

A M O N G

THE

COTTON THIEVES.

BY EDWARD BACON,  
Colonel of Sixth Michigan Volunteers.



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## PREFACE.

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To bring back in mind the scenes of the Department of the Gulf has been interesting to me. I have endeavored to make written pictures of those scenes which may be interesting to others. There are witnesses in all parts of the country who can testify whether the picture is like the reality. I offer no excuses for using plain words and proper names.

If the short-lived unwritten history of the civil war should seem to show that the system of military despotism, which has been handed down to our times substantially the same as it was in the days of Xerxes, is nothing but a system of man-worship, no less evil and absurd for any intelligent people in time of war, than it would be in time of peace, there is no doubt that the orthodox written history of the war will come to the rescue of the old system, and demonstrate its excellence in every way.



# AMONG THE COTTON THIEVES.

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“Calla, amigo Sancho,” respondió Don Quijote, “que las cosas de la guerra mas que otras estan sujetas a continua mudandza.”

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## CHAPTER I.

General Williams—His difficulties with the Mississippi River—The Sixth Michigan and the “Order of Combat.”

It is a July day in 1862. From an early hour Farragut's gunboats and sloops-of-war have been going down the river at Baton Rouge, and the transports that bear the troops of General Thomas Williams have been arriving from the expedition against Vicksburg. A crowd collects at the levee. There are the blue caps of Federal soldiers, the broad-brimmed planters' hats, the uncovered woolly heads of negroes, and the glossy beavers of well dressed Jews. At windows and porticos, here and there, appear a few white women of the poorest sort, and some quadron beauties, whose gay attire and finely curled ringlets indicate that they have not been losers by the Federal conquest.

A characteristic order of the General has forbidden the troops to land, and the crews of the gunboats left for duty at Baton Rouge seem wondering what the transports full of half-dead men and horses are doing so long in the middle of the stream.

Southerners in the crowd are smiling, and talk freely about the failure of the Vicksburg ditch. The Mississippi has proved too much for General Williams, and the Hill City is not yet made an inland town; his last device of making a little narrow ditch along the middle of the first ditch, in the vain effort to overtake the falling waters of the river, and lead them where he

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willed them to go, in no way helped the matter. A little trickling stream got through feebly, and in a few hours ceased to flow, although an old stern-wheel steamer had been kept at work at the upper end of the ditch, to force the water, by the action of the wheel, to obey the General's will. Some of the talkers think that the General's pride would not have allowed him to yield on account of the havoc made by sickness among his troops, had it not been for the appearance and doings of the rebel ram *Arkansas*.

At length, the General, with his florid countenance and his precisely cut grizzly hair, whiskers and mustache, comes ashore, duly attended by some of his obsequious staff officers. As the General steps on the plank held for his security, and then on the land, he glances at the crowd, and seems greatly satisfied with himself. He is escorted to the quarters prepared for him, without deigning to recognize officer or citizen. He appears to have made up his mind to try that dogma of his faith and early instruction, which is, that a sufficient display of authority is all that is necessary to make subordinates cease to think of the folly or crime of a commander, and that nothing is too absurd for a ruler to make the multitude believe. Next comes Nims' Battery, which, before the expedition, astonished Baton Rouge with its fine condition and abilities, that even justified its puffs by Boston newspapers. Now what a change. The gaunt, skeleton horses, hang to the ground the heads that they once held up with proper *esprit de corps*. Even the worn and cracked harness seems too much for them to carry. The guns and carriages are smeared with Vicksburg mud, and marred by the action of heat and rains. I meet a quartermaster of the expedition. He tells me, "We have come back. We ought to have come back sooner. That ditch would not work; the soldiers knew that it would not work. It made me sick to see them die as they did. We buried men everywhere. There were not well men enough to bury the dead. The men were lying around in the mud, exposed to the hot sun and the rain, without much of anything fit to eat. They looked



as if they would be glad to die, to get out of their misery. And the ditch itself will be no greater wonder than some of the orders and performances contrived every day. I was glad when the old ram came and started us down stream, for before that there was a fair prospect that we would have to keep digging in that ditch all summer."

The Ninth Regiment of Connecticut Volunteers, the Fourth Regiment of Wisconsin, and the Seventh Regiment of Vermont, are beginning to land as the heat of the day comes on. The faces of officers are changed, as if by ten years of care and trouble. The men appear like wretches escaped from the dungeons of the Inquisition; every face and form shows the effect of long continued exercise in tortures, and expectations of a miserable death. Numerous buildings have been seized for hospitals, and confused processions of the sick, some in ambulances and wagons, some in litters, and some staggering along on foot, present scenes of horror in every street. This day the surgeons' command outnumbers that of the General, and passengers hourly departing for the country carry faithful reports to the confederate outposts, while the frequent firing of funeral escorts causes reports and camp rumors that the long expected attack is about to begin.

My regiment, the Sixth Michigan Infantry, occupies the comfortable brick barracks at Baton Rouge. A long sea voyage, with three thousand men crowded on board one steamer, the sufferings of Ship Island, followed by many weeks of life on transports off the Southwest Pass and again during the first Vicksburg expedition, have conspired, with the climate and the recent change from civil life, to prostrate with sickness half of my regiment; but the excellent shelter afforded by the United States barracks is likely to enable the regiment to pass the dangerous hot season without increase of disease. For several weeks we have buried a man every day, but the numbers of those whom former sufferings have marked for the grave is growing less, and the appearance and step of the men show that vegetable food, and protection from the hot sun, are

slowly restoring strength to their debilitated constitutions. It is reported through the officers' quarters of the Sixth Michigan that our regiment is surely to be ordered out of the barracks, to make room for the Ninth Connecticut. There are other buildings enough ready for use, and that regiment have tents, while we have none; but as the report goes, we are to have no shelter either by tents or roofs. We are to be ordered to encamp, without protection from sun or rain, at a place just out of the town, toward the Perkins plantation.

The officers are assembled to consult as to the matter. The place where we come together is at the door of the quarters of the commanding officer, on the upper portico, toward the river, of one of the large barrack buildings, with white columns supporting its wide porches, beneath which many large windows are open. The men are thronging the shady part of their barracks. All the buildings being much alike, are arranged in the form of a horse-shoe, with the open part at river bank, so as to inclose a neat parade ground, with graveled walks, where the garrison of regulars once displayed their perfection. The consulting officers are now all in earnest. Our sleek commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Clark, seems to think of himself as well as of others, as he speaks most feelingly: "I am ordered to march this regiment out of these barracks, and I don't propose to do it, because I look upon the order as unreasonable. The men are just beginning to get well, and if we make them lie in the sun out there where they want to send us, they will die. I have told the General that the Ninth Connecticut have tents, and we have none, but he is determined to show his authority. He hates us, and hates to see us in these buildings. I expect he wants to revenge himself on us because our men yelled 'Order of combat,' as often as he showed himself on the deck of the Great Republic. The continual war that we have had with him since he commenced treating us like dogs, and calling us beasts, might as well come to a head now as at any other time. I refuse to march this regiment from where they are, to lie exposed to the sun and rain. The command will devolve upon some of the

rest of you in succession, and you can do as you please, but I do not wish to be accountable for the deaths of those who will die in consequence of needless exposure and suffering." The officers present are not slow in agreeing with their commander. Allusions are made to the threats of the General when our men used to hoot "Order of combat," as often as he showed himself out of his cabin; when we lay off the Southwest Pass, during the bombardment of Fort St. Philip and Fort Jackson. All the officers are committed to the policy of disobeying, and being arrested. Although some appear very willing to escape all risk to themselves, no one, however, dares speak openly in favor of gratifying the General by submission. The gathering is broken up, and the officers retire for secret counseling. Not long afterwards, Lieutenant-Colonel Clark returns from a visit to General Williams' head-quarters. He looks like a martyr; says that he is under arrest; appears to have lost considerable of his zeal, and to have a realizing sense that the thing is done. I, as major of the regiment, am in command, and in a short time an orderly arrives from the General with a message, taking me to post head-quarters. I cross the broad, dusty street, separating the barracks from the arsenal grounds. The sun seems to scorch the blood in my veins, my little uniform cap affording no protection. On entering the fine brick building used by the General and his staff, I find him standing by a table, on which lies an open order book. Lieutenant Elliott, the brigade quartermaster, is present, and attentive, probably in expectation of being a witness. For a like purpose, I have with me an officer of my regiment. General Williams, pointing to the book, says: "Major, Lieutenant-Colonel Clark, who has been in command of your regiment, being under arrest, the command of the regiment devolves upon you. An order has been issued which I wish you to obey, in regard to your regiment moving to the forks of the Bernard and Perkins roads." I answer that I do not know what the order is. It is pointed out to me on the order book, and simply requires that the regiment be moved to the place spoken of. I ask can I state any facts connected with

the matter. "No," answers the General. I say, in inquiry, "Then will I not be allowed to give any reasons?" "Orders are not to be discussed," is the reply, continued with the question, "Will you obey this order?" I answer, "Under the circumstances, I cannot." The little grizzly old General, growing red in the face, and straightening his tight-buttoned form, repeats, "Will you obey this order?" I answer that I can give no other answer than I have given. The General tries to look as fierce as he can, and again asks, "Will you obey this order?" My reply is again, "I can give no other answer than I have given." The General, suddenly losing all his ferocity, says mildly, "Go to your quarters in arrest." The command of the regiment is left to Captain Ely A. Griffin, of Company A. He is sent for by the General, and on being required to obey the order, squarely refuses, and is sent back under arrest. Captain William W. Wheeler, of Company B, is next sent for, and being naturally too subtle to lose such an opportunity to gain some advantage by his skill, he makes objection to the General that the commissions of captains in the regiment bear date on one and the same day, and that their rank has never been determined by lot or otherwise. The General is confused, but thinking this a fit occasion to show how a West Pointer is taught to dispose of matters of law likely to thwart his will, at once requires Wheeler to obey the order, and, without paying any attention to the answer, sends him to his quarters in arrest. Captain Spitzer, of Company C, comes next. At the meeting of officers, where resistance was resolved upon, he was most earnest in promising to stand by Lieutenant-Colonel Clark, and to refuse to obey the order. Yet there has been some curiosity to know the result of his present interview with General Williams. But little time has passed when Spitzer returns, his face the picture of distress. Some of us gather around him. He is saying, "What could I do? The General just showed me the law, and that went on to say something to the effect that if I did not obey orders I should suffer death. When he came to that, I told him I could not refuse, for I had not known what the law

was before." Several ask, "Did you agree to march the regiment out where the General wants them?" Spitzer answers, "What could I do?" and his looks render all further inquiry needless. I leave to others all further conversation with Spitzer, and return to my quarters, well satisfied that in his case there is a good example of what is called military subordination. While in the power of Clark, he was loud in professions of determination to gratify every wish of his regimental commander. While in the power and in the presence of General Williams, he was doubtless abject as a slave, and now that he was again among us of his regiment, he was as friendly as ever to our side of the question. Our case is beginning to be serious. There is counseling in public and in private. Captain Spitzer is in command of a regiment, and is bustling about getting wagons and baggage ready. The regiment is formed, and in dust and heat proceeds through the streets of the town to the new camp, where the General's ideas of camping without shelter are immediately tested by a drenching thunder storm. Officers seek the protection of the rebel roofs. No fear of General Williams is sufficient to keep the men out in the rain, and their expressions of hatred toward the General are sufficient to open the sympathies and the doors of rebel housekeepers.

During the days that elapse before the 31st of July, there are few events worthy of mention. The officers in arrest make application and receive the extension of limits of arrest, so that they can go anywhere within the picket guards of the post, such extension being usual, and almost a matter of course. A few hours after the grant of extension, our General hears something that has been said about him, and immediately sends an orderly with an order revoking the extension given, and confining the officers in arrest to the ground within the police guards of their camps. The exposure of the men to the heat and the rain is continually lessening the numbers in the ranks, already decimated by disease. I write a letter to the Governor of Michigan of which this is a copy:

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CAMP OF SIXTH REGIMENT MICHIGAN VOLS., )  
Near Baton Rouge, La., July 29, 1863. }

SIR—I am informed by Colonel Payne, of the Fourth Wisconsin Regiment, that the Governor of his State has promised "active co-operation" to deliver us from Brigadier-General Thomas Williams, who, though avoiding every chance to fight the enemy, has so long and openly been murdering the men of his brigade, that every one of us is convinced that there is more to fear from him than from Van Dorn or the rebel ram. We have found ourselves cornered where we must be destroyed like silly sheep, or begin to resist.

When Williams went on his second Vicksburg expedition, the Sixth Michigan, Twenty-first Indiana, one battery, and one company of cavalry, aided by the gunboat Kineo, were left to take care of the capital of Louisiana. Our brave men soon began to be themselves again, actually enduring the heat better than the guerillas could. Tired of the defensive, they began to penetrate many miles toward Camp Moore, never failing to break up guerilla camps, and return with new liking for real war.

General Williams returned. There had been no battle in which he had been engaged, but his troops looked as if they had come on furlough from Death himself. Slow in all operations against the enemy, he was active enough in those against us, for before he left his steamer he ordered us out of our barracks, to camp out doors, without any shelter, not far from where the waters of the great crevasse had just dried away, and in a defenseless position, where we would effectually mask an advancing foe from the fire of the gunboats. Next, all the wretched sick men were ordered out of the hospital, where we had made them comfortable, to go on a miserable transport, 150 miles, to New Orleans, among strangers. Next, all the troops in Baton Rouge received orders to march about a mile out of town every morning, and form a long line on an old field, and then, after being drilled two hours in the General's famous "Order of Combat," to march back in the hot sun to their quar-

ters. Nor were the hot afternoons to be without enough similar performances to make short work with the whole brigade. Lieutenant-Colonel Clark, myself, Captain Griffin and Captain Wheeler, were put under arrest, at first charged with disobedience of the first order, but now the charge appears changed to mutiny and exciting to mutiny.

This General verily believes all volunteers no better than dogs, and he is entirely incapable of understanding how an officer can take any care of his men's lives, or make them comfortable, except on the supposition that the officer is a politician seeking votes. But never did any demagogue under Fernando Wood do more debasing and menial services for Southerners, and Southern institutions, than our General is astute in finding occasions to do. Should I say that this man has decimated our regiment, it would, I admit, be far from the truth. There are now less than half the men of the regiment fit for duty, and of these few look like their former selves, or will be spared very long by the seeds of disability and death, which have not only been planted, but carefully nourished in their constitutions. Any sacrifice I can make to save my men, is simply doing my duty. I know that we are not doing what will discourage enlistments, or aid that enemy, who has never done us a hundredth part of the harm done by our own generals. Every act and word that tends to remove such men as Williams, tends to remove that which chiefly discourages enlistments, and aids the enemy—in other words, to remove the greatest stumbling blocks in the road to peace. The States of Michigan, Wisconsin and Indiana, ought to refuse to allow another regiment to move southward until General Williams is recalled. This would give some assurance to those whom they ask to enlist that they are not being recruited for hospitals and pestilence—some assurance that their own States consider a volunteer better than a dog. I rejoice that amidst all present evils I see one great good, namely, the North is learning war, though it be in the costly school of experience. And the great money god is loosing his hold on the people's affections.

I hope to be here again some time, to fight in the cause of the warlike Northwest, when Southerners shall know what our brave men and iron-clad gunboats can do, and what kind of raids we can make, when we are led by leaders chosen from among ourselves, and not from among regular army officers, who have no ties of residence, and into whose minds the South, during her long dominion, instilled her own principles much more carefully than into the minds of politicians, inasmuch as she was to have more use for them—use not only for those she was going to take, but for those she was to leave to lead us.

Respectfully,

EDWARD BACON,

Major Sixth Regiment Michigan Infantry.

His Excellency, AUSTIN BLAIR, Governor of Michigan.

I also take some of the leisure which our arrest affords to write to Senator Zachariah Chandler, of Michigan, the following letter:

CAMP OF SIXTH REGIMENT MICHIGAN INFANTRY, }  
Baton Rouge, La., July 30, 1862. }

SIR—Knowing you to be leader in the great Northern cause, which shall prevail, I wish to tell you of some of the troubles of the Sixth Regiment of Michigan, which has fallen into the hands of General Thomas Williams, an old regular army captain, whose hatred of all volunteers, evidenced by orders and public declarations, is enough to render him more to be feared than either fevers or rebels. We have been packed in the lower holds of transports, to voyage on various expeditions, for weeks together; our miserable rations seldom cooked, and always irregular; carefully avoiding the enemy, waiting for him to gather immense forces; and, in truth, with apparently but one design, namely, to make us feel that the life of a volunteer is not worth as much as that of a dog. The decimation of the entire brigade is already complete; the sick are everywhere, and the well hard to find. Hospitals are multiplied, without diminishing the number of deaths. In some regiments there are about enough men left for duty to make one company, while



other brigades, not under General Williams, are in excellent health.

Scarcely a wounded man is to be found, and from the soldier to the chief surgeon, all agree that one man is the cause of the deaths that are filling acres of grounds with graves. Even the poor half-killed horses, hanging their heads to the earth, seem praying for deliverance.

General Williams is stuffed full of the small things of the regulations. He appears determined to wage war by means of inspections; thinks that in this way he is fated to be a mighty warrior, and dissatisfied with inspecting our dress and looks, he has lately confined his ambition to the cultivation of his own, and there are those who even dare to say that had he shown the same skill before the enemy which he has shown before the looking-glass, the Mississippi river would not now be closed more firmly than at any time since the forts guarding its mouth were taken.

The expeditions to Vicksburg, and the renowned Williams ditch, on the westward side of the river at that place, where the insubordinate water would not run up hill, must be an everlasting puzzle to the rebels, and to all who do not know the presiding genius. The regiments never had a position either in his drill, the "Order of Combat," or when strung around Baton Rouge, or when marvelously embattled to fight the great ram Arkansas, but that the design seemed to make it necessary that the fire of friends, or of our own gunboats, should be the greatest danger. The General's two Vicksburg expeditions contain such a combination of petty injuries, neglect to strike effective blows, shrinking from fight, great displays at safe distance from danger, and such cowardly cringing to traitors, as can hardly fail to line the river with batteries, and bring rebel armies to the very streets of New Orleans. Nor is there any doubt that the Williams ditch would have been the grave of our whole force, perishing by exposure to all known causes of death, in the execution of a plan which must have been the offspring of a mind twenty years pickled in alcohol, had it not been that,

far excelling all fabled monsters, came the rebel ram, which, however, the Northwest and the Northeast must thank for saving the lives of those friends and relatives who were at that time saved from a fate scarcely less horrible than that of the hundreds of fugitive slaves who, having long been at work on the ditch, and standing on the shore, holding the hands of wives and children, sent up a shriek of woe when they were barred by the General's bayonets from entering empty steamers of the retreating expedition, and left to be made examples to terrify all who would afterwards aid the North. Some idea of the military abilities of our commander may be formed from his orders, such as his great negro order, his order of combat, and his two-ball order, copies of which I send herewith.

Being possessed of the Mississippi river, even if we only occupied land enough for temporary and changeable camps, with armed transports and active iron-clad gunboats, we could make raids wherever we pleased, shatter rebel authority far and wide, not only pay, but enrich both fleet and army with the spoil, and cut off from the enemy what is half his empire. Instead of any such plan, we are kept strung around Baton Rouge, guarding our General, his rebel friends, and a few poor Union men, whom it would be a thousand times better to support in the North. Seldom are there any incursions. The broad river is left free to the rebels, even within our sight. We are waiting for rebel rams to get ready, and then for another sudden retreat like the last from Vicksburg.

Respectfully,

EDWARD BACON,

Major Sixth Regiment Michigan Infantry.

Hon. Z. CHANDLER, Washington, D. C.

GENERAL ORDERS, No. 29.

HEADQUARTERS SECOND BRIGADE, }  
Ship Island, April 7, 1862. }

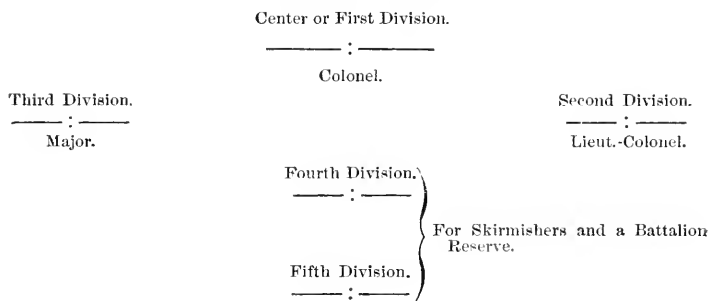
The tactics of the Second Brigade will be the attack, consisting of the fire of skirmishers advancing, the volley of the First,

Second and Third Divisions, at 50 to 75 paces. *Muskets charged with two balls*, and the bayonet charge delivered with manly cheers. The order of combat is an order of attack, and, therefore, to be practiced until it can be executed with rapidity, intelligence and vigor. Let the simulated attack be executed with the spirit and intelligence of brave men in earnest, and the real attack is made sure of. Field officers and captains of divisions in front, leading their men on, will step, the former to the rear, and the latter between the companies of their divisions, the instant before the volley, and rush again to the front to conduct the charge.

By order of Brigadier-General Williams.

WICKHAM HOFFMAN, A. A. Gen'l.

### THE ORDER OF COMBAT.



To form order of combat from line, the command of the General will be :

1. Order of combat.
2. March.

Which command will be repeated by the commanders of battalions.

At the first command, captains will step to the front, the captain of the First or Center Division to caution that division to move forward; the captains of the Second or Third Divisions to stand fast, and the captains of companies on the right and

left will break their companies to the rear, to form double column at division distance.

At the command "March," the First or Center Division will move forward, division distance, and be dressed by the center. The Second and Third Divisions will stand fast, and will be dressed, the Second Division by the left and the Third Division by the right, and the companies broken off to the rear will move to form double column, and will be dressed by the center. Chiefs of divisions, three paces in front of the center, lead their divisions. They are selected for courage, vigor and skill. There are thus in the battalion, when in the "Order of Combat," five captains who may be properly denominated fighting captains, and their divisions fighting divisions—all emulous of each other.

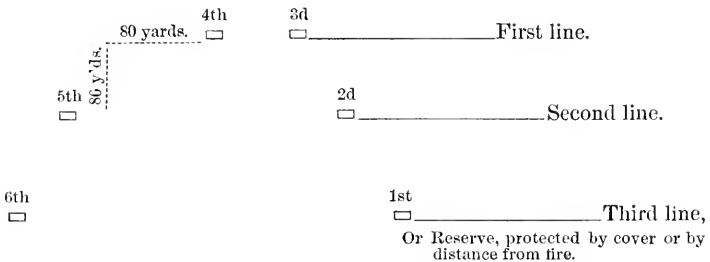
When the battalion moves forward, skirmishers are thrown 500 to 1,000 yards to the front. If only one division (say the Fourth) is thrown forward, one company supports; if two divisions are thrown forward, one division skirmishes, and one supports. As the battalion approaches the point from which its First, Second and Third Divisions are to deliver a volley and charge, skirmishers incline to the right and left, so as to unmask it, keeping up their fire. The distance between skirmishers and supports generally about 150 yards. When the battalion has approached near enough to act as a support to its own skirmishers, division or company supports withdraw by a double quick to their places in rear of the battalion, to act as a reserve.

In the volley delivered by the battalion, the men are directed to aim at the line of knees. At 100 paces from the enemy, commanders of battalions command:

1. Battalion—Halt! 2. Ready. 3. Aim. 4. Fire!
5. Shoulder—Arms! 6. Forward—March!
7. Prepare to charge! (at which the men come to *arms-port*) and at 60 paces—
8. Charge! When the men take cadence double quick, keeping up the touch of elbow toward the guide, and just

before the moment of shock, pass from arms-port to charge bayonet, with loud hurrahs. The touch of the elbow is to be insisted on in the drill, being essential to the momentum of the shock. After the shock, the order of combat is to be resumed at once; the men reload by command (Load at will—Load!) given by battalion, ready to renew the attack, and the skirmishers pursue.

The skirmishers consist of the Fourth Division, supported by the Fifth Division.



The battalions echeloned on three lines, as above, or by some other arrangement of echelons, support each other, and attack successively; if the attack of the first line fails, the second line attacks, and if successful, the reserves come up to complete the success; or if the second line is checked, the reserves strike for success, or to prevent disaster. The right or left flank of the battalion may be made the front by a simple wheel of divisions right or left, or by a wheel of divisions on the center (one company wheeling forward, and the other faced about and wheeling back), or by coming into line by divisions.

By the following commands of the battalion commander:

1. By Division—Right (or Left) Wheel!
2. March! (or double quick—march.)

NOTE.—The Fifth Division faced to the right or left, in moving, preserves its relative position to the Fourth Division.

1. By Division on Center—Right (or Left) Wheel!
2. March! (or double quick—march.)

NOTE.—The companies to be faced about will be so faced by their commander at the first command.

1. Battalion—Right (or Left) Face!

1. By Division into Line.

3. March! (or double quick—march.) To advance by center of divisions, the command will be: 1. Advance by center. 2. March! (or double quick—march.)

NOTE.—The companies will be faced to left and right flanks by captains, and broken to the front at the first command.

To retire by center of divisions, the battalion will first be faced about, and commanded:

1. Retire by Center.

2. March! (or double quick—march.)

NOTE.—The companies will be faced to right and left by their captains, and broken to the right at the first command.

NOTE.—The same movements of advancing or retiring may be made to either flank, by forming up to right or left, and then breaking to front or rear by center of divisions.

To FORM SQUARE.—The square is formed directly from the order of combat, at the commands of “Form Square—March!” (or double quick—march.) At the first command, the First Division is cautioned by its chief to stand fast; and the Second and Third Divisions are by their chiefs faced to the right and left, and some files broken to the front. The Fourth and Fifth Divisions cautioned by their chiefs to move forward. At the word “March,” the First Division stands fast, the Second and Third file to the right and left, to join on the First Division; the rear divisions (Fourth and Fifth) move up to complete the square. If a Fifth Division be present, it closes on the Fourth and faces outward—its flank files, also facing outward.

To FORM OBLIQUE SQUARE.—The battalion first changes direction by the right or left flank, and the square is formed as before. The square is reduced by facing the Second and Third Divisions by the left and right flank, and filing back by the left and right flanks to their position in “Order of Combat.” The Fourth front is marched, division distance, to the rear, and refaced to the front.

In evolutions of the line with battalions echeloned, in “Order of Combat,” the tactical commands are as familiar and simple

as they are easy of execution—changes of front, forward, and to the rear ; marching to the front, rear and flanks, etc.

BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS, }  
Camp at Ship Island, Miss., March 17, 1862. }

(Signed) T. WILLIAMS,  
Brig.-Gen'l Vols., U. S. A.

With compliments, to Colonel F. W. CORTIUS, commanding Sixth Michigan Infantry.

To complete a package of papers to be sent to Michigan, Lieutenant-Colonel Clark, myself, Captain Wheeler and Captain Griffin, sign this statement for publication in the *Detroit Advertiser*:

“ Being intrusted, in a sickly climate and at a sickly season, with a regiment of Michigan’s best men, most of them sons of worthy farmers, we have judged it our duty, regardless of consequences, to begin to disobey the orders of Brigadier-General Thomas Williams, because we believe his orders more fatal to the lives in our charge than the bullets of the enemy, or the yellow fever itself. By this General’s orders, our regiment was kept packed in the lower hold of the steamer *Constitution*, off the Florida Reefs and on the Gulf. By his order, men without half rations were worn out by carrying packed knapsacks at a double quick step, beneath the sun and in the sand of Ship Island, and made to drill, not in any known tactics, but in the “Order of Combat,” a thing of his own invention, worthy of himself, and intended to degrade the volunteer service. By his orders, the Sixth Michigan, Twenty-first Indiana, and Fourth Wisconsin Regiments, nearly three thousand men, lay many days off the mouths of the Mississippi, the deserted rebel Pilot Towns in plain sight, while disease, like a vulture, was preying upon the vital energies of every man. A week’s delay at New Orleans, and the General took us on board transports for his first Vicksburg expedition, upon which permission to go ashore was a rare favor. The rebel plenty and luxury on either side was protected by all the zeal of the General’s patriotism. Our

food, and the opportunity to cook it, were matters of chance. Sometimes there would be half allowance of the vilest rations; then nothing to eat; then more than enough of one kind of food. Superadded, came the moral effect of weeks of inactivity, failure and defeat. To Commodore Farragut we owe our rescue from the transports at Baton Rouge, where the pallid and emaciated battalions landed, looking as if they had just been raised from the dead.

“General Williams then went on his second Vicksburg expedition, ever memorable for its ditch. Then strength and life began to return, with the restoration of the usual means for sustaining them. The daily work of grave digging began to lessen, and some of the ghastliest faces in the hospital began to show the wonder of returning health.

“Now, the General, in fine bodily condition, without having been in any battle, has returned from what he, in military technicality, terms his grand diversion, but the horses and soldiers of his regiments and batteries horrify all who behold them. There has been a hurried seizure of buildings for hospitals, and so many are the dead, that even fugitive slaves are employed to dig soldiers' graves, although such fugitives have long been consigned to bloodhounds and slave hunters by the great negro order, which our General has had printed, posted up about the town, and circulated through the country:

“GENERAL ORDERS, No. 46.

“HEADQUARTERS SECOND BRIGADE, }  
 “Baton Rouge, June 5th, 1862. } ”

“In consequence of the demoralizing and disorganizing tendencies to the troops of harboring runaway negroes, it is hereby ordered that the respective commanders of the camps and garrisons of the several regiments, Second Brigade, turn all such fugitives in their camps or garrisons out beyond the limits of their respective guards and sentinels.

“By order of Brigadier-General T. Williams.

“WICKHAM HOFFMAN, A. A. G.



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“The General announced to us his arrival from Vicksburg by ordering us out of the barracks, not to occupy other buildings, of which there are many vacant or filled with rebels, nor into tents. Orders required us to leave ours at New Orleans, because we were to use buildings. Our regiment was to be without shelter. We were ordered to camp at a place outside the town, exposed to the deadly dews, to frequent rains, and to the glare of the Louisiana sun. General Williams has succeeded. The regiment is turned out of doors, and is alternately drenched with rain and scorched with heat, but not until a protest that must be heard has been made, by our arrest for disobedience to the order requiring such a sacrifice of health and life. This General now acts as if he has received a commission from the Genius of Pestilence, in the triumphant execution of which he draws a scent of prey innumerable.”

On the 31st of July, 1862, I am in my quarters yet, under General Williams' arrest. I have been amused by the tokens of sympathy and interest which the arrested officers receive from rebel citizens. I have watched the little groups of men who came with their colors to form brigade line for drill in the hottest hours of the day. Where are the rest? Not more than one in five of even the living are present. The experiment of the Vicksburg ditch has been a costly one. An order comes that the officers in arrest shall go to New Orleans and report themselves in arrest to Major-General Butler. We are to start about sunset. The regimental line is formed for parade beside their bush-hut encampment. We are called on to say something. Colonel Clark first goes before the line, and says: “I never expect to see you again. I am ordered off to New Orleans under arrest, and do not know what they will do with me. I have always done the best that I could do for you, and have always tried to save your lives from being sacrificed by unnecessary exposure. There is no man who can say that I have wronged him. If I have ever injured any of you, it was not done intentionally. I hope to satisfy your friends at home

that I have done right. You all know Captain Spitzer and Captain Cordon and Captain Bassett, who have been appointed to act as your field officers. They are good men, and I hope that you will respect and obey them. Farewell."

I am next called on, and as soon as the cheers that answered Clark admit, I address the scanty regiment. "Soldiers—or boys, as I have often called you—we have long enough seen our comrades die and be buried like dogs. I remember those burials of our friends in that levee at Vicksburg. The plain board coffins that held our dead were sunk in the mud of shallow graves, from which the flood that washed on both sides has, ere this, swept the bodies into the river, for the catfish and the alligator. The transports on which you were crowded, like slaves on slave ships, were tied to the same trees for many long days and nights. Diseases were engendered which have filled so much ground here at Baton Rouge with the graves of Michigan men, and now leave before me but a fragment of what was recently our regimental line. This work of murder has gone on long enough. Something must be done, and I have made up my mind to do it. I think of the wail that I must hear when I go home, and I am resolved that I will be able to report what I have done to stop this destruction of life without any cause, except some such cause as the Vicksburg ditch, and the man that made it."

Captain William W. Wheeler is next called, and commences like himself: "I do not care what the result is, I have submitted as long as I am going to. I had rather be cashiered, and go home and be drafted under the conscription law, and serve as a private soldier for nine months under the new conscription law, than to serve one month under this old General as a colonel." After continuing his remarks most happily in this strain for some time, he received more hearty cheers than those who preceded him. Carriages have been sent to hurry us to a steamer about to leave for New Orleans. Our regimental band, with their brass instruments, give us a tune at the camp. We stop a few moments in the town, where officers of gunboats, with some

army officers and leading citizens, are having a high time. Some rich man's supply of liquors is going for patriotic purposes.

We are off on the steamer Ceres, starting down the river just at sunset. The iron-clad Essex, and other formidable war vessels, one after another, are letting off steam with loud roaring, as they lie all ready and waiting for the terrible rebel ram Arkansas.

AUGUST 1.—After a ride down the majestic river, luxuriant sugar plantations extending far back from either bank, we arrive at New Orleans, take rooms at the City Hotel, report ourselves under arrest to Major-General Butler, and request a copy of the charges against us. Each of us, except Colonel Halbert E. Paine, of the Fourth Wisconsin, receives a paper stating the accusation against him. Mine is as follows :

CHARGE AGAINST MAJOR EDWARD BACON, SIXTH REGIMENT MICHIGAN VOLUNTEERS—CHARGE, MUTINY.

*Specification.*—In that he, Major Edward Bacon, Sixth Regiment Michigan Volunteers, in the service of the United States, did endeavor to excite, and did excite, a mutiny among officers and men at the post of Baton Rouge, Head-quarters Second Brigade, Department of the Gulf, by conspiring against the legal authority of his commanding officer, Brigadier-General T. Williams, U. S. Volunteers, in disobeying, with other officers, to wit: Lieutenant-Colonel T. S. Clark, Captain Eli A. Griffin, Captain W. W. Wheeler, all of the Sixth Regiment Michigan Volunteers, and combining with the same officers to disobey his, Brigadier-General T. Williams', legal orders, especially special order No. 200, dated Head-quarters Second Brigade, Baton Rouge, La., July 26, 1862, as attached hereto.

This at Baton Rouge, La., on or about the 26th of July, 1862.

(Signed) T. WILLIAMS,

Brig.-Gen. Vols.

[OFFICIAL.]

R. C. DAVIS, Capt. and A. A. A. G.

Colonel Paine's case is disobedience of the General's order to deliver up fugitive slaves.

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I see that the faces of some of the accused grow very long as they sit pondering over the articles of war relating to mutiny, an offense so serious that the limits of our arrest forbid us to leave the hotel. Our time goes heavily. Colonel Paine's sins are not considered of so dark a nature as those of the rest of us. He has no limits assigned, and is the means of bringing us much information. From him, and officers who visit us, we learn that General Butler's brother, Andrew J. Butler, and Colonel Shaffer, Chief Quartermaster, are supposed to be the best intercessors to obtain some favor for us with the Major-General, who has already commenced to reign as a Viceroy. Mounted orderlies and patrols, with shining arms and accoutrements, continually passing in the streets, give the city a show of government which it has never had since the Spanish rule. Although New Orleans is cut off from all trade with the interior, and is in the hands of an enemy, yet business goes on, and poor people live; but all questions, except those of our own case, are losing interest for us, and we begin to understand the feelings of prisoners—that want of liberty which would bring sensations of suffocation to a free man if confined within the walls of a church. On Sunday, August 3, a swift boat from Baton Rouge brings a dispatch from General Williams to General Butler, calling for reinforcements, and giving information that General Breckenridge, with an army, is advancing from Camp Moore, on the Jackson railroad, westward, toward Baton Rouge. The swiftest steamer is ordered to be in immediate readiness to carry General Butler and his staff to Baton Rouge. There is delay, inquiry, consideration, and the General does not go to Baton Rouge, but only sends dispatches. Whether there is to be an attack on Baton Rouge seems now like a real question. The present report is not like those which have caused many false alarms, and are we to lie here in confinement, a burning sun in the heats of August glaring upon this filthy city, where drainage is almost impossible, and during all the spring months the river has been more than six feet higher than the streets, and liable at any time to make the city the bottom of a

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lake, as nature intended? There are odors enough to lead a stranger to think that the very hotel where we are is founded in a swamp, where the process of putrefaction is never to cease. If the yellow fever does not rage here, as it has many times before, it is accident, and any night the returning pestilence may begin for the negroes and the dead carts their customary employment until frost comes. Memorable battles may be fought, and the only chance of reward for our former sufferings and privations may pass without any more advantage to us than if we had stayed at home. I, with one of my companions in arrest, sign and send to the General the following lines:

“GENERAL—If there really is to be an attack on Baton Rouge, we respectfully ask permission to serve with our regiment until the battle is ended.”

One report says that General Williams has made his “Order of Combat” the basis of his plan of defense, and that he has such confidence in his famous condensation of tactics, that he is resolved to advance three miles from the river to meet the enemy, who is reported to have 15,000 men. Our minds are wearied with speculations concerning our trial, and what points we can make in defense, and concerning the various federal and rebel rumors of the great events of war said to have recently happened, and to be gathering around us. On the night of the 5th of August, I draw my musquito net, shutting out the swarm that fill my room with music, and after some time given to the thoughts which have been keeping me in anxiety, I lose my troubles, and at about two o’clock in the morning am aroused by loud raps at my door. A messenger, with clanking sabre and bright uniform, has arrived from General Butler’s head-quarters, with verbal orders for Colonel Halbert E. Paine, and the rest of us under arrest, to report there immediately. “Has there been a fight at Baton Rouge?” is one of the first questions, but to whatever is asked the messenger replies with the caution of one who has been on worse business for superiors than he is doing now. A carriage is ordered, and we hurry

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along the moonlit streets to find out something new in our fate, doubtful whether it is to be for better or for worse. After going more than a mile up Camp street, we stop at a stylish residence, lately the home of General Twiggs, but now among the first fruits of confiscation seized by the General. Lights are in the hall, sentries are on duty, and orderlies and officers are coming and going. In one of the best rooms we are ushered into the presence of Benjamin F. Butler, who sits behind a table, officers of his staff about him. At first, scarcely raising his eyes from a paper he is finishing, he bids us "be seated," and in a short time, looking up at us steadily, he proceeds: "I have sent for you. There has been an attack on Baton Rouge, and the enemy have been repulsed. General Williams is killed. (Here the General pauses a moment, turning his eye toward each of us successively, and watching every expression of countenance.) He adds: "General Williams' head was shot off by a cannon ball." (Here the General quickly passes his eye from face to face, as if looking for some expression of surprise that a Western rifle ball has not done the work.) He continues: "The killed and wounded are about two hundred and fifty. Colonel Cahill was in command when the steamer left, and another attack was expected. That attack has probably been made. Reinforcements are asked. I have none to send. All of the navy that can be spared are going to Baton Rouge, to try their strength with the ram Arkansas, which is there. I have received from some of you a request to be permitted to serve with your regiments if any attack was probable. This is very gratifying to me. The cause of all difficulty has been removed. I have ordered the Ceres to get ready immediately, to take you back to your commands. You are all released from arrest. Do you wish to return to your commands?" A prompt answer in the affirmative comes from all of us. Some inquiries are made as to the ram, and the General, in a friendly voice, reads to us a part of his dispatch from Colonel Cahill, stating that the Arkansas was in sight, and says, "You have all that I know."

An officer who is present, and appears to have had something to do with the regular army, is dissatisfied with the whole proceeding concerning us. He says something about the bravery of General Williams, and his death in battle, and adds, "That is the way he always wanted to die," and glances at us with a look which indicates that he thinks that the slightest wish of a regular army commander ought to be reason enough for sacrificing any number of volunteers. We can see what would have been our fate had we been in the power of a man who would cower before the frown of that West Point influence, which would have surrendered our country and liberties at the beginning of the rebellion, had it not been for Benjamin F. Butler and a few other leading spirits, who gave things a different turn, and fixed the purpose of the nation for the mightiest war of history. In saving us from being crushed to gratify a dead West Pointer's hatred, General Butler added to the unpardonable sins he had already committed in displeasing that army aristocracy who are worse enemies to liberty than the democratic owners of estates and human chattels in the South—that aristocracy who despise all volunteers, and curse them as militia-men, whose courage in battle is, according to regular army theory, about as meritorious as that of horses. No man not of that aristocracy can long hold such a place as General Butler's, until the people learn to be their own masters in war as well as in peace.

On our way up the river, we are at times near to Farragut's sloops-of-war, and at times out of sight of them. As we turn the great bends in the river, many eyes look for the ram Arkansas, whose cannon may be the reporters to tell us news of the result at Baton Rouge. This formidable naval monster was, at Vicksburg, proved able to pass through the federal fleet without feeling their fire, and experienced commanders in the fleet expressed their opinion that there was nothing to hinder the ram from proceeding to New Orleans and shelling the city. What has been the result of yesterday's work? What would a federal victory on land avail, if the ram can

shell Baton Rouge? We approach our destination, after passing within a few yards of levees and thickets on the river banks, where a single discharge from a couple of field pieces, or even the fire of guerillas, might have compelled our defenseless boat to surrender. Lieutenant Weitzel, of General Butler's staff, who is a man worthy to command an army, is a passenger with us, and argues good news from the enemy's neglect of us. Our arrival at Baton Rouge is on the night of the 6th of August, while the flames of a burning house light up the clouds, being the signal agreed upon, give information to the enemy of the arrival of federal reinforcements. Our eager inquiries are answered by accounts of the blowing up of the ram by means of providential interference with its machinery, and the consequent failure of the enemy to make any second attack. The sorrowful news telling of friends who are wounded, and others that are killed, leaves little time or occasion for rest. After the sun rises like a fire to scorch the earth, a visit to the field of battle shows me scenes not to be forgotten. There, on a common near our camp, is a short trench in the hard soil. The flies are swarming over the crumbled pieces of clay with which it is partly filled. This is the place where Michigan men who were killed have been buried. At a little distance, rebels have been buried in a similar manner, and a ragged piece of white cloth on a stick left there, is the flag that protected the burial party. Near the Magnolia cemetery, the negroes are yet lazily at work disposing of frightfully swollen and blackened bodies, swarming with worms. Friend and foe are often placed in the same shallow, shapeless grave. During all the federal occupation of Baton Rouge, since the first of June, no earthwork or rifle pit has been made, the remnants of regiments were extended out of supporting distance from one another, and from any reserve, the plan being to surround the town and keep the enemy out. Wherever there has been any fighting, the fire of the gunboats would have been no less dangerous to our own forces than to the enemy. The ground, and a statement of the position of forces, show that the individual patriotism and self-sacrificing



courage of men of the Sixth Michigan and Twenty-first Indiana Regiments, aided by the want of all concentration on the part of the enemy, decided the battle, although the ruins of burned tents and baggage in federal camps, show that the enemy will claim that but for the failure of the Arkansas, he would have captured every federal regiment.

Now spades, picks and axes, are busy. Rifle pits and breast-works of earth are everywhere in the way of an assailant. Experience can even teach those who claim to need no teaching. For two weeks we are engaged in making strong, compact works, at the arsenal grounds, in the miserable business of burning about one-third of the town, and in getting ready for imaginary attacks by night and day, until soldiers and generals all agree that we do not want Baton Rouge any longer, and on the 18th of August, the place is abandoned and yielded up to the enemy, who quietly resume possession of both banks of the river, down to the immediate neighborhood of New Orleans. They must be satisfied with themselves for making no second attack, when they find the preparations made for their reception after their first attack. No attempt to hold useless parts of the town, formidable earthworks at the arsenal grounds, with sand bags and embrasures, all so arranged as to keep our forces under cover of a cross-fire from the navy. Yet these preparations were the work of Colonel Paine, a volunteer, he having been in command of the post from the time of his return from arrest. The same question which has cost us much to answer is now left for rebel consideration, namely—what is the use of holding Baton Rouge? One set of men are well satisfied, the convicts of the State prison, who number several hundred, and have just been turned loose, with some kind of obligation that all of them fit for service are to enlist in the federal army. When the prison doors and gates were thrown open, and the poor wretches, in their white cotton clothing, came out to embark for New Orleans, they looked as if the doctrine of universal salvation was to be realized right here. It was something new to see so much woe and misery and ignominy all ended instantly

by one stroke of fortune, the sentences to horrible pain which sinful men pronounced on those often no worse than themselves, were instantly swept away by the fortune of war, which may yet see some of these convicts made brigadier-generals, and patriotically applying the justice of the confiscation laws to those who once pronounced the sentences which were all nullified now by a verbal order from the officer of the day.

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## CHAPTER II.

The Lake Pontchartrain Swamps—The Court of Inquiry—Heresy almost detected—General Sherman and his remarkable inspection.

It is the month of September, 1862. The volunteer army, and particularly the Sixth Michigan, are far from having learned their first lesson of abject submission to regular army domineering. Brigadier-General N. A. M. Dudley's brigade, including the Sixth Michigan, Thirtieth Massachusetts and Fourteenth Maine Regiments, the Sixth Massachusetts Battery, and one company of cavalry, are lying at Camp Williams, on Metairie Ridge, a place where several small farms have been cleared in the swamp northward from New Orleans, and within three miles of Lake Pontchartrain. The dense forest of tall cypress and live oak, their boughs hung with long festoons of Spanish moss, shut out every breeze. The hot sun shines through the stagnant air, which is hazy with swamp vapors. The ground is called a ridge, because it is dry enough for human habitations, but no perceptible elevation is ever to be found in the low lands of Louisiana, where there is not a pebble or stone, and where every particle of earth appears to be made of decayed vegetation, and alligators and crawfishes appear to be the rightful owners of the land, as swarms of musquitoes are proprietors of the air. Although

the expected yellow fever has scarcely been heard of this year, yet a fatal disease of congestive symptoms, called swamp fever, with the assistance of diarrhea, threatens to take off almost as many victims as would be called for by that pestilence, which has filled with graves a crescent of burial swamps extending around the greater part of New Orleans. Lieutenant-Colonel Clark, of the Sixth Michigan, has become colonel, and I have received my commission as lieutenant-colonel. Intrigues, by which my colonel has expected to become a brigade commander, have been troubled by other aspirants, who have taken measures likely to result in a court of inquiry, to obtain evidence concerning many publications which have appeared in northwestern papers, attacking the character of our late General, Thomas Williams, country editors having proceeded to make their own comments in caucus style on such communications as the following letter, published in many places :

CAMP CLARK, BATON ROUGE, La., }  
August 1, 1862. }

Lieutenant-Colonel Clark, Major Bacon, and Captains Griffin and Wheeler :

GENTLEMEN—At a meeting of the representatives of the non-commissioned officers and privates of the Sixth Regiment of Michigan Volunteers, the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted :

*Whereas*, Our beloved Lieutenant-Colonel and Major, and Captains Griffin and Wheeler, were placed under arrest for disobedience of orders, which disobedience consisted in refusing to remove the regiment under their command from the United States barracks at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, to the woods, at a time when the regiment was totally unprovided with tents or other shelter, and while the regiment was suffering severely in health from needless exposures on transports and elsewhere; and

*Whereas*, At the time of the above mentioned ordered removal, the regiment would be exposed to privations and hardships which they were, from past treatment from the above men-

tioned General, totally unable to endure without endangering their lives and health; and

*Whereas*, We believe that the above mentioned officers, in acting as they did in the premises, were doing their duty to their commands, fearless of the frowns of military dignitaries. Furthermore, we believe that they did the best they could, under the circumstances, for the health, welfare and efficiency of their command; therefore,

*Resolved*, That we, the representatives of the non-commissioned officers, musicians and privates, of the Sixth Regiment of Michigan Volunteers, pursuant to instructions, express our unlimited and unabated confidence in the officers above mentioned.

*Resolved*, That in the course taken by our officers, we fully believe that they nobly laid aside all considerations of self-interest, having an eye single to the ultimate benefit of the soldiers under their command.

*Resolved*, That whatever be the result of any investigation or court-martial in the premises, we, in our own minds, hold them guiltless and free from blame; that we gratefully cherish them in our remembrance, and that if suffer they must, our unabated love, respect and affection for them, as officers and soldiers, shall go with them, whatever be their fate.

*Resolved*, That the chairman of this meeting shall send a copy of the preamble and resolutions to our officers, now under arrest at New Orleans, at the earliest opportunity.

Sergeant HARRIGAN, Co. A, Chairman.

Sergeant MOULTON, Co. B.

Sergeant CHAPMAN, Co. C.

Corporal SCOTT, Co. D.

Private WELTON, Co. E.

Sergeant AMSDEN, Co. F.

Private MABBS, Co. G.

Sergeant WHITCOMB, Co. H.

Sergeant STODDARD, Co. I.

Sergeant BEARDSLEY, Co. K.

Musician GEANSEY, Regimental Band.

To a regular army officer, such a letter seems worse than the most horrible blasphemy. Volunteers talking about wrongs done them, and taking measures likely to trouble their superiors, for disposing of them as they please.

The court of inquiry, having for its most important officer Lieutenant Elliott, lately of General Williams' staff, is assembled at the tent of the commanding officer of the Thirtieth Massachusetts Regiment, who is no friend of Colonel Clark. I am one of the first witnesses called, and in a hot tent, about the middle of Camp Williams, which stretches out about three-quarters of a mile in length, I am employed the most of two-days in making cautious answers, which, as well as the questions asked, are slowly written down in my presence. Slips cut from a newspaper printed at Niles, Michigan, my place of residence, are presented to me, containing the editor's remarks on the subject of our arrest, calling General Williams very hard names, and applying to Captain Spitzer, who submitted and obeyed the General, epithets such as show very little respect for military dignity of office. One of the questions asked of me, after mature consideration, is, "Do you know or have reason to suspect who instigated such communications?" I answer "No," for the papers presented to me do not purport to be communications, but only editorial remarks. I am asked further, "Do you know, or have you reason to suspect, who wrote or instigated any communications on which such editorial remarks are based?" I answer "No," for I cannot tell on what sort of statements the editor would see fit to base his remarks, for which he might have judged any vague rumor a sufficient basis. Another question is carefully framed and put, "Do you know, or have you reason to suspect, whether any officer in the service of the United States, ever wrote any communication on which an editor would be likely to make such remarks?" I answer "Yes," with this qualification, that any statement of facts connected with my arrest at Baton Rouge, would be likely to cause the editorial remarks referred to, considering the character of the editor.

Another question follows, "Have you any reason to suppose that any such statement of facts connected with your arrest, or the arrest of Lieutenant-Colonel Clark, at Baton Rouge, have been written home by any officer?" My answer is, "Yes. I think that facts connected with those arrests would naturally have been mentioned by many officers in writing home." The investigation proceeds, "Can you tell the court what statement of those facts has been made in writing home by any officer other than yourself?" "No." "Was the order of General Williams, for disobeying which you were arrested, a legal order?" "Yes." "In your opinion, did Captain Spitzer do right in doing as he did?" "Considering what Captain Spitzer believed, he did right." "Do you believe that Captain Spitzer was right in what he believed?" "Yes, taking his conscience, as it was, into consideration." "Did Captain Spitzer do right, leaving his conscience, as it was, out of consideration, according to the best of your belief?" "I do not know how to attribute any moral character to his actions, without taking his conscience into consideration." "Supposing Captain Spitzer's conscience was right, do you believe that he was right in doing what he did?" "Yes; if he acted according to his conscience." "Did he act according to his conscience?" "I do not know; but I have no reason to believe that he did any violence to his conscience."

"In your opinion, are the editorial remarks that have been shown to you on pieces of newspaper, true?" "Those remarks contain true statements of the editor's opinion, without particular information as to all the facts." "Are there not statements of facts in those remarks?" "Yes." "Are they true?" "Some of them are. For instance, it is stated that the Sixth Michigan was at Baton Rouge." "Are not some of those statements of fact false?" "Yes; for instance, the letter of Captain Spitzer's company is misstated." Then reading from one of the pieces of newspaper, Lieutenant Elliott asks, "Is it true that General Williams ordered the Sixth Michigan out of comfortable barracks, to camp without tents, where they would be exposed to

a hot sun and drenching rains?" I answer "Yes." He asks, "Have not other troops been exposed in the same manner?" My answer is "Yes."

Reports concerning the court of inquiry have filled my regimental commander's mind with anxiety. He has quietly obtained an order to take one captain and go to Michigan on recruiting service, a kind of service destined to employ many most eminent officers much of their time. Captain E. A. Griffin is agreeably surprised to receive, on the 30th day of September, 1862, the order to be ready to start with Colonel Clark for Michigan on the next day. But those interested in the court of inquiry have got out a subpoena, or order, for Clark to appear before the court without delay, and another order comes detailing him as general officer of the day, to serve October 1, 1862. The Colonel acts like a man with half a dozen constables after him. On the plea of seeing about being general officer of the day, he keeps out of the way of the subpoena, and on the strength of his order to go to Michigan on recruiting service, he gets excused from duty as general officer of the day, and is safely off and on his way down the river on a swift steamer, which goes too fast to be overtaken by a telegraphic dispatch, which the court of inquiry are a little slow in getting started from General Butler's head-quarters, for the purpose of having Colonel Clark stopped at Fort Jackson, and sent back.

For a day or two after Colonel Clark's exit, we are left to our reflections, without hearing much from the court of inquiry, except that they have removed their sittings to one of the buildings occupied for military purposes in New Orleans, and are at work there. What kind of a thing is this court of inquiry? They do not proceed according to Greenleaf on Evidence, that is certain. What theory of evidence is to guide them it is difficult to understand from their questions, but the manner in which they seek after doubts, beliefs and suppositions, is enough to make us all feel unsafe. Captain William Wheeler is called before the court, and is questioned for a long time as to his innermost belief and metaphysical doubts as to

whether Captain Spitzer did right in obeying the order of General Williams, which had been disobeyed at Baton Rouge. Captain Wheeler's answers set up a distinction of military right from moral right, Captain Spitzer's conduct being entirely right in a military point of view, while morally he might have erred. In following this distinction, the court work as if their job was to make up a code of morals. Then they get Captain Wheeler into the business of detailing grievances received from the General. Here the Captain is in his element. He commences with Ship Island affairs, and tells of a case of a man dying with small pox in his company quarters, while repeated applications were made in vain to General Williams to provide some suitable place to which the man might be removed, to save others from the contagion. Then follows the story of the transports, where western volunteers were kept in horrors such as belong to slave ships, and days and weeks passed, when men longed for death to end their sufferings, yet without doing the enemy any harm; and as long as the court are disposed to ask for aggravating circumstances, Captain Wheeler is ready to state them, with exactness of time and place. On the morning of the day after Captain Wheeler's examination, I am sent for to be questioned further by our court, now assembled at a building on Camp street, occupied by General Butler's Chief Quartermaster. It seems that regular army influence at head-quarters must be earnestly demanding vengeance on volunteers, to appease the shade of Williams. After I come before them, I am asked, "In your opinion, was it necessary that your regiment should be ordered to camp without tents, where they were ordered to encamp at the time of your arrest?" My answer is, "I do not know, because I am not informed as to what reason there was why tents could not be obtained." "If tents could have been obtained, then was it necessary for your regiment to encamp at the place, and in the manner, required by General Williams?" "No, for they were required to encamp without tents."

"Do you know whether there were tents which could have been provided for your regiment?" "Only by hearsay."



“What did you hear?” “That there were such tents, the same belonging to the Ninth Connecticut, the regiment which went into the barracks in our place.” “Do you know whether what you heard was true?” “No.”

“Were not the Ninth Connecticut more in need of comfortable quarters in the barracks than your regiment were?” “I am unable to decide.”

“Why?” “I cannot tell which was in the worst condition as to health. The Ninth Connecticut had just returned from the ditch of Vicksburg. Their health was certainly miserable enough, but that of our regiment was certainly bad enough, also.”

“Had your regiment been doing any duty as severe as that of the troops at the ditch of Vicksburg?” “Considering the health of our regiment, as compared with that of most troops who went to work on the Vicksburg ditch, I answer yes.” “What duty, and under what circumstances?” “Picket and other guard duty, guerilla hunting and cotton getting, when the men were in miserable condition of health and strength, on account of previous exposures and sufferings, especially such as were endured on transports, our regiment having made two sea voyages on ships carrying three thousand men crowded together, first in March, 1862, from Fortress Monroe to Ship Island, and then in April, 1862, on the transport *Great Republic*, from Ship Island to the mouths of the Mississippi, near which we lay without landing for about three weeks; and immediately after the federal occupation of New Orleans, our regiment was sent with General Williams on his first Vicksburg expedition, on river transports, where they were crowded, and suffered as much as they had at sea, especially while the transports, for a week in May, 1862, were lying tied to trees in the flooded country on the side of the river, westward from Vicksburg. During the whole time spent on the transports, the principal food of the men was hard bread and salt beef, both damaged. The Ninth Connecticut had not been on the First Vicksburg expedition, had never suffered on transports, and their men

were mostly Irish laborers, used to low living, while ours were mostly the sons of respectable farmers."

"Had you ought to have obeyed the order of General Williams, for disobeying which you were arrested?" "If the court ask my opinion, I answer that it is already a matter of record. My arrest must be presumed to show my mind, and I have not changed it."

"Did General Williams ever treat your regiment worse than others?" "Yes." "In what manner?" "On the 27th of May, 1862, when our brigade, on the transports Laurel Hill and Ceres, ran the rebel battery at Grand Gulf, General Williams being on the former transport, out of sight of the latter, which was loaded with our regiment, passed the battery first, and without waiting to give any warning to the Ceres, suffered her to be surprised while landing for wood at Grand Gulf, by the sudden fire of the concealed battery, the General, in the meanwhile, having hurried off down the river after gunboats."

The examination of witnesses before this court continued for many days. Colonel Holbrook, of the Seventh Vermont, president of the court, did not interfere with the zeal of Lieutenant Elliott, recorder of the court, and formerly a member of General Williams' staff, who evidently shaped the whole inquiry as he pleased, while other members of the court were willing enough to let his genius take its course.

After a long time, we heard that the report was about to be published; that Captain Spitzer's character had been vindicated. The first step was taken toward appeasing the spirit of Williams. Soldiers had their jokes about the similarity of courts of inquiry to smut machines. And when the report of the court came before Major-General Butler, he seemed both interested and amused, but on the next morning he sent for the lengthy charges which Colonel Halbert E. Paine filed against General Williams, and handing the report and the charges to his orderly, directed him to put those papers into the fire, saying to himself, "The less said now about that matter the better."

