

The article by Gen. Alexander on Fredricksburg was written
for a series of war articles which I edited, supplying
the note on p. 119. The book from which the note
was taken was written by Col. Henderson, author of the
Life of "Donnell" Jackson.

Feb, 1915.

J.R.P.

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A. J. Alexander

THE
LIFE AND SERVICES

OF
BREVET BRIGADIER-GENERAL

Andrew Jonathan Alexander

UNITED STATES ARMY.

A SKETCH

From Personal Recollections, Family Letters and the Records of the Great Rebellion

BY

JAMES HARRISON WILSON,

Lieut. Colonel, Volunteers, and Brevet Major-General, U. S. A.

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"There is a heritage of heroic example and noble obligation not reckoned in the Wealth of Nations, but essential to a nation's life, the contempt of which, in any people, may, not slowly, mean even its commercial fall.

"Very sweet are the uses of prosperity, the harvests of peace and progress, the fostering sunshine of health and happiness and length of days in the land.

"But there be things—Oh, Sons of what has deserved the name of Great Britain, forget it not!—'the good of' which and 'the use of' which are beyond all calculation of worldly goods and earthly uses: things such as Love and Honor and the Soul of Man, which cannot be bought with a price, and which do not die with death.

"And they who would fain live happily EVER after, should not leave these things out of the lessons of their lives."

JULIANA HORATIA EWING.

STOCKFORD,
Near WILMINGTON, DELAWARE,
May 23d, 1887.

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BREVET BRIGADIER-GENERAL

ANDREW JONATHAN ALEXANDER.

I.

AMONG the many younger officers of the National Army who were rapidly coming to the front at the close of the Great Rebellion, none gave greater promise or bore a higher character than Brevet Brigadier-General Andrew J. Alexander. Although he had not received a military education, he was an officer of first-rate abilities and many accomplishments. Before the end of the bloody struggle, which lasted four years, by virtue of great natural aptitude and that extraordinary adaptability so characteristic of young Americans, and especially of those from the Western and Southern States, he had made himself not only a model staff officer but an admirable cavalry commander. Those who had the good fortune to know him during the War will readily recall his superb figure, his stately carriage, his bright, flashing, blue eyes, his flowing beard, as tawny as a lion's mane, his splen-

did shoulders and his almost unequalled horsemanship. He was a pure Saxon in coloring, with hair and beard that glistened like gold in the sunshine, and a complexion that bid defiance to sun and wind. Standing over six feet in height, he was as trim and commanding a figure as it was ever my privilege to behold. But these were merely the outward indications of perfect physical manhood. The true spirit of the unselfish patriot, the unspotted character and honor of the perfect gentleman, the knightly qualities of the soldier, "without fear and without reproach," radiated and controlled his person and his conduct, and commanded the unquestioning confidence and respect of all who came within the circle of their influence.

It is impossible by words to convey a proper understanding to the reader of how all those beautiful qualities and characteristics showed themselves, one by one, during the multifarious and ever-changing occupations and incidents of the soldier's life in those stirring times when suffering and exposure, hardship and want, might naturally have been expected to arouse the selfish instincts; and when, as a matter of fact, if there was anything mean or disagreeable, ignoble or unmanly in an officer it was sure to come out. And yet in Alexander's four years of unbroken service during the Rebellion, and in the twenty-two of life on the frontier, and at his beautiful home on the shore of Lake Owasco, I venture to say that no human creature ever discovered a mean trait in his character or charged him with an ignoble act or thought. All alike, high and low, officers

and privates, friends and foes, men and women, soldiers and civilians, and even the Negroes and Indians recognized in him not only the physical qualities of perfect manhood, but the moral and intellectual graces in that just equilibrium which are the chiefest ornament and glory of our common nature.

I first met Alexander at the Cavalry Bureau in Washington, where he was serving as its Adjutant-General when I took charge of it, in February, 1864, and shall never forget his cordial and yet undemonstrative reception of his new and unknown commander. He had gone there with General Stoneman, and had assisted him and his temporary successor, General Garrard, in organizing and managing it. He had also served with Stoneman in the field, and was necessarily devoted to him and his interests. There is reason for believing that, in common with many others, he regarded his chief as, in every way, the best man in the Service for the place, from which he had lately been relieved by the Secretary of War; and yet, withal, he was a loyal and patriotic officer who never once questioned the Secretary's right to make the change, nor imagined himself aggrieved by it, or at liberty to condemn it, as was so much the custom of the day. To the contrary, he yielded ready and unquestioning, and, what is of still greater importance, uncriticising, obedience to the orders in question, and rendered the most cheerful and valuable assistance to me throughout my entire term of duty at the Bureau. I was again brought into relations with him while organizing and commanding the Cavalry Corps of the Military Division of the Mississippi. He

was my Adjutant-General and Chief of Staff during the campaign against Hood, and as such rendered me invaluable services, but as soon as the corps could be assembled on the banks of the Tennessee River, I assigned him, in recognition of his experience and qualifications, to the command of a brigade in Upton's division, although he was at the time only a Brevet Brigadier-General with the actual rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in the volunteer staff of the Army. From the time he first joined me till the close of the War, he was constantly with me or under my official observation, and down to his last fatal illness we were intimate friends and correspondents. Almost the last letter he ever wrote was to me, and, like every act of his life, it was redolent of generous and lofty manhood. I mention these facts to show that I had the best possible means of knowing him, and that what I say in his praise is not the mere outpouring of friendly regard, but is based upon long association and the closest personal observation and knowledge.

He was truly a model soldier and a most chivalric gentleman, who carried with him through life and "into the Silent Land" his purity of soul and character unspotted by the world and its temptations. Throughout his career he was equal to all emergencies, combining, in a remarkable manner, perfect courage and promptitude in all his undertakings, with the most thorough good sense and soundness of judgment. He was a few years my senior, though still under thirty, when I first knew him, and, in spite of the fact that he had been only two years a soldier, he was already widely noted for his exact and exten-

sive knowledge of all branches of the military calling. He was a most competent and laborious Adjutant-General and Chief of Staff, as well as one of the most enterprising and dashing cavalry officers I ever met. He was a hard and rapid hitter; methodical, careful and prudent, looking out for his men and horses with just as much care as he did for his papers and records, but never failing to go for the enemy with all his might and all his men when opportunity offered. He never believed in or adopted half measures; but, with the true instincts of a born soldier, carried everybody he could control with him into action, and scarcely ever failed to do what was expected of him. He never said "I can't," but always "I'll try," and that, with his grave and composed but virile and vigorous manner to back it, meant "I'll do it if it is within the range of human possibility and my life is spared." He was one of those level-headed, sensible men with the fighting attributes so deeply bedded in his nature that it never occurred to him to dodge an adventure, however desperate, to hesitate about it, or to say "Go," but always and everywhere, "Follow me;" and those of us who watched his career and survive him know that it took a stout-hearted and strong-limbed man indeed to get deeper into a battle than he. With the spirit of a true Kentuckian, as he was, he was always well, and generally superbly, mounted, and thus with his fine physique, his excellent trappings and his spirited charger, he was a perfect cavalier, not light and flashy, but steady-going, robust and invincible. It was a pleasure and satisfaction to see him leading his men into action, for it was cer-

tain that he had made all proper preparation, that he would perform his whole duty regularly and in order, and that he would carry everything before him if flesh and blood could do it.

He had an Arab's love for his horse, and his letters are full of allusions to "Max," who fell at Columbus, Ga., and "Bayard," who lost a lock of his hair by a bullet before Atlanta, but there was no animal to which he felt so strong an attachment as the "Black Sluggard." This horse had been raised by Mr. Blair, at Silver Spring, and received his name from Mrs. Blair, who called him after "Le Noir Faineant," in "Ivanhoe," whom she declared he strongly resembled in character. He came into Alexander's possession in '62, and was his companion in many a well-fought fight, was wounded a number of times, but ever displayed a courage and indifference to danger worthy of his gallant rider. Alexander lent him to General Stoneman to ride during his famous raid, as he was so much more reliable than any other horse in the command, and Stoneman would often come into camp at night with the pockets of his blouse stuffed with ears of corn for the favored charger.

When Alexander was ordered West in the spring of 1864, he sent his old war-horse to his *fiancée* at Willowbrook, and wrote as follows :

"The old Sluggard and I parted to-day—he has been my companion in many dangers, hardships and trials, and has in many cases proved himself my best friend. We knew one another so well, and I loved him so dearly, that I tell you it was a trial to part with him ; but then I know I shall see him again,

and I am sure you will take good care of him for my sake and for his past gallantry. He is on the 'retired list,' and the old war-worn veteran will have no greater hardship than to amble quietly along the shores of the beautiful Owasco with a loving girl on his back. He will hear no more the cannon's loud roar, and the bursting shell ; he will mingle no more in the maddening charge mid pistol-shots and shouts, and groans and clashing of sabers. No more glory for him ; but it makes me glad to think that in his old age he will not have to submit to the ignoble collar nor pass his declining days in starvation and misery—I would have shot him first !"

For many years the Black Sluggard was a familiar form at Willowbrook and Auburn, where his "military history" elicited much interest. When old age made him no longer serviceable, he was tenderly cared for, and in the summer time wandered at will in the grove at Willowbrook. The battle of life was ended for him in June, 1877. He was buried under the oak trees on the shores of the lake, and when "Decoration Day" comes round the little children do not forget to strew his grave with flowers.

Alexander was, withal, an excellent disciplinarian—neither negligent nor a martinet, but a thoughtful, serious man who consulted the comfort and convenience of those under him, as well as the interests of the Service and the requirements of the Army Regulations. The possession of the high qualities which I have attributed to him was not an accident ; they came by inheritance as much as by study and training.

His father, Andrew Jonathan Alexander, of Sherwood, Woodford County, Kentucky, was the fourth son of William Alexander, son of Lord Provost Alexander, M. P., and Marianne de la Croix, who was born at his father's country seat of Airdrie, between Edinburgh and Glasgow, in 1729; and after the death of his first wife, by whom he had two sons and six daughters, the first of which was Sir William Alexander, a lawyer of distinction, who rose to be Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer and Member of the Privy Council, he emigrated to Virginia in 1783, and finally settled at Staunton, where he lived till 1811, when he removed to Kentucky. He took an important social and business position, and married for his second wife, Agatha de la Porte, belonging to an ancient family of Montpellier. She was the niece of Count de Tu Bœuf, who emigrated from France before the Revolution, and settled with his sister's children and his retainers in the Clinch Mountains, where he was murdered and robbed under tragic circumstances by the lawless frontiersmen of the neighborhood. The history of Count de Tu Bœuf and his sister, Madame de la Porte, who with her son, an ex-captain of the King's Guard, and her two daughters, tried to carry the civilization and refinements of Paris into the mountains of Southwestern Virginia, might well be made the foundation of a historical story more interesting than any romance, but we leave that for the hand of another and pass on to the history of a later generation.

William Alexander had by Agatha de la Porte, six children: John, Regis, Andrew, Charles, James and Apolline Aga-

tha, who intermarried with the leading families of Virginia. William Alexander died at his seat in Woodford County, Kentucky, in 1819. His fourth son, Andrew Jonathan, married Mira Madison, the daughter of Major (afterward Governor-elect) George Madison, of Frankfort, Kentucky, on the 28th of April, 1822. Major Madison was the nephew of President James Madison, and was a gentleman of high character and education. He took an honorable part in the War of 1812, and was present at the battle of the River Raisin, where he was taken prisoner. He was carried to Quebec, where he was kept in confinement till peace was made, and then returned to his home in Kentucky so broken in health that he never recovered. On account of his services and high character he was elected Governor of Kentucky, but died before the time set for his inauguration.

Mr. Francis P. Blair, of Silver Spring, wrote in 1863: "George Madison was one of the best and bravest men I ever knew. He was modest, unambitious and unselfish; but when Clay and all the distinguished men of Kentucky were in their zenith, not one of them could have commanded the undivided vote of her keen-eyed sons for the chief magistracy as he did."

Andrew Jonathan Alexander and Mira Madison had six children, two of whom died in childhood, the oldest surviving one of which, Agatha Apolline, married Frank P. Blair, afterward the well-known and distinguished Member of Congress from Missouri, and a gallant and successful Major-General of Volunteers in the United States Army.

The eldest son, George Madison Alexander, married his cousin, Mary Victoire Campbell, of Paducah, Kentucky, a granddaughter of Victoire de la Porte—second daughter of Madame de la Porte. Compelled by ill health to seek a drier climate, he made his home for many years in New Mexico, and his memory is still cherished by the early settlers of that wild country, who appreciated the purity and unselfishness of his character, as well as his reckless courage. He succumbed at last to the disease that had so long threatened him, and died in 1866, leaving no children. Another sister, Mira Mariamne, married Franklin A. Dick, Esq., a lawyer of high standing at Washington and Philadelphia. The youngest member of this family was Andrew Jonathan Alexander, the subject of this sketch, who was born at Sherwood, Woodford County, Kentucky, Nov. 21, 1833. He married Evelina Throop Martin, of Willowbrook, near Auburn, New York, and leaves one son, Upton Alexander, named for his uncle, Maj.-Gen. Emory Upton, who commanded the Fourth Division of the Cavalry Corps of the Military Division of the Mississippi.

William Alexander, the founder of the family in this country, it should be observed, left his eldest son and several daughters in Scotland. His daughter Isabella married John Hankey, of London, England, and one of their daughters married Colonel Seymour Bathurst and was the mother of the present Earl of Bathurst.

Mariamne married Jonathan Williams, the nephew and private secretary of Benjamin Franklin. Their daughter

Christine married Thomas Biddle, of Philadelphia, and their son Henry married Julia Rush, the daughter of the celebrated Doctor Benjamin Rush.* Apolline, his youngest daughter by his second marriage, married Mr. Thompson Hankey, Governor of the Bank of England and Member of Parliament. He was the nephew of John Hankey, the husband of Isabella, and he and his wife are still living in London. By these marriages, and others not mentioned here, it will be seen that General Alexander was connected with many distinguished men and women in both Europe and America. He was cousin to the Biddles, Madisons, Prestons, Blairs, Browns, Williamses, Hankeys, and even to noble families of both France and England, and it is but faint praise to say that he was the peer of the best of them.

His father died by an accident at a mill on his estate, and his mother, shortly afterward, from grief and improper medical treatment, lost her eyesight. The devotion of her children and kindred, and her deep religious faith, sustained her in this dark hour, and enabled her to rise above her misfortunes and to discharge with wonderful ability her duties as a mother and the mistress of a large establishment. Mrs. Alexander, like many humane and intelligent Southerners, was strongly opposed to slavery, and though she had inherited a large number of slaves, and received from them a faithful and devoted service, which was invaluable to her, from time to time, as they were prepared to care for themselves, she gave them their free-

* House of Alexander, p. 33, *et seq.*, Vol. II.

dom, and they were all emancipated several years before our late War. When she removed from Kentucky to St. Louis in 1850, some forty of them followed her there, where they might still experience the benefit of her kind interest in them.

She resided in St. Louis, respected and revered by all who knew her till her death in the autumn of 1886. Her son Andrew, together with his brother and sisters, were carefully educated at home, in English, French, and the classics, by the most accomplished tutors, one of whom was the Rev. James Eells, well known in San Francisco and the East. Later Andrew attended college at Danville, Kentucky, and then returned to St. Louis, where he had already begun a business career when the Rebellion broke out.

Throwing aside all private interests and personal considerations, he made haste, as soon as it was certain there was to be a War, to enter the Army as Second Lieutenant, and was promoted the same day to First Lieutenant in the First Regiment of Mounted Rifles, which subsequently became known as the Third (regular) Cavalry. He reported promptly at Fort Leavenworth, and was shortly afterward ordered to Washington for duty on the staff of General McClellan, with whom he served till General Stoneman, with a force of cavalry, infantry and artillery was sent in pursuit of the Confederate Army, which had fallen back in March, 1862, from Manassas Junction to the Rappahannock River. So strongly had Alexander, although scarcely yet out of the ways of civil life, impressed himself already upon those with whom he had been

brought in contact, that he was designated to act as Assistant Adjutant-General of the force. Custer, then also a Lieutenant, and many other young Regular officers, were with the command, but the choice for this most important position fell upon the young soldier from civil life, and fully did his behavior then and afterward justify the commanding General in his selection. In addition to performing all of the usual duties of his office, he took an active part in the practical operations of the campaign, and in person commanded the rear-guard, as the column withdrew from its advanced position to Alexandria, preparatory to embarking with the Army of the Potomac for the Peninsula. During this expedition he was accompanied by Captain, the Count de Villarceau, of the French Army, who was also serving at that time on the staff of General McClellan, and upon more than one occasion has entertained his friends with an amusing account of how, while acting as rear-guard, in the hurry of the return march, the one lost a dinner, and the other ate it.

Alexander accompanied General McClellan to the Peninsula, and, with General Stoneman, took part in all the cavalry operations of the campaign. He was present at the siege of Yorktown, the pursuit of the enemy from that place, and at the battle of Williamsburg. He carried orders day and night, and on the night after the battle was sent by McClellan with important orders to General Heintzelman, commanding the Third Corps, then six or seven miles away. The woods were almost

impenetrable, the roads indistinct, and the ground everywhere soft and muddy, and hence he did not get back till about midnight. He found headquarters in a small house, the floors of which were covered with sleeping officers, and among them the French Princes. General McClellan occupied the only bed, and after receiving Alexander's report, for which purpose he had been awakened, with that thoughtful kindness which so endeared the General to those about him, he invited the tired staff officer to lie down beside him. But, wet and muddy as he was, the latter declined; the General insisted, and finally the Captain yielded, and slept soundly till about 3 o'clock, when he was called by Colonel Colburn, the officer of the night, to tell another aide-de-camp how to find Hancock's camp. Failing to make the latter understand, he had a fresh horse saddled, and finished the night floundering about in the darkness and mud, but reaching Hancock's camp at daylight.

I have related this incident, not only because it shows the kind of work an aide-de-camp was called upon frequently to perform, and how Alexander did it, but because it also illustrates one of the personal characteristics by which General McClellan gained such an extraordinary hold upon the officers who served with or near him. Certainly no General was ever more affectionate or considerate to his staff or to the Army under him, and it may well be doubted if any General was ever more loyally or lovingly served than he was, and the reason for which may be partly understood from this otherwise trivial circumstance.

After delivering his orders to Hancock, Alexander rode over the bloody battle-field of the day before, and saw for the first time the mangled forms of the dead soldiers, whose comrades were hurrying them into their hastily prepared graves, and so profoundly was he moved by the distressing sight, strong and vigorous as he was, that he was overcome by nausea, and compelled to dismount till the fit had passed away. Further on he records the fact that the road near the old city of Williamsburg was so muddy that the ambulances, laden with Confederate dead and wounded, had stuck in the mire, and that the drivers had lightened them of their ghastly burden by throwing out the helpless bodies, which the retreating artillery and baggage wagons had crushed and trampled almost out of shape. At more than one spot he saw arms and legs protruding, and thus came to know too well, that the poor bodies of his devoted but erring countrymen, were covered by the ooze of that horrid road. But it was no time for sentiment or delay, and so he pressed on with the advance-guard, which he had joined. The Confederates, in the hurry of their retreat, had not failed to plant torpedoes in the road farther on, and they were so arranged as to explode under the feet of the passing cavalry, but this did no serious injury.

For the next twenty days Alexander was engaged almost constantly in skirmishing with the enemy. At Slater's Mill he took part in a sharp fight, in which quite a large number were killed and wounded on both sides. He captured a rebel officer in personal combat, and took from him a Colt's revolver, his

first trophy, which he carried to the end of the War. During this period he visited the house in which Mrs. Custis lived when General Washington courted her, and the old church, built of bricks imported from England, in which they were married. Near here, also, under orders from headquarters, he arrested Major Lawrence Williams, of the Regular Army, for treasonable correspondence with the enemy. This officer was a cousin of the Lees, had gone beyond our picket line, and was fired upon by some of his own men as he returned. Alexander took him under guard to General McClellan the next day, but the latter, for reasons satisfactory to himself, released him. He did some good service during the next month, but his heart was not with the flag, and so he obtained leave of absence, went North, and shortly afterward, it is said, deserted and joined the Confederates. About the same time his brother was caught, tried and executed as a spy by the National forces in Tennessee.

