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THE FIRST ONE BURST IN THE VERY MIDST OF THE
COMPANY

The BLUE AND THE GRAY SERIES



BY OLIVER OPTIC

AT THE FRONT

The Blue and the Gray—On Land

AT THE FRONT

BY

OLIVER OPTIC

AUTHOR OF "THE ARMY AND NAVY SERIES" "YOUNG AMERICA ABROAD, FIRST AND SECOND SERIES" "THE BOAT-CLUB STORIES" "THE GREAT WESTERN SERIES" "THE WOODVILLE STORIES" "THE ONWARD AND UPWARD SERIES" "THE LAKE SHORE SERIES" "THE YACHT-CLUB SERIES" "THE RIVERDALE STORIES" "THE BOAT-BUILDER SERIES" "THE BLUE AND THE GRAY—AFLOAT" "A MISSING MILLION" "A MILLIONAIRE AT SIXTEEN" "A YOUNG KNIGHT-ERRANT" "STRANGE SIGHTS ABROAD" "THE YOUNG NAVIGATORS" "UP AND DOWN THE NILE" "ASIATIC BREEZES" "ACROSS INDIA" "HALF ROUND THE WORLD" "FOUR YOUNG EXPLORERS" "THE BLUE AND THE GRAY—ON LAND" ETC., ETC., ETC.

BOSTON

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AT THE FRONT

C. J. PETERS & SON, TYPOGRAPHERS, BOSTON, U.S.A.
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TO

MY FRIEND AND FELLOW-LABORER IN THE VINEYARD,

MR. EMERY CLEAVES,

A SOLDIER OF THE GREAT REBELLION TO WHOM

I AM INDEBTED FOR VALUABLE

MILITARY ASSISTANCE,

This Volume

IS RESPECTFULLY AND GRATEFULLY

DEDICATED.

PREFACE

“AT THE FRONT” is the fifth of the series of “The Blue and the Gray—on Land,” and the last but one of the six volumes. It is a continuation of the narrative contained in the preceding books, wherein is given the history of the Riverlawn Regiment from the formation of the two companies as a squadron, in which it rendered its first service for the preservation of the Union, till in the present volume it becomes a full cavalry regiment of twelve companies, with three battalions, a colonel, a lieutenant-colonel, and three majors.

In July, 1862, about four months after the battle of Pittsburg Landing, General Buell, commanding the Army of the Ohio, wrote to headquarters at Washington as follows: “I cannot err in repeating to you the urgent importance of a larger cavalry force in this district. The

enemy is throwing an immense cavalry force on the four hundred miles of railroad communication upon which this army is dependent for supplies." As if in direct response to this urgent call, the people of Kentucky took up the matter. It used to be said many years ago that the genuine Kentuckian was "half horse and half alligator;" and however it may be in regard to the saurian portion of him, he is still rather more than half horse, for one of the principal industries of the State is the raising of the finest horses in the country.

The companies of the Riverlawns, with the battery attached, were sent back to the State where the command had been raised; and there was an urgent need for them, for the Confederacy had begun upon a desperate effort to recover the State of Kentucky, which might place the cities of Louisville and Cincinnati within the reach of the Southern armies, as well as the rich and fertile States to the north of the Ohio. While the armies of Bragg and Kirby Smith were invading the State, numerous bodies of guerillas came into Kentucky from Tennessee and elsewhere,

and began a war of plunder and rapine. The first business of the newly organized regiment, with the battery still attached to it, was to drive out these marauders. The command did some rapid marching, encountered the enemy on several occasions, and did its full share in removing the pests from the soil of Kentucky.

Perhaps the personal history of the characters before introduced may interest our younger readers more than the details of battles and skirmishes. In the enlargement of the regiment, most, if not all, of them have risen to higher rank. They have been engaged in some sharp engagements, and they have done credit to themselves; and they owe their promotion to their conduct on the field of battle as well as to their strict adherence to the line of duty. But none of them have been permitted to do any impossible things. All of them have not escaped the perils of the field, and even the colonel had to lie some weeks upon his bed from the effects of a severe wound.

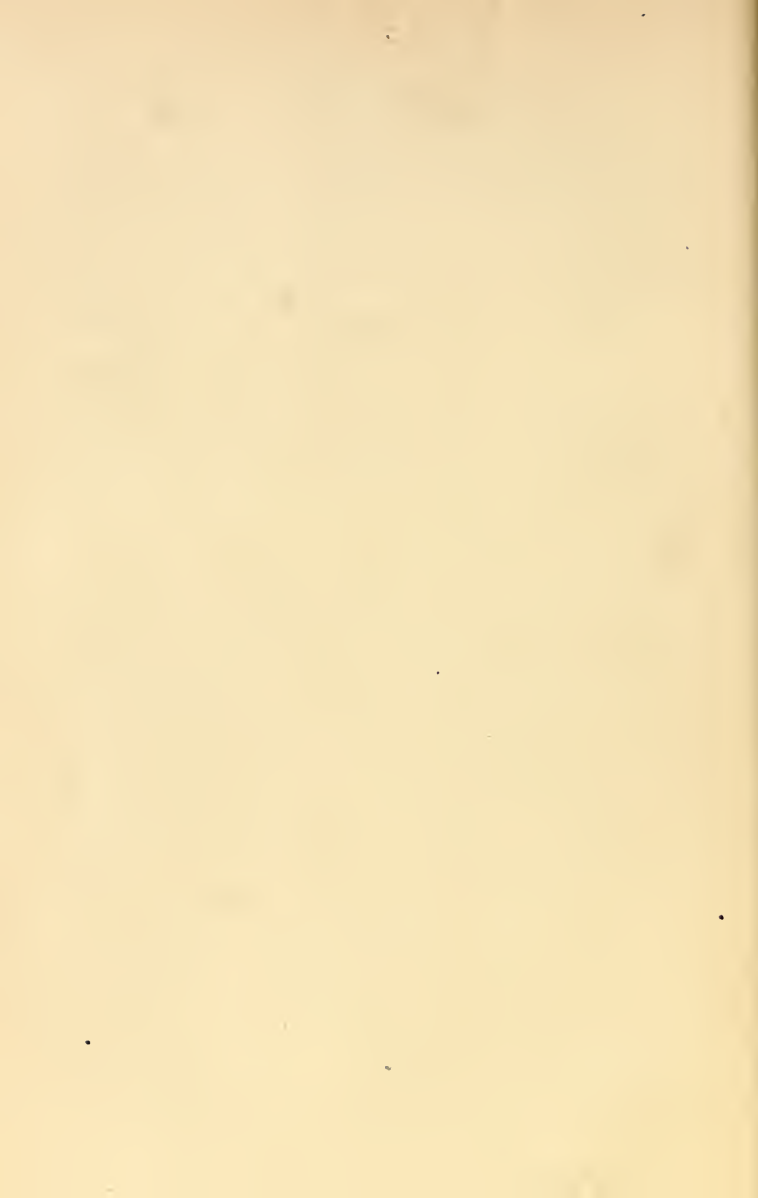
If Deck Lyon escaped in the several severe engagements in which he took a prominent part, it was not because he kept himself in a safe place;

for the most dangerous place on the field seemed to belong to him, and he always occupied it if his orders would permit. If he was the hero of any especial achievement, he gave the greater credit for it to the wonderful pluck, intelligence, and skill of Ceph, the horse he had trained from his ponyhood. He loved this animal as though he had been a human being; and he treated him as one of the family, never failing to look out for him in camp or on the march. And the steed was as affectionate towards his master as though he perfectly understood the relation that subsisted between them. Deck regarded Ceph as part of himself, and he would not have thought of riding any other steed in an engagement; and whatever good fortune came to him, he attributed one-half of it to the intelligent animal.

When the guerillas were driven out of Kentucky, the regiment was sent to Nashville, which city it was believed that Bragg would attempt to capture; and it was engaged in various services till ordered to Murfreesboro. The battle of Stone River soon followed; but before the engagement the regiment was occupied in clearing the roads

in the vicinity, which had been fortified in many places by the enemy. When the force had been sent to the defence of Columbia before the command had been fully organized, Colonel Lyon, recalling the valuable services of the riflemen who had joined his command at the battle of Mill Spring, succeeded in enlisting a full company of these sharpshooters, noted throughout the county in which they resided as "dead shots;" and in all the engagements in which they took part, they proved to be one of the most important arms of the service. The series of actions at Stone River resulted in the retreat of the enemy; and for months our heroes were engaged in detached duty, serving in some of the battles which followed. Again returning my hearty thanks to those who have encouraged my work for over forty years, I say adieu in order to finish the series.

WILLIAM T. ADAMS.



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AT THE FRONT

CHAPTER I

ORGANIZING THE NEW REGIMENT

It was the middle of August when Lieutenant-Colonel Noah Lyon, commanding the Riverlawn Cavalry, to which Major Batterson's battery of light artillery was attached, encamped for the night at Barcreek, on the plantation from which the battalion had derived its name. The command had been a portion of General Woodbine's brigade, which had taken an active part in the bloody battle of Pittsburg Landing, or Shiloh as it was called in the South, and had been kept exceedingly busy in the division of General Nelson at the siege of Corinth, even to the last minute

when the enemy had suddenly blown up their works, and fled in hot haste farther south.

The brigade had been engaged while it was still a part of General Nelson's division in building bridges destroyed by the enemy, and repairing railroads torn up, until the State of Kentucky was menaced by large bodies of Confederate forces in the east, and it was believed that Generals Bragg and Kirby Smith were moving in the direction of the Ohio River, either for the recovery of the State, or the capture of Cincinnati, or for both of these objects. These grand operations seemed to be foreshadowed by the appearance of many bodies of guerillas, larger in numbers and better organized than most of those with which the Riverlawn Cavalry had before contended, in Kentucky and in various sections of Tennessee. Morgan had made an extensive raid through the border State, destroying vast amounts of United States property, capturing towns, plundering plantations of stock and provisions. This vigorous leader was a genius in this kind of work, and the Federal stores taken by him or destroyed were estimated at over a million dollars in value.

The history of his raid and subsequent operations, even on the north side of the Ohio, was romantic in its boldness and daring.

At about the same time, Forrest was operating on a smaller scale in Tennessee, though with not less vigor and daring. It was evident enough that Kentucky, to say nothing of the States on the other side of the Ohio, was in imminent peril. Inspired by the example of these vigorous and daring leaders, many sections of country between the Ohio and the Tennessee were raided by less spirited bodies of guerillas. Nelson was taken from his division, and sent to the interior of the State of Kentucky to organize troops for the defence of the region, and to protect Cincinnati from the approach of Generals Bragg and Kirby Smith.

It was evident that the Riverlawn Cavalry was needed at home. It was plain that there was an abundance of just such work as that in which it had been largely engaged before the battle of Mill Spring, and in the interim between that affair and the departure of Nelson's division to take part in the battle of Pittsburg Landing

and the operations at Corinth. Evidently with the intention of increasing the force of the battalion, Major Lyon had been promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel; and his command, with the battery attached, were ordered to Kentucky, and directed to report at Munfordville, on Green River, about thirty miles from the plantation of Colonel Lyon, where he had encamped for the night. In the expectation that important events were about to occur, the commander marched at daylight the next morning, and hurried his force so that he arrived at his destination early in the forenoon.

“Colonel Lyon, I am glad to see you,” said an officer, wearing the uniform of the staff, as he extended his hand to the commander. “You have made good time from MacMinville, and I did not expect to see you so soon.”

“I understood that the State was in peril, and I have lost no time on the road,” replied Colonel Lyon, taking the extended hand of the staff-officer, whose shoulder-straps indicated that he was a major. “May I ask whom I have the honor of addressing?”

“Pardon me for not introducing myself before; but I was so much pleased to see you here so soon, that I neglected the formalities of the occasion. Allow me to make myself known as Major Richard Bornwood, of the staff of Major-General Buell,” continued the officer, extending his hand again.

“I am very happy to know you, Major Bornwood,” replied the colonel, taking the offered hand, and pressing it warmly. “I suppose you are the bearer of orders for me; and I am particularly glad to see you, for I do not wish to lose any time in entering upon my mission in my own State, and I feared that I might be kept waiting for my orders.”

“The general is in as much of a hurry to have you and your brilliant command in the field as you can possibly be, though there will be some delay in reorganizing your force, in which some considerable changes will be made; and I have the pleasure of presenting to you this document from the War Department,” added Major Bornwood, taking from a satchel suspended over his shoulder an official document, as the envelope in-

dicated, and presenting it to the commander of the battalion.

Colonel Lyon looked at the ponderous envelope, and read his name upon it. He was a modest man, and he could not imagine the nature of its contents. He had very recently been promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and he did not hope for or expect any further advancement. He had been faithful in the discharge of his duties as major in command of the battalion; and when promoted two weeks before, he honestly believed that his rank exceeded his military merit.

“Do you happen to know the contents of this envelope, Major Bornwood?” he asked, very much like a schoolgirl who wishes to know what is in her letter before she opens it.

“I do know its contents, and by opening it you will be as wise as I am,” replied the staff-officer, laughing at the hesitation of the colonel.

The recipient of the document tore open the envelope, and found that it contained a commission as a colonel of cavalry. He was absolutely amazed; and he could not see why he should receive the full rank of the commander of a regi-

ment, when he was in charge of only three companies of cavalry.

“I cannot accept this commission,” said he, after he had meditated for a few minutes. “It should be given to a better man than I am, a more competent commander.”

“There is no such man in the army!” exclaimed the major with a great deal of energy. “General Nelson says more than this of you.”

Colonel Lyon bit his lips, and seemed to be very much embarrassed. He had certainly never turned his back to the enemy in battle, or hesitated to lead his command into the most perilous portions of the field. As a strategist he had always manifested decided ability; and if not brilliant, he had more than once distinguished himself by his successful results.

“I can point to one in my command who is more worthy of this position than I am,” added the colonel, when he had considered the matter still more.

“Who is he?” demanded the staff-officer.

“Captain Gordon, in command of my first company,” replied the colonel.

“A very able and meritorious officer; and he has not been forgotten, as you will learn before your command is newly organized. If I should tell you what others say of you, men of elevated rank, who have seen you at Pittsburg Landing and at Corinth, you would not hesitate to accept this commission. Let me add, that if you decline to take the rank to which you are clearly entitled, I cannot carry out the mission on which I am sent into Kentucky, and that will involve a delay of at least two weeks, if not a month. I have three companies of cavalry recruits here, and they are to be mustered into the service to-day or to-morrow. They are fully equal to the men in your ranks now.”

“I accept the commission after what you say; for I cannot subject the service to the delay which you indicate,” replied Colonel Lyon, fixing his gaze on the ground, as though he was ashamed to yield the point.

“You are as honest as you are modest, Colonel, and I thank you for relieving me from the embarrassment to which your declension would subject me.”

“If I consulted my own feelings only, I should persist in declining this promotion; but I cannot do anything to embarrass the service,” added the commander. “I yield to your eloquence, Major, rather than to my own judgment.”

“I thank you for the compliment, and I am greatly obliged to you for opening the way for me to discharge the duty which brought me to Kentucky; and I am confident that the State will be benefited by your final decision in this matter.”

“You say that you have three companies here ready to be mustered into the service, Major Bornwood,” continued Colonel Lyon, anxious to bring the business of the day to a head.

“Three companies here, and another on the way, the last from the home of one of your lieutenants and its vicinity; and let me add that Lieutenant Knox raised the company himself.”

“Then it was for this service that he had two weeks’ leave of absence,” added the colonel, with a smile.

“Precisely so. General Buell has made very strong representations to the War Department

of his absolute need of more and better cavalry than he has had in the past, and an earnest effort has been made to enlist more men in this arm. The belief that the State is to be invaded by an army of the enemy has stimulated recruiting of both cavalry and infantry. You will have seven companies in the course of two or three days, and we hope to add three more in the course of a month. Now, Colonel Lyon, if you will form your battalion, including the battery, I will read to the men the orders I have brought from the general," said Major Bornwood, as he took a number of papers from his satchel, several of which were in envelopes, and looked as though they might contain commissions.

The command was formed in a hollow square. Colonel Lyon dismounted, and took a position with the staff-officer within the square. The commander then introduced Major Bornwood, of the staff of General Buell, who would announce certain changes to be made in the command. The men cheered him lustily, and the officer acknowledged the compliment gracefully. The staff-officer then proceeded to give the command all the

information which he had communicated to the colonel concerning the forming of a new regiment, stating that three companies were present which would be immediately mustered in, and that another would arrive at Munfordville within twenty-four hours.

“Your commander is now a colonel, promoted from the rank of lieutenant-colonel,” continued the staff-officer. “I have already had the pleasure of presenting to him his commission; and I am confident that such a promotion could not have been tendered to a more worthy, brave, and skilful officer.”

The command could wait to hear no more, but broke out into the most lusty volleys of applause, which was continued some time, and then ended in a vigorous clapping of hands, the members of the battery being as demonstrative as the cavalry.

“Will Captain Batterson of the battery oblige me by stepping forward?” the speaker proceeded.

The commander of the artillery dismounted, and walked to the front of the staff-officer.

“Captain Batterson, your merit in command of the artillery while attached to the cavalry command of Colonel Lyon has been neither forgotten nor overlooked; and I have the pleasure of addressing you as Major Batterson, and of handing to you this commission, which raises you to that rank.”

The major took the envelope, bowed and thanked the officer, retiring to his command amid the generous applause of the entire body.

“Will Captain Gordon step to the front?” continued Major Bornwood.

The captain presented himself, and appeared to be quite as much astonished at the calling of his name as Major Batterson had been.

“Captain Gordon, if Colonel Lyon had insisted upon having his own way, you would have been the colonel of the new regiment,” said the staff-officer; “and he accepted his commission against his own inclination. As it is, I have the pleasure of presenting to you your commission as lieutenant-colonel of the regiment.”

Colonel Gordon took the envelope amid the applause of the command, bowing low to the

officer, and, with his thanks, retired to the head of his company.

“Captain Dexter Lyon, late of General Woodbine’s staff, will oblige me by coming this way,” added Major Bornwood.

Deck had been utterly astounded when he was made a captain; and he believed he had rank enough to last him till the end of the war, and he could not understand why he was called forward.

“Captain Lyon, I have heard of you before, and I saw you at Pittsburg Landing. Though you are young in years, you are old in ability; and I assure you, and your father at my side, that it affords me peculiar pleasure to be able to address you as Major Lyon, for which the commission I now hand to you will afford me full justification. I congratulate you on the promotion that now comes to you, and I congratulate the new regiment on having such a brave and skilful officer.”

Deck took the envelope, and tried to say something, but burst into tears, completely overcome by the new honor which had come to him

unsought by himself or by his father. If it were possible, the cheers and the applause were more vigorous and longer continued than at any time before. He could do nothing but weep, and his father had to wipe away his tears.

CHAPTER II

THE VETERANS AND THE RECRUITS

EVERYBODY present on the field where Major Bornwood was engaged in reorganizing the command knew that Deck Lyon was not a baby, and that he "was no chicken." But they were astonished to see one who had always been the bravest of the brave, and always in the foremost of the battle, whom they had been in the habit of seeing in hand-to-hand encounters with the enemy, — they were astonished to see him weeping as though his heart were broken, instead of rejoicing at the latest of the rapid promotions which had attended his career in the army. The young officer could not have explained why he wept if he had tried; why his feelings had overcome him at the very moment of his greatest triumph. He had become a captain, and he had not the remotest suspicion that he could be promoted again. He was verging on his nineteenth

year; but he believed he had gone as high in rank as he could go, and, like his father, he believed that he had already obtained more than he deserved.

While he wept, the entire command cheered and applauded to the extent of every man's capacity. The cavalymen who had fought with him in many actions, who had been inspired by his heroism and daring, believed that he deserved his promotion, and would have deserved it if he had been made a colonel instead of a major. Some of his followers declared that it made brave men of cowards when they saw the young lieutenant engaged in single combat with Confederate officers. Three times at least they had seen him ride over his opponent, as it were, and bring both horse and rider to the ground. But the young soldier always insisted that it was his horse that accomplished these daring feats of arms; for he had trained Ceph, as Alexander the Great had broken in Bucephalus, whose name, in abbreviated form, he had given to his favorite steed. The horse had been taught to leap over any obstruction in his path; and he would obey

the mandate of Deck, or at least attempt to obey it, whether the object was a log, a four-rail fence, or a mounted trooper. Deck had been advised by his superior officers not to resort to this perilous expedient, and he had determined not to do so unless in a case of emergency. Near the close of the first day at Pittsburg Landing, he had been ordered by the commander of the brigade to take the place of Captain Gordon, who had been seriously wounded, and had dropped from his horse. Deck rallied the men, and placed himself at the head of the company, confronting a cavalry command led by a daring young officer, mounted on a small horse, who attacked him with all the vigor of a fiery nature.

Captain Lyon defended himself bravely and skilfully; but his opponent seemed determined to kill him as the only step by which he could make any further progress in repelling the charge. Deck regarded the situation as the emergency which justified him in disregarding the advice of his friends and superiors; and he drew back, giving Ceph his signals. The horse was as brave and daring as his rider; and he made a desper-

ate spring forward, mounted high in the air on his hind feet, as the young officer advanced again, and then came down upon the captain, as Deck struck him on the head with his sabre. Horse and rider went down, and the Confederate never rose again. The second company struck the enemy on the opposite flank, and the two swept their opponents from the field.

The movement on the part of the enemy was a flank movement, by which a large force was to turn the left of the Union army, and cover the ground for which they had been fighting all day. Not a few declared that this brave charge had saved the day in its waning hour to the nation, and was the prelude of the victory won the following day when General Buell brought his divisions upon the field. General Woodbine had witnessed the charge of the Riverlawn Cavalry, and especially the affray at single hand which had turned the tide of battle. He was filled with admiration at the heroic conduct of Captain Lyon, and it was the key to his latest promotion.

General Buell, after the siege of Corinth, when

the brigade was at MacMinville, had sent for the general, for consultation in regard to the situation in Kentucky. More cavalry was the pressing need there, and the brigadier had suggested all that had been done at Munfordville on the arrival of the force under Colonel Lyon. He was entirely familiar with all the affairs of the battalion, and knew the merits of all the officers, even to the sergeants and corporals. He had furnished all the names for promotion. There had been from the first appearance in the field of the Riverlawn Cavalry a long list of applicants for enrolment as privates in the two companies, so that the ranks had always kept full.

Soon after the retreat of the enemy from Corinth, officers had been sent into Kentucky by General Buell to recruit for cavalry service. The men gathered at Munfordville were the fruit of their exertions. When it was understood that the recruits were needed to make the Riverlawns into a regiment, men of the better class, the farmers, mechanics, and even those of wealth and influence, came forward, and formed the three companies that were waiting to be mustered in

at the capital of Hart County. Major Bornwood had been sent with full powers to organize the regiment; and his satchel was well filled with commissions for the new officers, some of them filled out, and others in blank, the names to be written in at the discretion of the staff-officer, in consultation with the new colonel and other officers.

After the major of the regiment had been commissioned, Colonel Lyon suggested to the staff-officer, who was really in command as such, that his men had marched thirty miles since daylight, and needed their dinner. The haversacks of the troopers had been filled with provisions, and possibly some of them had broken their fast on the march; but the men were dismissed till afternoon, when the work of the forenoon would be completed. The wagons had not yet arrived, for the mules were slower than the horses, and there was no grain for the latter; but the grass was fresh and green on the field chosen for the parade, and the animals were permitted to feed while the men took their dinner. It was two o'clock in the afternoon then; and the men were hungry, so that

they could forget it was not a Delmonico feast they took from their haversacks.

Deck had recovered his self-possession, and all the officers and most of the men congratulated him, and took him by the hand; for all of them believed that his promotion was the most deserved, worthy as all the others were of the advancement they had received. The new major had become even jolly by this time, and he was as happy as though he had been in the room with Miss Kate Belthorpe at her father's mansion at Lyndhall. Colonel Lyon and Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon did not escape the felicitations of the other officers and the men; and if everybody was not as happy as Major Lyon, they were all in a high state of rejoicing that those who had deserved it had received the reward of their bravery and skill in the field.

Major Bornwood invited the field-officers of the regiment to visit the camp of the three companies of recruits, which was about half a mile from the place where the commissions had been given out. As they were about to leave, they were informed that a company of troopers was

coming up the road from the west. This announcement created no little excitement; as it was not yet known whether the force approaching were friends or enemies. The staff-officer and the others had mounted their horses, and they rode out into the road. Deck surveyed the company as well as the distance would permit; and he soon satisfied himself that they were not enemies, for he recognized the tall form at the head of the party.

“That is Life Knox at the head of the party!” exclaimed Major Lyon as soon as he identified the acting second lieutenant of the first company.

“You are right, Dexter,” added his father, who always called his son by his full Christian name when they were not in the field, and had never been known to call him “Deck,” as everybody else did when off duty. “He must have marched from Muhlenburg County, and very likely he has done most of the distance to-day.”

“But how does it happen that they are all mounted, Major Bornwood?” asked Deck.

“I don’t know; you will have to ask Lieutenant Knox about that,” replied the staff-officer.

“He must have drilled his recruits to some extent,” added Deck, when the approaching force came near enough to be more distinctly seen. “In all the front ranks there are two men almost, or quite, as tall as Life himself;” for in the cavalry service the rule is not “the tallest on the right,” for they are placed in the middle of the section.

“They are good-looking men,” said the staff-officer. “Probably most of them are like those of some of the recruits in the three companies at Munfordville, — farmers, mechanics, storekeepers, and gentlemen of leisure.”

“Life is well known all over his county, and I have no doubt he has attracted the best men to his standard,” suggested Colonel Lyon.

“Very likely they own their own horses; but we have horses, uniforms, and equipments here for the balance of the regiment,” added Major Bornwood, as he advanced to meet the lieutenant, whom he had seen at MacMinville. “I am glad to see you, Captain Knox,” continued the staff-officer, as he extended his hand to him; for they were not in the military harness just then.

“I am glad to see you again, Major Bornwood,” replied Life, as he took the offered hand. “But I am not a captain, only an acting second lieutenant.”

“I shall not stand corrected, Captain Knox,” replied the major, laughing at the embarrassment of the stalwart Kentuckian, as he drew an envelope from the satchel which was always suspended from his shoulder. “If you will read the document contained in this envelope, you will find that I am right and you are wrong; for you are no longer an acting second lieutenant, but a captain.”

“I thank you, Major, and I must believe all you say,” replied Life, as he opened the envelope. “It is all right, sir, though I thought when I was made an acting second lieutenant that I had got about as high as I could ever go. I haven’t the education to be an officer.”

“But you have the education to make you a brave and skilful soldier, and no one would know to hear you talk that you were not a graduate of some college.”

“I owe my improved talk to Captain Lyon” —

“You mean Major Lyon,” interposed the representative of the Department commander. “He was promoted to-day.”

“I am blessed if I am not happier over that than I am over my own commission!” exclaimed Life, rushing to Deck, and actually hugging him as he sat on his horse. “My blessed boy! You haven’t got anything more than you deserve! I expect to see you a colonel before we get through with this war. It was Deck, Major, that educated me; he fixed up my grammar and pronunciation so that I can speak some English now.”

“But father is the colonel of the regiment now, Captain Knox,” added Deck.

“That is another blessed good thing you have done, Major Bornwood; and he is as worthy of the position as any man in the army could be,” said Life, as he grasped the hand of the colonel, and congratulated him as well as though his education had not been spoiled on the plains and in the Rocky Mountains.

“Thank you, Captain Knox, though I don’t think so much of the new colonel as you do,” returned the commander of the regiment.

“I should want to lick any other man that said that,” added Life, shaking his head as though he meant what he said.

“But don’t you do it, Captain. Now let me introduce you to Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon.”

“That’s another blessed good thing you have done, Major Bornwood,” said Life, as he seized the hand of Colonel Gordon, and congratulated him in his homely way.

“If I have deserved my promotion, Captain Knox, it is because I have had such good officers in my company as you are,” replied the colonel.

“I think I will stop firing, for all my shots fly back and hit me,” answered Life, as he returned to his place at the head of his company.

The news that Life had been commissioned as a captain had passed through the company, the recruits of which had already signed a petition for the appointment of the tall Kentuckian as their captain; and when he appeared he was saluted with a tremendous volley of cheers, and he made his best bow to the men.

“Now we will proceed with the business of

the day," interposed Major Bornwood. "Captain Knox, you will march your recruits to the camp, and I will lead the way. Your men will there be supplied with uniforms and equipments. You will be the captain of the company you have raised, and you will proceed to drill the men as soon as possible; for, if I mistake not, you will soon have occasion to lead them where things may be very warm."

The staff-officer and his companions led the way. As the recruits passed the field where the three companies had halted, the veteran troopers cheered them vigorously. They soon reached the camp, where they found the three companies gathered there clothed in new uniforms, and armed with carbine, sabre, and revolver. These men had stated explicitly to Major Bornwood that they wished the command of the companies to be given to old and experienced officers. The wagons arrived that night, and the three companies of veterans and the battery went into camp at once.

CHAPTER III

CAPTAIN LIFE KNOX IS IMPORTUNATE

ON the following day all the veterans and recruits were mustered on the field. All the evening before had been occupied in arranging the details of the organization of the regiment, and Major Bornwood had summoned the field-officers for consultation to the headquarters he had established in a house on the outskirts of the town. Seated around a table, the staff-officer had produced three papers, which proved to be the petitions of the recruits of the three companies, asking that experienced officers be appointed as captains and lieutenants.

“These recruits are very sensible; and they can see that they will do better with veterans in command than with some popular man in the county from which they come who is no soldier,” said the major, as he passed the papers to Colonel Lyon. “It makes the work of organizing

the command all the easier for us. Now, Colonel, if you will name the captain of the fourth company, we will proceed to business."

"Excuse me, Major, but I am afraid he will not name the right one," interposed Colonel Gordon. "I have in mind one who would have been promoted a year ago or more if his services had not been needed where he was. I am confident he would have been a first lieutenant by this time if other considerations than the merits of the young officer had not prevented his promotion. He has been the orderly of the commander of the battalion since the first engagement of the Riverlawns, and there is not a braver man in the body. I respectfully suggest the name of Artemas Lyon, whom we all know as 'Artie;' and though he is still a private, he is familiar with the duties of every officer in the line; and I think he is abundantly qualified for the position you are about to fill, Major."

"Artie a captain!" exclaimed Colonel Lyon. "I hope you don't intend to make a family matter of the promotions, Colonel Gordon."

"I certainly do not; but without regard to

family relations, I do not like to see a very meritorious young officer kept back in the shade on account of them," replied Colonel Gordon. "What do you think of the matter, Major Lyon?"

"Artie is not my own brother, but he is just the same to me; and I heartily indorse all that Colonel Gordon has said of him. I am well aware that he has been kept in the shade, but he has been extremely useful to my father. He has practically been an aide-de-camp, and as such he has learned the details of every officer's duty. I am sure he is amply qualified to be the captain of any company in the regiment."

"Have you anything further to say, Colonel Lyon?" asked the staff-officer.

"I am willing to admit that my adopted son deserves all that has been said of him, and perhaps more, for he never flinched from the discharge of any duty he was called upon to perform. I have seen more of him in action than any other officer; and the only objection I have to his triple promotion is that he bears my name," replied the colonel, in measured speech,

as though he felt the responsibility for what he was saying.

“The only objection is overruled,” added Major Bornwood, as he called in his orderly at the door, and sent for the young man under consideration.

He took a document from his satchel, and wrote the name of Artemas Lyon in a blank space when he had opened the document. “Good-morning, Captain Lyon,” he continued as Artie entered the apartment.

“Good-morning, Major Bornwood; but I am only a high private, and not a captain, or even a lieutenant,” replied the young man, who had rather more self-possession than his brother; and perhaps he had acquired it because his duties had required him to address some of the highest officers in the army.

“Not even a lieutenant; and it is not probable that you will ever be a lieutenant,” laughingly answered the staff-officer.

“Almost everybody else has been promoted; and I was wondering this morning if my time would ever come, though I am willing to serve

as a private till the end of the war, and be where I can do the most good," said Artie, as cheerfully as though he had been made a colonel.

"Your time has come, Captain Lyon," continued the Major, handing the orderly the paper in which he had just written the name.

Artie opened the paper, and read his own name, commissioned as a captain. He was more amazed than any other officer had been at his promotion. He started back, and gazed with incredulity at the face of the document, as though he could not believe even the evidence of his own eyes. He had a great deal of confidence in his visual organs, for they had served him very faithfully; and after a very close scrutiny of the paper he was compelled to accept the fact that he was actually a captain.

"I should have been glad to become a second lieutenant, or even a sergeant, but I did not expect to become a captain, even if the war lasted twenty years longer," said the new captain. "I thank you, Major Bornwood, and whoever else has spoken a good word for me."

"Colonel Gordon made the motion, but your

father and your brother, have supported it. Colonel Lyon's only objection was that you bore his name."

"But it is a good name to bear, for all that," replied Artie, as he began to back out of the room.

"Stop a moment, Captain Lyon," interposed the staff-officer. "You will command the fourth company, and all the recruits are drawn up on the field near the house. Now, gentlemen, if you will be prepared to name three more candidates for captaincies on my return, I will go out and introduce Captain Lyon to his command;" and he left the room with Artie.

A few minutes later a volley of cheers rent the air, and it was evident that Captain Lyon had been well received by his command. Artie and Deck were about the same age. They had been in the army over two years, and were now nineteen years old. Both of them had been wounded more than once, but neither had been sick a day. They had grown rapidly, and were as tall, and weighed as much, as the average of the men in the battalion. The fourth company,

therefore, had no reason to suppose that it was to be commanded by a baby.

The staff-officer returned to the room where he had left the colonel, and found him ready to name the other captains. The fifth company was the next in order, and Lieutenant Gadbury was promptly named as its captain. He was sent for, and his commission given to him. He was the first lieutenant of the second company, and was an able officer. Major Bornwood presented him to his company; and he was as well received as Artie had been. On his return he found Lieutenant Barnes of the third company—formerly called the Marions, though the name had been dropped, for the officers and privates preferred to share the glory of the Riverlawns—in the room with the field-officers of the regiment. He was quickly commissioned, and Major Bornwood went out to present him to his company. He was a fine officer; and it was considered no more than fair that the Marions should have a share of the promotions, especially as they had adopted the original name of the battalion. Life Knox had already been commissioned.

“Now, gentlemen, we have some more positions to fill,” said Major Bornwood, “and I wish to dispose of this business at once. You are familiar with the names of the officers and the places to be filled, and I am not. I will thank you to mention the vacancies and the persons who are to fill them, Colonel Lyon.”

“The place of the captain of the first company, made vacant by the promotion of Colonel Gordon,” replied the colonel, taking a paper from his pocket, on which had been written the newly arranged roster of the regiment. “We recommend that First Lieutenant Belthorpe be the captain, vice Gordon promoted.”

The staff-officer entered the name of Thomas Belthorpe on the blank, which had been duly signed for the occasion; and “Tom,” as every officer called him when off duty, became a captain. He needed no introduction to the first company, and the business proceeded without any further delay. The second lieutenant of the third company was made first of the first company, and Orderly Sergeant Fronklyn became the second lieutenant. It is hardly necessary to give the en-

tire roster of the regiment; but Sergeant Sluder, Corporals Milton and Sandy Lyon, were selected as second lieutenants to fill vacancies. In the course of the forenoon the new companies were mustered in, and under the direction of their new captains the first lieutenants were chosen. All of them had been military men in the cavalry service of the militia. The second lieutenants had all been sergeants or corporals in the battalion. These men had been selected for their education and their knowledge of military drill, as well as for their conduct in battle. Commissions were given to all who had not already received them, if they had been promoted.

The companies were dismissed for dinner, and to feed their horses. In the afternoon, when all the new companies had been mustered into the service, and the non-commissioned officers appointed, the line was formed, and then a hollow square. Major Bornwood now kept himself in the shade, and Colonel Lyon took the command. The latter made quite a long speech, which was as patriotic as the occasion required. He declared that the Riverlawn battalion had always been a

fighting body of men, and he expected that the regiment just formed would sustain the same reputation. "We are not yet ready as a regiment for active duty," he added; "and discipline is quite as necessary as bravery. The next thing in order is the drill, as much needed by the horses as by the men; and I shall dismiss the companies, and the captains will at once begin the drill of those which have just been mustered in."

Each commander of a company marched his men to the pickets where the horses had been secured, and they were dismounted. The first thing to be done was to train the soldiers in marching and facing on foot. This was done in squads, and the veterans were called upon to assist as instructors. As soon as the recruits were competent to march in good order, they were mounted; and it was several days before they reached this point in their progress, for they had to be drilled on foot in the sabre, pistol, and carbine exercises. Then came the mounted drill. Nearly all the men were good horsemen, and they made very satisfactory progress.

While the new companies were thus engaged,

Colonel Lyon received a telegraphic despatch from London, in Laurel County, notifying him of the approach of a Confederate cavalry regiment moving to the north. In consultation with Major Bornwood, it was decided that the original Riverlawn force, with the battery, should move in the direction indicated. At this time it was reported that several bodies of guerillas were moving into the State, believed to be engaged in plundering raids; and the presence of a body of cavalry was absolutely necessary in some of the southern counties.

“What does all this mean, Major Lyon?” demanded Captain Knox, as he met Deck; for he had noticed the preparations at the camp which looked like a movement of some kind.

“Three companies and the battery will move for the east at once,” replied the major of the regiment.

“But I have had no orders,” added Life.

“You are not to go. Your company is still as green as cabbages in July, and is not fit for active service,” answered the major, with a smile at the chagrin of the tall Kentuckian.

“Who says so, Deck?”

“Well, I say so, for one; and you know it as well as I do, Life.”

“I don’t know it. They may not do a big thing on dress parade, or anything of that sort, but they will fight like stacks of wildeats,” argued Captain Knox.

“They have not drilled over three days yet,” added Deck.

“Yes, they have; while we were waiting for some horses for a week in Muhlenburg County, I drilled them unmounted, and I was drilling them all the way on the road for two days. I say they are in good condition to go into a fight at this minute. I will be responsible for every man of them.”

“Of course I haven’t anything to say about it, and you must go to the colonel,” added Deck, who was not willing to think of such a thing as a fight when Life was counted out.

“Where is your father?” demanded the captain.

“At the headquarters of Major Bornwood; you will find both of them there,” replied Deck,

as Life stretched his long legs in the direction indicated.

The expedition was to start immediately after dinner; and all the veterans were busily engaged in the preparations for more stirring work, and the prospect of a change was very agreeable to them. Major Lyon walked up to the headquarters, and found on his arrival that Life had already stated his case.

“I have the best men in the column, — the best riders, the best marksmen, and the pluckiest lot all round that you could pick up, two or three from each county in the State; and I can’t stand it to have the Riverlawn Cavalry go into a fight without me and my men. I have known most of them all my life; and they are all in for Old Kentucky, and nothing else,” pleaded the captain. “A good part of them have been in the militia; and if they can’t make as good a show as the rest of the companies, they can do as much fighting, and do it as well as the best of them. I say I will be responsible for them.”

Both the colonel and the staff-officer yielded the point in the same breath.

CHAPTER IV

THE MARCH TO COLUMBIA

CAPTAIN LIFE KNOX considered it a personal grievance that he should be left in camp while his former companions in arms were sent out to drive off the guerillas that were invading the State, or were banding together within its limits; and he was made happy when the seventh company was ordered to join the three which had formed the Riverlawn battalion. He hastened to the camp where the horses were picketed; and at the appointed time his men were in the saddle, with their haversacks filled for the march. They had been provided with uniforms and arms on their arrival; and their vigorous captain had drilled them in the handling of their weapons, as well as in some of the movements as mounted men.

It was now a battalion of four companies, with Major Batterson's battery attached. Two wagons,

each drawn by six large mules, were loaded with grain for the animals and provisions for the men. In column the first company had the right, or head, and the second the left, or foot, of the line, with the seventh and third in the centre, in the order as named. The fourth, fifth, and sixth were to remain in camp, and their captains were directed to drill the men from sunrise till sunset every day; and, as the men were the best material in the State, it was believed that the three companies would be ready for the field by the time the battalion returned from the expedition.

The staff-officer represented the major-general in command of the Department; and he was authorized to send the regiment, or any part of it, where it might be needed. It was not necessary that the three field-officers should go with the expedition, but Major Bornwood had ordered them to do so, in order to give them the benefit of the experience they would obtain in the rank to which they had been promoted; and they were all as anxious to go as Captain Knox had been. The place of the colonel was at the head, the lieutenant-colonel at the foot, and the major at

the side of the column; and the staff-officer shook hands with all three of them as they took their places. The adjutant had not yet been appointed, for the regiment was not yet fully organized; but Sergeant Yowell, one of the original Kentuckians who had been among the first to enlist in the first company of Riverlawns, had been designated as sergeant-major, who is the assistant of the adjutant, and who takes his place when he is not present. In this capacity he marched near the colonel.

“Attention — Battalion!” commanded the colonel, when all was ready. “Forward — March!”

The horses had been resting for about three days, and they were in excellent condition. The colonel gave the order to gallop, as much to reduce the horses to a more quiet condition as to increase the speed of the column, though he intended to make a quick march to the point where the force was needed. This rapid marching was continued for three miles, when a halt was called to enable the wagons to come up; though Lieutenant Hickman, the quartermaster, had been ordered to keep up with the column if he could,

and he had hurried the mules to their best speed, and was not far in the rear. The march was resumed when they came up; and they did not again fall behind, for the column moved at the rate of about six miles an hour.

Colonel Lyon's fine steed was well trained; and when the march was resumed, he dropped his reins upon the animal's neck, and took a letter from his pocket, and broke the seal. It had been handed to him, with two others, just as his command was leaving Munfordville. He recognized the handwriting of the direction, and he was anxious to know its contents; for it was from his brother, who had been a prisoner of war at a camp near Chicago for nearly two years. Colonel Noah Lyon and Captain Titus Lyon had been on opposite sides in politics, and there had been a good deal of trouble between them. The latter had been a hard drinker of Kentucky whiskey in recent years. Titus had been at variance with his upright and honest brother in regard to the property of their deceased brother, Colonel Duncan Lyon, who had made a will giving the Riverlawn plantation to Noah.

Titus thought it ought to have been given to him, and this was the root of the trouble. He had been a Democrat at Derry, N.H., from which all the family had emigrated; and his associations with the whiskey-drinking people in Barcreek and its vicinity had caused him to cast in his lot with the Secessionists. He had raised a company of Home Guards, and had contributed from the money he had received from the estate of his brother to the Southern cause, till he had nearly impoverished himself; and he had been made captain of the company. But he drank so much whiskey that he was unfit for the command; and when he had been sent on a bridge-destroying expedition to co-operate with another force sent from farther south, his company had been captured, after being thoroughly beaten by the River-lawn Cavalry, and the prisoners had been sent to the North.

The family of Titus had been broken up by his erratic course, for he was no longer able to support them. His two sons, Sandy and Orly, had joined their father's company, which had gone to Bowling Green, where the boys had

been half starved in the absence of supplies in the Confederate camp; and they had deserted before the command was sent on the bridge expedition. The mother and three daughters, with the financial assistance of Noah, had returned to their friends in New Hampshire; and the two boys, who had followed their father's lead without having any interest in the South side he espoused, had joined the Riverlawn Cavalry. Both of them were brave fellows, and Orly had been killed in one of the battles of the battalion; while Sandy had just been promoted to the rank of second lieutenant, and assigned to the fifth company.

Noah had received two letters from Titus, and had put him in communication with his wife and daughters. As a prisoner, he could obtain no whiskey, and he had no money to bribe reckless camp retainers. His letters indicated a change of heart, and certainly of manners. Under the discipline of the prison camp, he had become a different man. The most significant announcement contained in his second letter was that the chaplain of the camp had converted him

to the Union faith. Noah had not much confidence in the professions of his brother. He asked for money ; but the loyal brother would not send him any, fearful that it would be converted into whiskey. This was the state of affairs between the colonel and his brother when he broke the seal of the third letter, received four months after the second.

The letter brought tears to the eyes of the reader, for Titus was a penitent.

“I have not tasted of any intoxicating drink for a year and a half, and I have signed the pledge never to touch it again as long as I live ; and with the help of God, I shall be true to my pledge [he wrote]. Mr. Goldword, the chaplain of the division to which I belong, has been my best friend. He secured me my rights as an officer, and I am now addressed as ‘Captain Lyon.’ But this is a small matter compared with the rest he has done for me. He has argued the political question with me till I believe I am as strong a Union man as you are ; and I am sure now it was whiskey that made a Secessionist of me. I have signed the oath of allegiance to the United States government. Since I did this two months ago, I have been practically set at liberty. I have no home now, for my wife and children have deserted me, though I do not blame them for doing so. I have property and debts due me in Barcreek ; but I have not

a dollar in money, and I cannot go to New Hampshire or back to Kentucky. I shall enlist as a private in the army of the Union at the first opportunity to join the cavalry service. I have been a member of a Presbyterian church here, and have been at work at my trade for a few days, since I could find anything to do. I have asked God, as I now ask you, to forgive me for all the hard words I have spoken to you, my brother, and for all I have done to your injury and that of my country. Mr. Goldword has promised to write to you about my case, and to give you his testimony in regard to what I am now."

This was the substance of Titus's letter, and the colonel wept over it. One of the other letters bore the same postmark, and he had no doubt it was from the chaplain, and the other was from Derry; but he had not time to read them, for the command had made ten miles, and he called a halt to water the horses. Without saying a word, he handed the letter to his son; and while his orderly was attending to his horse, he opened the letter from Derry. It was from Amelia, the wife of Titus, who had heard from him; and she related all the facts contained in her husband's letter. She had sent him some money, borrowed of her brother, and had begged

him not to enlist in a Western regiment. She thought he had better return to Kentucky, and work at his trade. The letter from the chaplain enclosed others from the minister of the church of which Titus was a member, and from the officers of the company in charge of the camp, all speaking in the highest terms of "Captain Lyon."

The march was resumed, and at sunset the command reached Greensburg, where they intended to camp for the night; but a telegraphic despatch from Major Bornwood informed the colonel that Columbia, the capital of Adair County, where the Riverlawns had been before on their way to Mill Spring, was threatened by a large body of guerillas, moving rapidly upon the town, and ordered him to hasten to its defence. It was about eighteen miles distant, and the commander decided to proceed without any unnecessary delay. The horses were fed, and the men had their supper. The battalion had marched only twenty miles that afternoon; it was a moonlight evening. The wagon-guard of the quartermaster was increased, and the four companies

made the first ten miles in an hour. They were then halted for a rest of half an hour; for the colonel believed in keeping his troopers as fresh as possible.

“Did you read that letter from your Uncle Titus, Dexter?” asked the commander while they were waiting.

“I did, father; and it looks as though Uncle Titus was a very different man from what he was in the Confederate service,” replied Deck, as much rejoiced at the change in him as his father was. “Do you suppose it is a lasting change?”

“I believe it is, for nothing could have induced him to write the letter you have read if he did not mean it,” added the colonel. “Titus is no hypocrite; and when he stopped drinking whiskey, he came to his senses. I have letters from his minister and from his wife. They all speak confidently of him, and your Aunt Meely advises him to return to Barcreek. I shall send him money, and if he comes home I should like to do something for him. If he had written before we made the promotions, I should have found a place for him in the regiment.”

“We have no adjutant or sergeant-major yet, father,” suggested Deck.

“More of the family in the command,” added Colonel Lyon with a smile. “But we will defer that matter till we need the officers you mention. Titus was the adjutant of a regiment in New Hampshire about fifteen years ago, and was a military man from the time he was eighteen. He is more of a soldier than I was when we went into the service.”

“I have no doubt he is qualified for any position up to captain of a company,” said Deck, as his father gave the order to form the column.

At ten o'clock in the evening the battalion was approaching Columbia; and a squad of cavalry was reported as coming up the road, consisting of not more than half a dozen. As they came nearer, they halted, and gave three cheers. Then they rode forward at full gallop; and Colonel Lyon halted the battalion, to ascertain the meaning of this demonstration. The principal personage of the group, or at least the one that rode in advance, halted in front of the colonel.