The month of October, 1862, sees more suffering and death

in the Sixth Michigan, caused by the pestilential influences of Camp Williams, than would have been caused by the worst perils of a Virginia campaign. The plain board coffins must be held under water in the shallow, swampy graves, while the clammy earth is thrown in. Lines of hastily made head-boards, marked "Sixth Michigan," are daily lengthened in an old field bounded by the cypress swamp, on the northward side of our camp. The hot and motionless air is murky with miasma. The only possible approach of the enemy must be between the river and Lake Pontchartrain, which are but about six miles apart, and for a distance of more than fifty miles the horrible swamp in which the lake loses itself comes so near the river, that the approaching enemy would at every step be under the fire of gunboats, and there is no fear of a confederate fleet bringing an army across the lake in spite of our navy. Every occupant of Camp Williams asks why it is that all these troops are kept here dying, to guard this horrid swamp, where no enemy can get to us, and where even the few survivors that have the needed strength would have to make a long march by narrow roads to reach any place where an enemy can come. But staff officers in the city have announced that Camp Williams must be kept filled with troops, to complete the cordon from river to lake, and make a necessary appearance on certain maps and reports, that are to go on the books at Washington. I hope that whoever is doomed to search those volumes and reports, will happen to find the number of those who died at Camp Williams, about the time that he inspects the maps, showing the scientific position of the troops.

One of the first incidents worthy of note after duty has called Colonel Clark to his home, is this: Captain Cogswell, of Company E, in our regiment, supposing that all members of his company likely to die during the day are in the hospital, goes to the city after dinner to get rid of the swamp for a few hours, and enjoy some of those recreations which New Orleans offers to men of war. Lieutenant Dickey, of the same company, is a man of destiny, fated to be a negro general, and on this occa-

sion his genius gives forth the first spark attracting attention. A man of the company, in fair health when the Captain left in the morning, is struck with swamp fever and dies, and the efficient lieutenant had coffin made, grave dug, and man buried, before the return of his captain at supper time.

The most noteworthy affair, however, besides death's doings, is our inspection by Brigadier-General Thomas W. Sherman. As the sun casts his last scorching rays before he drops into the yellowish haze over the swamps, on the 6th day of October, 1862, I receive from one of General Sherman's orderlies, or waiters, a notice that to-morrow the General will inspect my regiment. I have heard from officers of regiments encamped along the river, wonderful accounts of General Sherman's inspections. That he arrested one lieutenant on account of a slight flaw in the seam of his coat; another for deficiency in military expression of countenance; another for unmilitary tone of voice; but that he was most particular in a set of arithmetical questions on the numbers in the regimental reports; that he wished prompt answers from memory concerning changes in the various numbers of absent, sick, present, sick on detached service, and on extra or daily duty, and other lists; also as to the numbers of cartridges in the boxes of the men, and on hand in ammunition boxes. When I recollect that it would not be easy to answer promptly from memory such questions as "What are the twelfth and the twentieth letters of the alphabet?" I see what use may be made of inspections, to gratify the ill-will of a general or any of his staff officers, endeavor to commit as many figures of my reports to memory as I can, and prepare copies for pocket use. The men hear accounts of wretched soldiers doomed unheard by the General to ball and chain, and other tortures, because of something about their persons, or their tents, at which he took offense, and even those hardly able to move are at work sweeping the ground about camp, cleaning their clothing, and endeavoring, with feeble hands, to give to the metal of their buttons, and of their arms and accoutrements, that shine the possession of which, in the General's estimation, is one of

the first military virtues. Even at night, after the drums and bugles of Camp Williams have sounded tattoo through the vapor-laden air of the swamps—through that air which every night seems to putrefy, and everywhere gives forth the odors of carrion, I see that the men are keeping up fires, to be some defense against the swarms of musquitos, while the work of getting ready for inspection continues.

Feverish influences in earth and air have long prevented healthy sleep at Camp Williams, but on this night anxiety keeps many officers awake, as they are repeating to themselves the numbers of their reports, hoping that by accident they may remember the numbers which the General will call for. There is a great increase of the horrid midnight sounds usual in the camp, the sounds coming from the sick in quarters, who are groaning and vomiting worse than ever; and the hundreds of owls, whose nightly hootings are heard in these swamps, seem to be reinforced by new choirs of their friends.

On the morning of the 7th of October, 1862, the hot sun licks up the pestilential fogs of Metairie Ridge, and shines in the faces of a line of troops standing in heavy marching order, waiting for the inspection, on a swampy piece of ground, prepared at great expense of human labor, for the grand ghastly march in review. No reviewing officer has appeared. One hot and sickening hour after another wears away, but there the line must rest, clad in their thick, woolen uniforms, wearing the little regulation skull caps, and burthened with stuffed knapsacks and rolled great coats, for the inspection. Occasionally humanity, getting the better of fear, even among officers, sick men are allowed to straggle off toward the tents. I sit in my saddle and look at the pallid faces and emaciated forms of our men. I think what a favor it would be if these men could once breathe an October breeze of Michigan, or even if there would come a breeze such as is sometimes felt near the river in Louisiana; but there is no motion to the stagnant air. The men are allowed to rest in place. They unslung their knapsacks, stretch out like alligators in the sun, and wait in silence, the heat

striking through to the very blood in their hearts. Some companies have become so scanty in numbers by excusing men taken sick, that the officers will certainly incur the General's wrath. At length a cloud of dust is seen where the road comes out of the woods toward the river. "Attention!" sounds along the line, and the sick vie with those who are well in getting every button and strap into place. The officers are giving the commands, "Right dress," a few have said "Front," when General Thomas W. Sherman and staff are grouped before our center. "By companies right wheel," is shouted, for the General cannot wait a moment for those who have waited for him long after the appointed time. The regiments stand in column of companies. The General and staff have arrived in a brisk trot at the head of the column. They dismount; orderlies hold their horses. I see some of the staff officers are already at work with pencil and memorandum book. Mine is the second regiment from the right. I see that the General is putting questions to the officers, and keeps the memorandum book in use. Suddenly one company is ordered out from among the rest, and is put through the "firings," watched by staff officers. Then the company is exercised in some of the most difficult maneuvers of the drill, until faults enough to satisfy the General have been found. Unfortunate company! Some luckless word or look of your captain has given offense. As the General approaches, I give the command "Shoulder arms," and the men, warned beforehand, stand at strict attention. General Sherman, followed by his retinue, and with his officer of the memorandum book beside him, takes position right before me, and stands staring into my face, as if hesitating whether to let loose his wrath at once on me. I keep my eyes fixed on his face. He is a small, spare man, with a crazy look about his lead-colored eyes. He seems to have no blood in his body, and is a personification of dyspepsia—a disease which has preyed upon him until his mind is no less unsound than his body. I can hardly help smiling as I think what pranks will this great West Pointer play next? Probably

he will revenge himself on us for his last dyspeptic reflections while reading some newspaper article ridiculing his conquests when he was Viceroy, and spent eighty millions in South Carolina. At last, Sherman winks and speaks. "Colonel, how many of your staff are present?" I answer, "Two, sir." Some strange sensation, apparently starting from the General's stomach, runs through his frame, causing a curious expression in his face. He composes his features, looks steadily at me again, says nothing, and turning with a quick step, marches off, followed by his staff. They mount their horses, and the General leading the way, they go off at a furious gallop in the direction from which they came. After a while, the astonished regiments are marched back to their camps. I have scarcely arrived at mine, when one of the General's favorite orderlies comes in haste, and informs me that General Sherman will be at my camp and inspect my adjutant and quartermaster's books this afternoon. It needs no advice to let me know that if he wishes to dispose of any officers, he can do so more easily on account of faults in these books than in any other way, and during the remainder of the day we are searching and arranging what records we have of the various transactions of the regiment since its organization, but night comes again to Camp Williams, and no General Sherman arrives.

After some weeks, the sickliest part of the season being past, orders remove all the troops from Camp Williams, on account of fearful mortality, and the terrible fit of *delirium tremens* afflicting a high functionary at that place. All of the troops have gone to the healthiest parts of the suburbs of the city, except the Sixth Michigan. We are also removed, but to a place where the great parapet from the river, near Carrollton, ends in the swamp. It needs no learning to perceive that the place designated for our camp is worse than Camp Williams, and on my reports I name it Camp Mors, intending that if generals demand what the name means, I will tell them that it is the name of a Michigan statesman, but in writing home I state that our camp is named Camp Death. Whatever has been horri-

ble at Camp Williams, is now more horrible here. We petition, stating that our regiment is the only one required to remain in the swamp; that the others have been permitted to escape, and praying that if we have done our share of duty there, we may be relieved. We receive no answer, but at the end of three days a staff officer arrives, demands of me a detail to assist him in laying out and fixing landmarks for a new regimental burial ground for our use, and informs me that General Sherman is satisfied that the sickness of our regiment is caused by neglect on our part to obey properly the requirements of the regulations as to camp duty, and that on the 9th day of November, 1862, the General will inspect the regiment thoroughly.

And on the day appointed, after we have been waiting a long time endeavoring to lighten our hearts by making sport of our fears, the General and staff arrive, and commence the inspection, by having our poor, half-sick remnant of a drum corps, beat the ruffles three times—the salutes of the line being as many times repeated, at orders brought to me a distance of about fifty feet by that elegant horseman, Captain Wickham Hoffman, A. A. G., who seems to imperil his life in the short turns he has to make, at the required gallop. After I give the command “Present arms,” the third time, I wonder what is coming next, and resign myself to my fate. I go through with a review, an inspection of everything, and finally with a battalion drill, under the direction of the General, and when the Brigadier’s cavalcade departs, I cannot believe that the great inspection is to be without some terrible after-clap. To my surprise, however, on the third day afterwards I receive from General Thomas W. Sherman, through his doughty adjutant, Wickham Hoffman, a significant letter, commending me and my regiment for passing inspection well. I order this letter carefully recorded in the letter book, and knowing that the General did not believe a word he has said, I make up my mind that as Don Quixote, after his adventure with the lion, styled himself “Caballero de los Leones,” I ought to be “Caballero de las



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Inspecciones," and that General Sherman's inspection had by somebody been turned into an innocent stratagem to make us lie still in the swamps at Camp Death.

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### CHAPTER III.

Infernal Regions—Stonewall Jackson—Glorious Conquest of Pontchitoula—Noble and Patriotic Hopes Disappointed—Burning of the Barataria.

As the eye follows the course of the Mississippi, shown by the map, it is seen that toward the river's final outlet, land and water are in strange confusion. Strips of new made land at the passes are reached out in shape of a sea gull's foot, where the yellowish river water is discharged upon that sea, which for many miles refuses to mix with it. Among the curious lakes, bayous and inlets, seen in the Louisiana low lands, the most remarkable are the Lakes Pontchartrain and Maurepas, with their passes. Light draft vessels, engaged in the New Orleans trade by way of Lake Pontchartrain, steam in from the gulf toward great marshes covered with reeds and canes, where, on near approach, are seen the crooked outlets of the Rigolets, which are sluiceways connecting the waters of the lake with the gulf. After some miles of pushing through the Stygian channels of the Rigolets, Pontchartrain opens to view its expanse of shallow water—a lake without a shore, for although it may be said to be of oblong form, and about twenty miles in breadth, yet whenever a vessel leaving the strangely colored central parts of the lake, approaches most parts of the ragged line of cypress trees supposed to designate a shore, it is perceived that the color of the water becomes uniformly like that seen in vats of a tan yard, and that this color is given by particles of rotten vegetation, which thicken the sluggish waters that lose themselves among the cypresses and water plants of a dismal swamp, whose boughs

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are hung with long festoons of gray moss. This swamp is generally impassable even to boats, there being a blockade of fallen trees, and tangled undergrowth of canes and nameless vines. In this pestilential fringe the lake loses itself. Here, before the river levees were made, the river, the lake and the swamps, for about half of each year, kept their waters commingled; and in later times, when strong southeast winds have continued long enough, the sea is forced in, and the waters of the swamps rising rapidly, have flooded the streets of New Orleans. On the western side of Lake Pontchartrain is found a second outlet and inlet, where the water flows both ways, like the Rigolets. A long, low, cypress-covered island, named Jones' Island, divides the channel. The north branch is called North Manchac Pass, and the south branch is South Manchac Pass, and is navigable by the lightest schooners and steamers. The only railroad communication of New Orleans with the North was by expensive bridges over these passes, and crossed this island. At the western end of the island, the passes coming near together, open suddenly into Lake Maurepas, which is a little likeness of Lake Pontchartrain, about eight miles wide, and combining all the hideous features of its prototype, except that Lake Maurepas is the shallowest, and receiving several sluggish streams from the northward, its waters are made briny only in case of some high tides and winds that drive in the sea, but even then there is hardly any change perceptible in the vile color of the lake, which, for most of the year, is kept as hot by the sun as the surrounding swamps would be if the cypresses were removed. When the tide ebbs, and the wind is from the west, the lake lets out much of its tepid contents. There are then places along its margin where a broad strip of its bottom may be seen. A strange sight is presented to view. One thick mass of entangled roots and snags, dead and half cooked, but not one grain of any kind of earth. Most of these roots appear to be those of the cypress, showing that parts of the present lake bottom once belonged to the swamps. Many black and fetid bayous reach inland, making openings among the cypress trees and canebrakes

that form the lake margin, and by the evil significance of their names, in French and in English, make known that two nations have agreed in considering these regions as next to infernal. Whatever may be exaggeration in accounts of musquitos, moccasins snakes and alligators, found in other parts of Louisiana, is all plain truth in regard to these creatures as they exist about Lake Maurepas and the Manchac Passes, and whoever is fated to breathe for some time the death-laden air of these horrible places in the hot season, will feel the meaning of Virgil's description of Lake Avernus :

“Quam super hand ullae poterant impune volantes,  
Teudere iter pennis tales sese halitus atris,  
Faucibus effendens supera ad convexa ferebat.”

It is difficult to say what diseases are not generated in these seething, steaming swamps, where the yellow fever and the cholera dwell in conjugal bliss, and nourish all their offspring—a family whom the king of terrors would delight to visit. Northward from these lakes and passes lies the Confederacy, where, at no great distance, there is found solid land, with pine trees having no moss hanging on their boughs, but on the south side lies our province of New Orleans, where even what appears the most like solid land, is found to be decayed vegetation and the sediment of the high water, which, before levees were made, yearly rolled its inundations over all the low lands of Louisiana. It is said that once people were so deluded as to bore an artesian well in New Orleans, and at the depth of about five hundred feet cypress logs were found. At all events, it is evident that the federal province plundered by the courtiers of federal Viceroy, is the recent work of the Mississippi, and had not covetous men impiously built their levees, and interfered with the Creator's work, the country would by this time have been ready for men to live in. Now, the punishment of the intruders is, that as many of them shall die by plagues, to increase the scanty land with their ashes, as it is possible to take without frightening away others whom avarice continually brings to swell the burying ground.

Since the Sixth Michigan has removed from Camp Williams to Camp Death, rebels ask us sometimes whether our generals intend to teach us to be amphibious. Quinine, repeatedly administered in enormous doses, has ceased to have much effect against the terrible miasma. The doctors decide that a new and more powerful drug must be used, and at our morning sick call arsenic is administered, both as prevention and as cure, until nothing short of killing doses of that medicine will have any effect on our death-infected systems. Another change of medicine is required, and strychnine becomes the regular dose to counteract the poisons of earth and air acting upon us, and we are informed that when strychnine shall lose its power, there is no other antidote left. I often wonder if, should Camp Death fail to plant us all in the new burying ground, any worse place can be found to make surer work with us, and in looking on the map, my eye rests at once on the place where the Jackson railroad crosses the passes of Manchac. The thought comes that this is the very place. Some general, with his head-quarters at the St. Charles Hotel, and wishing to make a report, will certainly discover that Manchac is the key of New Orleans, and must be garrisoned. The Sixth Michigan is sure to be chosen for the garrison. Nor is my opinion changed by hearing that the railroad for miles on either side of the passes is supported on high trestle work, and that there is no footing for a man away from its track.

In March, 1863, the creatures of the different head-quarters in New Orleans, reveling in stolen luxury with their yellow concubines, are suddenly alarmed by a report that Stonewall Jackson, with 40,000 men, is coming to take the city. A New England favorite, enjoying the title, uniform and pay of a colonel, but without any regiment, Langdon by name, is sent with a light ganboat to reconnoitre at Manchac. He runs into the south pass, keeping Jones' Island between himself and all harm, and coming to the ruins of the railroad bridge burned by order of General Butler, he looks along the railroad through the narrow opening in the trees of the island, across the north pass,

and up the trestle work, into the opening among the cypresses on the confederate shore. What he sees satisfies him at once. He leaves in haste, and happy to find himself once more at his luxurious quarters in the city, he makes his report, and it is, or ought to be, among the Gulf Department archives. He reports that he has seen trains of cars arriving in rapid succession, and unloading large regiments of rebels, with their colors flying, near by where great numbers of negroes were at work mounting heavy guns on the north side of Pass Manchac. Dispatches are hurried to Washington. The province is to be saved by the valor, patriotism and ability of the faithful federal officers in New Orleans, and no small share of the honor is to belong to the brave colonel who made the bold *reconnoissance*.

The federal navy controls the lakes and the river, and sweep every inch of the narrow strip of passable ground which, for more than fifty miles, separates the lake swamps from the Mississippi. There is no way for Stonewall Jackson to reach New Orleans unless he comes right through the swamps, and that is the way that he is coming, according to the opinion of our lords. The Sixth Michigan is ordered further into the swamp than ever before. Our patrols and picket guards are ordered to watch for Stonewall Jackson in the most lonesome recesses of the canebrakes, where the stagnant water is thick and yellow with poisons stewed out of the rotting vegetation. Runaway slaves have surrendered to the bloodhounds rather than attempt to make their way through these poisonous bayous and jungles.

As the vapors begin to break early one morning at the Lake Pontchartrain end of the New Orleans shell road, strange schooners are seen approaching from toward rebeldom. The military telegraph wires are busy; there is a general bustle. Slaves are hunting for staff officers in haunts of sin. Money and gold and silver plate are ready for the gunboats, when the telegraph announces that the strange schooners have shown white flags and landed, and that they are heavily loaded with bales of cotton, valued at half a million. The owners of the cotton claim to be Union men, surrender their property, trusting

to federal justice, and report that nobody on the confederate side of the lake knows anything about Stonewall Jackson being this side of Richmond; that no preparations are going on for any attack on New Orleans, and that no confederate troops, except some scouting cavalry, are anywhere near Manchac. Orders are issued for the troops to be held well in hand, ready for an attack at any moment from any quarter. It seems to be the opinion at head-quarters that the cotton schooners may have been cunningly sent by Stonewall to tempt the ruling passion of his enemies, and allay their fears, while he is coming down upon them some way where he is least expected. Gradually all alarm ceases, and it appears that while the owners of the cotton fully report the truth as to there being no preparations for either attack or defense in the adjacent parts of the Confederacy, they find it expedient, in attempting to get their pay, to make statements not strictly true in regard to the abundance of cotton, resin and turpentine, articles now of incredible price. On the evening of the 20th day of March, 1863, Colonel Thomas S. Clark returns from a long visit at head-quarters to our camp, his face flushed and his tongue thick. He confidentially informs me that he has orders for the regiment to be ready early to-morrow morning to start on an expedition for Pass Manchac. On the morning of the 21st day of March, 1863, the regiment may be seen drawn up in line, with stuffed haversacks and heavy knapsacks, every man carrying about one hundred cartridges. The hot sun is shining in their sweaty faces. Colonel Clark comes forth from his quarters in a neighboring mansion, and in a most important voice orders "Stock arms!" A wagon, containing barrels, is driven near to him. Several men, under the direction of the Colonel's favorite orderly, draw out pails full of whisky, and going along the line, let every man drink with his tin cup the drugged and fiery liquid. Soon afterward the regiment, in a long and straggling procession, at rout step, are seen following the track of the Jackson railroad, from the sugar plantations near Kennerville into the cypress swamp. Beyond this place the railroad does not come in sight of the river again, but at the

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end of about five miles there is for some miles an opening in the timber, made by a great marsh flooded from the lake, just deep enough in most places to allow long reeds to grow up through the water. Here the railroad is raised by trestle work about five feet above the water, and at intervals the trestle work has been half destroyed by fire. The men are heavily loaded, and have to make long steps from tie to tie. Now and then some poor fellow falls; some ribs are broken. The effect of the hot sun and the villainous whisky is such that there is soon seen going back a considerable number of sick and injured men. I keep ahead, and notice many alligators, of all sizes and ages, stretched out on masses of float-wood. They do not fail to draw an occasional shot from the soldiers. At La Branch station, we again come to the cypresses. Here there are some railroad buildings. We halt to make a dinner of our cooked rations. As the fires kindled to make coffee are yet smoking, just after we have sounded the assembly for departure, Colonel Clark stands on the corner of the porch of the station house, and reads to us, in a loud voice, a part of his written instructions, saying that he is to push forward to South Manchac Pass, where he will find the One Hundred and Sixty-fifth New York Regiment Zouaves ready to co-operate with him. The last words are: "Great confidence is placed in you and your command. By order of Brigadier-General T. W. Sherman. Wickham Hoffman, A. A. G." The patriotism of the men seems unbounded. The march over the trestle work, of which much more remains, seems to have only intensified their zeal.

At length we come in sight of Lake Pontchartrain, and the breeze seems refreshing. Here the confederates built earth-work protections, where one or two guns were mounted, and with the fire of infantry from the cover of bushes and trees, a sure defense could have been made against any attempt to land, although here, for a short distance, the shore affords a secure footing. We soon follow the track into the swamp again. Clouds and rain render the air more stifling than ever. Our bugles often sound halt, and every man sits down on the ties

and timbers. The water which fills the swamp is full of old, black logs, and everything looks dark and dismal, and seems strangely hurrying to decay. The air almost refuses to echo the sound of our bugles. The mournful cypress trees are very thick and tall. The owls keep up their screeching, without regard to the doubtful daylight.

Night is spent at a place which is deemed inhabitable, where we came again to the lake. Here a few wretched buildings and improvements have been made. I make a bargain with some of the poor inhabitants that I will keep the men in the ranks long enough for them to get their pigs and poultry into their dwellings, if they will give us the use of their barns and sheds for the night. Soon the fires of the men are burning along the railroad track, pickets are stationed, and places being designated for assembly at any alarm; every place fit for men to rest in, not occupied by families, is filled with tired soldiers.

In the morning, Sunday, March 22, 1863, I find myself in command of the regiment, Colonel T. S. Clark having already began to act as brigadier, and gone to a detachment of eastern troops posted at De Sair station, a short distance before us, and ready to proceed with us to South Manchac Pass.

It is not far from noon, when slowly striding from tie to tie, the black waters and their reptiles under the trestle work below us, and the wall of dismal, moss-hung cypresses on either side, we come where the iron rails have been taken from the track and carried by the enemy to the Mississippi side of the passes. Soon we arrive where the trestle work is filled up with sand, which must have been brought from beyond the Louisiana boundary. We see a detachment of troops halted at a distance before us, their fires smoking for dinner. A shout is raised by the men, who suppose that they have reached the end of the chief labors of the expedition. Soon I stand on the end of the sand-filled trestle work. Here are the brackish waters of the sluggish South Pass at my feet, and distant a quarter of a mile before me is Jones' Island, which is only a piece of the cypress-grown swamp, set off by itself, and making a resting place for



the railroad, which was once supported by a great bridge across the pass. Now, rows of charred and displaced timbers show where the bridge was, and looking to the left I see, less than a mile distant, an expanse of Lake Maurepas; beyond that, the line of swamp timber that surrounds the lake. In looking to the right, a bend in the pass leaves little beside the forest in sight.

At night, an old light draught steamer, the Savary, and a little iron-clad gunboat, the Barataria, with several schooners in tow, arrive, loaded with red-legged Zouaves, of the One Hundred and Sixty-fifth New York. Nothing can be done till morning. A chilly, drizzling rain begins. The men pile up ties and pieces of plank for walls, and with their oil-cloths make roofs for shelter. Officers can do no better. We huddle together along the scanty and muddy embankment which fills the trestle work, and pass a miserable night. I am long kept awake by some of the most talkative of the company negroes, who are telling each other long stories of the old plantation life of their youth. My thoughts wander far back to my own home and youth, and then I think of the affairs which my colonel has laid before me during the afternoon. He showed me his instructions in writing from General Sherman, that he should send the Zouaves up the railroad, to advance directly on Pontchitoula, while the rest of his command should go in sufficient vessels across Lake Maurepas, up the Tickfaw river, and landing at or near Wadesborough, about twelve miles up the stream, should proceed three miles through open pine woods, and make a flank attack on Pontchitoula, while the Zouaves attacked in front. A detachment of the Ninth Connecticut, with two field pieces, were to be left on Jones' Island, to guard the base of operations. A detachment was also to be left at De Sair station, to guard against having our retreat cut off by any of the enemy, who might cross Lake Maurepas, and, in small boats, ascend a certain crooked bayou which extended through the swamp up to within about half a mile of that station. Pontchitoula being captured, we were to hold it until further orders.

My colonel had heard something about the Tickfaw river. It was a deep, sluggish stream, so narrow that the enemy could fell trees before us or behind us, so as to form the best of obstructions. Every man who showed himself while we were on the river might consider himself a target for the rifles of guerillas, securely sheltered by trees and logs; and that the three miles we had to go over in order to take Pontchitoula in the flank, might be a hard road to travel.

My colonel seemed to be somewhat the worse on account of his potations when he showed me his instructions, and told me that I was to command that part of the expedition which was to go up the Tickfaw, and that he would go with those who were to proceed up the railroad.

During the latter part of the day, I had busied myself in finding among the detachments of eastern troops two men who had been enlisted as recruits for New England regiments in Louisiana, and who had formerly lived near Wadesborough. One of them was intelligent, and a long cross-examination which I gave him, in the presence of my colonel and other officers, showed that if we reached Wadesborough, the flank attack on Pontchitoula would be the easiest instead of the most difficult part of the work before us.

During the forenoon of the 23d day of March, we are making the embarkation. The Zouaves are carried around the end of the island and landed, to advance up the railroad on the main land. The rain has given place to a southern hurricane. The difficulty of bringing any vessels near to our camp makes it necessary to carry the men in small boats across to the opposite side of the pass, where the vessels lie, protected by the island from the wind. Torrents of rain drench us. We all have to go, one at a time, over a long timber, extending about ten feet above the water out to a point where the boats can come. Some men have to be steadied by their companions reaching out their rifles for them to take hold of. At times the rain and wind compel all to stop. I find it difficult to keep my place on one of the bridge timbers, with the surging waves below me,

and the storm driving against me. My oil-cloth cap and coat save me from being as completely wet as are most of the men about me, but after going bounding over the waves, and finding myself in the cabin of the *Savary*, I find a fire almost as comfortable as if I had been exposed to one of the March rains of my own country. I hasten to see what kind of shelter the men have found, knowing that it must be poor enough. I find them huddled together on the steamer and on the schooners, shivering in the rain, many of them showing symptoms of a return of the fevers from which they have hardly recovered. I set some of the healthiest men at work to clear away below decks, and the wretched, half-sick beings are stowed into the holds of the schooners to escape from the storm. The sky suddenly changes, and lets down hot sunshine by intervals. The wind has fallen. We are busy trying to get the vessels under weigh. While we are disentangling a schooner's yard arm from a steamer's smoke stack, partly overturned in the storm, sergeant Yaw, of Company B, who was once a justice of the peace in the county where I lived, is accidentally injured in the head. The old gentleman is carried bleeding past me. I remember cases in which I appeared before him as an attorney, and little think how soon he is to die on the slaughter-field.

The expedition is on Lake Maurepas. The storm has gone. The ring of dense cypresses around the little lake shuts off the breeze. The *Savary* and the *Barataria* take the schooners in tow. The sail vessels keep their sails spread to aid the feeble steamers to keep up motion. The fires are fed all the bituminous coal that they can burn, but it seems as if a spell prevents headway. The steamers slowly separate, and as my schooner, the *Maybel*, floats beside the struggling *Savary*, I gaze with wonder at the little black iron-clad *Barataria*, about half a mile distant. A long, thick black cloud of coal smoke is continually rolling out of the smoke stack, leaving in sight parts of the white sails, while the points of yard-arms and masts stick out of the smoke. There seems to be but one large-sized vessel of nondescript character, emitting steam from among half a

dozen masts, and showing an iron-clad prow, armed with bronze twelve-pounders. Every growl of the engine is echoed over the suspicious lake from the enemy's shore. If any rebel scouts are making observations, they must wonder at our flotilla, appearing like two strange-shaped ocean steamers, yet making their way over a lake not five feet deep.

Delays, by getting aground and getting off again at different places, have kept us from reaching the mouth of the Tickfaw until almost sunset. Here we are at last, trying to enter an oblique opening among the cypresses. Broken stumps and deformed roots protrude from the water on either side. The Barataria is ahead of us, to show the way, but we suddenly find ourselves fast aground. We are within easy rifle range of some excellent hiding places for sharpshooters, yet not a living thing shows itself along the rebel shore. Anchors are taken out some distance and let down, ropes being attached, the capstan is used, but in vain. The *Mabel* and the *Savary* are held firmly by snags. The night is upon us, and we must stay here till morning. It becomes very dark. A drizzling rain begins. There is but little motion in the waters of the vile pond, on the dubious edge of which we are floating. To land is impossible, where even in daylight land would be so hard to find. On our vessel men are piled together, some above and some below decks, choosing as best they can between suffocating air and exposure to rain and frequent disturbance.

Officers of the companies with me on board the *Mabel* are gathered in the cabin, which is a box about eight feet square, entered by a steep stairway. Our tall, red-whiskered captain, shares his supplies with us, and a scanty meal of pork, hard tack and coffee, by the light of a smoky little lamp, prepares us for a horrible night. There are not seats enough for half of us to sit on, and the floor is not clean enough or large enough for us to lie down. We endeavor to keep up our spirits. Some wonder why Colonel T. S. Clark changed his plan, and, in the morning starting the *Zouaves* off alone for Pontchitoula, only about ten miles distant, has come with our part of the expedition.

Unless we find the passage up the river free, it will be necessary to go back and declare the object for which we came accomplished. Conversation often turns upon luxuries enjoyed at home. We have suffered before, but at last we find ourselves in this cabin, where we can hardly breathe. The poisoned air occasionally drives us out of our place of confinement, but rain and commotion soon compel us to return. Two officers find an opening like a shelf near the cabin floor, and going several feet into the vessel's side. They get a few minutes sleep in this place, and are waked by sudden strangulation. Both roll out half-crazed, and with fearful imprecations struggle forth to the open air. I button my long oil-cloth coat, and at last get into a painful doze, as I sit on the floor at the foot of the stairs.

TUESDAY, March 24, 1863.—Our vessels have, during the night, got clear of the snags, and as daylight appears we enter the Tickfaw, which for two miles appears to be only one of the well known family of bayous. We see one place where there happens to be dry footing for a few men among the moss-hung trees and rotten logs. Here are the remains of confederate picket fires, abandoned, apparently, for a long time by the guards, who have been driven away by the dismalness of the place.

For a while our steamers tow all the other vessels, till the sluice of dark waters on which we are moving divides in the swamp. The branch which we take grows narrow and crooked. It is hardly possible for the steamers to get around the short turns; they are continually striking the shores, and have to cease all attempts at towing. We are surprised that there has been no effort to obstruct the stream. The tall and heavy trees lean over us from both sides. A few hours of labor by a few guerillas, with axes, ought to have stopped us for days. Everywhere is the most perfect cover for sharpshooters. It is said that the confederates have several companies of Indian scouts along the frontier. Not a tree has been fallen into the stream, and now not a rifle shot is fired nor a guerilla yell heard. A number of skiffs, several navy boats, and a heavy barge, with a

howitzer mounted in the bow, have been brought with us. Soldiers, with their arms, are sent into the row boats, and by main strength our schooners are towed slowly up the sluggish Tickfaw—the steamer and the gunboat showing no anxiety to run ahead of us very far. I have the men and arms all in readiness, and make a sort of breastwork of planks and boxes along each side of my schooner. The soldiers dispose of their hard breakfast, with their loaded E. fields and Springfields beside them. The procession of masts and smoke stacks, with the decks loaded with blue-coated federals, winds slowly up its crooked way through the dense, dark forest. At last we see a few pine trees, at a place where our bayou divides again.

This place, the first ground which does not belong to the swamp, is called Whisky Point. Here are fresh indications of a hostile picket, and it is said that rebels have been seen running away to give news of our approach; but our flotilla still goes on, with the splash of oars and the puffs of the steamers. We are emerging from the swamp, and entering the rebel country, by them called the piney woods. A field and a log cabin appear on the north bank, which has raised itself with at least ten feet of sand above the river, that now shows a slight current. Hopes have been entertained of catching some richly loaded cotton schooners at Wadesborough, which we are rapidly approaching. A strong detachment, commanded by the energetic young Lieutenant James Brainard, of Company H, Sixth Michigan, is sent by land across a horse-shoe bend, while the rest of us are going round to where the cotton schooners are. A few shots are heard. The gunboat hurries forward, followed by the Savary. No more firing is heard, and when our slow going schooner comes struggling along within sight of the group of cheap buildings making the frontier village of Wadesborough, a great smoke announces to us that the cotton has fallen a prize to fire, instead of being left an honest capture for the court of New Orleans.

The Barataria, having brass guns ready, and men with Enfield rifles at the loop-holes in the iron plating, watches over us as

we hurry from our schooner over the decks of the rickety old Savary, and spring off upon the shore, man after man, till the companies are formed, and then moved up to their places in the regimental line, that is stretched out in a sort of street, on each side of which are scattered a few wooden buildings. News from the Zouaves is eagerly sought, for in any natural course of events they ought to have taken Pontchitoula, or to have been beaten back by noon yesterday. We hear that they have had a fight, but we can learn nothing satisfactory as to the result. Consultation is had. I urge that if the Zouaves had been badly beaten we would hear all about it, and would have seen more of the enemy, and that we must take advantage of the absence of the enemy and make our flank attack on Pontchitoula as soon as possible. Others coincide with me. We are moving four abreast up the road, Companies A and H advancing into the pine woods before us, and out on our flanks, scattering themselves as skirmishers among the trees to protect our march, which has to be very slow, to allow them to keep their distance from us, and make their way through numerous obstructions.

Our guide, the soldier who used to live near here, assures me that we are on the right road, and tells me where other roads are by which the enemy might advance upon us, but the tall pines on a level country, without much undergrowth, let us see far enough to be assured that either infantry or cavalry can here go wherever they please. I am admiring the sand over which we march—the first I have set foot upon since the day that we first disembarked on the miry alluvium of the Louisiana low lands. I can almost see the cypresses of the swamp through the pines on our right. One rifle shot is heard in front—another and another. Are we to have a fight, or is this firing on account of some fugitive making off through the woods? But a dozen rifles are fired in quick succession, and seem to be answered by a dozen more further off. We go along by the flank. Our skirmishers seem willing that we should get nearer to them. Firing breaks out from twenty rifles in a volley, and runs along most of the skirmish line in front and on our right. We can

see, here and there, one of our skirmishers crouching behind a tree, aiming and firing at some foe entirely out of our sight. We file right, halt, face to the front. Colonel T. S. Clark has picked out three or four favorite officers and men for his staff and orderlies, and takes a position as brigadier in rear of our line. About two companies of the eastern troops have been left at Wadesborough to guard all our water craft that lies in the Tickfaw, waiting for the cotton; two more eastern companies are with us. "Battalion—forward march!" and I move my line forward, finding it no easy matter to march a line of battle through woods as open as these. The firing is incessant, a thousand echoes adding to the sound. An officer from the skirmishers returns to us. "What have you seen of the enemy?" is asked of him. "Nothing but rebel cavalrymen," is his answer. "How many do there seem to be of them?" "There are a good many," he says. Company E is sent to reinforce our advance, and as we move along the whiz of bullets is heard over our heads, and a hostile line of skirmishers are firing as briskly as our own.

I see many serious faces. I get the line in as good order as possible, for the report comes from the front that the enemy are growing more numerous and obstinate, especially on our left, and that part of our line slackens pace, so as to change front gradually that way. We may, for aught we know, behold a rebel line of infantry rise up on our front, or on our left flank, not far from which runs a highway from Pontchartroula to Springfield. I order patrols of three men each to scout on the flanks. Our advance are at a stand, firing angrily, until we are almost upon them. Suddenly the well known yells of a charge are heard. We fix bayonets, but our skirmishers are going forward rapidly instead of being charged upon. We are soon informed of the truth. At a little bayou, having thickets of young pines beyond it, the rebels made quite a stand. Company A raised a yell and charged forward, the bugles sounding the signal "double quick," and the rebels ran farther off than ever. In getting over the little bayou, our line is necessarily much broken. I wonder



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why the rebels keep up their foolish random firing directly in our front at long range, while they have so many chances to trot around and attack us in flank, or even in rear. At one place, as our old Michigan colors happen to be borne along some distance in the road, I see nearly half a mile before us a group of mounted men taking observations, then suddenly galloping off, as if some bullet had whistled too near them. About the same time I get a glimpse of a rebel cavalier on a white steed making off through the woods. That is about the last heard or seen of the enemy for the present. The firing ceases; the coast is clear. We are within a mile and a half of our destination, but we march cautiously, keeping in line of battle in spite of fences or ravines, and keeping out skirmishers and patrols for fear of an ambush or surprise. At a distance we see white buildings. That is Pontchitoula. We enter the panic-stricken little town, our line of battle sweeping destructively through garden fences and door yards, terrified children running into hiding places in the houses, while frightened women, cheaply clad and ill-looking, try to beg for protection. We cannot stop to hear them, and do not halt until we come to the railroad, across which we form a line, sheltering our flanks by buildings, which afford good cover for riflemen, our front being partly covered by fences, the scantiness of the town leaving before us a good field of fire up the railroad. No enemy is to be seen or heard of. From the time we have entered the town sounds and sights at every house tell that the work of making the enemy feel the significance of our confiscation laws, has been going on. It now becomes apparent that our colonel finds the temptation more than he can bear. He can hardly wait to make an inquiry concerning the Zouaves, and on hearing that the enemy have until this morning prevented our friends from getting across a great marsh two miles from town, a sergeant and eight men, with a white flag, are sent down the railroad in search of them. And now it seems as if the main intention is to secure the plunder before the Zouaves get here. I see what an opportunity is given to the enemy. One well-handled company of horsemen might

take advantage of our confusion, excitement and plundering, and rout us. I endeavor to place men of Company G at the windows of a large tavern building, where our right rests, so as to make this building a sort of fortification, but an order comes from my colonel for this regiment to go out as pickets. Nearly half the regiment are sent as pickets to the open woods surrounding the unprotected town. Captain Chapman and Lieutenant Lawler, of Company B, Sixth Michigan, and the two companies of eastern men, are sent up the railroad to find and burn the first large bridge, and now the work in Pontchitoula goes bravely on.

All appearance of a line of battle is gone. I can hardly keep enough arms stacked to indicate the rallying places of companies. My last effort to keep a few men together is a distribution of a large quantity of excellent tobacco, but while this is going on a demijohn of Louisiana rum is brought. The demijohn is smashed, but as our commander has abandoned himself to plundering with patriotism equal to that of the worst soldier, every man follows suit. There is the large wooden depot, with its offices. The sounds of axes resounds within, and blue-coated soldiers are seen coming out with bundles and boxes. There are two country stores in the village. Our colonel is just coming out of one store, where he has set some of his attendants at work. He appears not to have found what he thought good enough for him. He has a wild and uncommonly thievish expression of face as he hastens toward the remaining store, followed by several of his favorites. The store door is fastened strongly. He makes a furious kick, throwing the weight of his corpulence against the door. It does not yield. A beam is brought in haste, and the colonel and his lackeys break in together. They greedily search for such things they think most valuable. Then the crowd is let in. No man confiscates the rebel liquors faster than our commander. It is told openly that a purse of a hundred dollars in gold has been found in a private house. Soon the few women and children that remain in the town are seen running in confusion, or imploring protection,

while at windows and doors soldiers are seen, offering no violence to any one, but searching for plunder and questioning negroes, who willingly submit to be compelled to act as guides. The post-office is now sacked. Letters and torn envelopes of miserable rebel paper, and newspapers from all parts of the confederacy, are scattered along the streets. Just as the red-legged Zouaves arrive, marching in order worthy of their character for discipline, some enterprising patriots are breaking into a well-furnished Masonic lodge. The contagion of plundering a town is rather too much for discipline, and the Zouaves suddenly begin to show their New York education. Silver squares, compasses, suns, stars, crescents, and other Masonic emblems, that would value most at a New York pawnbroker's, fall to our disciplined friends in what our men seem to think unfair proportions. One of their most severe sergeants has secured the tyler's sword, which he puts on in place of his own.

Pontchitoula is a little village of neatness and thriftiness uncommon in the South. There are very few slaveholders in all the country known as the piney woods. There are no fields in sight. The forest of evergreens closely surrounds the gardens of the village, which presents almost the same appearance as a frontier town in Northern Michigan. Most of the people have shut up their houses and fled on our approach, thereby rendering certain the fate which they might have changed for the better by remaining at home. Long may it be before any town in Michigan is visited as this place is to-day. Blue-coated soldiers are running here and there, far and near, singly and by dozens, some with their arms and some without, bringing all sorts of bundles, and eagerly dividing the spoil. The Zouaves, in their Turkish costume, are every way worthy of being thought true Turks.

There came with us on the iron-clad two distinguished and mysterious functionaries, one Captain Pierce, an A. Q. M., recently promoted, to reward him for bad eminence among the Gulf Department quartermasters. The other is a brother of our Chief Commissary, McCoy, in New Orleans. These men are

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our real commanders and owners, and, like our nominal commander, they have seemed transfigured by the evil spirits that possess them, and have appeared more like devils of theft and pillage than like mortal men. One of them has not allowed himself to leave the iron-clad, where he remains to act as receiver of the spoil. The other is present with us, and manifests himself now here, now there, everywhere the master spirit, like Homer's God of War in the midst of a slaughter. Greedily he drives his faithful blacks to seize, to bag and to pack up whatever his quick eye selects. Others, even our military chief, give up whatever the A. Q. M. chooses to take from them. Any disappointment is drowned by making sure of more drinks.

If the enemy have left behind them in the woods a hundred men to watch, they can make sure of a rout and a capture by any kind of an attack on us. Soon the truth appears that the poor town has not much that is valuable in it, even including the goods which New Orleans courtiers have received ten prices for in the contraband trade across the lakes. And further, it appears to be awfully true that there is no cotton in Pontchitoula after all, and the faces of our chiefs are saddened. In obedience to preconcerted orders from our colonel and our A. Q. M., parties of men have been sent out recklessly into the country to get teams at all hazards, for the purpose of getting our plunder back to our vessels waiting at Wadesborough, the damaged condition of the track, and the want of cars, preventing any other way of accomplishing the purpose for which we came.

Teams begin to appear and receive their loads. From pressing inquiries that I hear from our A. Q. M., I understand that he has an affection for resin and turpentine equal to his heart's desire for cotton. The astonishing prices which resin and turpentine bear lately are such as to promise more gain than cotton itself would afford at a dollar a pound. Guards are now established, and some attempt made to get the men together. I am glad to see that our men appreciate the danger that they have been in, and that the companies reassemble and make fires

to cook. In the hotel the table is spread with the best that the people had, for their own officers, but the vacant chairs are now to be filled by the officers of their plunderers, and fried eggs, corn bread and milk, never tasted better to half-famished men. I am glad to get something to strengthen me, expecting that something may happen to require my strength. My expectations seem realized. I have not risen from the table when Colonel T. S. Clark comes to me and tells me that Captain Chapman has found the enemy at the railroad bridge, and has sent for reinforcements, and that I am to take four companies of our regiment and go as quickly as I can to reinforce him.

I am soon leading my detachment along the railroad out of the town. I send a good number of flankers among the pines on either side. We have a hand-car, carrying a large tin can of turpentine, for bridge burning, and a quarter of some villager's cow, with other provisions, for the men at the bridge, from whom we begin to hear the sound of irregular firing. We are nearly two miles from the town, and see at a distance, upon the track, some kind of barricade, by which there is seen the smoke of firing. There, we suppose, must be our friends firing at enemies beyond them. A bullet whistles over our heads, and another strikes the bark of the tree beside us. These are supposed to be spent balls from a distant enemy, but now half a dozen bullets whistle closely about the men on the hand-car, a little before us, and go singing along by the ears of the whole detachment, marching by the flank. Such a raking fire must be avoided. We in haste get off the track, and march along under cover of the thick pine trees on either side.

Our flankers have, in their eagerness to get a shot at the rebels, got so far ahead of us, that in returning the fire of the enemy my men are likely to send some shots among their friends, and the effect of the Louisiana rum, which has been freely used, may be such as to give another fine example of federal soldiers getting into a skirmish among themselves. With difficulty I get my flankers back, while we wait for them under cover, the firing now being brisk. Captain Chapman has

communicated with me, and I march my detachment to his, who are lying covered by a rise of ground and by woods, about two hundred yards from the bridge, and on the side of the thickly-timbered bayou bottom, which the railroad crosses by means of a long embankment and a bridge one hundred yards long, supported by bents of heavy timber, about twelve feet high, beyond which is the rebel barricade, made by piling ties. I speedily ascertain that we can cross the bayou and turn the enemy's position. Two companies are sent across, and, according to their orders, deploy as skirmishers, resting one flank on the bayou, and swinging around so as to open a flank fire on all rebels along the line of the railroad. The rest of us follow promptly in close order, and by means of fallen trees cross the little bayou. We form. Already our skirmishers are rapidly pushing forward, so as to reach far around the enemy's barricade. We suddenly hear a yell raised by men making a charge somewhere up the bayou, on the other side of the railroad, where a company of the Fourteenth Maine had advanced to try that flank of the enemy before I arrived. Have they been surprised by concealed foes rising from ambush among the pines, perhaps in sufficient force to cut off our retreat while we are trying to flank them? But the yells cease, and the firing is no more heard. We advance toward the barricade, and looking up from among the thick timber to the top of the embankment, where the log breastwork is, we can see no enemy. They have fled. I send back to the town some wounded. Captain Spitzer, of Company C, in our regiment, with fire and axes commences the destruction of the bridge. I hastily place two long lines of skirmishers so that their flanks rest on the bayou on either side of the bridge, at distances of about a quarter of a mile, and meet at a point on the railroad about that distance forward in the direction the enemy have taken, and the rest of my command employ their utmost energies to destroy the bridge.

Dry ties are brought, and a great fire is kindled on the track and its supporting timbers at each end of the bridge, where it leaves the embankment. Another fire is started on the middle

part of the bridge, but there is not wood enough to keep it burning. About a dozen axes which we have brought are kept at work by reliefs to cut off the heavy timbers of the bridge bents, near their base. Bent after bent falls, and the timber being dry cypress, the assistance of our fires soon enable us, by the aid of levers, to bring down long stringers to which the iron rails are spiked; but the work is more than we supposed it could be, and although no enemy disturbs us, the night is far advanced before we have made the gaps in the bridge many yards wide. Negroes coming to us bring information that the enemy, not outnumbering our own detachment, have retreated about three miles, to what is called the shoe factory, an establishment of no small importance, which furnishes for the confederate army shoes and cavalry equipments, and are there protecting what is more important to them than the bridge we are destroying. I send back to our head-quarters for permission to move on and burn the shoe factory. Never were men in better spirits for an attack. The officers of the Fourteenth Maine company, Captain Trask and Lieutenant Wooster, give me the particulars of their charge when the yell was raised and the enemy fled. They had come to a wagon road crossing the bayou by a plank bridge, just beyond which, on a bank, the rebels had made a rail breastwork, crossing the wagon road in the same manner as the principal barricade crossed the railroad about two hundred yards distant. The firing had been brisk by the advanced skirmishers of the Maine company, when the reserve of about twenty men advanced, and their commander crying, "Battalion—forward, double quick!" they rushed ahead with all the yells they could raise, and the rebels departed in such haste that an officer's sword and some other arms and knapsacks were left for their deceivers.

A message is brought to me forbidding any advance. Our fires, for which there is plenty of the best of fuel, flame and sparkle, illuminating the pine woods not only by the bridge, but for some distance back along the track, where the men are cooking fresh beef, pork and poultry, and making their black

coffee, which, with the broken hard bread brought with us, makes a supper which cannot be equaled by any rich man's banquet, and is spiced by the continual expectation of an attack, for which our pickets are watching in various directions, our skirmishers being withdrawn to the safe side of the bayou. I have had nearly every post of the standing part of the bridge cut off near the base, and although the fastenings above prevent them from falling, I am satisfied that the enemy will not ridicule our imperfect work. My men are worn out, so that I can hardly keep a pair of axes at work. When I sink down to rest, after visiting my pickets, I hear some soldier more patriotic than the rest still at work to finish cutting off the last post of the bridge.

MARCH 25, 1863.—The fires that have illuminated the pine woods during the night, and cooked our breakfast in the morning, are smoldering. The sun has begun to dispel the mist. I stand leaning on the strong barricade of ties that we have built across the track, and look over the ruined bridge to where the enemy's barricade was thrown down, and we now have a picket of three men. Suddenly two rifles are fired somewhere beyond our pickets. I might retain my supposition that some confederate pig or cow had been the object fired upon, were it not that two bullets in quick succession come unpleasantly near my head. Our drummer beats the long roll. The companies fall in under cover along the sides of the railroad, while our retiring picket and a number of men near me keep up an interchange of rifle shots with enemies concealed behind piles of wood beside the track.

The hiss and sing of bullets, doing us no harm, is continual as we deploy skirmishers along our bank of the bayou, and post the main part of our detachment in reserve some distance back toward Pontchitoula, but the enemy cease firing and disappear. Some of our venturesome skirmishers send to me a sulky prisoner, from whom they have taken a double-barreled shot gun.

Toward noon a detachment of Zouaves come marching out to take our place, and our weary men slowly march back to the town, where my worn companies seek in a cotton-press and



other buildings shelter from the sun, and seem displeased to see what they have lost by being away from Pontchitoula all night, for last night has been a night such as no Turk-costumed Zouave from the Five Points will be likely to forget. Here lies the ravished town. I pick up in the street a love-letter from a confederate officer to his lady in a distant rebel city. All kinds of papers, books, daguerreotypes, articles of household furniture and female wearing apparel, are scattered here and there on the ground. Doors and windows are wide open, most of the people having fled to hiding places in the woods, or wherever they can find shelter. A few people, either from poverty or shrewdness, have remained about their homes. They seem to consider that the worst is past, and claim some protection now under the President's proclamation, on the ground of having submitted and laid down their arms. Captured teams have brought in loads of the precious resin and turpentine, for which small parties have been sent out nearly eight miles, at the risk of their lives, the danger appearing as little to the patriotic zeal of the soldiers as it does to the greedy avarice of those who sent them. One returning party, bringing with them mules and ponies enough for the men to ride, are mistaken by our pickets for the enemy's cavalry, and are fired upon. The long roll causes every soldier to spring to arms. Fortunately, the returning foragers do not fire; they send a flag of truce. The mistake is discovered, and many a man feels that his life and his plunder are safe.

Several portly individuals, having titles such as doctor or squire, have in some way managed to appear at the hotel building where our chiefs are enjoying themselves. There is some kind of treaty making as to trade and commerce. Powder is one of the articles mentioned. Medicines and certain articles of clothing and of luxury are spoken of as being the surest things to bring cotton and turpentine out of concealment.

I sit a few minutes in the best room of the old hotel, the owner and keeper of which is a widow lady, whose old, worn black dress and grief-marked face show the effect of sorrows

which must have begun before the war. Two other woe-begone old ladies, whose looks have made it safe for them to stay in the town while it was sacked, have come to the hotel. There is something sad and yet ridiculous in seeing certain officers of both regiments, with faces solemnized by drink, most seriously assuring these old women that they are under the sacred protection of gentlemen as chivalrous as any Southerners. A captain has been appointed provost-marshal, and a company detailed for his guard. He begins to give passes and to administer federal oaths to inhabitants of the conquered city. I take a little rest under the shade of the hotel piazza, and in a chair, novel luxuries which I have not often enjoyed during months of camp life. I am seated at the widow's table, and my well cooked dinner is a luxury, to my taste equal to that enjoyed yesterday, but the thought that we are eating up everything the widow has in the shape of provisions is unpleasant, even though we are the men who have brought Pontchitoula back into the Union.

Captain Joseph Bailey, a Wisconsin lumberman, who is called chief engineer on General Thomas W. Sherman's staff, has arrived this morning. He says that he has instructions to fortify Pontchitoula, and has a large gang of negroes coming up the railroad. He says to me privately that he does not see any place to fortify, unless he makes a breastwork around the entire town, and he does not see how he can do that. I urge that having destroyed the bridge we ought to abandon this open and indefensible town, and if we fortify anywhere this side of North Manhae Pass, we ought to select a good camping place on the railroad, so near to the swamp that our position cannot be turned.

Reports are continually brought by negroes that trains of cars have arrived at the shoe factory loaded with troops, and that rebel cavalry in strong force is on some of the main roads leading into the town, and it is evident that no more spoil can be got or is to be found. A messenger comes from our picket at the burned bridge informing us that a train of cars has cer-

tainly brought troops to the shoe factory. The main parts of both regiments are formed in line and start down the railroad toward Manchac Pass. Major Charles E. Clark, with about three hundred men, is left to fulfill that part of General Sherman's orders which requires us to hold Pontchitoula until further orders. The Major is to keep a strong picket at the burned bridge, and is to occupy the same extent of ground held by the whole force. He is instructed to hold the town as long as he can, and then retreat.

Considering the time that the enemy has had to gather force, I expect to hear firing before we get out of the village, for passengers have been coming and going, and it is fortunate if the rebels do not know just what we are doing. We pass the newly-deserted camps of several rebel companies, and follow the railroad among pines growing on some of the poorest land in the world. We arrive at a great open, flooded marsh, covered with reeds and grass, except in places where the water is deep, and water lilies spread their broad leaves on the surface. This marsh is eight or ten miles long, and from one mile to three miles wide. It divides the pine woods from the cypress swamp. There appears to be no mire sufficient to have made it difficult for those who made the road to keep the track above water easily by means of a slight foundation of sand. Along this narrow road we are kept marching, and are ordered to halt after we have entered the swamp, where the narrow embankment, with the black water on either side, is the only ground to camp upon. Our fires are soon smoking along the road for nearly two miles. Good things, brought from Pontchitoula, make our supper, and we lie down to rest at night on the hardest beds that men could have; but we rest well, for we do not have to watch for the enemy. Green boughs and ties, with pieces of plank, are the sides and shelter tents, and rubber blankets are the roofs of our long row of huts. Fuel is abundant, and fires light up the black recesses of the swamp, in which we feel at home again.

MARCH 26, 1863.—In the morning, after the swamp mists and vapors have cleared away, and our joints lose the stiffness

caused by the kind of resting place we have had, our camp presents many sights worthy of remembrance. Groups of men are enjoying their spoil and trophies. Here are half a dozen fine fellows cooking poultry; they have several cans of preserves and bottles of wine. Various articles of female wearing apparel, which they have in some way contrived to use for their bedding and sometimes in their dress, appear stranger than the captured articles of men's wear, and the quilts and fine coverlets with which they have carpeted the low, muddy embankment.

A group of Zouaves and Michigan men, in about equal numbers, conspicuous among whom is the disciplinarian sergeant, with the tyler's sword from the Masonic lodge, are deeply interested in something they have—an assortment of silver and gilded emblems and ornaments, which must have belonged part to Free Masons and part to Odd Fellows, and are now more freely mingled than would be pleasing to those skilled in the mysteries of either fraternity. Even wooden implements and all kinds of paraphernalia are produced. One villainous fellow, who wears a glossy beaver hat in place of his Zouave skull-cap, suggests that there will be no trouble in starting a lodge, which will excel Odd Fellows and Free Masons both. There are brethren of both orders present, but they seem to feel that rebel lodges have no more sanctity than rebel hen-coops and pigsties.

There is no danger of straggling to-day, for the railroad has the only ground a man can stand upon, and a picket each way prevents men from leaving without permission. I am not a little surprised to hear that our detachment in Pontehitoula have not been disturbed, and thinking that I can find better camping ground among the last pine trees on the opposite side of the marsh, I take with me the prompt and energetic Sergeant Fox, of Company C, in our regiment, and go across the marsh to make explorations. We first come to the point of pine woods, where about a dozen rebel sharpshooters, having climbed up among the green boughs, by their well-aimed fire kept our Zouave friends at bay, while the rest of the rebel force,

being about four mounted companies, were engaged in the foolish performances in our front when we took the town. I turn from the railroad and follow an old wagon road far enough to find that it furnished the rebel sharp-shooters an easy and safe retreat to the east of the town. Here are the recent tracks of horsemen, and in the road a good rubber coat is picked up by my sergeant. I return to the railroad near to the marsh, and find a place well adapted for camping and for defense. Here is a small piece of pine woods, almost like an island, being cut off from the rest of the dry ground by a swale difficult to cross, and having beyond it a small open field, on either side of the railway. In one of these fields is an old board house, where I find what seems to be a piece of large and strong stove-pipe, about eight feet long, having originally come from steam works somewhere, and having been used for a chimney here. The idea strikes me that it would make an excellent quaker cannon, and I assist in carrying it down the track to the place I have selected for a camp, and return to our main body to make report, but I find no favor at head-quarters. I see that the faces of my real and nominal commanders are unusually solemn. The reported wealth of Pontchitoula in cotton and turpentine has not been found in paying quantities. The soldiers have secured many fancy things, but the schooners, barges and steamers that have been waiting in peril at Wadesborough, will never get their intended cargoes. All that we are waiting for is an order to retreat, or for the enemy to retake the town, while we are beyond the reach of danger, and too far from the town to help our friends there, and they are scattered on the bridge and out on the roads, so as to be unable to help each other, unless the enemy pleases to let them do so. It is about seven miles from the end of our camp down the railroad back to the ruined bridge.