The activity of Alexander was displayed during the Peninsular campaign in many ways. Not content with what he could learn by scouting, he made an ascent in one of the balloons, which was used for the first time at the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac for purposes of observing what was going on in the enemy's lines. From his high but unsteady seat he obtained his first and only view of Richmond and its immediate surroundings. While lying at Mechanicsville he carried a flag of truce every other day, to a cross-road, a few miles farther west, where he was met by one from the Confederate lines.

Each officer was accompanied by about a hundred men, and Alexander always took particular pains to see that his were carefully selected, well-mounted, and clad in their best uniforms. After leaving the lines, he sent forward a white flag, carried by a corporal, with three men to act as an advance-guard, and to keep a look-out for the Confederate flag of truce. As soon as they got within a hundred yards of each other the escorts were halted, and the officers advanced to exchange their dispatches and to transact such other business as might have been committed to them. At these meetings it was customary, after planting the flags at the cross-roads, for each officer to throw out a picket toward his own Army, and to allow the men of his escort to mingle with those of the other in the friendliest manner. Upon such occasions they passed the time in telling stories, playing cards, and even in running horse-races, while the officers withdrew to a house near by, and shared their flasks, luncheon, and such fruits as they could obtain, as though they were brothers in arms, instead of unrelenting enemies. While thus engaged, it was almost impossible for them to realize that within an hour they might be trying to kill or capture each other. On one of these excursions Alexander escorted Mrs. Robert E. Lee and her daughter beyond our lines, and received from them a graceful acknowledgment of his courteous civility.

Two days before the battle of Hanover Court House he was sent with a squadron of cavalry and one gun for the purpose of making a reconnoissance of the railroad running north from Richmond, and the next day went with General Stoneman and

a large cavalry force to break and destroy it, while General Fitz-John Porter marched out and fought the battle of Hanover Court House. During these operations, and those which followed, Alexander was kept constantly occupied, and showed himself to be a handy and enterprising cavalryman, always on the alert, and always ready to take any reasonable risk in order to ascertain what the enemy were doing. From "Old Church" he discovered and reported the advance of Jackson's celebrated turning movement, which resulted in the bloody battle and defeat of Porter's corps at Gaines' Mill. This movement between the main Army and Stoneman rendered it necessary for the latter to fall back to Deep Creek, in the direction of the White House, on the Pamunkey River, and was the principal cause which compelled McClellan to abandon his railroad line to the rear, and change his base to the James River. The next day Stoneman took up a position at the White House, where the sutlers had collected a large quantity of stores, for sale to the troops, and where there were also many regular supplies belonging to the quartermaster and commissary departments, all under the nominal protection of a considerable force of infantry and artillery, commanded by an old officer of the Regular Army. The enemy followed the cavalry to that place, and General Stoneman sent Alexander to the officer just mentioned with the proposition that they should unite their forces and give battle, but the old General received this proposition with tears, instead of ready acquiescence, accompanied by the declaration that McClellan had treated him badly and he would

not fight. As a consequence, Alexander was directed to set fire to the property, and in a few minutes after he had given the necessary orders and distributed matches, the whole plain was ablaze. The White House caught fire, or was set afire without orders, and the troops marched many miles in the direction of Yorktown, by the light which illuminated the horizon till far into the night. This destruction, it is now known, was premature, if not entirely unnecessary, as it is certain that the position might easily have been held against any hostile force in the vicinity till all the property had been removed to a place of safety.

Of course Alexander, being only a staff officer and having no independent authority, was powerless to fight a battle, or even to delay the retreat of the united forces. He accordingly accompanied them to Yorktown, and, after his own chief had gone to Washington, became attached to the staff of General James J. Van Alen, in command of the defenses at the former place. During the campaign he had worn out or lost all of his clothes except those upon his person, but he lost no time in re-equipping himself, and at the end of two weeks, with a small detachment of cavalymen, he rejoined General McClellan at Harrison's Landing on the James River. He accompanied the headquarters of the Army to Alexandria in August, and, almost immediately after his arrival at that place, was attached to the staff of General Banks, commanding the troops for the defense of Washington. So acceptably did he perform the duties assigned him that when Banks was ordered to New Orleans he

asked Alexander to accept a place as a permanent member of his staff, but, perceiving that he was not likely to gain much credit in that service, he declined, and in October following was assigned to duty as Assistant Adjutant-General of the Third Army Corps, then encamped under the command of his old chief, General Stoneman, near Pooleville, Maryland. This assignment gave him the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel from the 1st of January, 1863, and along with it still harder work and greater responsibilities. He not only assisted in bringing the Corps to the high degree of efficiency it afterward reached, but did much hard riding from one wing of the Army to the other. About this time he was offered an assignment to the Quartermaster's Department but promptly and unhesitatingly declined it, for the more congenial service which brought him into closer relations with the troops and their operations in the field.

From camp near Leesburg he made a rapid night march with a squadron of Rhode Island cavalry to arrest the Confederate, Major Fairfax, who was reputed to be visiting his wife near Aldie, some twenty miles away. He executed the task assigned him with such celerity and good judgment that neither the Major nor his family could fairly realize how it had been done or that he was really a prisoner. After a friendly and bountiful breakfast with the Major's wife and children, and from his kitchen, they returned to the Union lines, where the prisoner was detained as his captor's guest till he was regularly paroled and released. He remained at home till duly ex-

changed, but took occasion to pay it a flying visit after the cavalry battle of Beverly Ford. Alexander appeared upon the scene again, but seeing him coming and recognizing the tall and handsome cavalryman, the good wife exclaimed, laughingly: "You are just fifteen minutes too late this time, Colonel; my husband, fearing that you would be around, has gone, and is now safely beyond pursuit."

The relief of General McClellan and the assignment of General Burnside to command the Army of the Potomac surprised Alexander as much as it did his seniors. A change was not unexpected, but popular as Burnside was, for his amiability and gallant bearing, neither officers nor men regarded him as capable of leading them to victory. The bloody fiasco of Fredericksburg was looked upon as the natural result of his incompetency. Alexander took part in all the operations of his own corps during the campaign, and a short time before his death wrote and published in the *Philadelphia Press** a spirited account of the incidents of the battle that came under his observation. He was present on that part of the field where General Bayard was killed. While talking to that gallant and promising officer, whom he had known before the war, the enemy opened a sharp fire from several batteries, and the shot and shell poured into the grove where they were standing. Bayard paid but little attention to the firing, and continued chatting as though there were no danger. The rest of the party sought shelter. Alexander, who was

* For this paper entire, see Appendix.

waiting orders, and could not leave, stepped toward a large tree just in front, and had not reached it when a shot ricocheted near him, glanced from the tree, and crushed Bayard's hip in its passage in such a shocking manner that he died from its effects the next day.

Alexander, in the article above alluded to, also describes a remarkable truce which the troops of the opposing lines voluntarily entered into the next day, and as it is a curious and interesting incident of the war, I append it substantially as it was written :

"Before daylight the next morning," says Alexander, "we were again under arms expecting to renew the struggle, but, to our surprise, the skirmishers continued silent. In a short time it was reported that they had, without consultation with their superiors, agreed to suspend hostilities till their dead and wounded comrades, who lay between the lines, could be removed. The opponents at once mingled in the most amicable way and began their work of mercy. As such a truce was contrary to the customs of war the officers from both sides rushed among the men, making the most strenuous efforts to restore order. But the men's warlike instincts had, no doubt, been softened by the groans and cries of their wounded comrades during the stillness of the long night, and no efforts to bring about a state of hostilities could prevail till the wounded and dead were removed. Regular details were then made and the truce continued, during which rebel soldiers were seen to carry our wounded into our lines and our soldiers

to bear wounded rebels back into the rebel lines. With this generous rivalry the wounded were all speedily cared for."

Alexander was himself one of the officers who had gone forward to ascertain what was going on, and was with the white flags which had been planted midway between the hostile armies, when General J. E. B. Stuart, the Confederate cavalry leader, also came forward and took part in the pathetic truce. "He was then," in the words of Alexander, "at the height of his military reputation, and was the object of curiosity and admiration to the Confederate as well as the Union troops, as could be seen by the groups of men of both armies who stopped and stared at him. He presented a very martial appearance, being dressed in a new suit of bluish-gray cloth, with the gaudy insignia of his rank on sleeves and collar, a pair of handsome new horseman's boots, with gold spurs attached, and a broad-brimmed felt hat from which drooped a long but rather seedy ostrich plume. While talking he rested on and played with a handsome, long French saber. Altogether, he was a very striking figure, to which his great reputation as a cavalry officer added much interest."

As soon as the killed and wounded were removed this extraordinary truce came to an end in the same spontaneous manner that it originated, but it is worthy of note that no fighting took place on that part of the field that day, although a heavy battle was in progress within a half-mile while the truce was in force. Alexander and the other officers returned to their posts, and were busy all that night in withdrawing the

Union troops to the north bank of the Rappahannock River. The next morning he and a party of his brother officers rode out into the open ground overlooking the river to see what the enemy were doing. Their skirmishers were advancing, and one battery, seeing the group of horsemen, opened a spiteful fire upon them, whereupon the latter "turned their backs finally and cheerfully upon the bloody battle-field of Fredericksburg," and galloped into the woods, which happily obscured them from view, and shielded them from further danger.

The Army returned at once to its former camps and went into winter quarters, where it remained till called out to make another abortive movement, which became known to the officers who took part in it, if not to history, as "Burnside's Mud March." Alexander shared its rests and its labors till General Burnside was relieved and General Hooker took command; and, in commenting upon it, he says it gave "satisfaction to the Army, which felt that nothing but disaster awaited them under Burnside, and that no other commander could be worse." He adds, what was the common opinion at that time, "Burnside was an amiable, gallant gentleman, but without military ability, and too much subject to political influence."

General Hooker at once resorted to every possible measure to restore the morale of the Army, and, among others, to the organization of the cavalry into a separate corps. As is well known, it had, up to that time, been scattered about in small bodies, engaged mostly in picketing and scouting, and had been a laughing-stock and a reproach to the Army. General

Stoneman was assigned to command it, and at once selected Alexander as its Adjutant-General. In view of the fact that the corps contained nearly all the Regular cavalry and its best officers, I cannot but consider this selection, made as it was by the General who was at that time regarded on all hands as the most accomplished and promising officer of that arm of Service, as a very high compliment to Alexander's character. It shows clearly that he had made a place and a reputation for himself which an older soldier might well be proud of. Fortunately for him, the estimation in which he was held by his chief, from that time to the date of their separation, is not a matter of conjecture or doubt, for on the 8th of January following General Stoneman, on being relieved from command of the Cavalry Bureau at Washington, addressed him the following note :

MY DEAR COLONEL : After a long and intimate social and official connection, we are now about to part. It would be useless for me to endeavor to embody within the limits of a letter what are, and what I feel you know are the sentiments of my heart toward you. To you more than to any other man am I under obligations for valuable advice and assistance during the past two years in the performance of the various duties to which I have been assigned. Clear, cautious and intelligent in council, prompt and cool in execution, brave in action, affable and courteous to all, firm, just and upright, you have made yourself loved, respected and esteemed by those with whom you have been brought in contact, and by none more than by myself.

If you have not received the rewards to which all who know you feel that you are justly entitled, you can feel and know that it is for other reasons than want of merit. Thanking you most sincerely for what you have been to, and for what you have done for me, I am, very truly, your friend,

GEORGE STONEMAN,
Major-General.

The work of collecting and organizing the cavalry, which, up to that time, had been scattered without head or administration throughout the Army, imposed a heavy burden upon Alexander as well as upon his chief. With but few clerks and assistants, and at the start with neither desks, paper nor ink, it can be well understood that they were almost overwhelmed by the records and reports of the twelve thousand men which constituted the new corps. Of course the greater part of the details and clerical labor fell upon the Adjutant-General, who was also Chief of Staff. For weeks he worked day and night; gradually an efficient staff grew up around him, and order emerged from confusion, and the personal pressure upon him was relaxed, but the winter was one long to be remembered. The cavalry, although brought under one commander, and subjected, as far as possible, to methodical instruction, drills and reviews, was still compelled to dissipate its strength by the extraordinary amount of picketing which it was constantly called upon to perform. In addition to covering the front of the entire Army against the enemy it had also to cover its rear in order to cut off communication with Washington and to prevent desertion, which was prevalent to an unusual degree at that stage of the War. It is worthy of note that this system of excessive picketing prevailed in the Army of the Potomac till Grant arrived and gave Sheridan command of the cavalry. I have, myself, seen miles of cavalry picket line with another of infantry just behind and in sight of it, and it was no uncommon occurrence for half the corps to be on such duty

at one time. The wonder is that, with such a system, the Cavalry ever reached even a passable degree of efficiency. The work was destructive of all discipline to the men, and was literally killing to the horses, which were used up and destroyed by thousands.

Early in the spring General Stoneman was ordered to cross the Rappahannock and break the railroads between the Confederate Army and Richmond, but was delayed by extraordinary rains and freshets. Later he succeeded in making a double crossing of the river, but one of his divisions was recalled by Hooker without notice to him, while he was himself left to continue his march toward the James River, above Richmond. Alexander showed great enterprise and resource during the abortive raid which followed, and did his best to make it a success, but he always declared that it had been irretrievably marred at the start by Hooker's recall of Averill's division, and by his instructions to Stoneman that, under no circumstances, was he to attempt to go into Richmond. In spite of these instructions, however, Alexander, perceiving the great opportunity offered, used every argument he could think of to induce Stoneman to move against and attack that place, which, he says, "we were certain had no competent garrison," and could be readily taken. Inasmuch as it contained fourteen or fifteen thousand Union prisoners, and was besides occupied by the entire Confederate Government, it offered an extraordinary prize, which justified his counsels, and would have fully excused an effort, even against positive orders, to capture it.

the first time in a week, he felt it safe to pull off his riding boots and place them by the camp-fire to dry. During the night some one built up the fire by which he was sleeping, and made it so hot that it burned off the foot of one boot, so that the owner was for several days compelled to ride with one foot bare. Such accidents as this, although common enough to officers in the field, are none the less annoying on that account.

On rejoining the Army near Fredericksburg, General Stone-
man, who was ill and badly used up by the raid, went on sick leave, and General Alfred Pleasanton succeeded to the command of the Cavalry Corps. He retained Alexander in the position of Adjutant-General and Chief of Staff, and shortly conceived for his good sense and courage the same high opinion that they had extorted from every one else.

The rest of the winter was passed in picket duty, and constant work on the part of the new commander to perfect the organization and efficiency of the National cavalry, in all of which Alexander took a laborious and conspicuous part. On the 9th of June the corps crossed the river at Beverly Ford and attacked the Confederate cavalry under Stuart, and after a stubborn struggle drove it back to Brandy Station. The country was open and level, and presented, on the whole, the best field for a cavalry battle in Virginia. There were perhaps 20,000 men engaged. Many brilliant charges were made, many hand-to-hand conflicts took place and much distinction was gained by the Federal troops and commanders, and especially by General John Buford and General David McM. Gregg,

and although the Union cavalry, overweighted by the infantry and artillery which came to Stuart's assistance, was finally compelled, after fourteen hours fighting, to retire with the loss of three guns, the officers contended that the honors of the actual fighting, in every instance on that field, were theirs. Certain it is that from that time till the end of the War they never hesitated, either in the East or the West, to give battle to the Confederate cavalry. It is equally certain that they succeeded, in spite of hard knocks and many vicissitudes, in maintaining the supremacy, which they always claimed for the Union cavalry from the day of the "joyous and gentle" conflict of Beverly Ford. Alexander, as usual, took a conspicuous part in the action and in the operations before and after it. He was constantly under fire, and was specially mentioned by the commanding General for his gallant and useful services. During the fight at Aldie, which occurred some days later, between Kilpatrick's Division and Fitzhugh Lee's, he was stunned and slightly wounded in the head by the bursting of a shell near him and by the gravel with which the explosion covered him. He bled freely, and for awhile it was thought he was seriously injured, but with the strong nerves and vigorous constitution of a cavalryman, the shock passed rapidly away without disabling him or materially interfering with his comfort. He personally took part in all the charges within his reach, and in one of these captured a twelve-pounder mountain howitzer, which he turned upon the enemy.

The Confederate cavalry, after much fighting, had gone

into the Shenandoah Valley and turned down it toward the crossings of the Potomac above Harper's Ferry. Alexander was sent forward with the advance-guard to gain information and to establish the Union cavalry's headquarters at Frederick City, Maryland. Driving the rebel pickets, which had reached there before him, out of the town, he took possession of the principal hotel, much to the disgust of the proprietor who proved to be a rebel sympathizer, and who refused to entertain his unwelcome visitors. This, however, did not disconcert the sturdy Colonel for an instant. He had to have shelter and provisions, and as that was the most eligible place for them, he put the innkeeper in arrest, and for several days thereafter performed his duties with true Kentucky hospitality, which was rendered all the more acceptable to his guests and companions by the fact that while the table was the best the country could supply, he made no charges and collected no bills.

This diversion was, however, too pleasant to last. The rebel advance was the prelude to the Gettysburg campaign, and after a few days General Meade, who had not as yet succeeded in divining the whereabouts and plans of the Confederate Army, sent for Alexander and directed him to take whatever force he deemed necessary and find out what Lee was doing. Selecting only forty men of the Second Regular Cavalry, he started at once across the country toward Gettysburg, where he expected to find two regiments of the Cavalry Corps. Upon reaching the Emmetsburg road about 11 o'clock at night, he halted to talk with an old man standing at his gate by the road-

side, who after satisfying himself that he was really confronted by a Union officer, told him that the Federal troops had been driven out of Gettysburg, and that there was a strong rebel force on the hill only a half-mile distant. But for this timely information Alexander would have most probably trotted into their camp and been captured. Leaving the direct road, however, and traveling through the farms, by daylight he reached Littletown, where he found the First and Seventh Michigan Cavalry, and under General Meade's orders took command of them. During the night he had, of course, been forced to impress guides from the citizens of the country, many of whom were unwilling, but, in his quaint and vigorous language, they learned that "War is a rough trade, and men with arms use convincing arguments."

Pausing at Littletown only long enough to get breakfast, which the good women of the place furnished with cheerful alacrity, while the men groomed and fed the tired horses of the troopers, and the young girls brought flowers and sung patriotic songs, he pushed forward, drove back Stuart's pickets and followed him in the direction of Hanover, near which place he overtook and engaged the main body for several hours. General Kilpatrick, with his division, was at Hanover, and it became necessary to send couriers around the rebel forces to advise him of Stuart's movement. Two picked men were detailed to go, one of whom was captured, and the other would have shared the same fate, but just as he was about to be overtaken by the rebel pursuers, a patriotic citizen gave him a stout, fresh

remount which carried him safely through, and was returned to its owner by Alexander the next day. Meanwhile, however, he and Kilpatrick united their forces and followed the enemy from Hanover to York and Carlisle, skirmishing heavily much of the time, and capturing some prisoners, from whom he learned that the main army of the Confederates was in the neighborhood of Gettysburg. On arriving at the conclusion that the latter place would probably be the scene of a great battle, he turned about and marched rapidly in that direction, and first drew rein at the Catholic chapel, four miles east of the battle-field. While resting his horses he opened conversation with the Catholic priest, standing on the porch near by, but so soiled were he and his men by the dust through which they had been riding that the good priest could not tell, from their uniforms, whether they were Union or Confederate troopers, and was therefore quite chary of talking. After they had satisfied him, however, of their loyalty, he told them that a battle was then in progress. Alexander could not believe it, and said there must be some mistake about it. He records the fact that "the day was unusually still, and yet no sound of musket or cannon could be heard." The priest reiterated his declaration, and took him up into the belfry whence, greatly to his surprise, he plainly saw the battle raging on the hills beyond Gettysburg, while not a sound of it reached him though it was afterward ascertained that it was distinctly heard thirty miles away in another direction. Descending at once, he mounted and rode rapidly to Cemetery Hill, where

he found the Eleventh Corps retreating and General Hancock, with a number of officers, engaged in rallying it. He assisted in this, and the line was reformed on the crest of the hill where the great battle was actually fought.