“I am glad to see you, Colonel Lyon, at just

this time, for you are greatly needed here," said the leading man. "I telegraphed to Major Bornwood at Munfordville, and received a reply that Colonel Lyon with four companies of cavalry and a battery were on the road to Columbia. You were Major Lyon when we met last, and when you defeated the enemy's force on the road to Jamestown."

"I ought to know you, and your voice sounds familiar; but I do not," replied the colonel.

"I am usually called Colonel Halliburn, for that was my rank in the militia; but I am now only the captain of the Millersville Home Guard," replied the officer.

"I am glad to meet you again, Colonel Halliburn."

"You don't remember a man by the name of Ripley, do you, Colonel?" said an elderly man next to the leader.

"Very well indeed, for he was in command of the sharpshooters that did such good service at Mill Spring."

"I am the man," said the second speaker.

"I am glad to see you, Captain Ripley," added

Colonel Lyon, as he shook hands with the best rifleman in the county. "But I think we had better attend to business now. Where are the guerillas, Colonel Halliburton?"

"They may be regular Confederate cavalry, though in my opinion they don't belong to the army. We have a squad of scouts out; and a messenger came in from them two hours ago, stating that the enemy had camped for the night at Harrison, and no doubt they will plunder the town."

"Then nothing can be done to-night; and I am not sorry for it, for my men have ridden nearly forty miles to-day.

"We will examine the map, and look over the ground," added Colonel Lyon, as he gave the order to march.

The command camped for the night on the outskirts of Columbia.

CHAPTER V

PREPARATIONS FOR THE DEFENCE

QUARTERMASTER HICKMAN, who was one of the sons of Colonel Hickman, whose battle at his mansion on the hill the battalion had fought the year before, and who was entirely familiar with the locality, for his home was less than twenty miles from Columbia, had made a cross-cut, and hurried up the wagons, so that they arrived at the camp almost as soon as the companies, and the tents were pitched. The men had taken their supper early in the evening, and they were soon rolled up in their blankets on the ground. But Colonel Lyon and the other field-officers did not go into their tent till a later hour, but proceeded at once to make a survey of the surroundings of the town, and to make the dispositions for the battle of the following day.

Columbia was not a large town in 1862; and the two original companies of the Riverlawn

Cavalry had been there before, and knew something about the place. It is located on Russell's Creek, — and a fairly large stream often takes the name of "creek" in Kentucky. In this instance it was a considerable river, flowing into the Green. Colonel Halliburn and Lieutenant Ripley were sent for by the commander of the force; and they began a tour of the town on the outskirts, where the engagement was likely to take place.

"Now, Colonel Halliburn" —

"Excuse me, Colonel Lyon, but I am not a colonel, only a captain in command of the Home Guard, and too many colonels may make confusion," interposed the officer addressed. "Call me captain, please; for that is my present rank."

"As you please, Captain Halliburn. Have your scouts reported the number of the cavalry approaching?" asked the colonel.

"They could not ascertain the number accurately, but believe the force consists of an entire regiment," replied the captain.

"What is your force here?"

"I have a full company of cavalry, and at

Millersville I have a company of infantry for the defence of the town."

"We shall be outnumbered, then," added Colonel Lyon, evidently not pleased with the situation. "I have but four companies and a battery of six guns."

Both of the camps were near the river, and therefore in the southern part of the town, that of the Home Guard being at the extreme end of the village. The road came in from Harrison, near the latter, by a bridge over the deepest water in the stream. From this crossing the surveying party had a full view of the entire locality outside of the town, which was at that time nothing more than a village, though it contained some very fine residences and the county buildings. Colonel Lyon halted on the bridge; and the moonlight enabled him to obtain a sufficient view of the surroundings. He had something over five hundred men in his command; and it was probable that the enemy had double that number, if it was a full regiment, as it had had been reported to be.

The colonel felt the responsibility of the situa-

tion; and from what he had learned he was inclined to believe that the regiment at Harrison was the advance of the forces that were moving into the State under Bragg and Kirby Smith, though it might be only one of the guerilla forces which had been sent in advance of the main armies. But whatever the enemy might be, it was necessary that the force should be beaten; and this was the great thought in the mind of the commander. He did not lose sight of the fact that he was to fight the battle with only half the force of the enemy. It would require something more than brute force to achieve a victory under these circumstances. He seated himself on the rail of the bridge, and looked about him. No one spoke to him, and he did not ask the advice of his associates. After he had been silent for a quarter of an hour, he leaped down from his seat, and rubbed his hands together as though he had obtained the idea he wanted.

“I think we can whip them!” he exclaimed in vigorous tones, as he stamped his right foot upon the planks of the bridge.

His companions looked at him; for they were satisfied that his plan for the battle was fully arranged. They were ready to receive their orders, and were rather impatient to know how operations were to be conducted; but not one of them asked a question.

“On the right of the road from Harrison, looking from this bridge, the woods extend at least half a mile,” said the colonel, seating himself on the rail again.

“For over two miles,” added Lieutenant Ripley.

“So much the better. Now, Captain Halliburn, where are the sharpshooters that rendered such valuable service in the fight on the road to Jamestown?” inquired Colonel Lyon.

“They are all here, still in my command,” answered the captain of the Home Guard. “When we want to use them as riflemen they are under the command of Lieutenant Ripley.”

“How many of them are there?”

“Sixty-three, counting me in,” replied the lieutenant. “We have had rather quiet times about here for the last year, and they have not had

much practice; but they can shoot as well as ever they could."

"I propose to place that portion of your command in this wood, Captain Halliburn, if you do not object; for the company is yours, and not mine."

"My company is under your command, and you can place them where you think best," answered the captain of the Home Guard. "Ripley, you will take your orders from Colonel Lyon."

"The colonel is going to play the same game he did a year ago on the Jamestown road and at the meadows by Fishing Creek," said the lieutenant. "I am ready to do my best for him; and when a ball goes out of one of my rifles, a trooper drops, killed or wounded."

"I thank you, Lieutenant, and I am confident I can depend upon you," added Colonel Lyon. "You can see that rising ground near the creek, south-east of the village. On that I shall post the battery of six guns. You will place your riflemen behind the trees, on the south side of the creek, and far enough back to be out of

the reach of the shot and shells which Major Batterson will pour into the enemy. But he will take the Confederate troopers at an angle, so that no shot will strike within a quarter of a mile of this bridge. Do you understand it, Lieutenant Ripley?"

"Perfectly, Colonel."

"Colonel Gordon, you will command the first and second companies, posted out of sight from the Harrison road at the southern extremity of the village. You can place your men behind the houses and in that grove by the river," continued the colonel.

"But I have forty-seven men besides the riflemen," interposed Captain Halliburn, fearing that he might not be employed.

"I believe there is a ford beyond that bend in the creek," continued the colonel, pointing in the direction of the road by which the command had arrived at the town. "We crossed it on the way to Millersville; for the enemy had destroyed the bridge."

"You are quite right, Colonel Lyon," replied Captain Halliburn.

“The third and seventh companies, with the Home Guard detachment, will be posted there, under the command of Major Lyon; and the three companies will be the reserve. I shall be first with the battery, and all the time where I can overlook the whole field. If I find it necessary, I shall order the bridge to be destroyed; and that would carry the burden of the fighting to the ford, where the major’s force will have to stand the brunt of the battle till it can be re-enforced by the first or second company.”

“I think we can stand it, though Captain Knox’s company is not yet in the highest state of discipline,” added Deck, not sorry to find that he was to have an important position in the line of battle.

“I have stated the plan of the defence fully, and I trust it is clearly understood; but I am ready to answer any questions,” said the colonel, with a gape which indicated what he needed next, though he had passed many sleepless nights on the field.

No one asked any questions, for each officer understood his share of duty in the action. It

was eleven o'clock, and the inhabitants of the village were all asleep. No loafer or night wanderer had disturbed the conference on the bridge, and not a word of it could have been overheard by any person. The officers went to the camps where they belonged; but the first thing Colonel Lyon did when he reached his tent, before which was a guard, was to send for Major Batterson. While his orderly was gone to summon him, the commander seated himself at his table, and drew a plan of the battle.

“Major, I have made all my dispositions for the affair of to-morrow, however early or late it may open,” said the colonel when the commander of the battery appeared, pointing on his drawing to the elevation where the guns were to be planted. “You will throw up a breastwork there, from which you can enfilade the enemy on his approach as soon as the regiment reaches the turn in the road. Sixty-three riflemen will be posted in the wood on the other side of the highway, and their line will extend to the bend in the road. Of course you will not throw any shot or shells into the wood this side of the bend.”

“Certainly not,” replied the major. “I will not kill or wound our own men.”

“You can turn your men out as early as may be necessary to complete the breastwork by daylight. The battalion will be under arms by three o’clock,” said the colonel, with another gape. “I intend this affair shall be a surprise to the enemy. Captain Halliburn has sent out mounted scouts on the road, who will prevent any disloyal persons in the village from carrying information to the enemy.”

“My command will be on that hill at three o’clock in the morning,” added Major Batterson as he returned to his tent.

Colonel Lyon rolled himself up in his blanket, and stretched himself upon the ground where his orderly had prepared the best bed he could for him; and he was asleep almost as soon as he touched it, for by this time he was an old campaigner, and could go to sleep at any hour, by day or night, and even when he was seated on his horse. He slept just four hours, which was enough for him, and then he was on his feet. The several companies were already stirring, and the

horses were eating their grain. The tents were rolled up, and placed in the wagons. The ammunition was served out, and the men were eating their breakfast of ham and hardtack, washed down with coffee. At three o'clock the lines were formed, and the colonel gave the order for the lieutenant-colonel and the major to move their respective commands to the locations assigned to them.

Major Batterson had his battery on the hill, which was not more than fifty feet above the level of the water in the creek; and his men were very industriously using their picks and shovels, assisted by a force from the town, for which the colonel had applied the night before. The guns were soon planted at the breastwork thrown up, loaded with canister, and all ready to open the battle. Colonel Lyon rode over to the hill to assure himself that everything was ready for the expected conflict. Major Batterson was as enthusiastic as an officer could be, and nothing was left undone in his lines.

Looking down from the hill, the colonel could see nothing of the troopers in the positions to

which he had assigned them; and he did not wish to see them, for their officers had been ordered to keep them under cover. He rode down to the bridge, and to the parts of the village nearest to it, and found that the lieutenant had posted his force in admirable positions for the duty they were to perform. The major's force was in a grove where they could not possibly be seen from the Harrison road. At the same time, both of these forces could fall upon the enemy without a moment's delay when it should be necessary to check the enemy. From these points Colonel Lyon rode into the woods, and found the sharpshooters all in position to discharge the important duty assigned to them.

The commander had studied his maps very attentively, and had learned, from those who were familiar with the locality, that the woods extended as far south as Montpelier, and nearly to Millersville. If the enemy were checked or turned back, they could not reach the other side of the village except by going back to Harrison, and making their way round by Jamestown and

Millersville. The company of Home Guards at the latter, where Captain Halliburn had left them to defend the town, had scouts out watching the approaches from the east and the south; for raids were expected as the Confederate armies moved towards the centre of the State, with Louisville and Cincinnati as their objective points.

At six o'clock in the morning a small movement was detected in the Harrison road; but it proved to be the mounted scouts of the Home Guard, and not of the enemy's cavalry. Captain Halliburn recognized them by signals agreed upon; for he and Lieutenant Ripley had posted themselves on the bridge, which commanded a clear view of the road. The scouts came in, and it was evident from the condition of their horses that they had had a hard ride. They reported that the enemy's cavalry had marched at four o'clock, and could not be expected to arrive before eight. But at half-past seven the force appeared. Not a sound could be heard in the village, or on either side of the bridge. Doubtless the enemy expected to surprise the Home Guard, known to be there. The regiment

advanced confidently till the head of the column reached the bend in the road, and then the six guns of the battery poured their canister into the head of the line.

CHAPTER VI

THE CHARGE OF THE ENEMY ON THE HILL

THE guns of the battery were not discharged together, but followed one another in rapid succession. The cannoneers were thoroughly drilled, and when the first piece was fired it was drawn back and reloaded with all the rapidity which skill and practice could give. There was no wind; but the air was still, without a puff to carry off the smoke, which lay in a dense volume, and prevented Major Batterson from seeing what effect his canister had produced in the ranks of the enemy.

Colonel Lyon had found an elevation near the bridge, which he mounted on his horse, and from which he could see the Confederate force. It was near the buildings behind which the first and second companies were posted; and as he passed Colonel Gordon, he beckoned to him to follow, as he wanted him to understand clearly

the situation, for he was to execute the next movement in the plan. The first shot was evidently a surprise; for the entire force of the defenders of the town was completely masked, and the colonel of the approaching regiment could have had no suspicion of the presence of the well-placed battalion.

The effect of the first shot was very decided; and several of the troopers were seen to fall from their horses, and there was no little confusion in the ranks. The first discharge was followed by the second, with very little interval between them. At the same time the crack of the rifles in the woods could be heard; and Lieutenant Ripley appeared to be using the same tactics he had applied on the two former occasions when he had rendered such efficient service in securing the victory. His men took careful aim, and no two riflemen marked the same person for their victim. Several officers had been marching leisurely at the head of the column; for it was plain that they expected to choose their own time and place for the attack, if the appearance of such a body of troops did not awe the defenders of the place

into an immediate surrender. Their easy and careless approach indicated something of this kind.

“They are getting more than they bargained for,” said Colonel Gordon, as the observers realized that the riflemen were picking off the officers of the regiment.

“It is all working precisely as I expected it would,” added Colonel Lyon, who did not seem to be at all excited by the scene before him. “Ripley is picking off the officers, and several of them have already dropped from their horses.”

“The commander of the force has retired to the side of the road, and must be severely wounded,” added Gordon.

“Batterson strikes them at the bend of the road and beyond, and he has followed my instructions to the letter; therefore he has not aimed at the head of the column,” said the colonel. “It is Ripley’s men who have brought down the officers, and they are still falling.”

“He is striking them now about in their third company, and he is doing terrible execution in their ranks,” replied Gordon.

“It looks very much like a slaughter; and I doubt if your two companies will have much, if anything, to do,” continued the colonel, as he saw the terrible havoc made by the guns and the riflemen.

He had hardly spoken the words before the company, or what was left of it, broke and galloped to the rear. The next company followed its example, for the road here was wide enough to permit their passage outside of the column. Colonel Lyon remained as unmoved as before; for though he was quick to take advantage of any favorable occasion, he was not the man to make a move without due reflection. It was plain enough that the enemy would abandon the field, and flee to a place of safety, or that a new disposition of the force would be made. The Confederate colonel was disabled, and was being borne to the rear. Simply because he had not suspected the near presence of any enemy other than the Home Guard, he had needlessly exposed himself to the fate which had overtaken him.

The panic in the companies at the head of the column had been communicated to the entire

regiment. Both of the officers on the knoll had brought their field-glasses into use as soon as the enemy broke, and Colonel Gordon had counted ten companies on the retreat. An officer on the left flank of the column had attracted the attention of the colonel when the panic began, and he was observing his movements very closely. He had marched at about the middle of the line, and he concluded that he was the major; but Gordon was confident that he was the lieutenant-colonel, though he was in the usual position of the major.

“He gave the order to ‘about face,’ and to retreat,” added Colonel Gordon.

“It does not make much difference what he is; but he has evidently taken the command of the regiment, and has given the order for the retreat, the only sensible thing he could do,” replied the colonel. “The only question now is what they will do next.”

“The colonel is certainly used up for the present, and all we have to do is to wait for the next move on the part of the enemy. Batterson has ceased firing, for the enemy have passed out of the reach of his guns; and the riflemen have

done the same. The force have discovered by this time that the place is defended by something more than the Home Guard."

Colonel Lyon was silent for some minutes; but he was making a careful examination of the country on the east of the town, the portion of which nearest to the battery was a tobacco-field. Beyond was a large area of hemp. It was the middle of August, and there had lately been no heavy rains. The land was therefore dry, with only a few scattering trees upon it. The creek flowed about half-way between the road and the elevation on which the battery was posted.

"I think I can see what the enemy will do next," said the colonel, when he had completed his survey of the fields on the east.

"They evidently believe that the battery has done all, or the most, of the mischief to their column; and they will take to the fields, and endeavor to capture it," suggested the lieutenant-colonel.

"That is exactly my view of the situation," answered Colonel Lyon, who seemed to be prepared to act. "You will uncover your com-

panies, and march over the bridge to the woods at the side of the road, Colonel Gordon."

The colonel spoke very decidedly, and his companion rode off hastily to execute the command. The troopers had done nothing thus far, and they were anxious to be led into the conflict. In a few minutes they were posted on the verge of the wood, which was too dense for the movements of cavalry. Colonel Lyon galloped his fleet steed down the hill and over the bridge to the position assigned to the major. He ordered Deck to march his command to the knoll where he had observed the progress of the action.

"Major Lyon, you will support the battery; for in the course of an hour, perhaps within half an hour, the enemy is likely to attempt to capture it. You will be greatly outnumbered, but we must not lose the battery."

"It shall not be lost," replied Deck confidently.

"Don't be too sure, for there will be hard fighting on that hill if the men on the other side have not lost their pluck. How are your men?"

"They are full of fight, and are very impa-

tient to be brought into action. Captain Knox has primed them up to the highest notch. They are nearly all great stalwart fellows, and they will make a havoc wherever they go. I think Life enlisted only the biggest men he could find; and he says there is another company at least that could be enlisted in Muhlenburg County."

"We will talk of that another time. March your command to the hill, and report to Major Batterson what you are there for," added the colonel, as he rode over to the wood.

The major moved his companies on the instant, and his father saw them posted on the hill where they could defend the battery to the best advantage. The colonel found Lieutenant Ripley's riflemen formed in line in the wood; for they had accomplished their mission as far as it could be done, and had fired till the enemy were out of rifle range of them.

"You have done exceedingly well, Lieutenant Ripley, and I thank you for your efficient service," said the colonel, in the hearing of all the riflemen, whom he intended to compliment as well as their officer.

“Is the battle ended, Colonel?” asked the lieutenant.

“No, I think not; but we have to wait for the next move of the enemy. The regiment has lost its colonel, who was either killed or seriously wounded.”

“I ought to know that, for I fired the shot that brought him down,” replied the lieutenant.

“We have not the time to talk about it now, Lieutenant. You are better acquainted with this locality than I am, and you are aware that there is a selvage of trees along the south side of Russell’s Creek, between the road and the stream; they have been cut off on the other side to make room for tobacco plants,” continued the colonel.

“I know all about it, Colonel, for I have fished that stream for fifty years,” replied Ripley.

“You will post your men in those trees, Lieutenant Ripley.

“With the road behind them?” asked the rifleman, with some surprise in his expression.

“Precisely so; for that road will not be used again at present for an attack, you may be very sure. The next move of the enemy will be to

attempt to capture the battery, which they doubtless believe did all the mischief to the Confederate column. I don't think they were aware that sharpshooters were stationed in this grove."

"They found it out when the surgeons examined the wounds of the men that fell."

"The work was well done, and it makes little difference whether or not the enemy know who did it. Now, Lieutenant, that you may know the situation, I expect the next attack will be made from the tobacco-field. The commander of the force cannot know yet that there is anything but the Home Guard behind that battery. Now post your men; and I need not say anything more to you, Lieutenant Ripley, for I know that you will do your whole duty," said the colonel.

Colonel Lyon saw that Gordon's command were on the verge of the wood, and then rode over the bridge to the battery. He found that Major Batterson's men, assisted by those of Deck's command, were at work with their picks and shovels, enlarging and raising the breast-work. Mounted on his horse, he could now just see over the rampart.

“Have you kept a lookout, Major Batterson, in the direction the enemy retreated?” inquired the colonel, when both majors came to his side.

“I have, Colonel; but there is no movement yet,” replied the commander of the battery.

“With the field-glass I made out certain movements on the part of the enemy which indicated that they were establishing a hospital on the other side of the plain occupied by the plantations,” said Major Lyon.

“I think they are at dinner on the side of that hill,” added the other major.

“Then we had better do the same thing,” added the colonel; and he gave the order to that effect.

As the men had to dine out of their haversacks, it was not a formidable affair, and in twenty minutes they were ready for action.

“They are forming in column for a march up the road they used before,” said Deck, as he was munching his ham and hardtack.

“But they will not come a great distance on that road,” added Colonel Lyon, who was engaged in the same necessary operation.

Every man who could see across the plain was looking out in the same direction. When the regiment had crossed about half-way over, men were sent to remove the fence, and the commander led the way into the field.

The force moved at a gallop in the direction of the battery, the guns of which were loaded with shell this time. Just out of reach of gunshot, the regiment halted, and one-half of it kept to the right, and the other half to the left. Each division was led by an officer, and they were plucky fellows to expose themselves in front of the columns; and this fact seemed to indicate that they were now aware of the presence on the field of the sharpshooters. The men hurried their horses to the top of their speed. The two divisions were not more than two hundred feet apart, and both of them were within the range of the riflemen.

The elevation on which the battery was planted was called a hill merely because it was higher at its summit than the surrounding region; but it was only fifty feet above the water-level of the creek, and the descent on all sides was very

gradual. The cannoneers were behind the breastwork; and the enemy could make no use of their carbines or muskets, whichever they were. They made no halt at the foot of the slope, but had gathered up for an impetuous charge.

Three of the guns were to act upon each of the divisions of the regiment. At the command of the major, a shell was thrown into the middle of the first company in each column. The fuses had been well timed, the parabola accurately calculated, and the shells exploded just as the commander intended. They created considerable confusion, but they did not stop the advance entirely. Half a dozen men were seen to fall. But the brave officers at the front rallied their troopers, and the advance was continued as impetuously as before. Then the second shells were thrown into the columns; but they were less destructive than the first had been. The column pressed forward, apparently unshaken by the shells; and at this moment Major Lyon poured his men down upon the enemy from each end of the breastwork.

CHAPTER VII

A BREAK IN THE ENEMY'S COLUMNS

MAJOR BATTERSON was compelled to silence his guns when Captain Life Knox led his company in the charge against the heads of the two columns of the enemy. Captain Halliburn, with the Home Guards, attacked the enemy on their left; and in spite of their name they were equal to any of the regular force. Both of the charging parties were required to keep as near the breastwork as possible, in order to give the riflemen the space to put in their deadly work.

Colonel Lyon rode down to the knoll where the first and second companies had been posted, to obtain a better view of the entire field. Life, at the head of the big men of his command, had made a furious onslaught. The riflemen were posted in the trees on the bank of the creek, and they had a full view of the advancing enemy. The riders in both divisions of the regiment be-

gan to fall from their horses as soon as they attempted to ascend the gradual slope. The present commander of the force was less reckless in exposing himself than his predecessor had been, and had placed himself behind the companies making the charge. He could not help seeing that his men were picked off at a very rapid rate. They dropped from their horses, or were wounded, while they were at a considerable distance from the heat of the charge.

He could see that they were not brought down by sabre wounds, and at first he was perplexed; but he soon discovered the men placed in the grove, for they made but little use of the trees, as there was no firing into their position. Not half of his force was engaged, for not more than four companies could get near enough to the breastwork to be of any service; and most of the loss was in the force which had found space enough to act on the slope of the elevation.

The regiment wore the uniform of the Confederate army; and their gray coats could be easily distinguished from the blue of the Union force by the sharpshooters, who had been care-

fully instructed by the colonel not to fire at those who were engaged in repelling the charge; for that would be perilous to the Kentuckians at the front. The commander of the enemy was seen to send an officer in the direction of the rear; but he had not gone ten rods before he dropped from his horse. A second officer was sent as soon as the fate of the first was noted; but he shared the fate of the other.

The riflemen were all mounted men, but their horses were at the picket-lines on the other side of the creek. When the Riverlawns were in this section of the State before, there had been talk relating to the forming of a company of mounted riflemen; but in the more quiet times that followed the battle of Mill Spring, and the departure of the enemy from this part of the State, nothing had come of it. Lieutenant Ripley had been in command of the sharpshooters when they rendered very important service in connection with the cavalry; and he was reputed the best shot in his county. He was sixty years old; but he was still as hale and hearty as he had been at forty, and his eyesight was evi-

dently not in the least impaired by his years, for he was still a dead shot. Butters, who had been the keeper of the jail at Jamestown, was hardly less in repute as a marksman; and he had been also a lieutenant without a commission in the company of sixty-four at that time. He was still in the Home Guard, and was present with it.

Ripley had the right of his line, and Butters had taken a position at his side, as there was no manœuvring of the force; for each man acted for himself, under the instructions given them beforehand.

“I suppose it will not take much calculating to tell what that man is sent off for, Butters,” said Ripley, as the officer rode out of the column on its left flank, and as he drew his bead on him.

He fired while the man was on the wing, and he dropped to the ground, while Ripley was loading his rifle again. The commander's eye had followed him till the messenger went down, and his horse galloped away to the rear. The second man was started on the same errand a

minute later, and the rifle of Butters covered him. He shared the fate of the first, though he was not killed, and a couple of the riders hastened to his assistance.

"I reckon all this means that we are to have a hornets' nest let loose in front of us," said Butters, as he loaded his weapon.

"One or two companies are to be sent this way to clean us out," added Ripley. "All that is plain enough."

"That feller that commands the force on the other side is a brave man, but he won't hold still long enough to be shot," continued Butters. "He keeps behind that big tree in the field."

"I don't blame him for that; for his troopers are falling all around him, and he wouldn't last two minutes if he uncovered himself."

"We are go'n' to have a fight in close quarters very soon," suggested Butters; "for the commander has sent a messenger out on the inside of his line, and we can't see him. I saw him give the order, but I lost sight of the messenger before I could fire."

"When the company comes it will be on the

other side of the creek; and it is about a hundred feet wide just here," replied Ripley.

While they were talking about what they were to expect, Colonel Lyon's orderly went with a note to Colonel Gordon, whose two companies were posted in the grove at the side of the road. The receiver glanced at the note, which was as brief as a telegraphic despatch, and then ordered the two captains to march over the bridge to the knoll where the colonel was observing the action. Captain Halliburn, with his forty-seven men, had charged upon the head of the column of the enemy on the left; but his small force was greatly outnumbered, and he was compelled to fall back.

Captain Belthorpe was sent to his assistance; and, as instructed by the colonel, he marched his company along the creek to the rear of the enemy, whose right platoon was pressing Captain Halliburn's command. At this point they fell upon the second platoon, Tom Belthorpe leading in person. They fired their carbines first, and several of the troopers in front of him fell. Then they charged with all the vim which

distinguished the Riverlawns, and crowded the company off their ground in the direction of the right flank of the regiment.

Captain Truman was sent over the hill in the rear of the breastwork, and came into the field on the left of it. Immediately in front of the work, Life Knox, with his undisciplined Kentuckians, had been doing wonders; but it was a hand-to-hand fight, and discipline did not count for much in such an affair. As Captain Belthorpe had done, Captain Truman, as ordered by the colonel, struck the enemy at the second platoon of the first company. The men charged as impetuously as they always did, and both the first and second companies seemed to ride over the enemy as though the Confederates had been only pygmies in their path. The result of this tremendous double onslaught was that the enemy were thrown into confusion; and in spite of the rallying cry of the officer behind the tree, they fled from the field on the right of their columns, which was the only open space by which they could escape from the terrible sabres of the Union cavalry.

But the beaten foe had no sooner passed, as it were, out of the fangs of the Riverlawns, than the artillery opened upon them, and the flight was kept up till they were out of the range of the guns. Colonel Lyon rode up to the breastwork, dismounted, and placed himself where he could command a full view of the entire battlefield. The two companies which had led in the assault on the works had been ridden down, and beaten from the field. The Union troops held the ground they had occupied.

“Never mind the two companies that are running away, Major Batterson. Don’t waste any more powder upon them,” said the colonel, when the commander of the battery had placed himself at his side. “It is time to act for a new combination. Open with shells upon the main body of the enemy. They are somewhat staggered by the disaster at their front. Fire two rounds of shells into them, and then I shall order an advance of the whole line. I see that the riflemen by the creek are still at work, for the men in the enemy’s columns are falling in both divisions.”

There was a pause in the engagement; and Colonel Lyon hastily wrote a few lines with a pencil on the "block" he carried in his pocket, and tore off the sheet, which he sent by his orderly to Lieutenant Ripley. The men were having a breathing-spell; but many of them believed they had already won the battle, though the commander did not. The question with him was whether the commander of the enemy behind the tree would order a retreat by the way the force had come, or an advance upon the four companies, with Captain Halliburn's command, which had just driven from the field the heads of his columns. While he was probably considering what he should do, the battery opened upon his command with shells, which created a great excitement, if not a panic, among his men. At the same time a company was discovered moving at full gallop from the rear of the column towards the front, but soon diverging from a straight line in the direction of the creek; and it was evident to the colonel that this force was sent to clean out the riflemen on the other side of the creek.

“Throw two of your shells into that company, Major,” said the colonel.

“Do you mean to attack with a single company, Colonel?” asked the major, as his cannoneers were training the two guns on the right to obey the order.

“By no means,” replied Colonel Lyon. “That force is sent to the creek to drive out the riflemen, who are doing a great deal of mischief in the ranks of the enemy.”

The shells were thrown as directed, and the first one burst in the very midst of the company, for they were pointed by the major himself. The effect was very decided, and the troopers scattered in every available direction; but the captain was a brave and plucky man, and with a loud voice he rallied his men. They were returning to the ranks when a rifle-ball silenced him forever. The first lieutenant was made of the same kind of stuff as his commander, and continued the work the other had begun. The men formed again, and were about to advance when another shell fell in the midst of the command, and scattered them again. The

lieutenant rallied them, and spread them out in sections over the field, so that the shells should not be so destructive; but no more of these missiles disturbed the force, and the officer led them to the creek, striking it at a considerable distance from the location of the riflemen, which disturbed their aim for a time.

“Now play into the ranks of the main body, Major Batterson,” said the colonel. “Our men are getting a good rest out of the present situation; and they need it, for they fought with tremendous vigor in the charge.”

“That they did!” replied the major, as he gave his orders to the cannoneers. “But what is coming next, Colonel?”

“I don't know any better than you do, Major; but it is the next move of the enemy, and when it comes I shall endeavor to meet it. Major Lyon wished to pursue the companies that ran away; but I ordered him not to do so. We are strong in front of your works now, and we should not be if two companies were sent in pursuit of the two that ran away.”

“Now, what can that company do with the

riflemen?" asked the major, as he saw the troopers following the creek.

"Nothing; just now they are shielded from the fire of Ripley's men by that bend of the creek; but as soon as they reach a point in front of them, or attempt to cross the stream, not a few of them will begin their last sleep," replied the colonel, as he directed his glass to the big black walnut which had so far been the salvation of the officer to whom the command of the regiment had fallen; and he had been wise to keep himself covered, for the safety of the command depended upon him.

"Can you hit that tree, Major Batterson?" asked the colonel, pointing it out to the commander of the battery; and it was the most prominent object on the field.

"I think so."

"Try it."

It was a failure the first time, but the second attempt was more fortunate, and the tree seemed to be hollow; for with his glass the colonel could see the shell penetrate the tree, and then explode, tearing the tree into a hundred pieces, and crush-

ing the officer under the weight of its branches. Probably he was not killed; but he must have been disabled, for he was seen no more on the field. Judging from the positions he had occupied, he was the lieutenant-colonel. A tremendous yell followed the fall of the tree. Then a young man, as he appeared to be with the aid of the glass, rode to the front of the two columns; and from the movement that followed, it was evident that he had given an order for the columns to advance. The colonel had no doubt that he was the major to whom the command had fallen by the catastrophe to the lieutenant-colonel.

He placed himself at the head of the column on the right, and, forcing his steed to a gallop, rode up the gentle slope, where Life and Captain Richland had formed to receive the attack. The first division of the command, under Colonel Gordon, formed for the onslaught of the left wing of the enemy. By this time the riflemen had their hands full; for the company in front of them had formed in single line, with all of six feet between the men, and were using their

carbines or muskets, firing into the little grove. Ripley had given the word to his men to keep covered by the trees, which were large enough to give them abundant shelter. But they used their rifles all the time, and many fell before them.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FINAL RESULT OF THE BATTLE

THE battle on all sides had assumed a new phase. At least four companies of the enemy, after the hand-to-hand fight with the superior force which Colonel Lyon had brought to bear upon them, and the steady fire of the riflemen, who hardly wasted a single bullet, had fled from the field when human endurance had gone to its extreme tension, and there were not more than six companies of the regiment left in the field. The ground in front of the breastwork was now occupied only by the four companies of Colonel Gordon and the command of Captain Halliburn ; but it was strewn with the dead and wounded of the enemy. The Union force had by no means escaped unharmed ; but the commander of the new regiment had always been as tender of his soldiers as he was of his children.

He had taken possession of a large vacant house near the breastwork, and the wounded had been conveyed to it. The women and the men of the town had assisted in this work, and Dr. Farnwright had been busy since the action began. So far, not a single one of the riflemen had been brought under his care, for they had been protected by the trees on their field of operations; and they had used them not only as shields for their bodies, but as partial rests for their rifles. Many of the enemy's wounded had been borne from the field, but there were many more left who were crawling away when they had the strength to do so; and when the pause in the conflict came, the captains had ordered their men, when they had rested a while from the severe exertion of the charge, to assist them to safe places.

The conduct of Captain Knox's raw troops had been all that could have been expected of veterans. They had come into the service rather late in the day, for they had been attending to their farms and workshops, where the State needed them as well as in the field; and they were citi-

zens of more character than a large portion of the recruits. As the advance of the season released them to some extent from their ordinary occupations, they had promptly enlisted when it was known that the Confederacy was making a tremendous effort to obtain possession of the State, even to the Ohio River, which would open the rich regions of the north to them.

They were stalwart men, who went into the army from principle, and not for mere adventure, as many did; and their whole souls were in the work before them. Life Knox knew where to find them; and as he was a very popular man at home, they had flocked to his standard as soon as he had raised it. The great majority were of the genuine Kentucky type. They were physically tall and powerful men. The sabre, in the use of which Life had given the most of his time in drilling them, was a mere plaything in their hands; and they used it with tremendous effect in their initial conflict. They rode over and hewed down the enemy with a vigor and dash that had literally driven their foe from the field.

The major of the enemy's regiment, as it was

afterwards ascertained that he was, could not have been older than Deck Lyon, and had a much more youthful appearance; for both the sons of the colonel were full-grown men in stature. But the Confederate major was a brave and daring fellow; in fact, he was very much such a young man as the major of the new regiment. If he could have been schooled to the use of a little more caution in his movements, he would have been a model soldier; for it is as much the duty of an officer to save his own life as it is to take that of the enemy. The young major acted as though he had been disgusted with the leadership of his superior officers, and was determined that he would redeem the errors of the past; but he was more likely to sacrifice his own life than to accomplish his evident purpose.

But he was in less peril than his predecessors had been. Perhaps half the enemy who had fallen, if not more than that proportion, had gone down before the deadly rifle-balls of the sharpshooters; for they had been able to pick the doomed without being exposed to danger themselves. They could be thrown into no flurry, nor

have their nerves shaken by the onslaught of a charging force; there was nothing to impair their aim, and when they fired they were reasonably sure of their aim. The fearful effects of their operations were now neutralized by the company of troopers which had been sent to drive them from their position if possible, and the riflemen had all they could attend to in facing the enemy in front of them. The young major was therefore in no peril from the silent force which had done so much in driving the four companies of cavalry from the field before the breastwork.

There were still two columns of the enemy. The major had placed himself between the heads of these divisions, but ahead of both of them; and with his sword in the air, so that he would have made a dramatic picture for the artist, he led the way up the slope of the hill. If Ripley or Butters had not been fully occupied he would have fallen from his horse before he had gone half-way up the declivity. In a loud voice, as he pointed with his sword in the direction of the battery, he spoke inspiring words to his command; and his men responded with the Confed-

erate yell, which echoed across the field with a clearness that might have paralyzed the arms of a more timid force than that in front of the breastwork.

Colonel Lyon had sent a messenger with a note from his block to Colonel Gordon and Major Lyon, ordering them to advance their commands at full gallop down the slope, and meet the enemy as they approached. The subordinate officers hardly needed such an order, for they had formed their commands for just this movement.

The horses were fresh, and the men well rested after the retreat of the force they had engaged before. Major Batterson had not been asleep; and as the young major began his advance, two of his guns sent shells into the head of the moving columns. If the shells were less destructive to life than canister, they were more terrific when they burst in the ranks of the enemy, and they produced a decided effect; but the young major and other officers rallied their men, and the columns moved again after the shock. But they had not advanced more than a hundred feet before two more shells burst in the midst of them.

The instinct of self-preservation was enough to produce a momentary panic, though the Confederate troopers manifested no inclination to flee from the field.

The last two shots from the guns were the signal for the advance of the lieutenant-colonel and the major; and, not to be shamed by the impetuous Confederate major, they followed his example, and rode at the head of their divisions. Suddenly the young officer called for a halt, which was apparently expected by the men; and they fired a volley from their muskets, before which about a dozen men and half as many horses were either killed or wounded. But the Riverlawns did not slacken their furious gait. The major ordered his men to sling their muskets, and draw their sabres. The Union columns dashed down the slope, and the shock was terrible. The tall Kentuckians in Deck's columns appeared to ride over the enemy, using their sabres with deadly effect. It was another hand-to-hand conflict; and the veterans of the first and second companies fought like tigers, urged on by Colonel Gordon. The young major was full of vim and

vigor, and he rallied his troopers as they shook before the assault. His men did their best to meet his ardent wishes, as he rode ahead of his line, yelling the most impassioned commands to his troops. But he advanced too far for his own good. He was directly in front of Major Lyon, who considered that the emergency had come which required him to do something more than rally his men, though they hardly needed any stimulus.

He touched the flanks of Ceph with his dummy spurs, with a pull at his reins; and the intelligent animal dashed forward down the slope, and made a flying leap upon the major, after the manner in which he had done the same thing before. Deck made an expert thrust with his sabre, and man and horse went down together, the young major underneath. The assailant wlieeled his steed, and fell back just as Life rushed forward to assist him. But he needed no assistance. He saw that the Confederate major lay upon the ground, and did not attempt to rise.

The company of Captain Knox had taken the enemy on their right flank, while Captain Rich-

land had attacked on the left, and Colonel Gordon made the same disposition in the charge upon the right column of the regiment. Captain Halliburn's Home Guards had struck the head of the left column. The fierceness of the conflict made it of short duration; and after the fall of the Confederate major the enemy began to fall back, though the senior captain, as he was supposed to be, rallied the force. He brought up the two companies in the rear which had not yet been engaged, with orders to attack the Union companies in the rear. This re-enforcement of fresh men seemed to turn the tide of battle; and Colonel Gordon saw that his veterans, assailed in the front and rear, were giving way. He dashed into the thickest of the fight, and rallied his men. He turned one company to the front and the other to the rear, leading the latter himself.

Captain Truman's company seemed to be inspired by his presence; and it made such a tremendous onslaught upon the fresh company, that they broke before it, and fell back. The colonel observed the various phases of the battle from

his position on the elevation, and he readily perceived the confusion among his own men. So did Major Batterson; and he had a hundred mounted men who were not engaged. Leaving cannoneers enough to care for the guns, he sallied out from the breastwork, and the colonel ordered him to the assistance of Colonel Gordon. The artillerymen were veterans; and led by their major, they fell upon the re-enforcement from the rear with such energy that it broke at once; for then they were attacked in front and rear.

Major Lyon's force was hard pressed, and he had fought like a tiger himself. The stalwart company of Captain Knox appeared to know nothing of fatigue, and they seemed to be as fresh as when they came into action. Deck directed this company against the fresh men who had for a time turned the action in favor of the enemy, and they soon ploughed their way through the re-enforcement, and drove them to the rear. The two companies from the rear which had changed the face of the action had been driven out; and it was evident to Colonel Lyon that the crisis had passed, and that victory was near.

Colonel Gordon and Major Lyon closely followed up the advantage gained; both of them fought with their own hands, and with their presence inspired the men under their command.

The break in the ranks of the enemy came in front of Captain Knox's company, where it must have seemed to the Confederates as though the fiends from the lower regions had broken loose upon them. They fled across the field in the direction taken by the two companies which had first fled from the fiery ordeal. The other portions of the regiment, having no officers to direct them, attempted to escape in various directions. With the men of the battery, Colonel Gordon directed the captains to pursue the fleeing enemy, and they were soon scattered all over the field. The victory was achieved, but the final results had not yet been summed up.

Some time before the hottest part of the engagement had been reached, Lieutenant Ripley had been confronted by a company of cavalry on the opposite side of the creek, which had been sent by the young major to drive the riflemen from the position where they had done so much injury

to the head of the leading portions of the regiment. This force advanced, using their muskets, firing into the grove at random; for the sharpshooters were hidden behind the trees, and so far not one of them had been killed or wounded. The company came along the bank of the creek, which was wider than below the bridge.

As the enemy approached the position, not a few of them dropped from their saddles; and they halted directly opposite that part of the grove where most of the riflemen were concealed. In accordance with his tactics, Ripley had divided his force into four sections, and the enemy into the same number, so that the rifle-balls should not be too much scattered. Formerly his men were numbered, and each one had his particular mark; but it was not practicable to do so on this occasion. The captain of the enemy soon realized that he was making no headway when he saw his men falling from their horses, while they were unable to accomplish anything to injure the riflemen behind the trees. He was sacrificing his men while they stood inactive on the bank of the creek; and suddenly, in evident disgust at

the situation, he ordered his men to ford the stream. This only made it the worse for him. The cavalrymen were shot down as their horses waded the shallow stream.

At this point the enemy had broken on the field, and were retreating, closely followed by the pursuing Union soldiers. Major Batterson had been ordered by Colonel Gordon to return to the breastwork, and to charge upon the company at the creek on his way. He did not assail this force, but formed a line around them, ready to do so. Of course the riflemen were compelled to cease their destructive fire.

“Do you surrender?” shouted the major.

The captain could not help hearing this question, but he seemed to be bewildered. The riflemen were on his front, and the artillerymen on his rear. As no reply came in answer to the demand, it was repeated, with no different result. The major waved his sabre in the direction of the grove, and then ordered his men to fall back where the bullets of the riflemen could not reach them. Ripley understood the movement, and again opened fire upon the enemy. The captain,

seeing his men fall from their saddles again, retreated towards the field. The major's men then dashed towards them, and then the captain made a signal that he was ready to surrender.

CHAPTER IX

THE WOUNDED CONFEDERATE MAJOR

COLONEL LYON had seated himself on the top of the breastwork after sending Major Batterson and most of his company to re-enforce Colonel Gordon's command. The result in that quarter, as in every other, had been abundantly satisfactory to him, for he had defeated nearly double his own number. While the major was receiving the surrender of the company which had been sent to clean out the sharpshooters, Lieutenant Ripley, finding that his occupation in the grove was gone, had formed his men, and marched them over the bridge, where they mounted their horses, and joined the major.

"The work appears to be all done," said Ripley, saluting the commander of the battery.

"It is all done, and well done; and you have done your full share of it, Lieutenant Ripley," replied Major Batterson.

“I always intend to obey my orders, and I tried to do so this time,” answered the rifleman.

“I was watching the field very closely from the first of it, and I could see the men in the ranks of the enemy tumbling from their horses when their officers could not tell what brought them down; and I could not tell myself till I had a chance to study the matter,” continued the major. “I could not see any of your men, and I suppose the enemy could not; but their men kept dropping all the same. I could not understand the situation at all till Colonel Lyon told me that a company of riflemen was posted in that grove.”

“But the enemy found out that we were there, and the little major sent one of his companies to clean us out,” added Lieutenant Ripley. “But they could not do anything as long as the creek was between us. When the enemy tried to ford¹ it, the current carried a good many dead cavalrymen down the stream to Green River, and they gave it up after trying it three times. They could not have done any better if they had got across the river, for they could not do anything in the grove on their horses.”

“I think we must march the prisoners up to the breastwork, and report to the colonel,” said the major. “I will lead the way, if you will bring up the rear, where you can drop any of them that try to run away.”

The force was formed, and the body moved up the elevation. The first and second companies, under Colonel Gordon, had pursued the broken column of the enemy to the north-west, which was the direction taken by the first company that fled from the field; and the third and seventh companies had pursued those that attempted to escape in the direction by which the force had advanced under Major Lyon. By this time they were all of three miles distant from the hill.

The prisoners were all marched to the breastwork, and then to the rear. The seventh company had surrounded and captured what was left of one company, and Captain Halliburn was sent to headquarters with them. All the prisoners had been disarmed on the field, and the arms left where they had been surrendered. Colonel Lyon ordered the horses to be picketed, and the men to be corralled in the rear of the works, and the

Home Guard had been placed as sentinels over them. A couple of baggage-wagons were sent to pick up the arms on the field. Life Knox was soon discovered in the advance of a considerable body, which proved to consist of the force under Major Lyon, with two companies captured from the enemy.

Half an hour later the first and second companies appeared with about a hundred and fifty prisoners; for the lieutenant had found the country less favorable to the pursuit in the direction he had gone than that by which the enemy had advanced. Nearly one-half of the regiment had been taken, and the rest of it had made good their retreat in a demoralized condition. The prisoners and the horses had been disposed of with the first lots brought in. Two more wagons had been sent to pick up the arms on the field. As before stated, the colonel had established a hospital in one of the houses nearest to the fields. Dr. Farnwright and his assistant were hard at work in them, aided by two doctors from Columbia who had volunteered their services; and the grateful inhabitants had come to their assistance, in-

cluding a considerable number of women, and the Union wounded were well cared for.

The two surgeons of the defeated regiment had set up a hospital in a tobacco-shed on the creek, and they attended to their duty after the companies had fled from the field. Colonel Lyon desired to be satisfied that the wounded on both sides had all the attention that could be given to them. When the prisoners had been disposed of, he visited the hospitals, and the volunteer surgeons were introduced to him.

“The enemy have suffered a far greater loss than the Union force,” said he to Dr. Watson, one of the Columbia doctors. “I fear there is a lack of surgeons in the Confederate hospital by the creek.”

“Do you look out for both sides, Colonel Lyon?” asked the surgeon with a smile.

“I have done the best I could to kill and wound the enemy; but the United States government does not make war upon wounded men on their backs,” replied the colonel. “If I had more medical officers than we needed, I would send some of them to the assistance of the enemy.

The battle has been fought and the victory won; humanity has the field till we are attacked again."

"I honor you, Colonel, for your liberal and humane views," added Dr. Watson; "and I have a suggestion to make. There are two doctors in Columbia who have been Secessionists from the beginning, one of them the best surgeon in the county. With your permission, I will send a message to each of them, informing them that they are needed in the Confederate hospital," said the surgeon.

"I hope you will do so," replied the colonel. "Let them report to me, and I will see that they are conducted to the creek."

Dr. Watson sent the messengers at once; and in half an hour the two surgeons reported to the colonel, who lent them horses, and sent two troopers to accompany them to the hospital. They were warmly welcomed by the doctor in charge, for their assistance was greatly needed. The two troopers started on their return to the hill with the led horses the surgeons had ridden; but they had gone but a short distance before they were confronted by Major Lyon.

“What are you doing over here?” demanded he, as the men saluted him.

One of the cavalymen explained the mission on which they had come to the creek by order of Colonel Lyon.

“Have you finished your business over here?” asked Deck.

“We have, Major. We have only to take the two horses over to the camp,” answered the spokesman of the men.

“Then, follow me,” added the major.

He led the way to the spot where he and Ceph had overturned the young major in the charge of his division upon the enemy. On his return from the pursuit of the enemy he had passed near the place where the gallant young officer had fallen, and saw that he was still alive. He had a sabre wound on his head. Sending the two companies forward with the prisoners, he had dismounted, and examined the wounded officer. The cut did not look like a very bad one; he saw from its shape that his sabre had turned in his hand in the excitement of the moment, and that it was the force of the blow, rather than

the effect of the edge of the weapon, which had disabled the sufferer. He had been stunned as though he had been struck with a club instead of a weapon with a sharp edge.