In the afternoon an opportunity to ride back to the town on a hand-car tempts me to revisit Pontchitoula, where I have hardly arrived when I see a number of officers and men standing by the depot and looking up the railroad, where they say there

is some firing. Our surgeon, who has just provided pleasant quarters for himself and the sick, looks at me as I approach, and says that this will not turn out to be anything serious, but we begin to see men clad in blue retreating rapidly toward us. The firing increases, and extends a much longer distance to right and left than our men can cover. The long roll is beaten promptly, first by the Zouave drummer and then by one of our own. The companies form promptly. A small semi-circular barricade has been built in the street. Here one Zouave company takes position, ready to fire up the track. I have the surgeon hurry to place some sick men and medical stores on the hand-car, and have them start down the track. Mounted men hasten to bring in the pickets. They have heard the alarm, and are soon present in good order. The firing is along the edge of the pine timber, just outside the town. An officer fresh from the skirmish reports to me that the enemy are in large force. I order Company K, Sixth Michigan, forward to reinforce our friends, who are hard pressed, and as I follow them just outside of the buildings, and assist in deploying the reinforcement so as to make the enemy display his force, I find my object accomplished, for rebel skirmishers, outnumbering and outflanking us, are fast hemming us in, and their bullets hiss close about our ears at short range. It is evident that we will not need to wait for further orders before we give up the useless and empty town, and find for ourselves some position more like our regimental head-quarters on the safe side of the marsh. The enemy can easily send infantry or cavalry to cut off our only retreat, and it is a wonder that he has not done so instead of making this attack on our extreme front, unless this is a feint to draw our attention from the real danger.

There is no necessity of ordering a retreat; the enemy are driving our skirmishers back. To right and left and in front I see rebel riflemen run forward from hiding place to hiding place, to get nearer shots at us. One fellow, with a puff of smoke from behind the corner of a building, sends a bullet whistling very near my head. I look at the Zouaves lying

behind their little half-moon shaped barricade in the open street. If the enemy get on either side of them, or behind them, there will be lives sacrificed for nothing. I have them retreat, halt, and form line along the edge of the pine bushes, on each side of the railroad, behind the town. Companies E and A, of the Sixth, each deploy a platoon on the flanks of skirmishers now engaged. The enemy displays more force, and the firing increases greatly. It is reported to me that a strong body of rebels have been seen moving around our left, to get behind us. Our Zouave reserve move slowly down the track, while our skirmishers are again compelled to yield ground. Our Quartermaster, Lieutenant Clement L. Stone, comes out of the railroad depot building, near which I am standing. He says, "There is a good deal of stuff here which I cannot get off. Shall I set the old thing on fire?" "Yes," is my answer. He disappears within the building for a moment, and hastily comes out, followed by a gush of black smoke from doors and windows. There go the resin and turpentine, to get which the zeal and patriotism of our men have been basely used. I notice women and little children running from houses to the woods, to get out of the way of the bullets coming from their friends, to whom we abandon the town. The burning depot sends up a great cloud of turpentine smoke, and the flames having suddenly enveloped the whole building, wave and dance high in the air. Some patriot set fire to the hotel as we left the town, but the building does not burn. It appears that the enemy are making a stop in the town to put out the fire, or to see what other mischief we have done. A considerable part of the Michigan detachment, and all of the Zouaves, march along the railroad. I keep out a line of skirmishers toward the enemy, just sufficient to prevent an attempt to get on our flanks. I am glad when we pass the principal wagon road crossing the track, about a mile from the town, for there has been nothing to prevent the enemy from getting cavalry, infantry or artillery behind us by this road. I send Lieutenant Stone, with a dozen Zouaves and six of our own men, to hurry ahead to the last hard ground

this side of the marsh, build a barricade with ties, and send a patrol out on the old road which I reconnoitered in the morning. Firing begins again on the right extremity of our skirmish line. It is apparent that the enemy, exasperated by what has been done in the town, and fully informed of our weakness, are making a bold push to bring us to a halt before we can reach a place where either flank can be safe. A considerable force of the enemy are following us on the track. I have a few ties piled up to make some shelter, and wait for a chance to deliver a fire that can do some good, but the rebels clear the track, and their bullets coming from hiding places on both sides of us, show us that we can gain nothing by waiting here, and again we retreat, deploying a reinforcement of skirmishers, whose fire keeps the enemy from following too closely, until we reach the place where the railroad passes through the miry swale which separates us from the sort of island, at the further side of which, about a quarter of a mile distant, our friends are building the barricade with ties from one of the piles to be found in many places along the track. I send all of the Zouaves to complete the barricade and get posted behind it, and posting some of my Michigan men behind a slight protection built across the track, and others in close order under cover of woods near by, I deploy the rest on each side of the road, so as to have the little open fields in their front and the swale behind them. Their fire soon checks the enemy in attempting to cross the field. Here is the ground to fight on. It will trouble the enemy to get around us, and we have a sort of a fortification and a reserve not yet engaged ready for us if compelled to yield. But the evil moral effect of retreating as far as we have retreated is our chief danger. And the enemy is doing his best to concentrate upon our left a heavier fire than we can bring to answer him. Our men there do not know the nature of the swale behind them, which renders their position not liable to be turned. They begin to retreat toward the railroad. Some of them have to wade through mire and water up to their necks. The retreat of the skirmishers on our left is soon followed by that of those



on our right, who are so closely followed by the rebels that most of them have to make their way through the water. The enemy are pressing right on, and are likely to commence a contest for our last position, when seeing some of our best non-commissioned officers and men about to abandon their place on the railroad where it entered the swale, I hasten to them and urge them to hold their place. Rebel bullets are coming thickly, but our men are soon firing coolly from good cover. The swale presents a most serious obstacle to the enemy if he attempts to get around us, and our deliberate fire makes him shrink from advancing directly upon us. We hold our position. In about an hour the sun will set, and the rebels will be likely to leave us. A man, wearing a red shirt, and having an excellent rifle, ventures near to us, and lying down beside the track, sends every bullet as he would at a shooting match. Whoever shows himself is sure to be this man's target, but we have men who fire so promptly and aim so well, that he has to fire too quick to hit. At last the sun sets, and our confederate brethren disappear. Not a man on our side has to-day been hit by a shot since we left the town. While the company at the bridge was being driven in, two men were wounded and one was taken prisoner.

The men of the Sixth Michigan who turned back, and by their courage and well-aimed fire prevented the enemy from gaining the passage through the swale, were Sergeant William Leinie, of Company E, Privates H. S. Howard, J. W. Armstrong, G. W. Sparling, A. Doy, Levi Crondman, Ira Gray and E. Thayer.

Colonel T. S. Clark arrived with his whole command to reinforce us just as we were succeeding in making our last stand. He ordered me to commence immediately a retreat across the marsh. I disobeyed, and when he saw that the enemy were withdrawing, he called me to him and said, "I want you to understand that when I give an order, it must be obeyed;" but proceeded to give me command, as officer of the day, of all troops on the Poutchitoula side of the marsh, and having ordered fresh men to relieve my tired force, he marched

back to his safe head-quarters, and I set about making preparations for night and morning. The large sheet-iron pipe which I found in the morning is now mounted so as to point through an embrasure in our barricade. A piece of blackened paper, with a round opening in the middle, is tied over one end of the pipe, and a stake is stuck up by the breach to represent a rammer. The spy-glasses of the confederates will be sure to find in the morning something very closely resembling an eight-inch howitzer pointed at them. I post sentinels where they can see and hear anybody attempting to approach our flanks. A bright fire is kindled on the railroad, and Sergeant Leinie, wishing to find out whether the enemy have any considerable force encamped in front, catches an old horse straying near by, and having fastened about twenty yards of wire belonging to the demolished telegraph to the horse's tail, turns the frightened animal loose on the road to Pontchitoula. The horse goes off at the top of his speed, and runs up the road with a clattering noise like that of a cavalryman's sabre, but he is halted by no rebel picket as long as he can be heard. The enemy have cautiously withdrawn to some strong position. A piece of hard bread and a tin cup of hot coffee make my supper, and I lie down on the uneven side of the railroad embankment, that being the driest ground, and half asleep, half watching and planning, I wait for morning.

MARCH 27, 1863.—With the earliest dawn I am up. Taking a few men without arousing the rest, I go, in company with Lieutenant O. Hare, of Company G, along the old road explored in the morning. Just before coming where this road crosses the swale, I place my men in ambush. If the enemy come at all, this will be the way they will choose. A trusty sergeant is put in command, with instructions when to fire and how to retreat, so as to mislead the enemy, and not be in the way of our fire. I am returning with the Lieutenant to our well-manned picket line, and while walking carelessly within ten rods of the line, my attention being directed to some features of the ground in relation to the expected attack, I am suddenly

fired upon once and twice, the bullets coming with a hot hiss, telling how near are the rifles from which they came, and strike pine trees near me. I spring behind a tree for shelter. Another shot, coming obliquely, gives me a narrow escape. Lieutenant Hare, with an oath, calls out, "What are you about there, Harris?" In a moment I hear the well known voice of Lieutenant Harris, of Company G, ordering his men to cease firing. He comes forward and explains that he had mistaken us for rebels; that he had no idea of seeing us outside of the pickets at that hour; and although no rebel bullets ever put me in any such danger as that just passed, I can blame no one, for we went out at another part of the line, and the fog among the thick pines obscures everything.

No enemy disturbs us. The morning wears away. I am relieved by Lieutenant-Colonel Carr, of the Zouaves, and go back to my Colonel's head-quarters, to rest. I find what has caused the sounds of hammering and clanking which I have heard during the night. Captain Bailey, of Sherman's staff, has been at work with his gang of negroes. He has taken up many of the rails along the track across the marsh, so that the rebels cannot run their trains of cars into head-quarters, and as an additional protection for our camp, he has built across the track, where leaving the open marsh it enters the timbered swamp, a tie barricade, ten feet high, against which he has leaned up iron rails, so as to present to the expected cannon shots a slanting front, like the upper part of the sides of the Merrimac. A considerable number declare that they do not believe that there was any need of leaving the fine quarters and expected pleasures in Pontchitoula, and a plan for fortifying and holding the town is talked of. The most zealous of this party obtain permission to go as near to the village as they dare, and reconnoitre. They soon return with accounts of lucky dodges to avoid bullets, and of a speedy retreat.

During the remaining days of March, 1863, we continued at this camp. The faces of our chiefs grew more solemn every hour. Here was a poor place for pleasure or plunder; nowhere

to go except up or down the railroad. Our good living ceased; we were reduced to common rations. The voices of frogs and the deep bellow of alligators were sounds which soon became monotonously doleful.

A flag of truce was reported to be in front of our most advanced picket toward the town. Colonel Clark immediately sent forward two young men to play staff officers for him, and see what was wanted by the bearers of the flag. For some time papers were sent back and forth. I was informed by my commander that the communications related entirely to cotton affairs, and contained a proposition from the rebel head-quarters in Mississippi to our head-quarters in New Orleans, offering to sell fairly all the cotton which the federal authorities would allow to pass the blockade. I saw that there was no result which kindled hope in my Colonel's face. He said he returned an answer to the rebels that he had forwarded their communications to New Orleans. Several citizens escaping from rebeldom entered our lines, and with them came a precocious little boy about twelve years old, who had just come from the rebel camp. He seemed to have a memory wonderfully adapted to retain just what he had seen of military preparations. We were able to ascertain that the long time we had spent about Pontchitoula had not been unimproved by the enemy. They had gathered a force greatly outnumbering ours. They had artillery and cavalry, and a large band of Indians for swamp fighting. Nothing but gross mismanagement by the enemy, in attacking our pickets farthest advanced, instead of getting behind us, had saved from certain capture all of us who were in the town on the day we left it. At our head-quarters, behind Captain Bailey's barricade, where a light rifled cannon was mounted, it gradually became established as proven that rebel shells coming down with a curve would fall right among us, notwithstanding the iron-clad barricade at one end of our long encampment; and that the Indians could get through the swamp and might at any moment be aiming a rifle at the bowels of the best of us; and also that there was no way rations in sufficient quantity could

be got up the railroad from Manchac Pass, without making too much hard work.

The result of deliberations was a change of base. On the evening of the 28th March, orders were given to our picket at the Quaker gun, on the Pontchitoula side of the marsh, that at 11 o'clock in the evening they should quietly abandon their position and retreat down the track till they found our new camp at Owl Bayou, where we all arrived at about 2 o'clock in the morning. A terrific thunder storm, which had long been threatening us, let loose its gusts and floods upon our half-stretched shelter-tents, and flashed its lightnings in our eyes. We were all as drenched as our oil-cloths would permit. At this camp we remained during the last days of the month. A new iron-clad barricade was built, stronger than the first. The rifled cannon was mounted pointing up the railroad, but this barricade was located, not behind the deep and wide bayou which crossed the track, but about one hundred yards in front of it, so that if the enemy's sharp-shooters ever got into the swamp, they could easily come on the flanks, and pick off any man behind the iron-clad fortification. The bayou is named after the hideous night birds, that hoot even in the day along its obscure, cypress-lined course. Its waters, of a reddish color, are thickened by particles of decayed vegetation, and cause a sickening sensation when tasted. The resemblance of this water to commissary whisky was noticed by the soldiers.

Colonel T. S. Clark took up his head-quarters on the gunboat Barataria, which lay in the Pass, two miles from our camp, and seemed delighted with the good bed, provisions and liquors at his service. On the afternoon of the 31st I was surprised to see Colonel Smith, of the Zouaves, accompanied by two of his best looking officers, all dressed as they would be for a city parade, going toward our picket farthest from the barricade. I ascertained that he had gathered together all the relics of the Free Masons and Odd Fellows that he could find, and was going back to Pontchitoula with a flag of truce to return them to their owners. About an hour afterward I saw the Colonel

coming back, his face showing no little emotion. "What is the news, Colonel?" "We found them a little ways in front of our pickets. They are advancing. Colonel Miller was there, and another colonel. They would hardly treat me civilly; they are terribly enraged against us." As I looked far up the railroad to a turn it made, I saw the gleam of the sun on bayonets, and in a little while the enemy were plainly to be seen marching down toward us. The long roll, and a prompt preparation for attack, followed. The gunners have everything about the cannon in readiness. I gave my skirmish companies instructions how to get on the enemy's flanks, and prevent him from getting on ours. The rebels halted, and remained at a halt until night. Then they kindled bright fires, and after a while it appeared that they were at work taking up the iron rails and bending them across logs, after heating them red hot in the fire. Not a shot was fired.

I sent a message to my Colonel, at his gunboat head-quarters, requesting permission to take fifty picked men and make a night attack on the rebels. After some time I received this written answer:

HEAD-QUARTERS U. S. FORCES, }  
PASS MANCHAC, March 31, 1863. }

COLONEL—The Colonel commanding is unwilling to allow you to make any attempt on the enemy to-night. It is his intention to shell their position at daylight to-morrow morning, and if he does not succeed in dislodging them by that means, you will have an opportunity to try your sharpshooters to-morrow night.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

WM. H. DICKEY,

Lieut. and A. A. A. G.

To Lieut.-Col. BACON, commanding Sixth Michigan Volunteers.

In the morning the enemy were gone. They had been tearing up the track to prevent us from following them, just as we had been doing to prevent them from following us.

The result was another change of base, which this time took us back to our old place of embarkation on the south side of South Manchac Pass, where we were to be kept a long time. The escape of our vessels from Wadesborough was evidence of the grossest neglect on the part of the enemy, who, during two days, had every chance to obstruct the stream by felling trees, and the weak guard left with the vessels could have done nothing to prevent an easy capture. Two steamers, four schooners, one barge, and a dozen row boats might have easily been captured or destroyed by a few companies of the force that recaptured the vacant town of Pontchitoula, with about the same superiority of numbers which we had when we drove their cavalry companies out of the place. The numbers employed on our side were as follows: Of the Sixth Michigan, 400; of the Fourteenth Maine, 40; of the Twenty-fourth Maine, 20; of the One Hundred and Seventy-seventh New York, 100; of the One Hundred and Sixty-fifth New York Zouaves, 306; and of the Ninth Connecticut, 26, who remained in charge of the two guns. The force we encountered on entering Pontchitoula was about four companies of irregular cavalry, acting as coast guards, but after two days of delay the enemy, by use of his railroad communications, collected a large force, which, if used as it might have been, would have made our cotton and turpentine expedition cost the lives of many good men.

The principal object of attention at our final landing place was the schooner which we had heard that the Zouaves captured at Owl Bayou, as they first advanced up the railroad toward Pontchitoula. This schooner was there receiving a load of cotton, which high contracting parties had agreed might go to New Orleans. No resistance or attempt to escape was made by those in charge of the schooner, but a Zouave bullet killed the captain as soon as he showed himself to the advanced guard, and now here the schooner lay at anchor, so near to the burned piles of the railroad bridge that it was continually bumping against them, and at last filled with water. Strong details of our best men were made to get the cotton out of the hold and

put it on other vessels, which carried it to the city. The poor results of our Pontchitoula expedition had caused a quarrel among those who were to divide the booty. Authorities near to city head-quarters were determined to take the whole schooner load of cotton, on the principle of right to the lion's share. This determination was so distasteful to our chiefs that they anchored the schooner where it would bump till it sunk, and then undertook to claim a large part of the cotton on the principle of salvage, supposing that the law would be on their side, but they soon learned that, law or no law, the lion must have his share, and asses must be content with the honor of obedience.

It is the morning of April 12th, 1863. The sun, rising from behind Lake Pontchartrain, begins to give an unhealthy sultriness to the air. The fires of our encampment at South Manchac Pass are smoldering along the railroad embankment. The aversion of the men to eating salt beef and pork is shown by the good appetite with which several groups are feasting on the white meat of alligators' tails, roasted. A veteran volunteer of the Sixth Michigan, whose features have been weather-beaten by the blasts of Hatteras and the storms of Ship Island, stands beside a sickly recruit on the shelving shore, made by earth washed from the embankment where the Pass opens into Lake Maurepas. They are filling their canteens with water, which the veteran tastes and says, "The water will taste more and more of salt until the wind stops blowing from the east." "I don't care," answers the recruit, "I am going to drink all I want of it. I'll not go without water, as I did yesterday, for any doctor, but somehow it seems to me as if that alligator garfish that we ate for breakfast had poisoned me. I wonder what kind of living Colonel Clark has at head-quarters on board the gunboat," and he points to the curious little iron-clad *Barataria*, which is anchored at a short distance. The veteran answers, "I assure you he is not in want. The old Savary arrived yesterday with any quantity of canned things and liquors. It would not be strange if they get aground again as they did last week,



when for two days they had the turpentine all ready to burn up their gunboat. Nothing but the high tide got them off. I believe that if one rebel had come out and shot at them, they would have burned up the *Barataria*." The recruit continues, "I can't speak the name of that gunboat; the boys call it 'Bull Terrier.' I was detailed for some kind of guard duty on board that craft yesterday. The officers had to drink very often. I should think that navy Lieutenant was about as much of a tee-totaler as our Colonel is. They seemed to agree very well. They kept me loading muskets for them to shoot at alligators all the way down to the lighthouse and back again. I thought the boat run as if the men that managed it were about half tight. They bumped first against one shore and then against another, and all yelled whenever the Colonel or the Lieutenant happened to hit an alligator." The veteran says, "I expect that there are a good many gunboats doing just about such service as that. Well, the Bull Terrier is getting up steam now. When General Sherman was here day before yesterday, he ordered that gunboat captain to explore all the rivers and bayous around this lake. I'll bet ten to one that order was the death warrant of the Bull Terrier. If the rebs don't capture it and bring it down to shell us out, I shall be glad."

The *Barataria* runs down to the bridge. Colonel Clark sends his orderly for two of his favorite officers and twelve of the best enlisted men, who soon go on board well armed and equipped, and the *Barataria* steams away, headed for the rebel shore of Lake Maurepas, leaving us in camp to wonder what daring exploit is undertaken. I am left in command of the post. A captain comes to me, and after seating himself beside me on a timber, he turns from looking at the long stream of black coal smoke which the disappearing gunboat leaves behind, and says, "I wonder how long we have got to stay here?" I point to Captain Bailey's gang of negroes, all hard at work with wheel-barrows, hand-barrows and pounders, making a sort of parapet of earth taken from the embankment of the railroad, and piled up around a little eight-cornered log pen,

about thirty yards wide, and I tell him, "You see what is to be done. It has been discovered that this cursed place commands New Orleans. They are afraid that the rebels will pontoon the Pass unless this fort is built, armed and garrisoned, to command this bridge.

The Captain proceeds, "I have heard that they are going to make railroad bridges here. They say that the contract is made, and that all sorts of workmen are coming here just as soon as our fort is sufficient to protect them. I do not know whether the price of the job is to stop in the hundreds of thousands, or go into the millions. I suppose that because old Ben Butler burned these bridges, there is reason enough why they should be rebuilt at any expense. Our New Orleans nobility were dreadfully afraid that Stonewall Jackson was building some kind of bridges across these passes, and now it appears that they are going to use up what there is left of us in rebuilding these bridges as good as they ever were. Probably we shall lay our bones here. Probably the job will be a great one for stealings, and we are to rot here to make some of those Boston Yankees rich." I answer the Captain that "it is the plan of our commanders to rebuild these bridges, and put the railroad in good order to the other side of the passes, for the ostensible purpose of getting a new base from which to attack the Confederacy, and that the nose of the ox treading out corn is not to be muzzled. I suppose it is right that those great men who have left happy homes to come and hold offices for their country in New Orleans, ought to have a chance to make something, especially as greenbacks have depreciated lately, and that, at all events, the regulations forbid us to speak disrespectfully of head-quarters." The Captain tersely remarks, "Our expedition has proved a failure as to cotton and turpentine. I suppose that this bridge job is to get out of our government as much spoil as was expected to be got out of the rebel country by our expedition. I have heard that when the railroad company built these bridges in the first place, they could not get men to work here without paying ten times common wages,

and even then the men died off so rapidly that the job had to be abandoned several times. The negroes were too valuable to be used up in any such way; poor foreigners, gathered in great cities, were the victims, and it appears that our regiment is in this department to be used in the same way that the foreigners were."

The hot hours of the day are almost gone. I have been looking with curiosity at the row of sharp sticks, about four feet long, which Bailey has stuck so as to turn up a little all around his mud fort, about half way up its side. These poor negroes are not so stupid that they cannot understand the ridiculous nature of their recent labors. This fort looks very much as if it is to be a master-piece of the same kind of work as our iron-clad batteries toward Pontchitoula, built to be abandoned immediately.

Night has fallen. The usual miasmas, mingled with the darkness, obscure everything. Nothing has been heard from the Barataria. A large dead tree, dry enough to burn, has been found, and is flaming and sparkling fifty feet in the air, intended to show where the landing place is. There is a general stillness, broken only by the doleful shrieks of owls occasionally answering one another, and by the voices and laughter of men at the flickering camp fires. Cannon shots have been heard in the direction where our gunboat was last seen. Several officers are out on the timbers of the burned bridge, listening and looking. A red spot of fire is seen across the lake. Gradually it flickers up; then flames illuminate that part of the horizon. Soon comes the boom of a heavy gun; then other cannon shots are heard. Now the discharges are in quick succession, and seem like those of a battery of light guns, which must be on the shore. Again a solitary twelve-pounder shot. A considerable pause; two or three other reports, apparently from the light guns on shore. The flames which have been lighting up the sky gradually subside, and there remains what appears to be a lurid mass of slow burning fire. Now and then a cannon shot is heard. Our whole camp is aroused, and the men have

crowded together where they can watch the fire. Various opinions are expressed by the officers on the bridge timbers. One says, "That fire must be on land, just about the mouth of the Amite river. Our folks have been burning a house. The rebels have come with a battery, and the gunboat has been shelling them." "No," says another, "I believe that the Barataria is in distress, and that a house has been set on fire and those guns have been fired as signals for us to come to their assistance." Two lieutenants take a skiff and row off through the darkness to cross the lake and find out what has happened.

Most of us expect soon to see the light of the Barataria's fires, and hear the sound of her machinery. There is a long time of suspense. The fire has burned down to just such a lurid spot as it was when it began, and no sound comes to us over the still lake. At last a light is seen toward the fire, but in a different place. It has the motion of a light on water. As we watch it, it becomes plainer, and is approaching slowly. After a while we can hear over the still water sounds which resemble those of regularly moving machinery, and the light seems bright enough to be the fires seen through the open forward ports of the gunboat. Some of us believe that the Barataria is coming, until the light is very near; then we perceive that the sound is of oars—we can hear their splash at every pull. It is the large cutter of the steamer, perhaps come for reinforcements. No; it is loaded down with men to the water's edge. I hear Colonel Clark's voice, and see that the light is a large lantern held by a man in the bow. "Where is the Bull Terrier?" is eagerly asked by one of the Colonel's friends, as the boat is slowly landing. No answer. Then, as the Colonel steps on shore with a sort of ejaculation indicating relief from fear, he exchanges a few words with his friend in a low voice, and followed by the two naval officers, carrying carpet bags, he goes directly to the fine new wall tent which Captain Bailey has had prepared by his negroes for his own use. It is about midnight. Candles are burning on the board table. As soon as the light strikes the faces of Colonel Clark and the gunboat commander,

it requires no skill to see that they have been doing something which makes them feel like condemned rogues on their way to the whipping post for sheep stealing. They simultaneously ask for whisky. A demijohn of the basest commissary, and a dirty tumbler, are immediately employed to put about a pint of the fiery liquid down the throat of each returned warrior chief. That whisky would dissolve a cent if dropped into it. Colonel Clark, after a shake and a wry face, indicating the action of the terrible stuff he has swallowed, begins, while the gunboat commander gets behind him :

“ I tell you, we did all that we could. We got aground about 8 o’clock this morning in the mouth of the Amite river. We supposed that there was eight feet of water in the channel, and so there was, but the boat was run by that pilot too near one bank, and got hung on an awful snag. We took out an anchor, and undertook to get the boat off by using the capstan, but it was an impossibility. After noon we sent a party ashore and cut some timbers, with which we were going to raise up the boat, but as our party were coming back with the timbers, the enemy opened fire on them. One sailor’s arm was broken. From that time it was impossible for a man to show himself without being shot, but Captain P—— succeeded in spiking the bow gun and heaving it overboard. My men kept the enemy down a little about that time by firing through the loop-holes in the iron-plated cabin, and Mr. G—— succeeded in opening the port-hole far enough to give the enemy one charge of grape from the gun amidships, but we could not get that gun overboard, and there was no time to be lost, for the rebels ceased firing and went off after reinforcements and artillery. And then where would we be? We tried again to get the boat off by having a cable, fastened to an anchor, wound up around the stern wheel by the whole power of the engine. There was only about fifty yards of water between us and the shore, and we knew that the rebels had gone after artillery, and would capture the Barataria and get command of the lakes with it. So we destroyed it and came off. I lost my shawl and all my

clothes except what I have on. We remained near the gunboat till we were sure that the rebels could not put out the fire. There was no use in sending for reinforcements as long as we could not get the boat off, and we could not wait till morning for the tide." Here the Colonel takes another tumbler full of fiery commissary, and closes with a side remark to Captain Bailey, "Captain, some officers have been willing to be taken prisoner, but I tell you I have a perfect horror of being a prisoner, and I would have fought till death rather than surrender. It required nerve. It required nerve to come eight miles across that lake, as we did. If the water had not remained smooth, we should have gone to the bottom." And as he fills the tumbler again, he says, "Well, it was a pity about our whisky. The wounded man was in the way; we could not get the demijohn into the boat, and it was used instead of turpentine to burn the vessel. It was poured over the bed clothes, and then we set fire to them."

Assistant Surgeon Mason has been at work with the wounded sailor. That arm must come off, the bone and flesh between elbow and shoulder being terribly blown to pieces. The doctor's humane countenance shows pity uncommon in the army, as he gets his case of instruments. The poor sailor is delirious. He groans and shrieks even after the chloroform is given, but the operation is performed in a manner doing no small credit to our surgeon, and which saves the life of the sailor, who is a tall, noble looking man, of middle age, who has seen much service, and is well entitled to the support guaranteed by the laws of his country.

I find a trusty non-commissioned officer, who has returned with the Colonel from the Baratavia. I ask him, "How many of the rebels were there?" "None of us saw more than six or eight, any how." "About how many shots did they fire?" "From a dozen to twenty." "Did you see or hear anything to show that the enemy went after reinforcements or artillery?" "They went off as soon as the charge of grape was fired at them from amidships. There was so much swamp there that

they could not have brought artillery except by one road, along the river, and our twelve-pounder commanded that road. As for infantry, they could not hurt us. We could have kept them off by firing from the loop-holes in the iron plating of the upper cabin, and they could not charge on us through the water without swimming." "Why did not anybody send here for reinforcements?" "Colonel Clark did try like a good fellow to get the cutter and come off himself after reinforcements, but the navy officer told him he could not let the cutter go, for when that was gone there was no way of escape for those that stayed on the gunboat. Colonel Clark would have come off if the navy man had not stopped him almost by force. There were two other little boats, and men begged the Colonel to let them take one of these and come for reinforcements, but he refused. He was afraid to cross the lake himself in one of those risky little boats, and did not seem to want any reinforcements if he had got to stay himself. Whenever there was any firing, or prospect of any firing, the Colonel stayed away down in the lower part of the vessel, where there was the most iron around him. The day was sultry, and he had like to have roasted down there. The truth of it is, that he and the gunboat officer were terribly scared. They acted as if they wanted to get away at any rate, and could not get away without destroying the boat. When we were getting into the cutter to leave, we found a man lying down. He would not raise himself. Some wanted to kick him and make him get up, but nothing could make him stir till we got out of rifle range of the shore. Then he arose, and behold it was our Colonel." I ask, "Did they use whisky for turpentine to set fire to the gunboat?" "They did; and in my opinion you may say in more than one sense that whisky burned the Barataria. I was just noticing that the tide is high enough to have floated the vessel off if they could have waited till this time."

## CHAPTER IV.

Vicarious Suffering—The Veritable Bear with a Sore Head—The Court-Martial which was no Court-Martial—A General Taught not to Meddle with the Toys of his Superior.

DURING the forenoon of the 12th day of April, 1863, a strange sail appears close to where the wreck of the *Barataria* is supposed to lie. It requires no great wisdom to form an opinion that the enemy are at work to carry off the fine twelve-pounders abandoned there, to recover which there has been no effort, although one of the guns has probably been held up by the wreck at about the surface of the water. Watching with our glasses, we perceive that the strange schooner is moving out into the lake toward us. Colonel Clark does not seem to take much interest in anything that way, but when he hears that the vessel is certainly sailing boldly on, and has almost reached the middle of the lake, he seems to appreciate the suggestion that the rebels may come and shell us out at leisure without approaching where our two light guns can do any harm. He is on the alert until the schooner tacks and makes for the mouth of the Tickfaw, evidently to escape with what she has taken from the wreck. We have our steamer *Savary* and the cutter. Officers and men are anxious to do something, at least, to disturb the enemy in getting off with his trophies. Permission is delayed, although there is so little wind that the schooner hardly seems to move in her new direction.

At length Lieutenant A. J. Ralph and Lieutenant Lacy, favorites of the Colonel, and yet men of courage, are seen wearing their swords and hastening with about a dozen well-armed men to the cutter. They embark and row off vigorously toward the schooner, which now cannot fail to reach the mouth of the Tickfaw before she is overtaken. But the rowers do their best, and the cutter is soon out of our sight around the projecting point of Jones' Island. Immediately afterward a



little canoe, in the back end of which sits our tall Lieutenant Trask, of Company H, is seen paddling in the same direction, following the cutter. The schooner, also, is hidden from us by the island.

The later hours of the afternoon, sunset, night, come, and there is no news of Lieutenant Ralph and his companions, except an uncertain report of some stragglers from our camp, who say that while they went down on our side of the lake, they heard firing near the mouth of the Tickfaw.

Time goes on. Day and night pass, and yet no news to tell the fate of our friends. On the afternoon of the 14th day of April, men looking across the lake with a marine glass think that they see a moving speck, which may be a little boat, now and then lifted into plain sight by the waves, which are running very high before the violent blasts of wind from the murky sky. The speck is coming near; it is a canoe. It has passed the point of the island, and will soon reach our camp, for which its rolling occupant is paddling bravely over waves that may swallow him at any moment. He is a very tall man, but he is in his shirt sleeves, and at first appears like some refugee from the rebel country. As he nears us, we lose our doubts; it is Trask. He soon lands and steps out on shore. He seems faint and starved. Surrounded by rejoicing friends, he is taken to the Bailey tent, where he seats himself. Colonel Clark congratulates him, and insists on giving him a dose of scalding commissary before he begins his report, but the Lieutenant is too far gone to say much till he has had something to eat. The best that we can provide is set before him, and he soon is ready to commence:

“I could not quite keep up with Ralph’s boat. The schooner did not seem to have many men on board. We saw them heave one of the *Barataria’s* brass guns overboard as we approached. She got into the mouth of the river a short distance ahead of us. We followed her, and could soon see her apparently unable to get away, for her sails were of no use in the river. No towing could keep her out of our reach many minutes. Ralph rowed

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into the river, and was getting near to the schooner, when a party of the enemy, concealed behind trees and logs, opened fire on him. They had let him pass by them a short distance, so as to take him in the rear. Ralph pulled for the other shore, and his men sprang out and commenced to return the enemy's fire. About that time my canoe attracted their attention. I was just entering the mouth of the river. They fired on me. I lay down in my canoe, but a bullet came through the side of it as if nothing had been in the way. I rolled the canoe on one side, slid out, and swam away among the willows and swamp trees near by. After a while I came to a strip of ground which was not under water, and crept out. The firing ceased. I suppose Ralph surrendered, for I never saw anything more of any of his party or of the enemy. I went about a mile in the woods, and hid till night. Then I came out and looked all along the lake shore for a boat, but could find none. There was moonlight, and there was some wind from that side. I found a good many boards that had been washed ashore. I began to make a raft, and worked the most of that night, but could not finish it. During the next day I stayed there. I had nothing but a few berries and twigs to eat. Nobody came, and I worked on my raft, but it was likely to be a risky thing to cross the lake on, and at night the wind rose and blew from the wrong direction. My raft went to pieces. I would have tried to follow the lake shore, but the Amite river was before me, and the enemy's pickets were there. If I undertook to go toward the Mississippi, an impassable swamp was before me, for the only hard ground was a strip along the shore of the lake. On the next morning I came out of my hiding place, and followed the path along the shore back to the Tickfaw. I thought that if the enemy's pickets were there they might take me, but they were not there, and no boat was to be found. I swam across the river. That was a hard job after such a fast, and I had some thoughts about alligators while I was paddling in the black water. I came out safely, and waded to a large log, on which I sat down to rest. I happened to look behind the log,

and there lay about the largest alligator I ever saw. His horrid head was almost under me. I got up and stood in the swamp water. It seemed to me as if I owed that alligator a grudge. I saw a sharp dead limb of a tree that I could get and use like a spear. I took it, and went back carefully. The two scaly eyes on the top of the animal's head were the only places where I could hurt him. I sent the sharp end of my wooden spear into his eye, when he gave a thrash with his tail and rushed into the river, where he swam around and turned on one side, as if he was crazed. I then hurried out of the water to a sort of shore ridge, which was dry enough to give me the advantage of the alligator tribe. I followed this ground two or three miles. As I rested in one place I missed my pocket-book, containing my last month's pay. It was lost, probably, while I was swimming. At last I came to a bayou, wide and deep. I thought that if I found many like it I would never reach the railroad. I waded up its side some distance, to find a narrow place to swim across. The other side looked much worse than the side where I was. I sat down, feeling somewhat like despair. My strength was just about gone, and I had been so much in the water that I felt sick already. Without any reason, I got up and made my way through a thick jungle to an arm of the bayou, a little before me. I parted the prickly vines till I came to the very edge of the water. There, half hidden in the rushes, lay the little dug-out that has brought me here. I went back and sat down on a fallen tree to rest, before trying to cross the lake. The wind was blowing, and the waves were such as you see. As I sat there, my finding the boat seemed like a delusion. I waded to it and took hold of it, and then went back and rested again. If I had not had a good deal of experience with canoes, I should not have reached here."

"Trask, how did you all come to go off after that schooner without permission?" says one of the Colonel's friends, while the Colonel's swollen face wears a look indicating that some base purpose is in his mind. The worn out young man, who has just finished his narrative, fixes his eyes on the Colonel and

inquires what is meant. "Why, those fellows got captured by going after the schooner without permission," is the reply of the Colonel's friend. "Without permission!" answers Trask, "Ralph came right from our head-quarters with a regular detail. He told me that he had orders to take a party and capture the schooner if he could, and directed me to keep near enough to report all that happened."

"Lieutenant Ralph had no such orders from me," says the Colonel, with assumed dignity. Then his spokesman resumes, "Old Sherman has forwarded a recommendation that Ralph be dismissed, and has ordered that if any officers who went with him should return, they should immediately be put under arrest."

Trask fixes his eyes on the sensual face of the Colonel, and with an expression of disgust, says, "If I had known that there was anything of that sort on foot, I would not have come back. I did not think there was any crime in going with Lieutenant Ralph to prevent that schooner in getting away with the gun which she had been carrying off under our eyes. I did not suppose that all my sufferings in getting back here were to end in being a victim to atone for Ralph's capture and the burning of the *Barataria*."

Lieutenant Trask was the first victim taken from our regiment to be sacrificed for the sins of a privileged commander. For about two weeks he was under arrest at our dismal encampment. I often took walks with him down the railroad, the only way we could go, and endeavored to demonstrate to him that it was almost certain that Colonel Clark would procure his release, for his position was such that the General did not care for him, and Colonel Clark would not want to have the falsity of the accusation exposed, and could easily make all necessary explanations to the General. All the blame would probably be put upon poor Ralph, because he could make no defense, or upon some one whom the Colonel wished to injure.

About the 22d of April, 1863, Colonel Clark went to New Orleans, and after one night's recreation, according to the usages

of war, in the city, our Colonel calls at General Sherman's headquarters in the morning, for it is in the morning, if ever, that the General's dyspepsia allows him to be approachable, but it is also true that some of his worst fits of insane rage have been in the morning. There is no show or parade at this General's headquarters. A sentry from the regulars, a military machine, kept not for war, but to show how near to the perfection of the regulations a man can be, walks his beat in front of the door of a brick building. He comes to a present arms with just the jerk and clatter required for that most important military duty. Our Colonel, not deigning to answer the salute, enters the door and goes up the stairs. An orderly, with a most subdued expression of face and a very clean appearance, ushers the Colonel into the first room, where Assistant Adjutant-General Wickham Hoffman is at work on his morning reports, scattered upon the long table behind which he is sitting. He greets Colonel Clark without rising, for even a waiter, and certainly any staff officer at the headquarters of a regular army General really outranks any volunteer officer. Captain Hoffman puts on an apish smile to receive Colonel Clark, as much as to say, "I know who is in favor with my master," and after inviting the Colonel to be seated, he rises, and opening the folding doors just wide enough to admit himself, enters the General's presence-chamber, and closes the door behind him. In a short time he returns, and as he says, "Colonel, the General will receive you immediately," his sallow features have an expression such as would be natural if his master had just given him a customary kick. Clark's perceptions are such as to make him feel uneasy. As he enters the General's room, a regular army orderly, in exact uniform, and with short-cropped hair, dodges out of the room, like a rabbit escaping from the cage of an anaconda.

General T. W. Sherman sits at a table, where he has been at work on some very disagreeable part of his report of his grand South Carolina expedition. Beside the pile of foolscap he has been using lies his bible—the old army regulations in force when he was young. He is a little man, prematurely old,

dressed in plain uniform. His hair is thick, of a soap color, and slightly frizzled. His complexion and eyes have a singular sameness, of bluish ash color, and of his emaciated features the most remarkable is his lower jaw, which is wider than any part of his head, and is continually moving out or in, or sidewise, chewing some cud of wrath. Colonel Clark, hat in hand, comes to a stand-still, bloated face, and ample development of abdomen and hips, make an appearance likely to gain favor at the court of New Orleans, for there, in his new uniform, with the gilt eagles on his shoulders, he looks showy, in spite of the expression of his pewter eyes, and there is no moral development to hinder him from being a pliant tool in such business as is generally to be done in the province. He speaks: "General, I called to see you respecting—" The General makes a short turn on his chair, and answers, "Look at me, then." "General, if you are engaged, I will call at another time," says the Colonel, faintly, and backing toward the door. "Halt! I have not got through with you, sir. You have lost a gunboat and a part of your command by your lack of discipline and of respect for the regulations. You are a d—d volunteer. There would not be any such losses if you had discipline. You can't flog your men, but why don't you buck and gag them, and hang them up by the thumbs? Why don't you have some of those officers dismissed at once? That's the way to put life into your regiment, and stop their dying off. After such losses, there must be an example. I'll have one." "General, I'll do anything you require, but I wish to say, in relation to Lieutenant Trask, that he has been a good officer—" "Good officer? d—d militia. Don't you talk to me. Don't say a word, G—d d—n you!" says the Brigadier, as the ash colors of his face darken and lighten by spots, and foam appears at the corners of his mouth, and he ejaculates, "Crawl, G—d d—n you! crawl, or I'll dismiss you for cowardice! Do you hear, you d—d militia nobody? Down on your knees, or you'll be dismissed in general orders for cowardice." The General springs to his feet, as if about to fly at Clark like a terrier. Down goes

Clark on his knees, looking like a despairing reprobate. "Down on your belly, or I'll break your head!" and Clark is sprawling full length on the floor, his eyes shut tight, as if not wanting to see what the General will do next. There is a pause, and the Brigadier says, "That's discipline. Now, I will make somebody of you. Get up, G—d d—n you!" and Clark regains his feet, looking some the worse for his prostration. The General continues, "Now speak—talk, d—n you!" "General, I want to say that, in my opinion, we have got the wrong man. Lieutenant Trask went outside of our lines by permission of Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon. And what is more, if my Lieutenant-Colonel was out of the way, I could do something; but as long as he is in the regiment, all my efforts to be what I might be are in vain." "Why did you not tell me before? Have him arrested, and prefer charges against him immediately. I'll have him tried in time for my report of your expedition. If things go right, this d—d militia colonel, N. P. Banks, won't keep me here and run that great establishment across the street much longer. When I am the Major-General commanding, I'll make you a Brigadier, if I see that I can use you. I'll yet make those abolitionists at Washington understand my South Carolina campaign. They will not dare to keep me in penal service here under Banks much longer. I'll make them feel who I am."

It is the 14th of May, 1863. A court-martial is in session in the dining room of the old Park House Hotel, at the corner of Lafayette square, in New Orleans, now used for General Sherman's head-quarters, and the members of the court are deep in their deliberations on the case of some unfortunate. The Judge-Advocate, a tall young man, with his uniform coat unbuttoned, and having light-colored hair, wearing spectacles, and evidently a lawyer, steps into what used to be the dining room, but is now the office of the Superintendent of Negro Labor, where I am sitting. He says, "Colonel, I will have that matter of yours brought on in about half an hour," and as I am near to him, he adds in an undertone, "From all I can hear

of the evidence, I think that this trial will be a good thing for you, and for that Colonel of yours, too.

I am seated at one end of a table, at the other end of which sits the President of the Court, the members of which sit on both sides of the table. The Judge-Advocate is beside me. I examine every face. I am safe. It is fortunate for me that this court was in session under an order from General Banks. There was no chance for General Sherman or his staff officers to pack a court.

Every face before me, except one, appears to be honest and intelligent. They are looking for the charge against me, and as I look out of the open window, and feel the air, refreshed by a recent rain, I think of the true character of the men whose brief authority has been used to send me here, and what injury their stupid malice has intended, contempt and hatred strive for the mastery. I stand up to hear the charge read, and plead to it. "Do you object to any member of this court?" says the President, in a manly voice. I answer "No." In about an hour proceedings, shown by the following record, were finished, this official copy being obtained long afterward:

#### PROCEEDING OF A GENERAL COURT-MARTIAL, .

*Convened at the Park Hotel, New Orleans, pursuant to an order of Major-General Banks, commanding the Nineteenth Army Corps, of which the following is a copy, viz :*

#### EXTRACT.

SPECIAL ORDERS, } No. 80. }	HEAD-QUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE GULF, } NINETEENTH ARMY CORPS, } New Orleans, March 25, 1863. }
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\* \* \* \* \*

5. A general court-martial is hereby appointed to meet at the city of New Orleans, at 10 o'clock on the morning of the 27th day of March, 1863, or as soon thereafter as practicable, for the trial of Cardinal H. Conant, late Provost-Marshal for the parishes of St. Bernard and Plaquemine, Louisiana, and such other persons as are brought before it.



## DETAIL FOR THE COURT.

Lieutenant-Colonel R. Fitzgibbon, Ninth Connecticut Volunteers.

Major J. B. Foster, One Hundred and Twenty-eighth New York Volunteers.

Major H. Stall, Twenty-sixth Connecticut Volunteers.

Major E. T. Clark, Twenty-sixth Massachusetts Volunteers.

Captain George M. Dickerman, Twenty-sixth Massachusetts Volunteers.

Captain F. Hannable, Twenty-sixth Massachusetts Volunteers.

Captain Richard Barrett, Forty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers.

Captain R. T. Mitchell, One Hundred and Twenty-eighth New York Volunteers, Judge-Advocate.

No other officers than those above named can be assembled without injury to the service. The court will sit without regard to hours.

By command of Major-General Banks.

(Signed)

RICHARD B. IRWIN, A. A. G.

[Official.]

G. NORMAN LIEBER, Major,

Judge-Advocate.

PARK HOTEL, NEW ORLEANS, }  
May 14, 1863. }

Court convened at 4 o'clock P. M., for the trial of Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Bacon, Sixth Michigan Volunteers, on charges and specifications annexed, marked "A."

Roster called by Judge-Advocate.

Absent—Captain Hannable.

Judge-Advocate reads certificate of Surgeon G. W. Braks, Twenty-sixth Massachusetts Volunteers, that Captain Hannable was sick and unfit for duty. Certificate annexed, marked "B."

Court declared open by Judge-Advocate.

Parties called into court.

Order detailing court read to accused.

Accused asked if he has objections to any member.

Answer—None.

Order detailing Captain Wilkinson as Judge-Advocate, in place of Captain Mitchell, relieved, read by Judge-Advocate.

EXTRACT.

SPECIAL ORDERS, } No. 83. }	HEAD-QUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE GULF, } NINETEENTH ARMY CORPS, } New Orleans, March 28, 1863. }
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8. Captain Robert I. Mitchell, One Hundred and Twenty-eighth New York Volunteers, is relieved from duty as Judge-Advocate of the general court-martial appointed by Special Orders, No. 80, of March 25, 1863, from these head-quarters, and Captain Robert J. Wilkinson is detailed in his stead.

Captain Mitchell will turn over to Captain Wilkinson, Judge-Advocate, all charges and papers which have been referred to said general court-martial, and are now in his hands.

By command of Major-General Banks.

(Signed) RICHARD B. IRWIN, A. A. G.

[Official.]

G. NORMAN LIEBER, Judge-Advocate.

Court sworn by Judge-Advocate in presence of accused.

Accused asked if he desires counsel.

Answer—No.

Accused arraigned on charges and specifications annexed, before full court, and to the specification pleads "Not guilty." To the charge pleads "Not guilty."

Ordered to proceed forthwith to the prosecution.

*Captain G. T. Spitzer* sworn for prosecution :

Question—What is your rank and regiment ?

Answer—Captain—Sixth Michigan Volunteers.

Q.—Who commands this regiment ?

A.—Colonel T. S. Clark.

Q.—Where were you stationed on the 12th day of April, 1863 ?

A.—At South Manchac Pass, Louisiana.

Q.—Do you know Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Bacon?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was he with the Sixth Michigan on April 12th, 1863?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Describe as well as you can the position of your camp, with reference to the pass and surrounding country.

A.—There is an island opposite the camp of my regiment, called Jones' Island, separated from the point on which the camp is situated by the south pass, some quarter of a mile wide. This island extends some distance each way east and west of the camp. There are the remains of a railroad bridge across the pass, and the camp of the Sixth Michigan is on either side the railroad track, the camp being on the southerly side of the pass.

Q.—By what troops is this island occupied?

A.—The detachment of the Second Connecticut Volunteers.

Q.—Are they the only troops there?

A.—I think they are.

Q.—Is any portion of this island in possession of the enemy?

A.—I think not.

Q.—Was it on the 12th of April, 1863?

A.—I think not.

Q.—Do you know Lieutenant Trask, of the Sixth Michigan Volunteers?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you know of his having received permission on or about the 12th of April, 1863, to go beyond the lines of our forces at the pass?

A.—I know now that he did. I did not know it at the time.

Q.—Where do the lines of the United States forces extend, with reference to your camp?

A.—We have a picket on the main land, on the same side the pass with the camp, a mile west of the camp.

Q.—Do you know where the pickets are on the island?

A.—I do not.

Q.—How did you know of Lieutenant Trask having received the permission as specified?

A.—I got it from Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon.

Q.—When?

A.—On or about the day he was arrested.

Q.—What did Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon say about this?

A.—That he gave Lieutenant Trask permission to go to the point of the island.

Q.—How far is this point from your camp?

A.—About a mile.

Q.—When you say the point of the island, which point do you mean?

A.—The west point.

Q.—Is this point in possession of the enemy?

A.—No.

Q.—How do you know?

A.—The men go there fishing and hunting.

Q.—Have you heard of the presence of the enemy at this point since your regiment has been camped there?

A.—No.

Q.—Have you stated all that Colonel Bacon said to you in relation to giving the permission in question?

A.—I have.

*Cross-examined by accused:*

Q.—Where was the Ninth Connecticut fortification?

A.—I do not know exactly.

Q.—Was there a federal picket on the east end of the island?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Where is the launch stationed?

A.—I think on the lower end of the island. I never have been there.

Q.—What federal pickets were kept out?

A.—Those of the Sixth Michigan and Ninth Connecticut.

Q.—What of the Sixth Michigan?

A.—On the main land, as I have testified, and in the rear of the camp.

Q.—Was the main land picket withdrawn daily?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was there any camp guard ?

A.—No; except over the guns and some boats.

Q.—Do you know of any of those camp guards interfering with any one passing ?

A.—No.

Q.—Do you know of any enemy ever appearing on the south pass ?

A.—No.

Q.—What did you ever see of any enemy on the lake ?

A.—I have seen a schooner once or twice on the lake.

Q.—Did you see one of such schooners on the 12th of April ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Where did she come from ?

A.—Either from the Tickfaw or the Amite river.

Q.—Did she not come from the wreck of the *Barataria* ?

A.—I don't know.

Q.—Was she not coming from the direction where the *Barataria* burned ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you see the *Barataria* burn ?

A.—I saw the light.

Q.—Was this schooner in sight when Lieutenant Trask went on the 12th of April ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—How long had it been in sight ?

A.—Several hours.

Q.—How far is it across the lake to the northern shore from camp of Sixth Michigan ?

A.—Five or six miles.

Q.—Have you seen federal boats coming around the west end of the island ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was not this continual ?

A.—I think it was, in a measure.

Q.—How near did the schooner you have alluded to come to the point of the island ?

A.—Five or six miles.

Q.—Do you know of a federal picket at the west point of the island?

A.—No.

Q.—Is not the point of the island in plain sight of your camp?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is the water about the point of the island a common fishing ground for the men?

A.—I have seen the men there fishing.

Q.—Have any of the federal soldiers in this neighborhood been disturbed by the enemy?

A.—Not of the Sixth Michigan. I think not of the Ninth Connecticut.

*Direct resumed:*

Q.—When did you first know that Lieutenant Trask went across to the island on April 12, 1863?

A.—That night.

*Lieutenant William S. Trask, Sixth Michigan Volunteers, sworn for prosecution:*

Q.—What is your regiment?

A.—Sixth Michigan Volunteers.

Q.—Where stationed on April 12, 1863?

A.—At South Manchae Pass.

Q.—Who was in command?

A.—Colonel Clark, of the Sixth Michigan.

Q.—Did you, on or about April 12, 1863, receive permission to cross the lines of the United States forces at your post?

A.—I received permission on that day to go to the point of the island. The point of the island is, if anything, inside the picket line. I think it is on the line.

Q.—From whom did you receive this permission?

A.—From Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon.

Q.—Was Colonel Clark near at hand?

A.—I believe he was in camp at the time.

Q.—Is any portion of the island in possession of the enemy?

A.—No.

Q.—What forces are on the island?

A.—A detachment of the Ninth Connecticut. Some on the side nearest the camp, some on the opposite side.

Q.—For what purpose did you request this permission?

A.—To reconnoiter a schooner running down the north side of the lake, apparently approaching the mouth of the pass.

Q.—How near was she to the mouth of the pass?

A.—About two miles and a half.

Q.—Why did you not apply to Colonel Clark for this permission?

A.—Because I did not see him. I happened to meet Colonel Bacon, and asked him.

Q.—Was this permission written or verbal?

A.—Verbal.

Q.—How near to the camp of the Sixth Michigan Volunteers was the nearest point known to be in possession of the enemy, and where is it?

A.—None nearer than the mouth of the Tickfaw, twelve miles.

*Cross-examined by accused:*

Q.—Was not Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon usually in command of the detachment?

A.—He had been. I can't say how long it was before that that Colonel Clark come there?

Q.—Where had Colonel Clark's quarters usually been?

A.—Before burning of Barataria, on her; after that, on shore.

Q.—What did Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon say when he gave you the permission?

A.—I guess so.

Q.—Have you measured the distance from the camp to the visible point of the island?

A.—Yes; three hundred and nine rods.

Statement of accused read to court by Judge-Advocate:

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN—My defense is the existence of Lake Maurepas and the passes, leaving the court to judge of the evidence, and give it due weight.

Respectfully,  
EDWARD BACON,  
Lieutenant-Colonel Sixth Michigan Volunteers.

Court cleared.

Charges read, with specifications under them. The vote of each member of the court being taken on the charge and specification severally, and submitted to the court after deliberation on the testimony.

Court finds Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon of the specification not guilty. Of the charge, not guilty. And the court doth therefore fully acquit him, Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon, Sixth Michigan Volunteers, therefrom.

MEMORANDUM.

The members of this court desire to express their surprise in this manner that the evidence furnished for the prosecution of the charges against Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon, Sixth Michigan Volunteers, is so meagre in amount and inconclusive in character.

It is only because the charge preferred is proper in form, that the court does not characterize it as frivolous.

RICHARD FITZGIBBON,  
Lieutenant-Colonel Ninth Connecticut, President.

JAMES B. FOSTER,  
Major One Hundred and Twenty-eighth New York Vols.

HENRY STALL,  
Major Twenty-sixth Connecticut Volunteers.

E. T. CLARK,  
Major Twenty sixth Massachusetts Volunteers.

G. M. DICKERMANN,  
Captain Twenty-sixth Massachusetts Volunteers.

RICHARD BARETTE,  
Captain Forty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers.

ROBERT WILKINSON,  
Captain One Hundred and Twenty-eighth N. Y. Volunteers,

*Judge-Advocate.*

RICHARD FITZGIBBON,  
Lieutenant-Colonel Ninth Connecticut,  
*President.*



In witness whereof, and of all the proceedings in this case, the President and Judge-Advocate of this court have hereto set their names, this 19th day of May, 1863.

RICHARD FITZGIBBON,  
Lieutenant-Colonel Ninth Connecticut,  
*President.*

Captain ROBERT WILKINSON,  
One Hundred and Twenty-eighth N. Y. Vols.,  
*Judge-Advocate.*

HEAD-QUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE GULF, }  
NINETEENTH ARMY CORPS, }  
Before Port Hudson, La., June, 1863. }

In the case of Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon, Sixth Regiment Michigan Volunteers, the proceedings are disapproved, the court not being legally competent to try him. The charges were in this and in several other cases referred to the court for trial by an authority other than, and inferior to, the one ordering the court. This was improper.

It is due to Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon to state that the charges were not sustained.

He will be relieved from arrest, and returned to duty.

N. P. BANKS,  
Major-General Commanding.

“A.”

CHARGE—CONDUCT TO THE PREJUDICE OF GOOD ORDER AND MILITARY DISCIPLINE.

*Specification*—In this, that Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Bacon, Sixth Regiment Michigan Volunteers, when not in command of the post, and when his superior officer and commander of the post was near at hand, did grant permission to Lieutenant Trask, of Company H, Sixth Regiment Michigan Volunteers, to go beyond the lines into the enemy's country.

And the said Lieutenant Trask remained absent over forty-eight hours on said permission.

This at South Manchac Pass, State of Louisiana, on the 12th day of April, 1863.

T. S. CLARK,  
Colonel Sixth Regiment Michigan Volunteers,  
Commanding Post, Manchac Pass, La.

Witness:

Captain J. BAILEY,  
Fourth Wisconsin Volunteers.  
Lieutenant W. S. TRASK,  
Sixth Michigan Volunteers.  
Captain G. J. SPITZER,  
Sixth Michigan Volunteers.  
Lieutenant W. H. DICKEY,  
Sixth Michigan Volunteers.

"B."

HOSPITAL TWENTY-SIXTH MASSACHUSETTS, }  
May 14, 1863. }

This is to certify that Captain F. Hannable is unfit for duty, by reason of remittent fever.

G. W. BRAKS,  
Surgeon Twenty-sixth Massachusetts. †

[Official copy for Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Bacon, Sixth Michigan Heavy Artillery Volunteers. J. HOLT, Judge-Advocate-General.]

Although members of courts-martial are sworn to secrecy until the published order of the General convening the court announces his will approving or disapproving the decision, neither the evidence nor the demeanor of the court allowed me to doubt what the decision in my case had been.

In the evening the Judge-Advocate invited me to take supper with him and a member of the court, and as we sipped wine that came from Bordeaux before the war, our conversation was about certain charges and specifications *in capite*, against Colonel T. S. Clark, which I had ready to file, accusing him of cotton stealing and other offenses, giving time, place and witnesses, in a manner which showed truth and also facility of conviction. "Colonel," says the Judge-Advocate, "I hope you will not depend too much on law, evidence or justice. Fortunate cir-

circumstances have given you the benefit of them for once, but only think what we are. Volunteers, off here, generally in the power of regular army brigadiers, who look upon us as dogs. They can dismiss any of us for any crime they choose to name, without evidence or trial. There is no chance for an officer but by the favor of his master. For you to file charges against a favorite for cotton stealing, will, in this department, seal your fate beyond a peradventure. As the matter now stands, your trial may be considered as all that need be done to cover up the loss of the *Barataria* and the capture of some of your regiment. Clark wants to be a brigadier, and he may never meddle with you again, but if you file those charges for cotton stealing, there is hardly a General or a staff officer in the department who will feel safe while you are in the service."