Of course Alexander now joined General Meade's headquarters, and was constantly engaged in sending or carrying orders to the cavalry which was now operating on the flanks of the Army. On the 2d of July General Meade sent him with orders to General Sykes, who was commanding the Regular Division on the left, and while riding along the ridge he says: "I came upon the Third Corps"—of which it will be remembered he had been the first Adjutant-General—"which had just been badly whipped and was retreating in great disorder. I never saw such a rout; there were men with and without arms, wounded and well, ambulances, ammunition wagons and artillery all mixed up in utter disorder, and hurrying to the rear, while the enemy's shot and shell were tearing up the ground in every direction. General Sickles was being carried back on a litter, with one of his legs gone. I stopped to inquire how he was, and he in turn asked me how the battle was going. He was very pale, but composed and manly. After I had found General Sykes and was returning, I saw General Sedgwick, at the head of the Sixth Corps, coming out of the woods in the direction of the battle. I turned and galloped toward him intending to speak to him, but when I got within about fifty yards of him, a cannon-ball passed over me and struck the earth just in front

of the General's horse, throwing a cloud of dust and dirt over him and concealing both horse and rider for an instant. When the dust cleared away, the General was seen calmly brushing his clothes with his open hand. The men nearest to him, perceiving that he was unhurt as well as undismayed, began cheering, and those in the rear took it up, and the roar went back through the woods for miles along the column, and continued for some minutes. This showed both our men and the rebels that re-enforcements were at hand, and possibly changed the fortunes of the day."

About sundown that afternoon General Meade and his staff rode the lines in front of the Army and in rear of the skirmishers, and asked Alexander to accompany him, which he did, mounted upon a stout, black charger that had been used as a race-horse. As soon as the cavalcade, moving at a gallop, appeared in the open field the troops began cheering, and this caused Alexander's horse, which doubtless thought a race was on hand, to rush away at full speed. He soon distanced General Meade and his followers, and his rider was getting control of him when his right stirrup-leather parted. The horse now dashed through the skirmish line and was going straight for the rebel position. For a moment it seemed that his gallant rider had lost all control over him, but he finally succeeded in turning him back toward our own lines, though unfortunately he had now attracted the attention of the enemy, and for half a mile became a target for their rifles. Happily he rejoined his companions without receiving any injury.

The next morning, July 3d, there was heavy fighting on the right of our Army, and Alexander records the fact that the roar of musketry was as heavy as any he ever heard, but toward noon it died out and there was a great stillness, unbroken except by an occasional report of a musket-shot from some active skirmisher. The day was hot, and both armies seemed to be taking a siesta. The officers and soldiers about General Meade's headquarters were lying about in such shade as they could find, some of them sleeping and others talking in drowsy tones, when suddenly all were aroused into life and activity by the simultaneous discharge of 150 guns, from which a storm of shot and shell came roaring and bursting over the scene. The great Union battery which General Hunt had massed replied at once, and the roar was terrific. General Meade gave orders for the cavalry to Alexander, who went at once into the little frame house just back of the ridge occupied by the main line of battle, to write them out. He found five other persons in the room—General Seth Williams, General Butterfield, General Warren, Colonel Dickinson and Rufus Colburn, Chief Clerk at Headquarters. Almost immediately afterward, a shell burst in front of the house, filling the air with fragments, one of which passing through the room cut General Williams' neck; another struck Warren on the chin and throat; another wounded Butterfield in the side and disabled him; another passed through Colburn's hair and raised a welt on his head, and at almost the same instant a link of a chain from a Shrapnel shell passed through Dickinson's arm, just above the

wrist, and lodged in his coat-sleeve. Alexander was alone untouched and unharmed. It will be readily understood that his companions lost no time in getting out of that room, but he, having a duty to perform which could be done there better than elsewhere, quietly remained till he had finished his dispatches, after which he also went out, and sent them away. Having now nothing to do but wait, which, under the circumstances, is about as hard a thing as a soldier can be called upon to perform, as it leaves him at leisure to think of his own peril, he lit his pipe and tried his best to appear unconcerned. Pickett's celebrated charge, which this heavy artillery fire was intended to prepare the way for, having failed, several hundred of his men were taken prisoners, and were hurried over the ridge to the rear. The rebel guns now opened again, and the rain of shot and shell fell upon both prisoners and Union men alike. The former were, says Alexander, now "utterly demoralized, and sought shelter behind trees, stones, and anything else they could find which promised to give them protection from the fire of their friends. The same men had only a few minutes before charged into our lines with the most desperate courage." This incident serves to show as well as any of which I have any knowledge, that the most conspicuous intrepidity is not inconsistent with or unaccompanied by the liveliest sense of bodily fear.

The day after the battle Alexander went back a few miles to where army headquarters had been established. He had had nothing to eat for thirty-six hours, but by that time the

country people had begun to gather from far and near to visit the battle-field. Many of them took their luncheon with them, and as the headquarters' mess kit had by some mischance been lost, it occurred to him that he might levy a contribution upon the sight-seers; and this he proceeded to do with such success as not only to fully supply his own wants, but those of General Meade, and the rest of the staff. It was a gratifying surprise all round, and so noticeable that Meade insisted upon knowing how it had been accomplished. Alexander explained with becoming modesty that he had placed a guard upon the road, and stopped the sight-seers till he had collected from them enough supplies to provide for all immediate requirements. Meade was well pleased, and it at once occurred to him that the carriages and country wagons, which were conveying the country people to the battle-field, might be impressed for the purpose of removing the wounded to the hospitals in the direction of Washington, and this was done.

A few days later Alexander participated in the cavalry battle of Boonsboro, and then followed the enemy closely to Williamsport, skirmishing continually with him, and under fire almost constantly. During the entire campaign he was in the saddle, day and night, and rendered such conspicuous services that he received the highest commendation of those above him. On the 10th of July (1863) General Kilpatrick wrote to General Pleasanton a flattering letter, bringing to his notice "the gallant conduct of Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander, Assistant Adjutant-General of the Cavalry Corps at the cavalry battle of Han-

over, and during the pursuit of General Stewart." The General adds that: "After having, at the head of two of General Custer's regiments, fought his way to my assistance, he remained with me up to the battle of Gettysburg, and to his great assistance, good judgment, and gallant example, I owe, in a great measure, the success of my operations. In view of the above (mentioned) facts, and of the great need of an officer to command my first brigade, I recommend that Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander be at once appointed Brigadier-General of Volunteers and assigned to my division." General Pleasanton promptly approved and forwarded this recommendation, of his own Chief of Staff be it remembered, "for the favorable consideration of the General commanding the Army of the Potomac," adding that the brigade lately commanded by Brigadier-General Farnsworth, killed at Gettysburg (the same officer who had received Alexander at Kelley's Ford), was much in need of a commander, and that the promotion of Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander would be "of great benefit to the service." General Meade, the same day, forwarded the communication to the Adjutant-General of the Army at Washington, "recommended to the favorable consideration of the War Department." It was in due course "respectfully submitted to the General-in-Chief," but unfortunately for Alexander and the Service, so far as the record shows, it came to an end there. At all events he did not receive the appointment which he had so thoroughly won, which had been recommended in such an unusual manner, and which the interests of the Service so manifestly demanded should be made.

Meanwhile, however, he pushed on into Virginia after Lee, but had got about thirty miles south of the Potomac when he fell violently ill, as the result of hardship, exposure and a slight wound, from which he had lost a good deal of blood and much strength. He was at once sent back to Berlin under a strong escort, but fainted several times on the way from suffering which was exaggerated by the roughness of the road. He found shelter and rest in the house of a widow, but the two armies had swept off all supplies, and there was nothing left but bacon and hard bread, which, although strong food for the well, is but poor diet for a sick man. Alexander could not eat it at all, and as there was literally nothing else to be had, he came near starving to death. Perceiving that this would be the end of his career unless he could get away, he told his faithful colored servant, Dandridge, that he must go to Baltimore if possible. Dandridge sallied out and found among the convalescents there, an old Regular-cavalry sergeant, who at once undertook to arrange it. Collecting about a hundred men he took possession of a freight-car standing on the side track near by, and backing it down as close to the house as possible, put the Colonel into it, and then forced the conductor of the next train that came along to couple it up, and haul it into Baltimore. The Colonel had but two blankets, and as the car had no springs, his ride was an exceedingly painful one. Fortunately he was insensible most of the time. The train reached Baltimore about 1 o'clock in the morning, but there were no carriages at the station. Dandridge went out and found a policeman, who with two

others hurried to the car and picking up the Colonel in his blankets carried him to the Eutaw House and laid him upon the counter in the office. He had fainted twice on the way, and had been laid upon the pavement to recover. The clerk was much frightened at the moribund condition of his ghostlike guest, and at once called the wife of the proprietor, who got up, went to the kitchen herself, and lost no time in making a bowl of chicken broth which she administered in spoonfuls every fifteen minutes, till the danger of death from starvation had passed. A week of tender nursing, and judicious feeding at the hands of this most excellent lady, put the sick soldier upon his feet, at the end of which time he was able to go to Silver Spring, the home of the Blairs, near Washington, where he received every care and attention from loving friends and relatives, and soon regained strength enough to take the field again. He had had a "close call," as soldiers would say, but hurried back to the Army at the earliest possible day, and took part in several skirmishes near Culpepper Court House.

Shortly afterward, the Army went into winter quarters, and Alexander, at the request of General Stoneman, his old chief, was ordered to Washington to assist in organizing the Cavalry Bureau of the War Department. His services here, if not so conspicuous and exciting, were none the less useful. The functions of the Bureau were to supervise the Cavalry Service of the entire Army, to furnish it with horses, equipment and arms, and to do all in its power to promote its discipline and efficiency. So well and faithfully did he bend his energies

and intelligence to the duties imposed upon him as the principal executive and staff officer of his chief that on the 8th of January, 1864, the latter addressed a letter to General Halleck, then General-in-Chief, calling his notice to Colonel Alexander as "one of the most tried and valuable officers in the whole Army." He added: "I know him well, and have seen him tested in almost every way, and he has never failed to acquit himself creditably and satisfactorily. He is possessed of the experience and capacity to fit him for a splendid brigade commander, for which position I beg to add my recommendation to those of many officers of rank and position." Still the promotion did not come, and when I took charge of the Bureau as its Chief a few weeks later, I found him there, as before stated, attending faithfully and intelligently to the routine work of the office. Discovering at once that he was an able and sensible officer of great business capacity, as well as of experience in the field, I lost no time in relieving him from office work, and sending him on various tours of special inspection to the horse markets, and also to the armies in the field, in all of which he fully justified the high opinions I had formed of his abilities and character.

An immense amount of work was done in the next sixty days. I had myself gone to the Bureau under a special arrangement between General Grant and Mr. Stanton, the Secretary of War, by which I was to be permitted to rejoin the Army in the field when operations should be resumed in the spring, and necessarily had to work hard myself and to require

the same thing of the officers under me. There was reason for believing that great corruption, on the part of the contractors, had crept into the business of supplying the cavalry with remounts, and that frauds, costing the Government many millions of dollars, had to be detected and punished, and their recurrence rendered impossible. Accordingly we framed and put into effect a new and rigid system of horse inspections, and in supervising this part of the work, Alexander's services were of the greatest value. An excellent judge of horses himself, and knowing from his two years' experience what were the needs of the active regiments in respect to that important matter, his counsel was of the highest utility. Those who are familiar with the history of the cavalry, attribute the high efficiency it attained almost immediately afterward, as much to the excellent work done for it in the Cavalry Bureau during that winter and spring, as to the skill and ability with which it was handled in the field from the time General Sheridan took command of that part of it attached to the Army of the Potomac.

11.

IN May I joined the Army of the Potomac and assumed command of the Third Cavalry Division; Alexander was ordered West, and shortly afterward was assigned to duty as Assistant Adjutant-General of the Seventeenth Army Corps, commanded by his brother-in-law, General Frank P. Blair. He joined it at Cairo, and after remaining there with it for two weeks, he accompanied it, by steamer, to Clifton, Tennessee, whence it marched through the country to Huntsville, Alabama. From the latter place it returned to Decatur, where it passed the Tennessee by a pontoon bridge, and crossed the mountains to Rome, Georgia. Thence it moved on Kingston, which was at that time the terminus of Sherman's railroad line of supply and communication. From the last-mentioned place, the corps proceeded through Alatoona Pass to Big Shanty, in front of Kennesaw Mountain, where it joined the main Army under Sherman. Although the corps was not large, it was composed of hardy veterans, who had never been defeated, and it was hailed with delight by the entire Army,

and especially by its comrades of the Army of the Tennessee, as a re-enforcement, which would not only make good the losses already incurred in the bloody fights of the campaign, but render victory still more certain in the future. Here Alexander made the acquaintance of Sherman, Thomas, McPherson, Logan, and many others of the distinguished generals of the three armies constituting the Grand Army of the military division under Sherman's command, and it was not long till he had won their confidence in an unusual degree, as will be shown further on.

There were occasional pauses in the rush of the campaign, and the coming of the Seventeenth Corps occurred in, or caused, one of these, but it was not of long duration. After resting a few days, the Corps moved forward and took position on the left of the Army facing the northwest side of the mountain. From this time forward it was skirmishing and fighting, flanking and assaulting, till it had lost a large number of men and some of its most valuable officers in one of the "strong demonstrations," which were not unfrequently ordered during that extraordinary campaign. After one of these, Alexander took a brigade out to the edge of the woods, nearest to the enemy in his front, and leaving the men under cover, walked forward with the brigade commander to reconnoiter the position. "The men behind could plainly see the enemy's works high up the mountain-side, and knowing too well that if ordered to assault, many of them would fall," they employed the interval of the halt in "deliberately tying tags containing

their names to their blouses, so that their bodies could be identified in case they should be killed." I use Alexander's words, and he impressively adds: "With these preparations completed, at the word of command they moved gallantly forward to meet their fate. It was a pathetic and heroic sight." No comment can increase the vividness of the picture thus presented, nor convey a clearer understanding of the calm desperation with which our gallant soldiers faced the extraordinary dangers which so frequently confronted them.

It was shortly after this incident that Alexander, from near Kennesaw, June 26, 1864, wrote as follows:

It is enough to make one's heart swell with pride to see so many thousands of brave men leave all the comforts of home to risk health and life, and suffer all the discomforts of camp life for our Government. Do not imagine from this that I am particularly uncomfortable, because I am not; but when I think of Willowbrook, it makes me sigh a little, but only for a moment, for I instantly think of the reason for my being here and I grow strong and willing to do my part in the great work; and why should I not? I am young, have no family to take care of, and fight now that the remainder of my days may be passed in peace, and that those who are dear to me may have peaceful homes and a substantial government to protect them, I trust, for generations to come.

I am getting very tired of this War, and wish it could be closed, in the only way that can be honorable to our Government, *i. e.*, by the entire submission of the rebels. If the war was right in its inception, too much valuable blood has been spilled for us to stop short of this now. Tell your dear mother, with my love, that I do not go for the "fun" of it, because there is too much misery connected with it, but there are few positions in which one can be placed where some fun cannot be had by a person of cheerful temper.

It is not necessary for the purposes of this sketch to recount all the operations of the Army, or even of the Seventeenth

Corps, for they have already been recorded with precision in the official reports and histories of the War. Here, as well as in the East, Alexander not only performed the office duties of his position, but was constantly present with the troops, counseling and directing them in the execution of the orders which he had been instructed by the General commanding to transmit, or which, quite as frequently, he assumed the responsibility of originating and giving in person to meet emergencies as they arose. In this respect he showed himself to be, according to the fullest meaning of the words, a model staff-officer, that is to say, one who was entirely competent to take the place of the general with whom he was serving. What was of still greater moment to Alexander and the Service, was the fact that this estimate of his character had come to be the one which commonly prevailed, not only in the Seventeenth Corps, where he was more intimately known, but also in the Army of the Tennessee, of which that Corps formed such an important part. Further on I shall give the most convincing proof of both, its acceptance and the fact, that it was correct and just.

On the 4th of July, many officers of the various Corps, visited Blair's headquarters to enjoy their hospitality, and among others, Colonel Keogh, that gallant young Irishman, who had served with Alexander on Stoneman's staff, and after escaping all the perils of the Rebellion was massacred by the Sioux Indians, with Custer at the Little Big-Horn. He now sleeps at Mount Hope, in the beautiful cemetery of Auburn, by the side of Alexander and his wife's relations, and at the feet of

his friend, the intrepid Upton. On the day in question, while the enjoyment was at the highest and the woods were resounding with patriotic songs, a tremendous fire of musketry and artillery broke out on the extreme right, and called the merry revellers at once to the more serious business of the day. All jumped to their horses "with hot haste," and hurried to their appropriate posts. The enemy had sallied out from his lines, and was making a fierce attack. Matters looked serious for awhile, but that was an army of veterans, every one of whom knew what to do in such an emergency. A sharp and bloody combat took place, and the Confederates were repulsed with heavy loss to both sides. As usual, Alexander was on the line, cool, steady and determined, duplicating the General, and directing and encouraging the men. The honors of the day were with the Union Army, but the battle had had a serious effect, and the celebration of the "Glorious Fourth" was not renewed. On the next day the Union forces advanced to the attack, driving the Confederates across Nickajack Creek, and into their main line of defenses, but finding the latter too strong to storm, they laid in front of them for several days, behind the hastily improvised but effective counter-works, which the troops constructed with such remarkable facility. But the delay was of short duration, for Sherman, fertile in expedients and untiring in his determination to crush Johnston, or force him from his position, now moved to the left, compelling his antagonist to fall back behind the Chattahoochee, and to seek cover in the works around Atlanta. The Seventeenth Corps was sent to the ex-

treme left, through Decatur, and thence in the direction of Atlanta. A few miles from Decatur it met a strong force of the enemy, and a sharp skirmish ensued, July 20, in which General Walter Q. Gresham, now United States Circuit Judge at Chicago, received a wound that crippled him for life. Alexander was near him at the time he fell, and assisted in removing him from the field. These two officers were about the same age, with tall and commanding figures, and that cool and dauntless courage which marked them as natural leaders of men, and endeared them to each other. Alexander, as before described, was a perfect blond, blue-eyed and yellow-haired as any Saxon, while Gresham was then, and is now, dark and swarthy as a Spaniard, with black eyes and hair, and a firm and vigorous determination of manner that made him invincible in battle. They were not unlike, withal, in prudence and judgment, and in the high character of their patriotism and manhood.

That night found the Seventeenth Corps and the Army of the Tennessee, of which it was a part, close up to the enemy's outer line of works covering Atlanta, and the next morning, July 21, Leggett's Division assaulted and carried the ridge in its front at the point of the bayonet. In the words of Alexander, "it was grand to see these long lines of blue coats with gleaming bayonets and waving banners move up the hillside as if on parade, without firing a shot, but leaving many a poor fellow lying in their wake upon the ground. For a few moments the fighting was close and desperate—five color-bearers of the 78th Illinois, one

after another, falling dead" before the murderous fire of the Confederates, but the gallant Leggett and his men finally swept everything before them and made good their hold upon the entrenchments they had carried. Connecting with the Fifteenth Corps to their left, which in turn connected with the Army of the Cumberland, they slept on their arms, confident of a crowning victory the next day.

About eleven o'clock that night, after silence had settled upon both armies, the pickets sent in word that the enemy was withdrawing from his outer line into the main defenses of the city. Feeling anxious, Alexander had not yet retired, and when the information came in, sent it at once to General McPherson, commanding the Army of the Tennessee, after which he lay down without undressing. He had hardly fallen asleep when General McPherson knocked at his tent door and entered. Alexander sat up, and as there were no chairs or camp-stools at hand, the General also seated himself on the blankets, asking at once for further details about the report he had just received. Alexander gave him all he had, and then said he "thought the enemy were evacuating the city and would have disappeared by morning." Thereupon, General McPherson expressed still greater anxiety, and added that he wished he had a trustworthy officer on the picket line to watch closely and send in reliable reports. The Colonel of course said he would send any one out the General might name, whereupon the latter, with a pleasant and persuasive smile, replied: "If you are not too tired I would like you to go." This was more than enough. Alexander at

once sprang up, ordered his horse and, as soon as he came, galloped to the front. On arriving at the main line he dismounted and crawled out among the pickets. There was now some desultory firing going on and the bullets flew unpleasantly close to him. As day began to break, he crawled still farther out to a large tree which stood in a field some distance beyond the pickets. Thanks to an excellent knowledge of woodcraft, he reached it without being observed, and peering carefully from behind it he found himself within close range of the main works, and in such position that he could see quite a distance along the enemy's line. He saw "large bodies of infantry lying down, as if they had just halted from a long march, and several batteries of field artillery with the horses attached and ready to move." Whilst watching he also saw one or two brigades and several batteries move back into Atlanta and disappear. "By this time it was broad daylight," and, in his own language, "the question arose as to how I was to get back, as I was very near to the enemy's skirmishers. If I crawled back I was almost certain to be observed and fired upon, so I determined to run for it. I raised myself cautiously behind the tree and then ran diagonally, as rapidly as I could, across the enemy's line of fire until I got under cover. A number of shots were fired, but, as I had calculated, none of them hit me. Our own men were excited, as they knew there was a crisis at hand, and cheered like mad when they saw me coming. I met General McPherson at the works and reported what I had seen. He thanked me with that kind and

genial manner which made him such a favorite with his men. I never spoke to him again." A crisis was really at hand, for that day, July 22, the bloody and desperate battle of Peachtree Creek was fought, and the gallant McPherson was killed. Everybody, from the highest to the lowest in the Army of the Tennessee, was busy from morning till night, for the Confederates under the resolute and desperate Hood, who had succeeded the more cautious Johnston, now assumed the offensive, and by a turning movement, as well conceived as it was boldly executed, threw the whole weight of his columns upon the Army of the Tennessee, front, flank and rear. Never were the discipline and courage of an Army more severely tried than were those of McPherson's veterans in that memorable battle. It is not my purpose to describe the operations of the Corps, nor to give all the details of Alexander's services on that important day, but a summary of them cannot fail to interest his friends.