“How do you feel now, Major?” asked Deck, as he dismounted, while the two soldiers looked at him with no little surprise.

“My head is rather shaky,” replied the wounded man; “but I think I shall be all right in a little while.”

“Is your wound painful?”

“Not very; but my head feels sore. Are you a surgeon?”

“I am not; but I may be able to do something for you,” answered Deck, as he took from his pocket the little package of lint, linen, sticking-plaster, and other remedies his mother had prepared for him the last time he was at home. He looked over the wound more carefully than before. A portion of the skin over his right ear had been turned over by the slipping of the sabre.

“I have some skill in this sort of work; and, if you don’t object, I will dress your wound,” continued Major Lyon.

“I do not object; on the contrary, I shall thank you with all my heart,” replied the Confederate officer.

“Will you give me your name, Major, if you please? for I shall be glad to know you better,” asked Deck, as he took a pair of scissors from his package.

“Richard Monroe; and I was the major of the cavalry regiment which has fared so badly on this field,” replied the wounded officer in a strong voice, which assured Deck that he was not very weak. “You wear the uniform of the Union army, I see now.”

“I do; and I am the major of the regiment which defeated yours on this field, — Major Dexter Lyon, at your service. But now I will dress your wound if you please.”

“Thank you; and you are very kind to do so much for your enemy,” added Major Monroe.

“We are not enemies except on the field of battle,” said Deck, as he proceeded to cut away the hair about the wound.

Then he washed the wound with a soothing lotion from his package. He turned the skin

back, carefully placing it, with the hope that it would heal as he adjusted it, and then covered it with sticking-plaster to keep it in place. He folded his clean handkerchief, and bound it around the major's head.

"I feel like a new man now," said the wounded major.

"I am glad to hear it; and now I will conduct you to the Confederate hospital by the creek," continued Deck. "If I have not dressed the wound properly, your own surgeon can do it better."

"Colonel Lyon sent two doctors over to that hospital, and they were both Secesh," said one of the two soldiers. "I reckon they have good doctors over there."

"I don't think I have any need to go to a hospital, Major Lyon."

"What will you do? Your regiment has been driven off the field, and something like one-half of your men are prisoners," suggested the Union major.

"It has been an unfortunate day for our regiment. Your battery behind the breastwork, and

the riflemen, were too much for us. You seem to be alone, Major Lyon; where are you going?"

"Back to my regiment, behind the breastwork, where I suppose our men are guarding the prisoners," replied Deck. "I supposed you would go to the hospital."

"The surgeons there have enough to do; and I will not bother them, for I don't need them. I will go with you," said the wounded man, who had evidently come to a conclusion.

"Go with me!" exclaimed Deck.

"You have been very kind to me, though I think I should soon have been able to find my way to the hospital."

"But you can go with me only as a prisoner."

"Very well, Major Lyon; as a prisoner it is. It appears now that I should have been captured if I had not been knocked from my horse, and I shall be no worse off now."

"You are a soldier, and you can readily perceive that I can do nothing for you in our camp," added Deck.

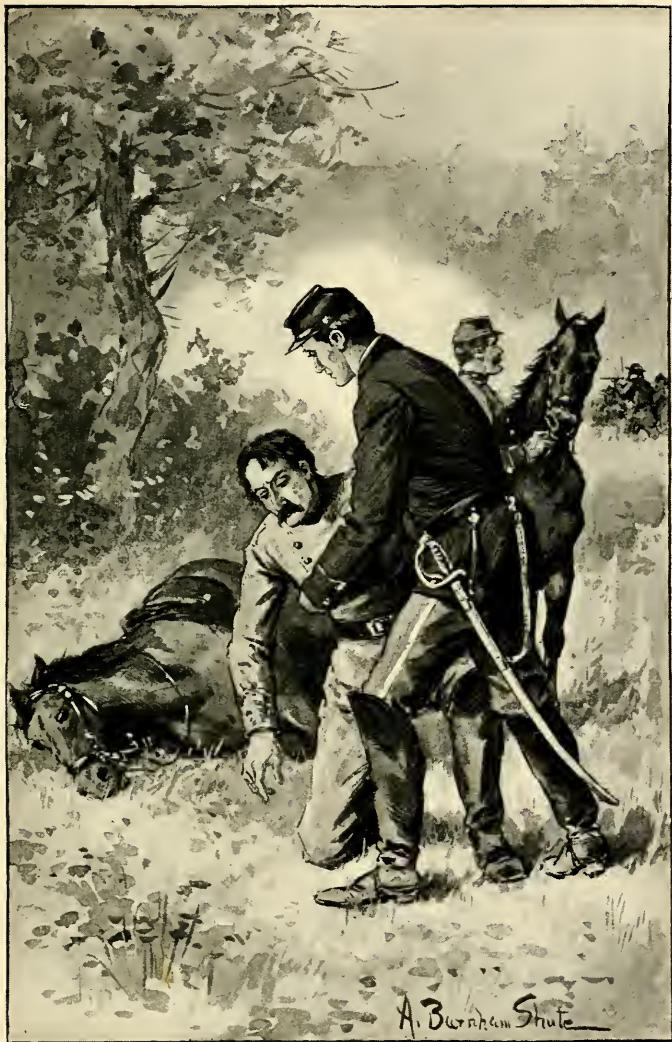
"It is the fortune of war, and I make no complaint."

“I am sorry that I cannot leave you to find the remains of your regiment, for I should be glad to do anything for you within the line of my duty.”

“I understand the matter perfectly. You have done all that one friend could do for another. I find no fault, and I ask no favors. Put me with the rest of our fellows. My head is still a little shaky, and I need only rest and quiet. I am ready to go with you,” replied the prisoner, as he regarded himself.

He rose from the ground where he had been lying all the time; but he was unsteady in his movement, owing to his dizziness, and Deck supported him. One of the led horses was brought up, and the major assisted him to mount. They moved very slowly up the declivity. The wounded officer had lost his sabre, and he handed two revolvers to Deck, who took them as a matter of duty.

“I don’t understand how I happened to fall, for I am only slightly wounded,” said Major Monroe. “It seemed to me just as though a thunderbolt had struck me on the head; and that is all I know about it.”



HE ROSE FROM THE GROUND

“I know more than that,” added Deck. “It was I who gave you the fall you had. I was filled with admiration at your brave conduct; but my path in the charge led me to you. I knew I could bring you down; but upon my honor I hated to do it, or rather to make my horse do it, for he had been trained to do just what he did at my order.”

“You did your duty like a soldier!” exclaimed Major Monroe.

“I feared we should lose the fight if I did not do it.”

Deck explained the conduct of Ceph, and continued to express his regret at being obliged to deprive the regiment of its major. They rode to the place where the colonel stood.

CHAPTER X

PREPARING FOR THE INVASION

COLONEL LYON was quite surprised to see his son ride up to him with an officer in Confederate uniform with his head tied up in a handkerchief. It was plain that he had been wounded in the action; and he wondered that he had not fled with the rest of his regiment, or why he had not been sent in with the rest of the prisoners.

“I have sent for you, Major Lyon, but my messengers could not find you. I have important news from Major Bornwood by telegraph, and I have wired him to ascertain what I should do with the prisoners; for we have not less than four hundred and eighty,” said the commander.

“Then, this one will make four hundred and eighty-one. Colonel Lyon, this gentleman is Major Richard Munroe, the brave young officer who took the command of his regiment when both of his superiors had fallen,” replied Deck. “It

was when Ceph came down upon him that the engagement turned in our favor."

"Major Monroe, I am happy to meet you personally, though I am sorry for your misfortune; for no more gallant officer ever rode upon a battlefield," said the colonel, taking the hand of the young officer, and shaking it as cordially as though he had been a Union instead of a Confederate officer.

"I thank you, Colonel Lyon, for your kind words; and I might differ from you in replying to your compliment, and point to Major Lyon as my superior in every respect, for I saw him on the field, and I tried to be as gallant as he was. He bears your name, and perhaps he is a relative."

"He is my son."

"Then, I congratulate you upon being the father of such a son; not only because he is a model soldier, but because he is as humane and noble as he is gallant. He dressed my wound"—

"But he is not a surgeon," interposed the colonel.

"I beg your pardon, but he is a surgeon,

though he may have never taken a degree. He is evidently a natural surgeon, and has had some experience with the wounded."

"What you say is quite true; but his mother was his professor in surgery, and fitted him out with the means to do a kindness to a brother officer, as it appears that he has done to you. I am very sorry that you are a prisoner, Major Monroe."

"It is the fortune of war; and having fallen into the hands of men as noble as these around me, I cheerfully submit to my fate," replied the Confederate major, bowing very respectfully and deferentially to the colonel.

At this moment the colonel's orderly, who had been sent to the telegraph office, with orders to wait for a reply, dashed furiously into the presence of the commander, and handed him a message. Colonel Lyon was not a little embarrassed by the number of prisoners on his hands, and he was very anxious in regard to the reply of the representative of the Department commander. He tore open the envelope in haste, and read the despatch. Then he passed it to Deck. The

reply was simply, "Parole prisoners." Then came something not relating to the same subject. "Raise another company if possible; suggest names for commissions. Commissions for two more majors ready."

The last part of the message was not intelligible to Deck. Commissions for officers was plain, for it was supposed to relate to the company Colonel Lyon was to raise; but he could make nothing of "two more majors" whose commissions were ready. Was he to be set aside or outranked? He believed he had done his duty faithfully, and certainly he had been praised enough for his conduct on the field. He was not willing to believe that he was to be displaced, or that his rank was to be taken from him. But he decided not to bother his head about the matter. Whatever Major Bornwood and his father were doing—and the latter had said that he had important news from the former—would come out in due time, and he would not worry about it.

"We will talk this matter over another time, Dexter. If your Confederate friend is wounded, he needs some attention," said the colonel. "A

house has been assigned to me by the town council for the use of the field-officers, and there is plenty of room in it for your prisoner. Banks!" he called to his orderly.

"Here, sir," replied the sergeant.

"Conduct Major Lyon to the new headquarters," added the commander.

"Now, Major Monroe," said Deck, "we will go to a more comfortable place than this field."

"Thank you, Major Lyon."

In a few minutes, as all three of them were mounted, they reached the house which Colonel Lyon had mentioned. It was a large mansion, very handsomely furnished, and seemed to be abundantly supplied with servants, both male and female. They entered, and were very politely received by a good-looking mulatto, who appeared to be the steward of the mansion.

Deck gave his name, and the man showed them to what he called "Major Lyon's apartment;" and it was even better than the one he occupied at home.

"But I desire an apartment for this gentleman," said Deck.

“Here is one next to yours, Mars’r Major,” replied Steward, — for that was his name as well as his occupation, — as he opened a door.

“You intend to lodge me like a major-general,” said the guest, as he entered the room. “I should have been quite content with more humble quarters.”

“I should give you my room if this one were not just as good,” replied Deck. “If you want anything, you have only to call for it. Steward, you will see that this gentleman is as well cared for as the colonel himself.”

“I will, Mars’r Major,” answered the steward as Deck left the room, satisfied that he had treated his guest with proper hospitality.

As he returned to his own room, he found a mulatto girl there, who evidently had a message for him.

“Mars’r Colonel want to see Major Lyon in the office down-stairs,” said she, after a courtesy which would have answered very well in a ball-room as one of the Lancer figures.

“Tell him I will be with him in two minutes,” said Deck, as he went to the looking-glass to ad-

just his hair and mustache, especially the latter, which he thought was a very fine labial ornament to his face; and the girl plainly believed that it was a very handsome face, for she made another very elaborate courtesy to him as she left the apartment.

The major delayed but a minute or two to arrange his toilet while his father was waiting for him. He found the girl in the hall, waiting to show him what she called the office.

It was the large front room on the first floor, where he found his father seated at a desk, with Colonel Gordon at his side. The latter rose from his chair, and gave his hand to Deck, whom he had not seen since early in the morning.

“I am glad to see you, Major, and I am very happy to find that you have not been killed or wounded; for nothing but your lucky star could have saved you,” said the lieutenant-colonel, continuing to press the hand he held. “I think you did more than your share in winning the battle, and you exposed yourself more than was necessary.”

“I don’t think so, Colonel; for men never stand

up to the work so well as when their officers lead them," replied Deck.

"Captain Knox was at the head of his company, and he never flinched a hair; and the same can be said of Captain Richland."

"But I only went in where I thought something extra was needed. When that young major was rallying the regiment, I saw that he made an impression on the breaking ranks; and it looked to me as though our men would give way before the increased vigor of the assault. Then I thought it was the will of the Lord who fights on our side, that the brave and noble major should be removed; for I believed he would turn the tide against us."

"Then you rode over him, as you have done several times before in the heat of the action," added Colonel Gordon with a smile.

"I considered it an emergency that justified me in putting my best foot forward."

"And Ceph's feet also," laughed the colonel. "Upon my word and honor, Deck, I believe you saved the day, for it was comparatively easy work after the major went down; for I happened to be

near enough to see the whole affair. You rode over him, and of course you killed him. He was the last of the field-officers to go down."

"I thank the Lord that I did not kill him," answered Deck.

"You will spoil that boy, Gordon," interposed Colonel Lyon, laying the pile of papers he had been reading on the desk. "Don't flatter him any more."

"I don't flatter him; I speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," protested Gordon. "The battery was silent; that same young major had discovered where the balls came from, as his superiors had failed to do, and had sent a company to clean out the riflemen. Then he went in to win on the field; and he would have done it if Deck had not neutralized him by laying him out on the ground. A cloud of witnesses will say the same thing. Then, Deck has a level head, and I don't think there is any danger of spoiling him."

"I suppose you are right, Gordon, for I saw the whole of it; but it is not necessary to remind the boy of all these things," said Colonel Lyon.

“But I think it is necessary to give the credit which is his due; and I have done nothing more,” added Gordon.

“I did not kill Major Monroe; for he is in the room next to mine, and I will introduce you when we have time,” said Deck; and it was evident that the colonel was ready for business. “You said you had important news from Major Bornwood, father.”

“I have; and I have just been reading the papers he sent me; and they amount to nothing less than the reconstruction of the regiment. He proposes to make it consist of twelve companies in three battalions.”

“That amounts to a revolution,” added Deck, who began to see where the “two more majors” were to come in.

“If you will hear me, I will tell you all I know about the matter myself,” said Colonel Lyon. “Major Bornwood, through his various agents, has raised four full companies, making eleven in all; and he wishes me to raise another company in this vicinity. I think I have already raised the company. I have talked with

Captain Halliburn on the subject, for I am very desirous of having those riflemen in the regiment."

"They would be exceedingly valuable, especially if Major Batterson's battery is still to be attached to the command," added Colonel Gordon.

"Of the battery I can say nothing; but Captain Halliburn is confident that he can make a full company of riflemen. For the people in this locality understand very well that the State is to be invaded by the enemy from the direction of Cumberland Gap; that the frequent raids from Tennessee are a part of the movement to clear the way. They are anxious to take part in the defence. Major Bornwood is acting very vigorously; and the important news from him, in addition to what I have already given you, is that he is marching to Columbia with the seven companies which have been at Munfordville; and he will be here by to-morrow noon, if not sooner."

"Captain Halliburn wishes to see you, Colonel Lyon," said the steward, coming into the room, after knocking.

“I will see him here,” replied the commander.

The captain of the Home Guard of Millersville presented himself at once.

“I am glad to see you, Captain Halliburn, and I was just speaking of you.”

“I have called on business, Colonel Lyon; for I think I shall have a full company to join your regiment, and they will all be in Columbia before night.”

“I am very glad to hear it, for the other seven companies will be here by noon to-morrow,” added the commander.

“I have had a long talk with Ripley; and he is very much pleased with the idea of joining your regiment, and all the men he had here are ready to enlist. It is only ten miles to Millersville, and I have sent him and half a dozen of his men over there to pick up about forty riflemen; for the men I have commanded to-day are not riflemen, or, at least, they are not up to Ripley’s standard as sharpshooters. He made out a list of those he is almost certain will join. I think Ripley ought to be their captain.

“He is entitled to it, and I can promise that he shall have it,” replied the colonel. “Can you name the two lieutenants?”

“Ripley said that Ethan Butters should be first, and Sewell Blount second.”

“Very well; they shall have commissions,” added the commander, as he wrote the names in his memorandum-book.

He had hardly done so before the steward opened the door, and Major Bornwood pushed him aside, making his way to the desk of the colonel, who rose to receive him.

“I did not expect to meet you to-day, Major, but I am extremely happy to see you,” replied the commander, as he took the hand of the staff-officer. “I think we have raised the company needed.”

Major Bornwood was introduced to Captain Halliburn.

CHAPTER XI

SEEKING INFORMATION OF THE ENEMY

MAJOR BORNWOOD explained that he had left the seven companies of which he had taken temporary command at Greensburg, where they had arrived the evening before, in charge of Captain Gadsbury, with instructions to march as far as Haskinsville that night, while he had hurried forward to that place himself, and spent the night there. He had found the battalion in good condition in the morning, and had ridden with all speed to Columbia.

“Now, Colonel Lyon, your command is needed in Lincoln County, and we have no time to spare; the four companies raised by my agents are from the best material in Kentucky, and I found men of wealth and position in the ranks. I found more gentlemen than I needed who were familiar with military; and I called upon each company to elect, or at least to indicate, their

own officers. I inquired carefully into the fitness of each candidate, and when they were chosen, I commissioned them; and I believe they are as good officers as any in your command, for all of them have had military experience."

"I am glad you have done as you have, Major Bornwood," replied Colonel Lyon. "As for the company raised here, they will be mounted riflemen, and every one of them is a dead shot."

"Good! Such a company is what we need. But we will now give our attention to the field-officers. As now organized, the regiment will consist of three battalions of four companies each. You need three majors; and you may nominate two more, to whom I will give commissions without asking any questions."

"I am ready to name them; but with three majors, which is the superior in rank? They will all be commissioned at the same time."

"That may be true of the two you are to name, though I think not," continued the staff-officer. "Major Lyon already has his rank."

"Certainly; I understand that he is already a major."

“And without regard to age or anything else, he will be the senior major. The next will be the second major, and the third the junior major.”

The staff-officer, who appeared to have an idea who were to be named, turned the pages of his diary, and then called upon the colonel to name the first of the new field-officers.

“Captain Thomas Belthorpe,” replied the commander promptly. And Major Bornwood, who had seated himself at the desk, immediately wrote it on a blank he had before him.

“But which major will he be?” asked the colonel.

“The second, as I have written it. The next name, if you please, Colonel?” said the writer, as he spread out another blank.

“Captain Bushrod Truman.”

“The junior major,” added the officer, as he wrote the name. “You have given the names in the order in which they received their captains’ commissions.”

“But Major Belthorpe is several years older than my son, and Major Truman is at least seven

years the senior of Dexter," suggested the commander.

"Age makes no difference in military rank. McClellan is only thirty-six; and several of the major-generals under his command are his seniors, as Sumner is sixty-six. I think nothing more need be said on that point. The senior major is entitled to his position both by seniority of rank, and eminent service on the field. Colonel Lyon, I place these commissions in your care, to be given to the recipients of them," said Major Bornwood, suiting the action to the words.

The further details of the organization need not be given. The next in rank in the first and second companies were made captains. It was dark when Captain Ripley arrived, in company with over forty mounted men. The commissions were given to the officers, and they were directed to encamp with the regiment. A dozen others came with them who preferred the artillery service, and the battery was increased to a hundred and fifty men. Another lieutenant was commissioned on the recommendation of Major Batterson. The seven companies from Munfordville arrived a lit-

tle later; for they were encumbered with a long wagon-train and over a hundred spare horses. They camped on the field near the creek.

During the afternoon the prisoners had all been paroled, and they departed in squads for their homes. Their horses were poor steeds, and were not wanted by the Union force. They were permitted to ride them; and they needed them, for the regiment was from Tennessee. Provisions were given them for two days' rations.

"You have given your parole, Major Monroe, and I suppose the time has come for us to part," said Deck, as he went into the room of his Confederate friend. "We may never meet again; but your future is assured in the army, though I wish you were fighting on the other side."

"I have the same cheerful wish in regard to you," replied Monroe, with a smile. "If I ever meet you wounded on the field of battle, I shall try to be as kind and generous as you have been to me. When this war is over, I hope I may meet you again; and I am sure there is nothing on earth that one can do for another that I should not be glad to do for you."

“Thank you, Major Monroe; and I heartily reciprocate your good will. We meet as enemies on the field of battle, but anywhere else as friends,” replied Deck, as they shook hands and parted.

The two officers shook hands again as Monroe mounted his horse, and rode away on the road by which the regiment had advanced to the attack. Deck had admired the young man on the field, and he found that he was as noble and honorable as any man he had ever met.

After the men had breakfasted the next morning, the three battalions were marched, each in command of its major, to an open field, where they were drilled for several hours. Captain Ripley's company were supplied with uniforms from the wagons, and with sabres and revolvers; but they carried their own rifles. They preferred to ride their own horses for the same reason that they chose to retain their own rifles; they were accustomed to them, and could do better with them than with those furnished by the government.

After the battalion drill the entire regiment

was formed, and the colonel put them through various evolutions, and assured himself that they were familiar with the tactics; for he was a rigid disciplinarian. The drill occupied all the forenoon; and after dinner the regiment marched to Liberty, about twenty-five miles from Columbia, where it camped for the night. It was a considerable village even at that time, and in a rich and productive region. When the colonel had selected a suitable field for the camp, the regiment marched into it, the tents were pitched, and the horses picketed. Though many of the inhabitants were seen, they all kept at a distance, apparently afraid that a raid was intended, and that they were to be robbed of their stock, provisions, and whatever else they had to lose.

When Deck had eaten his supper, and seen that Ceph had been fed and made comfortable for the night, he walked down to the road by which the command had arrived. Then he went a short distance towards the centre of the village. He had no knowledge of the place, whether the people were Union or Confederate. He was passing a house, one side of which abutted on the highway,

with the windows on the lower floor wide open; for it was an August day, and the weather was quite warm. A man in one of the rooms was talking in a loud tone, and Deck concluded that the person addressed must be very deaf. He had no intention to listen, or pry into other people's business; but a sentence that attracted his attention was, as it were, forced into his ears.

"Ride over to Middleburg as fast as the mare kin kerry you, and tell 'em there's a ridgimint of Yanks over here, Siah; and don't let no grass grow under your hoss's heels," said the speaker; and these two sentences were the first the major heard.

"What good'll that do, Dad?" demanded the person spoken to.

"There's a ridgimint o' Fed'rate calvary over there somewhere, and they'll come over and gether 'em all up," said the father, who evidently was not a person of finished education; and the lowly house did not indicate that he had been prosperous in the world.

Deck did not feel entirely sure that the regiment of Confederates would be able to gather up

the Riverlawns, as some of the new companies had already called the new organization. But he was not sorry to hear them apply the name to themselves, for it proved that they had a high respect for the name; and it was quite true that the command had made an excellent reputation for itself on the field of battle. He listened a minute or two longer; but he heard nothing more, and it looked as though Siah had gone to the barn to saddle his mare. He walked back to the camp. It did not appear that there was any other road in the vicinity by which the messenger could get to Middleburg; for the major had studied the map enough to know where the town was located, and he concluded that he must pass the entrance of the field where the camp was located.

The guard-tent was just inside the fence, and two sentinels stood there. Both of them saluted him; and he ordered one of them to ask Captain Abbey to send Sergeant Phillips and half a dozen men, unmounted, to the road. Deck watched the highway, for he intended to intercept the bearer of the message to the people of Middleburg; not

that he had any objection to the coming of the "Fed'rate calvary," but he thought he might obtain some information that might be useful to the colonel.

Sergeant Phillips promptly appeared with his squad of six men, armed with sabre and carbine, just as Deck saw the messenger come out of the yard at the side of the house. Siah seemed to be inclined to follow his father's instructions to the letter, for he put the mare into her best gallop as soon as he was in the road; but that was not saying very much, as horse-flesh is rated in Kentucky, for the beast was nothing but a scarecrow, and her gallop could have been beaten by any decent rocking-horse in the nursery of a respectable house.

"Sergeant Phillips, take two of your men, go to the third house on the other side of this street — wait a minute," said Deck, suddenly checking his speech as Siah came up to the spot. "What is your hurry, Siah?"

"I can't stop to talk now, nohow," replied the rider.

"Take that mare by the bridle, Shivers," added

the major to one of the soldiers; and he was promptly obeyed.

"Let my hoss alone! She'll kick and bite if you tech her," added Siah, trying to make her go ahead by pounding the animal with a heavy stick he had used before for this purpose.

"I'll risk it," replied Shivers, wrenching the stick from the hand of the boy, who was a stout fellow of about sixteen.

"Where do you live, Siah?" asked the major in a gentle tone.

"Over yender;" pointing to the house.

"Your father may be a first cousin of mine; what is his name?"

"Siah Kinnell."

"I suppose Siah stands for Josiah, don't it?"

"It do, all round the world."

"Now, Phillips, I have the name. Go to the third house, give my compliments to Mr. Josiah Kinnell, and ask him if he will be so kind as to step over here, for I wish to see him. If he won't come, take two men with you, and bring him over here," added Deck, turning to the sergeant, who hastened to obey the order.

“What do you want o’ dad?” demanded Siah, who seemed to be astonished at the proceedings of the major.

“I will tell him when he comes.”

“He won’t come, and won’t make no talk with a Yank,” replied Siah saucily.

“I think he will come; Phillips has such a winning way with him, that he will coax him over without much trouble. Now, Siah, why are you in such a hurry? I don’t see any house on fire, or any reason for such haste.”

“None o’ your business, Yank!”

“I don’t quite agree with you on that point. You are going over to Middleburg.”

“Who told you so?” demanded the messenger, evidently surprised that the officer knew his destination.

“Your dad, as you profanely call him. Can you tell me how many ‘Fed’rate calvary’ there are over that way? —not all of them at Middleburg, but some of them at Crab Orchard,” added Deck.

“Nuff to lick your crowd out of their boots,” replied Siah, who was shrewd enough not to give information to an enemy.

“All right, my boy; but I don’t think it is best for you to go over to Middleburg to-night: you might catch cold and be sick. Besides, if the ‘calvary’ should come over here, you will wish to see us licked out of our boots.”

“Dad told me to go, and I’m goin’,” blustered Siah.

“Two of you take this fellow from his horse, hand him over to the officer of the day, and have him kept securely till morning,” continued Deck.

“My horse will run away if you leave her in the road, and then you will have to pay for her,” growled Siah.

“She will not run away if she can help it,” added the major. “Take him off.”

Kinnell had declined to come, but the two soldiers had brought him. Deck ordered the men to take the prisoner to the colonel’s tent, and went with them. He explained to his father what he had done so that Kinnell could not hear him. By various devices they compelled the prisoner to tell how many Confederates were in the vicinity, — two regiments of cavalry.

CHAPTER XII

THE EXPEDITION OF THE THREE SCOUTS

THE principal device used with Kinnell, after the field-officers understood the man, was a gold coin of the value of five dollars. He was a Secessionist simply because the "white trash" of that locality, as in many other regions of the State, were of that easy persuasion. There was no principle underlying their political belief. Major Bornwood took part in the examination, for he was deeply interested in all movements in this part of the State. He had been sent to prepare for the invasion projected by General Bragg, acting with Kirby Smith. Though we have connected him only with the reorganization of the Riverlawn regiment, he had a dozen other irons in the fire.

The camp of the force was on or near the line by which the enemy would move to Lexington, the capital, where it was suspected that some

political work would be done, such as establishing the provisional government, which existed mostly in the camps of the Confederates. Morgan's great raid had done a vast deal of mischief; and he had been driven by a superior force of Kentucky cavalry, after he had destroyed Federal property to the value of over a million dollars, capturing many towns, paroling over a thousand Union troops, and made his escape into East Tennessee through this portion of the State. It was well understood that Kirby Smith was in the State, moving to the north; and ten days later he occupied the capital.

“The question now is where we are, and what portion of the enemy is near us,” said Major Bornwood. “It was a wise move on the part of Major Lyon to follow up the remark he accidentally overheard. I have no doubt there is a considerable force of the enemy's cavalry at the east of us. Wherever Kirby Smith's army is at this moment, I have no doubt he has thrown out a battalion of cavalry to his left, to cover his flank, and to drive off any force that may be lying in wait, or to annoy and harass him.”

“What do you suppose will be his route to the capital and the Ohio River, Major?” asked Colonel Lyon.

“By Barboursville, London, and Richmond.”

“Then, the main body of his army will pass within forty miles of Liberty, and the cavalry of which you speak must be within twenty miles of us; and the theory conforms to the meagre facts we have wrung from this man.”

“Middleburg, where Siah was to go to inform the enemy of our presence, is not more than ten miles from Liberty,” suggested Major Lyon.

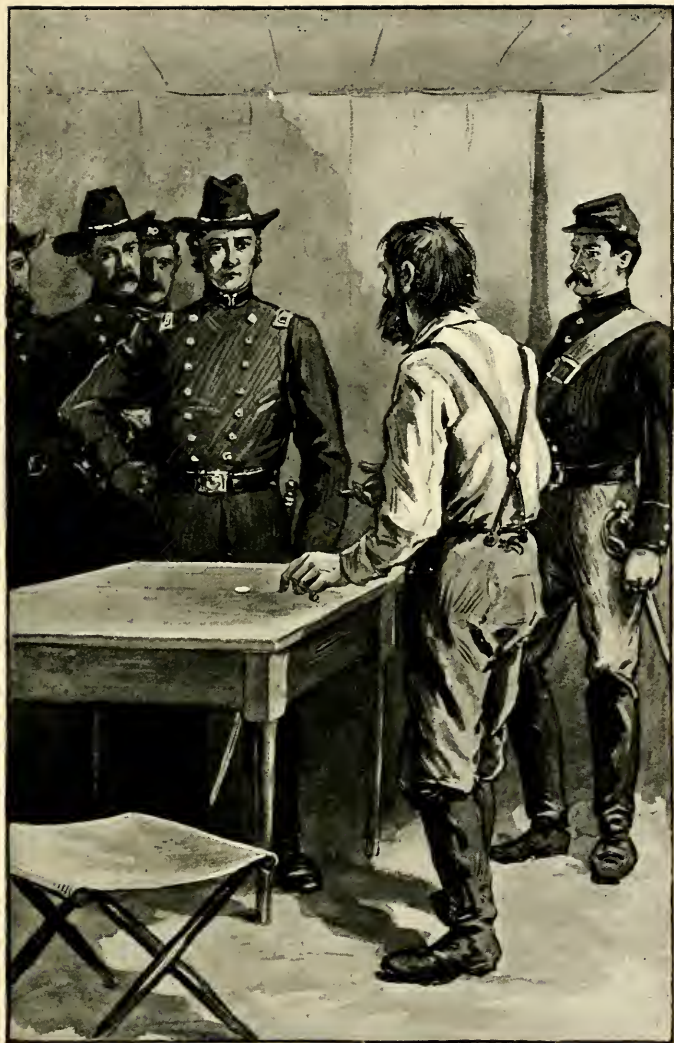
“Did you expect your messenger would find a Confederate force at Middleburg, Mr. Kinnell?” asked the staff-officer.

“I reckon I hain’t got nothin’ more to say. I ain’t one o’ your ginrals, and I don’t make nothin’ by talkin’,” replied Kinnell doggedly.

Colonel Lyon placed a gold half-eagle on the table before him.

“Will that open your mouth?” he asked.

“I’ll tell you all I know for that!” exclaimed the prisoner, his eyes brightening as though he had not seen so much money for a year.



"I'LL TELL YOU ALL I KNOW"

“Speak; and if you give us any false information, it will be all the worse for you,” added the colonel, as he gave the man the coin. “Did you expect Siah would find a Confederate force at Middleburg?”

“I did not; but Cun’l Chipton lives there, and Siah was to go to him. I expected the cun’l to do the rest on ’t,” replied Kinnell, putting the gold piece in an old wallet.

“How large is the Confederate force in that region?” asked Deck.

“I was over there this arternoon, and saw Cun’l Chipton.”

“Who is he?” inquired the colonel.

“He ain’t in the army; he’s a farmer. He said two ridgimints o’ calvary was down by Buck Creek, twenty mile from Middleburg. That’s all I know; and now I want to go home.”

“Not to-night; you will have to sleep at the camp. If we find that you have humbugged us, you will lose that gold coin, and may hang on the nearest tree,” said the colonel. “Corporal!”

“I hain’t told you nothin’ but the truth; I’m willin’ to swear to ’t,” protested Kinnell.

“Your oath would be worth no more than your word. Corporal, take this man to the guard-tent, and tell the officer to be sure that we find him in the morning,” added Colonel Lyon.

The corporal obeyed the order, and the field-officers with the staff-officer were alone.

“I am inclined to believe that the man told the truth so far as he knew it,” said Major Bornwood, as the colonel fell to studying his map.

“I find Buck Creek is a branch of the Cumberland in Pulaski County, and not far from Somerset, near the field of the battle of Mill Spring. The first thing we have to do is to verify, if we can, the information given by Kinnell,” said the colonel, looking into the faces of his associates, as if to ascertain how what he proposed could be accomplished. If that fellow told the truth, I fancy I can tell just where those two regiments have camped; at any rate, it is the place I should have chosen. It lies just east of Miltonville” —

“Miltonville!” exclaimed Major Lyon, springing to his feet.

“What is the matter, Dexter?” demanded his father.

“Miltonville was named after Win Milton’s grandfather, and he was brought up there. He knows all about that region, and I have no doubt he has fished in Buck Creek.”

“Send for Lieutenant Milton, Dexter,” added the colonel; and in five minutes he was in the tent. “Lieutenant, do you know anything about Buck Creek? For you have been our guide before in this region.”

“I know all about it, Colonel Lyon,” replied Milton. “I was born and brought up within ten miles of this village, and I have fished in all the streams within twenty miles of my birth-place.”

“How far is it from here?”

“About thirty miles to Grundy, the nearest town to it on the Somerset road. I could make the distance less than that by the short-cuts I know.”

The colonel explained the situation to the

lieutenant, and pointed out to him the fancied location of the Confederate camp, and then asked for any suggestion in regard to the next movement.

“There is only one thing to do, I should say, with due respect to my superior,” replied Milton.

“The fellow we captured here says there are two regiments of Confederate cavalry on Buck Creek; but the rascal may be lying, though I think he has told us the truth,” added the commander. “What is the one thing to do, Lieutenant, which you would suggest?”

“I should send not more than three scouts to ascertain whether or not the man lied,” added Lieutenant Milton. “Three men will not attract attention, as a greater number might.”

“And you will go with them as their guide?” queried the colonel.

“I should prefer to go as one of them, rather than have four persons,” replied Milton.

“But we have not time.”

“We have all the time there is, as my schoolmaster used to say,” answered the lieutenant.

“But look at it a moment; the three scouts

have to ride sixty miles before we can do anything, and the enemy may take themselves off before we get a chance at them," argued the colonel.

"I shall not presume to discuss the question with the commander; but I think my plan is quite practicable," said Milton modestly.

"I don't see it yet," persisted Colonel Lyon; and the lieutenant-colonel and the three majors could not see it any better. "Let us have your plan a little more in detail, Lieutenant Milton. I shall have all confidence in you, if you do not attempt impossibilities."

"I shall not do that, Colonel Lyon. I shall make the distance something less than thirty miles; perhaps not more than twenty-four if things in the vicinity of Miltonville are as they were about two years ago. We can ride this distance in two and a half hours if necessary."

"But your horses have done over twenty miles since dinner."

"I propose to change them at Miltonville for the remaining fourteen miles, and take our own on the return.

“If you are sure of finding horses ten miles from Liberty, the plan will work very well, I should say,” said the commander.

“If not at Miltonville, we shall find them at Somerset, though I have hardly a doubt about getting them at our first stopping-place. I know every man in the town, and the people will do all they can for me. But I will guarantee that we shall get to our destination in three hours at the most. What time is it now, sir?”

“Half-past seven,” replied the commander, consulting his watch.

“I thought it was much later. We shall be at Somerset by eleven, if we waste no time. Allowing an hour for the scouting near Buck Creek, we shall be ready to return by midnight, and shall be in this camp by three in the morning.”

“What do you think of this plan, Major Bornwood?” asked the colonel, turning to the staff-officer.

“It looks entirely feasible to me, Colonel; but I think I can suggest an improvement upon it,” replied the officer addressed.

“I do not insist upon my own plan, Colonel

Lyon; and I will obey any orders given me," added Milton.

"What change do you suggest, Major?" asked the commander.

"As I have had occasion to ascertain, the telegraph-line is open from Somerset to Munfordville, and there is a station in Liberty at the post-office. You can take possession of it, Colonel."

"Of course I can, as a military measure; but proceed with your plan, Major, if you please."

"If the three scouts complete their work at the creek, not more than five miles from Somerset, by midnight, they can telegraph the fact that the enemy are, or are not, there to Liberty, and it will not be necessary for the three to return."

"Excellent!" exclaimed the colonel. "The question seems to be settled, and the scouts shall be sent off at once. But who shall they be?"

"I volunteer, for one," said Major Lyon.

"I do not object, for the major is somewhat accustomed to such service," said the colonel, laughing.

The second and junior majors promptly followed the example of Deck.

“What do you say, Major Lyon?” inquired the commander.

“I should like the privilege of appointing the third myself,” replied Deck.

“Name him at once, and let us not lose a moment,” added the colonel.

“Captain Life Knox,” replied the senior major.

“Approved!” exclaimed the commander very earnestly.

“A word more, if you please,” interposed Major Bornwood. “You must see the postmaster when you get to Somerset, and make sure that there is an operator in the office by eleven o’clock. If the colonel gets your message, Major Lyon, for you are the ranking officer, and in command, — perhaps he will deem it advisable to march as soon as it is received. I make this as a suggestion.”

“I accept it, and I will see that everything is ready to march by midnight,” replied Colonel Lyon, who had already sent Lieutenant Fronklyn to capture the post-office and telegraph station, and sent for Captain Knox. “Now, is everything understood?” he asked, with a glance at Deck and Milton.

Everything was understood, and the three scouts were directed to have their horses ready as soon as possible. All the animals had been grained, and they were not obliged to wait for anything. Before they left, a message came from Lieutenant Fronklyn that he had captured the telegraph station; but the postmaster, who was also the operator, was a Secessionist, and was ugly. A guard of ten men was sent to prevent any interference with the plan. The lieutenant modestly wrote that he had been an operator formerly, and would take charge of the machine if ordered to do so. Of course an order to that effect was sent at once. The three scouts had each filled his haversack, and put an extra revolver in his belt. At eight o'clock they started on their long ride in the highest spirits; and all of them seemed to look upon the expedition as a sort of frolic. The trio were all men of high rank to do duty as scouts; but Life was the best in the army, and it was not beneath his dignity as a captain to serve his country in any capacity where he could be useful. They went off at a smart gallop, as though their horses entered into the spirit of the affair.

The postmaster was not at all pleased with the turn affairs had taken in his office. While Lieutenant Fronklyn was seated near the key of the machine, a call was made from some place on the line. The officer took his place at the board, and received what came.

“I object to your taking the business of the office out of my hands,” said the usual operator. “I am responsible for what is done here.”

“So am I. This office is in the keeping of the commander of the force in the field up the road. If you have any objections to make, I refer you to Colonel Lyon; I obey his orders. Arrest this man, and march him to the colonel,” said the lieutenant.

The message he wrote out was from Somerset as follows: “How many men in the force at Liberty, whose arrival you wired to me?” It was signed by “Scott Colonel.”

CHAPTER XIII

USING THE TELEGRAPH AT NIGHT

It appeared that Camden, the postmaster and telegraph operator, had wired the colonel commanding near Somerset, — for the despatch came from there, — of the presence of the Union force at Liberty. It had already been demonstrated that the man in charge of the office was a Secessionist, and the message which had just come fully proved it. He had been arrested, and sent to the camp. Lieutenant Fronklyn was not only a faithful, but an intelligent officer. He had served as an operator, and he knew that the original messages were usually kept on file for future reference if necessary; and he immediately looked it over to find the one sent to the colonel of the enemy.

The lieutenant had some doubt about finding it, for it might have been sent without writing it out, as the operator was the author of it; but it was the last despatch on the file, and it was on the

top. Calling one of his men, he sent this original, with the message he had just received, to the colonel, and asked for instructions. The man sent found the camp a lively collection of cavalymen; for orders had already been given for them to be ready for an early call in the morning, and they were preparing for it. But the colonel was in his tent with Major Bornwood, discussing the situation, when the messenger was admitted to the presence of the colonel.

“Lieutenant Fronklyn has just taken this message from the wire,” said he, handing it to the commander. “This despatch he found on the file,” he added, passing the original to him.

Colonel Lyon read the one from Somerset, and passed it to the staff-officer.

“If we wait long enough we are likely to be attacked here,” said the colonel.

“This is not a good field for an engagement,” replied the major, when he had glanced at the despatch. “You had better take the bull by the horns, instead of waiting for him to pitch into you at a disadvantage. This inquiry is signed by ‘Scott, Colonel.’ I have no doubt this despatch

comes from Colonel Scott, commanding Kirby Smith's cavalry, and the information is important."

"Doubtless his force consists of veterans," added the colonel.

"No doubt of it, and caution is a desirable virtue just now," replied the major.

"It is clear enough now that the force we have been talking about so much to-night is in the vicinity of Somerset, and the expedition of the three scouts may prove to be unnecessary," suggested the commander.

"They are five miles from Liberty by this time."

"But I might recall them by telegraph to Miltonville. Is it advisable to do so, major?"

"I think not," replied the staff-officer very decidedly. "Major Lyon will pick up all the information he can when he gets near the enemy, and the plan had better be carried out as arranged. But you must send an answer to this message, Colonel Lyon," said the major, with a significant smile.

"Will you write it, if you please, Major Bornwood?" asked the colonel.

“I will ;” and going to the table, he began to write.

While he was thus engaged, the commander gave his attention to the original of the postmaster’s message. He had evidently written it out to make sure that his sentence was correct. He had erased several words, and tinkered the sentence till it read: “Yankee force camped here this afternoon.”

“What is the other despatch?” asked Major Bornwood, with the paper on which he had written in his hand.

“It is not a message sent here, but a copy of the one Camden sent to Somerset,” replied the colonel, handing him the paper. “We have the sender of it under guard.”

“Where he ought to be. Fronklyn is an operator, and a very intelligent fellow,” added the major. “Now what do you say to this?” And the staff-officer read what he had written: “Learning your force was near, enemy marched in haste for Greensburg at eight.”

“That will do admirably !” exclaimed the colonel, rubbing his hands with delight. “That is a

bit of the tactics of Morgan the raider, who used the telegraph for his own purposes."

"The enemy are at least twenty-four miles from Liberty, and the Confederate colonel will not think of pursuing us with such a start against him," added the major. "Send the message to Franklyn, with an order to wire it at half-past eight."

It was nearly that time, and it was sent at once.

"These despatches put a new phase on the business before us," said the colonel, rubbing his head to stimulate his ideas, as he looked upon the ground in deep thought.

"It will put a new phase upon it for Scott. I have no doubt he has had a hard march, and that his men need rest. Your despatch will quiet him, and he will order his command to get all the sleep they can to-night."

"So much the better, and we will endeavor to give them a hard day's work to-morrow," replied the commander. "But one thing troubles me."

"What is that?"

"I am afraid we are moving a little blindly. All the talk has been about two cavalry regiments of the enemy in this vicinity, and it looks

as though we might be outnumbered," answered the colonel. "If their ranks are full, they ought to have at least two thousand men."

"But their ranks are not full, and I happen to know that they have only eight companies in each regiment; for General Buell is a careful commander, and he generally knows the force of the enemy, sometimes in detail, as in this instance. In my opinion, Scott has not over fifteen hundred men, and perhaps not over twelve hundred. His regiments do not consist of three battalions each."

"If you are correct" —

"I know I am correct as far as I have stated."

"We have fourteen hundred, and cannot be greatly outnumbered. But, after all, it depends largely upon the situation in which we find them. If the ground favors us, as it did at Columbia, our force is sufficient; for we were outnumbered there. But we need not wait for the despatches from Major Lyon, for we know the enemy are at Buck Creek. I have given orders for the men to get what sleep they can, and be ready to march at any hour of the night."

Everything had been done in the way of preparation; and the two officers rolled themselves up in their blankets, and stretched themselves on the ground. They were soon asleep, and the guard was ordered to call the commander at half-past eleven. No more messages came from Somerset or any other place. They had but three hours to sleep, though many of the men had gone to sleep as soon as they had been to supper; for they had fought a hard battle the day before, and had marched over twenty miles since dinner. The officer of the day had divided the hours for repose among the guards; but Fronklyn and his men at the post-office had to catch their sleep as they could. The lieutenant stretched himself on the counter, where he could hear the click of the instrument; and they all slept most of the time.

The three scouts went off at a gallop, hurrying their steeds all the way, so that they reached Miltonville at nine o'clock. Lieutenant Milton went to his father's house, where he was cordially welcomed by his parents; and especially by Grace Morgan, his *fiancée*, who was there on a visit.

Mr. Milton was a prosperous farmer, and raised

horses as well as hemp and tobacco, and three fine steeds were at once brought out for the use of the party. The saddles and all the other trappings were quickly changed by the riders, who mounted and departed as they shook hands with all the family; and the lieutenant did more than this with Grace.

Miltonville, Harrison, and Somerset were at the three angles of a triangle. Milton led the way over the fields and through the woods; and by this cross-cut he gained the six miles which reduced the distance to twenty-four miles to Somerset. The horses were fresh; and they galloped over the fields without relaxing the speed, and then by a cart-path through the woods. They forded Fishing Creek in the woods, and came out on the Somerset road near the village. They had heard the clock strike ten just before they reached the road, and it was not more than a quarter of an hour later when they halted before the post-office.

“Now, Milton, do you know anything about the politics of the postmaster?” asked Deck, just before they reached the office.

“I know all about them,” replied the lieutenant. “Mr. McCurdy is a loyal citizen, and has two sons in the Union army.”

“Then we are all right, and we must see him on the instant,” added Deck.

Milton dismounted, handing his bridle-rein to Life Knox; and in a moment more he brought out the postmaster.

“Good-evening, Mr. McCurdy,” said Milton, extending his hand to him.

“Who is it? I can’t see very well in the night,” asked the official, as he took the offered hand.

“Win Milton.”

“I’m glad to see you, Win. You have shoulder-straps now, and I am glad to see them too,” replied Mr. McCurdy very cordially. “I was afraid it was some more of those Cornfeds over at the camp; for I don’t like to send treason on my wires.”

“That man is all right,” said Deck, as Milton explained their mission.

“But I thought that Union force over to Liberty had marched for Greensburg at eight o’clock,

as the message came to me while an adjutant was waiting for it."

"That was a blind," laughed Deck.

"I am glad to hear it; for a Confederate army, under Kirby Smith, is moving up from Cumberland Gap by Barboursville and London."

"But where is this force near here of which you spoke, Mr. McCurdy?" for it did not appear that he was a colonel, or even a major.

"It is camped over on Buck Creek, about five miles from here."

"All right; information correct," added Deck.

They made their arrangements to send despatches to Liberty, and then Milton led the way on the road to Grundy; but before he reached that hamlet, he turned into the field on the left. They soon saw what the guide called the Buck Hills. They followed a stream till they were abreast of the hills, and about the centre of the length of the range of elevations.

"We had better leave our horses here; for there is a path over the hills to Buck Creek, and I have been over it fifty times when I was a boy," said Milton, as he reined in his horse.

The others followed his example, and the animals were picketed in some trees on the bank of the stream. Then they ascended the hill, and paused on the summit, where they were concealed by the bushes that covered all the hills. They were very careful; for the sentinels might notice any moving bodies in the moonlight, which fortunately favored the scouts. If they had been at all sentimental they would have called it a beautiful view. The moon had risen since they started on the expedition, and was now well up in the sky, so that there was plenty of light for their purpose. They seated themselves on a rock, and proceeded to take a survey of the ground in front of them. Deck was even planning the battle which was likely to come off on the following day.