"All that may be true, Captain," is my reply. "As you say, an officer's only chance here is the favor of his master. That favor is generally obtained by flattery and by secret services—by services vile, degrading and criminal. I shall find no favor here; I cannot hope for any. If I can be made a scapegoat once with impunity, I shall be used that way all the while, for there will be no lack of crimes to be put upon some innocent man, in order that the guilty may escape. My course is chosen. Before I can be arrested for something new, I will file these charges and specifications. Of course I do not expect Clark to be brought to trial—his guilt is his protection. Let staff officers, more guilty than he is, protect him; they will thereby show their complicity in the crimes of Clark. Let them even make a brigadier of him. They are likely to give me the means of exposing men who deserve the scorn and detestation of all mankind."

On the 15th day of May, 1863, I duly forwarded to General Sherman charges and specifications, of which the following is a statement:

## CHARGES AND SPECIFICATIONS

*Preferred against* THOMAS S. CLARK, *Colonel of the Sixth Regiment of Michigan Volunteer Infantry.*

## CHARGE I.—CONDUCT UNBECOMING AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN.

Under which followed specifications formally stating these offenses, viz:

That on or about the 4th day of February, 1863, at Camp Parapet, near Carrollton, in the State of Louisiana and Department of the Gulf, and in the presence of Captain Garrett J. Spitzer and Sergeant Lucius V. Lyon, of Company C, in said regiment, and of many other officers and men of said regiment, in their camp, he, the said Thomas S. Clark, was drunk, and being drunk, did then and there make an indecent exposure of his own person and of the person of a certain woman of color called Maria, and did then and there attempt \* \* \* and other things then and there did too enormous to be mentioned.

That on the 6th of April, 1863, at Pass Manchac, Louisiana, on the gunboat Barataria, where he had his head-quarters, and being in command of troops of the United States, he, the said Thomas S. Clark, was drunk and unfit for duty.

That on or about the 10th day of July, 1862, at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, he did employ and use, and aid and assist in employing and using, Captain Eli A. Griffin, of Company A, in said regiment, and about forty men of that company, and Lieutenant Alonzo Shumway, of Company F, in said regiment, and about twenty men of said company, for purposes of private gain and speculation in obtaining cotton and otherwise, whereby the health and lives of officers and men were endangered, and he, said Clark, made great gain and profit.

That on or about the 12th day of July, 1862, at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, he did use and employ, and assist in using and employing, Captain Harrison J. Soule, of Company I, in said regiment, and thirty men of said company, in the business of

getting cotton for greedy speculators, to the great injury of the troops and the enriching of himself.

That on or about the 5th day of February, 1863, at or near the residence of Judge Rost, in New Orleans, Louisiana, he did wrongfully take and carry away, and assist in taking and carrying away, certain articles and things of great value, to wit: of the value of one thousand dollars, being private property of some person or persons unknown, which he had no right to take and carry away, and being in part named and enumerated as follows: Twenty bottles of wine, eighteen bottles of brandy, one silver tray, one pair of silver snufflers, ten knives, ten forks and ten spoons, of silver, one lounge, two mirrors, one table, one stand, one bed and bedding, one liquor case, with bottles to fit, of great value.

That on or about the 15th day of August, 1862, at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, he did wrongfully take and carry away, and aid and assist in taking and carrying away, certain saddles, bridles and other things, being private property of some person or persons unknown, and partly described as one expensive saddle, twenty other saddles, one expensive harness, six other harnesses, fifty whips, four bridles and five pairs of spurs.

That on or about the 3d day of May, 1862, at the United States Mint, in New Orleans, Louisiana, he did wrongfully take and carry away property of the United States, partly described as follows: Twenty dies for coining money; also, pieces of machinery and apparatus used in making coin.

That on or about July 10, 1862, at New Orleans, Louisiana, and on divers days and times between that day and the 20th day of August, 1862, at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, he did take and receive, and aid and assist in taking and receiving, large quantities of cotton, to wit, ten hundred bales of cotton, and great amounts of money, to wit, ten thousand dollars, all paid and delivered to him in unlawful cotton speculations and other illegal business, wherein he employed himself and troops of the United States intrusted to him.

That on or about December 10th, 1861, at Baltimore, Mary-

land, where said regiment then was, he entered into a corrupt agreement with one Samuel J. Loenstein, a Jew, to have said Loenstein act as sutler of said regiment, and to have the Jew pay to him, said Clark, for his own use, fifteen per cent on all collections, and furnish said Clark with confectionery, preserves and liquors. And that afterward, in September, 1862, near New Orleans, Louisiana, said Clark openly used his authority as Colonel of said regiment to compel said Jew to fulfill said agreement, and did obtain and convert to his own use moneys and supplies received from said Jew, acting as sutler of said regiment.

That on or about the first day of September, 1861, at Kalamazoo, Michigan, at the organization of said regiment, he did wrongfully aid, counsel and assist, in a certain iniquitous arrangement with one \* \* \* a contractor, legally bound to furnish certain supplies for said regiment, by which arrangement provisions and rations for said regiment, and the obligation to furnish them, were disposed of for about six hundred dollars, then and there paid by said contractor. And in the unlawful reception of the money said Clark did then and there participate, with intent to make unlawful gain and profit.

CHARGE II.—CONDUCT PREJUDICIAL TO GOOD ORDER AND MILITARY DISCIPLINE.

Under which came specifications stating the following offenses :

That on or about July 15, 1863, at the United States barracks in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, said Clark, being in command of the post, did exhibit two thousand dollars in money to Captain Garrett J. Spitzer, of Company C, in said regiment, and boasting of his own shame, said, "God, I made that snaring cotton," meaning that he had obtained said money by unlawful and shameful service imposed upon troops of the United States, and by other foul means.

That on or about September 18, 1862, at Camp Williams, near New Orleans, Louisiana, he, said Clark, being in front of said

regiment drawn up in line, did, in their presence and hearing, say in a loud voice, "Old Williams (meaning his late brigade commander, killed in battle at Baton Rouge) was an old fool. I am glad he is dead," and many profane, indecent and obscene words, of and concerning the said deceased General, then and there spoke and uttered.

That on or about September 9, 1862, at Camp Williams, near New Orleans, Louisiana, he caused the names of Charles Heine, First Lieutenant of Company E, in said regiment, and John D. Kline, a corporal of Company C, in said regiment, to be wrongfully dropped from the rolls of said regiment, while he knew that said Kline and Heine were prisoners of war in the hands of the enemy, and did wrongfully give their offices to others.

That on or about September 10, 1862, at Camp Williams, near New Orleans, Louisiana, said Colonel T. S. Clark did write and send to the aforesaid Jew, Samuel J. Loenstein, the following letter, now ready to be produced, and being a call for money, whisky and shoulder-straps, to be given as bribes :

CAMP WILLIAMS, LOUISIANA, }  
September 10, 1862. }

FRIEND LOENSTEIN :

Sir—I expect that the regiment will be paid to-morrow or next day. I then intend to give you a chance to sell beer for a few days, and perhaps all the time. I have removed all other venders beyond my lines. I shall expect you to do as you agreed with me last December (you undoubtedly remember what that was), or else I shall let some one else take your place. I wish you would see if the shoulder-straps came on the Roanoke.

Yours,

COLONEL SIXTH MICH. VOLS.

That on or about the 27th day of May, 1862, at Grand Gulf, Mississippi, he led a large party in plundering the store of one Buckingham, and in wrongfully taking and carrying away therefrom a large stock of goods, of about ten thousand dollars value, and received himself a share of the plunder.

In conclusion, specifications for the recent stealing at Pontchitoula.

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CHARGE III.—NEGLECT OF DUTY, TO THE PREJUDICE OF GOOD ORDER AND MILITARY DISCIPLINE.

Under which came specifications stating the following offenses, in due form :

That on or about October 1, 1862, at New Orleans, Louisiana, he had in his control about five thousand dollars, to which the United States were justly entitled, yet he neglected to pay over said money to the proper officers, and converted the same to his own use.

That on or about July 20, 1862, at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, he had in his control about sixty-six bales of cotton, to which the United States were entitled, yet he neglected to deliver the same to the proper officers, and converted the same to his own use.

That on or about the 4th day of July, 1862, at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, he used and employed, and aided and assisted in using and employing, wagons, mules, contrabands, quartermasters and commissaries, of the United States, in getting cotton, and disposing thereof for money, for his private use and speculation.

That on or about May 1, 1863, at or near the mouth of the Amite river, Louisiana, he became intoxicated while in command of a party of about two hundred men, with their officers, in the service of the United States, a naval force co-operating with him, and being intoxicated, said Clark gave orders that the boiler lying at the wreck of the United States gunboat *Barataria* should be burst with a quantity of musket cartridges, and then did abandon said troops in the presence of the enemy, and went to New Orleans.

CHARGE IV.—MISBEHAVIOR BEFORE THE ENEMY.

In this, that heretofore, to wit, on or about the 7th day of April, 1863, at the mouth of the Amite river, in Lake Maurepas, Louisiana, in the Department of the Gulf, he, the said Colonel Thomas S. Clark, of the Sixth Regiment of Volunteer Infantry, being on board the United States iron-clad gunboat *Barataria*,



where he had his head-quarters, with eight privates, two corporals, and two commissioned officers of said regiment under his command, and with the naval force on said gunboat, commanded by a naval officer thereat, and he, said Clark, having also under his command near by, to wit, at Pass Manchac and thereabouts, troops of the United States, being about five hundred men, with their officers, and the said gunboat being aground, and there being some danger, six guerrillas firing with small arms, he, the said Thomas S. Clark, Colonel, as aforesaid, did, through cowardice, offer and attempt to take the only large boat there, to wit, a certain cutter, man the same, and himself go across Lake Maurepas after reinforcements, and not being permitted by the said naval officer to take said cutter and get away himself, did, without sending by a small boat for reinforcements, as he well might have done, hide himself in the lower part of said vessel, under heavy iron work, where there was much heat, where he remained hidden a long time, and then did forsake said gunboat, and did aid, counsel and assist, in the destruction of said gunboat, by means of fire, whisky and otherwise, through undue fear and without necessity, said iron-clad gunboat then and there being of great value and importance, and being well provided with Enfield rifles, bronze cannon, and all supplies needful for defense.

(Signed) EDWARD BACON,  
Lieutenant-Colonel Sixth Michigan Volunteers.

Although I knew that the court-martial had acquitted me, and censured my prosecutor, yet, according to unjust military usage, I would remain under arrest until the court would dispose of all the cases brought before them, and General Banks would publish in general orders his will as to their findings, so that for weeks, and even months, I would be exposed to all the torments which any commander may inflict upon an officer in arrest.

General Banks was, with his army, campaigning away in the Teche country, toward the Red river. For some days after my

charges had duly reached General Sherman, and their truth became known to him, I was interested as to what would happen next. Summary dismissal, on an accusation of some infamous crime, without regard to truth or proof, and without any chance of trial; or the wrath of head-quarters might, without mentioning any cause, send me to the Old Parish Prison, in the city, or to Fort Jackson.

I amused myself in reading some of Eugene Sue's famous descriptions of prison life, and hoped that the "honorable société," where I might soon have a place, would have a "Conteur" equal to Pique Vinaigre, author of the story, "Coupe en Deux et Gringalet."

But strange to say, staff officers direct from head-quarters, and Colonel Clark himself, seemed to be remarkably sweet-tempered toward me. The Colonel, disgusted with Pass Manchac, established himself in a fine plantation house at Kennerville, on the river side, sixteen miles above New Orleans, near the tents of our regimental encampment, which we left when we first started for Pontchitoula. Here many of the regiment, whose health had failed, were now remaining, and here I had my tent, and strolled up and down the river and about the great Kenner estate, during several sultry days. One event happened worthy of notice.

On Sunday, about noon, a courier brought a dispatch to Colonel Clark from Captain Bailey, commandant of the new mud fort stuck full of sharp sticks, at Pass Manchac. Clark immediately forwarded dispatches to General Sherman, in the city. We soon found out what was the trouble at Manchac. Captain Bailey's dispatch said that a fleet of seven rebel schooners had come out of the Amite river boldly upon the lake, and were bearing down at full sail right toward his fort; and as they probably had rifled cannon, which would carry farther than his thirty-two-pounders, they might shell him out unless he was reinforced immediately.

The idea of a confederate navy on Lake Maurepas was appreciated by every soldier, as was also the suddenness with which

the bridge and fort builders at Manchac had discovered the insecurity of their works.

But instead of hearing the distant roar of cannon, we heard before long that another courier had arrived from Captain Bailey with a dispatch, stating that all was over and no harm done, the rebel fleet having turned out to be seven schooners which a detachment from the Fourteenth Maine, at Bonne Carre, on the Mississippi, had captured up the Amite river, and having manned them, were sending them around to the federal post of Lakeport, on Lake Pontchartrain; that he would have blown them out of the water if they had not shown the white flag just when they did. The commander of the party that captured the schooners was never noticed or honored. He was not in favor, and was guilty of scaring Bailey, whose subserviency always kept him in favor. On the other hand, Clark's cotton and turpentine expedition to Pontchitoula was to be mentioned honorably in General Halleck's annual report, as commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States.

When it became evident that the truth of my charges against Clark made it unwise for the authorities to let loose their wrath upon me at once, and that they had decided to wait a while for a pretext, I knew that nothing I could do would increase my danger. I forwarded a copy of my charges and specifications to the Governor of Michigan, and began to devote much of my time to books; but my review of Virgil and Caesar's *de Bello Civile* was interrupted by important events.

## CHAPTER V.

Port Hudson—News of the First Assault—Determination to see the Great Show—Difficulties in the Way Overcome—The Curtain Raised—The Besieged and the Besiegers.

GENERAL BANKS, by the grand detour through the Teche country and the Red river, approached Port Hudson, where the confederate commander, General Gardiner, had received and announced orders to evacuate the place. The evacuation of Port Hudson had not only begun, but was likely to be complete before the federal army would be near enough to claim any glory. Federal generals, over-anxious about their reports, and sure of finding Port Hudson abandoned, pressed forward to capture spiked cannon, nearer than General Gardiner thought honor permitted; and although he had left the place himself, he returned and got back all of his force that he could collect, and had gathered considerable supplies when the advance of Banks' army exchanged shots with the rebel cavalry below Bayou Sara.

Port Hudson was not evacuated. On the contrary, it was said now to be provisioned, armed and manned for a siege. Orders came to General Augur, at Baton Rouge, and General Sherman, at New Orleans, to come with every man they could bring. The Sixth Michigan was gathered together at Kennerville, and hurried on board a great ocean steamer, to go to Port Hudson, where General Augur had one battle three or four miles from the fortifications, and although he claimed a victory, his killed and wounded were numerous, and he had come to a halt waiting for reinforcements.

I went on board the steamer with the regiment, and was in my state-room, when late in the evening Clark arrived from New Orleans, almost as drunk as he was on the memorable 4th day of February, 1863. He first ordered the long roll to be beat, and put the men to the useless trouble of disembarking

and forming line of battle on the shore; then ordered them back on board the steamer again. Soon afterward, his right hand man, Lieutenant Dickey, of Company E, came to me with an order, which he pretended was from General Sherman, that I must not accompany the regiment, because I was not released from arrest, and that I was to remain at Kennerville.

On the morning of May 28th, 1863, I rode past the grove in front of the Kenner mansion, and among the scattered houses of the little village near it on the road to New Orleans. The steamers which had been hastening up and down the river, and the strange rumors that had come from Port Hudson, as well as anxiety to hear from my last application for leave to join my regiment, had caused me to set out for the city to hear the news.

As I came along the river road, behind the levee, approaching the Carrollton parapet, I saw in the distance the flag at half-mast, and on inquiring at the picket as to what had happened, a sergeant answered, "I suppose it is on account of so many of our men being killed at Port Hudson." "Has there been a battle there?" "Yes, day before yesterday our army charged on the fort, and about two thousand were killed. I have heard that General Daw was wounded, and that Colonel Cowles, of the One Hundred and Twenty-eighth New York, Colonel Clark, of the Sixth Michigan, and General Sherman, were killed." I was soon at our regimental hospital in Carrollton. The wounded had been carried to general hospitals in the city, but I found eastern officers and men, who, as guards on steamers, had just returned from the siege. "Is Colonel Clark really killed?" was my first question. "Not exactly killed," was the answer. "Some of our boys passed him when he was lying insensible on the field. He was knocked down by the wind of a cannon ball in the beginning of the fight." "What kind of a place was he lying in when your men saw him?" "They said he was inside of a ravine; but it is said that he was very brave before he was wounded, and now he is in command of the brigade." "Then he is not wounded severely?" "No; the

wind of the ball only knocked him senseless, and as soon as he came to himself he was all right."

I heard many accounts of the general assault on Port Hudson, May 27, 1863. General T. W. Sherman was not killed, but the bones of one of his legs had been shattered by a rifle shot, and unless the excellent care which he was receiving at the Hotel Dieu should save him, mortification and death would soon end his career. No skill could save his leg.

I forwarded to Wickham Hoffman, who was chief of staff for General Dwight, successor of General Sherman, a formal application for leave to join my regiment, but days passed by and no answer came. I heard continual news from the siege, and longed to see for myself. On successive days I risked a new arrest by going to General Emory's head-quarters, and applying there for leave to go to Port Hudson. Pressure of business for several days prevented attention to my application, but at last I found the President of the court-martial by which I had been tried, and after he had had an interview with General Emory in my behalf, I obtained the following order :

## EXTRACT.

Special Orders, }	HEAD-QUARTERS DEFENSES OF NEW ORLEANS, }
No. 19. }	NEW ORLEANS, June 10, 1863. }

3. Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon, Sixth Regiment Michigan Volunteers, being under arrest in this city, and learning from the President of the court-martial before whom he was tried that the charges were not of a serious nature, and as Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon is anxious to join his regiment, and do duty in the field before Port Hudson, he is hereby ordered to report in person at the head-quarters of the Department of the Gulf for such orders as the General commanding may give.

By command of W. H. Emory, B. G. C.

W. D. SMITH, Lieut.-Col., A. A. A. G.

At about midnight of the day on which I received this order, I succeeded in getting on board a steamer which, on the way to

Port Hudson, touched at Kennerville to put off some commissary stores. As I lay down to rest in a scantily furnished state-room, I noticed that the vessel shook in every part with the hard labor of the engine driving forward at full speed with a load of provisions and ammunition probably much needed in the siege.

The sun shines down bright and hot on the morning of June 11th, 1863. Our steamer is gliding forward beyond Baton Rouge. I am on deck, and hardly feel the heat or notice the levees, plantations and luxuriant forests, or think that from either of the shores which we often approach may come the guerrilla bullets which will prevent me from seeing the famous Port Hudson. At last my eyes are gratified with the sight of the first black hulks of Farragut's fleet. There they lie at anchor. There are the same leaning smoke-stacks and black short-topped masts which I have seen going up the river on their way from distant stations to participate in the siege that I now feel sure of seeing. That piece of woods which divides the smooth yellow waters of the river is Prophet's Island. The channel on the east side of the island is very narrow, but the river being high we easily make our way up this passage, and soon have before us the regular tents and piles of stores at Springfield Landing, the base of supplies for all Banks' army. A steamer which, while aground, has been left half rolled over on its side by the receding waters, is used as a wharf boat. Gangs of slaves, newly captured from the plantations, are at work loading wagons with provisions and heavy ammunition for artillery. I look up the river and can see the water stretch out beyond the upper end of the island, and farther on are high banks and bluffs where the stream makes a great elbow. On the farthest of these bluffs are a few rough buildings like warehouses, and over one of these, from a high pole, floats the confederate flag of Port Hudson. Our war vessels are at a most respectful distance from those bluffs, on which, by assistance of a glass, can be seen the earth-work batteries where are mounted the cannon that destroyed the sloop-of-war Mississippi. Such

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skill has been used to protect and conceal the guns, that even with a glass there is hardly a cannon that can be seen. There is no firing going on between the rebel batteries and the fleet. The lead-colored Monongahela, most forward of the federal vessels, lies without a show of sail or steam, still as if keeping a Jewish Sabbath in the hot sun, about two and a half miles from the nearest rebel battery, which is on the point of a high fortified bluff, where the same sabbatical quiet seems to prevail; but when I have gone ashore I can hear occasionally the distant boom of a heavy gun from federal batteries, enough to give me a correct report of the siege. No parleying and no fighting is going on. These occasional cannon shots sound as if they were more for appearances than for effect. I meet our Quartermaster, and ask him, "How soon do you expect to get up another charge?" "In three or four days." "Then I am in time after all!"

I hear from Colonel T. S. Clark. He is in command of a brigade, and likely to be a division commander. Since his desperate adventure with the cannon ball on the 27th of May, his valor is, by the Generals, deemed established, and he has been more of a favorite than ever.

It is about eight miles to General Banks' head-quarters, where it is for my interest to arrive as soon as I can, in order to see him before my enemies can. Perhaps, by good luck and audacity, I will be put in command of my regiment, in spite of all that has been done against me, and of what I have done in return. I find an opportunity to ride in a wagon, and for a long time I am jolting slowly along dusty roads around in rear of the army. There is continual coming and going for all the supplies along these crooked roads to the landing; and there is nothing to hinder a dash of rebel cavalry from sweeping away teams and men any moment. I inquire what guards the communication of the besieging army with Springfield Landing, and am informed that Grierson's cavalry are the only protection of the rear of Banks' army, and that in reality they are not numerous enough to guard much of the long stretch where



attacks may be expected, but that Grierson's raid has made his name such a terror to the rebels that he guards where he is not almost as well as where he is. I feel more desire than ever to see and understand the operations here. I am almost sorry that I ever spoke a word about cotton stealing or the Barataria. It is certain that if I do get command of my regiment I have now enemies in high favor who will not let me keep command long. They will try their best either to have me killed, or rearrested for something as bad as they can think of; but life was monotonous at Kennerville, and I will surely see the siege of Port Hudson. The country is level, and was originally covered with a dense forest of high trees, which now only here and there have been cleared away to make room for plantations, and for the numerous wagon roads, along which the clay dust rises at every step.

We come where tents and bough houses are seen scattered in confusion under the trees. Stacks of arms, barrels of water, washed clothes hung up to dry, fires for cooking, negroes of every sex, age and costume, mules and dogs, refugees, plantation wagons, and piles of boxes of ammunition for everything from a cavalry revolver to a nine-inch Dalghren, are on all sides. These men are the besiegers of Port Hudson. A glance shows that they are already demoralized and at their wits' end, and that there is nothing but Grierson's name to prevent a small force of rebel cavalry, led by a bold man, from raising a panic here that would equal that of Bull Run. We pass along from one piece of woods, alive with besiegers, to another, then pass an interval where there appears to be quite a gap in the besieging army. Here is a house, said to be occupied by an old woman and her old maid daughters. They show themselves as we pass. They are representatives of the poor white trash, as represented by Northern novelists. The three men on guard at the house are not needed to protect such looking females, and such a house, even from the besiegers.

I recognize men of my regiment at a small log house, between two camps. I ask one of them, "What are you doing here?"

“This is Lieutenant Dickey’s place; he is an ordnance officer now. He keeps ammunition here, and we are detailed to help him.” “Well, you have a pretty safe business, haven’t you?” “We have that; but we had rather be with the regiment. There is no use in our being kept here to watch a few boxes of ammunition at such a time as this.”

I leave with a non-commissioned officer here my carpet-bag, and having inquired the way to Banks’ head-quarters, set out on foot to go there. After a while I come out of the woods, filled with besiegers, upon a great plantation, now all open and without fences, where about half a mile to the left, beyond level fields, is in plain sight the long, low earth-work of Port Hudson. There are the rebel sentinels; their musket barrels, sticking up above the earth-work, gleam in the sun as they turn. There is our naval battery of nine-inch Dalghrens, whose voices I have occasionally heard to-day, but now they seem to have done enough, and are quiet, participating in the languor which everybody seems to feel. The earth has been dug up and piled so as to protect the guns, which are kept as low as possible. Pieces of canvas have been stretched up like awnings, and I can see that the men who show themselves are sailors from the fleet. Inside of the enemy’s works there is nothing to be seen except a green forest. I let my eye follow that line of fortification. It seems very low, and soon disappears from my sight which ever way I follow it, trees and bushes hiding it, except for about a quarter of a mile in front of me. It seems to be laid out on a great curve, running from the river to the river again, so as to inclose four or five hundred acres. Is it possible that such a little string of earth-work can be so hard to pass?

I am standing near the edge of a great plantation, and can look over nearly a mile of open ground back toward the outside country. There, on the border of the distant woods, are plantation buildings, about two miles from the rebel works. At those buildings are General Banks’ head-quarters. A battery of light artillery is camped near where I stand. There is scarcely an appearance of any more federal forces as far as I can see.

What protects General Banks' head-quarters? The distance which the besiegers pretend to cover with their camps is about seven miles, and how can they afford to make such a bend to the rear to give their commander a country seat? and he must have a much greater respect for the rebel artillery in the fort than for the forces which the enemy may send to relieve the place. The besieging army is, on paper, about twenty thousand strong, but of men who will do any more earnest charging to take Port Hudson, there are not five thousand. The front, toward the enemy's works, is divided out to the regular army officers here, acting as Major-Generals. Dwight, Sherman's successor, has the left; Augur next; then Grover; then Weitzel. Those woods, distant from me about half a mile across the open plantation, are occupied by the troops of General Grover. These regular army gentlemen have certainly the control of everything in this army. They have sent General Banks two miles to the rear, to get rid of a volunteer and civilian superior, and true to their principles of jealousy and selfishness, every one will do all he can to make himself notorious, and to degrade his rivals.

On my way approaching Banks' head-quarters, I see that wagon trains are encamped along the skirts of woods beyond the fields, and among the out-houses and groves near the plantation house are several batteries of light artillery, without much show of even men enough to guard them respectably in time of peace. This plainly built white house, with its beautiful grove of stately oaks, is not occupied by General Banks. His telegraph operator has brought his wires into one window, and uses one room; the planter's family continue to use the rest of the house. Behind the house the sod under the oak trees is level and clean as a carpet, and there is a gentle slope of the surface. Here, with mathematical regularity, the fine wall tents of General Banks and his staff are elegantly pitched in the form of a parallelogram, the Major-General's tent being at the end nearest to the house. At a short distance from these tents, under other trees, are encamped the head-quarters' guard, the

best disciplined men from the favorite Massachusetts regiments. Sentinels are on post at regular intervals, doing duty in imitation of a King's body-guard. In passing through the federal camps, I have hardly seen a sentinel on duty, till I find this soldier walking his beat, precise in every motion, before the General's empty tent. I look over the open fields and woods, and the wide, level roads, extending farther into the enemy's country, and wonder what good this finely-clothed body-guard will do if the enemy should happen to choose these head-quarters for a point of attack; but when I hear an officer speak of Grierson's camp near by, I perceive what enables General Banks to rest in security in this rural retreat. My first business is to present my order at the tent of Lieutenant-Colonel Richard Irwin, a little red-headed regular army officer, who is Banks' Adjutant-General, and has been sent here by the West Point authorities in Washington to act as a *quasi* keeper for the civilian Major-General. I have often heard of this Lieutenant-Colonel Irwin. He is represented to have been a favorite, long employed in the War Department, where, in addition to his contempt for volunteers, he got great ideas of his own importance.

This spare-faced little individual is now right before me. He receives and reads my paper from General Emory with politeness, and, to my surprise, in a gentlemanly manner tells me to wait until General Banks returns; that this matter is one for his personal attention; that General Banks will return from the front in about two hours.

I leave his tent and walk away, looking for the best place to pass the time. I find twenty or thirty men in the dirty, dingy cotton clothing and slouched hats of rebel soldiers, lounging together on the ground, under the care of the guard. These are rebel deserters and prisoners. No opposition being made, I enter into conversation with the rebels. They agree in all essentials of their description of the fortifications of Port Hudson. There is but one line of works, except at a few points, where the nature of the ground has made outworks necessary. There are no inside batteries which command the

exterior works, except that some of the guns in the water batteries can be turned so as to command other fortifications near the river. Nearly all of the line of earth-work is intended to be of the zigzag kind. The ditch, where there is any, is about four feet in both depth and breadth, and the parapet is hardly high enough to hide a man immediately behind it. The chief strength of the place is what nature gave it—a labyrinth of ravines and a dense forest standing inside the fortifications, obstructing the view of the besiegers and stopping their shot, while outside of the earth-works the same forest has been felled, so as to make most of the way a mass of tangled tops where an enemy would have to approach, but should assailants make their way through this fallen timber, they would for about one hundred yards before reaching the ditch have to pass over ground cleared of every obstruction, swept by the concentrated fire of artillery and infantry. My inquiries about the supplies which the enemy have are answered in a manner which satisfies me that provisions, medical stores and ammunition, are scarce in Port Hudson, and that time will soon give us the place, if the demoralization of the besieging army does not sooner compel us to raise the siege, and if no attempt is made to relieve the besieged.

General Banks arrives, followed by staff officers and orderlies. The guard turns out, obsequious slaves hold the stirrups, and, when the well-uniformed riders have dismounted, lead away the horses. I see that some fine looking quadroon and mulatto girls are busy in cooking, at the house, the various dishes of food which genteel negro waiters are carrying to a table which they have covered with a fine linen table-cloth. While I wait a few moments for the General to get rested, I notice the accomplished Brigadier-General C. P. Stone, earnestly questioning an intelligent rebel deserter, and pointing to places on a map of Port Hudson, which he holds spread out on the ground. Two well-dressed, middle-aged slaves, who look as if they had always held positions of trust in great families, carry past me, on silver trays, decanters of liquors and finely-cut glasses. I

enter General Banks' tent, tell him who I am, present my order from General Emory, and make known to him that I have been tried and probably acquitted on the charge preferred against me, and that the report of my trial is on file at his head-quarters in the city, and that all I wish is to be returned to duty with my regiment. The General seems very much exhausted, and to have troubles enough of his own, but he tells me civilly that to-morrow he will telegraph to the city, find out what was the result of my trial, and that if I am acquitted he will return me to my command. As I go away I hear the clink of glasses and the sound of merry laughter, but I see that the General sits on the edge of his camp bedstead, and buries his face in his hands. Poor Major-General Banks, your regular army staff officers and division commanders are making your place worse than mine. There is little chance for you to command them. No, they will command you; they will ruin you here if they can. That you are a great man in the nation, and a volunteer Major-General, renders your fate certain.

I go back to the camps by the way I came, but take time to inquire and to make observations. Part of my road is not only within plain sight, but is within the range of cannon shot from the enemy's works. Many teams are passing and repassing, but not a shot is fired. I stop to talk a few moments with Captain Holcomb, of the Second Vermont Battery, and while others are expressing their opinions as to what has enabled the confederates to hold out so well, he says, "Well, gentlemen, my opinion is that we would have succeeded better if it had not been for a d—d rebellious spirit inside that fort."

Most of the way no sight of the rebel works can be had, on account of the intervening woods. My own regiment is where the extreme left of the federal army rests on the river. The head-quarters of the Twenty-first Indiana Infantry, now heavy artillery, is half way there. This regiment and the Fourth Wisconsin came with the Sixth Michigan on the steamer Constitution to Ship Island, in March, 1862, and these three western regiments have ever since that time been the only western

troops in the Gulf Department until the recent arrival of Grierson's cavalry, and have been continually persecuted by the New England officials, who have had everything their own way here. Common persecutions have united the Sixth Michigan, Twenty-first Indiana and Fourth Wisconsin, like a ship's crew in a foreign port, and have given a great contempt for the New England troops, who are all called "Nutmegs" by our men. Colonel Keith, of the Twenty-first, offers me good meals, a good place to sleep, a horse to ride, and a chance to visit the Indiana batteries, which are in front of every division, and advises me to make the most I can of my opportunity to see this grand performance of the regular army generals and New England troops, for there is no telling how brief that opportunity will be. I conclude to give General Banks one whole day to hear from New Orleans, and to begin my explorations to-night.

Soon after sundown I set out with Captain Roy, of the Twenty-first, to visit one of their principal batteries on the left. We pass several strong semi-circular redoubts, or lunettes, with deep ditch and high parapet. The revetments are of rails and posts. These lunettes, about a quarter of a mile apart, and nearly a mile from the present earth-works of Port Hudson, extend on a great curve around the place wherever an army can approach, and are a part of some plan of defense which would require thirty thousand men, and has been long since abandoned for the present continuous line, which yet remains too long to be well defended by the garrison.

The short twilight is gone, leaving us in darkness to find our way, by the short turns of a new road, through a mile of dense forest, filled with tangled undergrowth. This road or path is the only practicable communication of the federal center with their left.

What folly it is in the confederate cavalry to let Grierson, with his handful of Illinoisans, keep them from making these besiegers try their communications. What folly it is in the besieged to make no sortie on any isolated part of the federal army, for fear that the same Illinois cavalry will be everywhere

present, and ready to charge on whoever is caught outside the parapet.

We come where half a mile of the road is again through the open fields, and passes within rifle range of the rebels. Here some casualties have happened, and we get over the ground as fast as we can. We leave our horses in a safe place, and go forward to the battery of four heavy Parrott guns which we have come to see. The negroes have done well here. The short cornered embankment, raised to protect the guns, is very thick and high, and the embrasures are well made. Here one gun burst to-day, but nobody was hurt. I am told that the breach of the piece only backed a little and rolled off the carriage, while two or three large fragments flew up about twenty feet in the air and fell, giving everybody a chance to get out of the way. These Indianians talk as if the danger from a bursting cannon is very small. They say, however, that it is dangerous to wear any white clothing, even inside the battery, during the day, for it is liable to be seen through the embrasures by the rebel sharpshooters, who stand ready to send half a dozen rifle bullets into an embrasure. That two or three days ago, while one of their comrades was eating supper at the board table, under the awning behind the guns, a rebel Minie ball came through an embrasure and killed him instantly.

Captain Roy is getting ready to fire a thirty-pounder Parrott. "Take a percussion shell this time," he says, and without orders or noise, but in a very quiet and business-like manner, the gun is loaded and run into battery. All is still inside the rebel works in front. Not a flicker of a camp fire can be seen, but now and then appears for a moment a light like that of a lantern. It is said that about this time supplies and reliefs are being distributed inside the fort, and a few shots are to be fired for their benefit. At the word "Fire," spoken in a conversational manner, a stream of fire shoots from the muzzle of the loaded Parrott, the ground gives a quiver, a cloud of powder-smoke and a stunning sound fills the air. I step to one side, and listen to the screeching of the shell, at first very loud and



accompanied by a rushing noise, then rapidly growing fainter, until it dies away apparently among the woods of Port Hudson.

We wait until, at considerable intervals, several shots are fired. Some of the shells explode just within the enemy's works with a peculiar report, which tells how the pieces must fly, but not a shot from rifle or cannon is fired by the rebels in reply, and Port Hudson seems to be silent and unoccupied. Yet there is no disposition shown to go and see whether anybody is there.

JUNE 12, 1863.—The sun rises like a great fire, near enough to wilt the strength of even the Africans at work bringing hundreds of coffee sacks and oat sacks, stuffed with cotton, and piling them at a place not far from the head-quarters house of the Indianians. Negroes are getting horses ready. I am sitting under a rough piazza, on the shady side of the old building. At intervals I hear the boom of cannon, some near and some far off. The discharges are less frequent than they have been during the night. I have heard that the principal object of the random night firing was to keep the rebels from sleeping well. Our chief of artillery must be afraid that the rebels will try to sleep in the morning. There sits beside me an officer who used to attend with me General Williams' guard mountings on the deck of the *Constitution*, when we first came under the Southern heats, on our way around Cape Sable and the Florida Keys, and who has shared with me the rice and pork stews provided for us when, on board the sail ship *Great Republic*, we lay at anchor off the Southwest Pass during the bombardment of Fort Jackson. He says to me, "There is to be another charge on Port Hudson in a day or two. This charge is to be on a new plan—the cotton bag plan. I do not think that the long poles and short boards used on the 27th of May will be tried again." "Is it admitted," I ask, "that the poles and boards were a failure?" "Oh, no; there is no such word as fail in reports from this siege. The poor contrabands, five or six at each pole, were put ahead of the storming column that was to go over the Slaughter field. There was a sufficient

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number of the negroes to carry about two wagon loads of those infernal poles—green, hard wood poles, crooked and misshapen, four or six inches thick, and twenty-five feet long. Behind the negroes went the forlorn hope—men from your regiment. They were ordered to carry a lot of little boards, about five feet long. The charge began at double-quick. The first difficulty was that there were about three strong fences and the ruins of Slaughter's house to pass. Negroes, poles, boards and soldiers, got through, but when they made their appearance on the open field they were somewhat mixed up. The rebels opened a tremendous fire of artillery and infantry, and the Slaughter field became a field of slaughter. It was expected that the negroes would carry the poles to that great ditch which is supposed by some to surround Port Hudson. There, right under a raking fire, the poles were to be laid, about four feet apart, across the ditch; then the little boards were to go on, and the stormers were to go over on bridges. Neither poles nor storming column got more than half way across the field. The only real charge made was upon the fences. But few would have got off the field alive if it had not been for some of your regiment, who skulked forward as sharp-shooters, got into all sorts of hiding places, and by their well-aimed fire drove the rebels from their guns and kept them down."

"What is now the cotton bag plan?" "Well, some great regular army man has immortalized himself by getting up that plan. It is a wonder that forts have not been easily stormed and taken that way before. The soldiers are to carry cotton bags, about the size of pillows, to keep the bullets off. Our generals evidently believe in cotton."

After a ride toward the front, our road leading through woods where hut and tent encampments are curiously scattered, we have hitched our horses and walked forward to the Indiana battery in the point of woods on the south side of the Slaughter field. Here I recognize some of the iron twenty-four-pounders and eight-inch howitzers which we used to see on the parapet at Carrollton. This battery is about nine hundred yards from

the rebel works, of which I have a fair view. There stretches through the open, desolate cotton fields, the long, low earth-work, in most places hardly high enough to hide a man, but in places piled up in irregular mounds, said to be constantly repaired and strengthened by night work, to protect cannon that will not speak until another charge is tried. On my left the enemy's earth-work comes to an end in a projecting redoubt, where the fresh earth is piled up ten feet above the level plain. This redoubt seems to defend the corner where the line of fortification turns to go back to the river. To my right the rebel work extends across the Slaughter field until it is hidden by undulations in the surface of the earth and a growth of underbrush on land across which I have to look. Everywhere, at a short distance inside the rebel works, are seen the tall green woods, which, beginning again on our side of the ground, screen our camps and batteries. As I look forward I see some embrasures in the rebel works filled with green boughs, intended to prevent us from seeing when their cannon are run out of hiding places and got ready to fire. We occasionally have a glimpse of rebel soldiers skulking about their fortifications, and a few tents and log huts are to be seen on the edge of the woods inside the rebel earth-works. My Indiana friends are about to fire a twenty-four-pounder, which is loaded, run into battery and primed without any commands or ceremonies. "What do you see to shoot at?" says the tall, democratic looking Captain. "Nothing," is answered by a man at the gun. Another cannonier says, "I see an old cow right in front there, inside the fort." "Let her have it," says the Captain, and the flame darts from vent and muzzle, while the smoke rolls up over the battery, and the woods re-echo the report. The shot howls through the air on its curved flight, and bursts with a loud noise and puff of smoke about one hundred yards this side of the cow, which, either frightened or wounded, raises her head and runs into the woods. Several shots are fired, showing that Hoosiers can handle cannon as well as rifles, but without causing a rebel to show himself, or drawing any fire.

Having left this battery, we cross the back part of Slaughter's field at a run, being fairly exposed to the fire of rebel sharpshooters, who give us two or three shots from their long range rifles, but the noise of our horses' feet prevents us from hearing how near the bullets come. Here we are behind the fences and shade trees around the ruins of Mr. Slaughter's house, which was burned shortly before the great pole and board charge of May 27. Right here was formed the storming column of four wasted regiments, each in line, about twenty paces apart, the negroes ahead with poles, and the forlorn hope next with their boards; then the regiments, Sixth Michigan, Twenty-sixth Connecticut, Fifteenth New Hampshire and Twenty-eighth New York. Here General T. W. Sherman sat on his horse when General Banks' Chief of Staff, General George L. Andrews, brought him some message just before the column was ready to move, which stirred Sherman's wrath, and, as is said, he was seen to grasp his own hat, throw it to the ground, and after some words and excited gestures, he turned to the troops and cried, "Forward! double-quick! double-quick!" The soldiers had heard the fire of musketry die away, and the slow firing of artillery begin again along various parts of the federal front where there had been successive disconnected assaults by division commanders during the forenoon. Every man knew that the result had been disastrous repulse. They were slow to start, especially as they could see nothing before them but these strong palisade fences and the smoking ruins around the chimneys and cellars of the burned mansion.

"Double-quick!" cried Sherman, and double-quick went the doomed column, poles and all, against the fences, while Sherman dashed through a lane on horseback. It is said that he is the only regular army general who has been crazy enough to attempt to lead any of the charges ordered. In a few moments horse and rider were shot, and the field was strewn with bodies of the bravest men, who, without commanders, and in confusion, still continued this madman's charge. Many are those who must mourn for what was done on the 27th of May; many were

the brave volunteers who left happy homes and loving families to die on that slaughter-field.

I shall soon see the place to which Colonel T. S. Clark was carried by the wind of that cannon ball or awful shell. Port Hudson is as belligerent to-day as it was on the day of the assault, but by taking advantage of the cover afforded by the ravine and woods a little north of Mr. Slaughter's house, we are soon at the hollow in the side of the ravine to which the wind of that ball carried Clark about as soon as he found himself exposed on the open field. A large tree, growing on the ravine side, had been cut down, and its trunk and stump made doubly certain the protection which this little grotto, formed by the action of rains, afforded him. Here he lay, safe from the possibility of harm, while the slaughter was going on. What a fortunate thing that the concussion of that ball carried him to such an excellent hiding place. From this place six good soldiers had to carry him on a stretcher, as if he was wounded, while better men than he lay thirsty and bleeding on the sun-scorched field. Some of them lie in those graves which we have just passed by; some groan in hospitals, under the experiments of surgeons. Clark's valor and leadership, displayed on the 27th, have been reported and recorded. He has been a brigade commander ever since he was carried far enough to the rear to be one. I hope that the generals will show their faith in him by appointing him to lead in the next assault.

One of the strangest things about the assault made on this field was, that it was not made until about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, when the repulse of the divisions of Augur, Grover and Weitzel, had been complete about the middle of the forenoon, and the firing of heavy guns along that part of the line proclaimed to all of both armies that nowhere there had the enemy been driven from his works. The possibility of being beaten in detail was never considered by these division commanders, who are responsible for that day's work, and for the whole of this siege. Every one thought he would have an assault of his own, and he might get men enough killed to make

a great man of himself, no matter what would be the result, and probably every general thought himself able to take Port Hudson alone. Those who made the last assaults expected that the previous assaults had drawn the enemy away, and that success would be very easy. But Sherman's division, in plain sight of the enemy, and at a slow pace, was moved from a point of woods on the south side of the Slaughter field around along the back part of the opening, to the place in rear of the ruins of the house, where the charge was made at last. No better means of warning the victorious rebels where to concentrate could have been devised. After the disaster to General Sherman's column was complete, and the field was strewn with the dead and dying, Brigadier-General George L. Andrews, a renowned West Pointer, took General Sherman's place. The first thing he did was to announce that our troops were inside Port Hudson, and that something more must be done. Being General Banks' Chief of Staff, he had not been able to have an assault which he could call his own individually. Here was his chance. Three companies of my regiment, about one hundred men altogether, had been left to support the batteries of artillery which co-operated with the column. Captain E. A. Griffin was the ranking officer of these companies. He was commanded by General Andrews to get all the men together and move forward as rapidly as he could to support our troops, who were inside the fort and struggling with the enemy. The patriotic men of these companies rallied and charged out on the field about as far as the column went, and with about the same result. General Andrews' charge could show as many killed and wounded, in proportion to the numbers employed, as any charge made that day.

I look back to the woods in rear of Slaughter's house, where General Andrews remained safe as any brigadier, when his charge was made. Those woods were the place where General Sherman, on the night before the battle, made a beginning worthy of the end, namely, his night *reconnaissance* of Port Hudson and its artillery. The Sixth Michigan was selected for this

work. Total darkness was to prevent the rebels from taking aim, while our regiment were ordered to learn as much of the ground as they could by feeling, and were to press forward near to the fortifications and fire two volleys, to draw the fire of the enemy's artillery, so that something might be ascertained as to the caliber and position of the guns. An accomplished West Pointer, Lieutenant Woodrow, now accompanied the regiment as far as he could with safety, in order to give the General a correct report of the whole *reconnoissance*. The orders received were obeyed. Clark undertook to move the regiment through woods and ravines in line of battle. Sometimes twenty-five or fifty men would be rolled together down twenty feet among briars and tree tops. Sometimes the flank companies would find themselves in the center, and at other times the color company would find themselves nearly a quarter of a mile behind the rest. Clark halted at a convenient place, and sent forward one company to do the volley firing. They contrived to fire by rank, so as to deliver two volleys, without waiting to load, very near to the fortifications. They could distinctly hear the orders given, and the enemy's men taking their places, but not a cannon was fired.

On the next morning it was discovered that there was nothing to hinder whole companies from going to the edge of the Slaughter field, where, without being in danger, they could see not only all that was reconnoitered by feeling in the dark, but could also examine the whole front of the fortifications, and could see just where the embrasures and the thickness and height of the parapet indicated that cannon were, and nothing was plainer than that most of the guns were light, and movable from place to place. Soldiers wondered how much wiser anybody would have been for hearing some of the rebel cannon in the night.

We have arrived at the Indiana battery in the point of woods on the right of the Slaughter field. This battery is within about seven hundred yards of the rebel works. Every one who shows himself is liable to be hit by the Minie ball of rebel

sharpshooters, but I must make the most of this excellent chance to look at Port Hudson. Keeping tolerably protected by the thick piles of earth that protect the Indiana guns, I take a fair view of that long, irregular line of fortifications, which stretches so far to right and left. The sun shines down so hot that all I look at flickers as if about to flame. At intervals along the rebel parapet are placed white sand bags, always in threes, two side by side, about six inches apart, and one cross-wise upon them, leaving a hole through which the sharp-shooter watches and fires. I examine those mounds along the parapet which are said to protect rebel cannon. Some of these mounds are so near that I can plainly see what they were made for—principally to protect the cannoniers who are to work guns at embrasures in case of an assault. No guns are at the embrasures now; they have been turned around against the thick sides of the parapet, or run into holes in the ground, remaining silent as if they were made of wood, but sure to speak when an assaulting column comes. The spirit moves my Indiana friends to give the rebels a shot. They are loading one of their long Parrotts. I look to see what they can fire at. A solitary ambulance, with a little yellow flag, is slowly wending its way along inside of the rebel fortifications, and in the edge of the woods beyond I see a few tents and a line of little log huts, but not a rebel soldier is to be seen; they, like their cannon, only showing themselves when an assaulting column comes. The air is shaken, and the forest resounds with the report of our Parrott. Away goes the hissing, howling shot, and comes down among the tree tops inside of the rebel works.

It is said that rebel riflemen have been firing from the upper boughs of those trees. However this may be, the smoke of our gun hardly clears away when we hear the distant report of rifles, and the well-known whistle of a Minie ball is heard about twenty feet above our heads. Another and another comes, and on a descending flight, goes just over our heads and strikes the ground. Beyond us, another spitefully strikes the trunk of a tree, where it buries itself, causing fragments of bark to fly in



the air. It is evident that further observations from this point will be too risky.

In a little while we have arrived at another Indiana battery, where several familiar guns are in charge of a gallant captain. Here we find ourselves yet within range of rebel rifles, which occasionally send their balls singing over our heads. This is the ground where General Augur made his charge on the 27th, but he was too wise to lead it. He stopped further back than this, among his staff officers, safely protected by thick trees. He was heard to say, "Go in, boys!" as his regiments and brigades, in long lines, closely following one another, hurried forward to take Port Hudson. I see the ground where that massacre of the men took place. When they came out of the woods they found themselves not in cleared fields, but on ground terribly obstructed by fallen timber, where rank briars peculiar to this country had grown high and thick among the tree tops, especially in the deep and narrow ravines, into which whole regiments fell at once. On they went in confusion, brigade and regimental colors halting, wavering, sometimes carried back, and sometimes rashly carried forward. The fallen timber grew worse and worse for the assailants. The whole rebel parapet before them blazed with the fire of infantry and artillery. Scarcely a man of the storming column reached the narrow belt of cleared ground in front of the rebel ditch, where all the ground could be raked by cross-fire. The whole extent of fallen timber was filled with bloody corpses, and with groaning wounded, suffering dreadfully from thirst and pain in the burning sun, within plain hearing of the taunting yells of the victorious enemy. All in that column able to escape vanished strangely, some behind logs, some into ravines; some, regardless of the increased danger, had turned their backs to the enemy and fled back to where General Augur probably reported that he rallied his division, after a most desperate charge, in which the great number of killed and wounded proved indisputably his valor and ability—poor consolation to those who mourn for good men and true, who died as volunteer soldiers,

and for distinguished citizens, commissioned as officers, who died while bravely endeavoring to lead the way through fallen timber, in obedience to West Point generals, who kept far in the rear, and never knew the nature of the ground over which their columns were to charge until it was told them by those who reported the number of the slain. It seemed to have been considered, on that day, advisable that any number of volunteers should be sacrificed rather than any regular army general, except General T. W. Sherman, should risk himself.

I wonder what has been the effect of all the artillery firing since the great assault, and to my inquiry in that respect, my friend the Indiana Captain of this battery replies, "We soon knocked down all the guns that the rebels did not care about running into holes or swinging around close against their parapet, so as to be safe. It is some time since they showed either themselves or their cannon. We fire away as we are ordered to do. Generally we are ordered to drop shells at various places inside of the fort, but there is so much ground and such a body of timber there, that I think the ammunition we use up amounts to a great deal, and the damage we do to the enemy amounts to very little."

"Have any approaches been dug, or any attempts been made to batter any part of the rebel works?"

"Nothing of any such kind has been ever talked of."

"How are they going to take Port Hudson if they do not succeed in shelling that timber down?"

"Well, we have just received new orders. In about an hour we are to give Port Hudson the greatest shelling it ever had. All the artillery on land and water is to open fire and keep the shells going as thickly as they can for one hour; then a flag of truce is to be sent to demand the surrender of Port Hudson."

We are soon riding across the open fields near the naval battery, where I went yesterday. As I look toward the rebel works, I hear the frequent rifle shots of sharpshooters, while the cannon's voice is heard oftener than at any time since I have been here. There is no gleam of rebel bayonets to-day along the

fortifications. We hasten to arrive at the next and last Indiana battery on this side of Port Hudson, before the great fire-works begin. Our road lies through forests and ravines, where the huts and bough houses of the besiegers are on every side, especially in the ravines, where they can feel secure. The men are resting, idling, sleeping, cooking, and straggling, in every kind of ragged and dirty clothing. Many seem to have got rid of as much clothing as decency will permit, in order to get relief from the heat, which this morning has rolled up the green leaves as if there had been a long drought. All that part of military duty which consists of parade, display and homage, to gratify the vanity of officers, is dropped. These unfortunate wretches are to gratify the vanity of their commanders in another way, namely, by being slaughtered. They enjoy as many privileges as a drove of fatting cattle; but I think that most of them realize their doom.

By a turn which brings us along a ravine very near to the enemy's works, we are at the battery we intended to visit. The earth is piled high and thick, and the embrasures are made very narrow, to keep out as many rifle balls as can be avoided. Here are the Parrott guns, on their siege carriages, the implements laid about in convenient places, regardless of rules. Here are the half-tents and awnings, and the rough faces of Indiana volunteers, with whom I have drilled in General Williams' "Order of Combat," on the sands of Ship Island. This battery is about five hundred yards from the rebel redoubt, where, in front of us, the fortifications make almost a square turn to go to the river, on the upper side of the place. The fallen timber lies thick almost all the way to the redoubt, where the fresh earth has, by the night work of the garrison, been heaped up, so that there is some resemblance to what the Sebastopol redoubts are supposed to have been. Our sharpshooters have made use of the fallen timber for cover, in skulking very near to the enemy. Rifle shots are heard continually. Puffs of smoke from the sand bags along the top of the rebel parapet indicate that rebel rifles are at work, but a

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well-directed shell from a twenty-pounder Parrott goes with a shrill screech to the sand bags, where a rebel has been firing too boldly. The dust, sand and fragments of bags are blown into the air by the explosion of the shell. The rebels fire less frequently. Something appears to have happened to make them very cautious. Our sharpshooters are seen springing forward from one log to another, and firing oftener than before. An officer near me looks at his watch. The hour for the great bombardment has almost come. General Weitzel and General Grover, with some of their staff officers, have arrived, and in a very republican manner are talking with officers and men around me. It needs no extraordinary ability to perceive that General Weitzel is a very different man from most of the regular army subalterns who have been suddenly made brigadiers and major-generals. He actually went with his men in the assault of May 27.

I inquire of him what is to come next, if this shelling does not appear to hurt anybody. He leans back against a tree, on the shady side of which he is sitting, and says: "A little before daylight to-morrow morning you will see some work with powder and steel." A remark was made concerning those who were killed and those who escaped at the last assault—that the killed were generally men of the best character, while not a cotton thief was hurt. The General smiles and says, "Anybody who hears that would be apt to ask, 'Lord, is it I?'"

The artillery opens. Shot after shot is heard along the front. Some watches do not follow head-quarters time as closely as orders require. Our gunners spring to their loaded pieces. There is nothing but earth-works and woods to aim at, unless a drove of cattle, that have been quietly grazing inside the fortifications, should be shelled back into the forest. One gun at a time is fired, but one concussion of the air has hardly ceased when another comes. One gush of powder-smoke does not clear away when another rises. The distant bellow of naval guns and mortars comes booming over Port Hudson, while more heavy guns on land than Grant can open against Vicks-

burg roar in irregular succession. There is no danger in standing out and taking a fair view, for the rebels have all gone into their dens and rat-holes, close to their parapet, where they are in little more danger than in an ordinary thunder-storm. It is interesting to see the effect of the shot. Many strike the earth-piles of the redoubt and adjacent parapet, ripping up the dry clay, and raising a small cloud of dust over every spot struck. Some of the shells burst some yards short of the earth-works; some burst just as they strike, the fragments raising the dust in different ways. Many shells fail to burst. Often shells, scattering the fresh earth some distance short of the parapet, go with a bound over inside of the fort, where, with another bound from the earth, again raising the dust, they go into the woods. I can distinctly hear the howling and rushing sounds caused by shot and shell flying from batteries a mile distant. The naval guns have the loudest roar, and their great round projectiles cause a rushing noise, and, on bursting, make a report almost equal to the sound of the cannon. The long conical shells of the rifled guns fly with an angry shriek, and seemingly with the best aim. I lift my eyes from the smoky, dusty cannonade, up toward the hot sky. I see, at short intervals of time, sudden gushes of smoke in the middle air. These come from mortar shells, always sent up at an angle of about forty-five degrees, to drop from a great height. Imperfect fuses and erroneous calculations occasion the explosions, sometimes at the highest point of the great curve, and sometimes at less altitudes. Schooners, each carrying an enormous mortar, are anchored under protection of a high, curved bank, full two miles below Port Hudson. Twenty-five pounds of powder is put behind each shell, and an equal quantity within it. When any of these great thirteen-inch shells burst, there gushes forth a thick mass of smoke, to which the hot sun partly gives an appearance now of pure white, and now of rainbow hues.

What is the effect of all this noise? Not a living being is to be seen inside the rebel works. The cattle have made a hasty retreat, being too often selected as targets by gunners. Does

Port Hudson totter to its fall? This redoubt before me is none the worse for all the terrible projectiles that have struck it, only to bury themselves in its clay, and make an earth-work half iron. Appearances indicate that the rebels are only shelled into their holes, where neither raking or ricochet shots, or mortar shells, are likely to hurt one in a thousand. The crooked ravines inside of the place, like those outside, can hold armies safe from harm, especially when thick woods assist in making the cover better, and in screening everything from view.

The bombardment has lasted an hour, and ended. A flag of truce has gone to demand the surrender of the place, and stop the further effusion of blood. There follows a cessation of all firing. We do not have to wait to hear from the flag of truce to know that the people in Port Hudson are not all killed, for along the parapet, both ways from the redoubt, up come the graybacks out of their holes, like so many prairie dogs. They are talking with some of our sharpshooters. I have an opportunity to look through a large marine glass at all that can be seen of Port Hudson. The thick forest hides most of the camps inside the fort, but there are many log huts and one frame house in sight within the works. All the cannonade has done but little damage to these buildings.

I overhear some of the conversation between General Weitzel and General Grover, near me. A messenger sent by them to bring news from the flag of truce, has returned. "No surrender yet," says General Grover; "Old Gardiner was always as obstinate as a mule." To which General Weitzel replies, "Well, we know what is to come next." Having become acquainted with General Weitzel when he was a Lieutenant serving on General Butler's staff, I venture to point out to him some of the crooked ravines which extend in a winding course toward the rebel works, in a way which shows how easily approaches might be made so as to bring an army where it could rise and rush over the low rebel parapet at any moment when the garrison, by sleep, by a storm, or by a feigned attack, had their attention withdrawn. I ask why no approach has

been even commenced. The answer of the General informs me that he, having been in favor with General Butler, is necessarily out of favor at court now, and has very little to do with present plans.

We have returned to the Indiana head-quarters. I find here several officers of my regiment. I hear enough to be certain that it will be best for me to have General Banks' order returning me to duty before I go near the jurisdiction of Colonel T. S. Clark. I hear, also, that credible information has been received that powerful confederate forces are hastening to relieve Port Hudson. There is much disputation as to the manner in which our artillery has been used, and the probable effect of another assault. Some claim that if the bombardment had continued six hours instead of one, the fort would have surrendered. Others refer to the siege of Sebastopol for proof that to cannonade earth-works actually makes them strong instead of weak. There are those who advocate massing most of our army in one place for an assault, but it is said to have been decided by the Generals never to do so, because the rebels might get out and run away, and because some of the Generals would have to act a subordinate part in the column, whereas every one of them wants a chance to do all he can for himself and nobody else. Some declare that the rebel artillery is mostly silenced and disabled by our fire, and that nothing is wanting but a general assault to carry our army into the fort at once, and that delay will bring a relieving army upon our rear.