After getting his breakfast and mounting a fresh horse, he rode with the headquarters' escort to the field hospital of the Corps, from which word had come in that it had just been attacked. Promptly driving off the few rebels he found there, and disposing of a regiment which General Blair, at his request, had sent for the further protection of the wounded, he was about to turn away, when a picket, which he had sent out, was driven in and reported that the woods in front were "full of rebels." Doubting the truth of the report, even to the extent of saying that the man who brought it was crazy, he dashed forward, but had gone only a short distance when

he found the road filled with Confederate troops as far as he could see. Wheeling about instantly he retreated as fast as he had advanced, "followed by a shower of bullets which rattled in the trees" about him in a most convincing manner. When it is remembered that this was a half mile to the left and rear of the Corps' main line, and was entirely unexpected, it will be readily understood that he lost no time after hurriedly telling the regiment at the hospital to take care of itself, in riding to the right and front to find General Blair and report. On his way by the circuitous route which he was compelled to take, he stopped at headquarters long enough to tell his servant Trowbridge (a gray-bearded and tyrannical old veteran from Indiana, who was unable to perform military duty, but preferred service rather than to return home before the War was over) to burn his letters and take his trunk to his mother at St. Louis, if he did not return, he galloped toward the road leading to the center of the Corps' position. Just after passing through a broad valley, but before entering the woods by a road which the troops had cut through them the previous day, he saw General McPherson about a half mile ahead of him, disappear into the woods, and shortly afterward heard the volley fired which, it was subsequently ascertained, had killed him, and this volley caused the Colonel to bear to the right and keep in the open ground till he reached "Leggett's Hill," where he found General Blair. Meanwhile the enemy had attacked our works from the rear and been driven back, and the Colonel desiring to see for himself the condition of the troops, and what the enemy

would probably do next, rode along the front till he reached General Giles A. Smith's division. On that part of the line he saw the enemy advancing to the attack from the Atlanta side of the works. The troops who had been fighting from the front of their intrenchments, now coolly returned to the proper side, and prepared to repel the new assault. Alexander, seeing his peril, put spurs to his horse, and without dismounting clambered to the top of the parapet, which was not over two feet wide, and then, with rare skill, carried his charger by a magnificent leap from his uncertain footing, across the ditch to the ground in rear.

The battle lasted all day, and at intervals till after midnight, but every rebel assault, each of which seemed to be more desperate than the one which preceded it, was repulsed. During one of these Alexander was in the ditch of the intrenchments with General Force, when the latter ordered Captain Walker to go to the rear with a message. Instead of creeping along the works the Captain jumped out of the ditch and started to run across the open field, but had not gone fifty feet when he fell with a bullet through his thigh. Seeing the peril that his staff officer was now in the General ran out to bring him under shelter, but he was also stricken down by a bullet through the face. Both were rescued from their perilous position, and not only escaped further injury, but finally recovered.

It was during this battle, and under Alexander's observation, that part of the Union line held by the 15th Iowa Volunteers, then commanded by Colonel (afterward General) Bel-

knap, was assaulted three different times by the 45th Alabama Regiment, under Colonel Lampley, a most gallant and determined officer, who finally succeeded with thirteen men in reaching the Union breastworks, and refusing to surrender, Colonel Belknap, who was a man of great strength, reached out and seizing him by the coat-collar, lifted him off his feet and pulled him bodily over the parapet which he had striven so valiantly, but vainly, to carry. The gallant Colonel was sent to the rear, and died in prison some time afterward, it is said, from chagrin. His wonderful regiment was almost completely annihilated in front of the works, which proved to be impregnable even to its heroic valor, and nothing more can be said, of it or them.

Alexander, who remained in the line of battle till one o'clock in the morning, and returned to it again before daylight, well declares that this was the most desperate fighting he had ever seen; "the rebels charged us seven different times from the rear and front alternately, and were repulsed each time with great loss." He estimated their casualties at 5,000, or about half as many as the strength of the Seventeenth Corps in the battle. "The dead and wounded," he adds, "were piled up in some places three or four deep, in the most ghastly confusion. Nearest to our line, and ahead of all his comrades, was a delicate, fair-haired lad of about eighteen, who had fallen dead on his face in the last desperate charge." Not far away, lay also the Confederate General Walker, stiff in death. Shortly after daylight the Confederates sent a flag of

truce with a request for his body and for permission to carry away their wounded. The truce was granted, and Alexander went out to meet the officers from the opposing side. After arranging the necessary details, he walked over a part of the field "on which were lying hundreds of dead and dying, Union and rebel, indiscriminately mixed. Long trenches were dug at once, and the dead were thrown in and covered like so many pieces of wood."

When this sad duty was ended, orders came for another move, and this time it was to the extreme right of the Army. When the march was completed and the Corps found itself in its new position, it began fortifying, as usual, and as the rebels had captured all their intrenching tools on the 22d of July, they now had nothing left except their bayonets, tin cups and plates, and with these they covered themselves completely between 9 and 12 o'clock.

During a lull in the battle of the 28th, General Logan, who commanded the Fifteenth Corps, galloped up and down in front of the line to encourage his men; "with his hat off and his long black hair and mustache flying in the wind, he made a very martial figure and was frantically cheered by his soldiers."

Just as this battle was beginning, Alexander was standing in the rear, showing the men how to cover themselves, when the rebels opened with a battery on the right, enfilading the line. Seeing a 12-pounder round-shot ricocheting slowly along toward him, with apparently no more momentum in it than a foot-ball, he stepped aside to let it pass, which it did, but it

struck a soldier, lying just beyond, in the hip, tearing off the whole of his back. The battery now had the range, perhaps unconsciously, of a narrow wooded ravine behind the line, in which a number of skulkers, of whom there are some in every Army, were concealed, and the bursting shells scared them up, and, for the reason that there was no other direction in which they could go, they started to the front. This amused the men in line and they began laughing and cheering. Whereupon the rebels doubtless thinking they were doing good execution, redoubled their fire and speedily cleared the ravine of the cowards.

The Corps occupied this ground for several days, making breastworks and batteries, and drawing so close to the rebel lines that one could toss a stone into them. The fighting was sharp and almost incessant. "One could not show a hat above the breastworks without getting a bullet through it, and many men lost their lives in trying to peep over the head logs. General G. M. Dodge, commanding the Sixteenth Corps, had thrown his head back, and was looking over when a ball struck him in the forehead just above the frontal ridge and glanced over his skull, cutting a furrow in his scalp and disabling him for several months. Alexander's duties called him to the trenches nearly every night, and sometimes when delayed till dawn, he had to remain there all day, as it was almost impossible to get out without being shot. Upon one occasion he came out with General Giles A. Smith, and accepted his invitation to breakfast, but just as they "were approaching the mess tent a shell

went through it, scattering the dishes and 'outfit,' and frightening the cook so that he ran away and, very naturally, could not be induced to return till the camp was removed to a safer place."

After a while, however, the Corps moved again, this time toward Jonesboro, but the enemy moved too, and with night fighting and constant skirmishing, and the extension and construction of new intrenchments, the desperate combatants not only made life hardly worth living, but made it very difficult for each other to escape death. It finally became impossible to show a hand above the works on either side, without losing it, so close and so constant was the firing of the sharpshooters. This rendered it necessary for the men to drill holes through the breastworks in order to see what was going on beyond.

In the midst of this close and deadly work to the front, Sherman and Thomas rode to a hill in rear, from which they could obtain a good view, and where they found Alexander. Thomas soon satisfied his curiosity and left, but Sherman said he wanted to inspect the line more closely. Accordingly, he and Alexander mounted, and accompanied by their respective attendants, rode forward till they reached an open field, which it was necessary to cross. The Colonel, who was familiar with the ground and its dangers, intimated plainly that they had better go round, keeping under cover of the timber, as one of the rebel batteries had the range of the field, and would doubtless open upon a large party passing through

it. The General replied somewhat impatiently, "Well, if they do, they can't hit anybody"—so Alexander, without comment, led the way into the field, Sherman and his staff following. The Colonel was somewhat piqued at the General's tone, and determined to show him that he could stand fire as well as the next one. He therefore took a slow walk and began as unconcernedly as possible to point out the various positions of interest, and, as he expected, the rebels began firing as soon as they got a fair view of the party, and although they had the range perfectly, Alexander took not the slightest notice of the falling shells. Shortly one burst so close to the left of the party, that a fragment passed between Alexander's horse's croup and Sherman's horse's head, and struck into the ground near by with an ominous thud, whereupon the General cried out: "Look here, Alexander, let's get out of this!" It was now the Colonel's turn, and, of course, he retorted with all the imperturbability he could assume: "Oh! no, General—don't be in a hurry, they can't hit anything." The laugh was on his side now, but nevertheless they put spurs to their horses, and ran for it till they got out of range. The Kentuckian's horse being the best of the lot, he was not left behind.

What with flanking and fighting, marching by night and maneuvering by day, the enemy was repeatedly beaten and driven back till Atlanta was "ours and fairly won." Alexander went through it all, and did his part, both in the office and in the field, thoroughly and well, till he thought the campaign was ended. General Blair had, through the President's direc-

tion, obtained leave of absence and gone North, and General Ransom had assumed command of the Corps. After getting his official business into proper condition, the Colonel also asked for a thirty days' leave of absence. He was at that time engaged to be married, and knowing this, both General Ransom and General Howard had approved the application, but when it was presented to Sherman, as it was in person, with the fullest confidence that it would be granted, the General promptly and emphatically declared that he could not go, on the unanswerable ground that the Colonel's services could not be dispensed with. Sending his luggage back to Corps headquarters and submitting without a murmur to what appeared to be an arbitrary assertion of authority, he accepted an invitation to dinner with a brother officer in the city, but had not finished eating, when he received an urgent request from General Ransom to return to camp at once, to accompany him on a strong reconnoissance toward Fairfield for the purpose of finding out what had become of Hood.

All arrangements were made that night, and the next morning, bright and early, the column, composed of two divisions of infantry, several batteries of artillery and a squadron of cavalry, was on the road. They marched all day, and in the afternoon came upon the enemy's mounted pickets, which fell back before Alexander and his escort. After a fruitless pursuit of several miles, and then halting for the night, Ransom expressed the wish that some prisoners should be captured as the surest way of getting accurate information, and true to his cavalry

instincts, Alexander promptly volunteered to do what had been suggested. He was up before dawn and mounted upon his thoroughbred grey. Followed by a dozen picked troopers, he set off in advance of the column, and had not gone far before he came in sight of a rebel outpost, of eight or ten men, who fired upon him hurriedly and fled. Directing his own followers to charge, he put spurs to his fleet-footed steed, and singling out the hindmost man, rapidly overtook and ran him down. Calling out for him to surrender, and at the same time firing his revolver as rapidly as possible, he so disconcerted the poor rebel that the latter failed, or was unable, to guide his horse aright. Mad with fright, it ran blindly into a railroad ditch throwing its rider head first against a cross tie and knocking him senseless. This brought the race to a close, and Alexander pulling up at once, dismounted and did his best to revive his prisoner, but he was seriously injured and did not recover sufficiently to give any information for several days, by which time it was too late to be of any value. I mention this incident, not for its intrinsic interest, but to show Alexander's alacrity and resource, and especially to call attention to the fact that when important information was required, he not only knew how to get it, but went himself for it, instead of sending any one else.

Of course it was but a short while till it was known from many sources, that Hood had swung around to the north, recrossed the Chattahoochee, and was marching rapidly by the railroad, which he was breaking at frequent intervals, toward

Alatoona, far in the rear of the Union Army. Ransom's column, retracing its steps as rapidly as possible, camped the first or second night in a large cotton-field, where it was overtaken by a violent rain-storm, which drenched both officers and men to the skin, as they had no shelter of any kind. In recounting this incident, Alexander quaintly remarks: "The men took it all in perfect good humor, crying out at intervals, 'Quarter less twain and no bottom,' as if they were sounding the channel of the Mississippi River."

When they reached Atlanta they found that Hood had cut the railroad leading back to Chattanooga, and that all of Sherman's Army, except the garrison of the city, was moving in pursuit. They were, however, short of rations and forage, and the mules died, for a few days, in great numbers, but neither this nor anything else could stay the hurrying march which soon brought them to a region abounding in grass. All the world knows how stubbornly General Corse fought for the defense of Alatoona and its million rations, and how General Sherman, seeing the smoke of battle from the heights of Kennesaw, signaled him to "hold the fort, for I am coming." There was, indeed, no rest for Hood and his footsore battalions. Celerity was the highest duty of the hour, except fighting, for Sherman was thundering upon his heels, and yet Sherman had divided his Army, and now, if ever, was Hood's chance to fall upon and defeat him; but he proved himself unequal to his opportunities, and having failed to capture Sherman's supplies, or to materially injure his line of communication with

the North by rail, he swung off to the west by the way of Gaylesville to Gunter's Landing on the Tennessee River.

About the time the 17th Corps left Atlanta to take part in the pursuit of Hood, General Ransom fell sick, and was obliged to ride in an ambulance and leave the entire conduct and control of the Corps to Alexander. He continued on the march as far as Rome, but could go no farther, and shortly after his arrival at that place, died, much lamented by all who knew him, as an able and courageous General, rapidly rising into prominence. As a matter of custom, so long as he remained with the troops, no one could properly raise any question as to his right to command, and the practical direction of details was therefore necessarily left to Alexander, as Chief of Staff and Adjutant-General, but when the General could no longer perform his duty and could go no farther, it was by law the right and duty of the next in rank to assume command. In this case, however, the next in rank voluntarily waived his right, and the division and brigade commanders united in doing the same thing, and also in asking Alexander to retain command, which he did till General Frank Blair returned from leave of absence and personally took charge of the Corps. This was the highest possible compliment to Alexander and altogether unusual. Indeed, I never new of another case like it. It will be remembered that he was not even a general officer, but only a lieutenant-colonel, and that every colonel, as well as every division and brigade commander in the Corps, was entitled, in strict legal right, to the succession before he was.

Referring to this subject, General Oliver O. Howard, on the 9th of October, 1865, wrote from the Freedman's Bureau, to Brevet Major-General Lorenzo Thomas, Adjutant-General of the Army, as follows :

Allow me to call your attention to the services of A. J. Alexander, Captain 3d U. S. Cavalry and Brevet Brigadier-General of Volunteers during the Atlanta Campaign and the subsequent campaign against Hood, when attempting to move to our rear. During this time General Alexander was Assistant Adjutant-General of the 17th Army Corps, one of the corps of which my command, the Army of the Tennessee, was then composed.

I desire especially to mention his services during the time that General Ransom was in command of the Corps, as he died before making an official report of such.

General Alexander was in the various battles on the Chattahoochee and before Atlanta, on the 20th, 21st, 22d and 28th of July, and the battle of Jonesboro on the 31st of August. In all of these he behaved with distinguished courage and gallantry. In the campaign against Hood, after the fall of Atlanta, General Ransom, the temporary commander of the 17th Corps, was sick of the disease of which he afterward died, and in the march from Rome, Ga., to Resaca and Gaylesville, was confined to an ambulance; during this time the Corps was making forced marches and was conducted by General Alexander, and he displayed extraordinary judgment and skill in the performance of his duties, especially when the passage was forced through Snake Creek Gap.

Alexander subsequently wrote, for the information of his young son, an account of this portion of his career, from which I quote as follows: "Having secured our rations at Alatoona, we followed Hood's Army along the railroad toward Chattanooga, trying to overtake him and bring on a battle. We marched to Rome and there heard he was at Dalton. Our Corps was then ordered in that direction; the advance reached the railroad in the night, and Belknap's brigade was sent to Resaca on cars.

I went with them and arrived there late at night. We pushed out skirmishers and drove the enemy's skirmishers back a mile, and then waited for daylight. When that arrived we found there was nothing in front of us but cavalry. The Corps came up the next day, and the succeeding morning we started for Snake Creek Gap. I went ahead with a squadron of cavalry to clear the road. When we arrived within about a mile of the Gap, I rode up a little bench of ground with about a dozen men, when we were fired upon by 200 or 300 rebels, who were behind a long line of breastworks. Several of the men and horses were hit. One ball passed through my horse's mane, another cut my coat, and another cut a small limb from a tree just over my head. I trotted along parallel to the works till I got a good view of them and then went back and reported to General Sherman. He immediately deployed the 15th and 17th Corps in line of battle and prepared for a fight. Meantime I took the cavalry, went around to the left, flanked the works, and found we had only a few hundred rebel cavalry in front of us. These at once galloped off through the Gap.

"Snake Creek Gap is a low pass through the mountains, and was densely covered with a large growth of oak, chestnut and other forest trees, which the rebels had 'slashed'—that is to say, cut down in every direction, so as to make it almost impassable for horses and entirely so for wagons and artillery. The infantry marched through and I accompanied them on horseback, jumping logs and scrambling along the mountain-

side as best I could. At the farther end of the pass was a vacant log-cabin, about twenty feet square, before which I placed a guard to reserve it for the Staff of the Corps. After I had returned from placing the Corps in position I found the cabin occupied by General Sherman and a part of his staff. He apologized for taking *my* house, but insisted upon my remaining—and as our wagons were all south of the Gap and this the only house near, I did so. After the troops got through I asked Sherman to let me open the Gap and bring our wagons through, as the men were in want of rations. After some discussion he agreed, on condition that I should have the road clear of wagons at daylight, when another Corps would come through. I immediately took 1000 men with axes and 500 to act as log-rollers, and by 9 P. M. had the road opened. About 10 o'clock the wagons began rolling past our cabin in what seemed an endless procession. I was worn out with fatigue and had lain down on the floor with my saddle for a pillow, and was trying to sleep, but General Sherman soon began walking up and down near me abusing the wagons. I finally remarked that the wagons were necessary to carry food for the men.

"'No, sir!' he said, 'Hood's men live on sorghum and green corn and go without wagons, and we will never catch them until we travel as they do.'

"'But,' said I, 'Hood's Army devastate the country and leave us nothing.'

"'No,' retorted the General, 'there is plenty, and you

have more wagons for your headquarters than ought to supply a Corps.'

"I remarked that 'we had only ten wagons for our headquarters, and that was less than any other Corps in the Army.'

"'Yes,' said he, 'that's just it. I command the whole of the Army—100,000 men—and have only three wagons.'

"'But,' said I, 'you require us to keep a full staff of twenty-five or thirty officers, and make full reports, whereas the most of your staff are in Nashville'—and thus the dispute was kept up nearly all night—and I got but little sleep.

"At daylight I was up, and as my wagons had come in during the night, my cook had an excellent breakfast, including, among other things, a prime roast pig and sweet potatoes, and I asked General Stoneman and several others to share them with me. Just as we were sitting down Stoneman asked me if I was not going to invite Sherman; but I said no, and added by way of explanation that he had kept me awake all night, lecturing me about transportation, and I was afraid if he saw my mess chest, which was a particularly large and well-stocked one, that had been given to General Blair by our St. Louis friends, I was afraid he would make me throw it away. In a few minutes, however, Sherman came out of the cabin chewing a cigar impatiently, and began walking to and fro and gradually nearing us. I kept my eye on my plate until he got so near that some one spoke to him, when I could no longer resist his evident hunger and asked him to take a cup of coffee. He replied promptly, 'I don't care if I do,' and sat down and ate a

hearty breakfast with evident satisfaction; and what is better, he not only didn't order me to send away the mess chest, but never alluded to the subject again. That day our Corps was not engaged, and toward evening I rode back to look for the Corps wagons. I met Sherman's headquarters' train and counted thirty wagons, only three of which belonged to him personally.