He took off his cap, and placing a small piece of cartridge paper, which he had evidently brought with him for the purpose, upon it, he began to make a map of the locality. First he rudely sketched the hills, with the brook, as Milton called it, which they had followed from the highway, on the left of the sheet. Then he added

Buck Creek, which flowed into the Cumberland River. He marked the location of Grundy, from which a road extended to the north-east, through Rockcastle County. This thoroughfare crossed Buck Creek, and near the bridge over it at the present time, though it was formerly only a ford, a branch of the stream extended along the road as far as Deck could see. Between these two water-courses the land formed a triangle, not more than half a mile wide at its base, at the northern end of the range of hills. The enemy was encamped in about the centre of this triangle.

A further examination of the ground before him enabled the major, with a single line of his pencil, to change a portion of the branch stream into a pond, perhaps an eighth of a mile in length and ten rods wide in the middle. The road at its side was through the woods at this point, and Deck thought it was just the place for riflemen. He could find nothing more to add to his map, and he considered the locality for an engagement. He would post the six guns of the battery on the hill, with a battalion of cavalry above and

below it, and the third battalion near the apex of the triangle, Captain Ripley's company being posted in the woods on the shore of the pond. In fact, this disposition was quite similar to that of his father in the field at Columbia. He had taken everything as he found it in front of him, and had not imagined anything that would favor the Union force.

They descended the hill in silence, and hastened back to Somerset, where they found Mr. McCurdy waiting for them in the office. Deck telegraphed that he had found the enemy as first reported, and in a favorable position for an attack. It was only eleven o'clock; and in half an hour came a reply that the force would march at twelve, and arrive at daylight. Milton sent the three horses back, and their own reached Somerset at four in the morning.

CHAPTER XIV

THE OPENING OF THE ENGAGEMENT

AT half-past eleven there was nothing more for the three scouts to do; and Deck and Milton were gaping so that they were in peril of dislocating their jaws, though it never seemed to make any difference to Life Knox whether he slept at all. While waiting for the answer from Liberty, the major had worked on his sketch, and had completed it to his satisfaction. Two men and a boy had been found to ride the borrowed horses over to Miltonville, and bring back those that had been left there; for Deck was not inclined to ride a strange horse in an engagement.

“Now, Win, your party can get four or five hours’ sleep, and you can have the boys’ room,” said Mr. McCurdy. “I will call you when your regiment gets here; and I am afraid you will have a hard day’s work of it to-morrow, and you need all the sleep you can get.”

“That idea strikes me favorably, and things are in good trim now,” replied Deck; and in a few minutes all of them were asleep in the boys’ beds.

While they slept, the Riverlawn regiment was marching at good speed to Somerset. Milton was not with it, and they had to follow the roads by the way of Harrison. The wagon-train, attended by a sufficient force under Quartermaster Hickman, was permitted to fall behind; for the mules are not rapid travellers at the best, and the colonel hurried the men to a reasonable degree. They made about eight miles an hour, and at four o’clock in the morning the head of the column halted in front of the post-office. While the clock on one of the churches was striking four, Mr. McCurdy called the scouts. They were on their feet in an instant, and their toilet did not detain them a minute. Deck found his father in the office, where the postmaster had already informed him what the scouts had done. The sun did not rise till half-past five in this latitude, so that it was still dark, and the office was lighted.

“Are you ready for us, Major Lyon?” asked the colonel, as Deck came into the room.

“All ready, Colonel Lyon; and I think the force should be moving at once,” replied the major, as he went to the counter, on which a large kerosene lamp was burning, where he spread out the rude sketch of the field he had made.

“Have you considered how the force should be posted, Major?” asked the commander, as he looked over the drawing, with Major Bornwood at his side.

“This makes it all as plain as the engineers could have done it,” said the staff-officer, as he took the whole thing into his head at a glance.

“Now, Major Lyon, how have you posted the force?” asked he, after he had studied the plan a minute or two.

“Perhaps it would be disrespectful to my superior to meddle with his duty,” replied Deck with a smile.

“But you have looked over the ground, and I have not,” added his father. “You have some talent for strategy, I have been told by several officers.”

“I have made this sketch to give you a clear idea of the position of the enemy, and the country around his camp.”

“But if I ask you for your views in regard to the action, I am entitled to receive them,” continued the colonel; but he was smiling as though he was indulging in a pleasantry.

“As I was making this rough drawing, I could not help thinking how the force should be posted,” said Major Lyon, placing the point of his pencil on the centre of the range of hills. “Of course I should place the battery here.”

“Of course,” added the colonel.

“That is a self-evident proposition,” added Major Bornwood. “Go on, Major.”

“I should post Captain Ripley’s company in the woods at the east of the pond,” continued Deck, pointing to the position with his pencil.

“All right so far,” replied the colonel. “You have eleven companies more; go on, Major.”

“I should post the battalion of the senior major at the north end of the pond,” replied Deck, watching the expression of his father and the staff-officer.

“Go on,” said Colonel Lyon.

“I should put the battalion of the second major on the right, and of the junior major on the left, of the battery, both concealed by the range of hills,” Deck proceeded.

“But these positions mean nothing at all till we know how the action is to be fought, Major Lyon. You not only conceal nearly the whole force on the field, but you conceal your meaning. You have clearly marked out how you would fight the battle, but I may not approve your plan. You must therefore indicate how you would conduct the affair.”

“I will do so; and I shall not be at all sensitive if my method is condemned and rejected,” replied Deck very good-naturedly. “My plan is to include a surprise. The first battalion is to attack the enemy when the assembly is blown. The attack is not to be a charge, for the battalion will advance, and fire a volley from their carbines into the enemy. Then it will fall back, retreating at a gallop. Of course they will be pursued, and when they come to a point between the battery and the northern part of the

pond, the artillery is to open upon them with canister or shell, as the colonel may determine. At the same time, the riflemen will open fire. The enemy will certainly be shaken by the rifle-balls and the canister; then the battery will cease firing, and the battalions on the right and left, and the one in front, will charge. That is as far as I have gone."

"I have no fault to find with this plan, though it is nothing more than the opening of the engagement," said the colonel when the major paused.

"That is all I intended it to be," replied Deck. "Nothing more can be arranged till we see the result of the opening. Of that, of course, I can say nothing."

"So far I think the plan is excellent," said Major Bornwood. "It indicates neither victory nor defeat; and, as Major Lyon suggests, the colonel has to fight the battle after the preliminary steps have been taken."

"We have no time to lose in carrying out this plan," continued the colonel, as he moved to the door. "I have ordered Lieutenant Milton to conduct the force to the brook before you get

to Grundy, and halt there. Now we must hurry forward, and post the force."

The horses of all the officers who had dismounted were in front of the post-office, and Deck found Ceph there among them; and the other scouts had also obtained their steeds. The field-officers galloped to the brook, and came to the head of the column. The battery was directed to follow the stream, and Deck was sent forward to assist in placing the guns. He and Major Batterson rode ahead of the column in silence; for all the officers had been ordered to allow no noise of any kind, and the road was too far from the enemy to permit the sound of the horses' feet to be heard. The battery passed over grass ground, though there was something like a wagon-track on the border of the stream. All the companies moved with the greatest caution.

"You must haul your guns up the hill by hand, Major Batterson," said Deck when he reached the path to the summit of the elevation.

"That can easily be done," replied the commander of the battery; and he proceeded to instruct his lieutenants to prepare for the movement.

The two officers went to the top of the elevation, where they could see the camp of the sleeping foe. Then the artillerist selected the positions for his six guns, and planted them behind the ridges of the hill, where they commanded the entire triangle beneath them. Major Lyon hurried back to the road, where his battalion was waiting for him. The colonel was so well informed in regard to the field from the sketch of his son, that he had sent Captain Ripley's company of riflemen to the position assigned to them, and ordered the second and junior majors, with their battalions, to their places on the right and left of the battery; and they all moved so that no sound could be heard from them in the field between the two streams where the army was encamped. Deck ordered his battalion to march slowly and in silence. Fortunately the road was nothing more than a reddish loam, without a stone for the iron hoofs to strike upon. At the upper end of the pond he fell back from the road into the woods; and no one in the enemy's lines could have suspected the presence of a Union force so near.

It was now daylight; and the assembly was blown in the Confederate camp, and the soldiers were performing their morning duties. In a low tone of voice Major Lyon explained to the four captains of his battalion, whom he had called together, the manner in which the engagement was to be opened. This portion of the regiment had been thoroughly drilled, and the captains had the men under perfect control; and this was even true of Artie Lyon's company, though it was one which had just been mustered in. The riflemen had placed themselves at the trees which were to cover them in case of need. The battalion was formed in column of fours, and Deck had placed himself in front of it; for he intended to lead in person. The horses had been somewhat rested after their march from Liberty, and there were no signs of fatigue among the men.

“Battalion, forward! March! Gallop!” shouted the major, no longer careful about his voice.

The captains repeated the order, and Deck dashed at full gallop towards the point where he had decided to cross the stream near the foot of the pond. There were no laggards behind him,

and all the men came up in proper order. The stream was shallow; but Ceph made a flying leap, and came down in the middle of it. He was closely followed by Captain Abbey, and the rest of the companies, though none of them imitated the leap of the major's horse. All the horses went into the stream without any difficulty, and scrambled out on the other side. Deck saw that it was roll-call in the enemy's line. He wheeled to the left when he had crossed the water, and the column followed him. Then he wheeled to the right when within short musket-shot of the enemy, and continued at his mad gallop across the triangle.

“Battalion, halt!” shouted the intrepid leader.

Then he brought the companies into line, and the captains gave the order to fire. The troopers along the line discharged their volleys, and quite a number of the enemy were seen to fall.

“In column of fours!” commanded the major.
“March! Gallop!”

The leader led them back to the woods from which they had come at the best speed of the horses. The enemy seemed to be paralyzed by

this sudden exhibition of force in front of them, but they had not a musket loaded to return the fire. The battalion had no sooner come out of the water, and passed to the shelter of the trees, than from one gun after another the battery rained upon the shaken Confederates six showers of canister. The enemy were certainly surprised, and they stared at the Buck Hills with absolute astonishment. Many of them fell from the effects of the canister; but before they could come to their bearings, the riflemen began to put in their work, and the men fell in great numbers.

Colonel Lyon had placed himself on the highest hill of the range, where he could see the entire field. There was confusion in the camp, but the officers soon rallied them in voices of thunder. The men were mounted, and ready for fight.

They were brave men, none braver ever trod the battlefield; and the wonder was, not that they had been thrown into confusion by the suddenness of the attack and the number of men in their ranks who had fallen, but that their officers had the power to rally them, and bring order out of the panic that had been created. Colonel

Lyon and Major Bornwood declared that the opening was a perfect success. But the battle in detail was yet to be fought. The enemy had by this time come to understand where at least some of the assailants were located. They could not comprehend why the force that had assailed them in front had so hastily retreated; for they seemed to be in perfect order, and in condition to do some heavy fighting. Deck had planned the first act of the engagement, and he had no idea of charging into a force of at least three times his own number. He was prudent, whatever might have been said about him.

The enemy were ready to fight. They were veterans, and were used to it; but there was no enemy within their reach. Their commander was evidently thinking of charging on the battery which had made such havoc in his ranks; for Milton had seen him talking with another officer, and pointing at the summit of the hills. Then he had seen him indicating with his sword the upper end of the pond where Deck's battalion had crossed and disappeared. Colonel Lyon had seen all this with his glass. Then he gave an

order to Major Batterson to open upon the enemy with shell, and the guns were already loaded for this purpose.

One shell was first thrown into the camp; and it produced even more confusion than the canister, or than they had caused at Columbia. At the same time the riflemen did not intermit their fire for a moment. Officers and men were dropping out of their saddles, and the first detail of the action had become a slaughter. The colonel was sick of it; and it was a relief to him when he saw the two regiments of the foe formed, and march over the field in the direction of the place where the battalion of the senior major was posted. Doubtless the colonel in command realized that the sharpshooters were concealed in the woods with the force which had opened the conflict. He saw the necessity of dislodging the enemy on that side of the field.

CHAPTER XV

SOME DETAILS OF THE BATTLE

THE regiments of the enemy were formed in good order, and both officers and privates were as steady as though they had not been under a most destructive fire from the battery and the riflemen for the last twenty minutes. The natural breastwork which sheltered the artillery, placed at irregular distances where the shape of the hills afforded covering for the guns, did not appear to tempt the commander to make an attack in that direction. Buck Creek on this side of the camp was a considerable stream, wider and deeper, Milton had informed his fellow-scouts, than at many points below the Somerset road.

The enemy could not be aware that seven hundred men were ready to defend the ascent of the slope; for the two battalions of Majors Belthorpe and Truman were perfectly concealed behind the ragged hills. But their commander realized that

his situation was critical, with the six guns pouring shells, and the riflemen bullets, into his force, who continued to fall around him; and it was absolutely necessary to do something to save his men, for he could not help seeing that the battle had already gone against him. Colonel Lyon was equally assured that the Union force had won the day; but he never "gushed," and he felt that there was yet a chance for the commander on the other side to redeem himself, and he said nothing. He was fully occupied in studying the situation every moment of the time.

"The colonel over there is about to make a movement of some kind," said he while the enemy was forming. "I don't believe he will venture to attack on this side of the creek."

"No; he is too wise to swim the creek, and charge on the breastwork," replied Major Bornwood. "But he has come to his bearings, and he will certainly do something. He is a brave and noble fellow; and, upon my word, I feel sorry for him personally. He has fallen into a death-trap; but I will venture to say that he will save his men, or about two-thirds of them, for he is

full of fight, and is a man of expedients. So far, all the avenues have been closed against him."

"He can only take what comes," added the colonel.

"I wonder that he allowed himself to be caught in such a trap," suggested the major.

"How could he have helped himself?" asked the commander.

"Very easily; it is plain enough now, as it evidently was not at any earlier time. He ought to have had scouts out on all the roads around here. But I have no doubt he has been doing a great deal of hard marching lately; his men needed rest, and this seemed to be a good place to give it to them."

"Probably the despatch you sent last night had something to do with it." said the colonel.

"No doubt of it. I warrant Scott knows very well what Union force there is anywhere near him; and doubtless he has agents in this semi-Secession region, who send him all the information he needs."

"Like Camden, the postmaster at Liberty."

“Yes; and more active ones than he is.”

“But the question just now is, not how he got into this scrape, but how will he get out of it?” continued the colonel. “What will he do now?”

“It does not look practicable for him to do anything on this side of the field; and the only thing he can do is to attack Major Lyon’s battalion on the Rockcastle road.”

“That seems to be the only avenue open to him, or rather the only one that he can open. And he may turn the day against us yet,” said the colonel, a shade of anxiety sweeping across his face. “The woods on the other side of the field, where the senior major’s battalion is located, as well as the riflemen, appears to extend only as far as the end of the pond, and it looks like an open country beyond it.”

“That is the appearance, and probably there are farms along those bottoms where there is a rich soil,” added the major.

“Major Lyon must be re-enforced at once,” said the colonel very decidedly. “We have two battalions here where they are not needed; and

if there is to be a fight at all, it will be in the fields above the woods, on the farther side of that brook. Colonel Gordon!" he called to the second in command, who sat on a rock near him.

Although the lieutenant-colonel has been seldom mentioned, he was as active as any other officer in the field, both in consultation and execution. He promptly came at the call, and saluted the commander.

"Can one or both of the second and third battalions swim that creek at the foot of the hill, Colonel Gordon?" asked the commander.

"I have no doubt one or both of them can do so, though I have not seen the creek except from the top of these hills," replied Colonel Gordon.

"Order Truman and Belthorpe to do so at once, leaving one company of Truman's command here. Send them across the field to re-enforce Major Lyon, who is likely soon to have the whole force of the enemy down upon him on the other side of the pond!" said Colonel Lyon in vigorous speech.

"The enemy are moving!" exclaimed Major

Bornwood, somewhat excited by the earnestness of the colonel, and especially by his remark that the enemy might still win the day.

Colonel Gordon hastened to execute the order. He detailed the ninth company, under Captain Baron, to remain on the hill ; and Major Belthorpe started on the cart-path down the hill to the creek on the instant. The two regiments of the enemy had formed, and dashed off across the triangle in the direction of the head of the pond. The land was a tobacco-field, and was dry and hard. Tom Belthorpe was rejoiced to be called into action, for he had been as impatient as an idle baby while the battery and the riflemen were sending the deadly bolts into the midst of the enemy. As soon as he obtained the order, which came to him while his command was at rest on the level ground at the side of the brook which they had followed in reaching the locality, though he himself had been half-way up the slope of the hill, he dashed down the slope, formed his command, and then led them to the path over the hill, which was rather difficult of passage for horses ; but they reached the summit, and then

went down the rugged steep as rapidly as the roughness of the way would permit. Major Belthorpe was ahead of his three companies; for the riflemen were in his battalion, and he looked out for the most favorable place to swim the river. There was a tolerably level space fifty feet wide between the hills and the creek, along which he rode till he came to a slope down to the water, just what the situation seemed to require.

The water looked deep and dark; but Captain Gadsbury, in command of his first company, was a veteran in the Riverlawn battalion, and had often swum the streams on the march, and was entirely reliable. He was sure to get his command over the creek, which was here about a hundred feet wide; and the next company, under Captain Barnes, would be likely to follow him. If he did not, Captain Life Knox's company came next, and he would drive it into the water. But both men and horses are imitative creatures, and would do whatever they had seen others do. All the officers were veterans who had been promoted from sergeants to lieutenants, and had seen a great deal of service. Tom Belthorpe

rode his well-trained steed across the creek as though he had been swimming Green River for the fun of it.

He found a slope out of the water on the other side, which enabled him to come out of the stream without any trouble, though the creek had steep banks as a rule. Major Belthorpe halted on the bank as soon as he came out of the water to observe the passage of his companies. Captain Gadsbury landed his men all right. Captain Barnes followed him without any hesitation; but the horses of the men, which had not been trained to this sort of duty, were shy. Lieutenant Decker, who had been with the Riverlawns since they were mustered in, made himself very active with the flat of his sabre at the buttocks of the restive animals, and drove them into the stream. They went over without any further difficulty.

Captain Life Knox came next; and he had swum deep streams with his men, and their horses made no objection to crossing the creek. As soon as the three companies had landed, Major Belthorpe formed them, and dashed over

the plain at a furious gallop in the direction taken by the enemy. The three companies of Major Truman's command were new in the regiment; but the men had nearly all seen service in militia and Home Guards, and they passed over the stream without any delay. The battalion was formed in the rear of the second major's command, and both rushed across the field like meteors; for the majors understood that Deck must soon be hard pressed by the enemy. They had not been informed in regard to the situation by their superior officers, who were observing the action from the hill; but they were thinking men, and had looked over the field to some extent by climbing the hills where they could see for themselves.

After "opening the battle," Deck, with the four companies of his battalion, had retreated to the road behind the pond, and formed his force in the road along the upper part of the pond. He placed himself where he could overlook the camp of the enemy, and the tents were still standing as they were when the battalion had fired into the cavalrymen in line for roll-call.

While it has taken a long time to relate what occurred on the field, not more than half an hour had elapsed since the first shot was fired.

Major Lyon saw that the enemy were forming for a movement; but he could not know whether it was to be an attack on the natural breast-work, on his command, or a retreat from the field, and he watched the field with the most intense interest. When the column of two regiments had formed, though there appeared not to be more than seven hundred men in each, as Major Bornwood had said, they made a force of more than three times the number under Deck's command. It looked to him then that he was called upon to plan another engagement on his side of the field. It is not strange that he was very anxious; and it occurred to him, as it had to his father on the hill, that the battle might yet end in the defeat of the Union arms.

If the brave and skilful colonel in command of the two regiments could overcome the first battalion, he could soon clean out the riflemen, and then march by the Somerset road to Grundy, follow the brook, and take the battery

in the rear, though he would have to engage the two battalions posted there. This was what Major Lyon thought might possibly occur; and perhaps the same idea was in the mind of the gallant Confederate colonel. Just then Deck felt such a responsibility as had never rested upon him before. Such a course of manœuvres would bring the first attack of the enemy upon his command; and if he failed to repel it against three times his own force, he felt that the day would certainly be lost, and the new regiment be scattered to the four winds of heaven.

He saw the enemy approach over the plain with headlong speed. He was a noble and Christian young man; and he looked up to Heaven, and put up a silent prayer for strength and guidance in this hour, which he felt to be the most important of his lifetime. Then he considered his plan, and it was soon formed in his mind. He decided to meet the onslaught of the host, as it was comparatively, as they came out of the water in crossing the brook. He wrote a hasty note to Captain Ripley, ordering him to move his company up to the border of

the pond. Then he marched his battalion down to the brook, and placed two companies at the points where he believed the force approaching would land, and ordered the captains to charge upon the head of the column as it made the landing.

During the passage of the enemy across the field the battery had been firing canister, and the riflemen had been pouring their deadly bullets into the column. Many of them fell, killed or wounded, and the column diminished in numbers as it advanced. But the brave colonel of the force still urged his men forward, though he did not expose himself to the fire of the sharpshooters by putting himself at the head of the column.

As the head of the line approached the brook, the men pounded their horses with the flat sides of their sabres till they drove them into the stream. It was about fifty feet wide at the place which Deck had chosen to oppose their crossing; for the water was low, and the banks were high at all other points near the pond. The riflemen had moved up to the head of the sheet

of water, and stationed themselves at the sides of the trees, which made a rest for their weapons, rather than to hide themselves behind them. They opened upon the advancing enemy without delay, and they began to drop the horsemen as they had done several times before when in the company of the Riverlawns.

As Captain Abbey charged upon the head of the column while they were still in the water, Major Lyon discovered the battalion of Tom Belthorpe flying across the plain as though the force had not marched half the night before. Then the next battalion came out of the water, and dashed after the first; and then Deck felt that the day would be saved. At the same time he realized that his father, and not himself, was fighting the battle. The colonel had early divined the intention of the enemy, and had sent the needed re-enforcements. He thanked God that the responsibility had been taken from his shoulders.

Colonel Lyon had watched the advance of the two battalions with the most intense interest, and in great anxiety. He saw, with the aid

of his field-glass, Deck on the shore, and he felt that the day would be saved, as Deck had felt almost at the same moment. He thanked God audibly for the change in the situation; but he had hardly uttered the words before he fell back on the rocks with a groan. A man in a clump of bushes below had fired at him, and hit him in the side of the head.

CHAPTER XVI

MAJOR BORNWOOD'S PREDICTION

MAJOR BORNWOOD and Colonel Gordon were near the commander when he fell over on the rocks with a groan which indicated that he was wounded. Both of them sprang to his assistance, and raised him from the hard bed on which he had dropped. Captain Baron, in command of the company which had been left behind the breastwork, was near, while the cannoneers were serving the guns, firing canister into the column of the enemy when they could do so without peril to the battalion on the farther shore of the pond.

“Where is he wounded?” asked Colonel Gordon, shocked at the calamity; for neither of the officers had supposed the party on the hill were in any danger.

“In the side of the head, above the right ear,” replied Major Bornwood. “Captain Baron!” he

shouted; and this officer promptly responded to the call. "Dr. Farnwright is at the foot of the hill; bring him up here as quick as possible."

"Is it a bad wound?" asked the second in command.

"I don't know; I cannot tell," replied the staff-officer. "He is insensible, but that does not prove that it is a fatal wound. But, Colonel Gordon, you are now in command of the Union force, and you should attend to the movements in the field."

The colonel, as Gordon may now be called without any qualification, who was far from wishing to succeed to the command under such circumstances, turned from the wounded officer, and continued his survey of the field. His first order was to silence the guns of the battery; for Major Belthorpe had nearly reached the centre of the triangle, and the scattering missiles of the canister might strike his force. With his glass he watched the assault of Major Lyon's force on the head of the enemy's column, but he could not help turning often for a glance at his wounded superior.

Dr. Farnwright very soon appeared, with a soldier bearing his case of instruments; and Dr. Gwynn, his assistant, soon followed him. The regiment had hardly been exposed at all, and the surgeons had not yet been employed. The principal doctor hastened to the side of the wounded commander, attended by his associate. He had been with the Riverlawns since it was organized as a battalion, and had always been very intimate with the commander. He was deeply interested in the case before him.

“How did this happen, Major Bornwood?” asked the surgeon. “The breastwork has not been attacked.”

“The enemy left a small force in charge of the camp, and the men seem to be doing some of the fighting on their own account; for I discovered one of them in that clump of bushes on the other side of the creek with a rifle in his hands. That was where the shot came from,” replied the major. “I think we must first move your patient to some safer place; for the rest of the camp-guard may try to do something more for their cause.”

The surgeon and his assistant conveyed the wounded officer to a knoll sheltered by the higher summits of the hills, where there was a patch of grass. Major Batterson brought several blankets he had taken from the heap of knapsacks, and a bed was made for the patient. Dr. Farnwright, with the aid of his assistant, examined the wound of the colonel as soon as he had been placed on the blankets. The other officers stood around the knoll, anxiously waiting the verdict of the surgeon. A profusion of blood was flowing from the wound, which the assistant wiped away, and the nature of the injury was disclosed.

“Not a very bad wound,” said Dr. Farnwright, to the great relief of the officers around him.

“But he is still insensible,” suggested the staff-officer.

“Stunned by the shock; but I cannot tell yet the extent of the injury. I can assure you, however, that it is not a fatal wound, though he may not be fit for duty for a couple of weeks,” said the surgeon, as he continued his examination.

Colonel Gordon had placed himself in a secure

position, and was observing the progress of the engagement at the brook on the other side of the field. Major Bornwood soon joined him, and gave him the verdict of the surgeon, which was a great relief to him, though it made him feel more intensely the weight of responsibility resting upon him after his superior was disabled.

“I am glad it is no worse,” replied the colonel, when the staff-officer had reported upon the condition of the commander.

“The surgeon is not yet fully informed as to the condition of his patient, and it may be more serious than he now supposes. But how goes the battle, Colonel?”

“Major Lyon is following up his attack upon the head of the enemy's column, and they are fighting in the water,” replied Colonel Gordon; but the major could see that he was very uneasy about something.

“The fighting is now, and is likely to be to the end of it, on the other side of the field; and this is no place for me, though the major is doing very well, as he always does. He has evidently moved the riflemen up to the pond, and they are plainly

doing good service; for I see the enemy on this side of the stream dropping from their saddles. This is no place for me under present circumstances, and I am going over there," said the colonel, rising from the place where he had crouched behind a rock to shelter his body from the fire of the camp-guard on the other side of the creek.

"That is the proper thing for you to do. I think you need not be disturbed by the condition of Colonel Lyon," added the major. "You would better send half a dozen riflemen up here to dispose of the men who are trying to pick us off whenever they can see a head."

"I will do so; and as Captain Baron's company is not needed here, I will take him and his men with me," added the colonel, as he hastened from the place where he had observed the fighting. "If there is an attack on the breastwork, which I do not expect, I shall order Major Batterson to fire three of his guns in rapid succession, and I will be here with a force to support the battery."

"Banks," he called to Colonel Lyon's orderly, "get my horse ready for me at the foot of the hill."

He paused a moment to ascertain the condition of the commander, but the surgeon said there was no change for the better or the worse. Then he gave his orders to the commander of the battery, and ran down the hill, where he mounted his horse, and then ordered Captain Baron to move his command to the pond on the other side of the field. The company was mounted, and ready to move at a moment's notice; and the captain, with his command, followed him at a gallop.

Major Lyon was following up his charge upon the column of the enemy, and had taken them into the water, where a hand-to-hand fight was in progress, and Captain Abbey's company was more than holding its own. But Deck did not expect this condition to last more than a few minutes; for there were at least six hundred of the enemy on the field in the rear of the company he had engaged. He sat on his horse at the head of the pond, and observed the entire field. The colonel commanding the enemy was not far from the actual fighting, and he could not help seeing that the company engaged were making no headway. Captain Ripley said afterwards that he had done

his best to bring him down; but he was different from all the other officers he had ever seen: he appeared to have a charmed life, and he wondered if he did not wear armor under his uniform.

He did not long remain inactive while his company in the water were struggling fiercely to make a landing; for a whole battalion, though it was small in numbers, galloped from the main body to a point on the brook a mile higher up.

The banks of the stream were high, with the exception of the portion where Deck had crossed when he opened the engagement, and where the fighting was now going on; for here the water was beginning to spread out in forming the pond. Doubtless there were places higher up where the stream could be more readily crossed, though it was evident that the horses of the Confederates had not been so well trained as those of the company engaged. Major Lyon was prepared for this movement. The engagement had proceeded so far when Colonel Gordon dashed upon the ground, followed by Captain Baron's company.

“Are you all right, Major Lyon?” asked the colonel.

“All right so far, but a prompt movement is necessary now, for you can see that the enemy are marching north to find a ford; and I was about to send four companies up the Rockcastle road, to prevent that battalion from crossing if possible,” replied Deck.

“Name the companies, and I will send them,” said Colonel Gordon in hurried speech.

“Captain Blenk’s, Richland’s, Artie Lyon’s, and Life Knox’s. The first three of them are in my battalion; and I will go with them, if you will order Major Truman to send Captain Knox’s company.”

The junior major was at hand, and the order was given instantly; and in another minute the seventh company was on the road, following the three companies of the senior major.

“I am sorry to inform you, Major Lyon, that I am now in command of the Union force; for Colonel Lyon has unfortunately been wounded in the head, though Dr. Farnwright does not regard the injury as very severe,” added Colonel Gordon, as Deck was about to hurry off after his command.

“My father wounded!” exclaimed the major, with something like a groan.

“I am sorry for it, Deck; but life and death are the same here, and we must do our duty. Your father may be out in a week or two, the doctor thinks,” replied the colonel in soothing tones.

“I will try to do my duty, whatever comes,” said the intrepid young major, as he started Ceph at a gallop, and increased his speed till he came up with and passed Life Knox.

“Father has been wounded, but not badly,” said he, without reducing the speed of his horse. He passed the other companies; for Ceph was a blood animal, and could have earned thousands in the races if his owner would have permitted such a use to be made of him. And he had been offered a very large price for him; but he was Deck’s steed from his ponyhood, and the colonel would not sell him at any price.

He soon reached the head of the column; and then he reined in to make a more deliberate examination of the region, where he had not been before, and of the movements of the enemy. All

the horses of the battalion were Kentucky animals, and it was plain enough that they were superior to those of the Confederate cavalry. The road was good, and the companies had made a very rapid march. A little later they came up with the right of the enemy's column on the other side of the stream; and then Deck halted his command, and proceeded to watch the enemy.

The captain of the Confederate company in the water below appeared to have lost nearly half his men under the fire of the riflemen, whom Captain Ripley had stimulated to the highest state of activity. They were near enough to pick off their victims without endangering the Union men. Their captain had soon fallen, as had one of the lieutenants; the other had been killed before on the field. It was simply slaughter; and the company retired from the stream, under the command of the first sergeant. The battle in this part of the field had suddenly come to an end.

The remnant of the company fell back upon the main body; and then the invulnerable colonel gave a new order, for the entire force moved to

the north. Colonel Gordon immediately sent Major Truman's battalion, with the riflemen, on the road after the other force that had gone in that direction; and it was evident that the remainder of the engagement would be fought out farther up the stream. At this point Major Bornwood came to the place where the colonel was observing the field.

"How is Colonel Lyon?" was the first question of Colonel Gordon.

"He was still unconscious when I left the hill; but the doctor thinks he will come out of it in a week or two, and he has no fears for his like at present," replied the staff-officer. "If I had been in command, I should have sent the battery over here."

"I was just thinking of sending for it, and I will do so at once," said the colonel, as he wrote a note with a pencil, and sent it to Major Batterson. "The riflemen have proved to be one of the most effective arms to-day; and they are acting now as mounted men. I see that they have already begun to put in more of their work on the road."

“What force have you sent to the north, Colonel?” asked the major.

“The entire regiment; and when the battery arrives, the whole force will be on this side of the field.”

“Just before I left I received a despatch from General Buell, ordering your command to Barkville, where I believe you have already had some experience,” said the staff-officer, presenting the message to Colonel Gordon. “I think you have come to about the end of this affair, and you will be ready to march this afternoon.”

“We have not yet reached the end of this engagement,” replied the colonel with a smile.

“But you are very near it. I don't like to predict; but I am of the opinion that the enemy will retreat to the north, and may not even attempt to save their camp equipage.”

“I am afraid you are rather sanguine, Major.”

They looked the field over for some minutes, and somewhat later the battery came thundering along the road at full gallop.

CHAPTER XVII

THE FINAL RETREAT OF THE ENEMY

THE horses of the battery were covered with lather and perspiration when the command halted for orders before the colonel. They had come at a furious gallop all the way from the hills; and the distance was all of seven miles, which they must have accomplished in about half an hour. Major Batterson saw that if he was to be of any service at all on the other side of the triangle, he must move at breakneck speed, and he had done so.

“Hurry to the head of the pond, then follow the road, and as soon as you can find a chance use your guns for all they are worth,” said Colonel Gordon.

The horses had hardly time to breathe before they were again pushed to a gallop up the road taken by all the rest of the force. The Confederate column was still advancing to the north;

and the head of it appeared to have reached the stream, and the leading company had taken to the water. The colonel had followed the battery, for there was nothing for him to do at the head of the pond. He soon obtained a position where he could overlook the scene of operation by riding to the top of a small hill on the right of the road. As the commander of the enemy had concluded, he believed that plenty of fords would be found higher up. He had passed most of the companies, and the summit of the hill he had ascended was not more than fifty rods below the head of the enemy's column, the leading company of which had taken to the water, and Captain Blenks had been sent to clinch with it in a moist charge.

The riflemen, no longer seeking the cover of the trees, sat upon their horses, where they could take deliberate aim as long as the animals were at rest. Major Batterson had chosen his position well, and unlimbered his guns about half-way between the colonel on the hill and the companies in the brook; though it was large enough to entitle it to the name of a creek, or farther

north a river. The cannoneers worked in hot haste, and presently the column in the field was staggered with half a dozen shells pitched into their midst. The major in command of the battery seemed to be an expert in handling his fuses; for the shells exploded just over the heads of the cavalymen, scattering their missiles around them with the most destructive venom.

A second company had found a practicable ford farther up the stream; and the horses plunged into the water, only to be borne down by the giants of Captain Life Knox's company, with the tall Kentuckian at the head of them, where he always was in a conflict. The Confederates turned their horses under this onslaught, and he pursued them. The enemy were pygmies in the presence of the Kentuckians, and they fled at the first charge on the shore. Major Lyon ordered the bugler to sound the recall, which Life obeyed with evident reluctance. His men had not been in a fight that day, and had just got warmed up to it, he explained to Deck, when the bugle sounded. He insisted that he should have used that company up in five minutes more;

but the major suggested that he might have had a whole battalion down upon him before the job was completed.

The company upon which Captain Knox had charged in the water, perhaps moved by the example of the other, soon turned, and made their way out of the water. They were not as amphibious as the Riverlawns. The main body of the enemy had been thrown into confusion by the rapid firing of the battery, and a panic had taken possession of them. Some of the companies broke from the column, and galloped to the other side of the triangle. They were brave men, and could stand up firmly before a charge on dry land, but they had no amphibious tendencies. Major Bornwood soon joined the colonel on the hill; for he had moved more leisurely from the head of the pond.

“It looks as though your prediction had already been accomplished,” said the colonel, as the staff-officer reined in his horse at his side.

“Sooner than I expected, Colonel; you have had all the advantage on your side,” added the major, as he took out his watch. “We reached

the Buck Hill Creek at about five this morning, and it is now only half-past eight. You have made quick work of it. But the best officers and the best soldiers in the Confederate army could have done no better with all the advantage against them. In fact, it has been little better than a slaughter."

"But the enemy outnumbered our force," suggested Colonel Gordon.

"Not by more than a hundred men, or, at most, two hundred. In the first place, the enemy was surprised, and that was as good as five hundred men in your favor."

"Perhaps it was," the colonel partly acquiesced.

"Then with the artillery on the hill, and the riflemen in the woods, the enemy was in a terrible trap," added the major.

"Why didn't they charge the riflemen, and drive them out of the woods?" demanded Colonel Gordon, thinking what he should have done if he had been in command on the field.

"Because Major Batterson's guns threw them into a panic when he opened upon them."

“I think I could have brought my men out of the panic if I had been in command of one of those companies,” replied the colonel. “Then if he had charged into the woods, the major would have been compelled to cease using his guns, to save the riflemen from injury.”

“But the brook, which is almost equal in volume to the creek on the other side of the field, was in front of them,” said the major.

“The stream was of no consequence whatever; and the greenest men we have in our ranks would have counted it nothing but a frolic to swim or wade across it, even at the pond. Two companies of our men have beaten them fighting in the water. Then if I had been in command of that force, I would have mounted that hill, and charged upon the battery, even if I had sacrificed half my men,” argued the colonel, somewhat excited at what he regarded as a defence of the enemy.

“But the commander had every reason to suppose the battery was supported by infantry or cavalry, as it really was; and if you had reached the top of the hill under volleys of grape and

canister from the guns, you would have sacrificed half your men: and I doubt if you would have been justified by a court-martial in doing that," added the major with a cheerful smile, for the discussion was of the most friendly nature.

"Perhaps you are right, Major Bornwood; but if I could not fight the enemy, I would have retreated in the first of it," replied the colonel, starting his horse down the hill. "That is what the commander of the enemy is doing now; and he ought to have done it sooner. I would have got out of the scrape as quickly as a rat would leap out of a trap if it found a hole."

"I hope you will not have a chance to see what you would do in such a trap as the enemy is escaping from now. Do you intend to pursue?" asked the staff-officer.

"I think not: we have nothing further to gain from that force, unless it is to grind it up and bury it; and I shall not do that," replied Colonel Gordon. "As Major Lyon's sketch shows it, the space between the two streams is a triangle, and the enemy have retreated to the Buck

Creek side of it, and are moving north. Their camp near the apex of the figure is still as they left it."

"Of course you can capture what is left there, — the tents, the wagon-train, and the spare horses," suggested Major Bornwood.

"We have no need of anything there, for we are fully supplied with everything for a campaign; and it would take more time and trouble to bring them out than they are worth."

"Besides, the despatch I received from the general says, 'with all possible haste,'" added the staff-officer.

"We have no further business here, and we may as well move at once. I will order Major Batterson to fire a few solid shot into the camp, for the stuff would be only an encumbrance to us. But we must give our men a few hours' rest before we march; for they were on the move a good part of last night, and it is not prudent to wear them out."

Orders were immediately given to this effect; and the battery was sent to the nearest point to the camp, where the roar of its guns was

soon heard. A message was sent across the field to Lieutenant Hickman, the quartermaster, who was in charge of the wagon-train on the bank of the brook beyond the hills, to move down to the road. The majors gathered up their battalions, and marched to Grundy, where the train would join them.

The cannoneers were taking it easy in their work of destruction; and by the time the three battalions had passed it, it looked like a wreck. In a field at the side of the road near Grundy, the cooks gave the men their late breakfast, after the train reached the place. They had lunched from their haversacks early in the morning, and were not in a starving condition.

“Lieutenant Hickman, where is Colonel Lyon now?” asked Deck, as soon as the train arrived.

“We pitched a tent for him, and made the best bed in it we could. He has come to his senses, and was comfortable,” replied the quartermaster. “The doctors have contrived a litter, on which they propose to move him to the hotel in Somerset. The six riflemen sent up there to look out for the camp-guards volunteered to be

the bearers, and they must have started by this time. They cleaned out every living man that could be seen in the camp at the side of the creek; and the wounding of the colonel has been fully revenged upon those who did it."

"Not revenged," protested Deck. "The man who fired at my father did only his duty; and I am sure my father has no feeling like revenge in his heart, and I have not. I shall ride up to the hills."

All the horses were fed as soon as they were cool enough, and had finished their grain as soon as the men had done their breakfast. Deck mounted Ceph, and hastened up the path on the shore of the brook. Before he left the halting-place, most of the men were asleep, spread out on their blankets upon the ground. The major had not gone half the distance to the hill path before he met what looked like a procession, headed by the two surgeons. The litter followed next, borne by four of the riflemen, the other two mounted, and leading the horses of the others. The colonel's orderly brought up the rear. The procession halted as Dr. Farnwright saw Deck.

“How is my father, doctor?” asked the major, when he came near enough to speak to the surgeon.

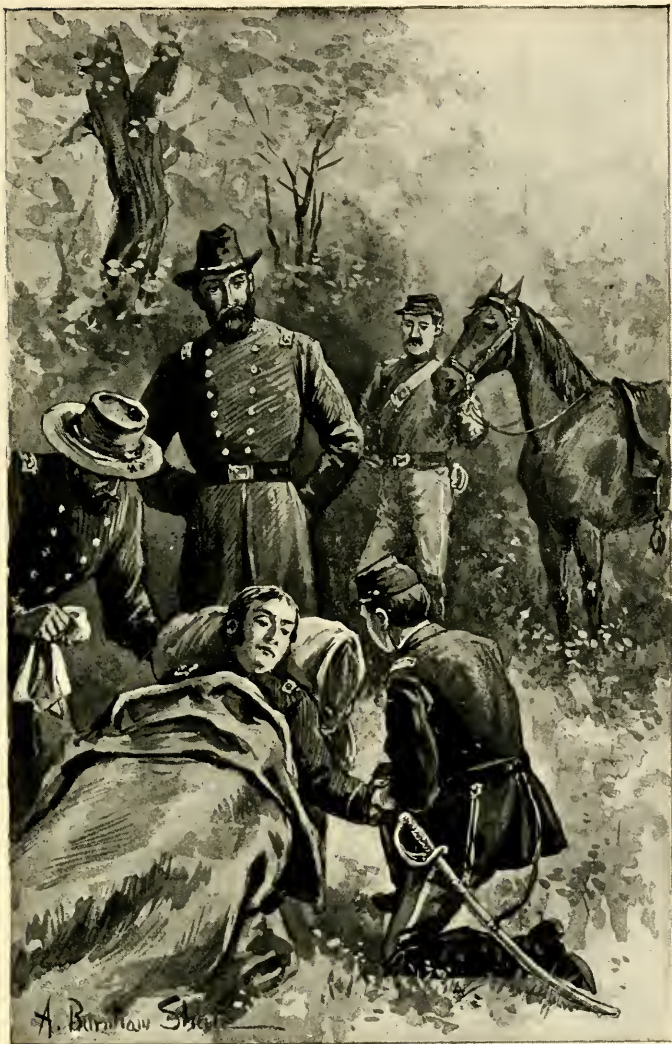
“He is quite comfortable; but I fear his injury is something more than a mere scalp wound, so that it will take time for it to heal, though I do not regard it as at all dangerous,” replied Dr. Farnwright.

“Can I speak to him?”

“Certainly; he is quite himself now. But the shock seems to leave him very weak.”

The bearers of the litter had placed their burden on the ground, and one of them told the colonel Major Lyon had come to see him. Deck dismounted; and Ceph looked at the wounded colonel as though he understood all about the case, and sympathized with the sufferer. The son kneeled at the side of his father, who reached out his hand to him, with a faint smile playing on his lips.

“How do you feel, father?” asked Deck, as he took the extended hand; and he could hardly restrain a flood of tears that crowded up for an outflow.



THE SON KNEELED AT THE SIDE OF HIS FATHER

“I am comfortable, though my head gives me considerable pain, and I feel as weak as though I had been sick a week. The doctor says I shall do very well; but it will take time for the wound to heal, for it is in a dangerous place. How goes the battle, Dexter?”

“The battle is over, and the enemy are retreating to the north,” replied Deck. “The general has ordered the command to Barkville with all possible haste, and the men are taking a rest of a few hours before we start.”

At this moment Colonel Gordon and the staff-officer rode up to the spot. They spoke to the doctor, who explained the condition of his patient, and told them they must not talk to him about the battle or the war, for the colonel was excitable on these topics. They went to the couch, and the sufferer took the hand of each. He wanted to know more about the engagement.

“Major Lyon has told you about the victory, Colonel, and you must not talk about it any more,” interposed the surgeon very decidedly. The visitors obeyed this order, for they saw that the patient was getting somewhat excited.

Dr. Farnwright gave them a hint that they had better go, and they mounted their horses and departed. Deck remained a few minutes longer, but he changed the current of the patient's thought by alluding to the plantation at Riverlawn. The surgeon soon interposed again; and Deck took his leave of his father, and the procession resumed its march. At the road two more of the riflemen were joined to the six, to relieve the bearers on the march. All of them had their horses, so that it was no great hardship to them.

The troopers were still asleep; and they were not disturbed till one o'clock, after four hours' rest. The column was formed after the best dinner that could be served on the march had been provided for the men. They were not greatly elated at the victory they had won; for there had been very little hard fighting, and most of the work had been done by the battery and the riflemen. The column marched at two o'clock.

CHAPTER XVIII

A GUERRILLA RAID FROM OVER THE RIVER

WHEN Colonel Morgan, the daring Confederate raider, made his destructive foray through Kentucky in June, 1862, he made a constant use of the telegraph, taking messages to Union officers from the wires, and sending false despatches to Federal commanders at the posts established for the protection of the State. Major Bornwood had followed his example in suggesting to Colonel Lyon the same tactics at Liberty, where Lieutenant Fronklyn had taken from the wires the message of the enemy's commander at Buck Creek, inquiring for the number of Union cavalry encamped at Liberty. The staff-officer wrote the answer that the force had marched for Greensburg at eight o'clock that evening. This reply had deceived the colonel in command, and he believed that no Union troopers were near him, and therefore neglected all precautions to repel an attack.

As Major Bornwood suggested, he should have had scouts on the roads at both sides of his camp. Doubtless there were guards in and around his camp, but they were too far removed from the approaches to the triangle to hear the careful movements of the Union force. The artillery had moved along the shore of the brook west of the hills, and had secured its position on the elevation without noise, for the guns had been moved up by hand-power. Major Lyon had followed the road to the point above the pond where he had to cross to open the engagement, leaving Captain Ripley's company in the woods on the way. Seven companies of the regiment had been posted on the flat by the brook, where they could hasten to the support of the battery if it was attacked, as the colonel believed it would be.

All these movements had been made in silence, before daylight, while the enemy were sleeping out their morning nap. The attack was therefore a perfect surprise. A volley from the carbines of Major Lyon's battalion was the first intimation the Confederates had of the approach of an enemy, who retreated as soon as they had delivered their

fire. Then the six guns of the battery poured canister into the line of the Confederates as they assembled for roll-call. It was not strange, therefore, that the day was really lost as soon as the battle opened. The enemy retreated till the danger was past, and then took the road in the direction they had chosen. They soon discovered that their formidable enemy had left the ground. A portion of the command returned to the camp, and gathered up the remains of their tents and train, and then marched to Rockcastle. Here two other regiments of cavalry joined them, and the commander of the defeated force, being the senior in rank of the other two, had the charge of all four regiments; and later the brigade appeared at Munfordville, which was on the road General Bragg had selected for his march to Louisville.

The Union force, now under the command of Colonel Gordon, marched from the vicinity of Grundy to Somerset, which the bearers of Colonel Lyon's litter had reached. The hotel-keeper, like the postmaster, was a Union man; and he furnished the best accommodations in his house for the patient. Dr. Farnwright had gone with him,

while his assistant had been sent to the hospital in the woods to look after the few men who had been wounded in the action. Two of the riflemen had been killed, and seven men of Captain Abbey's company had been wounded, two of them dangerously, in the fight in the brook. The worst cases were sent to Somerset by the assistant surgeon, and the others insisted upon joining their companies. On the arrival of the column at the hotel in Somerset, the eight bearers of the litter were found in front of the hotel, where they had taken their breakfast, and now joined their company.

Major Lyon went in to see his father again, and they bade each other an affectionate adieu. Captain Artie Lyon also visited him; and though he was only an adopted son, he was as kindly received as Deck had been, and the parting was just as tender. Dr. Farnwright followed Deck out into the hall, and told him that he had met a skilful physician and surgeon whose acquaintance he had made on his former visit to the town. He had taken him to see the patient, and given him a full account of his condition. He was to leave

the wounded colonel in charge of this doctor, assured that he would do all that was needed to effect his cure.