## CHAPTER VI.

The Programme—The Immortal Order No. 32—Pontoons and Cotton Bags—Fifty Sixth Michigan Men to Kidnap Awful Gardiner—Grierson to Perform a Cavalry Charge Against the Citadel—The Inspiration of General Dwight to be Demonstrated.

JUNE 13, 1863.—I have spent another night where, if the rebels turn any of their best guns this way, they can drop a shell through the roof, as is proved by the fragments of the great projectile which last week fell and burst in the door yard here. My knapsack has been my pillow, and my blanket, spread upon the floor, has been my bed. Dreams of my distant home have been disturbed by the reports of cannon, sometimes distant, sometimes near.

The sun has again risen glaring hot, but an excellent breakfast, prepared by captured cooks, from captured provisions, has given me good spirits, as I am ready for an early ride to General Banks' head-quarters, when Captain Stark, Company G, Sixth Michigan, arrives to make me a visit. I perceive that he is well prepared to make a report of what has been going on, and a queer expression of this old gentleman's face indicates that he has a story which I ought to hear. I am soon listening to a statement from him, substantially as follows :

“About the 11th of this month I first heard of the plan for the next assault, as intended by Brigadier-General Dwight, who has been our division commander since we lost General T. W. Sherman. I was sent for to come to the head-quarters of our Colonel, T. S. Clark, who has been promoted to be our brigade commander since his wounds received and valor displayed on the 27th of May. On approaching his tent, in company with Captain Cordon, of our regiment, who had also been sent for, we noticed that the position was admirable for safety, well to the rear, and in the midst of artillery camps. Colonel Clark showed me these orders :



SPECIAL ORDERS, }  
 No. 32. }  
 HEAD-QUARTERS SECOND DIVISION, }  
 NINETEENTH ARMY CORPS, }  
 Before Port Hudson, June 11, 1863. }

The following is the order of attack upon the enemy's works by this division :

1. Bags filled with cotton and fascines\* will be prepared and placed at or near the covered way at or near the white house mortar battery.

2. General Nickerson will detail two hundred men to carry these bags, to be closely followed by one hundred more, to pick up those which may be dropped.

A detail of the First Louisiana Engineers will carry the fascines.

3. The troops will be held in hand, and prepared to move immediately to such point of assault as the Brigadier-General commanding shall designate.

4. General Nickerson and Colonel Clark will each detail fifty men, under competent officers, to act as pontoniers. These men will provide themselves with tools, and make it a special duty to open a way for our artillery into the enemy's works.†

5. Colonel Clark will detail fifty picked men of the Sixth Michigan Volunteers, under command of Captain Stark, for a sudden attack upon the head-quarters of Major-General Gardiner. These men will press forward at all hazards. They will establish themselves in the house, and hold it until relieved. The names of these men will be published in general orders, and they will be promoted if successful.‡

Colonel Clark will also detail two hundred men of the same regiment, under command of the senior captain, for an important and decisive movement.§

\* What contents for these bags.

† Comprehensive instructions for these bridge-makers.

‡ Napoleonic ideas. Gardiner to be in his house at the time of a general assault, yet not a word said about taking him prisoner, which was the chief intention of the order, but an express order binds the men to hold the house, even if they find it empty."

§ To capture the citadel, spike its great guns, dig down the parapet, and heave the guns over into the river.

These parties will be supported by the One Hundred and Twenty-eighth New York Volunteers.

7. With the exception of the picked men, who shall be detailed as stormers, the nine months troops will lead the advance in the attack.\*

8. The officers designated by General Nickerson and Colonel Clark for the above special duty, will report to-day, at 2 p. m., at these head-quarters.

9. The officers commanding the brigades will see that there is abundant ammunition on hand.

By order of Brigadier-General Dwight.

WICKHAM HOFFMAN, A. A. G.

General NICKERSON.

Colonel CLARK.

SPECIAL ORDERS, }  
No. 35. }

HEAD-QUARTERS SECOND DIVISION, }  
NINETEENTH ARMY CORPS, }  
Before Fort Hudson, June 11, 1863. }

Special Orders No. 32, from these head-quarters, are modified, in pursuance of orders from department head-quarters, as follows:

1. General Nickerson will detail three hundred men to carry the cotton bags, and will prepare that number of bags.†

2. General Nickerson and Colonel Clark will each detail eighty men, instead of fifty, to act as pontoniers. Each party will carry seventeen axes, eleven shovels, five picks, one hand-saw,‡ and one hatchet.

4. Colonel Clark will detail thirty-four men to carry the balks and chasses of the bridge.

5. These details will be made at once, and the men drilled in their duties and in the order of march.

By order of Brigadier-General Dwight.

WICKHAM HOFFMAN, A. A. G.

\* Little would the nine months men have to do after the citadel was captured, and General Gardiner captured in his own house.

† These orders exhibit the great cotton bag plan for capturing Fort Hudson. The devotion of our chieftains to cotton must cost the nation as much in blood as it had cost in treasure.

‡ This gleaming handsaw, moving here and there amidst squads of stuffed cotton bags, is to add not a little to the martial appearance of the drill ordered.

“Colonel Clark assured me that he did not suggest my name for such a desperate enterprise. He said that my name had been put in at Dwight’s head-quarters. Some one of General Banks’ staff was present. I was informed by my Colonel that Captain Cordon and I must report to General Dwight. Before leaving, I asked Colonel Clark if he could tell us where General Gardiner’s quarters in Port Hudson were. He answered ‘No.’

“We went to Dwight’s head-quarters, which were yet a considerable distance to the rear. There we found Captain W. W. Wheeler, of the Sixth Michigan, Dwight’s Inspector-General, Captain L. W. Pierce, of the same regiment, his Quartermaster, and Lieutenant Trask, of the same regiment, his Topographical Engineer. Doctor Sanger, Dwight’s surgeon, Major Bailey, his Chief Engineer, and Brigadier-General Nickerson, were there. Captain Wheeler wanted us to drink as soon as we came. I told him that I was going to have an interview with General Dwight, and would defer the drink. He answered that it made no difference, as the General was tight himself. Immediately afterward we were brought into Dwight’s presence, and I saw that the Captain had made no mistake.

“We told Dwight that we were ordered to report to him. He produced a map pretending to be a plan of the works of Port Hudson. I confess that I could not understand it at all. Perhaps the church was set down somewhere near the right place. There were two rebel deserters present. Dwight had been talking with them. He pointed out to us the citadel, being the enemy’s water battery farthest down the river. He said that I was to have fifty picked men, who were to be disguised so as to look as much like rebels as possible. With this party I was to pass in through the citadel, and proceed immediately to General Gardiner’s quarters and take him prisoner. All this was to be done in the night, and we were to be notified time enough beforehand to make all needful preparations. The General described different cannon and batteries that we must pass, but we were to pay no attention to any of these. I asked the General where we were to get into the citadel. He

answered, 'Follow the edge of the river until you are directly under the citadel. Then, by steps cut in the clay, you will ascend the side of the bluff about one hundred feet, and find yourselves masters of the citadel. These deserters will be your guides, and show you the way.' I watched the expression of the General's red face, which seemed to be all chops and snout, and wishing to avoid getting any further instructions about climbing that stairway, I asked him if he knew whereabouts within the fortifications General Gardiner's quarters were. He said that he did not. I then asked him how I was to find the right place. He said, 'You must make a prisoner of the first man you meet, and holding your revolver to his head, extort the information from him.' I answered respectfully that among the deserters who come to us I had not seen one yet who could tell where General Gardiner kept himself, and asked, 'What shall I do if the man I catch cannot tell me where General Gardiner's head-quarters are?' 'Catch another, then,' said the General, and added solemnly, after an unmeaning pause, 'Do the best you can.' Soon he proceeded to say, 'You will be followed by Captain Cordon, with two hundred men, who will spike the guns in the citadel.' Captain Wickham Hoffman, who had stood by listening to the General as a small boy would listen to the instructions of a severe father, now ventured to add, 'General, would it not be well to have the men dig away the parapet and throw the guns of the citadel into the river.' Without turning his eyes toward Hoffman, Dwight said, 'Certainly, that must not be omitted,' and continued, 'Captain Cordon will be reinforced by five or six hundred infantry, to follow up his success. He will also be provided with rockets, which he is to send up, announcing to the army that General Dwight has taken the citadel.' Then steadying his glance toward me, as if his vision was rather uncertain, he closed his remarks in a very grave and Quixotic style: 'After you have taken Gardiner's house, you are to establish yourself in it, barricade the doors, and defend it at all hazards. Your men must be desperate men—men that will fight.' There was something

in the tone of his last words so comical that I could hardly keep from laughing in his face. After receiving our instructions, we had the honor of dining with the General. We sat down to a real feast. The table was provided with nicely cooked chicken, mutton and fresh beef, excellent soft bread, ice water, and the best of coffee. Surgeon Sanger is a little man, with a voice like that of a rat, but he seemed to have a huge appetite. To finish the dinner, two very gentlemanly waiters, the most valuable servants that could be found in the valley of the Teche, brought in costly decanters filled with old wines and brandies, which I suppose had been carried under guard ever since Banks' army left their revels in the Opelousas country, or worse yet, had been taken from hospital stores. I thought of our sick and wounded men, many of whom were suffering and dying for want of proper food and cold water. The General was too far gone to say much while we were at dinner.

"When we were about to come away, some of Dwight's staff spoke jestingly of our job, and asked if we had a sure thing now on Awful Gardiner. I saw that they looked upon the project as I did. An ambulance was ordered to take Cordon and myself back to camp. I thought that the Captain was very sour. I asked him if he would not want my help about spiking those guns. He said that I had work enough on my hands. We have endeavored to keep our instructions to ourselves, but the secret has got out some way. Curious questions have been put to us. Everybody seems to think that the General's orders for a forcible entry and detainer of Gardiner's house were inspired by whisky. It is to be hoped that he has forgotten the whole project."

I listen to Captain Stark's narrative with various emotions. My first words to him as he finishes are, "Well, Captain, I might not have been so anxious to get here had I known what a character we have for General Sherman's successor. I suppose that our Colonel must be Dwight's favorite Brigadier, and that all my risks will be increased by our change of masters." "We are all turned over to Dwight to be disposed of," is my

friend's reply. "His next freak may be to have a military execution of two or three hundred of us, if we fail to take possession of General Gardiner's house for him. If he has ever heard how summarily the negro chiefs in the interior of Africa dispose of their subjects, he will be ambitious not to be outdone."

Several trusty western officers have heard most of the Captain's account of Dwight's project to take forcible possession of General Gardiner's house, and speak of having before received intimations of such projects, but express astonishment at the shape in which it now appears. They urge me to hurry up my release, for I may get back to my regiment in time to act some important part in capturing Gardiner and the citadel.

Another officer of my regiment arrives during our conversation. It is Lieutenant William Trask, of Company II, now on duty with Dwight's staff. After he has been informed what subject we have been talking about, and sees that there are none but some of his old Ship Island friends present, he says :

"I assure you that General Dwight's designs upon the citadel and Gardiner are just as Captain Stark has stated—that is, making allowance for the General's difficulty in telling the same thing twice alike. But for some time past, even when the General comes nearest to being sober, he is continually talking about that cursed project of his, and yesterday he got an important addition to it. During the forenoon he drank often, sat down, resting his head on the hilt of his sword, which he held as he would a staff; then he would get up and walk with his arms folded in front or placed behind, acting in accordance with his fancied resemblance to Napoleon even more than ordinarily. At dinner he was taciturn and owlsh. He wished us to perceive that great things occupied his mind. In the afternoon he sent for General Grierson, of the Illinois cavalry. I was present at their interview. Dwight having given Grierson his camp chair, sat down on the side of his bed with an air of abstraction, and said, 'General, I have a plan by which you can add lustre to your laurels.' Grierson, who had been scanning the arrange-

ments of the tent for shade and pleasure, now fixed his eyes upon Dwight, and seemed to be making an effort to keep from laughing at the assurance and assumed gravity with which the comical little Brigadier proceeded, as he pointed with his fat little red hand to the road which winds through the great ravine, and enters Port Hudson at the citadel sally-port, and said, 'I am going to surprise the citadel and capture General Gardiner, independently. You will be notified of the time, and can have your cavalry here. As soon as I give the signal, you will charge down this road by twos, at a gallop, and enter the fort.' Grierson, with a curious expression, watched the grotesque figure before him a moment, and asked, 'What shall I do then?' 'File right and left, and dash along the parapet, sabering the cannoniers at their guns,' answered Dwight. Grierson, without changing his expression, repeated, 'What shall I do then?' Dwight hesitated a moment, and replied, 'Proceed to the center of the town; I will be there myself.'

"I could not keep from laughing any longer. I had to leave the tent, and a little while afterward Grierson came out, mounted and rode off, apparently satisfied as well listening to Dwight's plan as a doctor would be with listening to the plans of a man in *delirium tremens*.

"The road over which Dwight's cavalry charge was to be made goes out of the woods and diagonally across an open field, within full sweep of the rebel artillery: then' obliquely down the side of the greatest ravine about Port Hudson, where on both sides of the narrow wagon track the fallen timber and tangled briars make it almost impossible for even a man on foot to creep through. Down this road the cavalry were to charge by twos, and follow its winding way along the bottom of the ravine across a brook with steep banks, where the bridge is destroyed; then turning to the right, go up between two fortified bluffs, and crossing the ditch, enter the sally-port almost in rear of the citadel. All the way the cavalry were to be exposed to a raking and cross-fire from both heavy and light artillery, which, as well as the infantry fire, would also take them in

reverse for some distance before they could reach the sally-port, which is not probably wide open all the while, and on the inside of Port Hudson the ground looks to me as if there were as many bad ravines in the way of horsemen as there are on the outside.

“I soon saw the General again. He seemed to be disgusted with Grierson, and said of him: ‘In spite of the reputation he has gained by his raid, that d—d militia officer was afraid to execute my plan.’”

I inquire of Lieutenant Trask what is the truth as to reports which I have heard concerning Dwight’s orders for military executions without any trial. He says that the General has published orders containing such expressions as these: “Whoever seeks to hide himself from the enemy’s fire, falters or retreats without orders from me, shall meet with certain and disgraceful death at my hands;” and “If I find any of my command straggling, I will turn such vagabonds over to my Provost Marshal, and have them summarily executed.”

I receive fresh congratulations from several present, who commend my zeal in leaving inglorious repose to get under the command of Clark and Dwight in time for the next assault, for no doubt that they will find something for me to do. I tell them, “Well, gentlemen. I must act as if you were in earnest, and be off on my way to Banks’ head-quarters again, to obtain my order to return to duty to-day, if I can get it.”

As I am riding slowly along a shady part of the road, I am overtaken by an officer of my acquaintance, belonging to a general’s staff. Our conversation is on the remarkable character of our division commander, General Dwight. My friend gives me a statement, substantially as follows:

“Brigadier-General William Dwight is the hero of this siege. His claim to be a West Pointer is supported by testimony that he was expelled from West Point on account of his drunkenness and shameless association with obscene women. He came to this department a Boston Brigadier, having nothing but his grotesque figure to claim attention, until his brutal murder of John



Hamlin, a brave soldier of Company F, Seventy-first Regiment New York Volunteers, on Banks' first Teche expedition. It appears that amidst the general despoiling of the country for private gain, this soldier had taken for himself one cheap article of rebel clothing. For this Dwight, his brigade commander, had him immediately shot in the presence of the regiment, without any trial or hearing. Hamlin was a devout Catholic. Father Nash, of the Sixth New York, confessed him, and he folded his arms and received the mortal volley without fear. The priest wrote the murdered man's last message to his wife and five children, who were left to starve in New York city.

"When the army marched the next morning, Dwight rode in a rich carriage, drawn by fine horses, to which he had as good a title as he had to the excellent liquors for which he ransacked planters' houses every day. The *New Orleans Era*, published by a lackey of the military government, gave a particular account of the execution, and gave Dwight as much praise for such an exhibition of discipline as he ought to have received for gaining a victory over the enemy, and claimed that generals were to be measured by their discipline exhibited in such a way. But expressions of disgust by officers and men in the army were so frequent, that it was judged necessary to have the same newspaper publish gross libels upon the character which the murdered man bore at home.

"On the evening before the memorable 27th of May, 1863, Dwight, who was a brigade commander on the extreme right of the federal army, next to the river, above Port Hudson, sent for Colonel Nelson, of the colored regiment, known as the Third Native Guards, and told him, 'Colonel, to-morrow is the general assault. You will act as brigade commander under me. You lead the two colored regiments, First and Second Butler's Native Guards. You will have the easiest way into Port Hudson. As soon as you get inside the works, and up the bluffs, you will press forward at all hazards, take a strong position in the graveyard, and stay there until I join you on your right.'\*

\* If Nelson obeyed this order, he would have had to wait as long as any of the dead buried there.

“On the day of the assault, Dwight got drunk before breakfast. At about six o'clock in the morning, before any assault had been commenced elsewhere, he sent the colored regiments to charge over a wide flat against the works at the foot of high fortified bluffs, at the elbow in the river, on the upper side of Port Hudson. The position of the rebel batteries along the lower part of the river elbow was such that the great guns, which in March beat back all but two of Farragut's fleet, now not only swept with their concentrated fire the flat over which the colored regiments were to charge, but terribly raked the light timber beyond, through which they must come. The colored men must advance, receiving at the same time the fire of the water batteries and of the works immediately in front, along the foot of the bluff, while on their left flank they must receive the fire of several companies of rebel sharpshooters, from a singularly formed narrow ridge, extending forward from the bluffs of Port Hudson.

“Into this deadly *cul de sac* went the black regiments. They found a sheet of water from the flooded river extending along in front of the rebel works. Many would have perished by drowning had not the terrific fire driven them back into the woods. There was still no sound of guns announcing that the rest of the federal army had commenced their assault. An officer, sent far to the rear to find Dwight and report to him the state of things, returned with this order from the General: ‘Charge again immediately!’ and again the devoted regiments charged over their dead and wounded comrades toward the pond in front of the rebel works. Again they were driven back.

“By this time Dwight had become uncommonly drunk, and sent an order to Colonel Nelson, ‘Keep your negroes charging as long as there is a corporal's guard of them left.’ Seven times that day the black regiments charged over the same bloody ground. It was Lieutenant-Colonel Chauncey Bassett, of the First Native Guards, formerly a Captain of Company G, Sixth Michigan, who really led the colored men that day. He was

an old school abolitionist, and a brave man of principle, in whom his men had a sort of religious faith.

“No white regiment was within a mile of the place where the blacks were slaughtered. Two light field pieces, which were ordered to advance almost to the edge of the woods, to try their fire against the rebel batteries, were disabled and driven away. In the middle of the day the work of disaster and destruction was done everywhere any charge had been made within two miles of the place where Dwight’s victims fell. Yet throughout the afternoon, as late as 6 o’clock, after the work of removing dead and wounded had for hours been going on under flags of truce, where the division commanders had made their assaults, when the extent of the slaughter and the impossibility of anything but destruction were reported to Dwight, he said, ‘Tell Colonel Nelson to keep charging as long as there is a corporal’s guard left. When there is only one man left, let him come to me and report.’”

We have arrived where I must leave my companion, to take the familiar road through the open fields, to General Banks’ head-quarters. I tell my friend that if I obtain my order sending me back to duty, I shall endeavor to see Dwight as soon as I can, and will probably be in time to be under his orders in the next charge. I am unfortunate in finding that General Banks and his staff have gone to visit the various division commanders, and take a general view of operations. I find the same squad of deserters and prisoners that I saw here before. Their numbers have increased by the hourly desertions that thin the rebel ranks. Some of these men are intelligent; some very stupid. From inquiries, and with the help of diagrams on the ground, I am able to get from these rebels very correct ideas of the strength of Port Hudson, in men, armament and supplies.

After I have been lounging about under the oak trees for several weary hours, General Banks comes at about 4 o’clock p. m., with his staff. Their dusty horses are led away by attendant slaves. The General goes to his tent without speaking, followed

only by his chosen servant. He beckons to the servant to go away, and I am about to advance and present my case, when I see the General take off his sword and throw himself upon his camp bed with the air of a man who has had too much of a good thing. I conclude to wait for him to rest a while, and soon perceive that he is enjoying as sound a sleep as was ever enjoyed by Sancho Panza. I must wait for him to wake up, and as I see the preparations going on for a supper for these fellows, who can do what they please with me, I think seriously of what I have gained by exchanging my life as a freeman for that of a volunteer field officer. At last Banks wakes, sits up on his bed, and rubs his eyes. It is now or never with me, for his supper will soon have his attention. I walk to his tent door, and tell him who I am and what is my business; that I was here day before yesterday, and was ordered by him to report again as soon as he had time to receive a telegraphic communication as to the result of my trial. The General seems very sleepy, and evidently has forgotten that he ever thought of receiving any telegraphic dispatch as to my case. I cannot tell whether he even remembers to have seen me or spoken with me at any time. He answers slowly, "That is something for my Adjutant-General to attend to. Perhaps he knows something about it." Saying "I will see him, then, sir," I hasten to the tent of Adjutant-General Richard Irwin, who, like the General, has neither heard nor thought of my case since I was here day before yesterday. Again at the General's tent. I see that he intends to let me have almost anything I ask rather than have further trouble. He thinks a moment, and says, "If you bring me some paper from your regiment, requesting your return to duty, I will issue the order." I am soon mounted and on my way to my regiment, which is about four miles distant. I am anxious to get the desired paper and obtain my order to-night, for while I have been at the General's head-quarters I have heard intimations of a meeting there of all the subordinate generals this evening, in order to make arrangements for a general assault. From all appearances, I am satisfied that the West

Point Generals have made General Banks feel that he is to be nobody until they get through another general assault in their own way. I stop a few moments at the Indiana head-quarters to get a better horse, and there am informed by an officer who has just come from General Augur's head-quarters, that the following order has already been issued :

HEAD-QUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE GULF, }  
Before Port Hudson, June 13, 1863. }

SPECIAL ORDERS, }  
No. 140. }

EXTRACT.

A general assault upon the works of the enemy at Port Hudson will be made to-morrow morning, 14th inst. The following directions will be observed, and the following information is given for the benefit of those principally concerned: General Grover, with his command, including two regiments of Dudley's brigade, under Colonel Dudley, will make a vigorous and determined assault at the point in front of Colonel Dudley's present position, already indicated to him. The artillery cross-fire in front of this point of attack will commence at 3 A. M., and except such as may have been placed under his direction, will cease only on intimation from General Grover to these head-quarters that he desires it to cease. The attack of skirmishers will commence at half past 3 A. M., or as soon thereafter as General Grover may find best. A detachment of the First Louisiana Engineers, under Captain Jones, has been directed to report to General Grover, with intrenching tools and sand bags, to take position, unless otherwise ordered by him, near the twelve-pounder rifle battery.

General Augur will, in pursuance of orders already given, detail two regiments of Colonel Dudley's brigade, under Colonel Dudley, to report to General Grover, and two regiments, as already ordered, to report to General Dwight. With the remainder of his command, General Augur will make a feint attack on the part of the works in front of Holcomb's Battery and Slaughter's house, to be made vigorously, and converted into a real attack should circumstances favor it. He will also,

hold his command in readiness to support either General Grover or General Dwight, in pursuance of orders that may be given from these head-quarters.

A heavy fire of artillery will open on the point of attack at a quarter before 3 A. M. At a quarter past 3 A. M. the attack of skirmishers will be briskly made. An officer, to be designated by Colonel Hodge, will report to General Augur with a detachment of the First Louisiana Engineers, and, with intrenching tools and sand bags, to take position, unless otherwise ordered by General Augur, near Holcomb's Battery, on the road leading from his head-quarters to Port Hudson.

General Dwight, with his command, including two regiments to be sent by General Augur, will make an attempt to gain an entrance into the enemy's works on our extreme left. Should this attempt fail, it will be promptly reported to these head-quarters, and the same will be done in case of its success. In the former case, the command will be held in readiness to move promptly to reinforce at other points, in pursuance of orders that may be given at these head-quarters. A detachment of the First Louisiana Engineers, provided with intrenching tools and sand bags, will report to General Dwight, and take position, unless otherwise ordered by him, on the road on our extreme left, leading to Port Hudson, as near the works as cover may be found. General Dwight to move at such time after half-past 3 A. M. to-morrow as he may deem most expedient. Generals Augur, Grover and Dwight, will not wait for signals, but act at the times specified herein, without further orders. The standard is the telegraph time at these head-quarters. General Arnold will have charge of all artillery in position, except such as he may have placed under the direction of division commanders. A reserve of engineer troops, under Colonel Hodge, with tools and sand bags, will be stationed near General Augur's head-quarters.

All applications for reinforcements must be made at these head-quarters. Either of the three commanders of a point of attack is authorized to order the fire of artillery near him to

cease if he finds it inconveniencing his troops or his movements. He will report his acts to these head-quarters. General Banks' head-quarters will be, during the action, at the barn near the naval battery.

By command of Major-General Banks.

(Signed) RICHARD B. IRWIN, A. A. G.

I am now certain that if I can be returned to duty to-night, I shall have my part to act in performances the like of which was never seen or heard of, and when I think how unwelcome my presence will be to my Colonel and several staff officers, I see that my only chance to get such a paper as I am seeking is in speed. When I am about a mile from my regiment, I am surprised to meet in the road Major Clark, commanding officer of my regiment, in company with the Colonel of a Maine regiment.

Regimental commanders have been sent for to receive instructions. The Major is a man past middle life. He now appears twenty years older than when I last saw him. Lieutenant Frederick Clark, of Company D, in our regiment, nephew of the Major, was killed, shot through the head, in the assault of May 27. This grief, with what has been endured during the siege, have almost used up the life of my old friend. After a few words with me, he concludes that the paper I want will cause the arrest of all who sign it, and therefore he will get excused from reporting immediately for his instructions, and will accompany me back to Banks' head-quarters, and make personal application for my return to duty.

We are again at the tents of Banks' staff. We present ourselves to General Banks just as he has finished his luxurious repast, and is returning in excellent spirits to his tent. A few words, and I hand him my document from General Emory. He takes it directly to the tent of his Adjutant-General, who returns it to me, after making the following indorsement:

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HEAD-QUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE GULF, }  
Before Port Hudson, June 13, 1863. }

Upon the recommendation of Major Clark, Sixth Michigan Volunteers, Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon, Sixth Michigan Volunteers, is released from arrest, and will report for duty with his regiment.

By command of Major-General Banks.

RICHARD B. IRWIN, A. A. G.

All is done, but we must delay a little to look at these generals who are arriving, one after another, for the final consultation. There is no small show of ornament, uniform and style. They seem to vie with one another as to who shall have the handsomest staff officers to follow him. Ah! there is Dwight. I need not be told which he is—short, pussy, red-faced, pig-headed, but uniformed so as to make broadcloth and gilding do all they can for him. What a countenance. What a singular slope from the top of his head, both ways, to his belt. No forehead; wide mouth; neck larger round than his head. The Major remarks to me, "I need not tell you who that is. Don't he look like the image on the handle of a jug?"



## CHAPTER VII.

Prelude—the Surgeons; The Artillery Orchestra; Pyrotechnics; The Grand Tragi-Comedy Opens Wrong End Foremost with the Last General Assault, which is Changed into a Faree—a Night Assault by Daylight—a Charge without Getting Outside of the Pickets.

THE fast thickening shadows of the Southern night are taking the place of the last daylight. We have passed the Indiana head-quarters and the cross-roads, where the cotton bags are piled and scattered, ready for their part in Dwight's Order No. 32, for turning General Gardiner out of doors. We are at the large cotton-press building, where the division hospital of Dwight's division is kept. Surgeon Mottram, of my regiment, is here. Major Clark has returned to the regiment. A skirmish having been ordered, ambulances have just returned through the woods from the front bringing wounded men, who are carried groaning on stretchers into the hospital building, which resembles a great barn, with the sides partly uncovered. I am sitting on my horse, talking with two soldiers of my regiment, who have been detailed to be among the attendants at this hospital. One of them is a cook. He soon provides some tea and hard bread, at a cooking place in an old building near by. I dismount and enter.

Even at this late hour of the night a swarm of insects surround us as soon as the candle is lighted. I ask the cause of the horrid odor which fills the air. "They don't half bury the dead boys," is the soldier's answer, and he continues, "Things here are enough to sicken any man, unless he was like one of those d—d doctors, that take delight in butchering men alive. They are cutting, sawing and hacking men all the while. The groaning and screaming hardly stops day or night, and the breath isn't fairly out of a poor fellow when they send some of their niggers out to bury him, and the niggers hardly cover him up."

I am mounted again, waiting beside the open hospital building for Dr. Mottram, who has been called upon by his enemy, Dr. Sanger, the division surgeon, to stay here and help in an extraordinary case now in hand. And what a sight is before me. There is the dim flicker of lights in the midst of surgeons, with their young assistants, crowded around a rough bench, on which lies the subject, a nobly-formed young volunteer of the Fifteenth New Hampshire. Chloroform has been used in vain. He is crying, in an agonized, despairing voice, "O kill me! kill me! do kill me!" I see his large, manly breast, heaving with agony, as he lies on his back, held by some of the young doctors, who have their eyes set upon the hands of older doctors, at work now with probe, now with knife and saw, and now with other frightfully appearing instruments of torture. The young man has been shot in the shoulder, and the doctors are digging out his arm for experiment. Some one of them says aloud, "There is not much chance for him." The glimmer of candles flickering in the night breeze, dimly showing the naked form of the writhing victim, and the hard faces of the surgeons, with their bloody hands and saws, the darkness hanging over us like a pall, the stars sparkling in the vault of heaven—the same stars beheld by our friends at home, far away, and by our enemies in the beleaguered fort before us—all together make a tableau not to be forgotten. I am glad to find myself at last riding away from the horrid odors and sights of that hospital. The voices of myriads of insects of every kind and size, and the occasional boom of a cannon, with straggling shots from sharpshooters, are not enough to drive from my ears the groans and cries of the poor New Hampshire soldier, dying in the hands of his tormentors as we left.

We turn and turn again, following old roads and paths, which lead us backward and forward, descending, climbing, or wading through a thick forest of trees, which causes such darkness that we have to trust to the instinct of our horses and that of the negro servant of an Indiana officer, who has come with us to take back his master's horse, on which I ride.

The road brings us to a large wooden dwelling house on the banks of the river. This Dr. Mottram has for his regimental hospital. Our own sick and wounded will not have to be sent to Dr. Sanger and the division hospital. I lie down to rest a few minutes on the porch toward the river. Fatigue begins to leave my joints, when a sudden flash and blaze, like that of near lightning, rises from the water, and is followed by a crashing, jarring report, differing from that of a cannon. At the same time up flies a great spark, going with grand bounds toward mid-heaven. Another and another blaze and bellowing report, sending similar sparks toward the sky, where they go forward on majestic curves, all the while slackening their speed until they begin to descend. Then they go down with rapid bounds, being always out of sight an instant at every leap. Like shooting stars they seek the ground, and must strike in the middle of Port Hudson. Suddenly one of the sparks bursts, with a gush of red flame. Then comes a sound equal to that of a heavy cannon. Another spark reaches the ground in the fort with a thud distinctly heard two miles.

The mortar schooners of the fleet are anchored close by me, and have opened the bombardment to precede the general assault. This hospital must be a hard place for sick men, who cannot bear noise, but better all the noise, with occasional premature explosions at the hospital windows, than the horror of Sanger, the division surgeon, and his young doctors.

I have come along a crooked path, across several ravines, to the camp of the Sixth Michigan. A few little shelters, made with bushes under trees along the crest of a ravine, show where the bivouac is. Most of the men sleep in the open air, undisturbed by the bombardment or by dreams of the fate that may await them before the dawn of day. I have arrived at the head-quarters hut, made of bushes, on ground so descending that I wonder how anybody can sleep on it. Captain Cordon, our senior Captain, and Major Clark, rouse up and welcome me. I find that no order for the general assault has reached them. Captain Cordon says, "If there is to be another big charge, I

should think that we would have heard something about it. We have had no orders since Dwight gave Captain Stark and me our instructions for catching old Gardiner, and I suppose that business is dropped; if it is not, it ought to be." I answer that I have just come from General Banks' head-quarters, and know that the order has gone out for a general assault before morning. I call attention to the artillery fire which the gunboats have opened, and which the land batteries are increasing rapidly. Already the lighted fuses of four or five shells may be seen at once following one another with long leaps in the sky over our heads, rolling and whirling on their way from the mortar fleet to Port Hudson. Captain Cordon seems to be making the most of what time remains for rest, and has stretched himself on his blanket for a doze. I attempt to do the same, but I cannot rest on the slanting ground in the hut, and taking my blanket, I lie down on a level place beside a large stump, in the open air. I cannot sleep under the roar of such a cannonade. The rebels have at last been aroused to answer, and have opened with their heaviest guns in the water batteries upon our navy. Whenever I open my eyes I see the shells, with their burning fuses, following each other closely and more closely, apparently nearly as high as the stars. In case of a premature explosion, the pieces may come into our camp. Time passes.

SUNDAY, June 14, 1863.—The bloody Sunday has begun. What cannon these must be that I hear. At intervals, among the naval guns, one roars louder than all the rest, and its shot howls through the air on a higher curve, and with an awful rushing noise, unlike the hissing and screaming of the other missiles, which, flying back and forth between the fleet and the fort, have been ringing like choirs of winged furies hastening through the air, preparing for some work that is to fill pandemonium with rejoicings.

Now the rebels open fire with a huge gun, which they have held in reserve. It seems to shake the earth even where I lie. It sends a shot through the air with a growl and roar which equals the voice of any federal shot. The gunboat with the

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great gun is not heard from for an interval, then fires its huge gun further down the river than before. No shout of men is heard; not a human voice, although the night is still, and the rebel works are near. Now the fire of our sharp-shooters has become so much increased everywhere along the fortifications, that the rebels are evidently answering with their rifles at every part of their works. No order has yet come for us to prepare for the coming battle. Yet a battery of Indiana guns, within a few yards of us, has been steadily increasing its fire, under orders just received, and the thirty-pounder Parrotts are fired so near me, and so often, that I start to my feet and stand listening to the different voices of cannon far and near, and the noises of different projectiles traversing the air and striking against the hill sides and clay banks of Port Hudson. There is the peculiar cracking explosion of the great mortar shells, and the irregular screech of their fragments tearing through the air. There is the scream of the Parrott shot starting near me. Over my head is the same starry canopy which I have gazed into at home, and across which now flight after flight of shells follow one another like flocks of shooting stars. Yet this bombardment, with all its sights and sounds, is, in comparison with the sights and sounds of a thunder storm, really no less insignificant than a pyramid when compared with a mountain. One is the work of man; the other is the work of God.

No orderly from any head-quarters has yet brought us news of any order for the assault. Fortunate will we be if the enemy is as undisturbed as this slumbering regiment. Nothing could have been devised equal to this cannonade for the purpose of arousing the enemy, and having them vigilant and prepared at all points. Can it be that I have been here until the morning is almost ready to dawn? It must be so. Those rifle shots, far away toward the federal right, heard between the discharges of cannon, have become more frequent and distinct, until they are plainly fired by long lines of skirmishers. The assault has begun, and yet no order for us. There was certainly a volley of musketry. The artillery ceases in that direction. It must

be that those cannon ceased firing to let the storming columns act. Now comes heavy, continuous, irregular musketry firing. That is mainly from the rebel works. Those incessant rifle shots send death into the hearts and brains of the crowded and exposed assailants. Will Port Hudson be taken? All will be over very soon. Yet that continuous fire does not abate; no, it grows hotter. Ah! the rebels were not surprised; their reserves have come up readily. Many the souls of Northern men that are departing every instant; many the forms of good men that lie bleeding, pierced through by those rebel bullets. Slowly the firing grows less. The shots are farther apart; fewer and fewer are those shots, and the federal artillery resumes its fire with more vigor than ever. It is plain which way that assault has terminated—a repulse; a most bloody repulse. That artillery is firing at victorious rebels, who hold their works defiantly. Yet that was no general assault: there was apparently but one column engaged.

The east is gray with dawn. All that part of the horizon is rapidly getting lighter. Soon the darkness will begin to vanish. Has Dwight forgotten all his own orders and those of General Banks, or is he waiting for the other division commanders to get beaten in succession, in order that he alone may capture Gardiner, take Port Hudson, and do it all in broad daylight.

Again around on the federal right. The firing of skirmishers is heard, and is answered immediately by the enemy. A volley. A cessation of artillery fire. The continuous irregular firing of assailants and assailed across the earth-works tells that another storming column, moving near the fort, has been led by some important commander to grapple with the victorious and reinforced enemy. It is easy to perceive what must be the result. Probably every man who falls by any of those rebel rifle shots knew that he was led to certain defeat.

This second assault is finished sooner than the first. The continuous clatter of musketry in the distance has ceased: only scattering shots are heard. Have our people broken through

the fortifications? No. Our artillery has again opened fire with renewed vigor in the neighborhood where the assault was made. That tells the story—another repulse. I think of the ground covered with the dead; of the groaning wounded trying to creep out of the way of the rifle balls which are aimed at them by the rebel riflemen, whose shots I hear. Many are the anxious relatives in our distant country who are to see the names of their absent ones in the list of killed, and many the letters to be written from the North to the horrible Gulf Department hospitals, inquiring in vain for the wounded. It is broad daylight, yet every soul about me is quiet except a few artillerymen working the guns in the battery near by. But all the guns and mortars on land and water are keeping up the bombardment.

I hear the sound of a horse's hoofs. An orderly is picking his way through our bivouac, and is arousing a soldier and asking for the head-quarters of the Sixth Michigan. I call to him, and tell him that I am commanding officer. He says, "General Dwight's orders are for you to form your regiment immediately and march them to the forks of the Mount Pleasant and Springfield roads, and report to Colonel Clark." I answer that I am informed that this regiment is not in Clark's brigade. The orderly answers that Clark is to command more troops than his own brigade, and that he is certain this regiment is ordered to join Clark's command. I awaken some of the officers, find the Adjutant, and assist in arousing the men and having them fall in, but the men do not seem to be very willing, although it is almost time for reveille. The orderly, who went off at a gallop, returns at a run, and says to me, "General Dwight orders you to march your regiment immediately, and join the column under Colonel Clark." I answer that the regiment will march as soon as they are in line. I hurry the formation, and the line is begun. I hear no infantry firing except the scattered shots of sharpshooters. The artillery are increasing their fire everywhere near us, and slackening their fire in the distance, thus giving the rebels warning to prepare for us on this side.

Colonel Clark's favorite orderly, George Robinson, comes galloping furiously, and cries out to me, "Colonel Clark is waiting for this regiment. All the other regiments are there. He wants you to come immediately." I answer that we will be ready to start in a moment, and George returns, but is hardly out of sight when Colonel Clark rides up before our line, which is now formed. His eyes rest on me with no small surprise, and there is in his pale face an expression of hate and of fear of detection. The thought flashes upon my mind that all hurry on his part is pretended, and that he has been sending orderlies, and finally come himself, to get rid of going into danger just as long as he can, and that he does not intend to go into an assault this morning any farther than he did on the 27th of May.

"When did you come here?" he says, addressing me.

"I came last night, and am in command, by order of General Banks."

Colonel Clark turns toward the line and calls, "Captain Cordon and Captain Stark, are you here?"

"Yes."

"Are your details ready?"

"What details?" answers Captain Stark.

"Your detail of fifty men, and Captain Cordon's detail of two hundred men."

"What for?" says Captain Cordon.

"Why," responds Clark, "to fulfill the instructions which you received from General Dwight."

"We have never been notified," says Captain Stark. "The General said he would notify us before we were to fulfill those instructions."

"Well," answers Clark, "count off your fifty men from the right of the line there, and then, Captain Cordon, count off your two hundred. I'll show you the way myself, and you are to do as you were instructed by General Dwight."

"Where am I to go with the rest of the regiment?" I asked.



In the most amiable tone of voice Clark replies, "You will go to my main column, on the Mount Pleasant road. You can either lead the regiment yourself or accompany me between the two forward regiments, when I lead my column to the charge."

With that, directing the two Captains, with their details, to follow him, my gallant Colonel rides off slowly down a winding by-road, through thickets, toward the river, every step taking him farther from his column, which must have been waiting some time for him to lead it. There is now as much daylight as there is likely to be before the sun rises. A slight mist, resting along the skirt of the woods, has begun to clear away, and the rebels have evidently seen Clark's forces, for about half a dozen pieces of light artillery, along the rebel works in front of us, open fire, as if they meant to stir up the dilatory column. As Captain Stark and Captain Cordon, with their details, pass, I see in the faces of officers and men that all understand well what kind of a horrid scrape they have got into. I hear from among them the words, "Pile up our bones, to make a reputation for somebody." The men do not march, but drag themselves like the prisoners of some cannibal king led forth to be slaughtered to appease some wooden god, and be roasted for some horrid feast. I start with my remnant of a regiment to join the main column on the highway.

Dwight's grand night attack and wonderful *coup* to capture the rebel citadel and get possession of the rebel general's headquarters in Port Hudson, is to be attempted in broad daylight, after the federal army has been beaten off at all points, and the enemy, profiting by time and warning given them from our side, are already shelling the column, and ready to rake the highway to the strongest part of their works, and every inch of ground over which the column is to pass. I do not wonder that my valiant Colonel has got so interested in sending Stark and Cordon to their job that he has forgotten that his column is waiting. May be he don't care if they go on without him.

For some distance I have to follow the same track taken by the Captains. As I pass a hiding place between two thickets,

there stands my Colonel's horse without his rider. I look to see where Clark can be, and presently he reveals himself rising from among low bushes, and addressing me in a tender tone, says, "How do you feel this morning?" I answer, "Finely." He replies, "I am very poorly; I have a severe attack of dysentery." I go on with my detachment, and see no more of my Colonel. I now meet an aid-de-camp wearing a private's uniform, to avoid being shot at too much. He gallops to me, and as my command continue marching, he says in an excited manner, "Where is Colonel Clark?" I tell him where I last saw that gentleman, and instead of galloping on, he asks me where I am going. I tell him that I have been ordered to join the main column on the Mount Pleasant road. "That's wrong," says the aid; "you are to support the attack on the citadel. Follow me, and I will show you the way." He rides slowly down a new road leading toward the river, while I give the command—"Counter-march by file left—March!" and my detachment, like men not to be surprised at anything, file around, and we soon find ourselves following the Fourteenth Maine Regiment, who are crossing a ravine, with a muddy bottom, which is to be passed before we can reach the river bank. The aid is waiting under shelter of a hill, not anxious to return to the main column, or to show us the way any farther. Here, before us, spreads the broad Mississippi, here and there a thin wreath of mist rising before the rays of the morning sun. My men, one after another, struggle through the mud, and crouching, we climb the narrow mound ridge which is next to the river's edge. There, to the right of us, about a quarter of a mile, plain in the morning light, is the high fortified bluff called the "citadel;" by its big guns we can be swept off like pigeons. Our two Captains, with their details, followed by the Fourteenth Maine, are over the bank, and are moving cautiously along near the water, toward the citadel. My men are getting over and closing up in good order behind the Fourteenth Maine, as rapidly as that regiment can get out of the way. There go the rebel deserters piloting Stark and Cordon. A few steps

more, and they will come where this bank will no longer afford us partial shelter, and we must follow along the river across an open valley exposed to full view of the enemy, and to a direct fire from the citadel, and a cross-fire from a great redoubt up this valley. The alarm is given in the citadel. We have glimpses of men's heads and gleaming rifles hurrying stealthily to their places along the parapets and sullen earth-works. One great gun is pointed straight at us from an ugly looking embrasure. Rebel cannoniers are busy there, getting a field piece ready to work at the same embrasure. The picture of that citadel never will fade from our minds. Here we are going to scale that high clay-bank precipice toward the river, where, if there were no resistance, we having to climb up by a zigzag path, one man at a time, would not be able to get our men into the citadel in much less time than half a day. Dwight, in broad daylight, and at an hour when he ought to be sober, is about to sacrifice us, to carry out a scheme devised when he was drunk.

Evidently the rebel officers have been ordering their men to withhold their fire, and are no longer able to enforce complete obedience. First one rifle shot, and the Minie ball comes singing slowly through the air over our heads. Another and another shot. Then a succession of scattering shots. The hiss and whirling, fluttering sounds of some of the bullets are now heard close over our heads, and now right among us. Wounded men are helped back from the head of our column. Sergeant A. Amsden, of Company F, standing near me, is shot through the thigh, and is borne away. In a few moments more the rebel guns will be raking us, and there will be enough of us killed and wounded to make Dwight a great man. Captain Cordon's British common sense gets the better of every other feeling in his soul, and, taking the whole responsibility, he says to his detachment, in unmistakable English, "'Alt!" and the column never moves again toward the citadel. Captain Cordon and Captain Stark, returning, consult with me. I tell them to stick to their halt. We all hug the hill side, where a slight

curve protects us from most of the rebel bullets. Crouching, and hurrying to the rear, first to take advantage of Cordon's halt, comes Dwight's rocket man with his bundle of Fourth of July rockets under his arm. He was to send up those rockets in the sunlight to let Dwight know when the citadel was taken. Probably his services will not be needed.

One of Dwight's staff, Lieutenant William Dickey, detailed from our regiment, is seen galloping away along the safe side of a bluff far to the rear, whence he has been watching us. He goes to report to his master, but if I can judge by sounds his master's main column is meeting with such an overthrow that no report from us will be necessary.

At about the time we came in sight of the river, considerable rifle firing near by was heard in front of Clark's main column. A piece of woods screens the whole affair from us, but a wild, continued roar of small and great guns, and a terrible screeching of projectiles in the air, with the continual bursting of shells, tells that the main column is meeting its fate. The feeble yell they raised soon died away. The screams of the wounded, and the taunting yells of the victorious rebels, are heard. One boyish voice from the rebel works cries out between the cracking rifle shots, "How do you like it?" Another rebel, with rough and hoarse voice, cries, "Why don't you come on?" Now field pieces and rifles drown the sound of voices. Now the sound of guns breaks a moment, and horrible shrieks of the wounded and dying are borne on the morning air, which, but for man's doings, would have been as quiet here as it is on this summer morning, just before the church bells ring at home. The shout always raised by a charging column was hardly raised by these assailants when it was hushed. That column hardly begun the double-quick when it was broken up and scattered, and now yells, taunting cries and savage laughter, are heard along the rebel works in front of Clark's column, while in front of us no cannon is fired, and only now and then a rifle shot is heard, and the ball comes singing among us, wounding somebody, or spitefully tearing up the sod.

At the Indiana battery, by our last night's bivouac, there is evidently some trouble. The rebels are firing upon that battery as if they meant something, and there is a great yelling. The battery slackens fire, and the rebel yells increase rapidly. Can it be that the enemy will attempt a sortie to spike the guns of our old friends, who, by the rout of Clark's column, must be left without support? Some of our sick men and stragglers, left at the bivouac, have advanced as sharpshooters as far as they can, and are answering the rebel riflemen well.

A message comes to us from the Indianians that they must have more support, and can find nobody but us to apply to. I take the responsibility of dispatching two of our best companies. I soon hear their rapid firing as skirmishers close in front of the enemy, whose firing and yelling almost cease there, and the Indiana guns are all at work again.

Now is the time for the rebels to make a sortie, if they have any man among them worthy of a name. They have seen what these eastern troops and ambitious division generals amount to. The federal army has charged by divisions, so as to be dashed to pieces most easily. The strength of Port Hudson is demonstrated. This army can hardly be made to assault it again, if it was unoccupied and abandoned. The garrison which every federal division has found gathered in its own front, wherever these wretched piecemeal assaults have been made, is supposed to be much stronger than it really is. Now all that is wanting to fill out the page of history to be given to this Sunday, is a grand sortie—something to turn this disastrous repulse into raising this siege, and a rout and capture of those generals who, with intent to glorify themselves, have made such a slaughter as this sun now beholds.

An order, brought by the daring Lieutenant Dickey, who now comes very near to us, calls upon us to hurry somewhere toward the starting point of the main column. We obey, giving up without sorrow all ideas of sending up Dwight's rockets from the citadel in broad daylight, to announce that we have tossed the big guns into the river, captured Gardiner's

head-quarters, and made Dwight and his Special Order No. 32 alike immortal. We lose sight of Dickey, but we are soon going back along the same route by which we came. At one place the enemy get a glimpse of us hastening along the road, and making some show of men and arms. They open fire upon us with some new kind of light artillery, which shoots small, hissing projectiles, larger than musket balls, but much smaller than any cannon shot we have ever heard in the air. These villainous little missiles come as if fired from artillery revolvers, without delay for loading, nearer and nearer to our heads, sometimes tearing the leaves and limbs of bushes, which they could not have reached without passing through our line. The Minie balls keep up their singing and whizzing on every side of us. Balls which seem almost spent, and ready to drop, go past us slowly fluttering, but whenever one of them strikes a tree, it makes the bark fly, with a sharp, cracking sound.

We have arrived in sight of where Dwight's main column started, but where is the column, and where is Dwight himself? Stragglers are seen singly and in groups along the safe side of this ravine filled with tall timber, which screens Port Hudson from our view. Negroes in federal uniform are passing continually to the rear with stretchers on which are borne dead or wounded men. A stout red-haired youth, without hat, arms, or accoutrements, comes uttering piteous sounds up the side of the ravine, "O, where is the doctor, where is the doctor?" he cries in despairing tones. I see that his cheek is bleeding. He has been hit by a ball which has had hardly force enough to bury itself in his flesh, and he thinks that he is mortally wounded. Nowhere is a company or any remnant of a line. The whole column has disappeared. Captain Cordon with his two hundred men are sent forward as skirmishers to skulk over the ground where the column went out of sight, and act as sharpshooters. It is evident that the column charged into ravines and hiding places, instead of charging into the strongly fortified sally-ports of Port Hudson.

As soon as that column came under fire it was routed, and

privates, captains, colonels and brigadiers went out of sight like a flock of frightened quails. Clark was probably in time to be blown into some deep hole, and will be praised and promoted for valor and skill. Not many of that column will be got together till night.

Back a quarter of a mile farther from the enemy than we are marching is another long ravine, skirted with tall, thick timber. Behind that timber, out of sight of everything to be done, and out of all possible danger, is Dwight. His staff-officers and orderlies must make a long circuit to communicate with us. All that he could have expected to see of the battle must have been the rockets to be sent up announcing the capture of the citadel, and the tumbling of its guns into the river. The ravine beside us, with its timber, comes to an end. Here a section of a field battery, standing unscreened and unprotected, is firing upon the earth-works of the enemy as though the shot and shell were aimed at a line of advancing infantry. We are halted, and lie down along the last of the timber, and receive orders to support the battery. It must be unpleasant for Captain Cordon's sharp-shooters, as they lie firing from behind logs or stumps, to have that battery firing furiously over their heads at nothing. Rebel riflemen, who no longer show themselves, keep up a succession of rifle shots, the bullets coming with various sounds, passing through the air, now cutting the leaves and twigs, and now spitefully striking the limbs and trunks of trees.

Some distance behind us I see a group of men and officers gathering about a stretcher, on which a dead body has just been brought off the field. An Irish soldier looks at the body and turns away, bowing his head and weeping. That dead body was this morning animated by the soul of Colonel Bryan, of the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Regiment of New York. He was young, hopeful and talented, admired and beloved by all who knew him. He will be honored as a fallen hero. It will not be known that he was the victim of a drunken block-head, and that his blood was shed for nothing, and where

nothing was to be gained by what was attempted. Colonel Bryan fell advancing boldly, believing Dwight's last words, when the column saw the last of him, as he pretended to receive a dispatch, and cried out: "Go on, go on. G—d d—n you, go on. General Grover has broken through the rebel fortifications."

First orderlies, then staff officers come to me one one after another, with the question, "Where is Colonel Clark?" I am unable to give them any information till at last one of Captain Cordon's men returning, tells me that he has just left Colonel Clark. "Is he wounded?" I ask. "I think not this time," answers the soldier with a smile, "he is in a deep hole out there a little way, and says he can't come out till night; he wants his orderly to bring him his dinner."

Soon afterward comes Captain Hoffman, Dwight's Adjutant-General, with a most solemn countenance, as though he expected to find Clark's dead body immediately, and asks the oft repeated question. I answer that according to what I have just heard he can find Colonel Clark in the next ravine toward the front, where he is probably waiting for orders. The warlike Captain looks forward enough to see that the ground in front of the timber sheltering us is somewhat too open for entire safety. Just then a Minie ball is heard whizzing high over our heads. The Captain's oblique black eyes roll up an instant, and then turning, he goes at a rapid walk back to his master to report.

In a few moments Captain McGee, of the Massachusetts Cavalry, comes galloping carelessly to the battery, and gives an order from General Dwight to fire more rapidly, and to direct their fire so as to assist Colonel Clark in any further demonstration he may make on the enemy's works.

The Captain dismounts, and stretching himself on the grass near me, says: "General Dwight thinks that Colonel Clark is going to do something, and I am to observe and report." I ask him where his cavalry are. He says, "They were here this morning. I was to have the honor of leading this great charge." "Is it possible," I answer, "that the cavalry charge on the fort



was to come off as well as the capture of General Gardiner in his bed while the battle was going on. Let me take down in pencil all you know about the matter." I hastily note with pencil in my memorandum book as the Captain gives me these words: "This morning I saw General Dwight near the ground where his troops assembled. Captain Godfrey, Captain Barrett and I were there with six companies of cavalry. I was in command. My force was in time. I went to report to the General. He gave me orders as follows: 'You will move your command up the road till you get in view of the citadel, and there remain until I give you the command to charge. You will then charge up through the sally-port, turn to the right and saber the cannoniers at their posts.' I asked Dwight, 'That being done, where will I go, sir?' He said, 'Ride through the fort, and get out in General Grover's front.' I said, 'I will then be receiving the fire of both parties.' Dwight answered, 'Do the best you can; by that time you can fall back on the infantry, which I will send to support you.' No more was then said.

"I moved my command forward to within view of the citadel, which was about one thousand yards off. The enemy then opened fire, first with shell and then with spherical case. Captain Hoffman, Dwight's Adjutant, rode up to my command, which stood on the road in column of fours, and inquired which of the two roads led to the citadel, as he thought that I was not on the right road. I assured him that this road was right. He directed me to move my command a little to the right, out of range. I did so, but the enemy soon got the range again. (I forgot to say that Dwight told me he would give the order to charge as soon as he heard the firing on the left, by the river.\*) Hoffman directed me to move under shelter of a skirt of woods on my left, which I did, and then gave the order to dismount. We remained there until an aid brought us orders to retreat. When I was on the road leading to the citadel, a

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\* So Dwight expected that our surprise party, who were to capture the citadel and proceed to Gardiner's head-quarters, were to enter the fort with firing, as a storming party.

detail, with cotton bags, moved up on my left flank, even with the head of my column. When I saw the shells doing damage to them, I gave them the order to lie down. After the charge came off without cavalry, I fell back and reported to Dwight. He asked if I could get a section of a battery within range of the artillery that had been firing upon us. I said 'Yes.' He answered, 'As you were there, and know the ground, will you show Lieutenant Rodgers the place?' I did so, and came back and reported that I saw a regiment lying near where I posted the guns. Dwight said, 'Let that regiment be moved forward immediately to support skirmishers,' but no one could tell what skirmishers were to be supported, or where they were. I got on the ground of assembly before the infantry, and about sunrise."

As I put up my memorandum book, the Captain turns aside, and pointing toward the sullen embankments of the citadel, which we can see through an opening in the trees, he says, "I suppose that Dwight expected me to go by fours galloping down this narrow road, through ravines, under a cross-fire, and up the steep bluff, with a fire on both sides, and in my rear from the citadel and the next redoubts. Then we were to find the bridge all right and the sally-ports open. In we were to go, and find no difficulty in turning to the right, riding along the parapet and sabering the cannoniers at their guns, although the ground near the parapet appears just about as impracticable for cavalry on the inside as it is on the outside of the fort. The greatest thing about it all was that the whole thing was to be done after the federal army had been beaten to death before daylight at all other points, and everything possible had been done to let the rebels know what we were going to do."

I answer, "When Dwight's mind originated my order for catching Gardiner, and your order for sabering those cannoniers at their guns, he gave birth to twins, that much resembled their father." The Captain rejoins, "I would not wonder if one of his aids should come any minute and order us all to charge again, cavalry, infantry and artillery, for Dwight has had

time to take a good many more drinks of the sanitary liquors Sanger has on hand for the wounded, and I know that he expects at every moment to hear that Colonel Clark has come out of his hole and taken the citadel. I believe that I have waited long enough, and will go back and tell him straight out where Clark is, and what has become of the column, for those staff officers will tell him any lie that they think he wants to believe, and the General is very sure not to get near enough to see for himself."

The sun glares down upon us, heating the flesh to the very bone, and heating the blood to our hearts. The day passes. We find water in a ravine near by, and a few pieces of hard bread make as much as we feel like eating. Late in the day a little fire is made, and black coffee, hastily prepared, tastes as well from a bruised tin cup as it ever did when creamed, sweetened and offered in porcelain. Hardly a cloud has floated in the sky to-day. God have mercy on the wounded. No arrangement has been made for bringing off the dead and wounded under a flag of truce. The negroes have only been able to get off those who were nearest to our side. One of the black fellows just showed me his cap, through which a rebel rifle ball had torn a hole as he was helping to carry off a wounded man. Why is it that the wounded are left there to roast and thirst to death slowly in the hot sun? It is said that the rebel and the federal generals could not agree, the former saying that some of the wounded lay nearer to their works than they were willing to have federal parties make examinations, and generously offered to send out parties of their own men, who would carry our dead and wounded to a proper distance, and there deliver them to those sent to receive them; but luckily genius was not wanting on our side to perceive that in this way the rebels would make examinations too near our front, so the flags of truce returned, and the wounded are left to die in their agonies. The dead are already swollen and blackening, exposed to the feverish air.

An officer, some of whose friends and neighbors lay dying on

an open place toward the rebel works, begged Dwight to accept the rebel offer, as there was nothing here for the rebels to see which they had not seen every day. Dwight replied, "No, sir; it's all a stratagem of the enemy to get the dead carcasses carried away from before their works. They know that they will be stunk out if the bodies rot there, and they cannot get them away on account of our fire. No, sir; I'll stink the rebels out of the citadel with the dead bodies of these d—d volunteers, if I cannot make the cowards take it by storm, as I have ordered them to do. If my orders had been carried out, Port Hudson would have been taken by me, and there would have been no trouble about the wounded. You ought to be in Port Hudson, sir, instead of being here. Clear out, sir, or I will have you executed ignominiously."