"We pursued Hood south, and our Corps marched through Broomtown Valley. It was October, and the country had not been traveled over by an Army, so our men feasted on vegetables, chickens and pigs. After several days' marching we received orders one morning to prepare for a battle, as Hood was only a few miles away. It was delicious autumn weather, and the men stripped for the fight—leaving their knapsacks with the wagons and taking a double allowance of ammunition. The road was broad and firm, and the men marched ten or fifteen abreast, and as rapidly as if they were going to a feast instead of a fight. I was riding 'Max,' my grey thoroughbred, and he could hardly walk fast enough to keep out of their way. After traveling five or six miles we received information that Hood was eighty miles away in the Blue Mountains."

This ended the campaign, and shortly afterward Alexander applied for and was granted a 30 days' leave of absence; he hurried North, and on the 3d day of November, 1864, he was married to Evelina Throop Martin, daughter of E. T. Throop Martin, of Willowbrook, New York.

As Alexander had only 30 days' leave, and was anxious not

to lose any time, the day for his marriage had been arranged by telegraph, and a large party of friends and relatives had assembled at Willowbrook in anticipation of the happy event. The Colonel, however, was the last to arrive, having met with every possible detention on his way North; engines had run off the track and trains missed connection, while the telegrams he sent *en route* had not been delivered. The following letter, dated Willowbrook, November 5, 1864, from his brother, Mr. George Alexander, to his mother, gives an amusing account of the excitement caused by the late arrival of the bridegroom elect:

You have another daughter I can now announce! You will have to get a full description from Mary of the grand affair; my pen is inadequate. Andrew was detained on the way twenty-four hours. He should have arrived here Wednesday morning, but the carriage came back with letters and wedding presents, but no Andrew. It was a little annoying. The messenger at noon returned with more bundles and express packages, but without the expected one. The night train brought the same result. Just a shadow of uncertainty seemed to settle down upon the household—not much was said, but there was a great deal of thinking. The consequences—awkwardness of the occasion without him—would have been overwhelming. Mary and I, as representatives of his side of the family, were most nervous, though, like veterans, we put on a bold front in order to keep down a panic. We looked with how much anxiety to the morning train for our relief. In vain! The laggard came not! Your veterans were demoralized. I requested permission, in a very mild way, to go into the city. I went to the depot, paced up and down the platform for two hours, looking at the clock every five minutes. The last train came. I watched the passengers pour out of the cars, until the last one had stepped out. My heart was down in my shoes, and I was studying the propriety of taking the eastward-bound train when a tall figure with sunny beard loomed in sight, and my cares were ended.

There was a scream of delight, and an enthusiastic welcome from all when we arrived, just in time to prepare for the wedding, which was to take place at 4 P. M. in the little country church. For days it had been raining steadily, but the sun came out propitiously and gilded the spire of the little church as we drove up to the door. The interior was arranged like the Woodford Church in Kentucky, and the reserved seats were in "Quality Corner," so that we were placed to have a front view of the happy pair. In a moment a cloud of tulle floated down the aisle and formed in front of the minister. In the midst stood a stately soldier, and by his side the woman he had chosen, with a wreath of jasmine in her hair and her long veil floating to the ground. The ceremony was brief, impressive and beautiful. The sunset sent a flood of crimson light through the painted window, and it streamed down upon them as they knelt, side by side, to receive the benediction.

As soon as the ceremony was concluded the bridal party quietly left the church, and while the bells rang out joyously we all drove back to Willowbrook, where the reception was to take place.

The bay window of the parlor was draped with crimson curtains and festooned with evergreens, and the bride and groom stood in it like a picture in a frame, with the bridesmaids on each side. The reception lasted until 9 o'clock, during which time the supper was disposed of, and the guests dropped off, and they are now man and wife, to buffet with the world together, and for a little while to bear its sorrows and troubles. God grant they may fall lightly upon them. If they are as happy as we have been in our wedded life, and if she is as faithful and true as my Mary has always been to me, they can well put up with the thorns on the weary way.

III.

AS soon as Alexander's leave of absence had expired he returned to duty, but meanwhile Sherman, despairing of catching Hood or bringing him to an engagement, had destroyed Atlanta, and gone with the greater part of his Army on the celebrated March to the Sea, while General Thomas was left with the remnants of the three Armies of the Military Division to defend Tennessee against Hood.

I had been sent from the Army of the Potomac to command and re-organize the cavalry, and after remounting and equipping Kilpatrick's Division to accompany Sherman's columns, had also returned to Nashville to gather up the scattered divisions, brigades and regiments which, during the exciting campaign beginning with Hood's passage of the Tennessee River, and ending with the destruction of his Army, was welded into the compact and invincible mass, known in the history of the Rebellion, as the Cavalry Corps of the Military Division of the Mississippi. About the time of my return to Nashville from Georgia, Alexander arrived there from the North; and inas-

much as it was now impossible for him to rejoin his own Corps, which had gone with Sherman, and I had urgent need of his services, I invited him to accept the position of Chief of Staff with me in the new Cavalry Corps, which was then beginning to take shape, but which still required untiring exertion on the part of myself and staff, to collect it and to complete its organization, and to remount and re-equip it. Alexander having, as before stated, been Adjutant-General and Chief of Staff at the time the Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Potomac was organized, and having filled the same position in the Cavalry Bureau, was just the officer of all others to assist in the task which I now had in hand, and as he cheerfully consented to do so, I secured the necessary orders assigning him to that duty. Assisted by Beaumont, Bowman, and Noyes of the Regular Cavalry, Andrews of the Regular Infantry, Carling of the Quartermaster's Department, and a number of active and intelligent volunteers, he rendered the most invaluable services. He was especially efficient in making the details for the impressment of horses in Tennessee and Kentucky, and for their collection and distribution to the troops. His long and valuable experience with the cavalry of the Army of the Potomac, combined with his fine judgment and courteous manners, made him at once acceptable to all with whom his duties brought him in contact, and did much to lighten and expedite the work which fell upon me during that anxious period. During the latter part of November I was with the effective portion of the mounted force in the field, fall-

ing back before Hood's advance, and fighting Forrest as occasion required, while Alexander and Beaumont were doing their best to collect at Nashville the dismounted men, furnish them with horses, and get them ready to rejoin their regiments. After our Army had been concentrated, the cavalry crossed to the north side of the Cumberland River, and made an extensive camp at Edgefield, from which it watched the river both above and below, and conducted minor operations, which it is not essential to describe more fully here. Its most important duty by far at that time was to prepare for the great battle then so near at hand, and in order that it might act with vigor and follow up the enemy with celerity it was essential that it should have horses in great numbers. When the Corps was collected at Edgefield, it was found that it had only about six thousand horses fit for duty, and something like twelve thousand men. Within ten days, it had ten thousand men in the saddle ready to take part in the impending battle, a detached brigade of two thousand, and about three thousand men still dismounted.

At the battle of Nashville it played a most important part, breaking through the enemy's left center, turning to the left, capturing his intrenchments and guns, and finally enveloping, taking in reverse and overthrowing his entire left wing, so that in conjunction with the attack of the infantry in front, there was nothing left for him but to abandon the field and seek safety in flight. A common misconception in regard to the operations about Nashville is that inasmuch as the horses were

not actually used for charging, nor ridden into the thick of the battle, they were not necessary, and that the operations of the Army should not have been delayed in any way for their collection. At least one writer has sought to affix blame upon General Thomas for delaying the battle on that account, but in doing so has simply displayed his own ignorance of the fact that the principal use of horses in modern cavalry is to transport their riders rapidly, and without fatigue, to distant parts of the field, where they can dismount and operate efficiently on foot. By such means only is it possible to conduct many of the most difficult operations of War successfully, and especially such as relate to turning movements in battle, to the breaking of lines of operation and supply, and to the pursuit of a beaten enemy.

Alexander accompanied me during the entire operations of the first day, and at all times displayed the greatest activity, alertness and intelligence. On the second day of the battle, in anticipation of the final defeat of the enemy, he was sent with General Johnson and Harrison's brigade of the Sixth Division, by the Carter's Creek turnpike, to clear the country in that direction, and force a crossing of the Harpeth River, below Franklin, some fifteen miles to the south-west, and after doing so to march by the left bank of the river to that place, and, if possible, cut off the enemy's retreat. The movement was rapidly and intelligently made, but owing to high water in the Harpeth, and the distance to be covered, was not entirely successful. The column reached Franklin just as the rebel rear-guard was withdrawing, and while it captured quite

a number of prisoners, including all the enemy's wounded, it did not strike the main body of the rebel Army in the flank as it was hoped it would.

The next day Alexander—who was greatly chagrined at the failure of the column he had personally conducted, to make the great stroke that was apparently open to it—returned to Corps headquarters, and remained with me till we reached the Tennessee River. Like the rest of us he worked night and day, much of the time with the advance-guard, and on the skirmish line, doing all in his power to bring the enemy to bay, and to destroy him. The weather was as bad as it could be, raining, freezing and thawing, in rapid succession; the creeks and rivers were full; the bottom lands overflowed; the country roads were impassable, and the only way in which we could make even as good time as the enemy was to keep our columns on the turnpike. The days were short, and at times the country was covered with heavy fog, so that upon more than one occasion our men became intermingled with the retreating rebels without knowing who they were. Many sharp fights and rattling charges were made, and always with success, but the work soon began to tell heavily upon both men and horses. Provisions were scarce, and forage scarcer, as might naturally have been expected in a country which Hood's Army and our own had marched over, and the former had subsisted upon, and it was, of course, impossible for supplies from Nashville to overtake the hurrying columns. The men inspired by the great victory they

had won, and by the hope of completing it with the capture of what remained of Hood's broken and beaten battalions, pressed on, hungry, wet, and without shelter, and as they were veterans used to hardship, stood it well enough, but the poor horses soon began to fail, and by the time we reached Pulaski the roadside was strewn with the dead and dying. Many of them had frozen legs and feet, and hundreds of them lost their hoofs and had, in mercy, to be killed. The advance-guard reached the Tennessee River, just as the last of the enemy were crossing, at which time our main column was at Silver Creek, a few miles in the rear. Nearly half our horses had died or been disabled, and the rest were greatly enfeebled, but Hood's Army had been destroyed, or so nearly so that it never again appeared in the field as a separate organization. The pursuit was continued into Northern Alabama by General Palmer with an outlying detachment of the Cavalry Corps which had not been engaged in the battle of Nashville, or in the pursuit to the Tennessee River, and the pontoon and wagon train of Hood's Army were destroyed, and many more prisoners were taken. We came to a halt on the 1st of January at a miserable hamlet on the banks of Silver Creek, and as the country had been swept clear of all its supplies, we had a dreary time of it till the command reached Florence in its march to the railroad at Huntsville. On New-year's-day we rested from marching and fighting, the first time since the battle of Nashville. As there was nothing else to be done, Alexander and

the youngsters of the staff amused themselves in drawing up a grandiloquent dispatch (which, of course, was never sent) to the President, presenting to him the city of Pin Hook—the country people's derisive name for the desolate place at which we were camped—and all its stores and dependencies as a New-year's gift. It was a harmless diversion while it lasted, and brought a few faint smiles to those who heard it read, but it was not enough, to make any of us forget the hardships we had gone through, and still less the hunger we were then enduring. All had done their duty manfully, but Alexander had been conspicuous throughout the campaign, not only in assisting me, but in personally directing the skirmish line, in protecting it from the guns accompanying the leading division of infantry which came up with us at the Duck River, where we had been delayed while repairing a bridge, and in charging the enemy's rear-guard at every suitable opportunity. He was always in the advance, encouraging men and officers, and directing them what to do.

So ably had he acquitted himself during the few weeks he had been with me in all sorts of duty that in addition to thanking and expressing my obligation to him in my official report, I recommended him for the Brevet of Brigadier-General of Volunteers, and as this recommendation was strongly approved by General Thomas, the appointment was promptly made by the War Department.

The Corps was assembled in camps and cantonments between Gravelly Springs and Waterloo, a short distance below

the Muscle Shoals of the Tennessee River, early in January, and upon the arrival of Upton's Division from West Tennessee and Missouri shortly afterward, I relieved Alexander as Chief of Staff and assigned him to the command of Upton's second brigade, as a special reward for his distinguished services during the Hood campaign. In referring to this assignment I mentioned him in my next official report "as a young officer of courage and ability." Of course to let him go was a great deprivation to me, but I felt that our greatest need at that time was competent general officers, and that it would be unjust to keep him on staff duty, when there was a brigade which might be given to him. He accepted it at once, and immediately set about preparing his brigade, under the direction of the distinguished Division commander, for the spring campaign then near at hand. He constructed a model camp, in which both men and horses were well sheltered, and properly supplied with everything necessary to comfort and efficiency. He personally instructed his officers and men most thoroughly in all their duties, and when the weather, the streams and the roads were such that the Corps could move, he and his brigade were in first-class condition.

The campaign into central Alabama and Georgia began on the 22d day of March, 1865, and the line of march through Russellville and Mount Hope, although divergent at first, lay in the direction of Jasper, where the columns reunited, and near which they forded the west fork of the Black Warrior River. This operation was not only a perilous one, but required the

greatest celerity on the part of all concerned in it. Alexander had the advance, and as the weather was threatening, and a rise of only a foot, or at the most eighteen inches, would render the passage impossible, he lost no time in getting across. The river was two hundred and fifty yards wide, and the ford a rocky and dangerous one, but in view of the fact that the country west of it was poor and desolate, and therefore unable to support a force of 12,000 cavalry longer than a day or two, delay would have been fatal to us. Both Upton, and his two brigade commanders, Winslow and Alexander, displayed the greatest intelligence and interest in the task before them, and especially in getting forward to Elyton and the Cahaba River, which they knew they would also have to cross before they could see their way clearly to Selma, the objective point of the campaign. They found a small force of the enemy at Elyton, but brushing it out of the way pushed forward to the railroad bridge spanning the Cahaba near Hillsboro. Pausing only long enough for Winslow to plank it over for the horses and wagons, they marched rapidly toward Montevallo, the two brigades so directed as to destroy the Bibb, the Red Mountain, the Central and the Columbiana Iron Works, the Cahaba Rolling Mill, five collieries and much property of infinite value to the Confederacy. On reaching Montevallo, Upton halted to give the other divisions time to close up, and at the word resumed the advance, Alexander in front. Roddy's Division and Crossland's brigade of Forrest's Cavalry confronted him in line of battle just beyond the town, but without delaying to skirmish, Alexander, who

had personally reconnoitered the enemy's position, led his brigade to the charge, broke the rebel line, and drove them with a rush from the field in confusion. The charge was a beautiful one, and the pursuit which followed was maintained by both Alexander and Winslow till long after dark, and resulted in the capture of many prisoners, and much loose material, which the flying enemy was compelled to abandon.

The enemy, consisting of Roddy's Division, Armstrong's and Crossland's brigades, a battalion of three hundred infantry, and a battery of four guns, under Forrest in person, was next encountered in a strong position on the north bank of Bogler's Creek, near Ebenezer Church. Our troops were moving on two roads, Upton's Division to the left and Long's to the right. The latter was the first to attack, which it did with great vigor. Alexander's horsemen had the advance of Upton's Division, and when within three miles of the church, heard the firing and cheers of Long's men, and led by their gallant commander, pushed forward at the trot till they found themselves also in the presence of the enemy. Alexander taking in the situation at a glance, hastily deployed his brigade, mostly on the right of the road, with the intention of connecting with Long's left, and as soon as he got his dispositions completed pushed forward his line of dismounted men. In a few minutes, although the resistance was determined and the position was an admirable one for defense, it was carried by a gallant charge, and the rebels were again completely routed. Alexander's brigade captured two field guns and about

two hundred prisoners, while General Long's Division captured another gun. Winslow's brigade passed at once to the front in pursuit, but could not again bring the rebels to a stand.

The Corps bivouacked that night at Plantersville, nineteen miles north of Selma, and bright and early the next morning, April 2d, pushed forward, Upton's Division by the Range-line road, to the immediate vicinity of the city, which was known to be strongly fortified. We had already obtained a complete plan of the works, and of the surrounding country, and had arranged to make our principal attack on the left with Long's Division, while Upton with a dismounted force should move through a swamp covering the right center of the enemy's works, and this general plan was adhered to, but the movement of Long's assaulting force was precipitated by an attack in the rear from Chalmers' Division which was trying to force its way into the city. This compelled Long to move against the enemy's fortifications without waiting for Upton to reach the ground he had selected, or for the single shot from one of the batteries, which was to be considered as a signal for both to advance at once to the attack. The assaults were not therefore simultaneous, but fortunately both were successful. The fighting continued till late in the night; such of the enemy as had not been captured, fled by the two roads which it had been impossible for our troops to cover, or swam the Alabama River. Alexander, with a part of his brigade, pursued Forrest, who, with a remnant of his command, had

escaped by the Burnsville road, till long after midnight, and captured four field-guns and many prisoners.

The next morning at daylight Upton, with the greater part of his Division, marched out for the purpose of driving Chalmers to the west side of the Cahaba, to open communication with McCook, who had been sent against Jackson, in the direction of Centreville, and in conjunction with him to bring in the train which had been left behind. After three days absence, during which he marched over a hundred miles, Upton returned, bringing McCook and the train with him. He went at once into camp and busied himself with preparing his division for the further operations which he knew were near at hand. While Winslow, who had been assigned to the command of the town, was engaged in destroying the military and naval establishments and stores, which we found there, and which constituted the last general depot of the Confederate power, Generals Upton and Alexander gave their personal assistance to my staff in the construction of the pontoons and other material for a floating bridge across the Alabama River at that place. So swift and deep was the river, and it was rising so rapidly, that the bridge was swept away three times.

General Alexander, who had obtained a small boat, which was rowed by a crew of the 10th Missouri Cavalry, was engaged in trying to protect the bridge from drift logs which were being brought down by the flood, was overturned and narrowly escaped with his life, but was seriously injured. His boat was caught between a great tree and the anchor ropes of

the bridge, and turned bottom-side up. He was pitched out and disappeared under the surface of the swiftly flowing stream. Being a strong swimmer, however, he soon came to the top, and by a few vigorous strokes brought himself to the bow of one of the pontoons, which he seized with both hands, but just as he began to lift himself from the water the upper part of his body was caught by the butt of the drifting log and crushed against the bow of the boat till his ribs cracked audibly. I was standing on the bridge, within twenty feet of him, and seeing his terrible peril had directed the pontoniers with their spike poles to fend off the log, and they promptly did their best, but by its great weight and the strong current it was borne irresistibly onward, and in spite of all they could do it seemed to me that it must certainly crush the life out of its struggling and almost helpless victim. Fortunately, however, his hold was not broken, and this, added to the fact that the anchor ropes and the efforts of the men had in some degree overcome the momentum of the floating log, saved his life at the expense of several broken ribs, and a badly bruised chest and back. The log swinging out of the way, he was lifted into the pontoon and carried ashore in a fainting condition.