Deck took his place on the flank of the regiment, and the march was resumed. It was twenty-five miles to Jamestown; and they reached this town at sundown, and encamped in a field. The old Riverlawn battalion had been here before, and the first lieutenant of Captain Ripley's company had been the keeper of the county jail here, — for the town was the capital of Russell County, — and the officers were acquainted with many persons. At the hotel Deck had first met General Woodbine, on whose staff he had served at the battle of Pittsburg Landing and the operations in front of Corinth. The field-officers camped at the hotel; but they made no late hours of the evening, for they had lost more sleep than the privates. The entire command made a long night of it.

Mindful of the general's order to move with all possible haste, the men were called at daylight, after from eight to ten hours' sleep, had an early breakfast, and the column moved for Millersville, ten miles distant, and arrived there at nine

o'clock in the forenoon. It was not much of a town, little more than a post-office; but it was a rich farming district, and had been a fruitful field for the raiders and guerillas from Tennessee. It was in this vicinity that Deck, as a "lieutenant at eighteen," had beaten and captured a gang of guerillas plundering the mansion of a brother of Colonel Halliburn, the guardian of Grace Morgan, who was engaged to Lieutenant Milton.

The first person they met as they approached the hamlet was Colonel Halliburn, the captain of the Home Guards raised in the vicinity, of which Captain Ripley's company formed a part. He was on horseback, riding at full gallop. He had served with his command at Columbia with the Riverlawns, and taken part in the engagement there.

"Good-morning, Captain Halliburn," said Colonel Gordon, using the title the colonel preferred, as that of his actual rank. "You seem to be in a hurry."

"I am in a hurry; for our village is threatened by a guerilla force of a thousand men or more, as reported, who have been ravaging the country

around since yesterday noon. We have had no raids since you were here before; but the invasion of the State by the armies of Bragg and Kirby Smith has brought the guerillas down upon us again. I'm glad you have come, in reply to my telegram," replied Captain Halliburn.

"I have received no telegram from you," added the colonel.

"I sent one last night by the way of Liberty, for I did not know where you had gone from there."

"We left there night before last. We arrested the postmaster, who was also the telegraph operator; for we found that he was a Secessionist, and was playing into the hands of the enemy. We had to discharge him when we left the town, and he would not have sent your message to the injury of the guerillas, for he is a traitor. It did not get beyond his office."

"Then, how do you happen to be here?" asked the captain.

"We are ordered to Barkville, and we are on our way there."

"That is fortunate for us, for these raiders will

clean out the whole country around us. But where is Colonel Lyon?" asked the commander of the Home Guard, as he looked about him among the officers where the colonel had halted the regiment.

"Unhappily the colonel was wounded at an engagement we had on Buck Creek yesterday, and we had to leave him at Somerset."

"I am sorry to hear such news of him; for he is a brave and skilful officer, and the country needs such men. Is he dangerously wounded?"

"No; the doctors think he will recover in the course of two weeks. But where are the guerrillas, Captain?"

"They swam the river with their horses at Cuffy's Ferry, cleaned out Rock House, and plundered the farms near it yesterday afternoon, and went into camp at night on the creek. They were not five miles from here an hour ago, for I have scouts out watching their movements. They have plundered two or three farms this morning, carrying off all the stock and grain, and killed one man who would not tell the leader where his money was concealed."

“Then, I suppose they will come to this village by the road from the Cumberland River,” added Colonel Gordon, who was familiar with the locality, having fought in the battle of Mill Spring and in several skirmishes in the vicinity.

“Probably most of them will come that way; but some will approach over the fields, where they have been plundering the farms. You can see the houses which will doubtless be visited and plundered before noon to-day, if we do not check them. I have posted the Home Guard, all mounted and armed with sabres and pistols, behind that hill; for the house near it is likely to be the next one visited.”

But the captain's programme of the anticipated movements of the guerillas did not prove to be correct; for a scout came to the village, and reported that the gang were moving up the road.

“How far off are they?” asked the captain.

“About three miles; I ran my horse all the way back to give you this information,” replied the scout, and his steed looked as though he told the truth in regard to his speed.

“You have done well, Corry. I thought your

place would be the one they would ravage next; and I have posted the Home Guard behind that hill, half a mile this side of it. We have a strong force here now, and we shall need you just now. Will you ride over to that hill, and tell Lieutenant Gamble to move his force over to the road, cross it, and conceal his men in the woods there?"

"I will do so, Captain," replied Corry, as he hastened to the hill indicated.

"Tell the lieutenant he will find some of his friends there; for I shall post Captain Ripley's company there," added Colonel Gordon.

Corry hurried away to execute his mission, and the commander of the force proceeded to make his disposition of his companies. Captain Halli-burn conducted him to the top of the highest hill in the vicinity, the summit of which commanded a view of the greater portion of the country between the village and the Cumberland River. It was a gradual descent all the way to the great stream, though there were a considerable number of hills or elevations from fifty to a hundred feet high. On the right of the road by which the regiment had approached the village the face of

the region was quite uneven, though the hill the colonel and the captain had ascended was the highest in sight, but not more than two hundred and fifty feet high.

"This is a good location for a fight," said the colonel as he looked over the region beneath him.

"I suppose it is if you have force enough to make a good use of it," replied Captain Halburn. "I have less than a hundred men in the Home Guard of this vicinity, made up from the men of this little village, and from the farms for ten miles and more around it; I don't exactly desire a fight with ten times my strength."

"I should say not!" added the colonel, with a smile. "That is rather too great odds, for you say they consist of a thousand men."

"That is what my scouts reported to me, but there may not be more than half that number. I have not seen them, for it has taken all my time since yesterday noon to drum up what men I have to meet them. I missed Ripley and his men more than I can describe."

"But we have them here now, and I have

no doubt they will render as good service as they did at Columbia and Buck Creek. How did you discover their approach?"

"The man that lives in the farthest house you see in the southwest rode over here, and told me they were crossing the river. Some of them were in boats, leading their horses, but most of the men were swimming them. Bailey said he saw three of them carried down the river, and he thought they were drowned."

"Probably his estimate of the number was exaggerated, as is very apt to be the case," said Colonel Gordon, as he took a block of paper from his pocket, and began to write. "What do you call that place where the two roads meet, one of them leading down to the river?"

"That is called Grimsby's Corner; and this village had that name till about ten years ago, when it received its present name, after the biggest man in the place."

"There is a hill near it: has that a name?"

"It is commonly called Grimsby Hill when it is called by any name."

The colonel had made a sketch of the region

around him. He wrote the name of the hill against it, and then put a capital B in the circle he had made for the hill; for he had no time to draw it as mountains are represented on maps.

“Has this hill a name?”

“Win Milton always called it Grace Hill, after the lady he brought over here after her guardian’s house was sacked by guerillas, an occasion you must remember.”

“I remember it very well; but Major Lyon was the hero of that affair.”

The colonel wrote the name of the hill, and against it some letters which meant “Truman’s battalion,” indicating that he was to occupy it on the roadside, fifty feet above it. Then he called three orderly sergeants he had directed to follow him up the hill. He then wrote three notes on the block, and sent them to the three majors. He wrote a fourth, which the captain delivered to Major Batterson. He remained on the hill.

CHAPTER XIX

GRACE MORGAN AND THE GUERILLA

CORRY the scout, who lived in the house nearest to the hill behind which the Home Guard had been posted by Captain Halliburn, had been sent with a message to Lieutenant Gamble to take the company to the woods at the side of the road.

“Can I go into the house while I’m over there, Captain?” asked the scout. “My little boy is very sick to-day, and I want to see how he is. Grace Morgan went over to help my wife take care of him this morning; and I reckon she will want to get home before the guerillas get there, if they should take a notion to go to my house first.”

“Certainly you can go to your house,” replied the captain. “If he is very sick, you can stay at home, for we have plenty of men now.”

“I reckon my wife will be scared half to death,

and Grace will want to go home if there is going to be a row over that way," answered Corry as he dashed off to do his errand.

Colonel Gordon, as he seated himself on a rock at the summit of the hill, recalled this conversation. He saw the scout hastening at full gallop to the position of the Home Guard. The battery was hastening to Grimsby Hill, in obedience to the order sent to Major Batterson; and the battalions of Major Belthorpe and Major Truman were moving to the rear of Grace Hill, as directed in the colonel's note to their commanders. The attentive observer on the hill was surveying every portion of the country spread out before him. He was sorry that the trouble in Millersville came at just this time; for he was anxious to obey the order of the general to use all possible haste on his march to Barkville, and the affair might delay him a longer time than he cared to spare. But he felt that it was his duty to rid the locality of the invading guerillas; for they seemed to be almost swarming in this part of the State, in addition to the raiding parties who were picking up supplies for the Confederate

army. Besides, the staff-officer representing the general was still with him, and had approved his decision to defend the village.

Before Corry could reach the hill, Colonel Gordon saw a woman leave the house of the scout. For some reason which the observer could not understand, she did not take the most direct way across the fields to the house of Captain Halburn, but went to the south of the hill, and then directed her steps to the road by which the guerillas were said to be approaching. There was a cart-path across the fields, which the colonel could see with the aid of his glass; and the woman was following this, which appeared to be used by Corry's and another house half-way from it to the road. After what the scout had said about his sick child, the observer on the hill had no doubt that she was Grace Morgan. Milton had met her at his father's house on his way to Somerset, and she had returned from her visit there.

The artillery and the cavalry were now all in the positions assigned to them. Major Bornwood had taken a lunch from his haversack; for he was

provided with all the accoutrements of a soldier in the field, and armed with a sabre and a brace of revolvers, though he carried no carbine. He was climbing the hill to join the colonel, where he could see the operations in the field, or on the road to the river, which could not be much longer delayed. He reached the top of the hill; and after the two officers had passed "the time of day," the colonel explained in what manner he had disposed of his force, and pointed out the locations of the several battalions and the battery, and stated that the enemy had been reported by a scout as coming up the road.

Everything was as silent as though it had been midnight instead of ten o'clock in the forenoon. Of course the news of the arrival of the Union force had been circulated in the village, the most of which lay at the side of the road near Grimsby Hill, and had reached the houses for a mile or more around it. Care had been taken that the guerillas should not be apprised of the presence of the comparatively heavy force that were to give them a reception.

"There is a woman crossing that field," said the

staff-officer, as he discovered her moving with hasty steps along the cart-path.

“That is Grace Morgan,” replied the colonel.

“Who is Grace Morgan?” asked the major; and the commander told him all about her, including her relations with the second lieutenant of the fourth company, and the staff-officer was very much interested in the story.

At the end of the cart-path, there was an opening in the fence into the road; and Grace was hurrying her steps to this point. She had just passed Perry's house, the nearer of the two on the field-road to the River Road, as it was called, when a mounted man was discovered, through the glass of the colonel, approaching the village. He wore no uniform, and the observer had no doubt he was a scout sent forward by the marauders to feel the way for the main body. He turned into the opening, and halted to make a survey of the situation. Unfortunately Grace was included in the circle of his vision, and he did not appear to see anything else. The absolute silence which pervaded the region assured him that he was safe from attack, and he could

not help seeing that Grace was a very pretty girl. The colonel could observe them both so far as their movements were concerned, but of course he could not comprehend what had passed or might pass between them.

As soon as she saw him she understood that he was not one of the Home Guard, though the members wore no uniform. She turned, and attempted to run to Perry's house.

The horseman put spurs to his steed, and overtook her in a moment, and reined in before her. It was not strange that she was very much alarmed; and her fright seemed to paralyze her so that she had not the strength to escape from him. He dropped from his horse, and seized her by the arm. She screamed; but there was no one near enough to render any assistance, for Perry was in the Home Guard at the hill. The ruffian dragged her towards his horse; and, still holding her with one hand, he leaped on the back of his steed. The animal was one of that sort that never go when they can help it, and stood perfectly still.

By this time the Home Guard were coming out

from behind the hill. The men were all mounted on good horses, and they galloped into the field-road from Corry's house. Grace saw them, and screamed again. The ruffian saw them also, and doubtless feared that he should lose his prize. He was a strong and agile fellow; and seizing the girl by the other arm, he dragged her upon his horse in front of him. With his right arm around her, he grasped his reins with the other, and spurred his horse forward, guiding him towards the opening to the road.

The wood on the opposite side was already occupied by the riflemen, nearly as far down as the gateway on the other side of the road. It was not a dense forest, and the trees were rather sparsely scattered through it. The land was the property of Captain Halliburn; and in peaceful times it was a good investment, for the black-walnut lumber was shipped down the river. The trees appeared to have been thinned out when young, to increase their growth, so that mounted men could move with tolerable facility among them. In this wood Major Lyon's battalion had been stationed in the rear of the riflemen. Deck,

with Captain Artie Lyon at his side, had ridden down beyond the position of the riflemen, in order to obtain the first knowledge of the approach of the enemy. They were nearly opposite the gateway when the ruffian, with Grace still struggling in his strong grasp, passed through it. Deck was gazing down the road, looking for the enemy, and Artie was the first to see the ruffian as he approached the opening.

“What’s that?” he exclaimed. “A man carrying off a woman!”

“That’s Grace Morgan!” ejaculated the major, as he instantly recognized the maiden; for he had seen her at the house of Milton’s father on the way to Somerset. “Send one of those riflemen for Lieutenant Milton!” he added, as he dashed out into the road; for there was no fence to impede him.

But the ruffian had passed the gateway before him. His steed was no match for Ceph; and in a few moments Deck passed him, wheeled his horse, and faced him. A mile farther down the straight road he could see the head of the enemy’s column moving slowly towards the village.

“Save me, Major Lyon!” cried the terrified maiden when she saw him.

“Release the lady, you villain!” shouted Deck, as savagely as though he had been a bandit himself, just as Captain Artie joined him.

The guerilla looked at him, and made no attempt to escape, even when he saw the two officers with drawn sabres in front of him. He was a bold and daring fellow, and evidently knew no such thing as fear. He had a musket slung over his shoulders; but it was a useless weapon to him as long as he held his prize. On the other hand, Deck and Artie could do nothing without the danger of injuring Grace.

“What be you gwine to do about it, Yanks?” demanded the ruffian, after he had looked his assailants over a moment with a coolness that would have been admirable in a better cause. “This gal’s my prize, and I’m gwine to kerry her over inter Tennessee in spite o’ any young cubs like you uns. Do you see them men riding up the road yender? I b’long to that crowd, an’ you uns better make yoursel’s skeerce ’fore they git here.”



"WHAT BE YOU GWINE TO DO ABOUT IT?"

“This is an outrage, and it is a disgrace to any soldier to be guilty of it,” replied Deck, as he saw the steed of Win Milton bounding like a rocket out of the woods.

“I ain’t no soldier; we uns fight on our own hook.”

“Save me, Major!” gasped Grace, who seemed to think that the two officers could assist her.

“You needn’t have said you were no soldier, for that was plain enough before,” added Deck, who wished to occupy the attention of the ruffian till Milton reached the road; but there was no need for him to say anything more, for the lieutenant dashed into the road, and in a moment more he had reached the scene of the parley, just as the guerilla began to give something more of his argument.

Milton evidently understood the situation at a glance, as he saw the two officers confronting the ruffian. Artie had told the rifleman who carried his message, that Grace Morgan had been captured by a man, who was carrying her off. The lieutenant was mounted for the fight; and he did not wait to hear any more, but bounded away through the

trees as fast as his spirited horse could carry him. Deck was unable to imagine what he could do when he saw him rein up his steed, and leap from his saddle to the ground; for he was in as much danger of injuring Grace as the major and the captain had been. He unhooked his sabre, and dropped it upon the ground as though he had no use for it. With a tremendous spring, for he was an athlete, he vaulted upon the hips of the ruffian's horse, and clutched him by the throat. He drew back the villain's head, and choked him till he could hear the loud rattle in his throat.

The guerilla struggled with all his might to reach his assailant behind him, and this movement released Grace from his grasp. Deck dismounted, and rushed to her assistance, lifting her to the ground. The maiden was saved by this prompt action on the part of the lieutenant; and when he saw her in the arms of the major, he pitched the ruffian to the ground, and drawing his revolver, put a bullet through his brain.

“Are you hurt, Grace?” asked the lieutenant tenderly, as he took one of her hands.

“I feel very sore from the treatment I have re-

ceived, but I am not badly injured. I have been frightened almost to death," replied she in gasping tones; and it was evident that her nervous system had been terribly shaken by the rough usage of the ruffian.

"But the enemy are coming," interposed Major Lyon, "and we must be ready for them."

"You have leave of absence to go home with her, Lieutenant Milton," added Captain Artie.

"Thank you, Captain; I would not leave for anything short of this," replied Milton, as he picked up his sabre, hooked it in place, and then lifted Grace to the saddle of his horse; and it was not the first time she had ridden on a man's saddle, as Deck knew.

She held on at the holsters, and Milton led the horse. She declared that she felt much better by the time they reached the house of Captain Halliburn; and when she went in, she said he might return to his company. He sent Dr. Barlow to her, and then hastened down the road till he saw the advancing enemy, and then, like the negro, he "took to the woods," and soon reached Captain Artie's company.

Colonel Gordon and Major Bornwood had witnessed the capture of Grace by the guerilla, and had observed the whole affair with their field-glasses.

“Milton ought to be promoted for that; but he will marry the girl, and that will make it all right,” said the colonel.

“I held my breath with anxiety when I saw the two officers in front of the scoundrel, unable to do anything for fear of harming the girl; and when the lieutenant had the fellow by the throat, I knew he would not let go, and I wanted to yell with delight,” added the staff-officer. “But the enemy have nearly reached the position of the riflemen, and there will be ‘music’ very soon. The guerilla in command is at the head of his troop.”

A moment later the chief dropped from his saddle.

CHAPTER XX

TARDY MOVEMENTS OF THE ENEMY

“CAPTAIN GRINDERS has fallen!” exclaimed several riders in the front rank of the gang, as they halted, and thus caused the stoppage of the whole body.

The leader of the guerillas dropped upon the ground, and his horse moved on, leaving him there; but Captain Grinders did not move again. The front rank talked the matter over among themselves.

“You are captain now, Pardell,” said one of them, as a man rode forward from the left flank of the column. “What are you going to do now? We are all sworn to obey orders, and of course we shall do so. I didn’t believe in coming up to the village by the road, when the fields are open all the way; but I didn’t say anything.”

“Captain Grinders is killed, and of course the command falls to me,” replied Pardell. “What

am I going to do? I am going to put this thing through, Squire Vintner. I don't see any Home Guards around here, though I heard they had about a hundred in the company before we left home. I suppose some of them are hid in this wood, and mean to shoot us down as we go along. I was not in favor of coming up by the road any more than you were, Squire; but I obey orders, though I told Captain Grinders what I thought: and now he is the first to pay for it, for not minding what I said."

The riflemen evidently believed in fair play; and the next one to drop was Captain Pardell, losing his life before he could enjoy his accidental promotion. The commander of the riflemen had fired at both the captain and his successor; for the latter had come to the front, and disturbed his arrangement. The leaders had fallen; but the four men in the front rank still kept their places, facing the hill where the colonel and the staff-officer were observing them.

The rider on the right of the rank dropped as the others had, for most of these men could split a bullet on a knife as far as he could see the blade.

Six men had already fallen. Another man had come forward to take the command, probably the second lieutenant; but he prudently refrained from taking his place at the head of the column.

“All our front rank have been killed, Summers!” exclaimed some one in the ranks. “We can’t stand this thing; we did not come over to make a graveyard, or to fill one up. Take us out of this road before we are all killed!”

“Out of the road!” shouted half a dozen others.

“The Home Guard are in that wood behind the trees!” shouted another.

“March us into the woods, and we will soon clean them out!” said one who was certainly brave in speech. “Do something, or we shall soon all be a collection of corpses.”

“Into the woods!” yelled half a dozen more.

“Into the fields!” cried some more.

“If you will stop your yelling, I will do something,” replied Captain Summers, as he had apparently become by the fall of his two superior officers.

“Where is the commander-in-chief? He ought to be here,” shouted another of the unruly gang.

“There goes another!” exclaimed one in what was now the front rank of the company, as the man on the right dropped from his saddle.

The other three could stand it no longer, and they wheeled their horses, ran them back to the gateway, and then entered the field.

“Attention, company!” shouted Captain Summers. “Left wheel, march!”

The men were ready enough to move from the place where so many of the company had fallen, and the officer countermarched them; but they wheeled from where they were standing into the column as the rear came up with them, for none of them wanted to go near the place where sure death seemed to be their fate. The captain marched as far as the gateway, and there he saw approaching him the personage who had been dignified as the commander-in-chief. When he came up to the spot where he stood, the captain addressed him as “Colonel Cameron.” He was a tall and rather corpulent man, with a very

red face. He was riding very slowly, as though a gallop did not agree with his constitution.

“What are you doing, Lieutenant Summers?”

“I am in command of the first company, for Grinders and Pardell have both fallen at the head of the column; and all the rest of us would have gone down, too, if I had not led them way,” replied Captain Summers; for it was an oath-bound crowd, as it was afterwards learned from a prisoner who was about to die, and one of the rules was, that when an officer fell, the one who succeeded him should take his rank.

“You are not obeying my order, as you are sworn to do, Captain Summers,” stormed the colonel.

“My men were deserting the ranks, as they had sworn not to do, and I could not help myself, sworn or not. If you go fifty rods farther on this road, Colonel Cameron, you will want your coffin as soon as you get there.”

“The commander of a company is not necessarily required to march at the head of his column,” replied the colonel, somewhat subdued, perhaps by the mention of the coffin he might

soon need. "I don't understand this thing. Where are the enemy that have done all this mischief?"

"They are hidden behind the trees. You know about the Home Guard of this vicinity; I suppose they are all in those woods. They are considered the best riflemen in the State, and they bring down every man that comes in front of them. Captain Grinders chose to reach the village by the road, and the men are grumbling because we did not come by the fields."

"I ordered him to come by the road," said the colonel. "Why didn't you attack the Home Guard in the woods?"

"It is sure death to go near them," replied Captain Summers.

He had hardly spoken the words before several of the company fell. It was evident that Captain Ripley had moved his command farther down the gentle declivity, and had not obtained as good a position as before, for two who had been hit were not killed.

"I will attack the Home Guard in the woods, if you say so, Colonel," added the captain.

“Attack them at once, then,” added the commander. “We have a force of five companies, with a hundred men in each: are we to be sent over the river with nothing to show for our visit because there is a Home Guard here? Do your duty as you have sworn to do it!”

“I have and will do my duty. I want only my own company.”

“That is all you will get, anyhow,” replied Colonel Cameron.

“Attention, company!” commanded the captain. “Forward, guide right, march!” and it was evident enough to those within hearing that he was angry at the words of his superior, as he had good reason to be.

He was prudent enough to keep on the right flank of his company, which he sent across the road, and then marched on the edge of the woods till he came to a fence, below which was a farm. Keeping on the upper side of it, he followed it some distance, and then wheeled to the left. Captain Ripley sent Lieutenant Butters with about half the company down the gentle declivity to attend to the enemy who had left the road.

There was a cart-path extending through the woods parallel to the highway; and Captain Summers continued on his course by the fence till he came to it, and then wheeled to the left into it. He kept on the right of his column himself, for his colonel had told him that it was not necessary to march at the head of it. Butters had sent a scout down this path to ascertain the position of the enemy in the woods. In a few minutes he came back at full gallop, and informed the lieutenant that the force had taken the wagon-track through the woods.

Major Lyon, whose battalion had been stationed in the rear of the riflemen, had followed the detachment, and learned, when the scout returned, that the company of Captain Summers was moving up the wood-road. He did not wait to witness the effect of the fire upon it, but hastened to his battalion in the rear, where he ordered the third and fourth companies, under Captain Richland and Captain Artie, to follow him as silently as possible. The men wondered if it was to be another Buck Creek action; for they followed the lead of the major till they came to a brook, running south

into the river. Then he turned to the right, and kept near the brook till he came to the fence which bounded the farmer's land. Following it, he came to the wood-road where Captain Summers had gone. He halted the companies here, and they were placed as he directed.

“That company of guerillas will come back here within fifteen minutes,” said the major, when he had called the two captains to him. “The riflemen, or one-half of them, are posted where they can open upon them. Each of them is sure to bring down the one he fires at, and that will soon make a panic among them, as it did in the main road. They will flee in this direction, for they cannot go in any other. Then you must charge upon them, and not let them escape. If they attempt to cut through the woods to the brook we followed, you must head them off. As the senior officer here, Captain Richland, I leave it all to your good judgment and discretion.”

“I will do the best I can, Major Lyon. How many men will be opposed to us?”

“One company, about a hundred men, I suppose,” replied Deck.

“Then I will hand all there are left of them over to you in the course of the forenoon,” replied Captain Richland, as Deck galloped off by the way he had come.

He had not gone half the distance back to the position of the other two companies of his command when he began to hear the crack of the rifles in the direction of the road. The work for which he had prepared had begun; and he hastened back to the point from which he had come, from which he could better see the operations on the field. But except the reports of the rifles, there was not a sound to be heard that indicated a decisive engagement. Though Colonel Gordon had not given him the plan of the action, he understood very well from the disposition of the force what it would be.

Whether the enemy approached the village by the road or the fields, the battery would open fire upon the column. Major Batterson had kept his guns on the side of the hill nearest to the road; but they could be moved to the summit of the elevation, where they could be turned to any desired point. Deck thought six charges of can-

ister or six shells would create a panic in the four companies outside of the woods. The major moved about till he obtained a position where he could see the enemy. The guerilla battalion was still in the road, and did not advance at all, so that Captain Ripley and his men were having an intermission in their work, though they did not need or desire it. Colonel Cameron, as the riflemen had reported his name, could be seen; and he appeared to be in consultation with his four captains. But the council of war seemed to disagree; in fact, they appeared to be in a row. Of course they all knew that two officers had been killed by the sharpshooters; and they still believed them to be members of the Home Guard, whose reputation as dead shots, before Captain Ripley joined the regiment, was spread far and wide.

“They are in a regular muss,” said Captain Abbey, who was at the major’s side.

“That is what has kept them occupied so long. I wonder if they expect us to wait all day for them to settle it,” added Deck facetiously. “Perhaps we shall have to settle it for them by an

attack. I think I should enjoy charging into that column."

"I know the men would enjoy it, for the affair moves altogether too slow for them," added Captain Abbey.

"I wonder how the colonel's patience holds out, for he hasn't a great stock of it in an affair of this kind," said Deck, as he directed his field-glass to the summit of Grace Hill. "He is still there, and it is a lazy time for him."

"I think the enemy are ready to make a move," added the captain.

Deck looked down the road, and saw that the troopers were pulling down a section of the fence below the gateway.

CHAPTER XXI

THE CAPTURE OF THE FIRST GUERILLAS

WHY the guerillas deemed it necessary to remove a portion of the fence was not apparent to the two military observers in the woods; for they were formed by fours in the road, and the gateway was wide enough to permit their passage without any difficulty. The line of the riflemen extended from just above the opening, and it did not reach down to the right of the column where it remained after the departure of Captain Summers's company.

"It seems to me they are taking a great deal of needless trouble, when there is an opening wide enough for them," said Captain Abbey.

"I think the reason why they are doing it is plain enough," replied Major Lyon.

"I don't see it."

"The head of the column is out of the reach of the bullets of the riflemen, at least for accurate

firing; not on account of the distance, but the trees obstruct their aim so far down the road," Deck explained. "The colonel, as they call him, is in a safe place just now, and the sharpshooters could bring them down as they turned in at the gateway."

"I see now," answered the captain. "The commander of the battalion evidently intends to take proper care of himself, for he has not yet ventured above the opening into the fields."

"But in his next movement he is likely to "jump out of the frying-pan into the fire," added Deck.

Half a dozen of the guerillas had dismounted, and were taking down two lengths of rail fence. Doubtless the colonel intended to have his command dash at full gallop diagonally across the fields, and strike the village in the rear. The Home Guards were in the woods, and probably he believed he could easily overwhelm them if they would come out from cover. But a surprise was in store for him. Captain Ripley had kept the run of the movements of the enemy; and when the men began to remove the fence, he

comprehended the intention, and marched his men from the covert of the trees out into the road.

He placed them at once where they could see the enemy; and then, without the delay of a moment, he raised his rifle, and fired at the officer who was overlooking the men at work on the fence. He had no shoulder-straps, or other indication of his rank, and probably he was nothing but a sergeant; but whatever he was, he suddenly fell over backwards, badly wounded.

By this time the shouts of an officer farther in the rear were heard; the whole company unslung their muskets, spurred their horses forward, and dashed into the field through the opening which had been made in the fence, though the work had not yet been completed. But not half the company had been able to get through, for the men and horses had blocked the narrow opening made in the fence. The captain of the company was on the left flank, where the mounted men were between him and the riflemen. He hurried his command forward, and the lieutenant was leading the rest of the company into the field as fast as he could

get his men through the opening. An obstinate post prevented the squad removing the fence, and the crowd pressing upon them prevented them from completing their work.

The captain of the company was a gallant fellow, though he was reasonably prudent; for it was sure death for him to present himself at the head of his command. He urged his men forward till he could plainly see the riflemen; and then he wheeled them into line, and ordered them to fire at will, being careful to take good aim. But they did not fire at will, but nearly all at the same time, delivering a rattling volley, which killed one of the sharpshooters, and wounded two more; but three of the enemy had fallen before the fire from the road.

Captain Ripley was an elderly man of sixty, and was less reckless than a younger officer might have been; and he ordered his men to fall back into the woods, where they had been before. He was in no hurry about it, for he knew that the guerillas would have to load their pieces before they could fire again. But the rest of the company, as they came forward, delivered a scattering

fire ; but they were not riflemen, and were armed with a variety of very poor weapons, and the riflemen were safely moved from the road.

Major Lyon watched these operations with great interest, and he would have been glad to charge with his two companies upon the enemy in the field ; but this was not allowable, for it would interfere with the colonel's evident plan for the battle. Captain Ripley resumed his practice as soon as his men had gained the covert of the trees. The guerillas were still in line, and the company was now filled by the return of the rest of the command. The chief rifleman had resumed his usual tactics, but with an improvement upon them ; for he had passed half of his men, or twenty-five in number, over to Lieutenant Blount, placing them below his own position, so that their rifles could cover the left of the enemy's line.

So many of the men fell before the deadly rifle-shots that the enemy were appalled by the swift destruction that awaited them, and the left of the line broke. The right followed the example of the left, till the whole company were in full retreat towards the hill near Corry's house.

Captain Halliburn, after he had seen the Home Guards marched into the woods, had ascended Grace Hill, to learn what the colonel thought of the progress of the action. The two officers there had observed with great interest the operations of Captain Ripley in the road; but could not see in the woods, and knew nothing of what Captain Summers was doing there, though they had seen his company march in behind the trees at the fence. Captain Halliburn had just come from that locality. There was no work for the Home Guards, and Major Lyon had told him that there was not likely to be any; but they soon had an occupation, for events had moved with greater rapidity in the woods road than Deck had anticipated.

Captain Summers, keeping on the right flank of his company, had marched confidently up the woody avenue. He had ordered his men to unslung their muskets, and be in readiness to pour a volley into the rear of the line of riflemen; and he was confident that he could drive them from their chosen position, where they were making terrible havoc among the guerillas in the highway.

Lieutenant Butters had formed his line in the woods, so that every one of his force had a tree for a rest and a protection from the approaching enemy. None of the riflemen were mounted, and their horses were secured some distance in the rear of Major Lyon's force.

The first platoon of the rifle company, which was the command of Butters, soon heard the tramp of horses' feet in the road below them. Butters looked for the captain of the company as it approached; but he was on the farther side of his troop, and he could not find him. He was obliged to content himself by taking the man on the right of the first rank.

Even nerves of steel could not have sustained the near and absolute certainty of death; but the right-hand man fell before they decided to escape their doom. The other three wheeled out of the rank to the right, and fled into the woods. The third rank then were the front of the column. They saw the open grave before them, and fled after the others. In less than another minute the whole company were in a panic, and were fleeing into the shelter of the trees.

Captain Summers saw his command break; he drew his sabre, and threatened to cut his men down if they did not return to the ranks. He made several passes at them; but a couple of them pointed their muskets at him, and assured him they would fire if he did not sheathe his sabre.

“Cowards!” shouted he derisively. “You have sworn to obey your officer, but now you refuse, and run like poltroons from your duty!”

“Cowards!” yelled one of them. “Who is the coward that keeps himself behind his men, while they are shot down in front of him? It was an easy thing for you, Captain Summers, to keep over on the right flank, where nothing could harm you, and then call us cowards. You are the coward! If you had been near the front, where you belonged, you would have been a dead man long before this time. Give us a fair show, and we will stand by you as we have sworn to do.”

“We are beaten,” replied the captain. “It is no use for us to quarrel about it. Fall back out of the reach of the rifle-balls, and I will lead you to the road again, where Colonel Cameron

will march you into the open fields, out of the reach of the riflemen who are skulking behind the trees."

"That looks more like the fair thing, and we are ready to obey orders," replied the spokesman of the men. "What do you say, fellows?"

"We are all ready to do our duty if we have fair play," replied another; and something like a faint cheer followed.

Captain Summers was still in the wood-road, though out of the reach of the bullets. He ordered the troopers to turn square around, and then marched them in the direction of the fence, the men in the woods returning to the ranks as the rest moved forward. As they came to the end of the road, Captain Richland's company fell upon the head of the column, and Captain Artie's, the two platoons of which had been concealed among the trees on each side, charged upon the flanks. Both captains were at the head of their commands, and the onslaught was as furious as the Riverlawns were in the habit of delivering. Captain Summers had placed himself at the head of his column. The men had unslung their muskets

in order to fire into the riflemen. They had sabres.

“Throw away your muskets!” shouted the captain, who had drawn his sabre, and he ordered his men to do the same.

They obeyed these orders as quickly as possible in the confusion; but the Riverlawns, two to their one, had overwhelmed them at the onslaught. The rest of the fight was likely to be a slaughter. Captain Richland had already disabled the commander, and he was trying to escape. The attack had been a perfect surprise, and the enemy were in a panic, and were calling for quarter.

“Do you surrender?” demanded Captain Richland of the wounded captain.

“We are beaten, and I can do nothing else,” faintly replied the wounded commander. “I surrender on condition that we be allowed to retire from the field with our horses and our arms.”

“No conditions!” exclaimed the captain of the third company. “Shall the fight continue?”

“No!” protested Captain Summers earnestly. “It would be murder. Call off your men!”

The bugler sounded the recall; and the River-lawns fell back, completely surrounding the enemy. The first sergeant of the company was required to form the command at the end of the road, which was done without any grumbling on the part of the vanquished. With Captain Richland's company in the advance, and Captain Artie's in the rear, the prisoners were conducted to the portion of the woods occupied by Major Lyon's battalion. Captain Halliburn and the Home Guard were there, and the major turned the prisoners over to the local military. They were disarmed, their horses picketed, and a guard placed around them.

"I think I will go up the hill and see the colonel, and I will report this affair to him," said Captain Halliburn, as he mounted his horse.

"Tell him we are all right down here," said Deck, as he started for the highway to see what progress had been made by the enemy in taking a position in the fields.

The affair in the woods with Captain Summers's command had occurred even before the squad began to move the portion of the fence, and the pris-

oners had been disarmed before it was completed. When Deck reached the edge of the woods, he found that the entire battalion were already through the opening, and were moving to the point near the hill. Then the battery opened upon the enemy, giving them another surprise.

CHAPTER XXII

SURRENDER OF THE GUERILLA CHIEF

COLONEL GORDON received the report of Captain Halliburn on Grace Hill of the event in the woods, which he had not been able to see from his elevated position. One of the five companies of the enemy had been bagged, and the other four were moving into the fields.

“This affair will soon come to a head,” said the commander, as he wrote a couple of orders on his block, and sent them off by one of the sergeants he had provided for this purpose, who were stationed just behind the crown of the hill, where they could not be seen by the enemy. “Join your company when you have delivered the order to Major Belthorpe,” he added.

The ascent of the hill was on its side and rear, and was an easy path for horses. Captain Halliburn had ridden to the rear of the summit, where one of the sergeants had taken his horse, while he

went forward to the spot where the colonel and the staff-officer were located.

“I should say that it was approaching a completion,” replied Major Bornwood, in answer to the remark of the commander.

“I have sent an order to Major Belthorpe to move his three companies to the rear of the village, where he can charge upon the guerillas as soon as they have been well shaken up by the battery. Truman’s four companies are ready to move as soon as I can see where it is best to send them. We have come to the crisis of the drama.”

“Ripley has taken his men out into the highway, where he has a better chance at the enemy than in the woods, and he continues to drop the guerillas from their saddles.”

“I shall send Truman down that road, and Major Lyon already has his orders,” added the colonel.

The battery had not yet opened fire; but the commander was as confident of the final result, and the manner in which it was to be accomplished, as though it had already been achieved.

Major Batterson was allowed considerable discretion in carrying out his orders. There were several men who owned large and valuable farms in the vicinity, and they were looked upon as wealthy citizens. It was believed that the troublous times had caused them to keep considerable sums of money and all their valuables in their residences. Of course the guerillas had obtained full information in regard to the people of the county.

They could hardly expect to obtain much plunder in such houses as Corry's and Perry's; but they intended to load their boats, some of which were of considerable size, with provisions. Colonel Cameron, who was a lawyer from the capital of a Tennessee county, and believed that he was fighting for the Confederate cause even more effectively than the regular forces, though he was the chief of a horde of banditti only, entered the fields, which were hardly divided except from the highway. He looked upon the riflemen as his especial scourge, as they had certainly proved to be; and he headed his column directly for the hill near Corry's house. He anticipated no resistance except from the Home Guards, and be-

lieved the sharpshooters belonged to that body, though their blue uniform was a puzzle to him. Even up to the moment when he ordered his men to march to the hill, he expected to encounter no enemy besides the local force.

His men spurred their horses to their best speed, for they were in a hurry to get out of the reach of the riflemen in the highway. Colonel Cameron was a prudent man, and he kept himself as well concealed as possible on the left flank of his command. He saw many of his men fall from their saddles before the fire of the riflemen, and he urged his own steed forward with both spurs. He rode a better horse than most of his men; and he soon came to the head of his column, which then appeared to be the safest position, though he had not reached the shelter of the hill, where he intended to halt, and take a survey of the surroundings.

“What is Major Batterson about?” said Colonel Gordon on the hill; for he had not indicated the precise moment when he was to fire, and he began to think the artillery were rather dilatory.

He had hardly spoken the words before the roar of the first gun woke the echoes in the hills.

“The major is awake,” replied the staff-officer, as the cannon seemed to shake the ground upon which they stood. “There’s the second.”

One after another, with the briefest of intervals between them, the six guns of the battery followed each other, throwing shells into the whole length of the enemy’s column, so spread out that the guerillas should receive the full benefit of them. The missiles were scattered among the men, and many saddles were emptied by the volley. The guns were promptly reloaded with canister, and discharged into the paralyzed column of the enemy, producing even greater havoc than the shells.

“That was admirably done!” exclaimed Major Bornwood; for he knew that the guerillas included hardly a decent man among them, though a few of them proved to be educated men, and some of them were dressed like gentlemen, whether they were such or not.

“I thought the major was a little dilatory at first, but he has come to time as he always does,”

added the colonel. "We missed him greatly at Pittsburg Landing; for he is a very capable officer, and is an expert in artillery practice."

"He has just proved that in the most satisfactory manner."

"We are ready for the next act of the drama," — though he could well have called it the tragedy, — said the colonel, as he turned his attention to the field beyond the village.

Major Belthorpe appeared at the head of his battalion the moment the last gun of the battery had been discharged. The leader evidently saw at a glance the situation of the enemy; for the companies separated as soon as they were fairly on the field, that of Captain Gadsbury going to the left, Captain Barnes's to the centre, and Captain Knox's to the right for the head of the column. At the same moment the head of Major Truman's battalion appeared in the highway, and galloped down to the gateway, through which it passed, and went to the left of the guerilla column. The riflemen could no longer act in their usual *rôle*; and the men had slung their rifles, returned to the wood, and mounted their horses.

It was now friend and foe on the field, and their "occupation was gone" for the present.

Precisely at the moment when the other Union columns moved, Major Lyon led his battalion into the highway, and Captain Ripley led his command into the field, and took his place on the left of Belthorpe's battalion. Practically, Deck's command had become the reserve, though it did not look as though it would be called into the action. The force thus placed did not lose a moment in charging upon the guerilla column.

The enemy were surprised, bewildered, and paralyzed anew by this sudden display of an overwhelming force whose existence in that locality they had not even suspected. Colonel Gordon on the hill looked down on the panorama before him with the satisfaction of an already victorious commander. Everything had worked precisely as he had arranged it, and it was now only a question of a few minutes before the end would come. The guerillas were outnumbered by more than two to one. Each of their companies had more than an equal force on both sides, and both charged upon them at nearly the same moment.

Captain Life Knox had hewn his path through the terrified company nearest to the hill; and as he always looked for the biggest game on the field, he discovered Colonel Cameron, and "went for him" with uplifted sabre, ready to cleave his skull in twain. He wore something like a pair of shoulder-straps, and Life readily recognized him as the commander of the banditti. When he was about to strike, the leader lowered his sword to his side, and raised his rein-hand in the air.

"I surrender!" cried he with all the strength of his lungs, which were not at all weak, for he meant that his assailant should hear him.

"What do you mean by that?" demanded Life. "You are the commander of this gang, I take it, from the badge on your shoulders. Do you mean that you surrender your own body only, or that you surrender your battalion?"

"The battalion," replied Colonel Cameron; and he seemed to be actually trembling with fear, — a complaint which had troubled him from the beginning of the action.

Major Belthorpe was near; and Life called him by name, for he thought the subject was rather

too big for him to handle. The major rode over to the spot on the left of the column where the leader had kept himself out of harm's way as well as he could. Undoubtedly he was a great bully, and had probably made his reputation by bluster.

"What is the matter, Captain Knox?" he asked as he approached.

"This fellow is the colonel," replied Life irreverently. "He says he surrenders the battalion."

Major Belthorpe sent an order for the bugler to blow the recall.

"What do you mean by calling me a 'fellow'?" demanded the guerilla colonel, after he had heard the order from the commander of the Union battalion.

"Well, I don't think you are much of a fellow," laughed Life.

"I have surrendered, and no more fighting is to be done," answered the guerilla chief, retreating a few paces, and apparently not disposed to use any more dangerous epithets, at least so far as the tall Kentuckian was concerned.

The bugle sounded the recall, and was repeated by other commands; for it could be seen that the

fighting had ceased at the head of the column. Colonel Gordon, who had descended the hill, and was riding across the field to the head of his column, heard the recall, and hastened to the side of the major. Captain Knox saw the approach of the commander of the force; and as Colonel Cameron was still mounted, he kept an eye on him, believing he was mean-spirited enough to run away if he saw an opportunity.

“See here, you fellow, what is your name?” asked Life, renewing the conversation with the chief of the enemy.

Cameron looked at the captain with all the contempt he dared to put into his expression before he replied; and then he spoke, swelling himself up, and elevating his head.

“I am Colonel Cameron, in command of this force from Tennessee, a member of the bar. I have surrendered, and” —

“No, you haven’t; for you have your sabre at your side. Here is Colonel Gordon, in command of the Union force. Come over here, and give up your sword.

Life took the rein of the horse of the gentle-

man from Tennessee, and led him into the presence of the colonel.

“Colonel Gordon, the fortune of the day compels me to surrender my sword, which is a hard thing for a brave man to do when the battle has gone against him,” said Cameron, as he presented his sword to the Union commander, the handle towards the receiver.

Colonel Gordon took the sword, and he took in the man at the same time.

But the guerilla chief had something more to say.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE DISPOSAL OF THE PRISONERS

CAPTAIN SUMMERS'S company was still in the woods where they had lain down their arms, and a message was sent to Major Lyon to have them marched out upon the field.

"I neglected to ask you, Colonel Gordon, upon what terms I surrender?" said Cameron; for the commander did not recognize him as a colonel, and Captain Halliburn had told him that he had no commission of any kind, not even as a "partisan" ranger.

"No terms whatever, Mr. Cameron," replied the commander of the Union force.

"I address you as Colonel Gordon; and it would be more polite for you to use the same courtesy towards me, and speak to me as Colonel Cameron."

"Are you a colonel?"

"I am."

“By what authority?”

“By the election of the captains of my battalion.”

“Have you a commission of the so-called Confederate States of America?” asked the colonel.

“I have not; but I have one signed by all the captains of my battalion.”

“That is no commission at all; only a certificate of your election. You are not a colonel by the authority of your government; and I decline to recognize you as such, or to apply the title to you. If you were a regular Confederate commander, I should be happy to treat you with the utmost courtesy, and to give you such terms as the situation would warrant.”

“I have been told that there is no such thing as chivalry, delicacy, or decency in Yankee officers, and I believe it,” muttered Cameron.

“Your opinion is a matter of entire indifference to me. You are the leader of a gang of guerillas, banditti, lawless ruffians, having no standing whatever in the Confederate army. You are no gentleman, as I have had occasion to say before. I shall waste no more of my time upon you. You

surrendered, and, so far as I know, your command acquiesce in that step; and you have saved your life, Mr. Cameron, and the lives of your followers. I shall turn you over to the Home Guard of this locality, and Captain Halliburn will dispose of you as he thinks best. I have nothing more to say."

"But I have something more to say, and I am going to say it," protested the guerilla chief.

"I decline to hear it," added Colonel Gordon.

"But you shall hear me!"

"Silence, sir! I will hand you over to Captain Knox, to be committed to the county jail as a robber and marauder!" interposed the colonel.

This threat was enough to close, and keep closed, the mouth of the guerilla chief. The first company of the band, which had been captured and disarmed by Major Lyon's force, was marched on foot into the field, and the prisoners were drawn up in line. They were disarmed by the men in front of them; and the weapons, including sabres, muskets, and pistols, were carted up to the village, and placed in a barn. The men seemed to be anxious to know what was to be done

with them; and some of the troopers whom they asked, told them they were not good enough to hang, and were fit only to feed the buzzards. But it was not proper for them to answer in this manner after the surrender, and not many of them did so.

While the prisoners were still in line, Colonel Gordon called the commander of the Home Guard to him; and a consultation, which included Major Bornwood, followed. There had been about five hundred men in the guerilla force, and at least a hundred of them had been killed or wounded; but there was still a large body of them left.

“Of course we cannot take the prisoners with us on the march,” said Colonel Gordon. “It is now eleven o’clock, and as soon as the men and horses have had their dinners my command will leave. I turn all the prisoners over to you, Captain Halliburn.”

“Good Heaven!” exclaimed this gentleman. “What shall I do with them? The jail at Jamestown is not big enough to hold them, and I almost wish you had killed the rest of them. This is a question of the greatest embarrassment to me.”

“I see that it must be; but what can I do?” inquired the colonel. “I have to obey the orders of the general, who is represented in this State at the present time by Major Bornwood. Perhaps he can suggest something.”

“I don’t know that I can,” replied the staff-officer. “If we send them to the prison-camp near Chicago, they are not soldiers of the Confederate army, and they might be an embarrassment to the government on that account.”

“Why so?” inquired the colonel.

“I don’t know what view would be taken of the question if it came to an issue; but we will suppose a case. If the United States wanted to exchange four hundred prisoners of war, held in Libby Prison or elsewhere in the South, would the Confederate government be willing to accept the four hundred men we have here for the same number of Union prisoners captured from the Federal army? I can’t answer this question myself, for I don’t think a case like it has ever come up for adjudication.”

“I am sure I can’t answer it,” added the colonel.

“It is entirely out of the reach of my logic,” said the captain.

“But we may get a little better understanding of it by examining the facts in the case. Who and what are these men who appear here as soldiers, capturing property of any kind they can lay their hands upon? I know nothing about them,” continued the staff-officer.

“I am certain I do not, for I came from the other side of the Ohio,” added the colonel.