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## CHAPTER VIII.

Dwight gets an Idea; Night Performances; Views from the Rifle Pits.

Toward sunset orders came for us to form and march back to our camp. We obeyed, hoping that Dwight would make no further attempts to immortalize himself or sacrifice us that day. For some days our pickets and sharpshooters had reported the nature of the ground between our camp and the citadel, which was the extreme right of the rebel fortifications, and in front of it, down the river, our regiment formed the extreme left of the federal army. At the foot of the group of high fortified bluffs making the citadel and its outworks, was a deep ravine about three hundred yards wide, a miry little bayou in its middle, the valley being bounded on our side by a bluff almost as high as the opposite one on which was the citadel. Our bluff had been occupied by sharpshooters for several days, who, from behind logs and trees, got many good shots at any man who

showed himself in the opposite fortifications. There might be some propriety in making a redoubt with rifle pits at this place, to give our sharpshooters better protection, and have some artillery ready in case of a sortie. A mortar battery, safe behind a hill, could be used so as to annoy the enemy continually, but the idea of selecting the citadel as a place to batter with the best of the federal artillery, and for an assault with the best of the federal army, could only be suggested by the mind that originated Special Order No. 32. To send troops to pretend to capture and fortify the bluff opposite to the citadel, and then to influence General Banks to put the best of the artillery there in a grand battery, under Dwight's command, was suggested to this General by some of his staff as the best means to cover up his plans and performances of the memorable 14th of June. He gave orders that the suggested capture should be made, and added, "I will report to General Banks in the morning that I have made a lodgment on a bluff that commands the citadel, and, by G—d, I'll make him send me the best of his artillery, and report to Washington that I have done more than Grover or Weitzel, and that report will be true, if we do anything at all." Dwight rode to his tent, where a brigade of infantry, under General Nickerson, with artillery and cavalry, guarded him, and Surgeon Sanger had prepared a feast of canned meats and other delicacies, with choice liquors, sent, perhaps, by Northern ladies for the sick and the wounded. The obsequious little surgeon, having abandoned the care of the wounded to young doctors, actually took the place of a waiter behind his master's seat, and praised the achievements of the day, as he brought this and that to regale the great General, fresh from the field of victory.

We had hardly arrived at our camp, when Captain Bailey, afterwards breveted a General for working on a dam, and now Dwight's Chief Engineer, came and gave me instructions to move my regiment over into the next ravine toward the river, and that after dark he would bring some negroes to dig a rifle pit, and would call upon me for men to guard the working

party. Bailey was a man aged about forty years, during the latter part of which, before the war, according to his own account, the actions most to boast of were various horse trades, in which he had cheated his neighbors. It was said that before the war he was employed in a Wisconsin saw-mill for twenty dollars a month, but he possessed certain qualities sure to give him great favor in the eyes of Generals whom the government transported to this department to get rid of them. He was servile and obsequious to those he feared, and insolent as any blackguard could be to everybody else. No man ever had less sense of the difference between right and wrong, or less sympathy for suffering than Bailey had. His vanity and self-conceited importance were no less notorious and ridiculous than his gross ignorance and low breeding. No base man, suddenly promoted for base purposes of a besotted despot, ever believed more religiously than Bailey did in the necessity of cruelty and atrocious wickedness to make his importance felt. Although his avarice was unsurpassed by that of any favorite of power in New Orleans, his malignity, shamelessness and low cunning made him a valuable tool for any secret service, or any infamous work, or any heaven daring crime that did not necessitate the exposure of his person to danger. It always seemed to me that the immediate cause of his being in favor continually was his readiness at all times to sacrifice the health, lives or honor of his countrymen of the Northwest to gratify the caprice or hatred of any of the old regular army subalterns appointed to be military governors with us for their slaves. Qualified to be Chief Engineer about as he was to be a bishop, he got his position to keep out of danger, and to find play for his abilities as a negro driver, which gave him the envy and admiration of Creole overseers.

As he gave me the order to move my camp, his roguish face had an expression of uncommon villainy, which I tried to attribute to some pain he felt from a wound, for I saw that he carried his arm in a sling. I asked him if he was wounded, to which he answered, "Yes," with a look of affected unconcern,

as though to be wounded was a common thing in his experience.

At about 10 o'clock in the evening Bailey came to our camp, and in a few minutes I was leading two companies behind him in a gully on our side of the bluff, the top of which was to be fortified by us. "Halt," says Bailey, "send forward a man to reconnoiter. I don't want to make a mistake and get gobbled. You had better ask some of your men if this is the right hill, and send forward a scout to see if the rebels have got a picket there."

All causes for fear of being gobbled were removed, and I was soon on the top of the bluff with a party of our men, who had been provided with spades and picks, and were instructed to dig a trench about a foot and a half deep along the brow of the bluff toward the citadel as soon as they could, so that Bailey could come on with his negroes and go to work, having a place to drop down into and be safe if the citadel opened fire. The most of my men were posted as a reserve, lying safe on the hill side. The working party were armed and ordered to make as little noise as possible, while look-outs watched and listened for anything from the enemy. In a few moments our men would have places dug deep enough to get into if they were fired upon. The moon was not to be seen. The night air was cool and still, and the stars were bright in the dark sky. The citadel was very near. I could hear the sound of a lumber wagon driven back at a trot from the rebel works towards the village of Port Hudson. That team had been bringing ammunition or other supplies for those who could not receive much by daylight. A thirty-pound Parrott gun in the Indiana battery spoke out suddenly, and being partly to the rear of us, made everything about us tremble. The whirling, screeching percussion shell came tearing with a terrible noise through the air past us, and struck near where the team seemed to be, but in a moment afterward I heard the rebel wagon wheels going on again over the hard dry road.

I looked into the dark valley before me, and was thinking

what a blessing this darkness might be to our wounded, or to such of them as had lived through the hot day. I could hear sharp firing by skirmishers far off toward the federal right, where the greatest massacre had been in the morning. No doubt that our people were venturing far into danger to bring off their wounded. Ah! the dead were more fortunate than most of those wounded. The thirst, the loss of blood, the heat, the flies and mortification, made death certain, and caused death to be preceded by unspeakable horrors. Soulless surgeons, with their bloody instruments of torture, were to be the only attendants of the dying. Suddenly I heard in the citadel the voices of a congregation singing a hymn, and soon afterward the loud, earnest voice of a devout Methodist, leading in prayer. There was a camp meeting praying and singing, for more than an hour, the "Amen," and the "Glory to God," being often heard uttered with the greatest zeal. At the same time, shell after shell was sent up from the distant mortar boats, the lighted fuses alternately appearing and going out of sight, as the great shells rolled over and over on their mighty curves through the sky, and the heavy guns in several of our batteries were fired by regular intervals, and sent their projectiles howling through the air. No part of Port Hudson seemed to be aimed for more than the citadel, but the praying and singing men seemed to be used to hearing shells from mortars and Parrotts burst about their ears; they paid no attention to such things. There must have been pickets outside of the rebel works, who could hardly have failed to hear our working party. The citadel might open fire suddenly, and sweep the whole hill-top. I watched to see the flash of the rebel guns in time to lie down before the shot could reach us, but the thing most to be feared was that Dwight might come, or send new orders for us to do some feat of arms contrived by himself. Yet of this we need have had no fears; his staff wanted no more of his exploits immediately, and having done all their duty as his waiters and wine-pourers at the table, some of them had presented their master with a new black concubine, procured by them that day, and had performed for him



all the ancient and honorable duties of groomsmen—services to be rewarded with corps d'Afrique field offices.

At daylight on the 15th of June, 1863, I awoke from a sort of sleep, in which I had constantly watched for the citadel to open fire, and had been conscious that our working party and their guards had not been disturbed. The sound of our federal cannon, far and near, had grown fainter in my ears, until a sweet vision of home and children had hung before my mind, unbroken even by the report of the Parrotts in the Indiana battery near me. The first rays of light showed the rebels the lines of fresh yellow loam marking the crest of the bluff where our working party had been digging rifle pits. The sharp reports of half a dozen rifles, and the quick whiz of bullets, stopped all work, and our men dropped to their shallow trench as quickly as possible. In a moment an irregular volley from federal Enfields and Springfields, followed by a succession of shots from both sides, let me know that an exchange of salutations was going on between Michigan men and the defenders of the citadel. By a curve in the flight of the rebel bullets, after passing the heads of our men in the rifle pit, they came down the hill side, singing through the air, cutting the green leaves and twigs, and making the dry pieces of bark fly from the trees near me.

A little rebel howitzer, concealed in earth-works of one of the redoubts up the ravine from the citadel, was fired, and sent a spherical case shot, which exploded between me and our men in the rifle pit, and scattered its bullets recocheting over the ground where I had stood when the work commenced. The Indiana Parrotts seemed to think themselves insulted by the rebel gun that had dared to speak in their presence, and sent shot and shell, tearing up the earth of the redoubt where the howitzer had been seen. The Indiana guns rested, as if the rebel gun had certainly been knocked to pieces, but in a moment it fired again, sending a twelve-pound shell, which cut down a sapling, and emitting a gush of smoke, sent its fragments with a sharp growl flying up and down our hill side. Again the Indiana Parrotts, aided by the fire of other batteries,

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hurled their projectiles into the very place where the howitzer seemed to be, and this time when the roar of federal cannon and the shrieking of projectiles ceased, the rebel gun did not speak. No other gun, either in the citadel or any part of the works, was fired, and our artillerists could not tell where along the confederate works the cannon were hidden, but the rifle firing was kept up with spirit, as if it was a pastime, both parties lying under the cover of earth-works; and although the Indianians, assisted by a section of a regular battery having twelve-pounders, cannonaded the citadel, it was evident that the rebels were safer from the fire of artillery than they were from the fire of sharpshooters. My regiment lay grouped under several spreading oaks in the ravine behind the newly constructed rifle pits, ready to relieve those there, by sending fresh men, or to meet the enemy in case of a sortie. Even the shots from the rebel howitzer had not disturbed the men, who were preparing their breakfast unconcerned as if in perfect safety. Presently Simonds, of Company G, come down the hill holding a bloody handkerchief to his cheek, but not appearing to be hurt much. He told me that as he was getting ready to fire through a hole at a turn in the rifle pit, a bullet came tearing the earth off the side of another loop-hole, and hit him in the cheek. He showed me the wound. The bullet had evidently lodged on the first bone. I told him he would have an honorable scar worth more at home than a commission. No one supposed that the wound was mortal, but so it proved to be, and Simonds lies in one of the many graves which the siege of Port Hudson left, never to be found by friend or relative after the little board on which his comrades marked his name was broken down.

The rebels seemed to become reconciled to the presence of our rifle pits, and the firing soon was no more than good sharpshooters' practice, while the artillery fire became a succession of random shots at long intervals of time all around Port Hudson, without any effect or apparent object, except to show that we had a Chief of Artillery.

The sun mounting up in the clear sky poured down his scorching rays, hastening the decomposition of the unburied dead bodies of many brave and intelligent men, kindling the fevers of the miserable wounded, and compelling the recent combatants to rest. Long exposure to the Louisiana sun during the year and six months that I had been without seeing home or family had acclimated me, and I was busy in making observations and collecting information.

The great ravine immediately before the citadel extended back from the river about half a mile, and terminated close to the rebel works, so that it could not be swept by the fire of any federal battery. Our bivouac was in a second ravine, shorter and narrower than the first, and separated from it by the hill on which was our last night's work. A third ravine, in a course nearly parallel to the other two, extended from the river through the woods into the old cotton field. This ravine was separated from the second one by the ridge on which the Indiana battery stood. A fourth ravine, separated from the third by the last ridge, which was covered with timber, came to the river, beside open fields, near Surgeon Mottram's white house hospital. The broken nature of the ground had caused the planters to leave the timber growing on these ridges, in these ravines, and inside the rebel fortifications. Beside the fourth ravine, and not far from our hospital, were the nearest troops that could come to our support—a weak force, about half a mile from us, and by winding roads and difficult ground that distance might be regarded as at least quadrupled. In case of a sortie, it was plain that the enemy could come out, attack us, and return, without danger even from our nearest batteries, for these would have to send their shot among us in order to reach the rebels. There were pools, springs and little streams of tolerably cool water in the ravines. The doubts as to the effect of this water on health were little thought of by those who knew that they were the slaves of generals who considered it all right to use up any number of volunteers in any way to get a reputation, or even a notoriety.

After a refreshing bath, I fell in with Lieutenant Buck, of Company G, who had just been relieved from duty on the hill. He told me that from the rifle pit there was not only a good view of the citadel, but of much more of the fortifications, and that he knew a way of getting over the hill without much risk of being hit. I must examine the ground, and Lieutenant Buck acting as my guide, we started up the hill. As we begin to be exposed to bullets, the Lieutenant says to me, "You see that lone tree? Well, I'll run to that tree; then you run, and stop close behind me." It is done, and the little white oak hardly covers us. "Now," says the Lieutenant, "you see that old gate post standing there alone? We must run again, and go it faster this time, for the rebs can see us easily." I am conscious of making good use of my running abilities, and have hardly squatted behind my friend at the gate post, when he says, "They can take us in the flank if they see us from that redoubt to our right. That fresh earth across this stretch of open ground is the rifle pit. I'll run like the devil and throw myself into it, and you can do the same. We will probably draw fire this time, but it will be hard for them to hit us. Crouch down as well as you can." The Lieutenant does run, and drops into the rifle pit. I cannot be certain whether a rebel bullet hit him or not. Out of breath, I drop into the little trench, which does not seem to be quite a foot deep here. I do not know how near the bullets came, but the rebel rifles cracked in quick succession. Here lie our sharpshooters, every man yellow with clay dust, through which he must drag himself like a snake whenever he moves. They have their rifles beside them, or run through holes under limbs or logs of wood, which lie on the little earth-work thrown up during the night.

A spare and swarthy soldier, whose face I have seen in the hold of the Great Republic, and in many a swamp encampment, says to me, "Colonel, the best place to look from is at the fallen tree at the farther end of the rifle pits, but you can see a good deal from here." He draws his rifle out of the loop-hole, through which I strain my gaze, taking in at one view the great

ravine, and along the crest of the opposite bank, the sullen citadel, with its network of rifle pits and parapets looking down on one side upon the broad, tawny-colored river, flowing a hundred feet below, the most venturesome gunboat being two miles away, while on the side this way, at not much more than three hundred yards distance, two parapets, one above the other, on the steep hill side, hold their hidden fires ready to sweep the river bank and the valley yawning before me.

About two hundred and fifty yards up the ravine from the citadel, a high, round hill stands out, almost separated from the main bank, which the rebels have fortified. The top of this round hill is dug into a redoubt, which shows, by the piles of fresh earth on its parapets, that it holds its guns entirely safe, ready to cross-fire with the citadel, and rake every step of ground where assailants can come.

Up the ravine, a quarter of a mile farther, I see the heavy embankments of another redoubt standing out into the valley on a projection much like the round hill. All the rebel parapets are capped with sand bags, piled two side by side, six inches apart, and one laid across, so as to make a perfect loop-hole. In some places two or three lines of these sand bag loop-holes appear, rising one above another, on different parapets. The redoubts give a perfect flanking arrangement, and an assaulting column, in crossing this great ravine, would have to make their way through the tangled, fallen timber, interwoven with rank briars, cross the miry brook or bayou, and climb the opposite bank, encountering every kind of fire.

If the citadel should be taken by assault, the appearance of things on the inside of the rebel works indicates that the assailants would find themselves in a trap, for a deep ravine coming from toward Port Hudson village parallel to the river bank, and near to it, empties into the ravine before me. Just beyond the first redoubt, a strip of ground between the ravine and the river has the only track leading from the citadel to Port Hudson, which is a mile distant. Across this narrow strip of ground, I can see that several lines of interior works have been

made, any one of which looks stronger than any part of the single exterior line of earth-works, which, at other points, has repelled every assault. Along the narrow strip of ground, not far beyond the interior works, I see a comfortable brick dwelling house. Near it, and close to the river bank, are several negro cabins, also made of brick, some of them being white-washed. Farther toward the village everything is obscured from view by the dense forest, in the edge of which can be seen long rows of little log huts, built by regiments of soldiers. All these buildings look not much the worse for the cannonade.

My attention is drawn to the redoubts. Our generals are not yet acquainted with them, or we should have heard more about them. Under the fire of both of these, and winding around between the first one and the citadel, and through the doubly guarded narrow sally-port, Dwight was to send his cavalry to enter by twos, file right and left, and dash along the parapet, sabering the cannoniers at their guns. Of course, cavalry that could get through this ravine before me would go through any ravine on the inside of the rebel works. Surely, such cavalry need not stop at anything. The track where the cavalry was to go was the same where the infantry must follow, and the narrowness of the road would compel them, as well as the horsemen, to go by twos, nowhere sheltered from fire. The long procession would have to go for about half a mile almost parallel to the rebel works, and within good rifle range of them. The discretion which caused the storming column to disappear into holes and hollows as soon as they got fairly started, was better than any valor they could have shown.

I drag myself along the narrow rifle pit, slipping over the bodies of those I cannot get around. The low piles of fresh earth fail to be a sufficient cover. I stop in places, dodge my head for an instant above the little parapet, take a good view, and down again in time to be safe from a bullet. I creep farther, up with my head in a new place, so as not to appear where I may be expected to appear, get a fair glimpse of the rebel arrangements, and then down again.

This creeping through yellow clay dust without rising on my knees to help myself is advantageous in one way: whatever part of the body is shown to the rebels is the color of the clay, and cannot be aimed at easily. I have arrived at a great fallen tree on the brink of the bluff toward the river, whose waters do not come within less than about twenty rods of the foot of this bluff, the intervening ground being a low ridge along the river edge, and between that ridge and the foot of the bluff a strip of very low ground, through which winds the little bayou from the great ravine almost parallel with the river, until it empties into it back where our column, destined for Gardiner's head-quarters, first drew the enemy's fire yesterday morning.

All this low ground and river shore is completely swept by the fire of the enemy, and is not to be reached by a single federal gun, except by random shots from the navy two miles away. There were but few trees growing at the mouth of the great ravine, or anywhere between this bluff and the river, and no attempt has been made to obstruct the ground there with abattis. This place, safe from federal guns, is enough to tempt a sortie if anything can do so. Here the enemy can come by day or night and take this rifle pit, our camp and the Indiana battery, in flank, with superior numbers, while all support is cut off from us by distance and by the nature of the ground. But in any event we have less to fear from the enemy than from our own commanders, so we must accept the situation.

There is an opening under the trunk of this tree, through which I get a good view up the great ravine and along the rebel fortifications, but seeking a better view over the top of the log. While I am watching for any puff of smoke from the redoubt, I am suddenly conscious of several rifle shots in the citadel. I drop down quickly. Some of the bullets hiss spitefully through the air where my head was. There has been a little cessation of firing before this, but now the citadel garrison keep their rifles at work so that I will hardly be able to creep back as safely as I came. I gave orders to my men not to fire, thinking that shots from our side would only provoke the rebels

and prevent my observations, but I find, as I drag myself along the shallow trench that our silence is giving the enemy courage to keep up such a fire as will prevent me from running over the open ground in rear of our rifle pit. I lie still and give our men permission to answer, which they do with such spirit as to quiet their Southern neighbors, so that I find no trouble in returning to our camp in the ravine. But the twang of rebel rifles and the spiteful hiss of bullets which I heard as, covered with clay dust, I made the last race, yet ring in my ears.

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## CHAPTER IX.

The Boston Achilles at his Tent; Dwight as Magician—He Changes Known Defeat into Recorded Victory; His New Programme—a Tower of Cotton Bales to Overlook Port Hudson, and Mount Cannon Enough to Shake Down the Citadel; Verax, the Herald of Truth.

THE fiery heat causes Dwight, the mighty son of Boston, to perspire as he yet sleeps in his guarded tent. His staff speak in whispers. The sentinels forbid approach and prevent noise, but he awakes. The daughter of Ethiopia is gone. Faithful aids led her away before day dawn. Dwight speaks: "Hoffman!" Promptly replies the zealous Adjutant, in sweet tones, "Sir!" The divided curtain which separates the ends of the two white wall-tents is raised by the unsoiled hand of the trusty Adjutant. "I am here, General." Again speaks the chieftain: "Hoffman, where are my pantaloons?" "I will find them, General." "Well, find them now." Imperial was that voice. By the Adjutant's skilled assistance soon is the mighty leader clad, but sombre is his brow. There is blood in his eye. As Hoffman stoops with his white handkerchief to brush a little dust from his master's polished boot, Dwight makes a step, kicks the Adjutant, and with words as well as acts to teach subordination,



says: "G—d d—n you volunteers. If you had done as you were ordered, I would now be in General Gardiner's headquarters, and the world would have known who I am. If I had regulars I could march them into Port Hudson at a right shoulder shift arms. If I had even my old regiment I could send them in line of battle through any ravine here." Hoffman listens. It is not for him to answer. His master looks at him and says, "Where is Colonel Clark?" Tremulous is the answer. "He has been waiting some time to see you, General." "Why didn't you let me know that, sir?" "I did not know that you would like to be disturbed." Quick is the response of the great warrior Bostonian: "Did you think that I was asleep? Well, volunteers will never know anything. Go and bring Colonel Clark here."

Soon, on the carpeted floor of the outer tent, in presence of Dwight, who sits in a cushioned chair, Clark stands in finest uniform. Large the eagles on his straps, and wide the sash beneath his sword-belt. Tall in stature, portly in abdomen and hips, pale in his fat face, his bluish eyes wide open, he waits hat in hand. Dwight, swelling with superiority and dignity, says, "Where were you all day yesterday?" Pale is Clark, but unabashed: "General, I was holding my ground. I was keeping possession of the field of battle for you. When you send me forth to fight I am not the man to forsake the field. My headquarters were so close to the enemy that I could not communicate with you regularly. I was almost ready to make another attack on Port Hudson, when I was ordered to withdraw the troops under my command, but I was too near the enemy to retire before darkness covered my retreat." The cloud of wrath on Dwight's brow is not dispelled. He is not content with the glory of having held the field. Clark must say more: "I would never have stopped until I was in Port Hudson if the column by the river had obeyed your orders, and executed your plan for the capture of the citadel and of General Gardiner—that plan which will put you in history as the first military genius of the age. Had I seen one of the

rockets you provided, go up from the citadel, my bleeding column would have swept on like the wind, and the enemy would have fled in dismay. Had I been with my regiment to lead them myself, they would have obeyed your orders, and I would have sent you General Gardiner in a cage. But I could not be in two places at once. Under the leadership of those who were left in my place my regiment failed to act worthy of themselves." The great leader of storming columns would say more. He would tell his master that to his surprise he had found Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon in command of the Sixth Michigan, and knew that the presence of that officer was enough to account for the failure of the sublime plan.

But Dwight cuts him short. He start in his chair, swelling like a furious toad. "Send for Captain Cordon and Captain Stark," he says. "Cowardice! disobedience of my orders in the presence of the enemy! I have had men shot without trial for less than that. Even now my orders are out for the summary execution of stragglers. By G—d, I'll have a summary execution. I'll hang those Captains with my own hands this morning. Hoffman, send for them instantly. They are responsible for all the blood that this siege will cost. They are responsible for preventing the success of a plan which would have given me the stars that I am entitled to. I'll hang them high as Haman!"

While an aid is gone for the two Captains, Clark dares to address his chief, who has risen and steps from side to side, his short form and wonderful head and neck all full of majesty. The Colonel's voice is subdued in tone. He says, "General, your plans have not failed. I have heard you say 'there is no such word as fail.'" Hoffman interrupts, "Yes, General, may I sooner die than admit that your plan could fail. Your comprehensive plan provided for every emergency. The two columns made first-rate feints, and completely diverted the attention of the enemy, while under your eye your Engineer, Captain Bailey, slipped in and made a lodgment on the eminence that commands the citadel and Port Hudson. As soon as you get

your artillery there, you can demand the surrender of Port Hudson to yourself, and receive the sword of General Gardiner, without the help of any other division."

"What!" asks Dwight, thrusting his thumbs into the arm-holes of his vest, "did you not suppose I knew all that? Now, get some of Sanger's supplies out here as soon as you can. I'll have a hanging before I eat, but not before I drink, by G—d!"

The Adjutant and a first-class negro waiter bring the decanters filled with mixed liquors, in which the slices of lemon are seen through the cut glass. The liquors have been kept cold in hospital ice. Silver goblets, lined with gold, procured in the Teche country, are filled. Dwight drains one, and exclaims, "Clark, drink, or I'll hang you." The stormer of forts boldly reaches forth his right hand. Three times the two great men drink in silence. Hoffman fills the empty goblets.

"General," says Clark, "this execution—this execution. You have already made yourself No. 1 among disciplinarians. Of course this execution will exhibit your power, but I am anxious to see the order which all expect to see—the order announcing your victory and your occupation of the hill that commands Port Hudson."

"That's so," says the General, with gravity, and drank alone. "But the hanging comes first, unless—unless—" he drinks again.

Hoffman announces, "General, the two Captains are here," and the two Captains, worn and dusty, stand before Dwight, who tries to stretch himself up and put on authority, but it is like trying to stretch up a jug, or fit authority to a demijohn.

"Captain Cordon and Captain Stark," says Dwight, "you—you—hic—hanged—hic—" he holds on to the tent pole, "hanged—hic."

No smile is seen on the face of either Captain. Thoughts of home and eternity give them faces solemn as that of Daniel in the pictures representing him in the lion's den. But Hoffman smiles. He has crossed the liquors in a particular way, which he knew had power over the soul of his master, and he now

beholds both Dwight and Clark reeling into seats. The General says, with several stops, "Gentlemen, 'ep yur-selves." Hoffman directs the slave to offer a goblet to each of the Captains, and informs them that they can return to the regiment and await further orders. He adds, significantly, "If you hold your tongues, there will be no further orders in your case."

Captain Hoffman immediately sent for the officers who commanded the cotton bag battalion, and the bridge makers who started with the storming column, the former to keep the bullets off, and the latter to bridge some imaginary castle moat. When they came, he told them frankly that they were in danger of being hanged, and he did not know but they ought to be hung, for the cotton bags and the balks and chesses had been thrown down or piled up for shelter as soon as the enemy's bullets began to come, so that the bridge and cotton bags were at the rear of the column when it exploded, and that no matter whether to have stopped at the outset was the best thing they could have done or not, the General must be satisfied, for the assault must be reported a success. He advises them to get every sign of the cotton bags and of the pieces of the bridge out of sight, and have as little said about them as possible; to send a present of the best liquors to the General every day; and to send him anything else they know he likes, and to say all they can think of in his praise, and that, as Adjutant-General, he will look out for the rest. That so far luck is on their side, for the General seems to have forgotten all about them, and what they were to do. The distinguished bridge builders and cotton bag bearers have nothing to do but thank Hoffman and take his advice, as they would take a preventive medicine which is the only thing that can save their lives.

Captain Hoffman immediately sat down and wrote the following order, which aids and orderlies were soon delivering to various commanding officers:

GENERAL ORDERS, }  
No. 4. }

HEAD QUARTERS SECOND DIVISION, }  
Before Port Hudson, June 15, 1863. }

The Brigadier-General commanding the division congratulates the troops on the brave advance they made yesterday, and the ground they gained from the enemy, which they now hold. Every such approach toward the enemy must discourage and distress the rebel force. But to do this it is important that not a step of ground be lost; that from every ravine and every artificial cover our riflemen shall annoy and distress the rebels within their works. It is important, then, that our soldiers shall get such advanced position that the enemy cannot move about within their works in safety. The Brigadier-General commanding the division has to complain that regimental commanders do not keep their men well enough in hand, and that line officers do not keep the soldiers in ranks with sufficient strictness. These faults must be corrected. No soldiers can march to an assault who fail to preserve their formation strictly. No advance can be well held when soldiers are suffered to leave ranks. No sharpshooters or skirmishers can be effective unless controlled by their line officers. Regimental commanders do not preserve control over their regiments when they allow their soldiers to mingle with the soldiers of another regiment on the battle-field. The proper intervals of regiments must, under all circumstances, be preserved. When regiments are crowded they are inefficient, and sometimes uselessly exposed.

By order of Brigadier-General Dwight.

WICKHAM HOFFMAN, A. A. G.

The truth was that neither of Dwight's columns got as near to the enemy as our sharpshooters had been during many days before the 14th. Near the river and along the whole brink of the great ravine, from the place of our new rifle pit to the highway, our riflemen had for several days hiding places, and held the ground, for the enemy did not pretend to come out of his works. In the daytime artful dodging was necessary for riflemen to relieve each other in these hiding places, but at

night there was nothing to hinder the whole division from advancing to the brink of the great ravine and intrenching themselves there.

The main column led by Clark had not reached the brink of the great ravine, but had disappeared in other ravines before getting there. That column exposing its masses to a concentrated fire, could not pass the ground over which our sharpshooters had often skulked singly. These sharpshooters on the morning of the assault actually looked back towards the camps and saw that column routed, and sent into the earth. Our new rifle pit could have been made any night for a week before the assault just as easily as on the night after that event; so that Dwight really did all of his assaulting without getting outside the federal lines. But according to the West Point philosophy it appears that a general's authority is such that in his orders, reports and bulletins, he may use either truth or falsehood as suits his interest and convenience, and one of the most important duties of a staff officer is to tell lies for his master.

During the 15th of June, 1863, one of Dwight's staff, having hints from the General himself, wrote a communication for a Boston newspaper. As soon as the valiant Brigadier got sober enough to listen he read it to him as follows :

"BEFORE PORT HUDSON, }  
"June 14, 1863—11 o'clock P. M. }

"Port Hudson has been assaulted, and General Dwight is now master of the place. After the rest of the army had been repulsed, General Dwight led his division to attack the strongest part of the fortifications along the high bluff. If there had been no fortifications the position of the enemy would have been stronger than it was where any other general made an assault, but our brave commander, of whom Boston may well feel proud, led the charge in person. His valor inspired every soldier. His master mind found one of those simple yet grand plans of attack, which indicates a genius like Alexander's.

“One column pushed forward, aiming for the only weak side of the citadel, that toward the river. A stronger column, under the valiant and distinguished Colonel Clark, went thundering against the great redoubt. This was only to distract the attention of the enemy. Our chief led the center column, moving between the other two.

“His Massachusetts veterans, in perfect order, sweep over bluffs and ravines, which the enemy deemed impassable. They are ascending the precipitous side of the great hill which commands the citadel and all the adjoining works. On this hill the enemy are posted in force and strongly fortified. They pour a deadly fire into the advancing column of assailants. Undismayed, on rides the gallant leader, and, undismayed, behind him come his veterans, the old right arm and drawn sword on their banners. Not a shot is heard from them; they advance, trusting to the bayonet only. Even the enemy cheer our noble General. He bears a charmed life. A shout, a rush of the assailants—the hill is gained, and the enemy are driven headlong down the hill side.

“General Dwight’s engineers, instructed and drilled by himself, are at work turning the rebel works into fortifications for us, while the General himself leads the pursuit. He is the only mounted man whose horse has not been killed. His steed is worthy to carry such a rider. Our General dashes in among the flying masses of rebels. His bright saber flashes again and again—he cuts down a man at every blow. His looks strike an awe into all around him—they are helpless.

“He is borne along with the fugitives to the sally-port. Here, on the parapet, the rebels have planted a battle-flag for their last rally. Cutting and slashing right and left, General Dwight is in the very gate. A skillful blow of his bloody sword severs the flag-staff. He catches the trophy and rides away with it, under the cross-fire of rebel batteries. He displays a skill and grace in horsemanship which might win the fairest lady’s heart. The rebels, struck with admiration at his feat of arms, cease to fire at him, and, waving his captured flag, he rides unscathed

into our fortification on the hill top, from which we can look down into any part of Port Hudson.

“Here our mighty General rests in the arms of victory, and surrounded by those who adore him. As soon as the artillery to be concentrated here opens fire, Port Hudson must surrender. It is probable that as soon as the rebel General understands our position, he will abandon all further defense. General Dwight says that if the Illinois singing-school teacher, Grierson, had been man enough to follow him with a regiment of cavalry, and charge through the sally-port, Port Hudson would have been surrendered to him to-day.

“VERAX.”

Dwight expressed the utmost gratification on hearing the communication read, and rising to his feet, exclaimed, “Won’t those young ladies in Boston pursue me. I’ll make them feel who I am.”

Captain Bailey was present, requested Verax to write for him a communication to one of the Milwaukee papers, and, addressing Dwight, said, “If you ever want any of your staff to support them statements, just call on me.” Verax was promoted to a post out of all danger for the rest of the siege, and afterward was a renowned functionary in the Corps d’Afrique.

News from the great assault on the farther side of Port Hudson came privately. The slaughter had been terrible, the failure complete. General H. E. Paine, formerly Colonel of the Fourth Wisconsin, was badly wounded, having a leg shattered. He lay all day yesterday exposed to the sun on the field.

The plan of attack was to throw forward a body of skirmishers, who were to keep the enemy down. Behind the skirmishers strong details, carrying, as hand-grenades, six-pounder shells, with matches ready to light the fuses. Then the storming columns, the men in front carrying cotton bags, stuffed with the all-saving cotton. The skirmishers could not keep the enemy close, but, on the other hand, the enemy kept them close. The attack was before daylight, or the skirmishers could not



have got as near to the works as they did. Their failure made it impossible for the men with hand-grenades and shells to show themselves, and, lastly, the cotton bags would not keep the bullets off.

The burial of the dead was going on. Long trenches had been dug by negroes, and into these the blackened, flyblown bodies, were thrown and covered up. Dwight and his Engineer, Bailey, returned with satisfaction in their faces from a visit to General Banks. This much is certain. The order for a great battery, to be made under the direction of Dwight, on the top of the hill, where our new rifle pit was, had gone forth. The best of the federal artillery was to be concentrated there—was to be withdrawn from being in front of the weakest parts of the rebel lines, and concentrated before the strongest of all the fortifications, where the make of the ground made it certain that all the ammunition that could be got might be fired away without accomplishing anything.

Bailey and Dwight were also highly pleased with an order which had been issued to General Grierson, to have his cavalry take wagons with them, forage far and near for cotton, and deliver all the bales they could bring to Bailey, to be used in building his new batteries. They also brought from Banks' head-quarters the following order, which was circulated immediately :

GENERAL ORDERS, } No. 49. }	HEAD-QUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE GULF, } NINETEENTH ARMY CORPS, } Before Port Hudson, June 15, 1863. }
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The Commanding General congratulates the troops before Port Hudson upon the steady advance made upon the enemy's works, and is confident of an immediate and triumphant issue of the contest. We are at all points upon the threshold of his fortifications. One more advance and they are ours.

For the last duty that victory imposes, the Commanding General summons the bold men of the corps to the organization of a storming column of a thousand men, to vindicate the flag

of the Union, and the memory of its defenders who have fallen. Let them come forward.

Officers who lead the column of victory in this last assault may be assured of a just recognition of their services by promotion, and every officer and soldier who shares its perils and its glory, shall receive a medal fit to commemorate the first grand success of the campaign of 1863 for the freedom of the Mississippi. His name will be placed in General Orders upon the Roll of Honor.

Division commanders will at once report the names of the officers and men who may volunteer for this service, in order that the organization of the column may be completed without delay.

By command of Major-General Banks.

[Official.]

RICHARD B. IRWIN, A. A. G.

During the day the rifle firing between our men and the garrison of the citadel continued, the enemy supposing that nothing more than sharp-shooting was intended by us.

Dwight's father was said to be one of the richest men in Boston. It was said, also, that General Banks had sustained to the Dwight family the unfortunate relation of a debtor who could not pay. Hence the mysterious influence of our jug-shaped General at head-quarters.

## CHAPTER X.

The Citadel Overawed; The Chief Engineer's Wounds; Grierson Undergoing Punishment—He must get all the Cotton Dwight wants.

ON the morning of June 16, 1863, the rebels behold Bailey's cotton bales and large quantities of fresh earth piled up as the foundation of a great parapet laid out curiously along the site of our rifle pit. There is sharp rifle firing for a little while, but about as soon as the state of things can be reported to General Gardiner, and orders be returned by him, all firing by the enemy ceases suddenly. The rebels are compelled to believe that we are really making preparations for great batteries here, and have ordered an entire cessation of hostilities on their side in order that we may not be interrupted in our undertaking, for every cannon that comes here is virtually withdrawn from the siege.

Our men, lying under cover of the new made works, soon find that they can show themselves without being shot at, and cease firing. Before long officers of negro troops commence work on our parapet. At first they are cautious, but soon find that those who carelessly expose themselves to the view of the rebels are safe.

Bailey himself comes up from his tent in the ravine, and wishing all the credit of carrying on the work by daylight, in full sight of the enemy, he drives the frightened negroes to their task in crowds, keeping many on the top of the parapet, but not a rebel gun is fired. Along the enemy's fortifications the dingy-clad soldiers show themselves, some sitting lazily on their parapet watching our negroes work. With a glass I take a good view of these rebel soldiers. Here, not over three hundred yards from me, sits one of the rebel defenders of Port Hudson. He wears a slouched hat, a dingy gray shirt, and pants of the same color; his hunter's bullet pouch and powder

horn are hung across his breast in backwoods style; his feet are bare, and as he gazes at us silently he reminds me of Daniel Boone.

Bailey comes to me, his arm still in a sling, and says: "Colonel, I hope you will give strict orders to your men not to fire on any account, for they might draw the enemy's fire upon me. I think that the rebels have give up in despair, and if they let me get along a little further with my work, I am the man that'll have the credit of takin' Port Hudson."

During the day the report that Dwight and Bailey have silenced the citadel is industriously circulated. Officers from other divisions arrive to look at the peaceable rebels that line the fortifications before us. Among them is a friend of mine from the Fourth Wisconsin. In speaking with him I mention that nobody seems to know how Bailey got wounded.

"Wounded!" replies he, "does Bailey pretend to have been wounded by the enemy? I will tell you all about it. In one of the dark nights just before our last assault Bailey was sent in command of a gang of negroes to throw up a new battery a little nearer to the rebels than was entirely consistent with his safety. He thought that this would be a good occasion out of which to get up a report, so he called for a strong guard, and got a detail of one hundred down-east nine months men. About midnight Bailey sent a courier to head-quarters with the report that he had successfully made a lodgment in the important position selected by the General, and that in a short time he hoped to be able to report that he was ready for the guns to be brought forward. The officer in command of the one hundred nine months men flattered Bailey as to his engineering genius, and took it as a matter of course that the first thing in making a lodgment was to dig a trench and throw up a bank to protect the guard. While the negroes were zealously at work on this trench, the guard lay flat on the ground a little way to one side.

"Bailey undertook to superintend the work of the negroes. His chief duty seems to have been to keep the Africans from

making any noise that might draw the attention of the enemy. He knocked down two or three of his best hands for letting their picks hit something that made a clink. Bailey's mind became possessed with the idea that the rebels were coming out, skulking like Indians, to gobble him up. He saw lights, heard the sticks break, and at last thought that he saw the enemy in large numbers crouching close to the ground, and almost ready to surround him.

"Just then a negro hit his pick against a spade with a loud clash. The fellow who had hold of the spade exclaimed, "What yuh 'bout dah?" Bailey cried out to the guard, "Fire! fire! for God's sake, fire!" and at the same time broke for the rear like a quarter-horse, but intended to go no farther than the commander's position, when the line fires. The guard fired, and the negroes, who had just been taken from a drove brought in by the cavalry, were instantly on a stampede, springing and bounding with an activity never seen in them before. They go crowding and rolling, like a thunder cloud in a tornado, right after Bailey. He, in an unlucky moment, stumbles and falls upon his hands and knees. Three or four huge negroes tumble over him, and half a dozen more of the herd run over those that are down. Bailey's voice was unheeded, and the heavy heel of a brogan stamped on his arm and almost broke it.

"That's the way he got wounded. The nine months men got off the field about as soon as the negroes did, and in about the same manner. Bailey reported he did all in his power to stop the retreat, and although the fire of the enemy was terrific, and he was wounded, yet he was the last man to leave the field, and that he fell back in good order."

For days the work on our famous new batteries opposite to the citadel progressed in a manner worthy of Bailey. He claimed that the plan of his fortification was a wonder, and so it was. He declared that his cannon would enfilade all the water batteries in Port Hudson, but a bend in the river was such that every rebel gun in sight along the river could be pointed straight at Bailey's stronghold, and a dense piece of

woods inside the rebel works completely protected and hid from our view most of the guns that kept the fleet at bay. Bailey had given such a slant to his line of parapet, that if the rebels had any guns to the right of us, those guns would enfilade every rod of Bailey's engineering. There was something about every part of Bailey's job which indicated the genius of a common railroad boss of shovelers, rather than the genius of a Chief Engineer.

But in one thing Bailey's genius was admired by those of us who had served at Baton Rouge during the cotton harvest there. The cavalry and the wagons of our army must have given up most of their business, and spared no pains to get cotton bales for Dwight and Bailey. Several regiments of negroes came swarming into the ravines near us, to work rolling the cotton bales from the place where the teams left them up to Bailey's parapet.

Day and night the negroes toiled incessantly getting Bailey's cotton parapet piled up high enough to suit him. Every contrivance was used to make it necessary to have more cotton. The bales were placed endwise or were piled side by side so as to give a thickness almost equal to that of the Chinese wall. The joy with which Bailey and other favorites of head-quarters greeted every cotton train that arrived, and the praise bestowed upon every part of the job where the most unnecessary quantities of cotton had been worked in, left no doubt as to the ultimate destiny of the cotton, especially as every pound of it was likely to be worth a gold dollar.

The federal artillery only kept up a monotonous and irregular firing at long intervals of time between the shots. The other division commanders seemed content to lie still and let Dwight get all the glory of taking Port Hudson by means of Bailey, since the pole and board plan, and the cotton bag plan had failed. General Banks and staff, and the other generals, were frequent visitors at our new fortifications, where unbroken peace with the rebels made it entirely safe for visitors to show themselves and examine the works of both parties. But

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Dwight and Bailey had things their own way, and the siege was in such a degree of progress that nobody was jealous of them. There was strange delay in getting guns mounted in any part of our new works. We had nothing but the rifles of a small force of infantry and the good will of the enemy to rely upon for our safety from whatever force the rebels might see fit to concentrate, hidden behind their works three hundred yards off, ready for a rush across the valley, which none but their own guns could reach.

Cessation of firing was followed by friendly intercourse between federal soldiers and confederates, everywhere near Bailey's pacific work.

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## CHAPTER XI.

More Cotton and more Negroes; Diplomatic Intercourse; An Armistice; A Rebel Archimedes with his Mirror.

It is morning. The hot rays of the sun are kept off by clouds, but there is a sultriness that would seem stifling to any but those who are used to the atmosphere of the Louisiana low lands. The rebel citadel, and our bluff opposite to it, are swarming with men. They do not conceal themselves, but are standing, sitting and lounging in plain sight, along the outside of their trenches and parapets. Bailey has a reinforcement of about a thousand negroes, in addition to the black multitude that he had before. Like ants, they are all at work, picking, digging and shoveling the clay, or rolling and heaving the cotton bales. A grand addition to the former works of our Engineer is rapidly going forward, extending the parapet with a curve along the irregular crest of the ravine.

When the guns are mounted along this new part of our work, they can all be worn out by firing into the clay embankments

of the great detached redoubt opposite to them, without sending a shot into the real fortifications of Port Hudson, for the redoubt is so made by excavating and digging up the top of a bluff, that it will be necessary for artillery to be able to batter down the bluff itself before any kind of shot or shells can disable the hidden guns of the redoubt or drive out its defenders.

The rebels this morning do not pay the least attention to the host of slaves at work under experienced drivers to carry out Bailey's ideas of siege works and batteries. Confederates and federals appear to be chiefly interested in a conversation carried on by shouting across the valley at the citadel. It is easy to understand the words of a Michigan soldier boy, once renowned for his strength, but now somewhat the worse for many months of life in our swamp encampments. He stands in plain sight, his soldier cap, indigo-colored blouse and light blue pants strangely clean for a besieger. He calls to the rebels, "Hadn't we better quit this war and drive the French out of Mexico?" "Yes, yes," is answered by half a dozen voices from the other side of the valley, and one young fellow, springing up from behind the citadel parapet, shouts, "What's the news from Mexico?" He hears in reply, "Our papers say that the French have taken Puebla at last." After a pause, a man better dressed than others about him gets up on the parapet, and calls to the federals, "Bring me a New York *Herald*, and I'll meet you half-way."

As the Northern soldiers are looking around to see whether any staff officers are watching them, two gunboat officers, wearing the well-known naval caps and coats, unsoiled with the clay of the trenches, step forward, saying, "We are not afraid of any general," shout to the rebels, "Come on," and are going down the hill carelessly, as if the roar of that heavy gun which comes booming from the right of our army did not show the uncertainty and narrow limits of our truce. The Southerners are not to be outdone. Two of them, evidently officers, come lightly down the citadel hill, and about the middle of the open valley



stand on the river bank for some time, talking with the naval officers, who have been joined by an Indiana lieutenant from the nearest battery. Soon a man climbs up on the citadel parapet, and calls to the group who are holding the parley. They hastily shake hands and separate.

The lieutenant and the naval officers report that after the New York *Herald* was received by the rebel gentlemen, they spoke of the war, and said that there was no use of talking, or even thinking about the beginning of the war, for both parties were so far committed that neither could recede, but they were willing to confess that they were sorry that any war was ever begun in which Americans were to shed one another's blood. It was agreed that the truce should be respected from the river up the ravine to the old cotton-gin building beside the rebel works, at a point about half a mile from the citadel. If either party received orders to fire where any harm was likely to be done, warning was to be given in time for those in danger to get out of the way. The reason why Bailey's Ethiopian battery builders were not to be disturbed, was frankly given by the rebel officers, as it was, in truth, "Any man ought to see that the whole United States army could not get into Port Hudson by this way."

The lieutenant brought with him a little newspaper printed in Port Hudson, the quality of type and paper being very different from that of the New York *Herald* given in exchange. But the little rebel sheet has an account of the recent assault, and of the correspondence by flags of truce in regard to the wounded, which is not exactly such as our generals would like to have read by the troops.

A federal soldier, having a face not expressive of any great regard for other people's feelings, calls out to the rebels, "How do you cook rats over there?" and after some words and gestures indicating that it is not thought fair to make such an inquiry on a painful subject, a young fellow of a nature not unlike that of the questioner, answers, "We have rations of corn on the cob and mule meat now. We had salt mule as

good as you have, but when that gave out we commenced on fresh mule beef, and can live on that as long as you will charge on us often enough to keep our spirits up."

The clouds are gone and the sun glares down on the scene. A Boston boy in gay new uniform, wearing a costly sword and belt, and being a captain on Dwight's staff, has ventured from the hiding place where he has been watching all that has taken place, and appears among our men, who are exchanging words with the rebels. Suddenly all are still, and some begin to get back inside of our works, when all at once comes a dazzling, blinding flash, that strikes all eyes. The idea of rebel guns, shells or torpedoes, and of brains blown out, drops the staff officer, limp as a rag, to the ground, and causes many a better man to find himself safe in the trenches quicker than he ever got there before. In an instant a burst of laughter from the rebels is heard, and is immediately followed by laughter almost as loud on our side. The men, getting upon their feet again, look across the valley and see a tall, lank confederate, holding up a large looking-glass, turning it to reflect the sun's rays, and showing us that the flash was not that of powder.

## CHAPTER XII.

Stepping from the Horrible to the Ridiculous.

CURIOSITY leads me to take a walk outside of Bailey's works and explore all that rebel honor under the truce will permit me to explore. I follow our crest of the great ravine, looking at the wonderful abattis of briars and fallen timber up and down the rough sides of the ravine, along the farther side of which stretch the skillfully arranged rebel fortifications. I see that I am approaching the Mount Pleasant road, along which Dwight's main column was to have made their assault. I turn and follow this road back toward the federal camp that I see in the nearest woods. A branch of the great ravine extends along near on my left. A large oak tree has been cut down beside the road, and its great trunk lies sprawling like a fallen giant upon the ground.

A horrible sight is here. The unburied dead, blackened, swollen out of human shape, covered with worms, the flies swarming over them. Hereabouts it was that Dwight's column vanished. The crooked branches of ravines seen in various directions kindly received the fugitives, who would go no farther toward certain destruction.\*

This frightful corpse probably belonged to one of the nine months regiments put in advance. He must have been a man of unusual size and valor. Instead of escaping like the rest he was pushing forward to get the cover of the fallen tree and fire at the rebel cannoniers. A shot from a field piece tore through his bowels, and he fell as he lies, upon his back, his hands extended, the thick skin of the palms being the only parts not blackened by mortification. His accoutrements yet hang around him. From his torn haversack there have fallen pieces of the hard bread he had been ordered to carry. He had a

\* On the day of the assault all Michigan pickets and sharpshooters were withdrawn from this vicinity, and their places had not been filled.

high forehead, and his brown hair, in which flies and worms are creeping, is fine and delicate. He was probably a well educated New England farmer, not long absent from a New England home, whither he hoped soon to return. His Springfield rifle with the gun-sling strap attached lies a little beyond the hand from which it fell. Alas, for the sorrow of the unknown dear ones who will mourn for this man. May they never know any more about his fate than official reports will be likely to let them know of the truth in any respect.

This man was fortunate—he died instantly. Such a fate as his must have been envied by those poor wounded men who lingered for days and nights without assistance, to die at last within plain sight of friends and foes, who would willingly have relieved them, had not the fears of federal generals that their great plans and preparations might be pried into, stopped all negotiations for bringing off the wounded.

There, among the branches of the fallen oak, sits leaning against the trunk of the tree the horrible corpse of a man who died by slow tortures. Here he fell. Here are his rifle and accoutrements, and a little pool of blood dried into the grass, making the green blades dead and yellow as usual. I can see, by the trace of blood, the places where the poor man rested, dragging himself toward the tree top. A piece of shell hit him in the knee. He bound his handkerchief as tight as he could around the limb above the wound, to stop the flow of blood. The weeds and grass near him show his struggles to get shelter from the sun. He managed to break off two or three little boughs, having dead leaves, and arrange them together so as to give him some semblance of shade, but the scorching heat followed him, and thirst was more terrible than the heat. He tried to suck the juice from the roots of a few rank weeds which he could reach and get out of the ground with his fingers. These roots lie near him, still having the marks of his teeth; some of them are of the kinds likely to have increased his thirst. There are indications that he tried to slake the fire of thirst with his own blood. His strength failed so that he

could not creep back to his friends; but the difference of decomposition as seen in him and in the man who was killed instantly, shows that his agonies must have lasted at least two days after the assault. His head is leaned back, the sun shining in his blackened face, and his lower jaw has fallen. His vest, his fine linen shirt and neckcloth, indicate that the young man was probably one of the many students who left college to serve his country, but all his agonies were to gratify the idiotic caprice of a sot in brigadier's uniform. His death was but one of the many deaths that were to encourage the enemy to hold out till the last.

I hasten away, fearing to breathe longer the infected air. I approach a little arm of a ravine which comes close to the road. I see that it is very deep. The falling water drained from the plain in the rainy season has made a sort of grotto about twelve feet below me, and as I look down, what is my surprise to see there a well known sergeant of my regiment. "How do you happen to be there?" "I thought that I would improve the first opportunity to take a look at the place where I saw Colonel Clark's orderly take his dinner to him when I was with the sharp-shooters on the 14th." I ask, "Is it down there that the Colonel had those head-quarters that he reported so much about having established close to the enemy?" "This is the very place," the sergeant replies; "if he had established his head-quarters in the bottom of a well he would not have been safer. Here he sat enjoying the cool shade with two or three other great men all day long. These cans and broken bottles show how they consoled themselves while the wounded men out on the field were dying with thirst. Just look and see how much farther toward the enemy the column must have gone without any leader. The truth was that he dodged into this hole as soon as the column got under any fire that was dangerous." I take leave of the sergeant, saying: "Remember the regulations. Here I am talking with an enlisted man who is speaking very disrespectfully of his Colonel. Remember that Colonel Clark's reports of his achievements on the 27th of May and on the

14th of June are to stand as true. The testimony of every enlisted man in the regiment could not shake a word of those reports. It is best to claim a share of the honor sure to be conferred upon him, and be proud of our noble Colonel."

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### CHAPTER XIII.

#### Mental Conception.

WEST of Port Hudson, in the low land, an old horse-shoe shaped bend of the Mississippi, nearly twenty miles long, lies full of water, and appearing like the real river, from which it is entirely cut off by newly formed ground, and bears the name of "Fausse Riviere."

Behind the woods that separate the true river from the false one, the sun is setting. No beautiful crimson and golden tints on this sky. The sun keeps the same dazzling color he had at noon, and the last rays which he darts across the beleaguered citadel and the gangs of slaves rolling cotton for Dwight and Bailey, seem the fiercest that he has sent forth during the day. With the shade of twilight, Dwight, followed by some of his staff, has arrived behind Bailey's cotton bale wall, stands talking with the great Engineer, and says:

"Bailey, they have been trying to make me believe that our works here can be enfiladed."

"Well, then, we must have more cotton, and build them craverses you was telling about, General."

"Traverses, you mean, Major. How many can you call for?"

"Why, we must have one alongside every gun, of course, and the things must be big enough to shelter all the men working at any gun. And anyhow, General, I will find enough to do with all the cotton you can get sent here."

“All right, Bailey, you are the kind of an engineer for me and I’ll keep the cotton coming to you as long as I can work Banks; there is no way for me to work him better. The old fellow has promised to-day to send me all the artillery I want, so prepare for just as many guns as you can get into your parapet. I am going to open my thunders on the citadel when I get ready. By G—d, I’ll have an artillery fire that will drive every soul out of this part of Port Hudson. My mortar batteries will drop shell every moment along just inside of the fortifications. There will be no shelter for anybody behind the parapet. I’ll knock down the strongest part of their works in a little while, and blow every man away for half a mile inside. All my division of d—d volunteers and niggers will have to do is to occupy this part of Port Hudson, after I have vacated it for them. I could not make Weitzel understand what my cannon were going to do, but, by G—d, he shall know when he finds out that I have taken the citadel, stolen a march on all the rest, and got Port Hudson and old Gardiner for my own use. Bailey, I tell you that you shall have a tenth of my cotton here, and I will report you as second only to myself in capturing Gardiner and taking Port Hudson.”

“That’s so, General.”

“My dear Major, I name this battery Fort Bailey.”

“Why, General, is it possible that I am to receive so much grace from you? I am thankful. I am nothing but your servant. The name ought to be Fort Dwight, for you have told me just what to do.”

“No, I don’t monopolize. This is Fort Bailey. The citadel will soon be mine, and I’ll name that Fort Dwight.”

“I’ll always call it Fort Dwight, General, for it’s yours certain. Nothing can prevent that unless your orders are disobeyed, as they were on the 14th. We would have had Port Hudson then if your orders had been obeyed, and I may as well tell you what I’ve been thinking for some time, General. My mind has been troubled a great deal. I’m afraid that your orders won’t be carried out, and yet I would not for all Port Hudson, and all

this cotton, have you expose your precious life. Where would I be? Where would we all be, if it was not for you? Now, General, if you could only be here to watch 'em, you could make 'em obey your orders, and go in when you tell 'em to go in. Yet when everything in the world depends on you, you must not be exposed to a single bullet—no, not for nothing. Well, General, if you will walk along with me close behind this 'ere cotton, I will show you the place where I want to make it."

"Certainly, Major and Chief Engineer Bailey, but keep along where we are perfectly covered, for I must begin to be more cautious how I expose my person when I have such vast responsibilities."

"Now, General, here's the place; here I want to make it."

"Make what, Bailey?"

"A thing that will surely keep you safe. A thing that cannot fail to keep you safe while you can be the commander of every charge, and have all the chargers under your eye and make 'em go into Fort Dwight over there."

"New idea, Bailey. Explain yourself."

"Well, General, I'll make them niggers bring here the biggest logs they can find, and right here I will make three sides of a log house with the open side this way, and have three or four loop-holes in the side toward Fort Dwight; little loop-holes just so you can see out of them. And then if you will send me one guard to stand beyond my niggers, and keep the rebels from coming out of Fort Dwight to gobble us, and another guard to stand this side of my niggers to keep them from stampeding again, I'll make them pile up such a great haystack of dirt against the outside of the logs that no cannon can ever shoot through it, and you can sit inside and watch everything through the little loop-holes. You see I'll have long peaked boxes stuck against the outside of the loop-holes to keep the dirt from getting before them. General, when those volunteers are drawn up to go into Fort Dwight and begin to want to skedaddle, they'll look up and see the big haystack of dirt with



the holes in it, and they'll know that your awful eye is on 'em; they'll think about your having 'em executed, and they'll go in."

"Bailey, what a genius you are. This thing will be the most glorious invention to be found in all the catalogue of polytechnics. Bailey, I will make you a brigadier. Take all the men you want for guards, and if they get killed take more."

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#### CHAPTER XIV.

Form and Shape.

Hic portus alii effodiunt: hic alta theatris  
 Fundamenta locant alii, immanesque columnas  
 Rupibus excidunt, scenis decora alta futuris.

THERE is no delay for morning. The worn-out mules that have been at work all day hauling the cotton are compelled to get up, and are beaten into their places before the heavy blue-painted government wagons. The cavalry horses, jaded and faint from the last raid for cotton and negroes, are brought forth by their weary riders. The teams and escort are moving toward the nearest good timber. Quartermasters' clerks follow, mounted on costly and finely equipped steeds, and after them march, with faltering steps and downcast looks, numerous details from Northwestern regiments, from negro regiments, and from the best droves of slaves brought in by the cavalry. Some go far into the country to find the cotton bales, and have them loaded before sunrise, but a number of the best ax-men are soon at work felling, hewing and cutting at particular lengths, choice trees of a certain size. Few are their words except to ask the measurement by the quartermasters' clerks. The sounds of their ax blows are very different from the sound

of chopping in the Northern woods by willing men. The strokes are struck now by despairing and degraded men, who work like convicts. They know what this night work is, for the conversation of Dwight and Bailey was overheard.

Some half-spoken curses, and some words bitterly expressive of a sense of degradation, may be heard among the tired Michigan men, who help the negroes unload the finely-shaped logs from the returned wagons at the site of Bailey's wonderful safe, where that huge hollow mound is to rise, from which Dwight is to peek out and see his men take the citadel—that mound which is to give Bailey such favor at head-quarters as will yet gain for him the coveted star.