The column moved that day in the direction of Montgomery, and being unable to mount his horse, Alexander, with much unhappiness, took his place in an ambulance and accompanied his brigade, without giving up the command. After a few days, although still stiff and sore, he left the ambulance and returned to his horse. By the time we reached

Columbus, which was captured after night, on the 16th of April, Alexander had sufficiently recovered to lead the advance and perform full duty. He participated in the brilliant operations, by which the fortifications covering that important city were taken and our crossing of the Chattahoochie was secured. Winslow and Noble, of Upton's First Brigade, accompanied by Upton himself, led the assault, and Alexander with his own brigade, the gallant Benteen of the 10th Missouri Cavalry in the lead, followed it up, secured the bridges, gathered up the prisoners and trophies, and made good the brilliant victory which his comrades had gained. The steadiness, activity, and, above all, the careful preparation which he made for every emergency that could arise, during this campaign, and particularly during the night attack upon Columbus, gave Upton, who was himself an incomparable soldier, the liveliest satisfaction, and he lost no opportunity to extol the merits of Alexander and Winslow, his brigade commanders, and of their officers and men. He had served in the Army of the Potomac from the beginning of the War till the battle of Winchester, taking a most conspicuous part in all its operations, but he frequently declared to me that he never saw a better division than the one with which he made the campaign through Alabama and Georgia. He looked upon Alexander as an ideal cavalry officer, and frequently declared him to be equal to any command which the fortunes of War might bring to him. In his enthusiasm over the many excellencies of his Division, and the great advantages of night-fighting, he used to say that he could

go anywhere in the Confederacy and capture any works his men could clamber over undefended. But unfortunately for him and them, however fortunately for the country, the War was over. There were yet several long and rapid marches to be made, which carried them through Macon to Atlanta and Augusta, but the fighting was happily at an end. When they arrived at Augusta the Confederate chieftains, pursued by General Palmer (of Johnston's Division of the Cavalry Corps), who had entered South Carolina from East Tennessee, were endeavoring to escape through Georgia to the Southern sea-coast where they hoped to find refuge on board a Confederate cruiser. In anticipation of some such purpose as this, Alexander had already asked for and obtained permission to send his Acting Inspector-General, Lieutenant Yoeman, an enterprising young officer, with a party of twenty men, disguised in rebel uniforms, north-eastward into South Carolina, for the purpose of getting timely information of Davis's movements, and if possible joining his party. If successful in carrying out his plan, he hoped an opportunity might present itself by which he could seize Davis and bring him into our lines as a prisoner of war. Alexander seconded his Inspector's bold undertaking most heartily, and the troopers, after a long and rapid ride, came into the neighborhood of the fugitive chieftain, and in the confusion and excitement joined his heterogeneous cavalcade without attracting suspicion to themselves. They sent several couriers through to General Upton, with information as to the movements of Davis and his escort,

which was promptly transmitted to me, and, with what I had obtained from other sources, enabled me to so dispose of other parts of the Corps as to insure the capture of the party which we were all so anxiously looking for. But so vigilant and strong were the escort until after it had entered Georgia, that Yoeman and his party dared not undertake to carry out the last and boldest part of his plan; and hence neither he nor his chief had the satisfaction of becoming the actual captor of the Confederate President, although they contributed greatly, by the timely and accurate information they sent in, to his capture by others. Alexander, with his headquarters at Atlanta, scouted all through Northern Georgia, with which he had become entirely familiar during the campaign of the year before. He sent patrols and scouting parties as far north as Dalton and as far west as the Alabama line, and by his sleepless activity and vigilance, not only effectually cut off all retreat to the West through that portion of the State, but kept me constantly informed of every circumstance which he thought could be of the slightest assistance in directing the movements of detachments in other parts of the State.

Immediately after the Confederate chief was captured at Irwinville, on the 10th of May, the scattered detachments were drawn in, and for a few weeks were engaged in paroling the rebel soldiers who were returning home in great numbers, and then came the order to muster out and disband the Army, which had overthrown the Confederacy and re-established the Union under the Constitution and laws. Upton's Division,

after Winslow's brigade had rebuilt the railroad from Atlanta to Dalton, was ordered to Edgefield, Tennessee, and mustered out, and this put an end to Alexander's career as a brigade commander.

For his part in this successful campaign Alexander was strongly recommended by General Upton and myself for promotion to the full grade of Brigadier-General of Volunteers, and the promotion would doubtless have been promptly and cheerfully made had the War continued. As it was, General Grant had conferred upon him shortly afterward the brevet of Colonel in the Regular Army for "gallantry and military skill at the capture of Selma," and of Brigadier-General for "distinguished skill and gallantry in the cavalry engagements at Ebenezer Church and Columbus, Georgia, and for steadfast devotion to duty in the field during the War." Immediately after his brigade was mustered out, he proceeded to Knoxville, in East Tennessee, and took temporary duty on the staff of General Stoneman, his old chief. He was joined here by his young wife, and for a few months during the period of reconstruction enjoyed the happiness and rest he had so fully won by years of toil and "steadfast devotion to duty in the field."

Their life in Knoxville was always a sunny memory to Alexander and his wife. Their friend, Colonel Keogh, who was also on General Stoneman's staff, insisted that they should take possession of the cottage in which he was living, and with another young officer, made his home with them as long

as the headquarters remained at Knoxville. It was a primitive establishment, abounding more in the luxuries than in the comforts of life, but they found endless amusement in riding, driving, hunting quail, which abounded in the country, rowing on the Holston, and still greater pleasure in the companionship of their old friends, General and Mrs. Stoneman, and many others that visited them.

General Upton was stationed at Sweetwater, twenty-five miles below Knoxville, and every week came up to spend a day and night with Alexander, and discuss some weighty point in tactics, a subject which was then engrossing all his attention. Their affection for each other increased with constant intercourse. Upton's marriage, three years later, with Mrs. Alexander's sister, drew them still closer, and allied them to each other in the bonds of an indissoluble brotherhood.

Among those who visited them at their home in Knoxville, soon after their arrival, was an officer of the Southern Army, Colonel R. A. Alston, of Atlanta, Ga., whose tragic fate a few years later was so widely lamented. He was a gentleman of pleasing manners, and a soldier who had fought gallantly and lost everything for the Southern cause, but now frankly confessed himself "well whipped," and as ready to stand by the Union as the best of us. He gave such a distressing account of the destitution in the vicinity of Atlanta, caused by the ravages of War, that Alexander hastened to do what he could to relieve the immediate necessities of his unhappy country-

men. He wrote to his friends in New York, and soon succeeded in raising a thousand dollars, which was sent for distribution to Colonel Alston's father-in-law, Mr. Howard, living in De Kalb County, Georgia. This sum of money, coming at a time when it was so much needed, although comparatively small, saved an immense amount of suffering, and fortunately, it was soon followed by larger contributions from the North, which enabled the inhabitants to subsist until a crop could be raised.

IV.

I N March, 1866, Alexander, having returned to his proper rank in the Regular Army, joined his regiment, the 3d U. S. Cavalry, at Little Rock, Arkansas. He was then, simply, Captain of G troop, but without showing the slightest disdain for the small command which had now fallen to his lot, he cheerfully gave his whole time to the duty of getting his troop into the highest possible state of discipline. In May the regiment received its orders to march to New Mexico, and proceeded at once to Fort Smith, Arkansas, where it encamped for a couple of weeks. Here Mrs. Alexander joined her husband, and accompanied him during the remainder of his long and toilsome journey.

They left Fort Smith the 1st of June and arrived at Fort Union, New Mexico, by the middle of August. This was a novel experience for Mrs. Alexander. She took very kindly to camp-life, was a good horsewoman and well mounted, and the march through the Indian Territory and over the rolling prairies of northern Texas was full of adventure and delight

to her. The country was at that time an unbroken wilderness, filled with every variety of game, countless herds of buffalo and an occasional band of wild horses, consequently both Alexander and his wife always looked back upon this beginning of their nomadic life with none but pleasant recollections.

Upon arriving at Fort Union Alexander was ordered with his own troop and two companies of colored (volunteer) infantry to establish a new post in southern Colorado, on the head-waters of the Arkansas, and immediately proceeded to the Cuchara, where he was joined by Colonel St. Vrain and Gen. Kit Carson, who had been sent to assist in choosing a site for the new post. A plateau at the foot of the Spanish Peaks was selected, and the command moved to that place without delay.

Soon after arriving there he had the pleasure of a visit from General Sherman, who was traveling through that remote region on a tour of inspection. Alexander and his wife were warm friends and admirers of General Sherman, and they greatly enjoyed his flying visit to their mountain home. They were living under canvas at the time, but the hospital tent, used for a sitting-room, was provided with a rudely-constructed fire-place, and the keen mountain air was tempered by a glowing fire of pine knots. Here all the officers gathered in the evening, and listened with delight to General Sherman's brilliant reminiscences of his adventures by flood and field, which Alexander adroitly drew forth. During this visit the General decided that there was no necessity for a post at this point, and that the troops should be removed to Fort Garland.

While Alexander was in camp near the Spanish Peaks he received promotion to a majority in the 8th Cavalry, one of the new regiments in the re-organized Army, but obtained permission to delay joining until spring.

Early in October very serious troubles broke out between the Ute Indians and the citizens of Trinidad, on the Purgatoire River, and Alexander was called upon to defend the settlement. Taking G troop he rode over to Trinidad and had an interview with the hostile Indians, Kaniatze's band of Utes, who had been robbing the settlement. In reply to Alexander's remonstrances Kaniatze said that "the land was his, and when his children were hungry he would take food for them to eat." Alexander exerted himself strenuously, but did not succeed in bringing the Indians to terms, and as Kaniatze declared his intention of fighting, the General had "boots and saddles" sounded at once, and went toward the camp at a gallop. Upon arriving in sight of the Indians, he saw about fifty of them attacking Gutierrez's ranch, which was bravely defended. He at once attacked, routed and pursued the Indians, fighting for several hours till his ammunition gave out, when he fell back to a good position, and encamped for the night. The Indians left thirteen men dead on the field, and continued their flight up the Purgatoire in great haste. As soon as a fresh supply of ammunition could be obtained, Alexander resumed the pursuit of the Indians, who, in the meantime, had continued their devastations through the country, and had appeared at Camp Stevens on the 6th

of October, where they had attempted to surprise the cattle herd, but were driven off by the soldiers left in camp, with the loss of one cavalryman shot through the lungs by an arrow.

Alexander continued his pursuit until the savages were driven into Fort Garland, where they surrendered to Kit Carson, who was in command of that post, which was garrisoned by part of a regiment of New Mexican volunteers, of which he was the Lieutenant-Colonel. In acknowledgment of Alexander's services, General Hancock issued the following order :

GENERAL ORDERS }
No. 31. }

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE MISSOURI,
FORT LEAVENWORTH, KAN., DEC. 12, 1866.

The conduct of Brevet-Col. A. J. Alexander, Capt. 3d U. S. Cavalry, who, in October last, with a company of that regiment and a detachment of volunteer citizens, promptly attacked and punished Kaniatze's band of Monache Utes, killing and wounding a number and driving the remainder, by a rapid pursuit into the mountains in the vicinity of Fort Garland, is approved and commended.

This band of Indians had committed devastations upon the settlements along the Purgatory, in Colorado Territory, and had acted in a hostile manner when called upon to account for their conduct.

The success which attended Col. Alexander's operations against these Indians illustrates the fact that promptness to determine, bravery in the encounter, and vigor in the pursuit insure success ; whereas a more timid policy might invite disaffection, which would require large forces and extended operations to suppress.

The sound discretion of Brevet Brig.-Gen. Carson, who, in the absence of detailed instructions, arranged a peace with the beaten Indians, when honor had been satisfied and they had been sufficiently punished, is highly commended.

Indian Wars are not to be desired by us. They retard the progress of a country and impoverish the public purse ; but when they do occur it is

believed that such vigorous action as was displayed by Col. Alexander, in his encounter with the Monache Utes, Oct. 3, 1866, tends to prevent the spread of disaffection, and furnishes the best security against the recurrence of such Wars.

By command of MAJ.-GEN. HANCOCK.

CHAUNCEY MCKEEVER,
Asst. Adjt.-Gen.

While Alexander was in pursuit of the Indians the camp at the Spanish Peaks had been broken up, the colored troops ordered to Fort Union, and the remainder of the garrison marched across the mountains to Fort Garland, a rather hazardous trip, as the mountains were full of the retreating Indians. As already mentioned, Gen. Kit Carson was in command of Fort Garland, and welcomed the new-comers with all the warm-hearted hospitality of an old "mountain man."

The following extract is from a letter written by Mrs. Alexander at the time :

A few days after we arrived at Fort Garland I rode out with Kit Carson to the encampment of the Utes, about five miles from the Post, and which contained about a thousand wild Indians, among them Kaniatze's band, who had come in to make peace. Andrew did not go with us, as he was still supposed to be "mad," and had to remain in dignified seclusion.

I rode my mare Zaidee, and she excited the enthusiastic admiration of Gen. Carson, who declared before we returned home that she was the finest animal he had ever seen. Before we reached the encampment we were met by Ouray and some of his band. He was very handsomely dressed in buckskin richly ornamented with beads, his hands and feet were small and well-shaped, and his moccasins fitted him perfectly. He is not only a very fine-looking Indian, but honest and reliable, and it was greatly owing to his influence with the tribe that the late outbreak did not involve all the Ute Nation. He has visited Washington and New York, and fully realizes the

power and number of the whites, and receives \$80 a month from the Government as interpreter.

Ouray was accompanied by his wife, a gayly-dressed and handsome squaw, astride of a fine horse. Ouray and his party escorted us to their camp, and, as I glanced back, I was struck with the picturesque scene we presented. Old Kit and I took the lead, and were immediately followed by several hunters dressed in buckskin, fringed and embroidered. Then came the Indians, whooping to their ponies as they went, and arrayed in buckskin, bright blankets, beads and feathers, their bows and arrows slung on their backs in cases and quivers of deer-skin, and their long rifles in front of them.

The Indians were encamped on a large plain; their teepees were not of skins like the prairie Indians, but were made of drilling stretched over lodge-poles, and looking very like Sibley tents. The lodge of each warrior was indicated by his spear, firmly planted in the ground before the entrance, ornamented with eagle's feathers, and with his decorated shield of buffalo hide and head-dress of feathers hanging from it. We went to Ouray's lodge, and he politely asked me in, but I declined to dismount, and then his squaw brought me a cup of water, which I drank. A crowd of Indians gathered round me, steadily and fixedly gazing at me; many of them had red blankets, which they wore in the Mexican fashion, hiding all but their eyes.

We rode around the camp, and passed one teepee where somebody was sick, and they were "making medicine." The tent was filled with Indians, principally squaws and papooses. They sat around in a circle, droning a low chant, and knocking on some metal.

Kit Carson was received by all these savages with a wonderful amount of cordiality, their stolid faces brightened into smiles, and they held out their hands with the salutation, "*Como le va!*" or the Indian "how."

I saw him shake hands with a squaw who seemed delighted with the attention. He told me that when he went on his last campaign against the Navajoes with his Mexican regiment, he was accompanied by fifty Utes, and this old squaw went with them.

It is forty years this fall since Kit Carson first came to this country, and he is now one of the old land-marks. He was greatly pleased at my going with him to the Indian camp, and told Andrew there were not many who would have cared to take such a ride.

Alexander relieved Gen. Carson in the command of Fort Garland, and remained here until December, when he was ordered to Fort Union, New Mexico, and two weeks later he marched with his troop from Fort Union to Fort Bascom, and remained in command of that Post until the spring of 1867, scouting after Indians frequently, and on one occasion capturing several of the hostile Navajoes. While at Bascom Alexander received orders from General Grant to make a special inspection of all the posts in New Mexico, and report to him in person at Washington. This inspection required two months of constant traveling, and much hard labor, but by the middle of May he had accomplished it, and started on his journey Eastward, accompanied by his wife. This second trip across the plains was comparatively short, as they were but three weeks in going by ambulance from Fort Union to Fort Riley, then the terminus of the railroad.

In January, 1868, Alexander started to rejoin his regiment, the 8th Cavalry, which was stationed in Arizona. As this was before the overland railroad was built, he and his wife sailed from New York for the Isthmus of Panama, arriving in San Francisco the last of January, after having been twenty-five days at sea. From the latter place they proceeded by steamer to Wilmington and Drum Barracks, and from this point started in an ambulance for Fort McDowell. Their route lay across the California and Yuma deserts, and only those who have experienced it can conceive of the discomforts of their long journey of four weeks.

On arriving at Fort McDowell, Alexander, in compliance with General McDowell's orders, assumed command of the post and of the sub-district of the Verde. He held this command for nearly two years, and was engaged almost constantly in scouting after the Apaches. He had in his employment fifty Pima Indians as scouts, who always accompanied him on his expeditions. Mounted on their ponies with their long black hair, braided and tied with red flannel, reaching below their waists, with their war-paint and trappings, they were always a picturesque addition to the scouting party which left Fort McDowell with every full moon. The Pima and Maricopa Indians, being in the district of the Verde, were under Alexander's care, and he shortly acquired great influence over them. They are a fine race of Indians, of excellent physique and good disposition, and have always lived on friendly terms with the white people. When Alexander, at his own request, was relieved from the command of the Verde district, they were greatly distressed, and drew up a petition to have him sent back to them. The following letter shows the feeling with which they regarded his departure :

PIMA VILLAGES, A. T., August 10, 1869.

A. J. ALEXANDER, Brevét Brig.-General U. S. A.

General :—Antonio Azul, Chief of the Pima Indians, called on us this morning, and stated that hearing you were about to leave Camp McDowell for the Prescott District, he desired, on behalf of himself and tribe, to return you thanks for the many kindnesses they have received at your hands since your arrival among them. He said that both himself and tribe would always be at your service, and expressed many regrets that you could not remain with them longer.

* * * * *

The foregoing was written at the request of Antonio Azul, who came here expressly to have his feelings transmitted to yourself. We could not do full justice to him, as we have unfortunately forgotten many of his requests, and more particularly the phraseology. Such as it is, we take pleasure in sending it.

We also desire to express our regrets for your departure, and shall look back with pleasure upon our past intercourse.

Wishing you a safe and pleasant trip to your new post of duty, we remain,

Very truly yours,

WM. BICHARD & CO.

In August, 1869, Alexander was ordered to Camp Hualapai, fifty miles from Prescott, in the northern part of Arizona, a move which was most welcome, as the extreme heat and unhealthiness of Fort McDowell was beginning to tell on the health of Mrs. Alexander and their little daughter Emily, born at Fort McDowell the previous summer. The journey was a trying one to take in the middle of August, as it began with a dry march of eighty miles across a sandy desert. It was accomplished successfully, however, by sending a relay ahead with water in casks, and leaving Camp McDowell at noon one day, and traveling all night, they arrived at Wickenburg about noon the next day, having accomplished the eighty miles in twenty-four hours. From this point the journey was comparatively easy.

Alexander remained in command of Camp Hualapai until the 8th Cavalry was ordered across the mountains to New Mexico, in the summer of 1870. On arriving in New Mexico, he went East on leave of absence, spending the summer and

fall at his home at Willowbrook, and returning in December to Fort Bayard, New Mexico, where he remained in command until February, 1871, when he was ordered to Fort Garland, Colorado.

The following extract is from a letter written from Fort Garland in March, 1871, to his wife :

"We had quite a time the other night. Mrs. Thomson, who lives on the Trinchera, about two miles from here, sent me word that her two little boys, one 5 and the other 3 years old, had wandered off about dark and got lost. I immediately started with about forty men, and after a terribly anxious search, found the little fellows about one o'clock, A. M., nearly frozen, but stoutly traveling around in the brush. Old Tom Tobin and I trailed them up, and my back has been nearly broken since from leaning over so much. One little fellow said he saw the lanterns and fires, but thought it was the 'Coyotes' eyes after him.' I took my overcoat and wrapped him up in it, and made him drink out of a vial of brandy I had brought for the purpose. After coughing a little he said: 'I think I got too much.' You should have heard the soldiers cheer and roar like madmen. I think I should have joined them but somehow there was something in my throat, for I could not help thinking of you and my little three-year old. I put the brave little fellows in the arms of their frantic mother, and left her in her great joy."

In the summer of 1871 Alexander was ordered to New York by the Secretary of War, as a member of a Board which

was convened to revise the Army Regulations. After being on this duty several months, the Board was ordered to Washington in January, 1872, and continued its labors in that city until May, when Alexander was relieved at his own request, and returned to Fort Garland, Colorado, with his family. He remained there in command until the fall of 1873, when he was ordered to Fort Union, and commanded this post until the summer of 1874.

He scouted all this summer and fall in the south-eastern part of the Territory, after hostile Indians, displaying at all times the greatest patience and persistency in following up the treacherous and shifty savages, returning to the command of the post in November.

In the winter he obtained a short leave to go East after his family, and brought them back with him to Fort Union in February, and here, a few days after his return, he met with the great grief of his life in the death of his little daughter Emily. She was a most fascinating child, endowed with great beauty and genius, and her father lavished upon her the passionate devotion of his intense nature.

