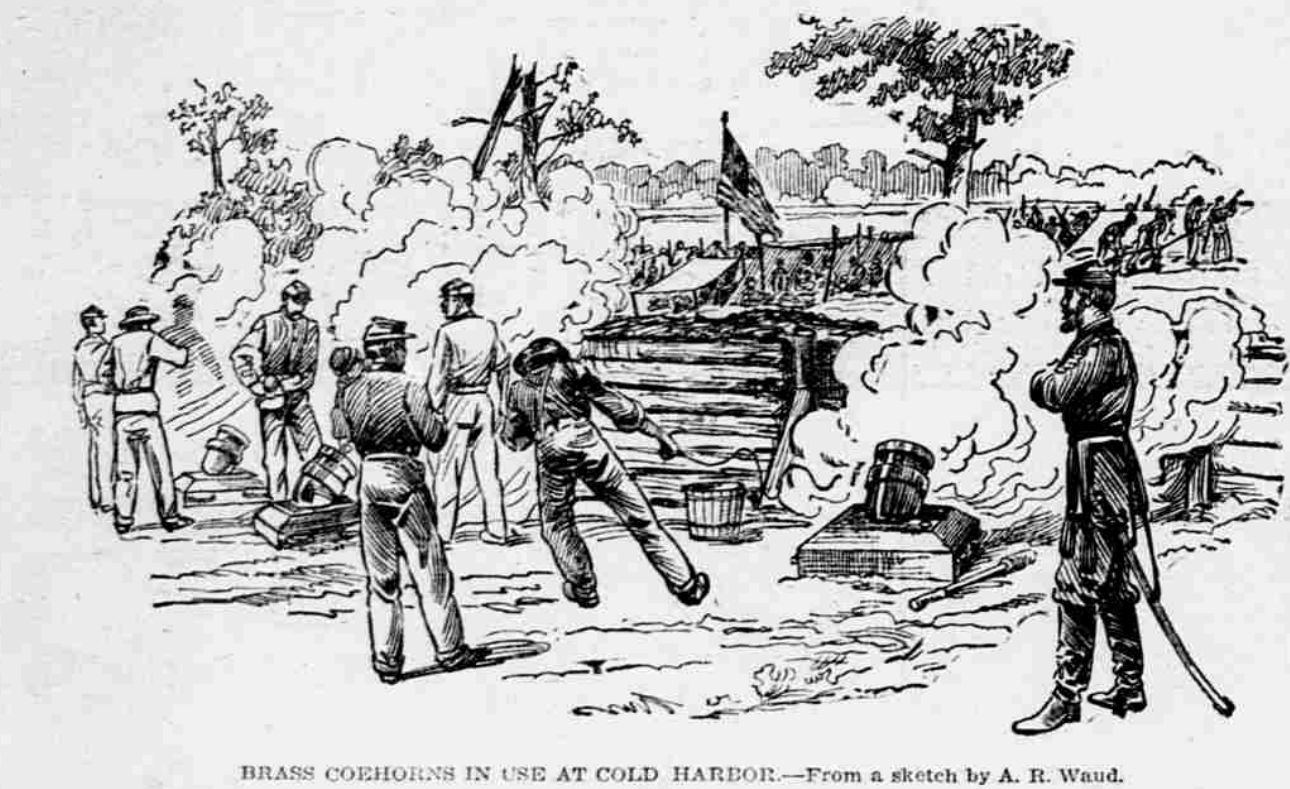
As to the losses of the enemy we are as usual quiet in the dark. Gen. Lee reported to the Confederate Secretary of War, June 2, that his loss that day was small, which was probably true. Our losses were largely occasioned by the terrible enfilade fire to which the troops could make no adequate reply. After the fighting on the morning of June 1 Lee's losses were certainly quite equal to ours, but on the afternoon of that day they were less than ours, though they lay at least 1,100. Evidently there were very many who did not come into the Medical Director's reports. The Adjutant-General's Office,

this was done under a continual searching fire from the sharpshooters of the enemy, only a few hundred feet away. Then followed nine days of the most exhausting labor, the greatest hardships and the intensest mental strain. All day long the skirmishers on both sides were busy trying to cut all others down and protect the workers in strengthening the lines. The musketry fire would be interrupted from time to time with terrific bursts of artillery firing, which seemed to tear up everything within range. The ground was level and open, which made the work of intrenching more severe and dangerous, as there was little shelter to be found anywhere, and every movement had to be made under fire. The men in the works had to lie close to the ground all day long, with little food or water. Cooking was almost as difficult as the fighting. The heat was intense during the day, all the springs and creeks were drying up, and those that did not were polluted by the necessary filth of a great army. Dead horses and mules

become as full of all that makes up the sum of human life as decades of ordinary days. The heart, swelling with the strongest emotions the mind can experience, may crowd the thrills of an hour into each second. Such perfect fighting machines had the Armies of the Potomac and Northern Virginia become that their collisions were as swift, brief and deadly as the dart of the serpent's fangs.

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BRASS COEHORNS IN USE AT COLD HARBOR.—From a sketch by A. R. Waud.