Even sick men have been compelled to take their places in the heavy details that have been sent down the hill side to prevent the possibility of the rebels coming out to gobble Bailey, who is on the ground with a detail of the best carpenters in the division, and with a small army of Africans, carrying picks and spades.

Bailey, with his own hands, assists some of his favorite negroes to lay the foundation logs of his great safe, in three sides of a square, and yet it is not much more than half-way from midnight to sunrise. He enjoins silence. He threatens death to any man who makes a noise that can draw the enemy's fire. He orders the carpenters to saw softly. Timber after timber goes into place. The structure rises. The peek-holes have been measured, marked and sawed, under Bailey's own eye.

With a grunt of satisfaction, Bailey gets inside of his safe as soon as it is high enough to keep bullets off. He orders the officers of negro troops to commence their part of the work. He peeks out and sees that they make every negro work for life. The broad bank of earth begins to rise against the outside of the logs.

As soon as one gang of negroes begin to give out, he orders them off, and a fresh gang is brought on. The carpenters are yet carrying the timber walls higher. Bailey stands up, and

his head is lower than the top of the wall, but he says higher it must go, because it is for the General.

The log work towers aloft, and negroes shovel the clay from near by, or carry it from a distance on hand-bearers, for the embankment, which Bailey tells must look like three haystacks all in one. Two sets of hands are at work on the top of the rising embankment. One set level and spread out the earth brought to them, and the other set pound it down with heavy pounders.

Bailey must show his authority, and make the negroes work as he would like to have them work, to make himself a brigadier. One fellow, who appears to be old and does not make very quick motions, he knocks down with a spade, and leaves him bleeding from a terrible gash on the head. Another negro, who says he is sick, he strikes in the back with the point of a pick, and he is carried off probably to die.

It is sunrise. Bailey has earned his star. The astonished rebels line their works, and shout, "What is that?" "Is it an Indian mound?" "Are you going to have a sacrifice on it?" Bailey's safe, though not quite so large as he intended it to be, is done, and presents toward the citadel, and toward right and left, the appearance of a large, well packed mound, in shape of half a globe. There are three holes in its surface, where flaring boxes lead back to the little openings in the log work. The side of the mound which is unexposed to any danger from the enemy is open, and the inside of the log work can be seen. There is a floor, a table, an easy chair, and other seats; also, a strong camp chest, for containing nice things to eat and drink, while a well formed shelter of green boughs and grape vines is formed over the whole interior, a little lower than the top of the walls.

The site of the wonderful safe was about the middle of the rifle pit made on the night after the last general assault. That rifle pit had since that time been changed into a part of Bailey's great cotton bale fortification, and two companies of the Sixth Michigan were posted there as the hot sun got near to noon

on the morning after Bailey completed that work, which, together with the dam he afterward helped to make, is to place him second only to Ulysses in future song and history.

They did not fail to appreciate the scene, as Dwight, followed by some of his staff officers and menials, came to congratulate Bailey.

“General,” said Dwight, addressing the great safe-maker, General, “the angels must have helped you last night.”

The Indian eyes and dark visage of the Engineer expressed a sort of cat-like delight, as he answered, “It must have been because I was making a thing to keep you safe, Major-General Dwight, for you are sure to be a Major-General as soon as your plan is carried out.”

Hoffman promptly turned the easy chair. Dwight took his seat with a peculiar majesty, that brought smiles to the faces of the worn-out soldiers near by. Captain Pierce, Dwight’s Quartermaster, was busy stowing a demijohn and numerous bottles of various shapes into the strong camp chest.

Dwight’s staff officer who kept the Boston papers supplied with truth, over the signature of “Verax,” was examining the safe within and without, and repeating aloud a sentence from Virgil, “*Scandit fatalis machina muros, foeta armis.*”

## CHAPTER XV.

More Cotton; Rebel Non-resistance; The Cards Begin to Understand how they are to be Played; Heretical Opinions about Breech-loading Arms.

THE work of building the cotton bale traverses went bravely on, and very soon a thick and high wall of cotton, on the right side of every gun, extended back about sixteen feet from the main parapet, so as to make every gun, and all the gunners, safe from any enfilading fire from the heaviest guns, showing thus, as Dwight said to General Banks, "what a fool any man was who thought that these batteries could be enfiladed."

Dwight's guns were to knock down the citadel and lay Port Hudson wide open, so that all he would have to do would be to walk in, and as Bailey intended to be present during the operation, he thought it advisable to do something to keep bullets from coming through the embrasures. He had large pieces of boiler iron, taken from the ruins of a burned sugar house, cut and prepared, and hung up so as to cover every embrasure, an opening being cut in the lower part of these mantelets large enough to let out the muzzle of the gun.

Bailey contended that the enemy would surely open fire as the guns began to be mounted, for General Gardiner would certainly get his eyes open at last, and have some idea of what destruction was to be let loose upon him. Accordingly, more cotton was called for and obtained, to make the parapet high enough to hide the operation of mounting the guns. The lightest pieces were put in place first, and the night time was taken for the work. Dwight could not wait for another night, and the mounting of the heavier guns went on in daylight. A nine-inch Dalghren was taken hold of first, and the enormous wheels of the sling cart were slowly rolled up on the platform, the ponderous gun slung to the axle. The wheels stood higher than the parapet, and in plain sight of the rebels. The secret

was out; the rebels would now see what all our work had been for. Bailey expected the whole storm of war to break then and there, and called on me to get my men under arms at once. But not a shot came from the rebels, and as we looked out by the cannon muzzles, we saw that our fellow citizens in slouched hats and dirty grayish clothes were acting as if they expected the truce to last for some time to come. Several of them were standing on their parapet unarmed within three hundred yards of us, and looking intently at our big wheels. When it became evident that the enemy had no more idea of keeping Bailey from arming his parapet than they had of keeping him from building it, I was unwise enough to say to him that the enemy could not have failed to understand all that he intended to do from the time that he commenced his parapet.

He at once became enraged, and answered, "You talk as if you did not know that my building this parapet right before the rebels' eyes was one of the greatest stratagems that ever was. Do you suppose that they would hold still and let us march into Port Hudson?"

"No, sir."

"Well, they might just as well do that as to let me get all these guns where I want them."

The guns were all mounted at last. The most of the heavy guns went into their places in the presence of as many of the enemy as there were spectators on our side. Rebel officers even offered to come over and help us. It needed not West Point education to perceive that no artillery could have any effect on the old bluffs of hard clay before us, into which and behind which the enemy had sunk themselves. All the operations of Dwight and Bailey could only result in having us sent into another assault against the strongest part of Port Hudson, with less chance for success, and a certainty of greater slaughter, than had been in any former assault. There would probably soon come a day of bloodshed and disaster to be memorable in history, but the Sixth Michigan must act well their part. There was one thing that I could do which might tend to the honor

of the regiment before the assault, as well as in the assault. The Twenty-first Indiana Regiment being now heavy artillery, had no more need of their excellent breech-loading rifles, which the men bought with their own money in Baltimore. I was on good terms with their officers, and might arm a part of my men at least with these Merrill rifles, if I could borrow them.

But little negotiation was necessary. My receipt was given, and Companies A and K, that came from my own county, and had as good men as there were in the army, were armed with the famous breech-loaders, highly prized by Northwestern men, but condemned by West Point.

I saw that every man who bore a Merrill rifle seemed to feel his spirits and ability quadrupled. The old arms were put under as good shelter as could be found, and soldiers expressed a willingness to have the price of their old arms taken out of their pay rather than lose the chance of using the breech-loaders, even in such performances as they expected were before them. I could not believe that either Dwight's big battery or any assault planned by him would do much more toward ending the siege than his operations on the 14th of June had done, but when he would open fire the truce would end, and Bailey's great cotton bag fortifications would afford good cover for our sharp-shooters, who could watch every part of the enemy's works opposite to them, and with their breech-loaders send telling shots in quick succession as often as there would be occasion, and in case of either a sortie or an assault, wherever rapid firing would give an advantage, the new arms would make one man equal to six men with muzzle-loading guns. It was not improbable that some trick would be used to make me lose the value of the old arms which I took the responsibility to have the two companies lay aside. Of this I must take my chances.

The big battery continued to consume time and labor beyond all expectation. Seventeen cannon were mounted, and half a dozen more were to be mounted. Several large magazines, intended to be bomb-proof, were made, bulging up like so many

bakers' ovens, and showing the rebels unmistakably where the powder was to be. Then came the work of filling the magazines. On the left of our cotton bag works, below the crest of the bluff toward the river, a mortar battery was placed, with its magazine, the mortars being down in a cavity, so as to be safe. It was expected that their shells would drive the rebels from the citadel without ceremony.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

A Sphere of Usefulness Extended; Grand Rounds; The Spirit of Command; Sent to Find that Bourne whence no Traveler Returns.

As the work on the great battery drew toward its end, Bailey feared that with the end of the work might come a lessening of his importance. It was at about this juncture that I showed to Bailey one day a plan for digging zigzag approaches, in the usual manner, from the little flat between the foot of our hill and the river to the foot of the citadel hill, and up its side. He appeared very much interested. I said that this part of Port Hudson was the strongest, and the ground here most unfavorable for approaches, but that if any such plan was to be tried, there was no other place near us so favorable as the ground I pointed out. Wherever digging was going on, Bailey was sure to be important, and before long he had a host of negroes digging trenches. A deep ditch, with a high bank, was made from the foot of our hill directly to the river. From this ditch, as a sort of base, the zigzag trenches were dug, about six feet deep, and the earth from them was thrown up on the side exposed to the plunging fire of the enemy.

The zigzag work reached forward toward the foot of a projection of the citadel hill, up which it must go to avoid as much



as possible a flank fire from the neighboring redoubts. The main ditch of the citadel might be reached, a mine might be sprung, the citadel might be taken, but it stood on the point of a long, high ridge, and was only an outwork. Behind it lay Port Hudson, yet having three times as much fortification to overcome as there could be found in front of the Slaughter field.

There were frequent rains and thunder-storms. Our regiment continued for some days encamped in the ravine nearest on our side to the new works. Companies had their cooking done in the second ravine, and at a safe distance. It was thought best not to let smoke from cooking fires indicate our place of encampment, for the ground we occupied might be enfiladed by some of the rebel guns.

Bushes were used to make slight shades for men to rest under, and we knew the trees that belonged to each company. There was an unceasing call on me to furnish details for fatigue and details for guards. I was daily obliged to order out for these details men whom I knew to be only fit for the hospital, but whose zeal and pride would not allow them to make known their real state of health.

My own quarters were at first under a large oak tree in the middle of the ravine. Afterward I removed to a sort of arbor which a grape vine formed by overrunning a little tree. This was on the hill side nearer to the works. I was sheltered better from the rains, but every breeze being shut out, the heat was very uncomfortable, and the musquitos would not cease to sing in the daytime.

At last the idea that the rebels might make a sortie and spike the guns arrived at head-quarters, but this was not until our diminished regiment, weakened by numerous details, had for days been the only force protecting the guns, none of which could be so pointed as to sweep the ground near the river where the sortie would be made if there was to be any.

I was surprised one day to find that first one colonel and then another had been sent to me to show them the ground

and give them places where they could be ready in case of the sortie, which I was told might be expected at any moment, as deserters and spies had given information at head-quarters showing that the rebels were about to make a desperate attack on Bailey's battery. The reinforcements took our old camping ground, while our regiment moved up close to the cotton fortifications. I fixed my head-quarters near the mortar battery, and during the first night that I was there Dwight paid a midnight visit to his safe, accompanied by Colonel Clark and by his Engineer Bailey. This visit was the finishing part of a drunken spree. Some odd mixture of liquors in the General's stomach had started him out. He immediately ordered Clark to send for one of the bravest captains in the Sixth Michigan, and in a few moments Captain Eli A. Griffin, of Company A, in compliance with an order from Clark, reported at the safe. A large flat brandy bottle was produced and the Captain invited to drink. He excused himself on account of a wound which was unhealed and feverish. The General took the proffered drink himself, and with slow and solemn utterance said to the Captain:

"The enemy have given up in despair, and are awaiting their doom. But the officer in command of the citadel continues to have the insolence to post a picket every night at the foot of the hill. Captain, I cannot endure that any longer from men who are no better than prisoners of mine. Take your company, go and capture that picket, and bring them before me here."

Captain Griffin answered: "General, I will go immediately if you order me to do so, but I, as well as other officers, have been acting in good faith with the enemy under this truce, and it was understood that hostilities would not be recommenced without notice."

There was a tone of kindling wrath in Dwight's voice as he replied: "What business had you or any G—d d—d volunteer officers to make a truce with the enemy. I don't know anything about any truce. Obey your orders, sir, immediately."

Captain Griffin was gone with his company some time. With

frequent drinks at the rests, the following conversation was overheard at the safe, Hoffman taking the lead: "General, after your capture of the enemy's picket on this side of the citadel, I think that it will be very important to stop the rebels from completing those fortifications between the citadel and the river, concerning which Chief Engineer Bailey has made a report of his observations to-day. Especially I would recommend that the enemy be compelled immediately to desist from going any farther with the work which Major Bailey saw them building across the track along the water's edge where the Sixth Michigan were ordered to advance on the 14th, and where I hope you will have the principal advance made against the citadel when it is taken."

"Very true," responds Dwight. "very true. The citadel shall be taken by an advance along the very track I selected for the Sixth Michigan. The advantage of an attack by escalade of the steepest side of the bluff, and a consequent surprise of the enemy, shall be demonstrated if I have to lead the storming party myself."

"Don't, General, don't," exclaimed Chief Quartermaster Pierce. "No cause could justify such exposure of your person. Here is the only place for you. Here you can have everything under your own eye, and be present everywhere."

"True—very true," answered Dwight, "and we will reconsider our intention to lead the escalade."

Here Bailey put in earnestly, "General, I made a *reconnoissance* in person, and looked behind the citadel along the river. There I saw a strong working party commencing a parapet right across the track where the Sixth Michigan ought to have gone. It was right at the foot of the stairway, where the Sixth Michigan ought to have gone up."

Captain Griffin suddenly returned alone. Dwight asked, before the Captain could speak, "Where are the prisoners?"

"I have none," was the reply; "I followed along the foot of the hill clear past the citadel, and there was no picket anywhere there."

“Very well—very well, then,” said the General, “they have concluded not to trifle with me by putting out a picket again on this side. They have changed their operations to the other side of the hill. Captain, they are making a work near the river, at the foot of the hill on the other side of the citadel, in order to blockade the entrance which I have chosen for taking Port Hudson. Captain, march there with your company, expel the enemy, and destroy that work. Major Bailey will show you where to go.”

Captain Griffin seemed to get an idea as soon as he heard that Bailey was to show him where to go. He said, “I am ready,” and turning to Bailey, asked, “Are you ready?”

Bailey started reluctantly, and as he went away with Captain Griffin, Dwight's last words to them were, “Get up just as big a fight as you can.”

They went along the deep trench down the hill from where the mortars were at the end of the cotton parapet, on the top of the bluff toward the river. Having arrived where the trench ended at the river bank, they stood beholding, through the hazy moonlight, toward the citadel, a precipitous clay-bank, one hundred feet high, which seemed to go almost straight down from the citadel to the river, but it could be seen that the muddy waters falling every day had left a strip of shelving ground, covered with sediment, along the flat at the mouth of the ravine. The same strip might continue along the foot of the citadel bluff, but the curve of the river made it impossible to see what was there. Bailey had imagined that if there was any passage along the water's edge, the rebels would make some sort of fortifications to obstruct it, and therefore reported that in a venturous *reconnoissance* he had found them making such a fortification behind the citadel. No more than four men abreast could make their way along the foot of the bank. If the rebels were at work there, they would not be asleep, and must be attacked by a force marching by the flank, and if they had even one field piece, the whole attacking force might be raked by the first shot fired. At the same time, the assailants

would be exposed to have lighted shells and heavy logs rolled down upon them from the rebel garrison over their heads, and experience what a plunging fire of riflemen would amount to.

Not a shot from friends could be fired so as to assist the assailing party, for Dwight's battery had not yet prostrated the works protecting the enemy's garrison. The whole bluff would be between the assailants and their friends. And in case such an attack could be successful, the idea of staying in such a place to dig down the enemy's work was worthy of the mind which believed that if it was possible for the assailing party to stay long enough to dig down the new work, the rebels would never think of doing anything further there, and would, of course, always leave the way clear for Dwight's escalade.

No man understood better than Captain Griffin the nature of the whole affair. He asked Bailey several questions, the answers to which were such that he could hardly refrain from laughing aloud, and, in a low tone, he said to the Engineer: "I am afraid some of the staff want to get rid of you. If they can get you one step farther than here, you are liable to have your bowels knocked out by a cannon ball."

The Engineer settled back into the trench, and crouching to the ground, collecting his ideas, said, "Captain Griffin, I will go back and wait for you at the other end of the ditch. Let your men go out, one after another, where I was a moment ago, and fire up the river bank. Keep up a firing for about a quarter of an hour, then have your company fire two or three volleys, and march them back with me to the General. I will do the reporting—you need not say anything. I know that the firing will accomplish just what is wanted."

There was an irregular musketry firing for some time, then the volleys aroused most of the camp. The first supposition of the awakening soldiers as to what was going on was not far from the truth. There were lights in the safe, and it was easy to conjecture what kind of projects would probably be tried.

Dwight took hasty glimpses through the loop-holes. He soon ceased to do that, such was the outcry of his staff against

his exposing himself so much, for a bullet might come and hit him right in the eye. They all assured him that Bailey and Captain Griffin were having a sharp fight, and when Bailey came back and made a report of what fighting he had done, and of his dislodging the enemy from their works behind the citadel, Dwight exclaimed, "Let us drink all around. Hoffman, make a report to General Banks immediately. We have done enough; let's go home." But there was silence among the staff, and Bailey continued: "General, before I got their works half destroyed they came down on me with a whole brigade, and those miserable volunteers that I had were not the right stuff for me to fight against such odds with, so I retired; and, General, if I see that the rebels undertake to complete those works that I drove them out of, I will find a chance for some other staff officer to surprise them to-morrow night."

On the next day, it having been determined that trenches should be extended along the crest of the great ravine to the right of the cotton bag battery, and several regiments of negroes having by great industry got these trenches so deep that a man could walk in them some distance without being seen by the rebels, Bailey and Clark, the leaders of storming columns, took a walk into the safest part of the trenches. Both had come recently from the safe, where they had imbibed freely the spirit of command, for they were of the chosen few that the regular army sentinel posted there had orders to allow to enter the sanctum. "Colonel," said Bailey, "let me show you how I make these nigger officers stand around."

"I have great confidence in your abilities, my dear Major; great confidence in your abilities. I may add great confidence in your abilities," was Clark's answer.

"See here," said Bailey to the colonel of a negro regiment, who, in his zeal to have his men do well, had just been using a pick with his own hands, "See here; you are a grumbler. You have been grumbling about your work. D—n you, I put you under arrest. Go to the rear in arrest."

“By whose order?” asked the surprised Colonel.

“By my own order,” said Bailey, “I rank you if you are Colonel. I am a staff officer. D—n you, a staff officer, I tell you, and I can put you in irons if I please.”

“I appeal to Colonel Clark,” said the arrested man, “I wish to know whether Captain Bailey ranks me, and can put me in irons because he is on General Dwight’s staff?”

“You insolent nigger officer. You G—d d—n volunteer,” cried the furious Bailey, making a pass to knock down the arrested Colonel, but sinking back suddenly pacified by the manner in which his blow was parried, and by a glance of fire from the eyes of the man he struck at.

“Desist! desist, my dear Major, I beg of you,” said Clark, “I will settle this matter to your satisfaction, I assure you,” and turning to the indignant commander of the black regiment, continued, “Colonel, you are subject to the orders of Major Bailey, for he is a staff officer. He is honored with a position very near General Dwight, a position for which he is eminently qualified; eminently qualified.” The arrested Colonel seemed to comprehend the whole, and, making a low bow, departed.

Bailey and Clark continued their walk, and in a little while a major, whose appearance as a well educated gentleman was enough to account for the ill-will of Clark and Bailey toward him, was sent by them to the rear under arrest. Then followed one captain and then another, arrested with scarcely any accusation except what might be gathered from Bailey’s words, “I’ll make an example of you.”

Immediately on Colonel Clark’s return to his head-quarters, he found, among several letters recently arrived, one from the Governor of Michigan, stating that my charges and specifications against Clark had been received and filed, and giving some ideas respecting cotton stealing, which, to Clark’s mind, seemed cruel and unnatural. Clark immediately sent his favorite orderly, George Robinson, for Bailey, and soon afterward the leader of assaulting columns and the great safe-maker were seen arriving at Dwight’s head-quarters.

It is about 2 o'clock on the morning of the 26th of June, 1863. A hazy light falls upon Port Hudson and the broad Mississippi. A few white clouds float below the stars. No wind stirs the air. There is the slight chilliness which midnight brings even in the warmest Southern night. The musquitos have ceased their din. A staff officer is seen coming from the safe, arousing a soldier here and there, and inquiring, "Where is Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon?" He finds me as I lay wrapped in my blanket on the platform of the mortar battery. I am awakened from such sleep as circumstances have allowed me for a few minutes, by a hand taking hold of my shoulder. I readily recognize Captain Metcalf, Adjutant-General on the staff of General Nickerson, and not doubting some evil is at hand, I spring to my feet. The Adjutant, with a voice indicating that he feels the baseness of his errand, addresses me: "By the order of General Dwight, General Nickerson has sent me with an order to you that you are to take one hundred picked men of your regiment, proceed immediately along the river bank behind the citadel, and make an attack on a party of the enemy that Captain Bailey has just seen throwing up an earth-work there. You are ordered to lead the assault in person, and make the enemy stop their work there. I am to wait and see you make the attack."

"Captain," I reply, "we have been in a brigade commanded by Colonel Clark, and how does it happen that this order is sent by General Nickerson?"

The Adjutant rejoins, "Colonel Clark was at the look-out with General Dwight when General Nickerson and I got there, in obedience to an order to report immediately. It seemed to me that Colonel Clark and Captain Bailey had been the means of having Dwight send for us expressly to take the job of sending you to make this assault."

Saying that I understand the matter, I go to the first company commander that I can find, which is Lieutenant Ellis, of Company C, and waking him from a sounder sleep than I have been able to enjoy for some time, I order him to get up his men and



have them form in as light marching order as possible, every man to have forty rounds of ammunition, and to have his rifle in good order and loaded.

I find Captain Craig, commanding Company A, and have him get his company under arms immediately. I then lead them to the part of Bailey's sap or zigzag works most advanced toward the citadel. Here I post them, and explaining to their Captain the orders I have to execute, I instruct him that as soon as he hears firing behind the citadel he is to open fire with his breech-loaders on the front, and make as much noise as he can, so as to keep some of the enemy away from my assaulting party.

Without waiting to hear remarks of officers and men, which were somewhat disrespectful of generals, and evinced some recollections of the orders for taking possession of General Gardiner's house, and turning him out doors, on the 14th, I hurry back to Company K, commanded by Lieutenant W. J. Edwards, whom I have ordered to have his men fall in under arms. I find his company ready for action, and post them in a trench on the extreme brow of our hill, directly opposite the citadel, and give the same orders that I gave to Company A.

I hasten to a well mounted eight-inch howitzer in the hands of a well known company of the Twenty-first Indiana, and make an arrangement with the Captain that as soon as firing begins he will open on the citadel with grape-shot and shells. No orders have been sent from any general to have artillery help us, but I can rely on this Captain, orders or no orders.

Lieutenant Ellis and Company C are ready to go with me on my mission, which is second to none but that called for in Special Order No. 32, for ousting Gardiner. To my surprise I find Colonel Clark standing in conversation with Ellis, who was one of his personal friends. "Colonel Bacon," says Clark, "General Dwight's order is that you are to lead this assault in person, and the General cannot be kept waiting any longer."

Lieutenant Ellis here interrupts, saying, "I can only get about forty men together; here they are."

"Very well, I had rather have that number than a hundred.

Perhaps the fewer men I have with me the better," is my answer, and turning to Clark, I say, "Colonel, do you consent to my going on with the men Lieutenant Ellis has here?"

The Colonel hesitates a moment, thinking how he can help his friend, the Lieutenant, out of the job on hand, but the clank of the saber of an approaching staff officer is heard. Clark stepping aside has a few private words with Ellis, and just as one of Dwight's staff officers arrives, Clark speaks aloud to me: "Move forward with your men immediately. You must dislodge the enemy from the works they are making behind the citadel immediately. General Dwight is waiting at the look-out to see the result."

In a few moments I have led my forty men out to the end of the trench at the river bank. I spring upon the embankment thrown upon the side toward the enemy. I look over the track we must take. It is the same we were ordered to take on the morning of the 14th, when we started under the famous orders. I cannot see beyond the first mound of the citadel hill. The great bend of the river makes it impossible to see what there may be a little farther along the foot of the precipice. One thing is certain, that if we find any footing along the edge of the water it will be very narrow, and if the enemy are there behind any kind of earth-works, especially if they have any artillery, the exploit before me now is equal to that ordered for us on the morning of the 14th. A brave and intelligent young man named Brown, a resident of my own county, is beside me. I start forward with him far enough to be in perfect quiet, the rest of my men being left under cover in the trench. I ask young Brown to go forward as stealthily as possible till he finds the enemy's picket, and then to return and report to me. He immediately lays aside his rifle, accoutrements, coat, hat and boots, and rolling up his pantaloons, so as to be ready to run the gauntlet, as he may have to do on his return, skulks forward like an Indian, and in a little while returns, saying that just beyond the mound he saw three men rise up before him, but he does not think that they saw him. There is no use in knowing

anything further about what is before us. I return to the embankment extending down the river bank. I find Captain Metcalf here. He says: "I understand this matter, and have come so that I can do justice to you in my reports." I thank him, and tell Lieutenant Ellis to bring his men out of the trench and over the embankment as soon as he can. The men, comprehending what is to be done with them, are not very prompt, as they close up four behind four, ready to march forward where nothing protects them from rebel bullets at close range.

Forward I lead my forty men, with as little noise as possible. Not a shot from the rebels. We are between the mound and the river. One rebel picket must be on the mound a few yards above our heads, but yet no "Who comes there?" and no shot. I feel a strong desire to get to the enemy as soon as possible, and have the firing commence. A strange compulsion is getting me too far ahead of my men. I turn to them and urge them by gestures to be quicker. Some of them seem to be influenced by common sense, and to wonder whether we are going clear into Port Hudson after General Gardiner again, but the same impulse which I feel to go through with the affair suddenly extends to every man. In a moment we are recklessly scrambling over the hard lumps and blocks of dry, yellow clay, along the base of the great precipice, which is very steep from the sullen citadel one hundred feet over our heads down to the deep water. We must be sure-footed; a mis-step sends any of us into the whirl of dark waters. We are already farther into Port Hudson than any assaulting party have ever been before, and yet no alarm. We go on. We have passed the middle of the citadel. Nothing but an abrupt and ragged side of the great clay-bank on one side, and the broad river on the other. A few clumps of hardy bushes here and there up the precipice, show footholds for sentinels, who at any moment may give the alarm. The upper part of the precipice appears to be less steep than the part near us. No doubt there are passages and rifle pits up there connected with the citadel. Still we go on, and yet no alarm. A glance upward shows that we are

leaving the lowering citadel behind us. Here, right before us, is a narrow path leading up the precipice, with occasional steps cut in the face of the clay-bank. This is the track by which Dwight thinks he is fated to reach at once the citadel and eternal fame.

We have gone as far as he intended us to go, and yet have found no work or obstruction of any kind made by the rebels. No wonder that they are content to leave this entrance to Port Hudson pretty much as nature left it.

Not yet thinking that the redoubt or earth-work we have been seeking is like Macbeth's dagger in the air, all imaginary, I feel a strong desire to find it, but there is no use in leading this cumbersome squad of infantry farther into places from which escape may be so much more difficult than entrance, until I know where we are going. I halt my command by a word spoken in a low tone to the forward men. In a moment the sounds of the soldiers' shoes on the hard lumps of clay cease. All of the men crouch against the side of the precipice. I, with four picked men, advance as quickly and quietly as possible along the foot of the precipice. We are a long ways inside of Port Hudson. I stop where going farther would take me out of sight of my company, and let the men go ahead to find the fortification we are to attack, if they can find it. I direct them that they are to leave one of their number at the end of every thirty or forty steps, so as to keep perfect communication with me, and that they are to return and report to me what they find of the enemy as soon as possible, without giving any alarm. As I wait for them, listening to the slight sound of their steps, rapidly ceasing to be heard, my thoughts fly an instant to my distant home. I see my children and my native land. Quickly the bright vision vanishes. I see the broad, dark surface of the river, glimmering in the pale light. I hear the low, ill-natured voice of the waters. I look up the precipice. There aloft are the sullen earth-works and parapets, mysteriously entwreathing and crossing the top of the high bluff. There are the rebel soldiers, perhaps unconscious of our

presence, and perhaps watching us, under the direction of some crafty leader, who is withholding destruction from us now, in hopes that our explorations will be the means of bringing a large federal force here to attempt the capture of Port Hudson by this way, in order that withholding destruction from the few may insure the destruction of the many. But if the garrison are asleep, I may scale this bluff, surprise them, and gain a place in history for this night. Yet if I should surprise the citadel, Dwight, Bailey and Clark are not the men to send me any support or reinforcement. No; they would keep their guns playing on the citadel if they knew I had possession of it. If I should escape with my life, they would have me arrested for exceeding my instructions, and in case of any failure and loss of men, I would be charged with cowardice and murder. After all, I know very well what it would amount to to surprise the citadel and be in possession of it. The inside of the citadel is commanded by the guns of other fortifications in rear of it, and for any federal force the citadel would only be a slaughter-pen.

We have been here too long already, but my scouts do not return. We must delay no longer. I go to the nearest man, and tell him to pass forward the order for all to retreat as soon as possible to our trenches where we started from. I wait till I see two of the four men returning toward me, without any signs of trouble. I hasten back to the main body of my party, and give them the order to retreat with as little noise as possible. It is needless to tell them to be quick about it.

As soon as we begin to retreat, every man has a realizing sense of what kind of a job we have been engaged in, and the insane impulse to find the enemy and charge on them in such a position as this, gives place to a common sense impulse to get out of such a place immediately. We are back at the federal trenches. Not a shot has been fired. As the men are getting over the embankment back into the trench on the river bank, I tell Lieutenant Ellis to see if they are all here. He finds two missing, and sends Lieutenant Grant, of Company C,

back to ascertain if they are near by. Lieutenant Grant is gone some time. I find Captain Metcalf beside me, and report to him what we found and what we did not find, and put under the latter head the fortification we were ordered to assault. He smiles when he hears that there was no possibility of there being any truth in Bailey's report about seeing rebel works where the precipice runs down to the water so steep that a man can scarcely find any footing there. He remarks to me, "Well, your charge on Port Hudson is the most successful one so far. The reports in the morning will have to show the orders executed and you alive, to the great disappointment of some, perhaps."

After a while Lieutenant Grant and the missing men return. The Lieutenant gives me an account of what delayed him. He says: "I went back as far as the company had been and stood still and listened, but I could hear nothing of the men. I then went on and kept going cautiously, until I found the men in a little level place by springs at the foot of the precipice. The rebels in the citadel had a cook shanty there and our men were collecting trophies. I hurried them off and brought along with me this bag of corn meal. I thought it would do well enough for a trophy, and better to make corn dodgers. Our colored man can make the best corn dodgers I ever saw. I will send him to you with a specimen of his work for breakfast."

Here a soldier of Company C, known as Yankee Hill, interrupts, "See what I have got, Colonel," and holds out a confederate soldier's waist belt with a circular clasp of brass marked "C. S." This Yankee Hill is a fellow whose wonderful development of nerve and muscle are such that fear and feebleness are almost unknown to him. I tell him that I think him entitled to wear the belt. Another Company C man, of short, burly figure, and curly black hair, presents to me his trophy, a fine, well smoked ham, out of the middle of which several slices had been cut, probably for the breakfast of some rebel officer.

"Colonel," says the soldier, "I think you will be entitled to some of this."

My reply was that I believed it to be a law of nature that the captor owns the prize, but that to live on salt beef and hard bread as we have been doing is enough to give any man an appreciation for any share in such a prize as he had taken.

"Well," says the short man, "I did not know but that I might lose it. I was the hindmost man coming out, and just as I was getting clear of the citadel somebody on the hill called out, 'What picket post do you belong to?' I answered, 'Outside picket post,' and he didn't shoot."

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### A Dream, and what followed next.

THE 26th of June, 1863, began with a flaming sunrise, but those of us who had been into Port Hudson slept late and soundly. It was natural to feel that for a little while we might rest exempt from that exhausting anxiety which had worn upon our minds and sickened our hearts with thoughts like those that torture shipwrecked mariners in the hands of a cannibal chief, who daily takes some of their number to amuse himself with their death struggles, and to regale him with their roasted flesh, or to be sacrificed in honor of some sacred serpent. One of those sudden thunder showers, which had so often drenched us, awakened me from a dream occasioned by thoughts of this very comparison which had often been forced upon my mind, and by the sounds of the approaching storm. The whole imaginary scene, though apparently involving considerable time, probably needed but an instant before waking to appear and be acted out before the mind. There was a strange union and co-mingling of the things of America with those of the negro continent.

It seemed that our hill, with Dwight's safe upon it, had been suddenly carried to the interior of Africa and set down amid the tall palm trees of a vast plain. Right before me was the safe, but increased in size to a pagoda, the floor being up about thirty feet above the foundation, a sodded inclined plane went up to the floor, and there aloft stood a wooden image of Dwight, wearing the hat and old-fashioned swallow-tailed dress coat of a federal brigadier, with enormous epaulettes. The face of the image was surprisingly like that of the original, but the rest of the body was roughly made. Although the general pot shape was well preserved, the naked wood was left in sight from the waist downwards, and the stomach was made by setting an enormous blue jug into the wood. In its right hand the image held out a large whisky bottle, a bottle familiar to the eyes of those who knew Dwight. On the floor at the feet of the idol lay crouching two beasts, looking at me hatefully. The upper part of their faces were like those of men, but their other parts were beastly and disgusting. The beast at the image's right hand was a hyena, and the human part of its head was that of Bailey. The beast on the left hand was a fat hog, and the human part of its head was that of Clark.

In front of the safe or pagoda, not very far from the foot of the inclined plane, cotton bales from our fortification at Port Hudson were regularly piled in the form of a great square, six bales high. The bales of the upper surface were laid with long, narrow openings between them, running across the square one way. In these openings stood, by ranks, all of our regiment in double column, every captain at the head of his company, and the lieutenants in the ranks.

In front of the column, and in the openings between the bales, I stood with the commissioned and non-commissioned staff officers of the regiment, and the color guard with the colors, all in the same order as is usual on inspections. Every man's hands were in manacles behind his back, and his feet were in fetters, chained to something below him. I looked at such irons as I could see of those near me, and saw plainly



stamped on the metal the words, "West Point Works." Between the ranks of chained victims stood, at intervals, on top of the cotton bales, the well-known officers, orderlies and slaves that belonged about Dwight's and Clark's head-quarters, Wickham Hoffman being nearest to me. All of these were without clothing, except a piece of red cotton cloth wrapped snugly about the loins, and all had become black as negroes. Every one of them held a broad, bright and sharp sacrificial knife, some of which were near enough for me to see plainly stamped on them the words, "West Point Works." Suddenly they all broke out into a loud, religious chant, using these words: "Happy! happy! happy! Blessed! blessed! blessed are they who die by the sacred knife, to glorify the god and his holy beasts." Then Captain Pierce, Dwight's Chief Quartermaster, appeared, black, and wearing only the red cloth like the rest, but he had suspended about his neck, by a long, slender, writhing snake, a miniature cotton bale, exceedingly dirty. He ascended the inclined plane, prostrated himself, and kissed the toe of the idol thrice, took from the extended hand of the god the whisky bottle, and saying, "To the god power, dominion and glory, for ever and ever," he poured out before the image a libation of commissary whisky, the odor of which caused the holy beasts to turn their eyes from me, and point their snouts, with tongues thrust out, toward the falling liquid, but a gesture from the Chief Quartermaster quieted them, and the black priesthood all chanted again, "Be pleased, be pleased, O deity, with whisky, with whisky, the liquid of living soul, that gladdens divinity. The victims long to die for thy glory, for thy glory alone. No honor for mortal men like the honor of dying before the god by the knife of sacrifice. O, Dwight, hear us! O, Dwight, hear us!" Then the Chief Quartermaster wrinkled his black brow, and pointing his black finger at me, cried out, as the holy beasts made a hoarse, angry noise, "Expel the unworthy one. Away with him into outer darkness. The glorious death is denied him."

Instantly a small dog, with a head and face resembling those

of Lieutenant Dickey, Dwight's ordnance officer, came running down from behind the idol, and scrambling up to me in some way, unlocked my manacles and fetters. Hoffinan cried "Begone! begone!" I sprang down, and after me came three of the black priests with their knives. I supposed that I was to be slaughtered somewhere out of sight of the god, and as they hurried me away I could hear horrible shrieks and cries mingled with barbaric chanting. The sacred knives were at work on the throats of the victims.

I was surprised to see no spectators except a number of men sitting on benches in rear of the sacrifice. These men, although black and naked barbarians, were at work like reporters. They were making hand-bills and sending them off every moment by couriers, and as some of them passed by me, I saw in great capitals at the head of the bills sometimes one and sometimes another of these phrases: "Terrible Slaughter!" "Dwight Triumphant!" "Glorious News!" "Great Bloodshed!" "Dwight the Hero of the Day!" "The Sixth Michigan to a Man Die Around their Colors!"

When the horrible sounds of the sacrifice began to grow fainter in my ears, I looked back and saw the whole pile of cotton sending up a column of flame and black smoke, and in that direction I could hear the noise of barbaric instruments of music. In other directions I could hear in the distance the applauding shouts and huzzas of great multitudes, who were not allowed to come within certain sacred limits, and who were receiving the hand-bills from the couriers. What became of my escort I know not, but I was borne with incredible rapidity through the air until I saw below me, at no great distance, the oak groves, the river and the streets about my home; but ere the gush of joy could rise in my heart, my course was suddenly changed, and I was let down, where the fast falling rain-drops awake me, on the platform of the mortar battery before the citadel of Port Hudson.

The splashing rain was soon driven past us by a northwester, which, even here, had not entirely lost the chill of the Rocky

Mountains. Nobody had heard from any of our lords who sent us on our little foraging party last night. They were all in the safe about the time they got us fairly started out of the end of the trench, and then they suddenly took a freak to go off. It really seemed as if they did not want to hear the sound of the guns which they believed would soon put an end to our lives, and on the principle that dead men tell no tales, make sure that no more charges and specifications against cotton thieves in this department would be sent home to the North.

Our whole regiment was in the trenches, mainly on the flanks of Bailey's great cotton bale works, for all the guns were in position. The magazines were supplied. Sailors, under naval officers, were at the huge nine-inch Dalghrens. As soon as Dwight and his nobility could sleep off the effects of those potations which quite overcome them last night before Metcalf could find them to make his report, the guns must open, and, according to official reports and calculations, the citadel and the rebel redoubts must tumble down, and Dwight was to have all the glory of capturing old Gardiner and Port Hudson; and as Dwight's staff would doubtless make him believe that the guns had done all he imagined they would do, he would certainly order the Sixth Michigan to go over and take possession of Port Hudson in his name, and probably not many hours would pass before I would have the honor of leading my regiment up the citadel hill to certain destruction, for it was easy to see just where the interior works of the rebels were which, entirely safe from federal batteries, could make short work of all of us who should reach the inside of the citadel. If fortifications could ever be so arranged on chosen ground as to render certain the fate of assailing infantry, it must be here. So well did the enemy know their advantages, that they had gradually withdrawn their pickets in order to let Bailey dig his trenches to the foot of their hill. I knew, however, that whatever disasters and massacres there might be, our regiment, and especially the two companies for whom I had borrowed the breech-loaders, might gain some honor by their skill and valor.

Every company had in various ways arranged loop-holes, so that the rifles could be aimed toward the rebels without letting any part of the man who held it be exposed. In some places, long boxes were thrust through the embankments on the flanks of the cotton bales. In other places, logs were laid upon the embankment, and holes made through the earth under the logs; and in other places again, sand bags were piled up so as to leave loop-holes, in the same manner as the rebels had prepared their parapet for riflemen. Such was the patriotism of the men, that although they could look forward only to some such performances as those of the 14th of June, yet when they saw so many cannons, and the cannoniers resting by them, behind such mighty fortifications, all were anxious for the hour of conflict, no matter what Dwight might do with us.

As is usual, after a storm in this region, the sun came out apparently hotter than ever. Incessant singing, like the voices of enormous locusts, was heard among the boughs of the scattered trees. The creatures from which the noise proceeded were of the lizard kind, and save their loudest racket for times of extraordinary heat. The screeching chorus of these lizards, seeming to be very happy about something, was in some way associated with the significance of the dream I had in the morning, but the moment I thought of the dream I remembered one thing about it which undoubtedly took away whatever faith I had in it. I had seen the Chief Quartermaster officiating as chief priest, where not only human life, but also a vast amount of cotton was sacrificed. I knew him too well; he would have disposed of that cotton in quite another way.

My attention was suddenly called from all abstractions by the sudden appearance of a staff officer, nobody less than Lieutenant Verax, Dwight's truth teller. He saluted me and requested me to step aside, as he wished to speak with me alone. "Colonel," said he, "a few officers of high rank are needed for General Bank's storming column of a thousand men. I believe that your attention has already been called to that subject several times. Colonel Clark and General Dwight are

very desirous that some officer of your rank should represent your regiment in that column of noble patriots, who will have all the honor of going forward as a forlorn hope. They will be immortalized. And yet, Colonel, I am authorized to say there is no prospect that they will ever be required for an assault. General Dwight will soon dispose of Port Hudson summarily. I assure you, Colonel, upon my honor, that this storming column offers a rare opportunity. They have a delightful camp in the safest position that can be found, and are provided with extra rations, and will have nothing at all to do. Yet it is a great gratification to General Banks to see the best officers volunteer."

He would have gone further had I not interrupted him saying that I had heard so many promises that the storming column were to do nothing, that I really began to believe these promises, and that if my regiment were in reality to be the storming column, I chose to remain and share their fate. Verax bowed and departed. It was easy to see that Dwight, Clark and Bailey wanted to get rid of me, and give me no chance to be a witness of their doings, but this was just what I was determined to see. I came to Port Hudson, knowing that I would soon be arrested a second time, especially if there was any probability that I should share any of the supposed honors to be won, or gain any distinction, but I came prepared for the worst, and determined to act well my part and see the performances. There was no use in attempting to conciliate any of the men hostile to me. No promise that they could make could be trusted, and any offer to conciliate them would only be considered a sign of fear, and would do harm rather than good.

I turned my thoughts to the scene around me. It was evident that, although all communication with the rebels had for several days been strictly forbidden, our men had continued to give them all the notice that honor required. They knew that our guns were about to open fire as well as we did; and now, as a sign that the truce had ended, a bright silken

battle-flag was run up on a long flag-staff close behind the main parapet of the citadel. The flag showed the three broad bars, red, white and red, and the rebel stars. It seemed as if colors never looked so bright before.

On our side the stars and stripes were held up, and waved a defiance, answered immediately by a similar motion of the rebel ensign. Yet no soldier on either side fired a shot, but every cannon was loaded, and its muzzle at the opening in the iron mantelet of the embrasure.

A message was brought to me by a soldier that Lieutenant Dickey wanted to see me down in the ravine, and having descended to a place where no bullets could come, I found the Lieutenant, mounted on an expensive horse of very doubtful ownership, often used by the Chief Quartermaster. The Lieutenant had an exceedingly malicious smirk on his canine countenance as he handed me a large white envelope, directed to me, and marked "O. B.," and said that General Dwight wished the order obeyed immediately. On opening it, I found it to contain a general order from Dwight, through his Adjutant, Wickham Hoffman, declaring Lieutenant-Colonel Porter, of the Fourteenth Maine Volunteers, and Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon, Sixth Michigan Volunteers, under arrest, and ordering the arrested officers to take up their quarters half a mile in rear of Dwight's head-quarters. (I thought Dwight's head-quarters were certainly far enough to the rear.) The order proceeded to set forth the cause of the arrests with curious circumlocution, meaning that we were arrested on account of want of respect for our commanders, which made it expedient to get rid of us before an assault on the citadel. (Then Dwight did not intend to wait for his cannon to drive all the rebels out of this part of Port Hudson, according to his predictions. No, he must have another assault first, probably by the same route which we were sent upon last night, so that his bulletin might not fail to report terrible fighting and fearful carnage.) The order concluded with a verbose subdivision, commencing with exactly this sentence:

“III. The troops of this division will never be required to perform any duty which should not be reasonably expected of good soldiers, and which is not only possible but easy.”

At the end of the subdivision stood officially the familiar words:

“By order of Brigadier-General Dwight.

“WICKHAM HOFFMAN, A. A. G.”

What did this mean? No doubt Special Order No. 32 and the jobs appointed for Captain Cordon and Captain Stark were referred to, and not altogether incorrectly, for if there could be doubt whether such duty should be reasonably expected of good soldiers, there was no doubt that such duty lacked much of being either possible or easy. And the General declares that he will never require his soldiers to do any duty which “should not be reasonably required of good soldiers, and which is not only possible but easy.” Perhaps the division will not think he tells them much that is new when he publishes in this order that hereafter no duty required of them is to be possible and easy.

It might have been that some mutineer had claimed that Dwight ought not to require impossibilities, and this order was to show authority, and let subordinates know that the General would now commence to require impossibilities continually. At any rate, this order was to be a finality, a sort of Dred Scott decision, by infallible authority, as to all of Dwight's performances, pronouncing them “very good”—indeed, so perfect, that to question their wisdom would be an unpardonable offense.

In a little while after receiving the order, the arrested officers, with their servants and camp equipage, were on their way toward Dwight's head-quarters, and long before our arrival at that safe and secluded place, we must pass through thick woods, which would hide every part of Port Hudson and all the operations of the siege from our view.

There was a great branching tree in one of the last open fields we were to pass before losing sight of Port Hudson.

The top of this tree had been sawed away, and a platform, a shelter from heat and rain, and a seat, had been fixed there. The arrangement was for a part of the signal corps. Here by day the curiously colored little signal flags rapidly waved in the signal semi-circle; and here, at night, the same motions were made by swinging lanterns fastened to poles.

Near this tree was now hitched a horse, with saddle and bridle, indicating that he belonged to a staff officer; and there, carefully climbing the long ladder leading to the platform, was an elegantly dressed little officer, Lieutenant Verax, who honored us by recognition, and in a very friendly voice, said, "I am going to see the big battery open. I think that this is about the right place to get a good view." Colonel Porter remarked to me, "Probably distance will truly lend enchantment to that view."

In a moment afterward one heavy gun was fired in the direction of the great battery, which was entirely hidden by the bluffs and woods about it. Other reports of cannon were immediately heard that way. Bailey and Dwight had begun, but my expectations as to the noise they would make were disappointed. It seemed to me that they were firing slowly. The navy also seemed to be commencing an unusual cannonade, but they, too, fired slowly, and yet they seemed to make more noise than the guns on shore. The last I saw of the siege of Port Hudson was a gush of smoke from one of the enormous naval shells, which prematurely burst in the middle air right over the great battery, the hot mid-day sun giving the smoke a curious reddish hue.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

## A Change.

NEAR the veranda of a plantation house, and under the live oaks and cotton woods, whose uniting boughs formed a thick shade, is spread a table with its clean white table-cloth and China ware bought in old times of peace. Here is the genuine Southern corn bread, light and soft as the white loaf beside it, made from Northern flour bought for my own use from the federal commissariat of Dwight's division. Here are the well cooked meats; also the cakes, preserved fruits and coffee prepared by the trusty slave women, whose affection for a kind mistress and for a good master has been sufficient to keep them at home, even though the camps of the army besieging Port Hudson are near by.

At the head of the table sits Doctor Burnette, owner of the plantation, recently a surgeon of the Eighteenth Confederate Regiment of Mississippi, and opposite to him his wife, a Southern lady. She has Southern pride in every feature, and yet such kindness and benevolence in her looks, that it is easy to understand why not only her female house servants, but also several fine appearing young men servants are seen among those who prefer slavery at home with such a mistress to freedom in the federal camps.

Seated about the table are those whom nothing but some cause unusual as this siege could have brought together. An old man, with sharp, black eyes, gray beard and hair, but with form erect and manly, as in youth. Beside him his wife, broken in strength and health, not by time, but by recent grief. The old man is Captain Griffith, who got his title in some bygone Indian wars. Lately his son, fighting under Stonewall Jackson in Virginia, was killed, and the news of his death was a stroke

from which his mother never recovered. The Southern cause is a part of her religion. She blessed her son when he went to the war, and believed that her continual prayers would be heard, and that she would see her son return and her country free. She has yet one son, who is very young, and serving with the rebel signal corps in Port Hudson. The house of Captain Griffith was burned by some of the federal army when Port Hudson was invested, and now he, with his wife and their daughter, are here to find shelter. The daughter is plainly dressed, but is a person possessed of uncommon vigor of mind and of uncommon health, which gives her the appearance of a New England girl.

Next to this young lady, and beside me at the table, sits the delicate little wife of a rebel surgeon, on duty with an Arkansas regiment in the fort. Opposite to me is seated a fair-skinned, blue-eyed Alsacienne, the wife of Lieutenant-Colonel De Gournay, a French officer, who is Chief of Artillery in Port Hudson, the man whose guns destroyed the steamer Mississippi, and beat back all of Farragut's fleet except the Hartford and the Albatross; the man whose hidden howitzers have come forth just in time to repulse and rake down every storming column which has ventured to assault Port Hudson.

Dr. Burnette is a tall, lithe and intelligent Mississippian, in the prime of life. He is saying, "Colonel, I do not understand how Dwight happened to measure the distance so as to send you straight here, unless he thought that to send you among such a set of rebels as we are would be a terrible punishment."

My reply is that I am resigned to my fate, and that inasmuch as we may be deemed outside of the federal army, I desire him to give me his word of honor that I shall not be taken prisoner, for nothing would please Dwight and his staff better than to get rid of me in that way, and report that I had deserted to the enemy, thus preventing the confederates from gaining anything by my capture.

Dr. Burnette answers, "Under the circumstances of your

visit to us, our honor is pledged that our friends shall not carry you off." Captain Griffith and the ladies seated about the table join in the assurance given. It needs no uncommon discernment to see that I can trust them.

The attentive slaves behind our chairs are model waiters, and as I enjoy the first wholesome, well cooked meal I have had in a long time, I see why Southerners want to keep their negroes. They are bound to them by ties of interest and affection both. Mrs. Burnette seems to divine my thoughts, and says to me, "I must talk with you some time about our peculiar institution. Perhaps you never supposed that there were really two sides to the slavery question."

I tell her that a lady's right to choose what shall be talked about is not to be disputed, but that the slavery question is the last subject I should dare to choose for conversation, considering that I am almost on her side of the line, and that even now I propose a question on a very different matter: "Why don't your confederate cavalry come and stir up some of our generals who have got their quarters so far to the rear, to escape the shells from Port Hudson?"

The lady responds that there is bad management somewhere; that she is sorry to say that the confederate leaders are too much like the leaders I have been serving under, and that if her country is ever subjugated, it will be on account of just such mismanagement as leaves the rear of Banks' army undisturbed, but she adds, with a significant look, "Don't you think, Colonel, after all, that we would be foolish to capture such generals as Dwight? Why, he has surely been doing more for us than most of our own generals."

Our conversation is interrupted by the sound of a sudden cannonade in the direction of the great battery which I left on the 26th, and as we listen it is not difficult to hear the continual irregular fire of musketry in the same direction.

"Another charge, surely," says Dr. Burnette; "can it be possible that your generals want to use up their army entirely? The garrison have nothing to do but lie in security and

slaughter their assailants in such charges as there have been. If they should surrender to-morrow, they have done our enemies more harm than ten times their number have done in Virginia and Maryland. Why don't Davis send somebody this way, where it is easy to do so much, rather than keep sending them on the errands of fools into Maryland?"

I have left the half-finished meal, and, standing apart under a tree, hear again much such firing as I heard on the morning of June 14, only it is now at a greater distance. For a little while I hear nothing but musketry; then the artillery is heard again, and the cannons speak in quick succession, as if to cover the retreat of repulsed infantry. Then follows a long continued firing of both musketry and artillery in confusion not easily explained.

Has Dwight got the citadel, and is this firing to hold it, or has he only got into his safe and set his artillery and infantry to firing at random for his amusement? I pray that it may be nothing worse than what I have last supposed, but I can easily imagine the evil disposition of Dwight and Bailey toward everybody on account of the ridiculous failure of their cotton bale battery, and I wait listening to every sound for a long time. The sun's last rays have gone, and I hear through the evening air only the sound of cannon shots at intervals, which proclaim afar that Port Hudson has not yet fallen.

When I return to the plantation house, I find my rebel friends seated under the veranda and under the nearest trees. In answer to inquiries, I state some suppositions in explanation of the firing, and what is the probable result. The Alsacienne wife of De Gournay stills the child she holds in her arms, and eagerly endeavors to catch the sense of English words enough to get my meaning, but seems entirely baffled, and as her servant takes her child, she rises, and approaching me, says, "Pardonnez moi, Monsieur, mais il faut que je sache ce qu' est arrivé. Pensez vous que beaucoup de gens ont été tués. Parlez moi en Français les autres entendent ce qu' il y a de nouveau. Mais jamais, jamais puis je comprendre l'Anglais." I make her

the best answer that I can in her own language, and tell her that I hope to hear in the morning all about what has happened, and that she shall have no more trouble in understanding the news, if she can understand my French.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### The Whisky Charge.

ON the morning of July 1, 1863, we had a late breakfast at Doctor Burnette's plantation, for we had been listening to uncommon firing by infantry and artillery until a late hour for two nights, and yet I had received no reliable news from the siege. I knew that something very uncommon must have prevented any of my friends from bringing the news, and I could not doubt that something like a series of assaults upon the citadel had been going on for the benefit of Dwight, and continued through such a space of time, and repeated in such a manner, as to leave little doubt that he was applying to the Sixth Michigan the same tactics which he used on the 27th of May, when he got more than a mile out of danger himself, and as often as the negro regiments under him were repulsed in attempting an impossibility, he sent orders to charge, and keep charging as long as a corporal's guard was left. In company with Doctor Burnette I was examining his cotton fields and cotton gin building, and learning something more about that plant which had cost so many valuable lives in my regiment, when a remarkably bright little negro boy came running to us and brought word that a gentleman wished to see me at the house. Soon afterward I accompanied a lieutenant of my regiment to Colonel Porter's tent in a dense woods near by. The Colonel's servant took charge of the lieutenant's horse.

We seated ourselves upon logs, and the lieutenant gave an account of what had been going on. He said:

“When the great cotton bale battery opened fire on the 26th, the enemy scarcely deigned to respond, and had nothing to do but to keep the cover of their works and act as sharpshooters occasionally. The more of our projectiles that sunk into their parapet the stronger did it become. Dwight had often said that his battery would drive the enemy from their works, and that he would take possession of Port Hudson, marching his men into the sally-port at right shoulder shift arms. Nobody knew what a failure his battery was to prove, but he delayed his assault until such failure was notorious, and the thundering of his great guns against the everlasting hills had become as ridiculous as the dropping of his mortar shells to drive the rebels out from behind their long traverse along the brink of the precipice going down to the river, the shells falling into the water or bursting at the foot of the precipice. After the 26th the enemy seldom fired even a rifle shot, and the truce seemed to be renewed on their side. Dwight's cannon appeared to get tired out with their own noise.

“On the night of the 28th it was determined at Dwight's head-quarters that the assault should be the next morning at 5 o'clock, and a tremendous bombardment for a long time before that hour made known to the rebels, as on former occasions, that an assault was at hand, but such was the quantity of sanitary wines and brandies which the General and his Surgeon Sanger had consumed at their midnight debauch, that before they realized what had become of the time, the 29th of June was far spent.

“Nevertheless, at about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, the One Hundred and Sixty-fifth New York, better known as the Zouaves, and the Sixth Michigan, were ordered to charge the citadel, under the direction of General Nickerson. Bailey's zigzag trench, or sap, had been continued without hinderance from the rebels until one end of it, made very deep, was at the foot of the most projecting part of the citadel hill. Here

Nickerson took position perfectly safe, but nearer to the enemy than any brigadier had been before during the siege. Nickerson appreciated the job appointed for him, and had prepared himself for it by imbibing at the safe large quantities of the spirit of command.

“The two regiments, or rather remnants of regiments (for fatigue, sickness, wounds and death had left but a few of them), lay in the trench close behind the General, who was making some kind of subterranean observations, and sending reports until nearly midnight, when just after he received Dwight’s ultimatum, ‘Charge, and keep on charging as long as you have a corporal’s guard left,’ a rebel deserter came running for his life, having narrowly escaped several rifle shots from the citadel, and sprang into the ditch, alighting astride of the Brigadier, who, with the ejaculation, ‘O, God!’ dropped down like a dead man, but finding himself alive, and the unarmed rebel in the grasp of two soldiers near him, he immediately put on airs of authority, saying to the rebel, ‘You wretch, come here, and tell me the truth or you are a dead man. What force is there in the citadel to-night?’ The deserter answered, ‘About seven hundred men, sir, for an assault has been expected for some time, and reinforcements have been arriving throughout the day.’ This was spoken a little beyond the leading file of men, and within plain hearing of many of the forward company, but Nickerson raising his voice somewhat, announced, ‘This fellow says that there are only forty men in the citadel,’ and sending two lucky soldiers and an aid to the rear with the deserter, he ordered the two regiments to climb out of the trench and charge the citadel. The order was so far obeyed that the miserable soldiers got out of the trench and climbed up the hill far enough to be safe from all communication with the generals on our side, and near enough to the citadel to hear rebel officers urging their men to reserve their fire, and let the d—d Yankees get into the ditch.

“The two regiments, in confusion, and numbering altogether less than three hundred men, with seven hundred of the enemy

in the works before them, lay down to avoid the bullets, which in spite of the commands of the rebel officers began to cut them down. Fortunately a sinking in the surface of the hill side partly sheltered our men from the fire of the citadel, which was ready to overwhelm them.