“I am a Kentuckian, though I was born in Louisville, which is farther from here than some parts of Ohio,” added Major Bornwood. “Captain Halliburn lives in this village, and perhaps he can give us some information.”

“I am nearly seventy years old, and I have lived here all my life. I have been engaged in business which required me to travel all over this State and Tennessee. I have raised more horses than any other man in Russell County, and I went about to sell them when I was a younger man. I think I know just what these men are.”

“Then, we are glad to hear from you,” said the colonel.

“I don’t say that Tennessee is any worse than Kentucky, for I don’t believe it is,” the captain proceeded. “I have spent a great many days and nights about the small hotels of both States, and they seem to me to be very much alike. I think both of you know what sort of men they are that loiter about these public-houses, and especially in the bar-rooms. They drink, gamble, and a good many of them will steal when they get a chance. Some of them enlisted in the Confederate army, and more of them would not do so because they could not stand the discipline; and the last class are the worst of the tribe, either in Tennessee or Kentucky. In my opinion, the members of this gang of guerillas belonged to this class.”

“Just such a rabble of ruffians as attempted to burn the mansion-house of Colonel Lyon at Riverlawn. They lived on whiskey, and had no more conscience than a millstone,” added Colonel Gordon. “They are no help to the Confederacy; for not many of them will fight its battles, and the more it has of them the poorer it is.”

“I think we are getting some idea of what

these men are, and my idea of them was about what the captain states. I don't think the Confederacy will be quite willing to exchange solid soldiers for these fellows, though they came from Tennessee."

"Soldiers would not be guilty of doing their kind of work," added Captain Halliburn. "What are they? They came across the river to rob, steal, plunder. They have done a great deal of this kind of work. The houses of Corry and Perry would have been pillaged, and the bread taken from the mouths of their children, if Colonel Gordon's command had not come along by accident; for my Home Guard would have been outnumbered five to one, and we could not have prevented the village, and the houses and barns around it, from being plundered. What they are doing is not warfare; it is simply robbery," and the captain waxed very indignant as he proceeded, and the others sympathized with him.

"The question is still, what shall be done with the four hundred prisoners?" interposed Colonel Gordon, as he looked at his watch.

"You have to march in accordance with your

orders; but these ruffians must not be left near this village, for I believe they would burn every house in and around it if you left them here," said the captain. "Every man would lose all the money he had in the world, to say nothing of all the provisions in his cellar and storehouse. If you leave them here, we shall be at the mercy of these ruffians, filled with revenge over their retreat."

"Drive them over the river!" exclaimed Major Bornwood. "I don't see that you can do anything else with them."

"But they will come back again as soon as this force is out of sight," the captain objected. "I had a good force here before half of them enlisted in the Riverlawn regiment."

"I think the captain is right, and it would not be right to leave the people here at the mercy of these villains. Is there a magistrate near here?" said the major.

"I am a magistrate myself," replied Captain Halliburn.

"Then I advise you to issue a warrant for the arrest of the officers of the battalion, and commit

them to the Jamestown jail. Have you the evidence at hand?"

"I have; plenty of it. I will do as you suggest; but it will never amount to anything, for you could not get a jury to convict them of robbery, even if it is clearly proved."

"No matter for that; we are only trying to get rid of them for the present. Bring out the Home Guard, and hand the six officers over to them for safe keeping. Colonel Gordon will immediately drive the rest of them out of the State."

"I am all ready to do it; for I see that the horses have been fed, and the men have eaten their dinners from their haversacks. Give the marauders their horses, for they need them to swim them over the river," added the colonel, as the trio moved over to the regiment. The Home Guard were at hand; and the commander ordered Captain Knox to arrest the officers, and hand them over to the local force.

"One thing more, Colonel Gordon. I suggest that you leave your eighth company here for the protection of the place, and insist that a guard shall be on the bank of the river night and day

as long as there is any danger of the miscreants returning; and the riflemen will be as good as a brigade on that duty."

"If you desire me to do so, I shall regard it as the wish of the general, and shall comply at once," replied the commander.

"I am on the staff of the general; and if I found it necessary to exercise his authority in certain cases, I might do so; but I prefer to discharge my duties without any friction, and I have met with such a kind spirit in this State that I have not been obliged to mention my authority. Please to inform Captain Halliburn that Ripley's company will remain here for the present," added the major, with abundant suavity.

The colonel gave the order at once, and Captain Halliburn received it with the most profound satisfaction.

"I thank you, Colonel Gordon, for this order."

"Thank Major Bornwood, if anybody, for he advised it," replied the commander.

Major Belthorpe gave the order to Captain Ripley, and it was immediately proclaimed to the men. The village and its vicinity contained their

homes, and they were not sorry for the information. The Home Guard had arrested the guerilla officers; and Cameron swore like a pirate, and protested with all his might, but his custodians only laughed at him.

The majors were then directed to form the prisoners in their own companies, and march them down to the river. Captain Halliburn went with them, and found considerable plunder which the ruffians had taken from the houses they had sacked, the owners of which were standing around, observing the operations of the soldiers. The captain called three of them who had been robbed, and told them if they could find any property that belonged to them, to take possession of it.

The plunder was on the grass near the boats of the guerillas, guarded by six men with muskets in their hands. The prisoners had been conducted to the landing by a company of Major Belthorpe's battalion on each flank, and another in the rear.

“Who are you?” demanded the major, when he came to the corporal in charge of the guard.

“I am the corporal of the guard in charge of the goods here,” replied the man.

“Captain Knox, see that those men are disarmed, and the owners of the property be allowed to take it away,” said the major.

The corporal objected to giving up his musket and sabre. Life reasoned with him; and the result of the argument was that he was pitched about a rod, and the weapons taken from him. He did not appear to understand that the guerillas had surrendered. The owners of the goods carried them off; and the men who had boats were driven into them, leading their horses, and the rest of the force were compelled to take to the river and swim across. The work was accomplished; and Captain Ripley's company was stationed on the shore, to see that the guerillas went over the river. The rest of the Union command was formed, and the march to Barkville was resumed.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE BOOT ON THE OTHER LEG

IT was plain enough to the observers that the guerillas, driven into the river on their horses, were dissatisfied in the last degree with the result of their visit across the river. Doubtless they had expected to return with a greater or less quantity of booty, which they expected to steal from the houses of the farmers and others in the vicinity. It was comparatively a rich neighborhood, and the houses they were to visit were well furnished generally; but their proceedings had been interrupted by the riflemen and the battery guns, and they had been miserably defeated before they reached the richest part of the territory they intended to lay under contribution.

In the few houses they had visited near the Cumberland River, they had gathered up considerable plunder. In the heap of goods from which

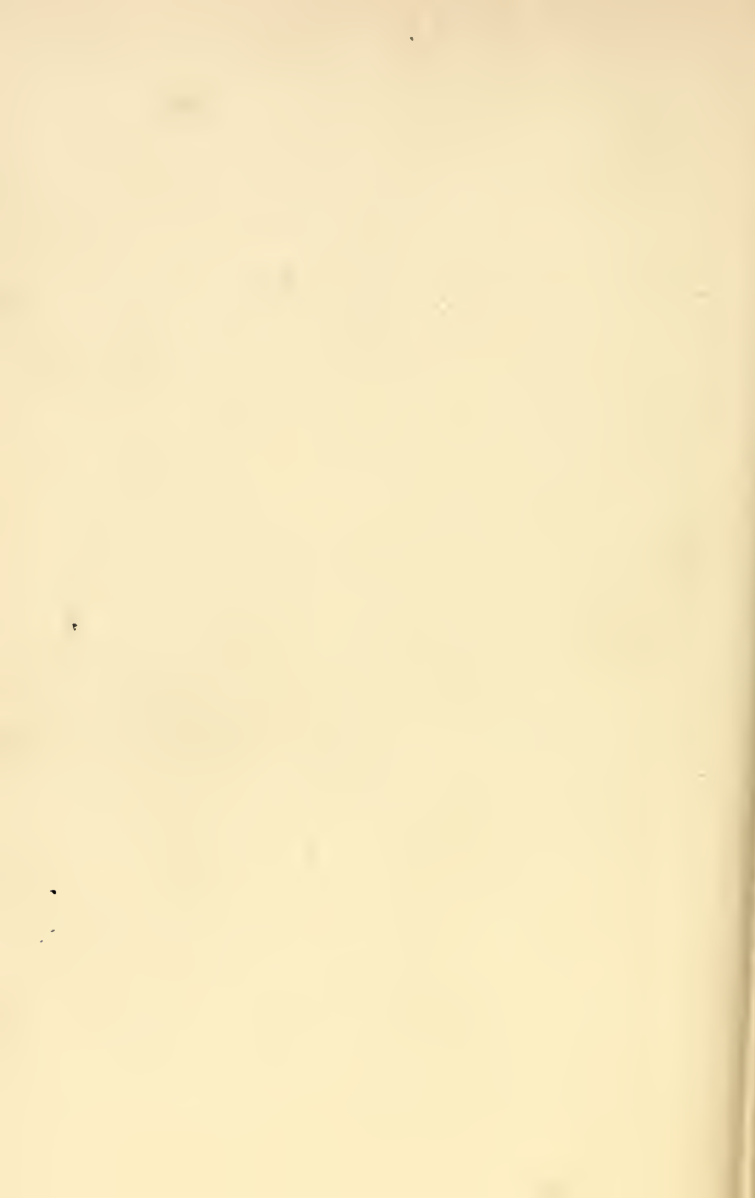
the owners had claimed their property there were several clocks, the ornaments of mantel shelves, bundles of bedding, and such other articles as they could carry to the shore on their horses. They had several large flatboats for the conveyance of their plunder across the river, though they had not been able to gather up the most valuable portion of what they expected to obtain.

They were plainly unwilling to return to the other side of the river after they had seen the departure of the main body of the Union force, and a considerable number of them had turned their horses in the water, and struck out for the shore. But Captain Ripley's company had been stationed on the bluff just above the landing-place, and Colonel Gordon had ordered them to shoot the ruffians if they attempted to return. The guerillas had been deprived of their arms, even to the pistols which many of them carried; and it was madness for them to attempt to renew the business which had brought them over before.

There appeared to be about twenty or twenty-five, led by a big fellow, who were disposed to contest the ground with the Home Guard, though



HE WAS HIT IN THE HEAD



it was difficult to conjecture what they intended to accomplish, without a weapon of any kind among them. Captain Ripley was not disposed to believe the ruffians would be guilty of any such madness, and he was not inclined to shoot them in the water. It was a hard struggle for the horses, for even at the low stage of the river there was a considerable current; but the riders spurred them on so that they made some progress towards the opposite shore.

The captain of the riflemen was forced to the conclusion that the party following the stalwart leader meant to reach the shore, and pointing his rifle at him, he fired. He was hit in the head, and springing up from his saddle, he came down in the water. He made no effort to cling to his horse, and sank out of sight. His followers were appalled at this sharp practice; and perhaps they were not aware that the rifle company had been left at the place for the protection of the village, though they wore the blue uniform of the national army.

The Home Guard, wearing no uniform, were near the landing-place, and doubtless the reck-

less marauders expected to encounter only this force. If they had opened their eyes, they could not have helped seeing the riflemen on the bluff, though they were partially concealed by a thicket of bushes. But the effect of the fatal shot was soon realized; for the gang in advance soon turned their horses, and joined in the struggle with the others to reach the Tennessee shore. The animals were not trained swimmers, like those of the original companies of the Riverlawns. Not another shot came from the riflemen while the ruffians continued their efforts to reach the other side. But the present defenders of the town watched them for a couple of hours, when the last of them had effected a landing in the creek from which they had embarked the day before; but they carried no plunder of any kind to their homes, which Captain Halliburn thought were located in several counties.

In the meantime, the Riverlawn regiment and the battery continued their march. Major Bornwood had telegraphed to the postmaster at Barkville to ascertain if the town was in any danger of a raid from any quarter, and had received a reply

at Jamestown. The place was in no present peril, though a band of guerillas was said to be in the neighborhood of Glasgow in Barren County. The command of Colonel Gordon moved leisurely; for the troopers had been actively employed for several days, and there was no need of hurrying.

In the vicinity of what is now Bakertown, the officers who had been over the road before had observed a mansion on the hill, which they had learned was occupied by Mr. Bickworth, who was said to be a Secessionist, though he took no active part in any of the commotions which kept the State in a turmoil much of the time. He was past the military age, but he had refused to contribute to the purchase of an equipment of a Home Guard in the adjoining counties of Metcalf and Cumberland. If this was an overt act against the Union, it was the only one that had been charged to him.

He was believed to be a wealthy man; and it was generally supposed that he had money concealed in his house, for he paid his bills with the greatest promptness. He lived "within his own shell," and seldom mingled with his neighbors.

He had no family at his home ; for his wife had died years before, and his two sons were in business in China. The recent raids into the State had induced the people to enlist a Home Guard for the protection of their families and their property, and Mr. Bickworth had declined to give any money for the purchase of arms for the company. The Union people, not all of whom were peaceable and law-abiding citizens, were indignant against him, and called him a Secessionist, as he admitted himself ; but he took no part with them in disturbing the peace of the county or the State.

The highway by which the regiment pursued its march passed the entrance to a private road leading to the gentleman's residence. There appeared to be a commotion near it ; and in a field on one side of the road the Home Guard recently gathered were drilling, as the officers judged from what they saw, and in the private way a rather noisy gang seemed to be discussing some matter. All the way up the road to the elevation on which the mansion of the Secessionist was located, men were moving.

“What does all this mean, Major Bornwood?” asked Colonel Gordon, as they approached the scene of the excitement.

“I am sure I don’t know; but very likely it is a gathering of the people to rob and plunder some Union man, for such things are not wholly uncommon in some parts of the State,” replied the staff-officer.

“But the man who lives in that house on the hill is not a Union man; on the contrary, he is a Secessionist, and formerly lived in Alabama. I met him once during our stay in Barkville, and was introduced to him by one of the town council. He is a very gentlemanly person, and said he believed in the Confederacy, though he took no part whatever in politics. He had moved to Kentucky because the climate of Southern Alabama did not agree with him. The councilman who introduced me said he was a good man in spite of his disloyal opinions, always paid his bills, and contributed liberally to the support of the poor, whatever their politics, and most men respected him. He was not a Union man, but he was entirely inoffensive in every respect.”

“Then, what is the meaning of the gathering near his mansion?” inquired the major.

“I don’t know,” replied the colonel, as he halted his command at the head of the private road when the head of the column came to it.

Of course the appearance of the regiment excited the attention of the people. The colonel and the major rode into the side road to ascertain the occasion of the gathering, and approached the group that were discussing in rather violent terms the question before them.

“I believe in pulling down his house, or burning it over his head!” exclaimed one of the disputants.

“I don’t believe in anything of that kind,” replied another very earnestly. “Mr. Bickworth has done nothing to deserve such treatment, and it would be an outrage to treat him in that manner.”

“You will find yourself in a very small minority in this crowd,” continued the first speaker, who had evidently primed himself with more than one glass of whiskey.

“What is the trouble here?” asked Colonel

Gordon very quietly, as he rode as near as he could get to the violent man of the group.

“Trouble enough,” replied the orator of the occasion, as he evidently regarded himself, and he interlarded his speech with occasional oaths; but he could not “hold a candle” to Cameron, though he was just such a person, on a minor scale. “We don’t mean to have things go all one way about here. The man that lives in that house on the hill is a Secessionist. About a week ago the disloyal ruffians of Adair County cleaned out a Union man over there, robbed his mansion of all that was worth taking away, and then burned it to the ground. The man that lives in that house,” pointing to it, “is a disloyal man; and we are going to serve him as the disloyal ruffians served the Union man at Breedings.”

“Then, you intend to be the loyal ruffians on this occasion,” replied the colonel mildly.

“We are not ruffians; we are gentlemen, Colonel,” replied the orator. “I am a member of the bar, and those with me are reputable citizens.”

Major Lyon, who was near the head of the column, had his curiosity somewhat excited, and

had ridden his horse into the road to ascertain the nature of the business in progress.

“Do I understand that you intend to rob Mr. Bickworth’s mansion, and then burn it?” asked the colonel.

“That is just what we intend to do,” answered the member of the bar.

“Have you any suggestion to offer, Major Bornwood?” asked the commander of his companion.

“None ; but I am as much opposed to outrages by Union men as by Secessionists,” replied the staff-officer quietly.

“Major Lyon!” called the commander to the senior major. “You express my opinion precisely, Major Bornwood.”

Deck saluted the commander, and waited for orders.

“Major Lyon, you will march your first two companies up this road, and surround that house on the hill,” said the colonel, loud enough for the orator of the group to hear him.

Deck ordered the two companies to march up the hill, and placed himself at the head of the

column. Apparently to the astonishment and indignation of most of the group, the two hundred troopers marched by them, and ascended the hill. There were about fifty people collected around the mansion, and there were as many more who were drilling with muskets in the field near the highway. .

“Do I understand, Colonel, — the colonel of a Union regiment, — that you intend to interfere with this affair?” demanded Squire Blunt, the orator of the group in the private road, whose indignation had been fanned to rage as he saw the two companies gallop up the road.

“Most decidedly I do,” replied the commander.

“Do you claim to be a Union man?”

“Can you ask such a question as that of a soldier in the United States army? Are you a Union man?”

“You know that I am!” exclaimed Squire Blunt. “Why should I be here on this business if I were not?”

“And you intend to prove that you are a Union man by joining a mob to rob and burn the residence of a quiet and inoffensive citizen of

Kentucky; to take part with Union ruffians in committing an outrage on a peaceable member of this community! Why did you not enlist in the army of your country, as I did, to demonstrate your loyalty?"

"That's into him seven feet!" cried the man who had argued in opposition to the proposed outrage.

The colonel turned his horse, and began to ascend the road, with the staff-officer still at his side. The rest of the group, and the Home Guard in the field, followed them; for it looked as though the time for action had come. Major Lyon had posted his first company on a lawn at the side of the mansion, and stationed the second company all around the buildings. He had placed Lieutenant Fronklyn, with half a dozen men, dismounted, with carbines in their hands, on the piazza, the officer being at the front door.

"Colonel Gordon, I protest against your action in this matter as an outrage upon the people of two counties of the State," said Squire Blunt, as soon as the commander had examined the preparations for the defence of the mansion.

“What are you about to do here, Mr. Blunt?” asked the colonel.

“We are about to sack this mansion, and burn it to the ground, as the disloyal ruffians did that of Captain Wiggin at Breedings,” replied the orator.

“By what authority do you propose to act in this manner?” demanded the commander.

“By the authority of the loyal sentiment of two counties.”

“That is rather indefinite authority. You wish to justify the action of the Breedings mob by following its example. What has Mr. Bickworth done to offend the loyal people of two counties?”

“He has refused to contribute to the equipment of the Home Guard for the defence of our homes and rights.”

“He is a citizen of the State, and he had the right to refuse. Did you contribute to the equipment of the State Guard at Breedings?”

At this moment Mr. Bickworth appeared at the door of his house.

CHAPTER XXV

THE OBNOXIOUS CITIZEN ON THE HILL

“DID I contribute to the equipment of the State Guard at Breedings?” said Squire Blunt. “Of course I did not! The State Guard is a Secesh body, and I was not asked to do so. It would have been treason for me to do anything of the kind, and against my principles,” replied Squire Blunt.

“It would have been quite right for you to refuse if you had been asked,” added the commander. “Very likely Mr. Bickworth regarded a contribution to the equipment of the loyal Home Guard in the same light.”

“I make a distinction between things loyal and disloyal.”

“So do I.”

“I judged from your action that you did not,” replied the squire. “You array your soldiers against the loyal people of this section.”

“The loyal people of this section are collected here for the purpose of using violence against a peaceable citizen of Kentucky, in violation of the laws of the State, and will be liable to prosecution if they proceed with their work. You are a lawyer, Squire Blunt, and you know this as well as or better than I do.”

“I don't think they are in any danger of prosecution,” said the member of the bar with a laugh.

“In all the large cities of the North, there is an occasional citizen who believes the South is right, though I am glad to say they are very few ; and they are called ‘Copperheads.’ We have heard of such a thing there as that man being compelled to display the American flag on his house ; and perhaps violence would have followed after a refusal. But generally such citizens were not molested if they were peaceful, law-abiding citizens, and did not make any demonstration in favor of the South. I commend the example of the Northern people to you.”

“It is a different thing down here ; for we are right in the midst of the rebellion, and at this

moment the armies of the Confederacy are marching into the State of Kentucky with the intention of subduing the people, and raising the flag of Secession. This state of things creates a great deal of indignation among our citizens."

"I sympathize with them so far, and I believe our armies will drive out the intruders. As a soldier, I shall do all I can to bring about this result; and I believe it would be very much better for you, Squire Blunt, to shoulder your musket, and do the same, rather than to employ your time and talents in destroying the property of a peaceful citizen like Mr. Bickworth."

"That's the right kind of talk!" exclaimed Mr. Letcher, the gentleman who had argued against the squire near the highway.

"That's so!" added several others.

The entire collection of people had gathered near the colonel to hear what passed between him and the orator; and Mr. Letcher asked those who were opposed to mob violence to step over to the corner of the fence at the road. About a dozen responded to the summons; but most of the crowd had come to the hill for another purpose,

and they were not willing to step over to the other side of the question, though they seemed to be moved by the argument of the commander.

“I see that Mr. Bickworth has come out of his house, and is talking on the piazza with Lieutenant Fronklyn. I am going up to see him, and I should be glad to have you go with me,” said the commander, as he and Major Bornwood dismounted from their horses, and handed them over to the keeping of a couple of troopers.

“I am the chairman of a committee of three to make a final demand upon Mr. Bickworth, and I will meet him in your presence, Colonel,” replied Squire Blunt; and it was obvious that his views had been somewhat modified by the argument of the commander.

With the committee, the orator led the way to the piazza, followed by the colonel, the major, and Major Lyon, at the request of the commander.

The party ranged themselves around the obnoxious citizen, to hear what was said on both sides. Mr. Bickworth appeared to be about seventy years old, was quite tall and dignified, and

with a very mild and gentle expression of countenance, as far removed as possible from a "fire-eater." He received the party with a graceful bow, and waited to hear their business with him. It was opened by Squire Blunt.

"As a committee of three," said he, indicating with a gesture his two associates, "we have called upon you, to make a final demand for a contribution for the equipment of the Home Guard of this locality."

"What are Home Guards?" asked the obnoxious citizen very mildly and gently, and with a pleasant smile on his face.

"They are military bodies raised for the defence of our people and their property. You can see most of the company formed in line before your mansion;" for the body had marched up the hill, and formed in front of the house. "Captain Greene, their commander, is one of this committee;" and the orator pointed him out with a flourish.

"For what purpose do they visit my estate?" asked Mr. Bickworth. "I am a citizen of the State of Kentucky, and one of 'our people,' as

you very properly designate them. I have been told that all these people come to my residence with evil intentions ; in a word, for the purpose of destroying my property, of burning my mansion. Am I to infer that the Home Guard came to defend me and my estate from violence ? ”

Squire Blunt bit his lips, and made no reply.

“I pay my taxes regularly, and I have been told that I pay one of the largest amounts in this way in Barkville. I contribute liberally for the support of the poor, in addition to my taxes ; and I think I am right in regarding myself as one of ‘our people.’ ”

“But you are a Secessionist ! ” exclaimed Squire Blunt.

“I have my private opinions on the politics of the nation ; but I have taken no active part against the government, neither in word nor in deed. But you did not answer my question, Squire, and I will ask Captain Greene to do so. Am I to infer that the Home Guard came here to defend me and my property from the violence of a mob ? ”

“No, sir ; they did not ! ” exclaimed the cap-

tain, who did not like the turn in the conversation.

“Precisely; I am happy to understand the matter,” added Mr. Bickworth. “What is the particular business of your committee with me, Squire Blunt?”

“To make a final request of you to give a contribution, according to your abundant means, for the equipment of the Home Guards before you,” replied the orator.

“I have declined to do so several times before. I could quote several instances in which so-called Home Guards took part in the destruction of the property of citizens like myself, peaceable, but having private opinions like my own. The commander of the Home Guard to whose equipment I am invited to contribute says very decidedly that his force did not come here to protect me and my property from violence and destruction. Therefore, I must finally decline to contribute for the equipment of his force,” replied Mr. Bickworth mildly and with dignity. “I decline, even if you proceed to the outrage which brought you here.”

Doubtless the "obnoxious citizen" shared the views expressed by the historian of Kentucky in regard to Home Guards, while he gives some of these bodies ample credit for substantial service to the State and the nation. We quote from his pages to indicate that Mr. Bickworth's views were not entirely his own: "The difficulty of maintaining the activity of the civil law in this period of conflict was made the greater by the action of the Home Guards, a force that could not be kept in proper control. These partisan troops made many raids upon persons known to be in sympathy with the South. The whole experience of the Civil War with these detached localized troops shows that they were an element of great danger to the civil government of the State."

"That's all that need be said!" shouted Captain Greene, who was evidently a "fire-eater" on the wrong side of the question. "We are ready now to do the work for which we came up here."

"What is that?" demanded Colonel Gordon quietly.

"We shall sack the mansion, and then set it

on fire. We may get enough out of it to make up the rebel's subscription."

"You can proceed with your cowardly work," added Mr. Bickworth.

"You will do nothing of the kind, Captain Greene," interposed the colonel. "Mr. Bickworth, this battalion of United States cavalry will protect you and your property from injury. The civil law is in force in Kentucky, and it is the duty of the Federal officers to support it. The proposed action of this mob would be an outrage, and I shall stand by you."

"I thank you, Colonel Gordon, and I am sure you have taken a correct view of the situation," added the "obnoxious citizen."

Mr. Letcher and those in sympathy with him, now increased in numbers to about twenty by the arguments to which they had listened attentively since they moved up to the piazza, gave three cheers; and doubtless they were regarded as traitors by a portion of the assembly.

"Colonel Gordon, do you intend to interfere with the action of the citizens of this county?" demanded Captain Greene.

“Most decidedly I do!” replied the commander with more vim than he had spoken before. “Major Lyon, mount your horse.”

Deck hastened to mount his steed.

“I hope you will not act foolishly, Captain Greene,” resumed the colonel. “I have two hundred cavalry on this hill, and over a thousand more on the highway, which shall be marched up here if necessary; for it makes no difference to me whether you are loyal ruffians or disloyal, I shall deal with you in the same manner. If you meddle with the mansion or its proprietor, Captain Greene, my troops shall charge upon you, and drive the mob from the hill. I hope you understand me, for I support the civil government of the State of Kentucky.”

“Attention, Battalion!” shouted Major Lyon. “Draw, sabres!”

The two companies were the original River-lawn squadron, and their sabres flew from the scabbards on the instant. Then Deck moved the company on the lawn to the front of the piazza, ready for action, and waited for further orders from the commander.

“Squire Blunt, I should be very sorry to be compelled to assault my own friends, the loyal citizens of this vicinity; but they are clearly in the wrong, and Mr. Bickworth, though his opinions on the great question before the country are not yours or mine, is entitled to protection, at least until he is guilty of some overt act, and I have not learned that he has done anything against the peace and dignity of the United States or the Commonwealth of Kentucky.”

“Of course Captain Greene cannot do anything against such a force as you have under your command; and I must say that my views are somewhat modified by the discussion which has been held on this piazza,” replied the squire. “I will talk with Greene,” and he went over to him for this purpose.

He talked in such a low tone that others could not hear what passed between them; but certainly the commander of the Home Guard moderated his tone very much, since he was not a fool, and could see that he and his Guards would be annihilated if he attempted to oppose the cavalry by force; for the people of Bark-

ville, where most of them came from, were well acquainted with the Riverlawns and the battery who had defended them from the attack of the enemy who came there by the Harbinger. The squire soon returned to the presence of Colonel Gordon.

“I think we can compromise the case, Colonel. I will do as you say it has been done in the North: I will ask him to display the American flag on his mansion or grounds; and there is a flag-pole on the lawn, on which he used to hoist the flag on the Fourth of July.”

“But suppose he declines to do so?” suggested the commander.

“I don't think he will, for he is a very moderate Southerner, in spite of his opinions; but if he refuses, we shall have to leave without settling the question,” replied the orator. “The answer we can make to the people who have been waiting to see the flames rising from the hill is that we have been convinced by the arguments of Colonel Gordon that our work was not the right thing to do.”

“I am very glad if anything I have said has

influenced you, and especially if it saves me the pain of attacking our people."

"You made a very able argument, and you ought to have been a member of the bar."

"I was a lawyer when the war began," added the colonel, as the squire left him to speak to Mr. Bickworth.

"Whether you accept or reject the compromise I am about to propose, Mr. Bickworth, it is evident enough with the troops around your mansion, that neither you nor your property will be subjected to any violence," the squire began.

"I shall be glad to have the matter settled to the satisfaction of the people," replied the obnoxious citizen. "What is the compromise?"

"That you hoist the American flag on your lawn."

"I will do that with pleasure," replied Mr. Bickworth.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE SEARCH FOR GREEGER LAKE

SQUIRE BLUNT made a speech to the assemblage to the effect that a compromise had been arranged; and he had hardly said so much before the Star Spangled Banner floated in the air over the lawn. Deck called for three cheers from the battalion, which were given lustily, followed by three more from the Home Guard and the rest of the gathering; and the orator proceeded with his speech, though he was so thirsty for his whiskey that he made it very brief. Though the respected gentleman who resided in the mansion before them, he said, had some private opinions of his own, he was a loyal citizen to the whole country; and after this demonstration, he was confident they would protect his person and property from any assailants, wherever they came from.

“I was born and brought up under this flag, and I have never ceased to honor and love it,”

said the "obnoxious citizen" to those around him. "I love my country, though I have spent a portion of my life in China; and I love it all the more for that reason. Now, gentlemen, if you will come into my house, I will show you that I can drink to the reunion of our country under the American flag."

Colonel Gordon was especially invited to go in; but he pleaded that he never drank anything, and that he must leave with his command for Barkville. He was excused; but half a dozen others went in, and the sufferings of the orator and the captain soon came to an end. They were treated very handsomely in both senses of the word, and remained some time with their "respected fellow-citizen," as the squire called him in his remarks and toasts. They were entertained in the dining-room of the host; and upon their departure it required the whole width of the road to accommodate the captain and the squire on their way to Barkville.

The regiment marched to the town, and were received by the town council. They encamped in the field they had occupied on their former visit;

and after the long day of fighting and marching, both officers and men were glad to roll themselves up in their blankets, and spread themselves out in the tents.

It was a long stay the regiment and battery made at Barkville. Major Bornwood received no letters or telegrams, as he expected, at this halt, which was believed by the officers to be only for a day or two, and that orders for the command would be received there. But General Buell was very busy in Tennessee, concealing his own movements, and seeking to ascertain those of General Bragg. Nashville was in possession of the Union army. It was believed that this would soon be the object of an attack on the part of the enemy. General Buell was farther south. Aug. 30 he ordered his entire army to move to Murfreesboro, about thirty miles southeast of the capital of Tennessee, on the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad, expecting an attack on Nashville.

It seemed to be a game between him and General Bragg to ascertain what the other intended to do. Whether the latter intended to capture Nashville, if he could, or invade the State of Kentucky,

was the question. Buell was at Decherd, in the southern part of Tennessee, eighty-two miles southeast of Nashville, a long distance from the central part of Kentucky, ready to move against Bragg when he could discover his objective point. On one of the last days of August he ordered his whole army to move to Murfreesboro; and his several divisions were united there on the fifth of September. No long halt was made there, and the divisions moved on to Nashville. Still the question was whether Bragg would attack Nashville or by a flank movement invade Kentucky.

The events described in this volume occurred towards the latter part of August, and it was about the twenty-fifth when the Riverlawn regiment arrived at Barkville. Day after day wore away, and no orders came for the force to move in any direction. The officers were treated very hospitably by the people of the town; but they soon wearied of the life of inactivity, and longed to be again engaged in the strife, which they confidently believed would soon overwhelm the rebellious enemy, though they had to wait many months before this result was realized.

Deck had telegraphed to Mr. McCurdy at Somerset, to ascertain the condition of his father, and learned that he was doing very well. The wound on his head was healing up satisfactorily to the physician. A week later came a letter written by Colonel Lyon himself, in which he said he had been out to walk for the last three days. He had a good appetite, and he felt as well as ever in his life; he was ready to rejoin his command, but the doctor would not permit him to do so. He was confident that he should be able to do so.

“Our men are getting very tired of this idle life,” said Colonel Gordon when they had been in camp a week.

They were at the post-office waiting for the sorting of the mail, for the staff-officer was in daily expectation of a letter or telegram from the general. It was the second of September; and the general had been so busy watching Bragg and other officers, and had been moving about so much, that he had not been able to attend to minor affairs in Kentucky, though he was prepared to counteract the movements of Bragg as soon as they could be developed.

“A letter for Major Bornwood,” called the postmaster through his window.

It was given to him, and he immediately declared that it was from the general. He tore it open, and read it with deep interest, and then passed it to the colonel. From the first lines it was apparent that the staff-officer had given very favorable reports to the writer of the newly formed regiment of cavalry. Then he informed him that a large body of guerillas, or partisan bands, which he considered the same thing, were operating in Logan County, or on Grigger Lake, wherever that was. The number of the guerillas was reported to exceed six hundred. He instructed his staff-officer to have the regiment sent to capture them, or drive them out of the State; for such a number of ruffians would do a vast amount of mischief.

“That looks like work for my command,” said the colonel, as he handed the letter back to the major.

“But where is Grigger Lake?” inquired the latter.

“I haven’t the least idea; and I did not sup-

pose there were any lakes in the State large enough to be mentioned," replied the colonel. "But I dare say we can find some one in the town, perhaps in the regiment, who knows where it is. We will make a business of ascertaining at once."

They began to do so; but the postmaster and others in the office had never heard of it. No such body of water was laid down in any of the maps with which the officers were provided. Then at roll-call the next morning, all the captains were instructed to inquire of the men if any one knew where Grigger Lake was, and all the officers were required to be present.

"Grigger Lake," repeated Captain Knox. "That is something like it, but that is not the name."

"Greeger Lake; that's what they call it, but I don't know how to spell it," interposed Lieutenant Shapley, of Life's company. "It isn't far from where Captain Knox and I were born and raised."

"Then I think we can find it," added the colonel. "We may march for that lake to-day,

for there are six hundred guerillas in that vicinity.”

The men went to their breakfast with the belief that the season of inactivity was at an end, and the officers sought their maps again. They found the stream which Life and Shapley said flowed from it; but the lake was not indicated, and it was not in Logan County. The colonel gave the order for the command to march as soon as it was ready. Deck wrote a letter to his father in Somerset, and another to his mother at Riverlawn, informing them both that he was about to leave Barkville, with Captain Knox as a pilot. Franklin was the nearest post-office to the locality, though it was some distance from the scene of operations.

At nine o'clock everything was in readiness to move, for the force was kept in condition to leave at short notice from the nature of the operations in which it was engaged. Nothing was to be left behind, for the commander did not expect to be ordered back to Barkville. Life thought that the distance was about sixty miles, forty of which were made the first day. Captain

Knox was entirely familiar with the roads, as were most of the members of his company. The command camped near a village for the night; and it contained a post-office, which Life and Shapley visited after supper in search of information in regard to the guerillas. Neither the postmaster nor any of the natives assembled there could give him any tidings in regard to the marauders. They knew where Greeger Lake was, and assured the officers that they were on the right road to reach it.

The general's letter was not to the effect that the partisan force was at this lake, but only in the same county. When the captain and lieutenant were about to leave, a travel-stained man, with a valise of considerable size strapped upon his back, entered the store in which the post-office was located. He was at once recognized as a peddler, and asked the postmaster if he could get some supper and a night's lodging in his house. He could be accommodated, and he seated himself to wait for the meal.

"Have you travelled far?" asked Life, seating himself at his side.

“I am a peddler, and I am travelling all the time. I have just tramped through Christian and Todd Counties; and I have had a hard time of it, for that country is full of gorillas — that’s what I call ’em. I believe a gorilla is a big monkey, nigh on to the size of a man, that bites and kills a fellow as you would a fly; and that’s what them robbers do over in Todd County. They wanted to rob me of my pack; but I got away from ’em, though one of ’em on foot chased me a mile.”

“Do you know where they are now?” asked the captain with deep interest.

“They were moving this way, and I reckon this store will be cleaned out by to-morrow or next day,” replied the peddler. “They had stopped to plunder a house the last I saw of ’em.”

“How many guerillas are there, of them?”

“I don’t know; one man told there was a thousand of ’em, but I reckon he stretched it a little. I saw them on the road ahead of me, and I went around ’em when they halted; I should say there were five hundred of them, with two wagons loaded with goods.

“Your supper is ready,” said the postmaster, coming out of the rear of the building where his family lived.

“I’m half starved, and I must attend to that call,” replied the peddler, rising from his chair.

“I am much obliged to you for what you have told me, and I don’t reckon that gang will come to Palmyra,” added Life.

“You wear a blue uniform, and I reckon you’re an officer. I hope you will ketch them gorillas,” returned the peddler.

“I am an officer, and we have force enough to grind the guerillas to powder, whether there are five hundred or a thousand,” said Life; and he and Shapley moved to the door, though others wished to talk with them.

The two officers hastened back to the camp, and immediately sought the colonel in the headquarters tent. They were admitted by the sentinel, and found the commander studying a map on the table in the centre, with the staff-officer at his side.

“I am glad you have come, Captain Knox; I called my orderly to send for you, but he told

me that you had gone to the village," said Colonel Gordon as they entered the tent.

"I have been to the village with Lieutenant Shapley, and we have obtained plenty of information," answered Life. "Those guerillas have been rampaging through Christian, Todd, and Logan Counties, and a peddler who has just come through that country has seen them, and told me all about them;" and the captain proceeded to give the colonel a full report of all the information he had obtained from the travelling hawker.

"You were very fortunate to come across such a person, Captain Knox; and I am very glad to know that we are on the right road to Greeger Lake," said the commander when the tall Kentuckian had finished his narrative.

"I don't believe it is much of a lake; but in our State, where such sheets of water are scarce, they call almost any puddle a lake. The traveller had seen the lake from the road, but did not go very near it; but it is of no account. He got away from the guerillas near Hadens, on the Louisville and Memphis Railroad; and as they

were coming this way, they must be somewhere near the lake by this time, and it can't be more than fifteen miles from where we are now," replied Life.

As he was about to leave the tent, Deck came in. He had been foraging for information among the farmers and others who had come to the vicinity of the camp from motives of curiosity; but the intelligence Captain Knox had procured rendered his story of no especial value. He was ordered to have everything ready to march at five o'clock in the morning; and the officers went to their couches on the ground, where all the troopers, except the guards and half a dozen scouts on the roads to the east and the west, had gone as soon as they had taken their suppers.

At four o'clock on the morning of Sept. 3 the assembly sounded, and the men promptly abandoned their couches, rolled up their blankets, and complied with all the forms required. The horses and mules were fed, and breakfast was served half an hour later. The column was formed, with the train in the rear, flanked by a guard, and the command began its march towards Price's Mill.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE LAKE AND THE GUERILLAS FOUND

BOTH officers and privates were impatient to meet the enemy who had been engaged in devastating the counties along the Henderson and Nashville Railroad, and a speed of nearly eight miles an hour was kept up. Captain Knox, with five members of his company, had been detailed as scouts, and were several miles in advance of the main body. Major Lyon had formerly been Life's companion on his scouting expeditions; and he almost wished he was not a field-officer, that he might be with him on the present occasion. He even mentioned this feeling to the colonel when the scouts were detailed.

"There is nothing to prevent you from going with Captain Knox if you wish to do so," replied the commander.

"I always used to go with him on such expeditions, and I feel lonesome while he is away on

such an errand," replied Deck. "But I suppose it is rather undignified for a field-officer to be on a scout."

"That is just as you happen to view the matter," said the colonel, laughing at the remark of the major.

"I don't care for the dignity here on these barrens; and if you don't object, I will join Life," added Deck.

"I certainly don't object; on the contrary, I should like to have you with the captain, though I should not send you out as a scout."

"All right, Colonel Gordon, then I will soon be up with the captain; there is only one grade in rank between us," said the major, as he gave the signal to Ceph to go ahead.

Life had not more than fifteen minutes the start of him; and at the speed of his steed when he hurried him, it was not more than fifteen minutes more before he overtook the scouts. Life halted his squad as soon as the hindmost man reported a horseman approaching them. As he came a little nearer, the man reported to the captain that it was Major Lyon. He was afraid there

was something wrong, some hitch in the movement in which they were engaged.

“What’s the matter, Major Lyon? Has anything broken?” demanded Life as he surveyed the swift rider.

“Nothing is the matter, and nothing has broken,” replied Deck, as he reined in his horse at the side of the chief scout. “I always used to go with you on any expedition of this sort, as you know; and I felt lonesome on the flank of my battalion when I thought that you were away on your present mission. I spoke to the colonel, and he did not object to my going with you; and here I am.”

They started their horses again at a gallop; for Life was desirous to get as far ahead of the regiment as possible, in order that he might have the more time to examine the country before them, especially that in the vicinity of the so-called lake. Three of the scouts were riding ahead of the captain, and the other two in the rear, all of them at a considerable distance from him. All the men had good horses; those ahead had been directed to make their best speed, and they were

evidently doing so, though Life and Deck had no difficulty in keeping up with them.

“What time is it now, Deck?” for they did not vex themselves with titles when they were together, if no others were near them.

“Half-past six,” replied the major, after consulting his watch.

“We have been moving for an hour and a half; and at the rate we have come over the road, we ought to be near the lake,” replied Life, as he discovered a negro on foot approaching them. The captain reined in his steed when he was abreast of the man.

“Can you tell me where Greeger Lake is, Snowball?” inquired Life.

“Who tole you my name, Mars`r?” asked the negro, displaying all the ivory that could have come from the tusks of one large elephant.

“Is your name Snowball?”

“No, sar; but that’s what old mars`r calls me.”

“Where do you live?”

“Wid Mars`r Price dat owns de mill now, and he libs near it, on de oder side ob de road,” re-

plied Snowball, who wanted to ask the captain who he was, but he did not quite dare to do so.

“Do you know where Greeger Lake is, Snowball?” demanded Life in more imperative tones.

“Yes, sar; dat’s de mill-pond which got de name of Greeger Lake from de man dat use to own de mill; but he’s dead now, and he was drowned in de pond. He was” —

“No matter what he was, but tell me where the lake is,” said Life in very decided tones.

Before the negro could give the information, one of the scouts ahead rode back, and stated that there was a road turning off from the one that they had followed thus far, and he did not know which one to take.

“Dat’s de road to de pond,” interposed Snowball. “But mars’r mustn’t go ober dar.”

“Mustn’t go over there! Why not?” demanded the captain.

“Mars’r Price got heaps of trubble. Dem gorillas done rob his house of all his money and all de nice tings he hab in his parlor.”

“When did they do that?” inquired the captain.

“Arly dis mornin’, fo’ sunrise,” answered Snowball. “Dey done took mars’r out to a tree, and tole him dey hang him if he don’t tole whar his money was hid, when dey couldn’t find it. He done tole ’em, to sabe his life.”

“Where are those guerillas now?” asked Life.

“Dey done go ober to de oder side of de pond, and camp thar, and make missus cook tings for ’em.”

“Where are you going, Snowball?”

“Ober to Franklin fur de Hum Guards.”

“You need not go. We have over a thousand soldiers on this road; and we will see your master set to rights, and get his money back for him,” added Life.

“Bress de Lo’d!” exclaimed Snowball, exhibiting his ivory again.

“I want you now. How far off is the mill?”

“Half a mile from here. Jes’ ober de hill.”

The captain had ordered the scout that brought information about the road to bring in the other two men, and they had already arrived.

“What do you think about this business, Deck?”

What had we better do?" asked Life, turning to the major.

"Leave your men here, and let them take care of our horses while we walk up the hill and reconnoitre the location," replied Deck so promptly as to indicate that he had been thinking of the matter before. "Ask the darkey to show us a place where they can keep out of sight if any one happens this way."

There were no woods, and but few trees along the road; but Snowball pointed out an "oak nob," or low round-topped hill, near the highway, behind which the men and horses could be effectually concealed, and Sergeant Peters was directed to get behind it with the horses.

"Now lead the way to the lake, Snowball," said Life; and he and Deck started for the road that led to it. "Don't let anybody see you or see us."

"Nobody can see you till you done git to de top ob de hill," replied the negro; and what he said was plain enough to the officers.

Kentucky has a considerable variety of surface, the eastern part being hilly and even mountain-

ous, though none of the elevations are more than three thousand feet high. The western part of the State consists of the "barrens," as they are called; though they are not so barren as the name would seem to indicate, and they are only less fertile than the hilly regions nearer to the Ohio River. Portions of this region are what would be called rolling country in some of the more northern States. There are but few elevations which could be classed as hills, for hardly one of them is fifty feet high.

But on the barrens are a great many "oak knobs," which are, as said before, low, round-topped elevations, which take their name from the trees that grow on them. They are high enough to conceal a mounted man from observation, but not lofty enough to be looked upon as hills which reach up to the height of two thousand feet, the dividing line between a hill and mountain. This is a distinction which was in vogue many years ago, and it may not be generally regarded at the present time. Of these knobs, Deck and Life had seen them farther east when on a scouting expedition in the first service of the Riverlawn squadron.

The two officers followed Snowball up the hill, which was hardly entitled to the name, for in walking half a mile they had hardly ascended one hundred feet. It was a farming country, and of reasonable fertility, as the strangers observed the still unharvested crops of hemp and tobacco. Deck counted five oak knobs in the fields around him, the tallest of which was at the turn of the road to the left leading to the miller's house, and at the right of it they could see the water of Greeger Lake.

“We must not go much farther on this road, or we shall show ourselves to the enemy camped on the other side of the lake,” suggested Deck, when they had gone far enough to see a portion of the sheet of water.

“No, sar; dey can't see you, fur de knob before you hide you from dem,” said the negro, who doubtless knew the exact location of the camp.

The officers kept on up the gentle slope for a few minutes longer, looking sharply on each side of the knoll for any appearance of the guerillas; but they came to the obstruction to their vision without seeing them. The captain peered with

the utmost care along the side of the knob at the left, while the major did the same at the right.

“They are eating their breakfast,” said Life, as he discovered a squad of them close to the water, in which a flatboat was floating close by the shore.

“What is that boat for, Snowball?” he asked.

“Dey make missus cook de meal fur dem, and Sam tote it ober to ’em in de boat,” answered the negro.

“Who is Sam?”

“Anoder nigger,” grinned Snowball.

“They have evidently about finished the meal,” said Deck. “Sam is picking up the pans and dishes, and putting them into the boat.”

They were lighting their pipes and cigars, and seemed to be inclined to stay where they were till they had had their smoke. Deck was willing; and he drew some paper from his pocket, placed his cap on the knob, and then the sheet on the cap. Hastily he made a sketch of the lake and its surroundings, including the roads, the house of the miller, and even the knobs.

“All right, Deck; that is precisely what the

colonel will want, and it will give him the situation better than half an hour's talk," said Life, when he saw what the major was doing. "But I must go down to the road, and send word to Colonel Gordon what we have discovered;" and with long strides he began to descend the slope. When he reached the main road he found the column was in sight. Then he went to the knoll where the men and horses were concealed, and mounting his steed rode out into the highway, and without pausing an instant, galloped towards the approaching force.

"Where is Major Lyon?" demanded the commander, fearful that some calamity had overtaken him.

"He is all right. We found the enemy camped on the side of Greeger Lake, taking their breakfast. The major is making a drawing of the place and what there is about it. We shall find him by the time we get to the road by which we leave this one," replied Life briskly; but the column did not halt, and increased its speed as the captain took his place at the head of his company.