In June, 1875, the 8th Cavalry was ordered to Texas. Alexander took command of the regiment, and marched with it to Fort Brown, on the lower Rio Grande, arriving there in October, after a long and fatiguing journey. In January he was joined by his wife and infant son, born at Willowbrook, November 2, 1875, and named "Upton," after his old friend and brother-in-law, General Upton. During the next four

years Alexander served almost continuously at Fort Brown and Ringgold Barracks. He was in command of the latter post from September, 1876, until the spring of 1877, when he was ordered back to Fort Brown. While at Ringgold he had the pleasure of a visit from General Upton, who had just returned from his tour around the world, and hastened to Texas to make the acquaintance of his little namesake.

Alexander made many friends during his stay in Texas, both on the north and south side of the Rio Grande. Diaz, who was then in exile, was entertained at his house at Fort Brown, and when he afterward became President of Mexico was anxious to reciprocate the hospitality. Alexander received many little souvenirs from him and other Mexican gentlemen, which had been sent in acknowledgment of his courtesy, among other things an enormous Mexican sombrero, of gray felt, embroidered with silver, which had been made for him in Zacatecas, and with his initials worked in it in silver bullion. I mention these things to show the cordial relations that Alexander was able to maintain on the frontier, not only with the settlers, who always admired and respected him, but also with the Mexicans.

In March, 1879, Alexander was promoted to be Lieutenant-Colonel of the 2d Cavalry, which was then stationed in Montana. He went East on six months' leave, which he spent at Willowbrook, and in October, 1879, started with his family for Fort Ellis, Montana. This was a two weeks' journey, including a week's camping out, as Fort Ellis was then a long

distance from the railroad. Alexander remained in command of this post for two years, and made many pleasant friends in his new regiment and also in the neighboring town of Bozeman. Up to this time all his life on the frontier had been spent in warm climates, and the change from the extreme southern latitude of Fort Brown to the rigor of a mountain winter was a severe one. Montana had one great attraction for him, however, in its fine hunting. He had always been an enthusiastic and most successful sportsman, and had hunted and fished not only in Kentucky, Virginia and Missouri, but all through the Rocky Mountains, had killed grizzlies in Colorado and buffalo on the plains, and now in Montana he found himself in the home of the elk and mountain sheep. He had a fine pack of hounds, and, when his official occupations would permit, reverted once more to his old amusement, making many fine bags, and enjoying the sport highly.

In the summer of 1881 he was transferred to the command of Fort Custer, the headquarters of his regiment. It was while he was at this post that his health first began to give way. He suffered from severe attacks of malarial rheumatism, and in July, 1866, was so ill that he had to be carried on a mattress to the railroad, thirty miles distant, and taken East. He never joined his regiment again. His health was improved for awhile by a change to the sea-shore, aided by the most skillful medical treatment, and careful nursing, but the following winter he was taken dangerously ill with pneumonia, attended with serious complications, and for many months his

life was despaired of. In the fall of 1884, however, his strong constitution rallied, and he once more regained an appearance of health, although his disease was only kept at bay by vigilant care.

He spent the winter of 1884-5 at St. Augustine, Florida, with his wife and son, and was once more able to enjoy his old pastimes of sailing and fishing, and the companionship of old friends and relatives residing there.

In the spring of 1885 an effort was made by Alexander's friends to have him appointed Deputy Governor of the Soldiers' Home, near Washington, as they felt that his long and arduous services entitled him to such consideration. Among the many letters forwarded to the Secretary of War with the application, was the following, addressed to Mrs. Alexander:

ST. LOUIS, MO., April 19, 1885.

MY DEAR MRS. ALEXANDER:—I have your letter of the 16th, and as I feel it somewhat indelicate for me to meddle with Army details, will answer you direct, with the understanding that you can use the letter with the Secretary of War, or any other person who can aid you in your purpose to have Colonel Alexander detailed as Deputy Governor of the Soldiers' Home at Washington, or other like duty at the East. Colonel Alexander was on General Frank P. Blair's Staff as A. D. C., or Inspector-General [really as Assistant Adjutant-General and Chief of Staff], during the campaign of 1864-5, which brought him under my personal observation daily. He was then in the prime of manhood, very handsome, a splendid horseman, bold and enterprising, of infinite use to his chief, and rendered conspicuous service, for which he was repeatedly brevetted.

On the re-organization after the War, he was retained as Major of the 8th Cavalry, and I shall ever remember him and you when I sought refuge in your camp at the Spanish Peaks to repair my broken wagon, and when you both escorted me to Francisco's Ranch in a driving snow-storm. I don't

know of any field officer of cavalry who was so constantly on duty with his men in all the Indian Wars from 1866 to 1880 from Texas and New Mexico up to the sources of the Missouri. That he now suffers from malarial rheumatism is the natural and necessary consequence of these many years of exposure to the cold and storms of the Rocky Mountains, and it is but fair and just that both he and you should enjoy a period of comfort and repose.

Without, therefore, intending to prefer one over any other of the many most worthy applicants for the post you name, I assure you that it will give me special pleasure to learn that the Colonel has been chosen as Deputy Governor of the beautiful Soldiers' Home at Washington. With great respect, your friend,

W. T. SHERMAN.

Notwithstanding this high indorsement the detail was not made, but it was, perhaps, just as well, for Alexander's health was never afterward such as would have justified him in undertaking even the agreeable duties that it would have brought upon him.

As stated by General Sherman in the letter just quoted, it is absolutely true that no field officer of cavalry had been more "constantly on duty with his men in all the Indian Wars from 1866 to 1880, from Texas, New Mexico [and Arizona], up to the sources of the Missouri River," and that his health should have broken down was "the natural and necessary cause of these many years of exposure to the hardships and storms of the Rocky Mountains." He was naturally a man of splendid physique and great toughness of constitution, but withal it was not strange that twenty-five years of such service as he had gone through should prove to be too much for even him.

Soon after his return from Florida he was ordered before a Board, of which General Hancock was president, for the usual

examination, and on July 3d, 1885, having been found unfit for further active duty, was placed upon the Retired List.

He accepted his new lot, not with resignation, but with a fair degree of happiness and contentment. The old home at Willowbrook, which had been in his wife's family for 70 years, and around which a thousand happy memories clustered, was very dear to him. He used often to say it was the only place for which he had formed a local attachment since he left his birthplace in Kentucky, and he and General Upton had agreed to spend the evening of life together there, when 30 years' service should enable them to retire.

In the house built by Governor Throop on the shore of Lake Owasco, a few hundred yards from the old homestead, he had spent his first days of married life, a brief happiness enjoyed in an interval of an arduous campaign, and in after-years he had revisited here again on leave of absence. After his return from Florida he established himself permanently at Willowbrook, and entered with enthusiasm into country life, which had always had strong attractions for him. He took great interest in his roses, strawberries and vegetables, as well as in the improvement of the extensive grounds, which show many marks of his fine taste and judicious care. The beautiful lake was a never-failing source of pleasure to him, whether he was rowing on its blue waters, fishing in their transparent depths, or watching the sunset reflected therein. His fondness for life in the open air still clung to him, and though he was no longer able to mount his horse, he keenly enjoyed his

daily drives to Auburn, three miles and a half distant, or through the beautiful rolling country which surrounds the lake.

For two summers he had the happiness of having his mother and sisters with him in his home, and welcomed there some of his old Army friends, who did not wonder at his laughing declaration that the Army and the frontier had no longer any charm for him. He bore the trials of ill-health with the same cheerful courage that had carried him through many a hard campaign, and his patience and self-forgetfulness could only be understood by those who knew the depths of his religious feeling, and his perfect confidence that his Heavenly Father had ordered all things well.

Notwithstanding his retirement Alexander continued to take a lively interest in the improvement of the Military Service, and, even after his entire separation from Army life, participated in the discussions which had that end in view. He was a vigorous and accurate writer as well as a clear and intelligent thinker, and when the President and Secretary of War in 1886 urged that a more rigid system of examination for promotion should be adopted by Congress, he wrote as follows to the editor of the *Army and Navy Journal*:

It appears to me that sufficient attention has not been given in the public press to the recommendations of the President and Secretary of War in regard to the examination of officers for promotion. It is one of the most important measures that has been brought to the attention of Congress for the benefit of the Army.

It is obvious to every one that our field officers are becoming superannuated and unfit for the active duties of their profession.

In all the operations against the Apaches the field officers were conspicuous by their absence. Although squadrons and battalions were in the field under captains and lieutenants, and in one case where a battalion of infantry had to change station involving a march of some 150 miles, the field officer in command was unable to accompany them and the movement was made under a lieutenant. Twenty years ago no movement of troops, scouting or otherwise, occurred without the presence of a field officer when the size of the command justified, and in every regiment officers of this grade were found capable of the most arduous duties. Now the reverse is the case, and it is safe to say that at least three-fifths of our field officers are physically unfit for any except post duty. In fact, our Army is gradually getting into the condition of the English Army in India before the great Sepoy mutiny, as described by Hodson, of Hodson's Horse. In one of his letters, speaking of the system of the Indian Army, this distinguished officer says: "At the age at which officers become colonels and majors, not one in fifty is able to stand the wear and tear of Indian service. They become still more worn in mind than in body. All elasticity is gone; all energy and enterprise worn out; they become, after a fortnight's campaign, a burden to themselves, an annoyance to those under them and a terror to every one but the enemy. The officer who commanded the cavalry brigade which so disgraced the Service at Chillianwalla, was not able to mount a horse without the assistance of two men. A brigadier of infantry, under whom I served during the then most critical days of the late War, could not see his regiment, when I led his horse by the bridle, until its nose touched the bayonets, and then he said faintly, 'Pray, which way are the men facing, Mr. Hodson?'"

Now there are cavalry officers in our Service who, if mounted, would need more than two men to hold them on at a gallop, and a ten-mile march would put them in hospital. The infantry arm of the Service is, if anything, in worse condition. Many of the "old captains" who served during the War of Secession, are in the same category. This state of affairs is growing worse from year to year, and it is time for the authorities to take steps to stop it. No officer of right feeling could object to an examination by a competent Board, and if he did it would be *prima facie* evidence that he was unfit for his position. No government on earth is so liberal toward its officers and soldiers, and it is therefore entitled to the best service. The increase of the retired list would be but temporary, as in the course of nat-

ure these broken-down veterans would soon disappear. The impulse given to promotion would add new life to the Army, and make the younger element ambitious and studious. Let the young men, therefore, bestir themselves with their friends in Congress to have this measure pushed through at the present session.

When he, with his own incomparable constitution, had failed he knew that others of his own age had not withstood the ravages of time and continuous service, and that it was but the part of common prudence to require a rigid examination as a condition precedent to every promotion. He was a great student of books, and although his disease gradually grew worse and at times threatened to carry him off, he held on bravely and would not surrender till the last moment. He read much, and in the well-stored library at Willowbrook found a constant source of instruction and contentment, which endured to within a few weeks of the end.

And notwithstanding his enjoyment of what seemed to be fairly good health for the last two years, the end was near at hand. After passing through the winter of 1886-7, without serious inconvenience, he was attacked by what at first was thought to be nothing worse than a severe cold. His wife with anxious and unremitting care did everything in her power to nurse back his failing strength, but finding her efforts unavailing, under advice of the family physician she prevailed upon him to go to the sea-coast in hopes that the change would benefit him. Yielding implicitly to her judgment, but apparently more with a desire to please her than with any real confidence in the efficacy of sea air in his case, he consented to make the

proposed visit, and accordingly in April went with her to Atlantic City. He stopped on the way, at Philadelphia, to see his sister and her family, and spent a week of happiness if not of immunity from pain among them. Then, as if anxious to still further relieve his wife's growing solicitude, he completed the journey, but after a few days at the seaside it became evident, in spite of a temporary rally, that he was growing worse instead of better. The heart of the dying soldier longed for the sacred spot around which clustered the dearest memories of his earthly pilgrimage, and he gladly acquiesced in his wife's suggestion that they should return home, his physicians believing that he was able to make the journey. With an overpowering consciousness that the fatal day she had so fought against and dreaded for years was now close at hand, the stricken wife gave up her last hope for her husband's life, and, with a cheerful countenance but a sinking heart, set out with him for Willowbrook. Calling her brother to her assistance they succeeded in getting the invalid to New York with but little discomfort; but he passed a restless night at the hotel which sheltered him. The next day they resumed their journey by the Hudson River and New York Central Railroad, and had nearly reached Utica, when it was apparent that a great change was at hand. The General had borne the fatigue of traveling with unwonted cheerfulness but had early shown signs of unusual difficulty of breathing. The car window was opened and his wife and brother fanned him continuously, but the difficulty did not pass away.

She then asked him if he did not think it would be best to stop over night at Utica. He replied, gravely and calmly, "Matters are getting very serious with me—I am dying!" He rose to his feet, and standing at his full height, strove again to inflate his lungs, but with only partial success. After a few brief moments he resumed his seat beside his wife, and resting his head gently upon her shoulder, with one long sigh, and without a struggle, the gallant soldier calmly yielded up his life to Him who gave it.

Hero-like he met death almost upon his feet, bravely yet hopelessly contending with him for the mastery, but when it was evident that his time had come, yielding to the relentless victor serenely and peacefully as becomes the Christian gentleman.

His death occurred on the fourth day of May, 1887, in the fifty-fourth year of his age.

Thus one by one the heroes of the great conflict pass away, and they were heroes such as the world has rarely seen. Looking back upon the noble life which I have so inadequately described, I cannot recall one selfish thought nor one ungenerous deed which could be charged against it. It was as pure and beautiful as any woman's, and yet as brave and chivalric as any paladin's. It followed everywhere, and through every danger the lofty banner of Duty—duty to country, to all mankind, and to God! Its patriotism knew no section, and was limited by no State lines, but was as broad and unconfined as the continent itself. Political sophistry and sectional pride

were alike powerless to disturb by so much as a hair's breadth the simple faith which regarded the whole Union as its own, and knew no North, no South, no East, no West. With no bitterness whatever against those who differed from him in regard to the cause or issue of the great conflict, but with kindness and charity to all as occasion offered, it is but just to add that Alexander cheerfully gave from the first the whole of his mind, strength and character to the support of the National Unity, and had it been required upon the field of battle, there can be no shadow of doubt, would have given his life also, with no regret except that he had but one to lay down, in the great emergency which had come upon his beloved country.

Gentle and considerate in social life, faithful and devoted in friendship, calm and deliberate in council, vigilant and industrious in camp and on the march, bold and resolute in action, he was a model husband and father, a model citizen and a model soldier. Fortunately such characters cannot in God's providence altogether die or be forgotten. And so long as we continue to value them while living, and to cherish, in any broad and generous way, their memory and example after death, so long may we hope that our liberties will remain undiminished and our country united, independent and invincible.

APPENDIX.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG.

DURING the campaign ending with the battle of Fredericksburg I was attached to the staff of the Third Army Corps, commanded by General Stoneman. General Stoneman had distinguished himself before the War as one of the best cavalry officers and most enterprising Indian fighters in the "Old Army." When the War broke out and Twiggs surrendered the troops in Texas to the rebels, Stoneman, who was stationed in southern Texas, refused to obey the traitorous order, seized shipping and transported his squadron of cavalry to the North. When McClellan came East he made him his Chief of Cavalry, and charged him with the organization of this Arm of the Service. In this position he had various important commands during the Peninsular campaign, which he conducted with so much ability that after the battle of Antietam he was intrusted with the command of the Third Army Corps, which had been recently held by General Heintzelman.

Two days before the battle of Fredericksburg our Corps was ordered to be in readiness to follow and support the Second Corps, which was to cross the Rappahannock, opposite the town, and it was therefore brought up close to the river, concealed, however, by the hills, and held in readiness to move at a moment's notice. On the 12th of December over 100 guns were placed in position, and commenced a bombardment of the town and right bank of the river for the purpose of covering the construction of the pontoon

bridges. A body of the enemy, however, clung obstinately to the bank of the river, and prevented the laying of the pontoons until late in the afternoon. During the bombardment I spent some hours on the river bank watching the result, and was astonished to see what little effect this storm of shot and shell had on the town. I expected to see the houses melt away at once before such a terrible fire, but after hours had elapsed and the artillerymen were exhausted with their tremendous labors but little damage was apparent. There was a large clock in a steeple in the center of the town which tolled out the hours and half hours as quietly as if it only regulated the occupations of peaceful life, and one young lieutenant of artillery, in the battery where I spent most of the day, was so exasperated at its monotonous sound that he fired a shot at it every time it struck, without effect, however, as I heard the solemn peal long after the firing had ceased, and the worn-out soldiers were quietly sleeping beside the smoking cannon. During the day the enemy's guns had maintained a grim silence, but at dusk, when our firing had ceased, they commenced on Marye's Heights, and, continuing along the line to their right, the flash of the guns in the gathering darkness, as battery after battery opened fire, showed us the formidable character of their position.

After the Second Corps had crossed, Whipple's Division of the Third Corps was left as a reserve to the Second Corps, and the remainder of the Third was ordered to report to General Franklin, who had made an easy crossing on the left. The roads were bad and encumbered with trains, etc., making the march slow and tedious, so that we did not reach the river at Franklin's Crossing until about daylight. Here we were halted to get breakfast and await further orders. About 9 or 10 o'clock Meade's Division of the Pennsylvania Reserves was ordered forward. The battle-field in our front was an open plain for about a mile from the river to some hills, which were covered with dense woods and underbrush. A railroad skirted the timber along the foot of these hills and a sunken road lay midway. The enemy had taken position in the woods behind the railroad, so that they were entirely concealed from view.

Meade moved steadily across the field and entered the woods, when we heard a heavy fire which told us that the battle had opened. An order came to send a Division to support Meade. Birney's Division of our Corps immediately crossed the river, and as the head of it reached the sunken road and turned to the left the enemy opened some batteries on it, causing, however,

little loss. When we reached the rear of Meade's Division it was engaged in a most desperate struggle, judging from the crash of musketry and cheers of the combatants. But little artillery was used on account of the denseness of the woods. Very soon wounded men and stragglers appeared in the field in rapidly increasing numbers, and then the whole of Meade's Division came back. The men appeared sullen and disheartened, as if they had been badly treated and sacrificed by being sent against overpowering numbers without support. One large, fine-looking young man was coming back in a leisurely way. When I rode up in front of him I said: "Halt! my man! this is the safest place! Rally right here in this sunken road!" He looked at me contemptuously, and, taking his musket by the butt, flung it thirty feet from him, exclaiming: "I've had enough of this sort of d—d business," and walked on toward the river bank.

The enemy followed up Meade's Division closely until our front was cleared of the retiring forces when the rebels were, I should think, not over seventy or eighty yards distant, and were much disordered by their eager pursuit.* Two batteries of "Napoleons" had been placed about the center of our line, and when the command was given to "commence firing" these, with the entire line, opened with a vigor I have never seen surpassed. I was near the batteries, and I think they must have fired without sponging, as there appeared to be no interval between the roar of the guns. After a few minutes the firing was stopped, and when the smoke cleared the enemy had disappeared, except the wounded and one regiment of Georgia troops which had gotten into a ditch in our front, and could not retreat. These were taken prisoners, and Ward's brigade sent to follow up the retiring rebels. It suc-

* An English volunteer officer in a recent volume, entitled "The Campaign of Fredericksburg," says: "Burnside's indecision and vacillation led Franklin in turn to resort to half measures. This was seen when Meade, with less than 3000 men in his division, actually broke the Confederate line at some too feebly guarded woods in Jackson's front, and his regiments found themselves in the heart of the enemy's position. At this crisis of the fight, when every available battalion should have been hurried to the front and poured through the still open gap, when a determined rush of the whole fighting line and supports would have probably driven Hill and Early back upon the reserves, Franklin, incapable of a bold offensive, made no effort to assist his lieutenant, and, despite the urgent appeal for succor, left the gallant Pennsylvanians to their fate. If Birney had responded to Meade's cry for help, and, with Newton on his right, swept across the open, and, overwhelming Lane and Archer, had pressed on to the military road; if Doubleday, abandoning the passive defensive, had threatened Stewart and induced Jackson to detach to the aid of the cavalry a portion of his reserve, all might have yet been well."—*Ed. Weekly Press.*

ceeded in reaching the railroad, but was speedily forced back by overpowering numbers. Sickles' Division had meantime been brought across and formed on the right of Birney. Sickles' right connected with the Sixth, and Birney's left with Doubleday's Division, which made a curve back to the north and rested on the river. This was the last severe fighting of Franklin's command, although heavy skirmishing continued until dark, with one slight attack on the Sixth Corps. The command lay in an open field exposed to a heavy artillery fire from the right and left, both of which almost enfiladed the line.