“The Zouaves and Michigan men were left for a long time on that hill side. Whoever rose up was shot. No orders of any kind, and no reinforcements came. Dwight drunk, and trying to look out of the holes in his great safe, expected to behold by the light of rifles and cannon all his plans succeed in the capture of the citadel, which he was now able to see double, and literally nodding to its fall. He was greatly dissatisfied because the firing was so irregular, continued so long, and made such a poor show. He waited long, drank often, and was heard making great promises of promotion to the staff officers who bore him away from the field of his fame. He seemed to think that the citadel was taken and reduced to his possession, and that all was done by himself.

“Dwight was soon sleeping the drunkard’s sleep in his distant quarters, and the men of the Sixth Michigan and the Zouaves were left on the terrible hill side, without any orders. The 30th of June began to dawn upon them, and they began to realize their condition. They were not half hidden. Nothing but the screen of darkness had been between them and certain death. Yet their case was clearly within that order of Dwight’s which announced that he himself would be the hangman of any soldier or officer who should ever take advantage of any cover, or retreat without permission, during any assault.

“The choice between the dangers must be made immediately. One at a time the men began to leave. Some stayed lying among the dead bodies and pools of blood, until they had to run a gauntlet of rebel fire to escape. A few having the best cover stayed, frequently fired at, until about the middle of the day, when the last who remained there, being Lieutenant Hare, of the Sixth Michigan, and a few others, driven to desperation by thirst and the scorching rays of the sun, sprang up and



arrived breathless and covered with dust in the federal trenches, miraculously escaping the bullets aimed at them. In the afternoon Dwight became partly sober, and, with his jug-bearers, reappeared in his safe. He at once gave orders for the same two regiments to charge the citadel again. The Zouaves, on account of their discipline, were put forward in the last night's affair, and this time the Sixth Michigan were to go ahead of the Zouaves. The former regiment were now about one hundred and thirty strong. The Zouaves, still fewer in numbers, were led by a sergeant. Every man felt as if he was under sentence of death, and the whole affair was only a military execution in disguise.

"The sun was about to set, when, under the instruction of Dwight's staff officers, the mournful procession filled the trench leading to the foot of the citadel hill. The instructions as to the exact manner of the massacre were precise, so that all the killing might, if possible, be seen from the safe. The men were to get out of the trench nearest to the citadel, and charge by twos. Orderly Sergeant Walker, of Company D, Sixth Michigan, was to lead the first pair, who were to run up and jump into the great ditch of the citadel.

"Turning to his company, he said, 'I will lead you, boys, and I shall never come back here. I will never be brought here to charge the citadel again.'

"The instructions were complied with. Sergeant Walker and other brave men were instantly killed. Of course, there was a repulse and a hasty escape of all who could escape, but not until some daring and reckless men, crowding forward, actually sprang into a rebel rifle pit, and from their brief struggle there brought with them a rebel captain as prisoner. Some of the assailants got into the main ditch of the citadel. Of these none returned; they fell under the fire of rifles and howitzers that raked the bottom of the ditch, where torpedoes were exploding.

"There was dissatisfaction and disappointment at the safe. There had been only the beginning of the sacrifice intended for

the benefit of Dwight. Bitter curses were uttered against the volunteers, who this time had disobeyed orders just as they did on the morning of the 14th. Officers who, before the war, had been clerks or apprentices, and whose base and contemptible qualities had made them staff officers in the Department of the Gulf, or given them places among Dwight's personal attendants, were now prompt in repeating the customary curses on all volunteers, and were equally prompt in pouring out and mixing numerous drinks for immediate use.

"Hours passed by, and no orders came to the troops in the trenches. At about 9 o'clock in the evening, the council in the safe seemed to have come to an important conclusion. Aids and orderlies were dispatched with orders that all the officers of the Sixth Michigan, the Zouaves, and five other regiments of the division, should leave their commands, and immediately assemble before the General.

"They came. Dwight sat full of whisky in his safe, like an ugly little heathen god in his pagoda. A favorite aid on either hand held a lighted tallow candle. Dwight began his speech, of which no adequate idea can be formed by those who did not hear it. He proceeded with wonderful gravity, pausing at every word. I have written it out. Here it is:

"The citadel is no longer tenable by the enemy, and the fire of my batteries has laid open Port Hudson. To take the citadel is nothing. All that regulars would have to do would be to walk in with arms at right shoulder shift, but you will have to take it with a rush. It is to be done immediately. Never stop until you get orders from me, for I am going to take Port Hudson by storm this very night. Colonel Clark will lead the charge—a charge which is to eclipse the glory of all other charges led by that gallant officer, a charge which is to let the world know what I can do with white men. On the 27th of May I showed what I could do with colored men.

"I will have the two regiments proceed along the margin of the river. When they come to the steps cut in the clay leading to the rear of the citadel, they must go up. I tell them they must

go up. Former experiments demonstrate that by this way the citadel can be surprised at any time, and I will tolerate no such disobedience of my orders as there was on the 14th. The rest of my division will leave the trenches at the foot of the hill, and will march on the road up the valley along the base of the hills on which are the enemy's fortifications. As soon as they shall have gained the rear of the citadel, they must rush up with manly cheers, join the two regiments coming up from the river side, and form column immediately in rear of the citadel; the handful of men who may yet occupy the citadel, seeing themselves cut off, will at once surrender. There are some interior works where the enemy are supposed to be still in possession. From that direction my column may receive a few discharges of grape or canister. I order you to pay no attention to any fire that may be opened upon you. No, you are to rush forward with a shout, and carry those interior works at the point of the bayonet. The enemy will think there is a perfect earthquake, and will fly in all directions before you. Let not a foot of ground gained by you be lost. Let no man forget that he is under my eye. It is not necessary for me to repeat here that a fate like that of John Hamlin, the man I executed summarily on the Teche expedition, awaits every man who retreats without my permission. I am the only General in this army who knows how to enforce discipline. What I have ordered is easy to perform. I know all about it—I am a West Pointer. I would lead the assault in person were it not that my rank is such that I must remain here.'

“As the General closed his sentence, a shell from the enemy came screeching over the safe, fortunately failing to explode until it had passed over the heads of the assembly. Dwight, securely protected by many feet of earth, seeing others crouch suddenly, said in the drollest manner, ‘Do not dodge. If it had been meant for you, you would never have heard it. Go execute my orders, and in the morning Port Hudson surrenders to me.’

"The demoralized remnants of regiments, under the direction of Dwight's staff officers, were crowding into the trenches. The enemy, looking on, and thoroughly prepared, were ready to make a speedy destruction of human life, that would at least be sufficient to insure for Dwight the Major-General's commission which he coveted. But all at once there was a halt, and it soon became known that orders had come from General Banks stopping the whole performance. The regiments went back to their places, and thus ended the charge which, under standing orders, had been proceeding for two days, and which has already taken the name of the 'Whisky charge,' a name likely to be remembered by those who know what quantities of the fire-water were consumed at the safe. I think that recent events, like those of the 14th of June, tend to prove our General's greatest merit, namely, that his absurdities are likely to defeat his wickedness."

The Lieutenant, belated by his lengthy narration, took hasty leave of us. I satisfied to some extent the curiosity of my friends at the house, who were waiting to hear the news. Madame De Gournay was most anxious to have me explain to her all that had happened, and as she could speak no English, and made earnest promises to give no information to others, I gave her as good an account of Dwight's whisky charges as I could give in her language. She appreciated well all that I said. Her expressive face could not conceal the joy which the politeness of her nation did not permit her to express in words. For a moment she seemed to be at a loss what to say, and then said:

"Laissez moi vous chanter une de nos chansons. Je vous prie d'oublier qu'<sup>elle</sup> est un peu rebelle<sup>le</sup>"

I answered that she could not be held responsible for the sentiments of song writers. She sang in a manner that was worthy of applause, and gave me a copy of the song, as follows:

## CANTATE.

Après vingt ans de sourdes trahisons,  
 Le Nord enfin ose lever la tête ;  
 Brisant nos lois, ruinant nos maisons,  
 Il veut du Sud consommer la défaite.  
 Fiers de nos droits jusqu'ici respectés,  
 Enfants du Sud, voulons nous être esclaves ?  
 Laisserons-nous charger nos mains d'entraves ?  
 Laisserons-nous périr nos libertés ?

Formons une sainte alliance ;  
 Levons-nous contre l'oppresseur ;  
 Et, glaive en main, jetons en chœur  
 Le noble cri d'indépendance.

La paix règnait au sein de nos cités,  
 Et l'abondance, au milieu de nos plaines.  
 Ils sont venus, ces tyrans détestés,  
 Semer partout la ruine et les haines.  
 Jouissez donc du fruit de vos exploits,  
 Noirs artisans de crises politiques ;  
 Repaissez-vous des misères publiques,  
 Et contemplez la patrie aux abois.

Formons une sainte alliance ;  
 Levons-nous contre l'oppresseur ;  
 Et, glaive en main, jetons en chœur  
 Le noble cri d'indépendance.

Entendez-vous ces dévots orateurs ?  
 Ils vont du Christ invoquant la doctrine.  
 Mais le sophisme a corrompu leurs cœurs ;  
 La bible en main, ils prêchent la ruine.  
 Alertes donc ! enfants de l'Union ;  
 Armez vos cœurs d'un saint patriotisme.  
 Et dans les rangs d'un obscur fanatisme  
 Portez le trouble et la destruction.

Formons une sainte alliance ;  
 Marchons sur les blasphémateurs ;  
 Et renversons les oppresseurs  
 De notre vieille indépendance.

O Liberté ! combats sous nos drapeaux,  
 Et chasse au loin cette peste publique,  
 Réveille-toi, sortez de vos tombeaux,  
 Pères sacrés de notre république !

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Dans les dangers servez nous de soutiens ;  
 Et, s'il nous faut périr dans la tempête,  
 Mieux vaut tomber que de courber la tête,  
 L'indépendance est le premier des biens.

Formons une sainte alliance ;  
 Marchons contre les oppresseurs,  
 En évoquant les fondateurs  
 De notre vieille indépendance.

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## CHAPTER XX.

Dwight Writes a Letter: A Bill of Complaint; News Items; Dwight's Last Charge; Difficulties and Dangers of River Navigation; The Sixth Michigan Interested in Naval Artillery Practice; The Fourth of July.

On the next day, July 2d, I received from a friend who had access to a letter-book at head-quarters, a copy of a letter written by Dwight himself to General Banks, requesting that Colonel Kingman, of the Fifteenth New Hampshire Volunteers, Lieutenant-Colonel Porter, of the Fourteenth Maine Volunteers, and Lieutenant-Colonel Bacon, of the Sixth Michigan Volunteers, might be summarily dismissed from the service of the United States, and setting forth reasons for the request substantially the same as in the order for my arrest, namely, a want of respect for Dwight, but adding these words as to Colonel Porter and myself: "Both have constantly expressed their opinion that the generals in command were incompetent, and that they would be massed and exposed at long range to the fire of artillery." No doubt that to express an opinion that those generals "would be massed and exposed at long range to the fire of artillery," was great wickedness in Dwight's estimation. I thought that my chance was good for the only really honorable discharge I could ever hope to receive from such a

reprobate as now had a whole division of Northern men in his power.

I resolved to be bold, and during the next two days the following address to General Banks, for myself and Colonel Porter, was written :

“ A private recommendation for our summary dismissal from the military service of the United States, without any form of trial, has been forwarded to you by General Dwight.

“ We offer no defense to any accusation which seeks to avoid and cut off all opportunity for hearing or defense. Such an accusation carries with it a sufficient defense for the accused, and really accuses no one but the accuser.

“ It is true that the West Point aristocracy, taking advantage of the confidence and the calamities of their country, have assumed the power of dismissing at will any officer for any crime they please to mention.

“ It is also true that this same aristocracy are everywhere endeavoring to create an artificial importance for themselves at the expense of others, by establishing for citizen soldiers a system of cruel and unusual corporal punishments, forbidden by the laws of the land and the laws of civilization. It is intended that, for volunteers, there shall be no such thing as military justice. It is intended that there shall be no rest, security or reputation, except such as shall be wholly dependent upon arbitrary will and favor—this, when the events of every day prove the truth of the maxim that ‘ Hatred is as often incurred by good actions as by evil.’

“ The insults, wrongs and outrages which our regiments and ourselves have suffered, are such as justify us in presenting to you a statement of some of those grievances which American citizens, serving their country in this army, have suffered from certain officers who have suddenly been made generals, and who seem to believe that it is for their interest to ruin you, and to gratify their hatred of volunteers by dooming those in their power to slaughter or disgrace. Educated to believe tyranny

the chief of virtues, their sympathies, if they have any, have naturally been with the South, and with that institution which they were taught to respect. It would not be strange if the South had had her choice among the officers of the old army. It would not be strange if interest and not principle is all that can be depended upon in the most of those left for the North.

“We may safely admit all that these regulars claim as to the advantages of their education, and yet assert that all they know of real war is what they have learned since April, 1861, and that the events of this siege argue as little for their attainments as for their principles of heart. The events of this siege assert better than we can that these generals have never intended that there should be any success of which the fame would be yours. They intend that our country shall carry on war for the benefit of a certain privileged class, or else carry on war in vain. Each of them appears to have made it his business in this siege to prevent all such success as would honor anybody but himself, the honor sought for himself to be measured by the numbers of his killed and his wounded.

“There has never been any co-operation of divisions. Each commander, no matter how weak his division, must have a separate column and a separate assault, all for his own benefit. One case excepted, not a division commander has led an assault on Port Hudson. It can hardly be said that any general from the regular army has exposed himself to any real danger before this place; their anxiety to take care of themselves has equaled their eagerness to rush others into danger.”

(Here was inserted a concise statement of the crimes and absurdities of the siege, set forth in the preceding pages of this narrative, and being such as justified the common belief of the soldiers that the Department of the Gulf was the Botany Bay of brigadiers—a penal colony for such as the powers at Washington could not endure.)

Our address continued:

“We charge that the staff officers of the generals have generally been selected on account of dress, personal appearance and



sycophancy; that they generally know little or nothing from actual service in companies or regiments, and consider it their duty to fill their masters' ears with flattery and lies, and to supply intoxicating drinks on all convenient occasions.

"Among the favorite staff officers retained nearest to the persons of generals are notorious cotton speculators and thieves, whose interest it is that the Mississippi should not be opened, for the opening of the river would be likely to deprive them of their power and plunder in Louisiana.

"We charge that these base favorites and sycophants would willingly cause defeats and massacres of this army, such as there have been, if they supposed that by such means their evil interests would be advanced. Such favorites have pretended to make daring *reconnoissances* of the ground over which assaulting columns were to move. The ground has been reported open and the way clear, but when the troops were rushed forward they were suddenly lost in strange ravines, full of fallen timber.

"The worst of these favorites seem to have obtained the greatest influence, and to such an extent have evil and absurd counsels prevailed with division commanders, that it has been officially announced that it is better for the reputation of a general to enforce in every volunteer company and regiment the barbarous system of degrading corporal punishments and tortures used in the regular army, than it is to succeed against the enemy without that system, and any true history of this siege will only make a horrible farce, which will appear incredible to posterity.

"At last, as a publication of the folly and wickedness of the assaults, our division commanders have been digging those approaches which, at the beginning of the siege, might have insured the speedy fall of Port Hudson, without those losses which were intended to detract from your fame, and add to that of your subordinates. But in digging approaches General Dwight has shown his usual defiance of common sense, and although he has obtained the use of the best of the federal

artillery, and has wasted a great amount of labor, yet it is notorious that the most he can accomplish is to have an assault which will be more disastrous than any heretofore. And we pray you to decide whether, after such doings and sayings, and habitual drunkenness of General Dwight, as are undeniable, it is possible that we could do anything that could add to the derision and contempt into which he has brought himself and his authority.

“The enemy, encouraged and emboldened by victory after victory, take pride in enduring every privation and suffering. All plans, stratagems and labor, and all the sickness and slaughter before Port Hudson, have not only been in vain, but have been for the honor and advantage of the enemy, and have brought this army to a state of demoralization unequalled since the war began.

“Those gentlemen of military education who have been intrusted with the management of this siege, and who have originated every plan, had little to fear on account of disaster and defeat—these have been charged to the volunteer Commander-in-chief. The honor of anything fortunate which might happen was to belong to your subordinates, who, in charging you with their own infamy, take the same pleasure which they have had in the wanton sacrifice of life—they will gratify the evil feelings which they, as regular mercenaries, entertain toward all volunteers, and all freemen.

“For these privileged officials the war has but this chief end and object, namely, to prove that volunteers are worthy of contempt either as soldiers or commanders, in order that a great standing army may be established. Without the establishment of such an army, these great men must return to their former insignificance. With such an establishment, they hope to see their present importance perpetuated and increased. Let the danger to republican institutions be mentioned, and not one of them can entirely conceal the sinister delight caused by the mention of the downfall of that liberty to which they, by education and experience, are strangers. A common interest,

a common belief in military despotism, and a common contempt for all popular institutions, fill the minds of these newly promoted generals with great hopes and ideas.

“They have been educated in a system which implies an imperial head. According to that system an army is degraded, and can hardly be worthy of being called an army if it is subject to a democratic government. They well know that to demonstrate that volunteer armies must fail, and to show the necessity of a great standing army, is to demonstrate that free governments must fail, and that the only form of government worthy of respect, and able to prevent civil war and anarchy, is imperialism—imperialism such as causes order to reign in Paris and in Warsaw. If the rebels have been encouraged by repeated victories, and the federal army has been discouraged by repeated massacres; if Port Hudson, once abandoned to us, must at last be taken in the ancient way, by starvation; or if superior forces of the enemy should cut off communications with New Orleans, and you should find your army and yourself in danger of being made prisoners of war, many of our generals would in their hearts rejoice, for in your ruin, in the disgrace of citizen soldiers, and whatever degrades republican government, they think they see just such a state of things as may compel America to submit to standing armies.”

For some days I had little to do besides reviewing the news and reflecting upon the same. There came to Dr. Burnette's house many visitors from various parts of the federal army, and there also came visitors from neighboring plantations, ladies and old gentlemen, who had lived in planter style until recent events had brought them to poverty, which most of them bore without any such depression of spirits as I expected to see. I had good opportunities to hear from both rebels and federals. A summary of the news for the first days of July is as follows:

The storming column of one thousand volunteers called for by General Banks, were likely to enjoy their safe and comfortable quarters and extra rations undisturbed by any real probability of an assault.

The only successful operations I could hear of were in the way of gathering all the valuable negroes in the country far and near. These negroes were brought in by our cavalry and by expeditions of all arms, and were mostly sent off down the river in steamers, to be used up on the plantations in the hands of Northern speculators and government agents, and the zeal and avidity with which these negroes were sought for showed that the Yankee mind had begun to realize that the wealth of the country was its negroes. I heard from credible persons that the number of slaves gathered in and appropriated since the beginning of operations against Port Hudson was as great as thirty thousand, and it is probable that no African seaport ever saw so many slaves shipped off in an equal time into service where speedy death from suffering was so sure.

The most important news from my regiment was that after the failure of the cotton bale battery and the whisky charge, Bailey, wishing to keep some great work going on to make himself important, and retain his legion of negroes for his own benefit, contrived a plan for digging a tunnel under the citadel hill, commencing where his approach came nearest to the rebel works, on the extreme point of the long narrow ridge on which was the citadel, and along which, for a quarter of a mile behind the citadel, were strong interior works, the innermost of which would need mining as well as the outermost. Before Bailey's tunnel could do any good, it would have to be worked until after the rebel garrison would starve to death and molder to dust. But Bailey was getting as much credit for his tunnel as he had received for his cotton battery.

Dwight, since the whisky charge, had been on a big drunk, which was likely to last until the end of the siege. He had not been sober enough to order an assault except on one occasion, when, in company with Bailey and some of his staff, he visited the guard in the trench near the entrance of the tunnel, and when the lieutenant in command of the guard presented himself, Dwight swore at him, told him that there were men enough in the guard to take the citadel, and, pausing a

moment, said, "G—d d—n you, have your men fall in, and make a charge on the citadel immediately. These d—d volunteers have been having a good time in this trench. G—d d—n you, get out of here and do something for me. I'll see if I never can make you charge. Now, remember you are to charge, and keep charging till I order you back here. If you don't obey me, I'll hang every one of you." The guard, numbering about thirty men, were hastily preparing for obedience and for eternity, when Bailey and the staff officers began to exert themselves to get Dwight's attention away from his suddenly planned assault, and succeeded so well that they got him away, and got him to drink till he forgot all about the last charge he ever ordered against Port Hudson. Soon after this he became almost unfit for duty by reason of a certain unmentionable affliction which was chronic with him, as it is with many others of our military aristocracy.

The news most important of all was that which reported the advance of Dick Taylor with an army superior to Banks' army from Western Louisiana toward the Mississippi, to cut off our communication with New Orleans. A steamboat arrived at Springfield Landing marked by cannon shots, and bringing the report of having narrowly escaped being sunk by a formidable rebel battery on the west bank of the river, not far from Donelsonville. Some of the fleet went to drive the rebels away from their insulting position, and the war steamers returned with a report that they had done a great deal, but had, nevertheless, been unable to get the rebel guns away, and it needed no West Point education to understand that the river was closed to all intents and purposes, and that the only communication with New Orleans must be by running a gauntlet of fire from all the artillery of Dick Taylor's army. Sixteen guns were said to be admirably placed at embrasures in the levee.

General Magruder was said to be at hand with an army to support Dick Taylor. One vessel passed the rebel batteries in the night, and hardly escaped. The darkness proved but poor protection, for the enemy had sent parties across to the eastern

bank of the river, and had built fires there, so that they could stand by their guns and fire at the moment the vessel passed between them and the fire.

A body of rebel horsemen, variously reported as numbering a few hundred or several thousand, come charging down upon Springfield Landing in broad daylight, drove the frightened contrabands into the river like muskrats, killed and wounded men, smashed, burned, blew up or carried off federal property at our base of supplies at such a dreadful rate as to operate on the fears of the whole army in a manner none of them will ever forget.

Banks' army could not retreat with any prospect of reaching New Orleans, and reports of a rebel army, with many thousand cavalry, coming to relieve Port Hudson, were beginning to assume every appearance of truth.

All news from federal and confederate sources as to the siege of Vicksburg went to show that Vicksburg was no nearer to a surrender than Port Hudson was. The siege of Port Hudson would have been raised, but there was no chance for doing so. The army could not go on transports past the rebel batteries, and to retreat by land with the sick and debilitated men that filled the ranks, and with the present want of teams and with the great siege train on hand, was impossible.

There was nothing to be done until a rebel army appeared in the rear to demand a surrender, and nothing was done except that all the division commanders were striving to outdo one another working their men in all sorts of digging, mining and mound making, described in the text-books on fortification as proper for besiegers. But it was probable that the number of really effective men in Banks' army was reduced by sickness, slaughter and demoralization, to less than that of the effective men in Port Hudson, and no reasonable man supposed that the digging and mining was for any purpose except for generals to report upon to show their abilities.

About this time the remnant of the Sixth Michigan were kept constantly in the trenches near the mouth of Bailey's

tunnel. The rebels in the citadel were now really carrying on war, and there were many brave deeds done by the Michigan soldiers. On one occasion the enemy had been rolling lighted shells into the head of the trench, and although the Michigan men had managed to dodge these shells when they exploded, or to pick them up and throw them out of the trench before they exploded, yet they had been greatly annoyed. They perceived that the rebels would not be likely to get many more shells into the trench if it was possible to get rid of a certain trough of boards which the rebels had fixed in the ground so as to guide the shells toward the trench, for no matter how closely the enemy were obliged to conceal themselves to escape our sharp-shooters, it was only necessary for a man to reach up one hand to the end of the trough and start the shell on its course. It was arranged that our sharp-shooters should keep every rebel close, and that every man with a breech-loading rifle should be ready to do his best. Then three brave Michigan men sprang out of the trench, ran to the nearest end of the trough, grasped it, and would have drawn it away in an instant had not two rebels, keeping themselves well concealed, kept hold of the other end of the trough. There was a struggle. The Michigan men were too strong for the Southerners. The trough was soon in the federal trenches, a trophy that will be remembered by the brave men there. But as such deeds could not well be claimed by any general for his own credit, they were never reported.

Every day since the rebels had resumed hostilities, the Michigan sharp-shooters had done wonders. They improved the embrasures through which they fired; they kept the breech-loading rifles continually pointed, and avoided the necessity of giving the enemy any advantage by drawing back the piece to load. Officers watched with excellent marine glasses, borrowed from the navy. No rebel could put his face to an embrasure an instant in safety, for on a preconcerted signal, telling at what point to aim, half a dozen bullets would strike the earth right before the rebel's face. Not a hat on a stick, or

anything else for a dummy, could be kept up by the enemy to draw fire unless it was immediately detected, and if any shots were wasted, it was only to tempt some rebel to expose himself.

On one occasion some staff officers took it into their heads that the long expected sortie was to be made immediately, and forthwith the Sixth Michigan were ordered to post themselves on the brow of the hill opposite to the citadel, sheltering themselves by means of the fortifications or the trenches as best they could. It was a sultry noon, and the officer of the deck on board one of Farragut's sloops-of-war lying in sight, almost two miles away in the river, saw the hurried movement of troops and the colors near where he had been instructed to watch for the long expected sortie. He was probably not a total abstinence man, and it seemed to him that he saw the whole rebel garrison pouring into the federal trenches. He gave the alarm, and in a moment every naval gun that could send a shot so far began to roar. The astonished Michigan men had to exert all their skill to escape the howling shot and the bursting shells. These men had been used to see their comrades die to gratify the malice of a drunken general. Every man of them was ready to be murdered, as he had seen others murdered, but to find those that were left of the regiment suddenly shelled by the best guns in Farragut's fleet, was too much, and soldiers who had gone through Dwight's whisky charge without flinching, trembled, and the hair of their heads stood erect as Farragut's enormous projectiles came thumping, bounding and bursting among them for some time, and then suddenly ceased. There was never any satisfactory explanation of this shelling announced to the regiment, but, in conversation, certain naval gentleman said that the officers of the sloop-of-war which began the cannonade had that day received an unusual quantity of sanitary supplies, which devout and patriotic people in New York city had sent for the poor sailors who were sickening and being worn out on the lower Mississippi and the Gulf.



Dwight and Bailey considered the affair a capital joke, and the drunken General stammered out, on hearing of what had happened, "I wish that was the only kind of sympathy these d—d volunteers ever got from the navy."

My liege, Colonel Clark, about this time was in great favor at Dwight's head-quarters, and as General Banks had ordered Dwight's whole division into the trenches close about the cotton bale battery, Clark procured the following order as to the manner of doing the thing, giving the safe a safe place in recorded orders for celebrating the Fourth of July, although posterity may not understand what the "Look-out" was:

SPECIAL ORDERS, } No. 57.	HEAD-QUARTERS SECOND DIVISION, } NINETEENTH ARMY CORPS, } Before Fort Hudson, July 3, 1863. }
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1. Hereafter the First and Third Brigades will relieve each other in the duties of furnishing the picket and guarding the trenches.

2. The First Brigade, Colonel Clark commanding, will to-morrow, the 4th instant, furnish one regiment for the rifle pits and one regiment for picket duty in front. The other two regiments of the brigade will be held in the immediate support of the battery and trenches. Colonel Clark will make his head-quarters at the *Look-out*.

3. On the 5th instant, the Third Brigade, General Nickerson commanding, will relieve the First Brigade, General Nickerson making his head-quarters at the *Look-out*, and so on, on alternate days.

4. When not on duty, the brigades *will rest in the immediate neighborhood of their respective commanding officers*.

5. Brigade commanders are cautioned to station their best sharp-shooters where most required, and to see that their pickets are well advanced in all places, and always as far as may be necessary for the support of the working parties.

By order of Brigadier-General Dwight.

WICKHAM HOFFMAN, A. A. G.

It was certain that General Banks' army would soon be without provisions. It was uncertain how long the provisions of the rebel garrison would hold out, and the demoralization of the federal army had begun to work like a pestilence. There were but about eight thousand men in the besieging army reported for duty. It was said that orders came from Washington to raise the siege of Port Hudson, but compliance was no longer possible. The besieging army was really nearer to surrender than the besieged.

General Banks had a superstitious belief in his luck. Luek had been with him throughout his public life, and he did not doubt that something would turn up yet to give him success. He visited the camp of the lucky one thousand volunteers for the last assault assembled there, and made an eloquent speech to them, full of the spirit of Demosthenes. The one thousand expected to be led to the charge immediately, but the General expected no such thing. He went back to his head-quarters and commenced packing up his baggage, intending to move his establishment as near to the gunboats as circumstances would permit without further delay. The gentlemen of his staff were delighted with his intended removal, for false alarms and dreams of rebel cavalry had worn upon them until they began to look like the demoralized soldiers. After the last false alarm, these gentlemen had turned out in the night and worked for hours carrying rails from both sides of a highway leading back from their rural retreat. With these rails a barricade was built across the highway, and although there was nothing to prevent the dreaded cavalry from coming through the open cotton fields on both sides of the road, the barricade was considered a great protection.

## CHAPTER XXI.

Port Hudson Surrenders to a Dispatch Boat from the Northwestern Army at Vicksburg;  
Closing Scenes—the Performer, Dwight, Reappears for General Applause.

A stout little dispatch boat arrived at the landing where the federal army rested on the river above Port Hudson. The military telegraph wires quivered under the hasty dispatch sent to General Banks. That something had turned up in accordance with General Banks' usual luck and expectations was soon flying in dispatches to division generals. Hoffman received the dispatch for Dwight, and immediately issued this order:

GENERAL ORDERS, }	HEAD-QUARTERS SECOND DIVISION, }
No. 8. }	NINETEENTH ARMY CORPS, }
	Before Port Hudson, July 7, 1863. }

The following dispatch, received to-day, will be read this evening at the head of each regiment of this command:

DEPARTMENT OF THE GULF, }
United States Telegraph Office, July 7, 1863. }

By telegraph from Banks' head-quarters to Brigadier-General Dwight.

The commanding General directs me to inform you that an official dispatch was received this morning from General Grant, announcing the surrender of Vicksburg the evening of the 4th instant. Twenty-seven thousand prisoners, one hundred and twenty-eight pieces of field artillery, and eighty siege guns, fell into our hands.

(Signed) RICHARD B. IRWIN, A. A. G.

By order of Brigadier-General Dwight.

WICKHAM HOFFMAN, A. A. G.

Further orders were soon given to the army and navy for a salute of a hundred guns, and every cannon began to bellow the news to the rebels, while cheers and shouts from the federal forces caused the enemy to spring to their places in expectation of a general assault.

So many lies had been published officially, that the federal army did not believe the news. Rebels shouted, asking whether all that noise was Banks' last card; and if Vicksburg was taken, why Grant did not send some help this way, where it was needed.

A flag of truce came out of Port Hudson. General Gardiner asked some of his West Point friends to state on their honor whether Vicksburg had surrendered or not; and for an answer, General Banks sent the original dispatch from General Grant. Whether Grant's handwriting and character were known to General Gardiner, or whether General Gardiner had received news of the fall of Vicksburg from Southern sources, I did not hear, but it seemed that it was easier for him to believe in the dispatch than it was for most of the federal army to believe it. In the course of a few hours the negotiation for the surrender of Port Hudson began.

Not a shot from musket or cannon was to be heard. Hostilities had ceased. The rebel garrison and the federal army were mingling in confusion along the works. The Northern soldiers were sharing their hard bread and coffee with those whose bullets had killed or wounded so many good men on the same grounds where now Northerners and Southerners were in society, as though slavery and civil war had never existed in America. Many of the wounded left hospitals, and the same men whose shots might likely enough have shattered each other's bones, were now the most friendly toward one another, appearing to appreciate mutually the honor of having been wounded.

At Dr. Burnette's plantation there was grief such as I did not expect to see anywhere on account of public affairs. Had death struck down the best loved member of the household, and had the coffin been before the eyes of the remaining members of that household, there could not have been such grief as this. Here there seemed to be woes from which there was no escaping; time could not end them, and no happy hereafter was offered to hope. All prayers unanswered; all the victories,

which seemed like so many promises from heaven, were gone for nothing, and Banks' army—that army the capture of which seemed certain—was to have Port Hudson and all its defenders, to dispose of at pleasure. All this was but the necessary consequence of a calamity which was far greater than the fall of Port Hudson, for the fall of Vicksburg seemed little less than the downfall of the confederacy, and the final sentence of its citizens and defenders to eternal degradation and despair.

Taking advantage of the gathering up of the federal army to march into Port Hudson, and receive the surrender of the garrison, I have decided that the limits of my arrest have become so affected by the withdrawal of troops that I can gratify my desire to be among the first to examine the works of Port Hudson, and for fear of being deprived of seeing for myself what the inside of Port Hudson is, I have put on a blouse, and am approaching the Jackson sally-port, not far from the place where Colonel H. E. Paine was wounded on the 14th of June.

The troops are gone, federals and rebels. All is silent except the voices of insects and creeping things, singing to the blazing noon. I have left behind me the line of woods, along which I see the piles of fresh clay and the broken cotton bales, indicating where federal batteries have been. At every step I am on ground where the blood of worthy citizens has been poured out. There has been no rain recently, and the dry clay-dust, stirred by the men, horses and wheels that have passed along the road, covers the fallen timber and the rank weeds on both sides of the level road. Soon my longing eyes rest on the ditch and parapet, concerning which so much has been imagined. And is this Port Hudson? The ditch is about four feet deep in most places, but in many places the clay has crumbled down so as to lessen that depth one or two feet. The parapet is about four feet high, and about the same number of feet in thickness. The revetment is of common fence rails,

held in place by stakes. I see where several light artillery shots have gone through both parapet and rails.

The sally-port is an awkwardly made gap, to admit the old highway. A little interior breast-work has been raised to guard the entrance. A little to my left, as I enter, I am surprised to see an old acquaintance, one of the same identical brass twelve-pounders which I have often seen on board the *Barataria* at Pass Manchac, and which were left for days on the burned wreck of that gunboat for the enemy to get if they pleased. Those guns were the cause of my arrest and trial on the charge of giving Lieutenant Trask permission to go after them, but it is plain now that this gun has lately been the cause of evils greater far than any of my misfortunes. Here it is, mounted on a carriage let down into the ground, so as to send its shot just grazing the surface of the field outside of the narrow embrasure before it, while thick piles of earth protected the cannoniers. This gun has been aimed at by several of our batteries, but it has been hit only once, and then without injuring the gun for use. Here it has been from the beginning to the end of the siege. Its field of fire includes places of the greatest slaughter.

I look over the ground inside the rebel works. There is an open space about fifteen rods wide extending around just inside of the works. Then comes that forest which, during the siege, screened from federal observation almost everything within Port Hudson. The open space is mostly level ground, but I see that the forest is full of ravines, where the enemy could have fallen back and taken position so as to rake the open space within the fortification with their fire, as well as they did the open space without the works, over which the assailants would have had to come after getting through the web of ravines and fallen trees farther off.

I determined to follow the rebel fortification around to the river above Port Hudson. It is easy to perceive the deception of the first appearance of these works. They were not intended as an obstruction to assailants. The ditch is of no account.

Almost as much of the clay for the parapet was scraped up inside of the parapet as there was taken from the ditch. The intention was to have works, guns and men, as low down as possible, to trust to bullets instead of ditches and parapets to keep off assailants. The low place along just inside of the irregular *banquette* is dug full of what are called rat holes, for the men to hide in to escape shells. There are similar holes made large enough for field pieces to hide in, and be ready to run up to narrow embrasures cut in the naked clay. Now I come to a twenty-four-pounder dismantled, a piece knocked out of its muzzle, and the carriage broken to pieces. Next lies a brass twelve-pound howitzer, which has been fairly cut in two by a federal projectile. At another place, where there is an angle in the works, a great black, rough looking gun, that may be a forty-two-pounder, is turned snug against the parapet, which has been thickened here. This gun is in good order, and is entirely safe from any federal shot. It can easily be swung around so as to put its muzzle to an embrasure, from which it can rake one of the spaces where an assault would be most likely to succeed. At intervals I come to thick and high traverses, being long rail pens, filled with clay. The size of these traverses show that our raking or enfilading fire was the only fire of which the rebels had much fear. The rebel soldiers who have gone to the surrender have doubtless carried their arms with them, but all along the works I find great numbers of old rusty muskets of all kinds. Some have flint locks, some are marked "U. S.," and some have marks indicating that they came from different kingdoms in Europe.

However worn and rusty these pieces appear on the outside, I am surprised to find the inside generally in good order. Most of them are loaded and capped, and there are in boxes near by, or often scattered on the ground, many kinds of cartridges, some of them containing twelve or sixteen buckshot, and others a ball and three buckshot. These muskets were kept here ready, so that every man could have enough of them in case of an assault.

There are many cannons dismantled and broken by the fire of our artillery, and many others in good condition for use, and protected in various ways, so that no projectiles from our batteries would be likely to hurt them. The ammunition is in ammunition chests or caissons, sometimes hid in little magazines, and sometimes put close to thick parts of the parapet. The powder of the cartridges is not held by flannel of a uniform color, such as I have been used to seeing, but is held by all kinds of woolen and calico, of every print and color. Much of this cloth is worn, and has evidently been cut from articles of female wearing apparel. Here is the delaine, the merino, the linsey-woolsey, and beside the homespun flannel is seen stuff cut from costly shawls, all contributed by Southern women. I see, also, that the sand bags on the parapet are mostly made of sheets and table-cloths, often of the best linen. Many fine pillow-cases, marked with their owners' names, lie filled with sand, needing no change to adapt them to their new use.

The remains of the last rebel rations issued are everywhere scattered among the rat holes—molasses, little black beans, unshelled corn, a few pieces of corn bread, made of pounded grain, unsifted. And to these men who defended Port Hudson comfortable clothing, equipments and pay were unknown.

The monuments which the federal division commanders have left outside of the rebel works, at various distances, are curious enough. One general has dug an approach to within a short distance of the rebel works, and then apparently not knowing what to do next, he has built an enormous mound. Four rows of sugar hogsheads were first set up on their ends; three rows of the same kind of hogsheads were set on the first, and one row more on top of the second tier, all full of earth. Bundles of sticks, bales of cotton, and great quantities of earth were heaped about the hogsheads. An ascent was made for men to go up, and a sort of platform or shelf for them to stand upon, so as to fire through sand bag loop-holes on the top of the mound. All this structure was to give a few riflemen such a position that their fire would command the inside of the rebel



works, which were hardly four feet high anywhere in front of the mound. The feeble fire of these riflemen could not do as much enfilading as the artillery had been doing, and if an assault was made directly in front of the mound, their fire would be useless. Close by this mound was the entrance of a mine, which was a shaft dug through the clay, under the surface of the ground, toward the rebel parapet. The opening was such that one man could enter it at a time by stooping. The mine was to blow up a projecting angle of the rebel works, where, during the progress of the mining, the enemy had been making all needful preparations. An interior earth-work and rifle pit, and piece of ground full of sharp pickets, were ready for any assailants who might come to take advantage of the explosion of the mine.

But it appears that this mine came to a sad end by some mistake. There was a premature explosion, which blew up friends instead of enemies, and made the prospects of further mining here very poor.

At a long distance around the rebel works, on the front of another division commander, I find another serpentine approach, which has been dug very wide, and yet could not admit more than four or five men abreast. Its end is near the rebel parapet, but the nature of the ground was such that there could be no trenches dug parallel to the rebel line, and no such trenches have been made by any of our commanders anywhere before Port Hudson. How it could have been expected that a force marching four abreast could spring out of their approach and make a successful assault, is not easy to understand, especially when the preparations of the enemy were no less notorious than those of the besiegers. Large shells, hid just under the surface of the ground and in the bottom of the ditch, were prepared like torpedoes, by means of wires and gun-locks, so that assailants would find themselves in the midst of infernal machines. Here also the rebels have been at work with a countermine, a shaft going from the inside of their works out under

the only space of ground where any considerable number of assailants could come at once.

There has been an incredible amount of firing by federal infantry into the trees, which here grow close to the works. The bark on every tree was torn and rent by bullets coming directly and obliquely, and, to my surprise, I find almost every tree entirely dead from the effects of the shot. It would seem as if the artillery ought to have injured the trees more than the Minie balls, but I see but few trees that have been hit by our artillery. Yet it is plain that the projectiles sent from our army and navy must have all struck somewhere, and the ground is strewed with them. They have plowed up the ground, or buried themselves in it in all directions. They seem to have spared the earth-works, trees and men, and to have sought only to bury themselves.

Throughout the last half mile before I come to the river above Port Hudson, the woods stand close to the parapet. The ground is very broken, being cut by deep ravines crossing one another in various directions. The rebel parapet is but little more than a line of rifle pit work, and is said to have been made since the siege began, all this part of Port Hudson having been unfortified when the federal army arrived. But there is not much need of any kind of fortification here, the labyrinth of ridges and ravines affording advantages for defense with infantry and artillery both, which no art of fortification could give. One twelve-pound howitzer is placed at the head of a ravine in such a manner that five men might with it keep back five hundred.

When I arrive in sight of the river I see that the parapet is much stronger, and instead of going directly toward the river, where there is a broad flat, it follows along the crest of the high bluffs, bending southward so as to join the great water batteries at some distance down stream. On this flat, toward the foot of these bluffs, is the place of the massacre of colored troops on the 27th of May. The rebel works are now manned by the survivors of those same black regiments whom Dwight

ordered to destruction here on that day. Inside of the works, under the trees and in the shady hollows, I see that there are several regiments of disarmed rebel prisoners, guarded by the negro soldiers. Proud old Southerners and their fiery sons, wild Texans and tawny Creoles, are here. Some of them, perhaps, recognize their own waiters or field hands among the sentinels who march leisurely to and fro, clad in federal blue, and carrying Springfield muskets. But what an exhibition of human nature. The rebels, one and all, appear to be enjoying a comfortable rest, and are talking to the negroes with a familiarity which would shock Northern volunteers. These Southerners appear glad to see me, and want to delay me with conversation.

I hasten onward, pass through the old graveyard, and come to the little white meeting-house, with its four-spired steeple, which has been a target for our army and navy. The frail building has been struck several times. There are large openings made by the shot, and by shells that have burst in it. I look in and discover that the building has been used for storing provisions. There is yet on the floor a large quantity of little black beans, which are full of insects and half spoiled. Near by is a pile of unhusked corn, exposed to the weather. It appears that some of the rebel soldiers have been followed by their families. Several old covered wagons are standing under the trees, and as I pass so that I can look inside of the covers, I see wretched, emaciated women and sick children lying on straw and rags. No pen will ever describe what they have suffered.

Going a little farther, I have before me a long line of rebel soldiers lying on the ground. They have opened ranks and grounded arms. Their rough looking old muskets lie in two long rows, extending into the woods and over uneven ground. The accoutrements are laid on the muskets. The officers and soldiers are clothed almost alike, and seem to have lived on equality. There is a sort of vivacity and spirit in these men which no surrender can kill. They are waiting to be marched off as prisoners.

I hasten on, intending to go through the middle of Port Hudson, and reach the parapet at the sally-port where I entered, and then follow it around to the citadel. In passing through a wooded hollow, I find two men digging a grave. One is a well known soldier of my own regiment, and the other is a stout, cotton-clad rebel, wearing an old slouched hat. A piece of tent cloth near by appears to be spread over two dead bodies. The Michigan man drops his pick in astonishment on seeing me. I inquire of him who is to be buried. He answers, "One of our Company F boys, who was wounded and taken prisoner in the whisky charge," and with that he turns down the tent cloth, and tries to keep the flies away. There is the face of a brave boy, well known to me through weary years of war and suffering. His pallid, emaciated face is marked with agony, and his breast, under his blue coat, is strangely sunken.

"When did he die?" I ask.

"To-day," is the answer, and the soldier beside me continues, "He was shot in the shoulder. He lived till we got in after the surrender. He said the confederates did as well for him as for their own men, but they had no medicine or anything else he needed. There were not men enough to attend to the wounded. The flies got to his wound, and his shoulder was full of worms. He seemed very glad to see us. He said he hoped that his death would be for the good of his country in some way."

The sharp-eyed rebel who stands by says, "Excuse me, sir, but I hope you will not think we neglected wounded prisoners," and as he points to the corpse of his countryman that lies buttoned in gray uniform before us, he proceeds, "This man, too, was wounded, but such was our want of everything, and especially of attendants, that he died in the same manner that your man died. They lay near each other in the hospital tent, and were very friendly to each other, so we thought they would not be displeased if they knew their bodies were to rest side by side in one grave."

As I leave I hear the two picks at work breaking the hard, dry clay, deepening and widening the grave.

I look where the most of the little village was, and through an opening in the trees see the Union flag floating from the tall flag-staff. Near to me are several small, old houses, by which my road goes. I see that several of them have been hit by great projectiles, which left large openings in the sides and roofs. Every house is empty and bare. I see no furniture and no person in any of them, except at one shattered window there appears a poorly clad woman holding a sick child. The hatred expressed in her face is indescribable.

I arrive at the same sally-port where I entered the works, and follow the rebel line along to the Slaughter field. An Arkansas regiment has been posted here, and some of their sick men are yet left in huts in the deep ravine, which comes winding along the side of the field, and goes inside of the fortifications. One of these sick men very willingly leaves his resting place and shows me the spot where the colors of the Sixth Michigan were planted on the 27th of May by our wounded color-bearer, not far from the parapet. Few were those who came as far forward as those colors on that day. Not a few were those who fell in protecting and in bringing off those colors. Vain efforts to capture them cost many a rebel his life. I go outside of the works and walk over the field. There are yet many traces of the massacre. Blue caps, relics of accoutrements, cartridges, arms, some of the long, mis-shapen poles, and many of the little boards with which Bailey was to bridge the imaginary ditch, are scattered here and there, where the most of the dead men lay. When I return to the parapet and see the ditch, in many places hardly three feet deep, and about five feet wide, I appreciate better than ever the merit of the plans for capturing Port Hudson—plans which orthodox history will praise for their wisdom.

I stand on the rebel parapet, and look over the Slaughter field. A well made federal battery is very near in the open field, almost as near as where the Michigan colors were

planted on the 27th of May. This battery was manned by regulars, who had light guns only, but such was the skill with which the earth and cotton bales were piled, that there was but little danger for those who worked the guns. A long, oblique trench, with an embankment on the side toward the enemy, reaches back from one end of the battery, and communicates with the great ravine along the north side of the field. Here federal soldiers passed to and fro almost within pistol shot of the rebels during most of the siege. All the neighboring ground southward from the great ravine is open and level both without and within the rebel parapet, which was here but a single line of frail breastwork. There was nothing to hinder just such a trench as that communicating with the battery from being used for a better purpose.

Just such trenches might easily have been extended to right and left parallel to the rebel works, and near enough to them to have enabled assailants, with an unbroken front, to have sprung up and swept over the even ground for a few paces, and carried the single line of low parapet and shallow ditch before them. Federal artillery could, by enfilading fire, do more here to prepare for and assist an assault, than could be done in any other place.

One-tenth of the labor, material and life thrown away in unreasonable attempts, where but a few men could advance at a time, and where carrying one strong line of work was but a beginning of what was to be done, would have certainly succeeded here, for as I look along the parapet I see that less of the rebel artillery is left in working order here than on any other part of their works. As I look along the level, trodden ground inside of the parapet, I see that the enemy, once driven from his line of defense, had no other to fall back to. But this siege was for the benefit of generals. The individual interests of each of them required the work to be done on that part of the front assigned to him.

Having left the region of the Slaughter field, I come to the great southeastern angle of the works. That high embankment

which I noticed here when I first came to the siege is, to my surprise, entirely an outwork, with several good brass guns, all in order and ready to be used in any direction, the intention being to have a powerful fire ready to sweep the ground which the great angle and the works receding on either hand might have left unprotected.

I follow the receding line toward the river. One of the guns yet remaining in good condition here is a fine piece, like a twenty-pounder Parrott, bearing an inscription showing that it was made in the State of New York in 1861. I find broken and dismantled guns and shattered carriages and caissons here, as everywhere along the line. I find, also, traces of the rations of unground corn and molasses issued to the rebel soldiers. For a drink there was used along the whole line a sort of beer made by putting shelled corn into barrels containing water, with a little molasses, and leaving it in the hot sun to ferment.

It is plain that the rebel companies and regiments all remained without relief at the parts of the parapet assigned to them. Here was their home. Here sick and well generally remained together. Only the badly wounded men and those who were very sick, were sent to the general hospital in a great ravine. Everywhere close within the parapet I find the same little dens dug into the earth, and the same little shelters to keep off sun and rain. Here the unpaid, half-clothed and undisciplined starving rebels lived, every man at his post, ready to rise up and fight on an instant's warning. Cannon and men were alike hid in the earth, seldom showing a sign of their existence until some federal commander tried to glorify himself by an assault for his own benefit in the newspapers and reports. The corn, water and ammunition were generally distributed at night. The cooking of mule meat and hominy was generally done in the nearest ravine.

After climbing out of a very deep ravine, I find myself near the river, which was a hundred feet lower than where I stand. I am surprised to see that I am yet a long way from the citadel. I am on that long, high and narrow ridge left between

the ravine and the river, at the extreme outer end of which I see the high and thick embankments making the citadel. I cross a bridge over a deep gulch, partly artificial and partly natural, going straight through the ridge. Next I come to a large square redoubt, occupying the top of the ridge. The earth walls of this redoubt, and its deep trench, are sufficient alone to stand a siege. I have yet to pass a newly made embankment, in good repair and of great strength, running across the ridge.

Here are excellent preparations for using both artillery and infantry, as well as signs indicating that if torpedoes and mines ever became necessary, they would be used. This work commanded the inside of the citadel, which stands before me vacant, but in better condition to resist an assault than it was when I first saw it. Within it a high, thick traverse or embankment, extending along the crest of the river bank at such an angle as to be safe from any enfilading fire, showed that behind it the garrison were always safe enough, and yet ready to man every part of the work whenever occasion required. Everywhere there remain cannon enough in good order to meet assailants.

The enormous works and diggings of Bailey and Dwight are on the opposite hill. I climb down and pass into the mouth of the Bailey tunnel. No common negro driver could ever have got such digging done as is to be seen here. The clay is piled into a sort of artificial hill, very near to the outermost rifle pit of the citadel. The tunnel is probably so far along as to reach under the bottom of the main ditch of the citadel. If a quarter of a mile of the ridge had been tunneled and successfully blown up, the rebels would still have a better fortification presented to the besiegers than ever existed before the Slaughter field, and all that the tunneling would have accomplished would be to have bored under a long tongue of clay ridge extending outside of the proper line of the rebel works, and having what we called the citadel as an outwork at its extreme end. It was very uncertain what would have been the



effect of an explosion in this tunnel. The only result might have been to blow out a small opening to the upper air.

After the siege of Port Hudson, my Colonel, T. S. Clark, zealously pressed his claims to be commissioned a brigadier, and all necessary recommendations were forwarded. Personal valor, and gallant and meritorious services during the siege, were the grounds on which his immediate promotion were recommended by Dwight. He claimed the command of a brigade without delay, but there were not brigades for all the heroes of the siege, and by some turn of affairs at Banks' headquarters, Clark was put off with an order changing our regiment to heavy artillery, so that he would, probably, be in permanent command of a fort somewhere.

I could hear nothing of any proceedings against me, and was yet reported in arrest. No limits were assigned, and no duty was required of me. I spent my time in rambles about the camps and fortifications, and feeling the irksomeness of having nothing to do, I duly forwarded to Banks' head-quarters the following communication :

CAMP OF SIXTH REGIMENT MICHIGAN HEAVY ARTILLERY, }  
 Port Hudson, La., July 22, 1863. }

Lieutenant-Colonel R. B. Irwin, A. A. G. :

Having been in arrest for a long time by order of General Dwight, but receiving no copy of any charges or specifications, and being unable to find out what act, expression or neglect is to be deemed the ground of any charge against me, I respectfully ask a copy of any charges and specifications on file in my case.

EDWARD BACON,  
 Lieutenant-Colonel Sixth Regiment Michigan Heavy Artillery.

No answer came. I wrote again :

CAMP OF SIXTH REGIMENT MICHIGAN HEAVY ARTILLERY, }  
 Port Hudson, La., August 6, 1863. }

COLONEL—On the 26th day of June, 1863, I was arrested by order of General Dwight, but have received no copy of any

charges or specifications, do not know what crime I am accused of, and have no opportunity to confront my accusers. I pray a copy of charges and specifications against me, or to be returned to duty.

Respectfully, EDWARD BACON,  
Lieutenant-Colonel Sixth Regiment Michigan Heavy Artillery.

Lieutenant-Colonel R. B. Irwin, A. A. G.

At last an answer came in this shape :

SPECIAL ORDERS, } No. 35. }	HEAD-QUARTERS UNITED STATES FORCES, } Port Hudson, August 14, 1863. }
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EXTRACT.

2. Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Bacon, of the Sixth Michigan Artillery, is hereby released from arrest. He will resume his sword and return to duty.

By command of Brigadier-General George S. Andrews.

G. B. HALSTEAD, A. A. G.

My Colonel was gone to New Orleans. He had secured an order detailing him as a member of a court-martial, so as to stay in the city until he could obtain an order to go home to Michigan on recruiting service, in which he was destined to succeed so well that the regiment were never to see him again during the war. I assumed command with this order :

GENERAL ORDERS, } No. 36. }	HEAD-QUARTERS SIXTH REGIMENT MICHIGAN } VOLUNTEER HEAVY ARTILLERY, } Port Hudson, August 15, 1863. }
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I, by Heaven's will, successful against enemies, whose schemes have come to naught, assume, under the order of General George L. Andrews, command of this regiment.

EDWARD BACON,  
Lieutenant-Colonel Sixth Regiment Michigan Heavy Artillery.

Knowing that it would be absurd to trust to any kind of peace with my enemies, I lost no time in sending to Banks' head-quarters the following :

*Supplemental and additional charges and specifications preferred against*  
THOMAS S. CLARK, Colonel of the Sixth Regiment Michigan Volunteer  
Infantry.

CHARGE I.—MISBEHAVIOR BEFORE THE ENEMY.

*Specification 1.*—In this, that heretofore, to wit, on the 27th day of May, A. D. 1863, at or about the time that Brigadier-General T. W. Sherman's attacking column first came under fire on the Slaughter field, before Port Hudson, Louisiana, he, the said Thomas S. Clark, Colonel, as aforesaid, on the field aforesaid, through cowardice, did lie down and hide himself from danger amongst bushes and behind a log within a ravine, and, through cowardice, there remained a long time, to wit, two hours, and then caused himself to be carried off the field on a stretcher, by men engaged in carrying away the wounded.

*Specification 2.*—In this, that heretofore, to wit, on the 14th day of June, A. D. 1863, at or about the time that General Dwight's attacking column first came under fire before Port Hudson, Louisiana, he, the said Thomas S. Clark, Colonel, as aforesaid, through cowardice, did lie down and hide himself behind a log, and, through cowardice, did get himself into a deep hole within a ravine, and did remain there a long space of time, to wit, twelve hours, until night, when he did stealthily go to the rear.

CHARGE II.—CONDUCT UNBECOMING TO AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN.

*Specification 1.*—In this, that heretofore, to wit, on the 27th day of May, A. D. 1863, before Port Hudson, Louisiana, he, the said Thomas S. Clark, Colonel, as aforesaid, did falsely pretend and say that he was knocked down and badly injured by the wind and concussion of a cannon shot, in the attack on Port Hudson, made on the day and year aforesaid on the Slaughter field.

*Specification 2.*—In this, that heretofore, to wit, on the 15th day of June, A. D. 1863, at or near Port Hudson, Louisiana, he, the said Thomas S. Clark, Colonel, as aforesaid, did falsely pretend

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and say that in the attack made on Port Hudson on Sunday, the 14th day of June, he did establish his head-quarters as an acting Brigadier-General far to the front, near to the enemy, against whom he held the field of battle until he was ordered to retire, when, in fact, he and others had been hiding in a deep hole near to where they were first fired upon in said attack, and had not dared to show themselves above ground after about the time they were first fired upon in the morning until they went to the rear stealthily at night.

EDWARD BACON,  
Lieutenant-Colonel Sixth Regiment Michigan Heavy Artillery.

I, of course, had no expectation that these charges and specifications would do more than those I had filed before. Clark's burning of the *Barataria* appeared to have entitled him to the command of a brigade. His pretending to be knocked down by the wind of a ball on the 27th of May appeared to have been the means of giving him a whole division to command. His getting into a hole, and staying there all day on the 14th of June, might be supposed to give him a place in the official reports which would make him an immortal hero. Northern papers had published wonderful feats of arms by the gallant Colonel Clark. It had generally been published that on the 27th of May he had led the assault, scaled the walls of Port Hudson, and, while the combat raged, pulled down the rebel flag and run up the stars and stripes on the rebel flag-staff.

I knew that there is a mysterious power in truth. I pitched the plain truth right against so many lies to see the effect. Thousands of witnesses knew the truth of what I had charged, and the falsity of the reports, and I could lose nothing by throwing the acid right into the alkali.

Dwight, as well as Clark, had reaped such a harvest of fame before Port Hudson, and had gained such a name for genius and heroism, that he, too, wanted to go home to enjoy his glory immediately. The night before they left for New York,

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the long carnival which brigadiers and their favorites had been enjoying in New Orleans had a closing scene in the house of a distinguished woman.

Parisian lamps blazed upon gorgeous furniture and upon costly mirrors, in which were reflected starred chiefs and cringing staff officers, who had figured in the rear of the fields of slaughter before Port Hudson, and were here reveling with painted ladies, whose satins and jewels were paid for from funds that carried on the war.

Suddenly the folding-doors were thrown open. All stopped and looked. There stood the glittering mistress of the house; beside her, in haughty state, the majestic, red-faced Dwight, wearing his conquering sword and shining star—the star that soon must double.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” exclaimed the dazzling Madame, “this is Napoleon.”

“And Josephine the Empress,” added Dwight, with the same grave utterance as when, at his safe, he said, “You must take the citadel with a rush.”

[END OF PART FIRST.]

## ERRATA.

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Page 49, in the quotation, read *Tendere* for "*Teudere*;" *talis* for "*tales*;" *effundens* for "*effendens*."

Page 86, thirteenth line, read April 7th for "April 12th."













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