Deck did not take any time to polish up his

sketch; but as soon as he had finished the drawing, he marked upon it the positions in which he thought the different portions of the command ought to be placed. He judged that the lake was a mile and a half long, and half a mile wide. It was not a natural body of water. The elevation on each side of it had probably suggested to Mr. Greeger, whoever he was, that a mill-pond could be made between them. At what was now the foot of the lake, a high dam had been constructed of a kind of stone found near it on the creek which had flowed through the valley; and the original owner had very successfully carried out his idea. After he built it, Deck learned from Price, he had raised the dam about ten feet, and it had made a sheet of water large enough to be dignified by the name of "lake."

Price said the dam was now twenty feet high, and the mill stood by it. It had been placed so low that the power had never failed even in the driest times. The mill was reached by a road passing the house of the owner; and a bridge had been built over the dam, to enable the miller, who was also a farmer, to reach his fields on the other

side of the lake. The road by which the two officers had reached the knob where their observations had been made also extended around the lake, passing a high bridge over the creek. There was no road on the opposite side of the lake, where the enemy had camped; but the slope of the hill was smooth, and grass grew upon it for several rods from the water.

When Deck had finished the positions on his plan, he hastened down to the main road, but found that the column had moved half-way up the hill, to make sure that the guerillas should not escape. He handed his plan to the colonel, who examined it carefully, and then approved even the positions. A surprise was out of the question in such an open country, and the column advanced at full speed.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE ENGAGEMENT AT GREEGER LAKE

THE column completed the ascent of the gradual slope. Near the knob at the turn of the road to the house and the mill, the fence was torn away, and the battery went into the field on the right of the road, crossed it to another knob at the eastern end of the lake, where it unlimbered the guns, and Major Batterson placed them on each side of the hemispheric elevation, just as Deck had marked their position on the plan.

Major Truman's battalion passed the rest of the column, as it had the farthest to go to its position, and galloped along the road that led by the miller's house, crossed the bridge near the mill, and reached its station on the other side. As the squadron had been reduced to three companies by the leaving of Captain Ripley's company at Millersville, and as the position was more isolated than any other, Captain Knox's

company had been added to Major Truman's command.

Major Belthorpe's battalion was sent by the road which led around the east end of the lake over the high bridge, to a knob just beyond the creek. Colonel Gordon and Major Bornwood stationed themselves at the knob where Deck had made his sketch of the lake and its surroundings. He had marked the stations of the various portions of the force just as any military man of any experience at all would have placed them, and there was no especial skill required to do so. The colonel found no reason to change any of them, and had only filled the vacancy in Truman's battalion, and added Captain Artie's company to Major Belthorpe's, leaving Major Lyon's command with only three companies; but as it was to be the reserve, it was not required to be as strong as the other divisions.

The appearance of the battery at the head of the column had disturbed the guerillas in the enjoyment of their smoke, and they were mounting their horses with all possible haste. They formed in six companies, and looked about them

with a bewildered gaze as Major Batterson unlimbered his guns. They were armed with muskets and sabres, and seemed to be very well equipped. The captain of the company on the left of the line wheeled and fired a volley at the battery; but it was a wasted volley, for the company was about half a mile distant from it, and doubtless the firearms were of the inferior quality the Riverlawns had found in the hands of the other similar forces with which they had contended.

The battery was hardly in position before the second battalion, under Major Belthorpe, arrived at the knob on the left of the enemy; and by this time the command of the junior major had crossed the bridge by the mill, and all the force were in their positions, Major Lyon's three companies having formed in the road between the battery and the knob at the junction of the roads, which had now become the headquarters of the colonel.

"This is all very well arranged," said Colonel Gordon, as he glanced at his command in various parts of the field.

“Major Lyon placed the force exceedingly well; and if he don’t become a brigadier-general within another year, he will not obtain the rank to which his merit entitles him,” replied Major Bornwood.

“I am disposed to give the major all the credit to which he is entitled, — and he is always entitled to a large share of it, — but almost any sergeant in this force could have done it just as well,” added the commander. “I don’t see how any military man could have done it in a different way.”

“Admirable as it is, it looks easy enough when it is done; but I think it was quite possible for any officer to make a blunder in arranging the attack,” said the staff-officer; and he proceeded to state how the dispositions of the troops might have been differently made. He felt that the victory was certain to be on the side of the loyal force, and he was almost sure that the enemy would all be captured.

Major Batterson had been ordered to open upon the guerillas as soon as he had his guns in position, three on each side of the knob, with shells.

And when all was ready for action, the conflict began by the whizzing of the first of these missiles through the air in a graceful curve, the fuse so well timed that it burst directly over the heads of the enemy, and not far above them. A minute later another shell followed the first, which burst nearer the ground, scattering its contents among the ruffians; and several of them dropped from their saddles.

The enemy were panic-stricken at this rude opening upon them, and they began to fall back up the slope of the hill, which seemed to them to be the only way open to them for retreat; but they had only begun to move, when Major Belthorpe's battalion, the head of his column some distance above the knob, dashed into the tobacco-field, and galloped across it, till it was halted abreast of the middle of the lake. Starting at about the same moment, Major Truman dashed up the slope on the enemy's right, and galloped at a furious speed, with Captain Knox's company at the head of the column, till it halted at the head of the line of the second battalion; but the left of it was still near the mill.

The two columns were extended in a curved line from the knob to a point near the mill, the centre of it far enough back from the lake to be out of the reach of the shells. When the retreating guerillas found this line of cavalry moving with exceeding briskness in their rear, they halted; for this avenue of escape seemed to be closed to them, unless they fought their way through the column. Still the shells were pouring in on them at intervals of one minute, and the guerillas were falling from their saddles dead or badly wounded. But the enemy had become desperate by this time. Their only hope of escape from the death-dealing shells was by cutting their way through the line which had formed for the charge.

Colonel Gordon and his companion at the first knob, as they called it to distinguish it from the other two included in the field of operations, were using their field-glasses in examining the enemy. They were especially looking for the officers in command of the body, particularly for the commander. They readily identified the captains, for each of them was with his company;

but so far they had been unable to find the chief of the body, if there was such a personage among them.

“Perhaps there is no officer corresponding to the commander of a battalion,” suggested the staff-officer.

“There must be some one in chief command, some Squire Cameron, unless he is sleeping off the whiskey he drank before his breakfast,” replied the colonel.

In front of the miller’s house his whole family, including several black men and women, were gathered to witness the conflict. Snowball had wandered up as far as the first knob, and was watching the affair with the most intense interest.

“Snowball, who is that man coming this way from the house?” asked Colonel Gordon, who had spoken to him before.

“Dat’s Mars’r Price, de miller; he lib in dat house yender,” replied the negro.

“Do you know of how much money the guerrillas robbed him?”

“No, Mars’r Ossifer; he don’t tole me.”

But the miller himself was coming, and he could answer the question.

There was a pause in the conflict after the fourth gun of the battery had delivered its shell; for the guerillas in their desperation had evidently decided to cut their way through the column in their rear, and they had approached so near the Union force that they were now out of danger from the shells. The battalions did not charge; for the majors were sure that they would drive the enemy before them to the lake, and thus bring their men within the scope of the shells. But Major Batterson had stopped his firing when he saw the situation on the slope. The colonel wrote an order to him to cease firing till he received further orders, though the Riverlawn officers did not know it; and thus the assault seemed to be "hung up" for the present.

The commander also sent a mounted orderly to the majors on the other side of the lake, with the information that he had ordered the battery to cease firing. By this time the miller had reached the first knob, and the colonel desired to obtain some information from him. Mr. Price

was a man of middle age, who talked and acted like a person of sound sense.

“I am glad to see you, Mr. Price,” said the colonel when he came within speaking distance.

“Well, I reckon I’m glad to see you; and I wish you had been here early this morning, for I have been robbed of all the money I had in the world, and these imps of Satan have loaded the two wagons you see on the other side of the pond with grain and flour from my mill. I reckon you are in command of the soldiers here,” replied the miller.

“This is Colonel Gordon, commanding the Riverlawn Cavalry and the battery attached to it,” interposed Major Bornwood by way of introduction.

“Of how much money did the guerillas rob you, Mr. Price?” asked the colonel.

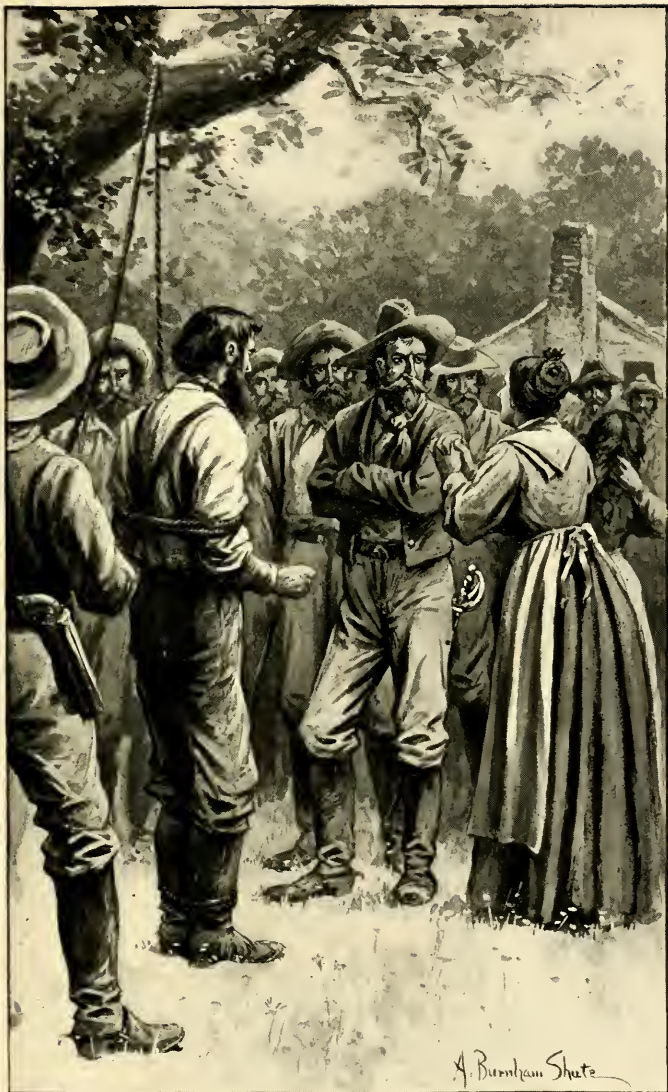
“As near as I can remember, I had two hundred and forty-six dollars in gold and some silver in the pocket-book I had to give up to the head of the imps,” answered the owner of the mill.

“You had to give it up, you say?”

“Yes, sir; I had it hid away under the floor in the garret of my house yonder,” he answered, as he pointed to his residence. “The head of the gang said he would hang me till I was dead if I did not give it up; and they took me to a tree on the farm, and threw a rope over one of the limbs. I thought I would stick it out, and let them hang me, for I didn’t like to lose so much money in just that way; but my wife and daughter begged so hard for me to give in, that I did so at last.”

“Do you think they would have hung you?” inquired the colonel.

“I reckon they would, for I know they did such a thing over in Elkton. The head of the gang went with me to the garret of the house; and I took up the board where it was hid, and gave him the pocket-book. He counted the money, and said it was all right. A man over in Trenton paid me two hundred dollars for flour a few days ago to send South, and he must have told this robber that he did so. I wouldn’t take no Confederate bills for it; and he paid me in gold, or he wouldn’t have got the flour.”



A. Burnham Shute

THEY THREW A ROPE OVER ONE OF THE LIMBS

“You sell flour to go South, and I conclude you are a Secessionist yourself,” suggested the colonel very mildly.

“No, Colonel Gordon, I’m not,” replied Mr. Price. “But living where I do, it is hard to be a Union man. I mind my own business, keep my views to myself; but I believe in the old Union, and if I were a young man without a large family to support, I would enlist in the Union army.”

“When my officers met Snowball in the road, he told them he was going over to Franklin for the Home Guard. Did you send him on that errand?”

“I did; and between you and me, I belong to that company, and had a right to call upon it for help. I served in the company when it went over to Hickory Flat to save a Union man’s property from being burned by a mob of Secessionists.”

Major Bornwood interviewed Snowball in regard to the truth of this last statement; and the negro confirmed it, and said he went with his master, and carried his rifle over for him. The

colonel and the staff-officer concluded then that the miller had told the truth.

“Do you know who commands this gang of ruffians, Mr. Price?” asked the colonel, dropping the other matter.

“I don’t know him; but I heard some of the other imps call him Major Gossley, as I understood the name.”

“All right, Mr. Price. Where is that tree of which you spoke?”

“It is over by that knob, with the rope still hanging from the limb,” replied the miller.

“I see it. Don’t remove the rope from it; for we may want to use it, though I hope not. I think we can restore to you all the property you have lost, as you are a member of a Home Guard, and not of a State Guard.”

“I shall feel happy if I get my money back,” added Mr. Price, who saw that the commander “meant business” in his own line, and he had become quite cheerful.

By this time the mounted orderly had delivered his information to the majors on the other side of the lake. The effect was immediately per-

ceived. The column had formed in double line, and suddenly "stiffened up" from the apathy of waiting for the movement. Suddenly it dashed forward upon the line of guerillas, making a tremendous charge. But the enemy consisted of fighting men, it was evident; and they stood their ground with decided firmness.

Both officers at the first mound used their glasses, and they saw that a furious fight had been inaugurated. Life's company of giant Kentuckians near the centre of the line made short work of the pygmy Southerners in front of them; and in a few moments they had hewn their way entirely through the enemy's column, driving before them all who were not killed or wounded. The other captains went into the fight at the head of their companies; and the enemy began to give way, for they were outnumbered in the ratio of two to three, even with three companies of the Union force not engaged.

When Life made his break into the ranks of the guerillas, the major suggested that one company of the reserve be sent over to follow him up; but the colonel declined to do so. Then

both of the observers mounted their horses, and rode over to the second knob, where the battery was, passing Major Lyon's battalion on the way. The Union line had pressed the enemy so hard that it had driven the guerillas nearly to the border of the lake.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE GIBBET-TREE BY THE KNOB

As soon as Colonel Gordon reached the second knob he ordered Major Batterson to load his guns with canister; but as two of them were charged with shells, they were permitted to be used as prepared. The commander sent one of the two orderlies who followed him wherever he went, to summon Major Lyon to his presence.

“The next movement of the enemy is apparent,” said the colonel as soon as Deck saluted him. “You will march your battalion to the south side of the lake, and post them near the water in front of the knob and tree there; then wait for further orders.”

Deck saluted, and then hastened to his command, ordering the captains to move their companies at a gallop to the point directed by the colonel. The Riverlawns on the north side of the lake were still pressing the enemy, now within

ten rods of the water. On the shore of the lake was an officer dressed in a curious uniform, with gilt leaves on his shoulders; and the commander concluded that this was Major Gossley, in command of the guerillas. He was full six feet high; and if his pluck were equal to his bulk, he would not permit the engagement to go against him while it was possible to save the day. He was mounted on a horse much larger than most of those that carried his followers.

Colonel Gordon observed him very closely. He was doing his best to rally the companies as they yielded to the tremendous charges of the River-lawns; but his efforts seemed to be practically useless, for the ruffians still fell back towards the lake, and he could not check the retreat of his force. This was before Major Lyon's command had been ordered to the south side of the lake. A few minutes later the colonel sent off the orderly for Deck; but before the major could reach the position assigned to the first battalion, the guerillas broke completely, and fled to the lake.

Gossley evidently ordered the battalion to swim

their horses over the pond to the other side; and in a very few minutes all of his companies had waded into the water, which was shallow near the shore. The Riverlawns were disposed to follow them, and fight it out to a finish in the lake. Colonel Gordon did not believe in this step; for there was no necessity of making an aquatic engagement of it, when there was plenty of land around for the purpose. He rode to the most exposed place on the shore near the second knob; and drawing his sabre, he waved it from left to right, as a signal for the line to move back.

At the same time he sent a message to Major Belthorpe not to swim the lake, and to send the companies of Captains Gadsbury and Barnes to the other side, where Deck's battalion had just appeared. The officers with the troopers pressing the enemy into the lake evidently understood the signal of the colonel, and moved their men back from the water. The two companies sent for soon appeared, and the captains were directed to report to Major Lyon.

Major Gossley, who was no major at all, took to the water himself, as he had doubtless ordered

his command to do. As soon as the horses were clear of the shore, and the Riverlawns had fallen back about ten rods from it, Colonel Gordon ordered Major Batterson to open fire upon the enemy, using the two shells first.

“I am going over to the south side of the pond now, Major,” said he. “When I hoist my cap on the end of my sword, you will cease firing.”

The colonel had a blood horse under him, and he galloped at a furious speed to the south shore. He had not reached the first knob when the roar of the cannon and the whizzing of the shell engaged his attention; and without decreasing the gait of his steed, he watched the effect. Only three saddles were emptied, though doubtless several other guerillas had been wounded. The second shell followed with about the same effect. The third shot sent a charge of canister into the midst of the swimming body, and the result was more destructive. A panic had taken possession of the guerillas. Some of them swam their steeds back to the shore they had just left, and were made prisoners as soon as they landed.

Major Gossley was urging forward his horse;

and if ever a man was alarmed, he was. He was making signals to the troopers on the shore, and especially to Colonel Gordon, who had taken a place by the side of Major Lyon on the shore. He was swinging his cap in the air.

“What does he mean by that, Deck?” asked the colonel.

“I’m sure I don’t know,” replied the major.

Finding that his signals were not understood, or were not heeded, he shouted something in a loud voice, which neither officers nor soldiers could make out. The guns continued to pour canister into the guerillas, who were still dropping from their saddles into the water. When the demoralized horde had reached the middle of the lake, a bright suggestion seemed to come into the head of the leader. He drew his sword, which had before been a useless weapon to him, and grasping it in the middle of the blade, he extended it with the handle towards the shore, and kept it moving up and down.

“It is easy enough to understand that,” said the colonel, as he took off his cap, drew his sabre, and hoisted it in the air as high as he could

reach, making the signal in which he had instructed Major Batterson. The artillery officer had been on the lookout for it, and had directed Lieutenants Walker, Castleton, and Phillips to do the same; for he thought it was time to cease firing at the miserable villains in the water. It was promptly seen, and not another gun was fired. An orderly was sent to Major Belthorpe, and a second to Major Truman, with orders to move to the south side of the lake; for the battle had been fought and won.

When the firing ceased, after the surrender of the chief by signal, the guerillas in the water made better headway towards the shore. But some of them were wounded so badly that they could not manage their horses.

The boat in which Sam had carried the breakfast over to the guerillas was at the shore, and Deck sent a couple of men in it to assist those who were unable to care for themselves. But little could be done with a single flatboat compared with the need. There was a large pile of lumber on the shore, with which the miller intended to erect an out-building; and Deck ordered

Captain Barnes to have a raft built by his men, and sent to the rescue of the others. The miller, with his negroes, assisted in this work.

“Do you know what Gossley did with the pocket-book when you gave it to him, Mr. Price?” asked the colonel when he met the miller.

“I do know, for I saw him put it into the pocket inside of his vest,” replied Price.

In the course of another half-hour the guerillas had all landed, and were disarmed by the troopers as they came on the shore. Gossley, as soon as he made out the colonel, presented his sword to him. The commander took it, and intimated that he had some further business with the chief, which must be disposed of before anything else could be done. The guerilla chief asked the colonel if he had any whiskey near; and the latter replied that no liquor was used in the command except on prescription of the doctor.

“I am informed by Mr. Price that you robbed him of a large sum of money,” continued the colonel; “that you threatened to hang him to that tree if he did not give it up.”

“That’s my affair, and I reckon I have nothing to say about it,” replied Gossley, as he placed his hand on his chest, as if to assure himself that the pocket-book was safe where he had placed it.

“I shall take the liberty to make it my affair also,” added the commander. “I will trouble you to return the money to Mr. Price, from whom you took it.”

“I will not do it!” exclaimed Gossley, folding his arms, and struggling to look dignified.

“Then I shall be obliged to require one of Mr. Price’s negroes to take from your dead body, at the foot of that tree yonder, the pocket-book in your inside vest pocket,” said Colonel Gordon, pointing to the tree with the rope still dangling from one of its limbs.

“What do you mean, sir?” demanded Gossley, with a heavy frown on his brow, and straightening still more his tall form.

“I think you can understand what I mean without any elaborate explanations,” replied the officer.

“I do not understand you, Colonel, for I suppose that is what you are” —

“That is what I am.”

“If you will explain what you meant by that remark about the negro at the foot of that tree, I shall be obliged to you. I am an officer like yourself, sir; and I am entitled to an explanation.”

“Have you a commission from the Confederate government, or any other authority?”

“I have no commission except that signed by the six captains of my companies.”

“That is no commission at all; and I look upon you as simply the chief of a gang of guerillas, with no authority to make war against the United States, and certainly not upon peaceable citizens like Mr. Price.”

“What makes you an officer if I am not one?” demanded the chief, with an expression of countenance implying contempt.

“The commission of the best government that God ever permitted to exist, — the United States of America,” returned the colonel with sufficient energy to emphasize his reply.

“God will not permit it to exist much longer, for it is already split in twain,” sneered the guerilla chief.

“With a million men in the field, and more millions behind them, the rebellion will be crushed in due time. But you have not even the authority of your unrecognized government. I will not debate this matter with such a person as you are,” said Colonel Gordon, who veiled his contempt for the man beneath a dignified countenance.

“Then, will you tell me what you meant by the remark I asked you to explain?” demanded the freebooter chief.

“I will if your understanding is not equal to the interpretation of it,” answered the loyal officer; and all the majors and some of the captains listened to him with intense satisfaction. “After you had searched and plundered the house of Mr. Price, and you could not find the money you had been informed was paid to him, you brought him to that tree, and put the rope that still hangs there about his neck. You threatened to hang him if he did not give up the two hundred and forty-six dollars he happened to have at the time, and which he had concealed in the garret of his house,” continued the colonel, re-

hearsing the events of the morning as the miller had related them to him. "Have I stated the case correctly?"

"I suppose you have," replied Gossley doggedly.

"Very well; and as you decline to return the money to its legal owner, I propose to serve you in the same manner, and not to waste any more time about it."

"Do the Yankee officers hang their prisoners?" asked the guerilla chief, with an expression on his ruddy face that he had put a "clincher" to the colonel.

"Not when they are soldiers; but when they are freebooters, highwaymen, acting without even the authority of the so-called Confederate government, they may do so as a measure of just retaliation, as in the present instance."

"I hung no man," said Gossley, as doggedly as before.

"But you had the rope around the neck of your intended victim, and would have done so, as the highwayman takes the purse of the peaceful traveller at the point of the revolver. But I will

talk no more about it. Captain Knox," said the colonel, as he saw Life near him with his mouth half open listening to the conversation.

Life stepped briskly forward, and saluted the colonel, realizing that he was to take part in an act of retributive justice.

"Captain Knox, take this man over to that tree by the knob, and put the rope dangling from it around his neck. At the order from me, your men will walk away with the other end of the rope, and swing him up," said Colonel Gordon very deliberately. The commander ordered the first four of his company to assist their captain. "Mr. Gossley, if you have any prayers to say, I will wait five minutes for you to complete your devotions. That is a favor you did not extend to Mr. Price."

"No, he did not," added the miller.

"Are you in earnest, Colonel Gordon?" demanded the chief.

"I am in earnest; and as sure as there is a good and just God in heaven, I will have you hanged on that tree till you are dead, if you do not return to Mr. Price the pocket-book you stole

from him; and it must be done before the rope is put around your neck, for then it will be too late," exclaimed the commander.

"The money is mine now; I will not give it up," said the guerilla.

"Take him away, Captain Knox," added the commander.

Gossley held back as though he intended to resist; and Life seized him by the collar of his coat, one of his men taking him on the other side. They dragged him to the tree, the miller following them, calling Snowball to go with him. The victim was actually trembling with terror in spite of the bold face he had put upon the situation. Before they reached the tree Gossley said something to the man on his right, and then drew the pocket-book from the inside pocket. The tall Kentuckian halted.

CHAPTER XXX

DISCIPLINING THE GUERILLA CHIEF

THE man on the right of the prisoner had loosened his hold so that Gossley could take the pocket-book from the inside pocket of his vest. The moment Life saw it, he released his hold upon the intended victim, whose nerves were not strong enough to enable him to bear the strain upon them. The colonel had assured him that it would be too late after the rope had been put around his neck, and he had taken time by the forelock before he reached the tree. Possibly at his last refusal to give up the money he had some hope that his gang would come to his assistance; but there were half a dozen companies of Union cavalry between them and the gibbet, and his men were prudent enough not to interfere with the proceedings.

Gossley tendered the pocket-book to Captain Knox, who declined to take it, very much to the

astonishment of Gossley, who was still shaking with terror.

“Do you mean to hang me, though I have offered to give up the pocket-book with the money in it?” demanded the prisoner.

“It was the colonel’s order that you return the money to Mr. Price,” replied Life. “My business was only to hang you, and I have nothing to do with the pocket-book. If you are ready to give it back to him, we will return to Colonel Gordon, and let him see you do it.”

“I am ready to give it up, but you need not mortify me any more,” pleaded the victim, who had some pride left in him.

Life made no reply except by a chuckle at the idea of mortifying such “carrion,” as he had called him more than once in his conversation with Lieutenant Shapley; and he grasped his man by the collar again, his assistant following his example. They led him back to the position of the colonel, who had observed the proceedings with intense interest, for he would have rejoiced to escape what he regarded as his solemn duty.

“What now, Captain Knox?” asked Colonel

Gordon, as the prisoner was halted in front of him.

“He offered the pocket-book to me; but I would not take it, for you ordered that he should return it to Mr. Price,” replied the Kentuckian.

“Mr. Gossley, Mr. Price is still here. If you wish to return the money you stole from him, now is your time,” said the commander. “Otherwise the hanging will proceed as ordered before.”

“That captain might as well have taken it when I offered it to him,” answered the intended victim.

“I always obey orders,” added Life.

The guerilla walked over to the spot where the miller was standing, and doggedly tendered the pocket-book to him; and he was glad enough to see it again. His neck bore the marks of the rope that had been put around it, and he had lived longer that day than in any former year. He took his treasure, and then walked up to the colonel with it in his hand.

“Open it, Mr. Price, and count your money; if any of it is missing, the rope may still be wanted.”

The miller seated himself on a log, and pro-

ceeded to count the gold and the other money. He was quite interested in the operation, for he was afraid the robber had appropriated some portion of it. He went over it twice, and then reported that one half-eagle was gone; but the silver and the bills were all right.

“Am I to be hung for five dollars?” demanded Gossley, filled with indignation; and he began to feel about in the pocket where the proceeds of the robbery had been placed.

“I hope not,” replied the commander; and he was sincere in what he said.

At that moment Gossley took from the pocket the missing coin, and handed it to the miller.

“I did not mean to keep that piece!” protested the guerilla, evidently believing it was not too late to hang him. “The piece must have dropped out of the pocket-book.”

“I don’t believe you did intend to keep it, Mr. Gossley, for your present conduct proves that you did not,” added Colonel Gordon, as he asked the miller to show him the receptacle for his gold.

The commander looked at it, and found that the pocket where the gold was had an opening of

half its width at one end; and he told the miller it was not a suitable place to keep his money, except the bills; a shot-bag was much better.

“Are you satisfied now, Mr. Price?” he asked.

“Of course I am; for I expected I should never see my money again,” replied the miller. “I have lost enough without having my money, all I had in the world, stolen from me.”

“What else have you lost, Mr. Price?”

“The villains took a clock that cost me thirty dollars, and two revolvers from my chamber,” answered the miller.

“Where are the clock and the revolvers, Mr. Gossley?” demanded the colonel imperatively.

“I reckon the clock is in one of the wagons on the other side of the pond, and I don’t know where the revolvers are. I suppose they will make another hanging case,” replied the guerilla chief, frowning and looking ugly. “I haven’t got them; but I suppose some of my men took them, and they did not bring them to me.”

“I shall not hang you on account of the weapons; but they must be given up. What else have you lost, Mr. Price?”

“I don't know; but the women-folks can tell you.”

“Send for them.”

The wife and daughter of the miller, with several smaller children, were gathered near the knob, watching the proceedings, and Snowball was sent for them. They mentioned several articles that had been taken from the house, and a memorandum was made of them. A squad from one of the companies was sent over for the two wagons, which had stood all the forenoon with the mules harnessed to them. The guerillas were formed in line, dismounted, and then a searching-party was sent along the lines, who required every man to show what he had in his pockets. Revolvers were found on two of the guerillas, who insisted that they had brought them from Tennessee, from whence they came.

The weapons stolen from the house belonged to Mr. Price, who was sent for to examine them. One of them, he claimed, belonged to him; and he mentioned a file mark upon them before he saw them. Lieutenant Fronklyn, who was in charge of the searching-party, declared that one of them

belonged to the miller, and the other did not. No one could say that the search had not been fairly conducted. On a member of another company a revolver was discovered upon which the same marks were found, and it was returned to the owner. Other members of the several companies had most of the articles mentioned by the wife and daughter of the miller and noted in the schedule, and they were taken from the plunderers. In fact, nearly everything in the list was reclaimed, to the great delight of the family.

The examination of the contents of the wagons was the next thing in order; and the clock was found, carefully packed in the straw at the bottom of the vehicle. The grain and flour which had been stolen from the mill were unloaded, and several other articles belonging to the family were discovered when they were removed. Mrs. Price declared that they had recovered everything of any consequence that had been taken from the house, and the miller had obtained all the grain and flour he had lost.

The guerillas had been required to take all their wounded to a hospital which had been estab-

lished near the knoll on the other side of the lake. There was a surgeon belonging to the lawless gang; and with the assistance of Dr. Farnwright, the sufferers had been cared for. There were many dead ruffians collected near the dam at the lower end of the lake, and the prisoners were compelled to bury them in a spot indicated by the miller.

Long as it has taken to narrate the incidents of the forenoon, it was not much after noon when the work seemed to be completed. The wagon-train of the loyal force had been halted in the road leading from the highway. The haversacks of the Riverlawns were well filled with provisions; but Mr. Price, who had butchered an ox the day before, insisted upon cooking a meal for the men who had rendered such valuable service to him, and his wife and daughter had been at work upon it since eleven o'clock. The officers were invited to the house, and served with an abundance of beefsteaks, rye and wheat biscuits, and other solid food. As fast as the women could prepare it, the same food was sent out to the men; and they all fared substantially, though

not elegantly, that day, after the active employment and the march of the morning.

“Where shall my men get their dinner, Colonel Gordon?” asked Gossley, after he had seen the loyal troops so well fed.

“I don’t know; I am not the caterer of your gang,” replied the commander.

“Won’t you order Price to get a dinner such as your men have had, for my soldiers?” he asked.

“No, sir; I will not!” answered Colonel Gordon very decidedly. “Your men are not soldiers, they are nothing but brigands; and I will do nothing to assist in feeding them, for I have been informed that there is plenty of pork, bacon, and corn-bread in your wagons.”

“But that is rather hard fare for my men after seeing yours fed with beefsteaks, potatoes, and biscuits.”

“Good enough for banditti,” answered the colonel.

“This is not generous, Colonel.”

“Perhaps not; but I mean to be just before I am generous. A word more, and perhaps about the last I shall have to say to you. You will feed

your men, if you intend to do so, at once; and at three o'clock they will march for Franklin, with my force in their rear. If they do not behave themselves properly, and keep in the direct road, I will open upon them with the guns of my battery," said Colonel Gordon in the emphatic speech he used when the occasion required.

"You drive us before you to Franklin, then?" asked the chief.

"I certainly shall not leave you here where you can undo all that I have done to-day, and rob Mr. Price of his money, his grain, and his flour, as you did early this morning," replied the commander. "I was sent here by the general of the Department to dispose of six hundred guerillas; and I think I have done my work well so far, and I don't intend to leave it half done."

"I see that you have no more consideration for my men than you would have for the same number of mules."

"Mules are respectable animals compared with the banditti you have brought over here to kill and plunder the people of this section of the country. The consideration you and your gang need is the

gallows, or long terms of imprisonment; and if the civil government were in working order in this part of Kentucky, I should hand you over, especially the officers, to the consideration of the sheriff and jurors. But enough has been said; you have nothing to expect or hope for from me. If your men are not fed and ready to march at three o'clock, they will move on empty stomachs."

"What is to be done with us when we get to Franklin?" asked Gossley.

"I don't know, and I have nothing more to say," replied the colonel, as he stretched himself on the grass by the knob, to rest himself after the fatigue of the day. The quartermaster of the gang distributed bacon and corn-bread to the companies, and they dined upon their own fare. The loyal cavalymen had fed their horses and mules, and they were ready to move before the time named by the commander. The ruffians did not take much interest in their dinner, and some of them were seen to throw their rations into the lake. At a quarter before three the bugles sounded, and the companies of prisoners, for such they really were, were required to form

in column of fours; but they were in a rebellious state of mind, and Captain Knox was sent to regulate them. Many of them were brought to their senses by blows with the flat of the sabre, and they were finally in condition to march. But it was decided finally, after they had behaved themselves badly at the camp, to send Major Belthorpe's battalion on ahead of them to keep them in order.

"What can I do with them finally, Major Bornwood?" asked the colonel.

"They are an elephant on your hands," replied the staff-officer. "You have disarmed them, so that they can't do any more mischief. Didn't I hear that there was a Home Guard in Franklin, or in that vicinity?"

"There is such a body here, for Price told me that he was a member of it," returned the colonel.

"Then I advise you to do as you did in Millersville, — turn them over to this body."

"I will do so if they will take them; but this town is only a few miles distant from Greeger Lake, and the ruffians would return and do their work there over again. I advised Price not to

have any money in his house ; and I believe there is a bank in Franklin. However, we have done all we could for him, and we cannot remain here to protect him. We will see what we can do with the ruffians when we reach our present destination.”

The prisoners made no little trouble on the march, a whole company bolting into the field, attempting to escape. But Captain Abbey's command was sent after them, and fired into them with their carbines. Then they were surrounded and driven back. In a couple of hours the force reached Franklin ; and Major Bornwood hastened to the post-office, where he obtained several letters for himself and others.

CHAPTER XXXI

MAJOR LYON'S MARCH INTO TENNESSEE

MAJOR LYON received three letters, the most important of which was from his father, who declared that he had entirely recovered from his wound, and his doctor considered him in fit condition to return to duty. He intended to start the following morning for Franklin, in company with Banks, his orderly, who had been left at Somerset to assist in taking care of him. Deck reported this news to Captain Artie, who happened to be near him; and they rejoiced together that their father was restored to his usual excellent health.

Another letter was from his sister Hope, now fifteen years old. She told him all about everything at Riverlawn, and all were well. He passed this one to his brother, and turned to the third. As soon as he recognized the handwriting, he put it in his pocket; it was from Kate Belthorpe, and

he preferred to read it in the quiet of his tent. It was not very often that he received a letter from her, and those he did get were simply friendly epistles; for Deck was a bashful young man, and he would not have dared to write what is called a love-letter, though he did a great deal of pleasant thinking over his relations with the young lady whom he had rescued from the clutch of a ruffian during the exciting scenes which preceded the mustering-in of the two original companies of the Riverlawn Cavalry.

The guerilla band, hardly numbering five hundred men since the affair at Greeger Lake, had been camped in a field just outside the town, with one company from each battalion acting as a guard over them. It was still the third day of September when the force arrived in Franklin, and it had not yet been decided what should be done with them. They were a crowd of reckless ruffians, such as the Riverlawns had encountered before, the meanest of the "white trash" that could be collected in a Southern State; and it was not prudent to turn them loose upon the country. They were ready to plunder any plantation that

would afford them a harvest, without regard to the politics of the owner.

Mr. Price was fearful that they would be set free, and make another visit to the lake. He rode over to Franklin late in the day to satisfy himself, and had deposited his money in the safe of the bank. Colonel Gordon could not say what he should be obliged to do with the ruffians; but he would not release them unless he was obliged to do so in case he was attacked by a force of the enemy. He had allowed them to retain their two wagons, with the mules, after they had been lightened by the discharge of all the plundered property they contained. All their provisions of bacon and bread, and the few tents they had, were not disturbed.

When the tents for the force had been pitched on the field, Major Bornwood retired to the marquee occupied by the colonel and himself, and proceeded to read the voluminous despatches sent to him by order of the general. But they contained no order relating to the Riverlawns, except that they were to remain at Franklin till their destination should be given. When he had disposed

of them, Colonel Gordon, who had issued his orders for the night, joined him in the tent, expecting to be informed to what locality the regiment was to be sent; but the staff-officer had no orders for him except to remain where he was.

“No orders!” exclaimed the colonel, when the major had stated the fact. “I supposed we should be needed at some threatened point.”

“I had supposed so myself,” replied Major Bornwood. “But the general is in rather a harassing position. He is at Nashville, watching and collecting information in regard to the movements of General Bragg. The enemy’s objective point now is to get possession of the Ohio River, where they can menace Cincinnati, and capture Louisville. Kirby Smith’s army is moving in that direction. The general is in doubt whether Bragg intends to capture Nashville, or move across the State and take Louisville. All we can do is to wait for further developments.”

“How long are we to remain here, Major?” asked the colonel.

“Of course I don’t know any better than you do. The railroad and the telegraph are open to

Nashville, which is only about fifty miles from Franklin; and we may get an order at any hour of day or night to march."

"I don't seek to know what does not concern me, but I don't care to feed five hundred ruffian prisoners for a week or more," answered Colonel Gordon. "Their rations, poor as they are, will last them only a day or two longer, their quartermaster informed me this afternoon. If they were prisoners from the Confederate army I should not object."

"I see; and they are an elephant on your hands," added the major, musing.

"I have ordered Hickman, the quartermaster of our force, to purchase additional rations for our own force; and they are not readily to be obtained in this vicinity."

"You must get rid of them, for they are a nuisance to you," added the major.

"That is so; but how am I to get rid of them?" demanded the commander.

"Major Lyon informs me that he has a letter from his father, saying that he has fully recovered from his wound, and will rejoin the regiment in

two or three days. As the mails are rather slow, he may be expected at any time. I don't care to saddle this encumbrance of half a thousand prisoners upon him when he arrives."

"We are not ten miles from the Tennessee line; and I suggest that you send them into their own State, under escort of Major Lyon's battalion."

"As we are likely to remain here some days, that is an excellent idea; and I shall adopt it at once, for I am anxious to get rid of the nuisance, and I will start them off to-morrow morning," said the colonel, rubbing his hands to express his satisfaction with the remedy. "Sentinel, send for Major Lyon."

Deck soon made his appearance, and found the two officers in the tent studying the map on the table. He was informed of the mission that had been arranged for him, to which he did not object, as he never did to any order.

"But I am not clear that it is advisable to send the ruffians over the line at its nearest point, for the first town or village in Tennessee to which they would come to would be Fountain Head, which is not more than twelve or fifteen miles

from Franklin; and they could easily return, as they have their horses. Besides, the vanguard of Bragg's army may be coming this way about this time. I think it would be more prudent to send the villains to some point farther off, though it will make a longer march for Major Lyon."

"Never mind the length of the march," interposed Deck.

"Then, send him to Scottville, about twenty-five miles from here, and then turn to the south-east on the road to Lafayette, near which the major can turn them adrift, and let them shift for themselves," continued Major Bornwood, still studying the map. "The main thing is to get the rascals as far off as possible, and make sure that they don't return."

Deck had studied his map of this vicinity very carefully when the force halted at Palmyra the night before, and he knew the roads very well on both sides of the line. The duty would require a forty-mile march for his command; but he regarded this as of no account when he realized the importance of getting rid of the guerillas.

"I beg your pardon, Major Bornwood, but you

suggested that Bragg's army might be coming this way on his route to the north," interposed Deck. "He has not announced by what roads he will march, and isn't it possible that he may come by the way of Lafayette and Scottville?"

"Of course we don't know which way he will come, or even if he doesn't choose to enter Kentucky by Cumberland Gap. If you find him in front of you, Major, all you have to do is to give the vagabonds the slip, and put some miles between you and the enemy. Of course the cavalry will be in the advance."

"But you will not engage them, Major Lyon," said Colonel Gordon very decidedly.

"Certainly not, as I am so ordered," replied Deck, though he was very sorry to receive the command. "I have only one thing to request Colonel. I am liable, though not likely, to meet a force of the enemy; I shall ask that Captain Knox's company be added to my battalion."

"The request is granted," replied the commander, with a smile; for he knew how much the tall Kentuckian was attached to the young officer, and he thought it would be safer to have an ade-

quate force, for the ruffians, though unarmed, outnumbered his battalion.

The sentinels at the prison camp were instructed to allow no person to communicate with the guerillas during the night; and Major Truman, who was in charge of the camp, was directed to see that this order was strictly enforced. The ruffians were not to be informed what was to be done with them in the morning. But Deck made all his preparations for the march. The men were to take two days' rations with them, with not even a shelter tent; for it was early in September, and the climate was very pleasant. The guerillas were mustered in the morning by the battalion in charge of them, after they and their horses had had their breakfast. They had the provender for their animals in the two wagons with their rations.

The five companies in charge of them were placed in their front and rear, and Major Lyon gave the order to march. At two o'clock the column reached Scottville, after dinner on the road. They made no halt at this place, but took the road to the south without answering the ques-

tions of the inhabitants. The prisoners asked their custodians what was to be done with them whenever they had the opportunity ; but they were not answered, for Deck had ordered his command to have no communication with them.

At five o'clock in the afternoon they had made about twelve miles from Scottville, and came to the point where the road crossed Long Creek by a bridge. Major Lyon decided to camp on the bank of the stream. There was a piece of woods some distance from the camp, and he ordered that the horses of the prisoners should be picketed there. A guard of two companies surrounded the marauders, for Deck determined that he would not lose any of them after he had come so far. He was mindful of his orders to place them where they could not easily get back to the rich country they had pillaged before. The ruffians had blankets ; and, as soon as they had eaten their supper, they rolled themselves up, stretched out on the grass, and went to sleep. The darkness settled down upon the camp of the prisoners and of the command. But Deck did not lie down or go to sleep.

About ten o'clock, when the guerillas were sleeping as soundly as though they were in their last slumber, Deck walked on the bank of the creek to the limit of the camp of his force; and there he found Life Knox with about twenty of his men, all mounted. It was evident enough that something was on foot, but only Deck and Life could have told what it was.

"I did not have a good chance to explain what is needed to be done," said the commander of the force in a low tone to Captain Knox.

"I reckon I know from what you said to me just what is to be done," replied the captain. "I have enough of my best men to do it, and do it well. They shall all be turned loose in ten minutes."

"But that is not the most important part of the duty," added Deck.

"I know it is not; but my men shall drive them as far as the nature of the country will allow. I will make it five miles sure, and ten if I can."

"All right, Life; you understand the matter perfectly."

“I do; and I reckon none of those horses will ever drink any more water out of Greeger Lake,” replied the captain, as he left Deck and followed the stream to the place where his men were stationed.

He went at a gallop, and did not halt, but continued to run his horse along the stream, followed by all his men. Deck watched them for a few minutes till the darkness concealed them, and then he walked back to the camp of his battalion. The sentinels were wide awake, and nothing had been heard from the other camp. Everything seemed to be in good order and condition; and he rolled himself up in his blanket, stretched himself on the softest place he could find, and was soon asleep. There was no event to disturb him or his men, or even the prisoners, during the night.

At daylight the assembly sounded, and the command were soon on their feet. Deck had sent four scouts on the road toward Lafayette to give early notice if they discovered the approach of the head of the Confederate army of Bragg, or any other force; but the enemy did not appear. The major had suggested that the Southern army

might take the road by which he had come, at least as far as Scottville, while Major Bornwood seemed to think it would approach its northern destination by Gallatin and Franklin. It afterwards proved that Bragg did take the road by which Deck's command had come from Scottville, having crossed the Cumberland River at Carthage; but it was a week later than the major's march.

The men took their breakfast at an early hour from their haversacks, while the prisoners suited themselves in regard to the meal; but an order was sent to them to be ready to march by seven o'clock. The Riverlawn regiment was in column at that hour, and most of the men believed they were to march farther into the enemy's country. Major Lyon sat on his steed in the road; and great was the astonishment of the privates when Captain Abbey's company turned to the right instead of the left, for the former led back to Scottville, from which they had come the day before.

"Battalion, gallop!" shouted Deck as soon as all the companies were in the road; and the command soon disappeared at a bend of the highway.

CHAPTER XXXII

DECK RESORTS TO A "YANKEE TRICK"

WHEN the battalion had gone a couple of miles the speed was reduced; and Major Lyon placed himself at the side of Captain Knox, whom he had not seen since he met him the evening before on the bank of the stream, when it was evident that the big Kentuckian had a mission before him. The nature of the duty had not been stated in the camp. Twenty men had left the camp while most of the cavalrymen were asleep in their blankets; and as long as those awake were called, they did not trouble themselves about the matter.

"I haven't had any chance to report to you, Major Lyon," said Life, as soon as his superior officer was within speaking distance of him. "I had to keep so quiet that I could not talk to you without some one hearing me."

"It was all right, Life. I knew that you had done your work properly, as you always do; and I

did not care for any report from you," replied Deck in his familiar manner with the captain, for they were fast friends.

The major had been on secret service with him, and was indebted to him for the fidelity with which he had served him, as well individually as in the line of his duty. On the other hand, Life had joined the company as a private, and had soon proved that he was a very valuable man; he believed that he owed all his promotions to his present rank, which he had never expected to reach, to the influence of the major, though it was really his own merit that had procured his advancement. Then, when they had not been actively employed, Deck had taken a great deal of pains to improve his mind, recall his early studies, and especially to improve the quality of his language.

"Did you have any trouble with the horses last night, Life?" asked Deck.

"Not a great deal; my men were at home in handling horses. We turned them all loose from the picket-line, fixing their halters on their necks, and carried off the rope to which they had been

tied, and left no sign that horses had ever been tied there, except the marks of their feet in the soil; but their tracks could have been followed for ten miles farther. Then we swam them over a creek of which the one we camped on is a branch."

"Then, you left them ten miles from the camp?"

"That is what we did, for you said take them ten miles if we could."

"Then, they must be up in Monroe County in Kentucky. Well, they are far enough off to prevent the ruffians from finding them again very soon," added Deck as he rode forward to the head of the column.

The Tennessee raiders had been not a little astonished that morning that they were not routed out as usual, and still more so when they saw the major's battalion march out of the camp into the road without receiving any orders. They saw their custodians take the road to Scottville instead of that to the south. Gossley, when he discovered that his gang were no longer surrounded with guards, walked out into the highway, and ob-

served the departing Riverlawns. He did not understand it, and presently some of the officers and privates joined him.

"What do you make of this, Collier?" he asked of a captain.

"That's not a hard question," replied Collier, laughing.

"Answer it, then."

"I reckon the Yanks ain't going any farther with us," said the captain, who seemed to be greatly pleased that they had got rid of them.

"I reckon that's so," added the chief; and he also laughed, for they had not enjoyed the severity of the discipline to which they had been subjected. "We can have it all our own way now, and if we don't fool the Yanks it won't be my fault," changing his smiles into a malignant frown.

"What are you going to do about it, Major?" inquired Captain Collier.

"I reckon we'll finish the work we began," answered Gossley, scowling all the time. "It made me mad to have to give up near two hundred and fifty dollars, and all the rest of the

things we had put in our pockets or loaded on the wagons ; and I'm going back to do it over again. Let's have breakfast, and then we'll take a short cut I know over to Fountain Head. From there we'll cross the line just south of Greeger Lake, and be there by to-morrow morning. That's the plan now ; and it is not more than forty miles to the place where Price will hand over his money again, or hang to that tree. We mean business now."

Breakfast, such as it was, came in due time ; and then the men were sent over to the woods to bring up the horses. Captain Collier went with them. They did not find their horses where they had been compelled to picket them. They could not even find the rope to which they had been tied. The tracks of the horses were there, and that was all. They followed the hoof-prints of the animals for about five miles ; but they were tired, and could not go any farther. The captain sent a man back to report to the chief that the horses had disappeared, and they had followed their tracks for five miles ; and they were going farther after resting the men.

They did go five miles farther, and there the marks were not to be seen. This was the point where Life had driven them across a wide and deep creek. The animals were not to be seen on the other side; and doubtless they had continued their march farther into the country, in search of greener pastures. Collier swore as the only vent he had for his wrath and indignation. The creek was broad and deep, and they could not swim over it. They were compelled to abandon the search. They were again tired enough to need a rest, and they had ten miles to walk before they could reach the camp. They arrived in the middle of the afternoon, where the chief was doing a large amount of swearing on his own account. The captain reported to him.

"It was a Yankee trick!" exclaimed Gossley, with a superabundance of expletives, which did not seem to make him feel any better, for they never have that effect. "They drove the horses off, so that we should not get them again!"

"That was the game, and I reckon we are dished," added the captain.

"I should like to hang that young cub of a

major, and about twenty more of them, just to give them an idea of Tennessee justice."

"I don't reckon we can catch them again, and I don't believe you'll hang any of them," added Collier. "The question now is not hanging, but what are we going to do?"

"Huff it home," suggested a private who was standing near them.

They talked about it for an hour; but the more they talked the more they found they could do nothing to repeat the raid, as the chief had proposed; without their horses they were helpless. They argued for various plans, swore, cursed their luck, and came to blows in some instances. Finally they separated when they found they could not agree, and went off in groups by themselves. They came from a dozen different localities, and all they could do was to start for their homes, some by the road; but about half of them followed the creek down the stream, hoping that they should recover their horses, and thus save a walk of thirty to sixty miles. It is not known whether any of them found their steeds or not. The last scene was

when the chief discovered that he had been robbed of all his money, which he carried in a belt around his body. The gang had taken a great deal of grain, pork, hams, and bacon in their raid; and Gossley had sold them to go south. He kept the money, and it was to be divided when they reached their headquarters. It was doubtless stolen while he slept by some of his own men.

The Riverlawn battalion continued their march, and arrived at Scottville in the forenoon. Here Deck was informed that a company of Union soldiers had camped there over night, and had marched towards Franklin early in the morning. The major wondered what force this could be, and he asked some questions about the company. Then he learned that the company were uniformed like his own men, and that with them was an officer of over forty years of age, who wore the shoulder-straps of a colonel. The men in the force were armed with rifles and sabres.

"That must be Captain Ripley's company," said Deck to Captain Knox. "The field-officer must be my father."

“How could the riflemen get away from Millersville so soon?” asked Life.

“I don’t know anything about it, of course; but we will move on, and as we are marching light, we can overtake the company in a couple of hours,” replied the major, as he gave the order to move on.

The horses were in good condition; and Deck hurried the march, so that the battalion came up with the company when they had halted for the noonday meal. The men were sent into a field, where they gave the horses their grain from a bag each one carried behind his saddle. Deck gave Ceph to his orderly, and hastened to find his father. The colonel was taking his lunch with Captain Ripley, and he grasped his hand with a considerable gush of emotion for him.

“Why, Dexter, how came you here?” asked his father, still holding the hand of his son; and it was evident enough to all that he was rejoiced to see him.

“I will tell you all about it in a few minutes,” replied the major. “I want to know about your health first.”

"I am about as well as ever, I think, though not quite as strong. My wound in the head is fully healed, though the spot is a little tender."

"I am very glad to learn that you are in such good condition; and I judge that we shall remain some days longer at Franklin, so that you will have a chance to build yourself up a little more. This march must have been rather hard for you."

"No; we have not hurried; I have an excellent appetite, and I can stand nearly as much as I ever could," replied the colonel. "I see that you have a whole battalion with you."

"Five companies, sir, for Captain Knox's command was added to my battalion. We had a fight at Greeger Lake, though we had it all our own way, and took about five hundred guerillas prisoners. Colonel Gordon wanted to get rid of them before they ate up all our rations, and I was sent to set them down in Tennessee, which I did about five miles from La Fayette; and now I am marching back to Franklin," replied Deck.

All the commissioned officers in the battalion came over to congratulate the colonel upon his recovery and return to his command, though

Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon was quite as popular as the colonel. When they had all gone but Life, Deck gave a full account of the fight and other events at the lake.

“I reckon Major Lyon played off a Yankee trick upon the guerillas last night at the camp,” said Captain Knox, with a Kentucky smile which was a full-fledged laugh.

“How was that, Dexter?” asked the colonel.

“Colonel Gordon, when he and Major Bornwood decided to get rid of the prisoners, whose horses were not taken from them, for they had to go a long distance to reach their homes, was very much afraid they would return and continue their raid, especially visiting Greeger Lake again, to rob the miller there of his money, as they had done before. I was ordered to march them about twenty miles over the line into Tennessee, and leave them there. But as they had their horses, they could return and do all Colonel Gordon feared they would do. I hit upon a plan to checkmate them, and sent Captain Knox to carry it out. He can tell you better than I can how he managed it.”

Life told the story at some length.

"I reckon they are looking for their animals just now," he concluded.

The march was resumed, and the force reached the camp of the regiment before sunset. The men cheered lustily when they saw Colonel Lyon, and he was gladly welcomed and congratulated on his recovery by all the officers. Colonel Gordon, who had gone to Riverlawn as a lieutenant to muster in the new companies, and had been in the command ever since, was especially glad to see his old commander, and none gave him a heartier greeting. If he liked the command, he was happy to surrender it to one whom he respected so highly.

Major Bornwood had been ordered by telegraph to join his general at Gallatin, and he had left the day before. The rest of the afternoon and evening was spent in recounting to the colonel the incidents of the march of the regiment from Somerset, including the affair at Millersville, of which he had heard before, as also that at the lake. Colonel Gordon had expected an order to move the regiment to some point

where it could be actively employed. But no order came during the next two days.

On the 7th of September, a message came by wire from the general himself, ordering Colonel Lyon to move his command to Nashville by the way of Springfield, and report to General Thomas, in command there.

“Why by Springfield?” asked the colonel, who was consulting the map with Colonel Gordon.

“I cannot tell; but I can guess that the roads leading more directly to Nashville are, or soon will be, occupied by troops moving north,” replied the lieutenant-colonel.

They did not know it then, but that day General Buell moved six of his divisions across the Cumberland River. He had discovered by this time that Bragg, whom he had been watching for some time, had crossed the river at Carthage, and was moving rapidly for Louisville. He had left General Breckinridge with a heavy force of artillery, cavalry, and infantry to invest Nashville, which was probably the reason for sending the Riverlawns there.

CHAPTER XXXIII

BEFORE THE BATTLE OF STONE RIVER

THE return of Captain Ripley's company restored the Riverlawn regiment to its full strength of twelve companies; and its experience at Columbia, Buck Creek, and Millersville had practically made the officers and men veterans. Captain Halliburn had been able to procure a couple of brass cannon which had been used in a neighboring county for saluting purposes, with the ammunition for putting them to a more destructive use, and had planted them in a breast-work commanding the river, though they could be drawn up the slope and placed on Grimsby Hill, where Major Batterson's battery had done such efficient service. With the assistance of these guns the captain of the Home Guards believed he could protect the village from guerilla raids.

Colonel Lyon gave orders to prepare his command to march at once for Nashville; and two

days later the regiment and battery arrived at their destination, and reported to General Thomas. For the next two months the force was employed in various duties, in repelling the attacks of the enemy, and in several expeditions to the surrounding country. Colonel Lyon, with the battery and a portion of the regiment, had been over the ground before; and his careful study of his maps had made him familiar with the geography of the region, and he rendered valuable service in defeating the plans of the Confederates.

The force did some heavy fighting, and lost a considerable number of its officers and men; and Captains Artie Lyon and Richland were severely wounded, the former being in the hospital for a month. But space does not permit the giving of the details of these actions and expeditions. It was on the day of the departure of the regiment for Nashville that General Buell moved his six divisions across the Cumberland; and then began a race between him and Bragg to Louisville. A few days later the general, fearing for the safety of Nashville, sent General Mitchell's division back to that city; but the order was sub-

sequently countermanded, for Buell found that Bragg had torn up the track on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad from Franklin to Bowling Green, and that the head of Bragg's army, a brigade of cavalry, was near Munfordville, on the north side of Green River. The situation was such that he not only countermanded his order for Mitchell to return to Nashville, but ordered Thomas, with his own and Paine's divisions, to proceed to Bowling Green on the 15th; but if necessary to insure the safety of Nashville, to leave the latter. This order was promptly obeyed; and Thomas joined Buell at Prewitt's Knob, on the branch road to Glasgow, near its junction with the railroad to Louisville.

Munfordville had been re-enforced and fortified by the Union force, and under Colonel Dunham several assaults of the enemy were repulsed; but on the 17th Colonel Wilder, who succeeded Colonel Dunham in the command, finding the place surrounded by an overwhelming force, surrendered to the enemy. At Prewitt's Knob, when Thomas joined Buell, Bragg was confronting the Union forces, and seemed dis-

posed to fight. There was some skirmishing, but possibly the arrival of Thomas prevented the enemy from engaging Buell's army. While the latter were preparing for a battle, it was discovered that Bragg was retreating, moving to the eastward of the railroad to Louisville. The western part of Kentucky was thus left open to the army of Buell; and he marched rapidly for Louisville, which the last of his force reached on the 29th of September. Bragg proceeded to Bardstown, about forty miles south of Louisville.

General Buell found at Louisville the remnant of General Nelson's division, which had been thoroughly defeated in the three days' battles near Richmond, and a large number of new troops which had been hurried to the defence of the city. He reorganized these recruits, putting the new men in the ranks with his veterans, and then marched to Bardstown. At this point General Buell was relieved, and General Thomas was assigned to the command of the Army of the Ohio; but at the request of the latter the change was not made, and Thomas became the second in command.

The two armies confronted each other, and, after various movements, came together at Chaplin Hills, near Perryville, and the battle called by both names followed, with very great loss on both sides. The result was the retreat of the Confederates; and in the language of Pollard in "The Lost Cause," "To evacuate Kentucky had become an imperative necessity. This retreat of Bragg was certainly a sore disappointment to the hopes which his first movements in Kentucky had occasioned and his sensational despatches had unduly excited."

The battle had been fought, the enemy had left the State, and the campaign was transferred to the South. General Buell was concentrating his army at Glasgow and Bowling Green, when the mandate came from Washington relieving him from the command of the Army of the Ohio, and giving General Rosecrans the command of the Army of the Cumberland, as it was soon very generally called. The Riverlawn regiment was kept busy in the vicinity of Nashville until the last of December. They were employed in raids and counter raids. It had fought with Forrest.

With General Negley's force, they assisted in driving the noted raider seven miles from Nashville, but failed in an attempt to cut him off.

Murfreesboro, in the vicinity of which was fought the battle of Stone River, though it is also called after the name of the town, is on the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad, thirty miles south-east of the capital of Tennessee. General Bragg was with his army at this place in the last days of December; and General Rosecrans decided to attack him there, possibly fearing that he would venture a movement against Nashville. The new commander of the Army of the Cumberland divided his forces into three bodies, of which General Thomas was assigned to the command of the centre, with five divisions; General McCook to the right wing, and General Crittenden to the left. The Riverlawn regiment was placed in the cavalry of the centre. On the evening of the 25th of December, General Rosecrans issued his orders for his army to move for Murfreesboro the next morning.

General Thomas was to march by the Franklin turnpike, and then cross the country to Nolens-

ville, between the two railroads leading to the south. The right and left wings moved in other directions, but the plan was too complicated to be repeated. In moving across the country from Lavergne, a cavalry force was discovered ahead of the command, consisting of two divisions and a brigade; and the Riverlawns, without the battery, were sent to clear the road. It appeared to be a regiment. Colonel Lyon gave the order for his command to proceed at full gallop. The senior major was in the advance with his battalion, and he was sent forward to engage the enemy. It was a rough region; and the rain was pouring in torrents, which obstructed the vision of the officers. The command had started in the morning in a dense fog, and the rain had not yet beaten it down.

As Deck turned his steed in the road, in a small piece of woods, he could no longer see the foe, which had been some distance from him.

“What has become of them, Captain Abbey?” he asked, somewhat bewildered by the sudden disappearance of the force he was pursuing.

“There is some trick about it, I should say,” replied the captain.

“What trick can they play upon us here?” inquired the major, reining in his horse.

“The colonel of that regiment did not tell me, and I don’t know!” replied the officer.

But Major Lyon thought he had obtained an idea. About a quarter of a mile ahead of him was a knob, as they call it in that section as well as in Kentucky, which appeared to be a pile of rocks of all shapes, as well as the major could make it out in the fog and rain. A portion of it had been removed to permit the passage of the road, or perhaps to obtain the stone for culverts or other purposes. Deck was satisfied that the regiment, battalion, or whatever it was, had gone behind this knob, which was large enough to be called a hill, with the intention of falling upon the regiment as it came along the road. The force could not have passed out of sight in the road, for it extended far enough in view not to admit of its disappearance by a hurried movement.

“The enemy are behind that hill, and will fall upon you as you reach the farther side of it, Captain Abbey,” said the major, as he discovered the

colonel hastening forward; and he explained the situation to him. "If you will order Major Belthorpe to take to the field, and attack the enemy in the rear, I will engage the portion near the road."

Deck was somewhat given to strategy, and his father had confidence in him; and as he saw that the plan was fitted to the occasion, he immediately ordered the second battalion to move as Deck had suggested.

"Move with all the speed you can make, Tom," said Deck to the second major as he came up.

"It is a rough piece of country, but I will do the best I can," replied Major Belthorpe, as he led his command into the field, which had no fence to obstruct him.

Deck ran his horse to the head of the column, and gave the order to walk, in order to give the second battalion time to reach the rear of the hill. When he came to the side of the elevation, he was satisfied that Major Belthorpe had nearly reached his destination, and a minute or two later he heard the clash of sabres in that

direction. It was evident enough to Deck then that the trick Captain Abbey suggested had developed itself, and that the commander of the Confederate force had posted a portion of his regiment behind the hill which was to take the Union column in the flank or rear; in other words, he had "stolen Deck's thunder."

The moment the major heard the clash of arms, he ordered the men to move at a gallop; and they soon came to the other side of the knob. As anticipated, about five companies appeared to be the force of the portion ranged in the order of battle at the side of the road where they could not be seen till they had the regiment in blue in front of them. Deck led the first company till it was abreast of the enemy's line, and then gave the order to charge, keeping on the flank and rear of his line. It was a furious attack, such as the original companies of the Riverlawns had been trained to make, and the others had learned from them.

Deck urged his men on, though they hardly needed any stimulus of this kind; and the conduct of the companies fully met his approval.

The officer in command of the enemy remained behind his men, where he ought to be, and Major Lyon did the same; but if the former had shown himself in the conflict, he would certainly have been in front of him.

Colonel Lyon did not remain far in the rear; for as soon as the fight was fairly under way, he sent two companies from the third battalion to the rear, with Colonel Gordon, and two more, under Major Truman, to the front of it. The latter, seeing the way open for him, led his two companies to the rear of the enemy at the road. The effect of this re-enforcement was soon apparent; for the enemy at the road, charged upon in both front and rear, very soon began to give way, and, in spite of the efforts of their officers, fled from the field, hurrying towards a wood or grove, half a mile from the scene of the engagement.

Behind the knob the result was not very different. The re-enforcement that went in that direction consisted of the companies of Captain Ripley and that of Life Knox. The former had no especial gifts in a charge with the sabre, but they were terrible as sharpshooters. They were

sent into the woods which surrounded the knob; and as soon as they were in position, the enemy began to drop from their saddles without being able to tell what had caused their sudden downfall.

Life Knox's company, as soon as they had been trained to their office, were even more terrible than the riflemen. More than half of the members were giants in stature, and the diminutive cavalrymen of the enemy were no match at all for them. Observing the conduct of the force by the road, they followed their example, and fled for the woods. The result was decisive; and the regiment of the enemy was entirely vanquished, and nothing more was seen of it till the division reached Nolensville.

As the force of General Thomas approached the knob, Major Belthorpe joined the first battalion, and marched out upon the road, the two companies from the rear soon joining them. The commander, who had ridden forward with his staff to ascertain the cause of the blocking of the road, came into the presence of the regiment, the soldiers of which regarded him as a sort of demigod, and cheered him as soon as he appeared.

“What’s the trouble here, Colonel Lyon?” asked the general, as he came up with the cavalry.

“Nothing especial, General. A regiment of Confederate cavalry were on this road for the evident purpose of delaying the passage of your division; but Major Lyon fathomed their purpose and their plan, and we have utterly routed them.”

“Who is Major Lyon, Colonel?” inquired the commander of the division.

“He is my son, General.”

“Ah, yes; I remember. He came to my headquarters at Somerset, and distinguished himself in several affairs on the Cumberland River. He is a young man with genius.”

“He is a major now, the senior major of the Riverlawn regiment; and I beg you will not give him any further promotion at present, for I assure you he desires no advancement,” said the colonel.

“He deserves it, at any rate,” added the general, as he followed the regiment, in column by this time.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE OPENING OF THE GREAT BATTLE

GENERAL DAVIS had the advance of the right wing, and he went by a crossroad over to Nolensville. As a cavalry escort he had an Illinois company, in command of Captain Sheerer, who unearthed the enemy's pickets in the rough and broken country through which he passed on his way; and the fact indicated that General Bragg may not have expected an advance on the part of the Army of the Cumberland, though he had been careful to obtain immediate information of any movement on the part of the Union force on his front.

The resistance to General Davis's command on the crossroad was not heavy, though the march was difficult over the poor road and in the pouring rain; but on his approach to Nolensville he found it necessary to dislodge the forces of the enemy there, for the Confederate cavalry was

formed for an assault, and a battery was brought to bear upon him. Davis formed his division for the engagement to dislodge the enemy. The march of the centre had been arranged so that General Thomas could support either wing if pressed too hard for its strength on one side or the other.

The Riverlawn Cavalry, with its battery, which it was still allowed to retain, though it might be sent to any part of the field where it was needed, was regarded as a very effective body; and as it had generally been at Corinth, Pittsburg Landing, and other fields, was sent out ahead of Thomas's wing to feel the way. It had effectually disposed of the Confederate regiment of cavalry which impeded the march on the crossroad; though as Major Lyon's advanced to the town, he caught a glimpse of it through a gap near the road, hurrying in the same general direction as the command to which he belonged.

The roar of artillery was heard in the direction of the town; for a battery had opened upon General Davis's division, though it was soon silenced by Pinney's guns.

The general in the advance of the right wing, as soon as he had cleared the way for his march, learned that he would meet with a heavier opposition at Knob's Gap, an opening in a range of rocky hills on the Nolensville and Triune turnpike, extending about ten miles in a southeasterly direction, or towards the locality of the battle of Stone River. General Thomas heard the guns at Nolensville. Colonel Lyon was already following the sound, and the general hurried Negley's division forward to the support of Davis. The range of rocky hills at Knob's Gap was exceedingly favorable for defence; and artillery was placed there among the steeps, which opened upon Davis at long range as soon as the head of his column appeared.

The Riverlawn Cavalry came up at this point, and the colonel looked the ground over thoroughly. He saw what looked like a practicable passage to the rear of the hills; and he ordered Major Lyon, with the first battalion, to take this opening. He was directed to get on the flank or rear of the enemy; and the seventh company, the riflemen, was sent with him, to be placed where they

could operate in their line upon the artillerymen on the hill. By this time the batteries on both sides were actively employed; but Deck's command was protected by a spur from the main range, and he soon found an eligible locality for the sharpshooters. They picketed their horses at the foot of the slope, and then ascended on foot. Post's brigade charged upon the batteries on the left just as the riflemen began to drop the cannoneers at their pieces. Captain Ripley was confident that his command had killed or disabled over fifty men; and he might have done all this with a single round of his rifles, even if one-half of his men had missed their aim, which they were very unlikely to do, for he had over a hundred privates in his company.

Deck moved on with the first battalion as soon as he had placed the riflemen. Both wood and stone had evidently been taken from these hills, for the major soon found a rude road which had been traversed by wagons. He followed it with all the speed the roughness of the locality would permit. The batteries must have moved their guns up to their present positions by this road.

He soon came to one of them hurriedly firing their pieces at the force in the road. But Post's brigade had already routed the other batteries nearer the road; and the gunners were fleeing to the rear, doubtless with the intention of making their escape by the road down the hill from the bayonets of the Union assailants.

Major Lyon charged upon the battery near him as the broken companies approached; and it was done by the old companies of the Riverlawn squadron so fiercely that he almost instantly drove the men from their guns. The escaping force from the front deflected to the right, doubtless greatly surprised to find a Union force in the rear. But Deck had silenced the battery near him; and he ordered his men to fall back in the road, with the intention of blocking it against the fugitives. Then he opened fire upon them with the carbines, and the revolvers when near enough for the use of the latter.

The battalion had moved back but a short distance before they came upon the rest of the regiment; and Deck saw his father just as he came to an open space at the side of the road. Taking

advantage of this favorable position, Colonel Lyon had sent Major Belthorpe's battalion to the verge of the opening, which was a perpendicular mass of rocks, and blocked the way of the retreating companies. He charged upon the two companies when they drew their sabres and showed fight. It was an impetuous onslaught of a superior number, and the enemy gave way before them. Deck saw the movement ordered by the colonel, and closed his four companies around the fugitives, and they were entrapped. They surrendered when they could do nothing more, for they were confronted by overwhelming numbers.

"The guns are silent in the front of the hills and on the right of the road, and I think the business of the day is finished," said Colonel Lyon when he met his son in the wagon-road.

"And I think we had better get out of this place as soon as possible," replied the major. "General Davis will suppose we have been annihilated if we do not."

"But what are we to do with a hundred and fifty prisoners, more or less," suggested the colonel.

“March them down with us, for we don't care to fight them again in this campaign,” replied Deck.

The colonel gave the order to the two majors to have them formed in companies; and they were placed between the two battalions, and marched down to the road. Major Belthorpe picked up his seventh company on the way. But the prisoners were on foot, and the march could not be hurried beyond a double-quick. The distance was not great; and when they were seen with their captives in the column, Post's brigade, which had just descended from the heights, honored them with a cheer, to which the officers replied by saluting.

A small number of prisoners had been taken, and were in camp with a guard in the town; and the two companies captured by the Riverlawns were sent to join them, for it was easier to keep them in camp than it would be to fight them again. The troops bivouacked in the available fields, the Riverlawns among them. They were tired enough to sleep, and they did not spend much time in talking over the events of

the day after their horses had been fed and they had eaten their own suppers. But Deck could not help asking his father what they were to do the next day.

“I don’t know any better than you do, Dexter,” replied the colonel. “We form a sort of extra reserve force, and we shall not know what we are to do till we are ordered to do it. That is what General Thomas told me, adding that the command had excellent Kentucky horses, and always moved with great celerity; and as the battery could keep up with the riders, he had prevented it from being detached from the regiment, though it was a little irregular for a cavalry regiment to have such an appendage. But he added that Major Batterson’s must be sent where it was most needed.”

“I suppose you understand, father, that we are on the eve of a great battle,” added Deck.

“I suppose we are; though I am not sure that General Bragg, whose army is in and around Murfreesboro, expected a great battle in this locality; for I learned yesterday that he had sent General Morgan into Kentucky to break up the

communications of General Rosecrans, and General Wheeler into West Tennessee. Both of these generals were in command mainly of cavalry, forming much the larger portion of Bragg's force of this arm. Probably General Rosecrans, aware of this fact, chose the present time for an advance."

"I was talking with the captain of one of the batteries we captured this afternoon, and he was rather more communicative than he ought to have been," continued Deck, who did not often have an opportunity to talk with his father.

"What did he tell you?" asked the colonel with interest.

"Probably nothing the generals don't all know; but the first thing he said was that Rosecrans's army was about to get the biggest licking the Yankees ever received, and that he should not be a prisoner for many days, for the ground would all be wanted for the Yankees captured in the great battle. I replied that it was more likely to be needed for the accommodation of Confederate prisoners."

"That was nothing but blackguarding on the

part of both of you; and I advise you not to indulge in much of that sort of thing," replied the colonel with a smile. "Did that captain tell you anything that is worth knowing?"

"He told me some things that I did not know, which doubtless the generals do know."

"What, for example?"

"That Bragg's army is in order of battle on the west of Murfreesboro, with Stone River in its rear, and field-works in front of them as far as a creek near the Franklin road. I have studied my map enough to understand something about it; for we have been in the town, and I have walked about to some extent in the vicinity."

"I don't think your information is of any great value, my son; and that captain will not be shot for giving you what knowledge you obtained from him. But it is time for us to get our sleep, Dexter; for we don't know what will happen tomorrow, though I shall pray that it may not be a calamity to the national army."

"I shall do the same, father."

On the morning of Dec. 27 the weather was anything but propitious for the advance of the

army. A dense fog prevailed, so that it was difficult for an officer to see any considerable distance in front of him. The right wing under General McCook was to come upon the ground by Nolensville and Triune, the latter a post village within a dozen miles of Murfreesboro; and the fog had prevented him from reaching this place as early as was expected. A forward movement was attempted in the morning. General Johnson led the attack near the Franklin road, where General Hardee's corps had been in line of battle all night and all the morning. General McCook did not deem it wise or prudent to force an engagement on unknown ground, and in a fog so dense that it was almost impossible to distinguish friend from foe. Artillery practice was kept up along the line all the forenoon, as well as lively skirmishing.

Early in the afternoon the fog lifted; and Johnson, supported by General Phil Sheridan, again advanced. Hardee had burned the bridge over Wilson's Creek; and, having placed a battery and a platoon of cavalry to defend the crossing, he moved back his main force. The line of

Union skirmishers attacked his rear-guard, which fled after a very feeble resistance. After this opening of the great battle, which lasted four days, Johnson, with the other divisions in his rear, moved a mile to the south, and there bivouacked for the night.

All had not gone as desired, for the delay of McCook in the early morning had prevented Crittenden, in command of the left wing, from advancing as early as arranged; but at a late hour in the forenoon he had moved three of his divisions, though no decided direct advantage was gained. But operations in this portion of the field extended as far to the north as Lavergne, ten miles distant. The enemy was driven from this village and the neighboring hills, and in retreating to the south set fire to the bridge over Stewart's Creek; but it was saved by a Kentucky regiment of infantry. There were other operations in this vicinity, and those engaged in them passed the night at Stewartsboro.

General Thomas moved several of his divisions during the day; though the rain of the day before had left the roads in such a bad condition that

the marching was slow and difficult, and on the crossroads it was exceedingly laborious and wearing to the soldiers.

The 28th of December was Sunday; and though armies do not delay in honor or reverence of the day, no general advance was made. But a reconnoissance was made by one of the brigades of the right wing to ascertain the direction of General Hardee's corps on its retreat; and it was ascertained that he had retired to Murfreesboro.

On the 29th General Stanley moved in advance of the right wing. The Anderson cavalry from Pennsylvania pushed the enemy six miles, charging warmly all the way, though it was so unfortunate as to fall upon an ambuscade of two regiments of the enemy's infantry, with considerable loss in killed and wounded.

The Riverlawn regiment was ordered to Wilkinson's crossroad, with a portion of the enemy's cavalry near them; and this proximity resulted in a fight, in which the Kentuckians held their own as usual, without much loss.

CHAPTER XXXV

WARM PRAISE FOR THE RIFLEMEN

ALTHOUGH General Bragg had sent away the greater part of his cavalry, a considerable portion of it remained, posted on the left of the line beyond the field-works ; and what was left of Wheeler's command was behind Breckinridge's works on the extreme right, and on the east side of Stone River. On the 29th of December the divisions of Johnson and Sheridan were at Wilkinson's crossroads, and near this point the enemy's cavalry appeared in strong force. The River-lawns had been sent to this position, in company with an Ohio regiment of cavalry whose commander was ranked by Colonel Lyon. The colonels conferred together when the Confederate force appeared in the distance ; but when they discovered the position of Johnson's division, they halted, and took a survey of the ground.

“That force is not likely to come much farther

in this direction, Colonel Lyon," said the commander of the Ohio regiment. "It is for you to say what we shall do."

"Colonel Milliken, you will go forward on this road, and I will take to the fields," replied Colonel Lyon. "There is a small piece of woods; and I will get behind it, and strike them on the flank or rear, while you push the enemy in front. I will send my seventh company with you; for they are riflemen, and can do a great deal of execution as sharpshooters."

"I see that the brigade of cavalry, or whatever it is, has resumed the march in this direction," remarked Colonel Milliken.

"So I perceive," replied the commander of the Riverlawns. "I was afraid that the force, when they saw the divisions near the cross-roads, would strike across the fields to the ford over Overall Creek, near the church, rather than come any nearer to them. If they have noticed us at all, they do not seem to bestow much attention upon our regiments. We must convince them of their mistake."

The riflemen were called out from the column,

and transferred for the time to Colonel Milliken's command, with an explanation to Captain Ripley. They were placed at the head of the Ohio column; and it moved off at a smart gallop, after they had started at a trot, as usual in cavalry tactics. Colonel Lyon led his command into the field on the right of the road, and went at a furious gallop for the grove to which he had alluded, not more than an eighth of a mile from the road. He proceeded to the farther side of it, and there halted.

In the meantime, Colonel Milliken hastened forward in the road; but before he came up with the enemy, he sent Captain Ripley's company into the field on his left, directing its commander to take such position as he considered most desirable, and open upon the troopers at once. The riflemen were provided with good horses; and when the heads of the two columns clashed together, he was in position to put in his deadly work. The sharpshooters could not dismount; but they had become so accustomed to firing from their saddles, that their bullets were hardly less effectual than when they had a rest at the

side of a tree. They galloped a short distance beyond the head of the enemy's column, where the mutual charge had already entangled both bodies. Ripley had sent his men ahead of him, so that he remained at the left of his command, with a sharp eye fixed on the officers of the Confederate regiments. He was looking for a mark that was worthy of his remarkable skill with his rifle; and presently he found it near the head of the column. Raising it, and with hardly an instant's hesitation, he fired; and the commander of the force dropped from his saddle, and was carried out of the road by his men.

Lieutenant Butters, who was accounted the second-best rifle-shot in Russell and Pulaski Counties, was equally diligent in seeking the officers of the leading regiment, and one of them fell every time he discharged his weapon. The riflemen had been ordered to keep five feet apart, and take the leading men of the enemy in front of them; but the enemy were not long in discovering the cause of the great mortality among their officers, and the captain of one of the companies, who still remained in his saddle,

for he was beyond the line of the riflemen, wheeled his command out of the road, and led the way in an attack upon the sharpshooters, probably considering it an easy matter to drive them from the ground.

Most of the fences, where there were any, had been thrown down by the movements of the army, and there was an opening near this captain; but he did not live to reach it. His first lieutenant dashed into his place, rallied the men, the riflemen slowly retreating before them, but wheeling about and firing all the time as they did so. The captain's successor almost instantly followed him to the ground. Lieutenant Blount, next in rank to Butters — for the men of the company, who elected their own officers, or at least recommended them for commissions, hardly knew any other skill except that in the use of the rifle, — was in charge in this portion of the line. Captain Ripley's command had been stretched out till it covered two companies of the enemy, and very soon not an officer was left in them.

The second of the enemy's regiments was thrown into the field where the riflemen were,

and were advancing at a rapid gallop to fall upon the flank of their assailants. Captain Ripley moved his company farther back; but the officers of the second regiment began to drop from their saddles, and many of their men also, as they hurried to the head of the column. The fall of so many of its men in the second regiment was too much for their nerves in the their officers.

Another regiment had moved forward in the field on the left of the enemy's column, and charged upon the leading companies of Colonel Milliken's command, who fought with desperate bravery; but the regiment from the field on their right, still falling before the riflemen, crowded through the broken fence, and carried a panic into the main column. The enemy had evidently had enough of the sharpshooters, both the first and the second regiment, and in a mass they bolted into the field. A captain from farther in the rear took the command of the force at this time, and by vigorous action reformed the column, the head of which had suffered a severe loss. The command by this

retreat had moved out of the range of the riflemen.

The Confederate force was already badly beaten in spite of its superior numbers, but Colonel Milliken pursued. The enemy appeared to have better horses than any force which the Riverlawns had encountered, and they were pounded with the flat of the sabres to their utmost speed. At any rate, the force gained considerably on its pursuers.

Captain Ripley's command had lost its occupation in the field on the Union left; and he saw the panic, as well as the pursuit of Colonel Milliken. Though he was the oldest man in the regiment, he was one of the most active mentally, as he was physically; and he counter-marched his command till the head of it was where the rear of the enemy's column had been. Then he crossed the road, and was somewhat ahead of the right of the Ohio regiment. He led the way himself. The horses, raised mostly by the men themselves, were of the best breeds, and some of them had taken part in the races of the State. He reached the woods almost as soon as

the head of the enemy's column; and, placing his men, the deadly aim of the riflemen began to make havoc in the Confederate ranks.

While the sharpshooters were thus engaged, Major Lyon's battalion dashed out from beyond the woods, and struck in a furious charge against the head of the column. The lieutenant-colonel and the major had already fallen; and as soon as Captain Ripley got his eye upon him, the captain who had become the acting colonel fell back on the haunches of his steed, and was borne by the animal out of the reach of danger, if he was not already dead. Major Batterson's battery had been sent on other duty for that day, or perhaps the engagement would have been finished by this time.

Major Belthorpe's battalion broke out of the woods, or more properly grove of large walnuts, coming from its centre, and charged into the middle of the enemy's force. Major Truman appeared from the end of the grove nearest to the road, and galloped his men to the left of the Confederate column. The three battalions had moved at very nearly the same moment.

By this time the enemy was well-nigh wearied out, perhaps as much by the dismay the riflemen had created as by the fatigue of the action in the road, and were not in condition to meet the reckless charge of the Riverlawns. Captain Ripley's command had again lost their occupation; for the men could not fire without endangering the Union force, as the battalions spread out along the entire line. Another captain had taken the vacant place of the colonel; but he appeared to be powerless to rally his force for a desperate sally against their assailants, and led them with all speed towards Overall Creek.

At the same time it was seen that Johnson's division was moving down the road to the same point. Apparently the enemy on the other side of the stream had discovered that the brigade of cavalry was hard pressed; for Colonel Lyon with his field-glass discovered three batteries moving out from the Confederate works, and hastening to the ford. He immediately ordered a halt; for he believed that a farther advance would involve the loss of many of his men, without any advantage to compensate for it.

“You think we have gone far enough, Colonel Lyon, do you?” asked Colonel Milliken, riding up to him.

“I think we have gone as far as our duty warrants us in going; for I have seen with my glass no less than three batteries approaching the ford, and of course they will open on us as soon as they can do so without peril to their own people,” replied the commander of the River-lawns.

“Perhaps we have punished that brigade enough for one day; for I believe your riflemen have killed off all the officers of two of their regiments,” added the Ohio colonel.

“Not all of them,” said Colonel Lyon, with a smile of incredulity.

“Of course I do not mean every one of them, but a great many. I was absolutely amazed when I saw Captain Ripley stretch out his men, and then bring down the commander of the force with his own rifle.”

“He does that every time.”

“His company is a very important element in your strength, Colonel.”

“It is, when he can get his men into a favorable position,” replied Colonel Lyon.

“They all appear to be absolutely sure with their rifles to bring down the enemy. I should like to have such a company in my regiment; for I really believe that Ripley’s men did more to win the day for us than my whole regiment. His men made terrible havoc with the enemy’s officers; for with them it is not merely the loss of a man, but the loss of the controlling force of the regiment. But where did you pick up so many riflemen so sure every time with their weapons?”

“Not sure every time, but generally; though I believe the three commissioned officers of the command rarely fail to hit the mark, perhaps because they never fire unless they are sure of their aim. My son, who is the senior major of my regiment, had about half a company of these same men, including the present officers, and did very valuable service with them at Mill Spring a year ago. I found them in that vicinity, and most of them belong in Pulaski, Russell, and Adair Counties. They have all been hunters at

home, and taken part in all the rifle-shoots in that part of Kentucky. But they did not enlist at that time, though I had it in mind to get up a company of mounted riflemen."

"Are you a Kentuckian, Colonel Lyon?" asked the other.

"I am not. I was born and brought up in the State of New Hampshire, and went to Kentucky just before the war broke out; for my brother left his plantation, from which my command gets its name, to me by his will."

"It is about time for us to return to our camps."

The two commands separated, and marched to headquarters; and Colonel Lyon reported to General Thomas what had been done on the Wilkinson road. He was sent immediately to re-enforce Colonel Starkweather, who was guarding a bridge on the Jefferson turnpike. When he arrived at his destination he found the guard assailed by a cavalry force. As the position was favorable, the colonel, after he had reported to the colonel in command, and with his permission, sent the riflemen to the bank of the stream; and when the

Confederate force charged, its officers began to drop from their saddles. Deck's battalion charged with its usual fury upon the enemy, and the major was once tempted to take part with Ceph in riding down the commander of the assailants; but he had been entreated by his father and Colonel Gordon not to perform that feat again, and he resisted the temptation; but he kept his men busy till the enemy was repulsed, largely by the force of Colonel Starkweather. Again the colonel reported to the general, and then went into camp.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE RESULT OF THE GREAT BATTLE

GENERAL BRAGG believed that his army was outnumbered by that of General Rosecrans, and therefore he awaited an attack. But an offensive movement was not made on the 30th, as the enemy expected, and they were greatly disappointed. In the evening the Confederate commander-in-chief determined to make the initiatory movement himself, and he arranged his divisions for a great battle on the following day. He had an immense advantage over his opponent in the possession of the roads diverging from Murfreesboro, and in the thorough knowledge of himself and his subordinate commanders of the country where he was operating.

On the morning of the last day of the year 1862 both commanders were prepared for battle, and it proved to be the eventful day of the four days' conflict. The Confederate generals re-

alized that they had reached the hinge of events ; and they were inspired to do all that Southern bravery, dash, and skill could accomplish. The Union army at the point of attack was not in condition for the movement that was made upon them. The commander of the division was not on the line, or near enough to control the force ; and the general of brigade intrusted with the defence of the flank was absent. The line of battle had been thinly spread out to secure space for a battery.

The sun rose in that latitude at twenty minutes past seven ; and before that time General Hardee, with nearly one-half of the Confederate infantry on the field, made a long *détour*, and struck the right of the Union army. It was a tremendous onslaught, as though the enemy had become desperate in their determination to decide the battle in their favor. In the unprepared condition of the right wing the Confederates had it very nearly all their own way. General Bragg claimed that this portion of General Rosecrans's army was surprised, and doubtless the attack from the quarter from which it came was

unexpected; but all the usual provisions against surprise had been provided for, and there was a skirmish-line in front. The right of the national line as it was then had been overwhelmed.

The movements of both armies were too complicated to be followed in their many variations, and at ten o'clock in the forenoon the result looked doubtful. An attempt was made by Bragg to transfer the right of his line to the left, which was evidence that McCook and Thomas were holding their own on the right of the Union line. The latter repulsed and drove back Hardee's force, and successfully established a new line, thus greatly changing the condition of affairs on the right. But the battle continued in all its complications on the first day of the new year with varying success and defeat.

On the 2d of January it looked as though Bragg would resume the offensive on his right. Crittenden's line had been extended across the river, and the Confederate general believed that Polk's divisions would be attacked if the force of Crittenden opposite Breckinridge on the other

side of the river was not driven from its position. The latter made an onslaught on the brigades in front of him as fierce and persistent as the contingency of the occasion demanded of him. This was on the east side of Stone River; and Crittenden perceived that his left on the other side of the stream was under heavy pressure, the attack being made in support of the movement of Breckinridge. General Beatty was hard pushed, with two other brigades; their lines were broken, and the enemy pursued them towards the river. In this emergency Crittenden called upon his chief of artillery to mass all the guns he could gather to relieve Beatty. Battery after battery was placed, till fifty-eight guns were ready to open upon the enemy. The brigade of Price and the Ninth Kentucky Regiment, under Colonel Grider, were dislodged, and retreated to the river, losing heavily at every step they moved during the pursuit of the enemy. At this perilous situation of the left of the Union army, the concentrated batteries opened fire from the elevations on the other side of the river, producing a tremendous effect upon the enemy;

for Breckinridge recoiled, and fell back, suffering very severe loss.

At this critical time for the foe, Colonel Miller, commanding the Third Brigade of Negley's division, with a portion of Stanley's cavalry, charged across Stone River, less than a tenth of a mile wide, upon the partially demoralized enemy. A number of guns and the colors of the Confederates were captured. General Jeff C. Davis, commanding the first division of the right wing, sent a re-enforcement of a brigade over the river, and then followed himself with two more. Being the superior in rank on the ground, he assumed command. He threw out a skirmish-line, and soon encountered the foe, somewhat restored after the panic; and a brisk engagement followed, which was the last of any consequence.

Colonel Miller's movement was an exceedingly important one; for it defeated Bragg's attempt to get possession of the elevated ground on the west side of the river, and had a great influence on the final result of the four days' battle. It was a hazardous venture; and he was ordered by a general officer, though not his immediate

commander, to refrain from making his charge over the stream; but he disregarded the command, dashed over, and threw his force furiously on the enemy. Breckinridge, after his first success, lost the heights he had held in the beginning; and his reckless attempts to recover what he had lost cost him in casualties two thousand men.

General Bragg had lost the last important engagement of the long battle. The third day of January brought weather which was not favorable for military operations, and he made no offensive movement. General Thomas, re-enforced by the arrival of Spear's brigade, drove the enemy away from his front, opening his line in the centre.

That night Bragg retreated; and he explained that "common prudence and the safety of my army, upon which the safety of our cause depended, left no doubt in my mind as to the necessity of my withdrawal from so unequal a contest." He alludes to his knowledge that Rosecrans had received re-enforcements as also a reason for his retirement. With the exception of the arrival of the single brigade of Spear, there were no additions to the Union army.

But Bragg retreated from the ground he had held behind his field-works for four days, leaving the army of Rosecrans in possession of the battlefield. Nevertheless, Stone River can hardly be regarded as a decisive victory.

Both of the commanders-in-chief believed that they fought superior numbers; Rosecrans thinking that the Confederate force consisted of over 60,000, and Bragg that the Union army amounted to 70,000. The loss of the former was 11,577, and of the latter about 10,000.

The Riverlawn regiment was actively employed during this last day of the battle, though not with the regular force of the centre. The cavalry of the enemy passed entirely around the army of General Rosecrans, endeavoring to capture the wagon-trains, and were often engaged with the same arm of the Union army. Colonel Lyon had a very smart engagement with a superior force near the Lavergne road. He had been directed to look out for the safety of the trains. He had crossed Stone River at a ford north of the left wing of the army, and reached the Lebanon turnpike. Moving along this thoroughfare,

Major Lyon had discovered a cavalry force moving south on the Lavergne road, several miles distant, towards a group of wagons with their mules, on the shore of a creek, and near a piece of woods, many of which were on the battleground, and in all the vicinity for miles from it.

Deck stood up on the saddle of his steed, and used his glass till he obtained some knowledge of the situation in the distance. The enemy were moving at a lively trot, and were still some distance from the wagons; but he had no doubt the train was their objective point. He reported what he had seen to the colonel, who asked him several questions, in order to assure himself that his son's statement was correct. But Deck satisfied him; and, wheeling his command to the left, the regiment crossed the fields, and came out at the woods, where the riflemen had orders to post themselves in the most eligible place for their work.

Deck was sent with his battalion through the woods, and came out just as the enemy appeared in the road abreast of the train. The second and third battalions were concealed by the trees from the view of the foe, and the Confederate com-

mander doubtless regarded the evident purpose of the battalion to charge his regiment as a reckless piece of bravado. He had formed his line; and he did not wait to receive a charge, but dashed into the field, intent upon overwhelming and capturing the presumptuous battalion. But they had hardly passed through the broken-down fence, before the leader of the command dropped from his saddle, no doubt a victim of Captain Ripley's unerring aim. A second officer immediately followed the first to the ground.

Major Lyon ordered his companies to fall back. He had baited his hook with his comparatively small force, and drawn a whole regiment into the field, while there appeared to be another remaining in the road, perhaps as a reserve, though probably the commander did not think of such a thing, as he expected to wipe out the battalion in front of him at a single blow. Deck retired his force a few rods in order to give the riflemen an opportunity to do their deadly work. The cracking of the rifles was almost continuous, and the men in the ranks tumbled to the ground in rapid succession. Deck fell back a few rods

more, to permit a farther advance of the enemy's line. The riflemen scattered more than at first, when the hurry did not permit them to take the best positions.

The enemy hastened forward, as Deck desired they should, and the riflemen moved to better places. But the fall of so many of his men appalled the new commander; though he kept in the rear of his men, as his superior had not, paying the penalty of his rashness before he had time to order a charge. In a few minutes not less than fifty men had fallen, and the major in command, as he appeared to be, evidently began to take a new view of the situation; for he could not help seeing the necessity of escaping from the destructive fire from the woods, and he ordered a retrograde movement.

Major Lyon had expected this, and the trumpet sounded a blast which was a signal for Captain Ripley's company to cease firing. For a considerable distance there was a selvage of woods alongside the road, behind which the train had taken shelter, where they could not so easily be observed. Deck sent a message to the captain

of the rifle force, suggesting that he should post his men among the trees there. Then Deck ordered his four companies to charge upon the enemy; and at this movement Colonel Lyon sent Major Truman's battalion between the enemy in the field and the road, while Major Belthorpe's command went to the support of Deck. It was a furious charge, and the right of the enemy's line began to give way before an attack in their front and rear.

The force in the road, which had waited there for the destruction of Deck's battalion, awoke from its lethargy at the sudden appearance of such an increased force, and began to move into the field. The leading officer seemed to be the colonel commanding, as Ripley described him; and he did not learn wisdom from the fate of so many of the other regiment. He yelled, and he swore, and was certainly very mad at the check the Riverlawns had given him, and he dashed forward in a charge upon Truman's battalion; but he had not passed the broken fence before he slid from his saddle to the ground. The sharpshooters did not intermit their fire; and as this

regiment had advanced some distance beyond the second, it had to countermarch to reach the broken fence, and the riflemen dropped its officers and men as they moved forward.

The two battalions engaged fought with desperate fury, as they always did on such an occasion. Ripley's company soon dropped many in the ranks of the regiment; and when they saw what an immense loss they were suffering, they broke, and fled to the fields on the other side of the road in spite of the efforts of the officers who were left to rally them. Between the upper and the nether millstone the regiment in the field were practically ground to powder. Colonel Lyon sent an order to Major Truman to fall back into the open field, as much to open a way for the riflemen to do more effective work on the force in front of Deck, as to enable the regiment in the field to escape, as the men were certainly inclined to do. As soon as the men began to feel the effect of the rifle balls, they became completely demoralized, and fled across the road to join those who had fled before.

The victory was complete; the train was saved,

and the enemy showed no disposition to renew the engagement. But the result was not so overwhelming as might have appeared at first glance. The Confederates were in two regiments, but both were small in numbers; and the disparity in force between the two commands could not have exceeded two hundred, and perhaps not so many as that. But the two regiments would have done better if they had been consolidated into one under an able colonel, as the Riverlawns were.

The Union force remained at the place till nearly night to secure the train from any molestation. The enemy had retreated; and in the darkness the command of Colonel Lyon returned to their camp, where officers and men listened with intense interest to the accounts of the great battery duel which had been fought a short time before. The next morning they learned with surprise that the Confederate army had retreated in the night. On the fourth day of the month, the Union army employed all the time in burying the dead, and on the following day took possession of Murfreesboro. It has not been attempted in this volume to give a full history of the movements of

the army; and the attention of the reader has been mainly confined to the operations of the Riverlawn regiment since it was reorganized, and especially of Deck Lyon, who, unconsciously to the writer, became the hero of the volume, as he was of its predecessors.

The army remained for the next six months in the vicinity of Murfreesboro; and Deck's battalion, either by itself or with the rest of the regiment, were engaged in various operations and expeditions, and in spite of the military quiet which prevailed in this portion of the South, the hero had some very exciting experiences. When later in the year the movement of the army to the South began which ended in the battles of Chickamauga, Lookout Mountain, Chattanooga, and "Marching through Georgia," the Riverlawns were not kept in the shade, but took an active part in the events which enabled the loyal people in all parts of the country to realize again the blessings of AN UNDIVIDED UNION.

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