When the line had been firmly established, General Stoneman sent me to report the fact to General Franklin. Franklin's headquarters were in a grove of large trees in rear of the Bernard House, and I found him, General W. F. Smith and General James A. Hardie seated and standing behind a large tree near the south-west angle of the grove. Bayard's division of cavalry and Gibson's battery of horse artillery were standing in the open ground a short distance to the west. I dismounted some twenty or thirty yards from General Franklin, and walked to where he was sitting on an old door. Before reaching him, I saw General Bayard standing against a tree, talking with several officers. I reported to General Franklin and was told to wait for orders. I stepped back to where General Bayard was, and found him talking to Captain Gibson and Major Falls, of the 1st Pennsylvania Cavalry. A number of staff officers were lying behind the tree against which Bayard was leaning, some holding their horses.

I had known Bayard for some years quite intimately, having been with him in St. Louis a good deal when he was recovering from a wound in the face, given by an Indian in a fight on the plains, and therefore stopped to converse with him. The enemy could see from the heights beyond the railroad the arrival and departure of numerous staff officers and messengers, and rightly judged the location of the general headquarters. Although a hospital flag was flying outside the grove, they occasionally searched it with their artillery. While I was talking to Bayard they opened a very severe fire from several batteries, and the shot and shell poured into the grove. Although entirely exposed, Bayard seemed to take no notice of the deadly missiles, but continued chatting as gayly as if in no danger. Captain (now General) Gibson invited us to walk over to his battery and get some lunch, and the others accepted, but I told him I was waiting orders and could not leave, but would get behind the big tree to our front, as I saw that every one

else was covered. I turned and had walked toward the tree a rod or two, when a shot struck near me that ricocheted and struck the tree, crushing Bayard's hip in its passage. It also cut General Gibson's saber sling and tore his coat. I turned at once and saw several persons down. Running back I saw that no one was seriously injured except General Bayard, who was immediately carried to the Bernard House, where he expired the next day. Bayard was an ideal cavalry officer; tall, slight and long-limbed, he sat a horse as if part of the animal. He had all the youthful *elan* of Custer, with the thoughtful steadiness of John Buford. His dark, flashing eye and dashing appearance gave courage and spirit to his men, and his genial manner made him an universal favorite. He was one of the youngest brigadier-generals in the Army, and had won his stars by conspicuous service in the presence of the enemy. His friends and admirers had marked out for him a most brilliant career, which had already commenced, and which was cut short in so unfortunate a manner. The shock rendered him delirious, but his soldierly spirit continued to marshal his forces in imagination until death intervened.

After waiting at Franklin's headquarters some hours I was relieved, and returned to General Stoneman on the field in front of the sunken road. The men and officers were lying in the open field without any other protection than the irregularities produced by former cultivation. I saw only one earthwork thrown up, which I was informed was General Doubleday's headquarters.

Late in the afternoon I was on some duty at the extreme right of the skirmish line where it joined that of the Sixth Corps, when a force of the enemy, amounting to about a brigade, came out of the woods to my right at quick time, firing as they advanced. It was the first time I had ever seen an attack of the kind and as I was quite near and not under fire I saw it to great advantage.

As the line burst from the woods they commenced firing and cheering, and I observed by the puffs of smoke that at least two-thirds of the muskets were fired at an angle of sixty or seventy degrees, making the fire harmless. The attack was easily repulsed by the skirmish line, which (I think) consisted of the Vermont Brigade. After this all became quiet. Fortunately the night was unusually warm, as we had to bivouac without fire or shelter. I for one slept profoundly with no other bedding than an India rubber blanket and overcoat.

Before daylight the next morning we were again under arms expecting to renew the struggle, but to our surprise the skirmishers continued silent. In a short time it was reported that the skirmishers had without consultation with their superiors agreed to suspend hostilities until their dead and wounded comrades, who lay between the lines, were removed. They at once mingled in the most amicable way and began their humane office. As such a truce was contrary to all the rules of War the officers from both sides rushed among them, making frantic exertions to restore order. But the men's warlike instincts had no doubt been softened by the groans and cries of their wounded comrades during the stillness of the long night, and no efforts to bring about a renewal of hostilities could prevail until the wounded and dead were removed. It was therefore deemed best by the proper authorities to establish a flag of truce for this purpose. Regular details were then made and the removal speedily accomplished; the men on either side mingling in the most friendly manner for the accomplishment of their sad duties. I was one of a number of officers with the flags, midway between the hostile armies, when General J. E. B. Stuart came up. I had known General Stuart slightly before the War and recalled myself to him. He was then at the height of his military reputation, and was the object of curiosity and admiration to the Confederate as well as Union troops, as could be seen by the groups of men of both Armies who stopped and stared at him. He had a very martial appearance, being dressed in a new suit of bluish-gray cloth with the gaudy insignia of his rank on sleeves and collar, a pair of handsome, new horseman's boots, with gold spurs attached, and a broad-brimmed, soft felt hat, from which drooped a long, rather seedy ostrich plume. While talking he rested on, and played with, a very handsome long French saber. Altogether he was a very striking figure, to which his great reputation as a cavalry officer added much interest. After a short conversation and a few questions about some of his old friends he moved away.

The wreck of the previous day's battle having been removed the flags of truce were withdrawn and we resumed our hostile attitude, but to the best of my recollection no shots were fired during the day in front of Franklin's command. The 14th of December was a long, weary day of expectancy. Occasional bursts of cannon-firing at Fredericksburg, accompanied by dropping musket-shots, kept us on the alert, but finally, as darkness came, we received orders to recross the river. The night was dark starlight. It

became my duty to withdraw a portion of the skirmish line. This was a very delicate affair, as the safety of the command depended upon the secrecy of the movement. Soon after dark I visited all the officers of our skirmishers and directed them to meet me at a designated point, after notifying their men of the anticipated movements and giving them the necessary cautions. After we assembled we waited with a good deal of trepidation for the final orders to withdraw, as the least indiscretion might have brought a heavy force upon us and possible disaster. Finally the orders came and we quietly separated, giving the men directions to find the best way back to the bridges and join their regiments as they could. As I was riding slowly back toward the river, I saw a dark line in front of me which I mistook for one of the roads made by the artillery, but upon urging my horse up to it I found it was a column of infantry, moving as silently as ghosts. No rattling of canteens, bayonets, scabbards or arms indicated their presence. It was almost daylight before I crossed the bridge, and a few minutes after the bridges were taken up. I reached our camp, which had not been moved to the right bank of the river, and found a cup of hot coffee and some breakfast, which were taken as gratefully as any meal I ever ate. As the daylight advanced a party of us rode out into the open ground near the river to see what the enemy was doing. As soon as they found out that we had recrossed the river they sent a heavy skirmish line down to the bank, capturing a few stragglers who had overslept themselves. One battery, seeing our group of horsemen, opened a spiteful fire upon us, upon which we galloped into the woods and turned our backs finally and cheerfully upon the bloody battle-field of Fredericksburg.

A. J. ALEXANDER.

AUBURN, N. Y.

THE BATTLE OF ATLANTA.

The great Army with which Sherman captured Atlanta consisted of three smaller armies, as they were called, viz., the Army of the Cumberland, commanded by General Thomas, the Army of the Tennessee, General McPherson, and the Army of the Ohio, General Schofield. The first aggregated about 60,000 men, the second about 30,000, and the last about 18,000. This anomalous division of his Army by so great a soldier as Sherman has been a subject of comment by military men up to this time. But whatever may have been the reasons, it acted unfairly in the general movements of his command. The "Army of the Cumberland" had the lethargic qualities of its great commander, and was too large and heavy to make flank movements, therefore it moved solemnly down the railroad and held the line of communications. The Army of the Ohio (which consisted of only one Corps) was too small, and consequently most of the active work fell upon the Army of the Tennessee, which was sent from right to left as the exigencies of the campaign demanded. The soldiers (in their emphatic language) called it "Sherman's whip-cracker," for whenever he swung his whip the Army of the Tennessee "popped." In plain language, whenever he made one of his many flank movements he used the Army of the Tennessee, which besides its mobile size was composed of the *élite* of the men of the North-west, was Sherman's old Army, and was officered by men with whom he was familiar, and in whom he placed the implicit confidence justified by their conduct in many severe campaigns and hard-fought battles. The narrative which is told below follows the fortunes of this Army, as the writer was attached to the staff of the Seventeenth Army Corps, commanded by Major-General Frank P. Blair. It is noticeable that the great majority of the trained professional officers and soldiers, both North and South, were drawn to the Eastern Armies, where the capitals of the contending powers were the objective points; whereas, in the great West, the troops, as a rule, had to learn the trade of War by experience and hard knocks. Thus while corps, divisions and brigades in the East were commanded by West Pointers or Mexican veterans, those in the West were dependent on the citizen soldiery, most of whom had never seen even a "cornstalk muster."

This condition of affairs developed an unexpected array of talent, and speedily brought forward men competent for large commands. Among the

most prominent of the citizen soldiers was Major-General Frank P. Blair, of Missouri. General Blair was a native of Kentucky, but became a resident of St. Louis in early manhood, when he entered upon the profession of the law, and soon attained the prominence which his talents justified.

General Grant spoke of him as a "full-fledged Brigadier-General," and Sherman as a "Political General," but while they were quietly engaged in civil pursuits General Blair was organizing and drilling companies, regiments and brigades, arming many of them at his own expense, and preserving a magnificent empire to our Government. He became Colonel of the 1st Missouri Volunteers, was soon made Brigadier and Major-General for distinguished services in battle, and finally Commander of the Seventeenth Army Corps. General Blair had no military ambition save to do his duty to his country in the position where his ability was of the most avail, and always mourned over the ravages of war, and as soon as peace was established exerted all his statesmanship to alleviate its sufferings and conciliate his late enemies by all means in his power.

When Johnston made his retreat across the Chattahoochie River, the Seventeenth Corps was on the extreme right at Nickajack Creek, and as usual the Army of the Tennessee was ordered, after crossing the river, to the extreme left, passing in rear of the other Armies. On the 20th of July our route lay through Decatur, and then south and east toward Atlanta, in order to cover the left of the Fifteenth Corps. When we got within five or six miles of Atlanta, we met the enemy's dismounted cavalry, which was pushed rapidly back, not without some loss on both sides. On our side General Gresham was severely wounded while superintending the skirmishers of his division. Darkness found us in front of the extreme right of the enemy's advanced line, which rested on a considerable elevation, and was as usual strongly intrenched. On the morning of the 21st, General Leggett with his Division was sent to the front, and carried the enemy's redoubt in the most gallant style, charging up a steep hill over an open field, driving the enemy from it with heavy loss, and losing on our side about 700 killed and wounded. As this hill was the key to our whole line, the enemy made on the same day two determined efforts to recapture it, but were each time repulsed with severe loss. The Fifteenth Corps formed and connected on the right of the Seventeenth, then came the Army of the Ohio, and then the Army of the Cumberland. The remainder of the day was occupied in intrenching, clearing away the heavy timber and cutting roads of communication.

One road was cut about half a mile through dense woods, immediately in rear of the center of the Seventeenth Corps, to some fields, where the wagons were parked. The line to be occupied was so extended that it took the entire Corps, leaving no reserve. The extreme left was formed in a dense wood, which prevented the pickets from seeing more than a few rods in advance, and as we had no cavalry the pickets had to be drawn in close to the main line. The enemy had constructed a line in our front a short distance in advance of the main works about Atlanta. During the night it became my duty to receive the reports of the pickets and forward them to General McPherson. About 11 o'clock these reports showed that there was an unusual restlessness in the enemy's advanced lines, which indicated some movement of importance. I sent them to General McPherson, and lay down fully dressed, awaiting further developments.

In a short time some one knocked at my tent-door, and upon bidding him enter, I was surprised to see General McPherson. In his customary polite and genial manner he apologized for disturbing me, and then commenced discussing the character of the reports I had sent him. He said he was very anxious, as he was satisfied that the enemy was making some unusual movement, and it was of vital importance that we should find out what he was doing; that he would like to have some reliable officer on the picket line to give him frequent reports. I told him if he would select any officer he would be sent at once. He replied in the apologetic way in which he generally gave disagreeable orders to his subordinates, and which made him so universally beloved: "If it is not too hard on you, I would like you to go." I immediately ordered my horse and rode to the front. Upon arriving on the picket line I sent some reliable men to crawl as close to the enemy's line as possible and reconnoiter. They returned shortly with the information that the enemy had withdrawn from their advanced line into the main works. Our skirmish line was at once advanced, and took possession of the enemy's rifle-pits. These were so close to the main works of Atlanta that we could distinctly hear the necessary bustle which always accompanies the movements of large bodies of men, with the occasional rumble of an artillery carriage.

Just before daylight I crawled out with one of the pickets to an oak tree on the brow of a hill overlooking the works of Atlanta, and within easy rifle-shot of them. As the day advanced we could see the troops of the enemy massed behind the works, the infantry lying down with their accouter-

ments on and muskets in hand, and the artillery harnessed and ready to move. As we looked, regiments, brigades and batteries moved back toward Atlanta, and I became convinced that they were evacuating the city. When the day became well advanced I crept back to the main line, when I met Generals McPherson, Blair and Giles Smith, consulting together. General McPherson questioned me at length about my observations, and then remarked to the other officers: "I don't know what Hood is doing, but I have ordered up the Sixteenth Corps to support the left." He then turned round and thanked me, asking what I was going to do. I replied that I was going to get breakfast and a fresh horse. He said: "You had better get some sleep, too." I told him I thought we would have too busy a day and left him. This was the last time I ever saw him. I rode back to the headquarters, which had not been moved since the night of the 20th, and was about two miles to the left rear of our position. While I was eating breakfast a mounted man came up in great haste to inform me that the enemy's cavalry had attacked our field hospital, about half a mile east of the headquarters. I took about twenty mounted infantry which were at the headquarters and galloped over to the hospital, sending word at the same time to General Blair to ask for a regiment to protect the hospital until the men could be removed. He immediately complied with the request. Upon approaching the hospital I found the guard and nurses skirmishing with a small rebel force, which, on our approach, retired by a country road leading toward Atlanta. I followed them a short distance and met the regiment which General Blair had sent. I asked the colonel to send a small picket on the road the enemy had taken and cover the hospital until the wounded were removed. In a few minutes the picket of a dozen men came running back into the field where we were. I rode up and asked the sergeant what was the matter. He replied that there were "too many Johnnies" on that road for him. I at once galloped down the road, and, upon turning a bend in it, saw that it was entirely filled with infantry and artillery standing at ease. I wheeled my horse, and, escaping the few shots that were fired at me, rode back to the regiment, told the colonel to get his men out as soon as he could, and started to report what I had seen. As soon as I came upon the ridge parallel to the road I had just left I passed the rear of the Sixteenth Corps, which was marching in column toward our left. While I was passing, the enemy (Bates' Division of Hardee's Corps) appeared on their left flank, and was immediately sharply engaged. As I reached the

brow of the hill overlooking the valley where the trains were parked, I saw General Blair and staff about to enter the woods on the farther side. Just then there was a rattle of musketry in the woods in front of him, which caused him to turn to the right, in the direction of Leggett's Hill, where I joined him a few minutes later. This was the volley that proved fatal to General McPherson, who was at the time the most promising officer of his age in the Army.

Before attempting a further account of this terrible struggle, a few explanatory remarks are necessary. Hood's Army of some 70,000 veteran soldiers was divided into three *corps d'armée* of nearly equal strength. This force was supplemented by 20,000 to 25,000 Georgia militia, who, though not considered useful in field operations, became useful defenders of the formidable works behind which they were placed. Hood had failed in his desperate attack on the Army of the Cumberland at Peach Tree Creek on the 20th and determined to risk all on his great flank movement on the 22d. Therefore, leaving one of his Corps, with the militia facing the Armies of the Cumberland and Ohio, he moved the other two Corps to the left of Sherman's Army, with the intention of placing one Corps in rear of the Army of the Tennessee and another in front, so that a simultaneous attack, front and rear, would destroy this Army, and force Sherman back to the Tennessee River.

It will be seen that Hood had placed about 40,000 of his best troops against less than 30,000 of Sherman's. This movement was rendered easier by the fact that Sherman had scattered his cavalry over the country, destroying railroads, thus depriving his Army of the necessary "eyes and ears." It is well to observe that in our position we had not a cavalryman to patrol the roads to our left, and, therefore, although every one was on the alert, the enemy approached with their line of battle within musket-shot of our slight intrenchments before the alarm was given. Hood's plan was a masterly one and deserved success, but he did not calculate on the opportune arrival of the Sixteenth Army Corps, and the desperate fighting qualities of the Army of the Tennessee.

When I joined General Blair on "Leggett's Hill," the enemy's skirmishers, after killing General McPherson, appeared in the edge of the woods to our left and rear. Their main line, pivoting on our left, came up by detachments, and engaged our men, who had jumped over the works with their backs to Atlanta. The enemy were much disordered by their passage

through the dense forest, and were received by such a withering fire at close quarters that they recoiled. Just as they disappeared in the woods another force of the enemy were observed approaching from Atlanta. Our men immediately sprang over the works and received this new attack with the same cheerful alacrity. Four other assaults were made in the same way, each one failing disastrously to the Confederates, because from the nature of the ground they could not co-operate.

After the first crash of the battle General Blair, myself and some others, tried to ride to our left to see what was going on. We had not gone far when we were warned by the falling of men and horses that we could not proceed. We therefore returned to "Leggett's Hill," and leading our horses to the rear, went into the trenches. Walker's Corps of Hood's Army charged our front and the commander was killed within fifty yards of our works. I happened to be near General Force when he directed his Adjutant-General to carry some order to the rear. Instead of proceeding by way of the trenches, he started to cross the open ground immediately behind us. After he had gone about twenty yards he was prostrated by a ball in the thigh. General Force rushed out to his relief, and while raising him from the ground, was shot through the face. After some difficulty they were both brought into the trenches and sent to the rear.

General M. C. Force was one of those remarkable men that were produced by the War. He was a citizen of Ohio in 1861, and attained the position of brigade commander by distinguished service. He was of medium height, of fair complexion, very pale, and had one of those impassive faces which show no emotion under any circumstances. These peculiarities gave him the greatest control over his men, and made him one of the best commanders of troops in the Army. I happened to be near him once in front of Kennesaw Mountain when a favorite aid-de-camp was killed by his side, and although I knew he suffered all that a man could under the circumstances, his face was as unmoved as if nothing had occurred.

After several attacks the regiments to the left of "Leggett's Hill" began to disintegrate and drift toward the right, where they were halted and placed in available positions. In one of the attacks I saw a soldier jump on the parapet of the works, fire his musket, and cheer frantically. While exposing himself in this way, a fragment of a shell took off a part of his scalp and knocked him into the ditch near me. I presumed he was dead, but a few minutes afterward I saw him firing away with his musket as if nothing

had happened. The 45th Alabama Regiment of Confederates, commanded by Colonel Lampley, was confronted in the first attack by Colonel W. W. Belknap's Regiment, the 16th Iowa. The Alabama Regiment was repulsed, but returned several times to the attack, until it was nearly destroyed. Colonel Lampley and about twenty of his men succeeded in reaching the ditch. They were summoned repeatedly to surrender, but as often replied by musket-shots. Colonel Lampley was immediately opposite Colonel Belknap. Both were large, powerful men, and equally determined. The men could not raise their heads above the works without being shot or bayoneted, and consequently continued the fight by thrusting their muskets over the works and firing at random. Colonel Belknap was anxious to save his gallant opponent, but every time he appeared above the works he became a target for some of Lampley's men. After repeated efforts he finally succeeded in dragging Colonel Lampley over the works by his coat-collar, whereupon the remainder of his regiment (to the number of thirteen, I think) surrendered and were taken prisoners. Colonel Lampley had been slightly wounded in the back, but I heard he died in prison, more from chagrin than injuries. The Confederates honored the 45th Alabama by burying them on the ground where they fell.

A great lull came in the combat, and I told General Blair I would go to the left and see what had become of General Giles Smith, who had been assigned to the Fourth Division after General Gresham was wounded. As the last attack had been from the rear, I pushed my horse through an embrasure, made for a gun, and galloped to the left. Proceeding some distance, I found General Giles Smith sitting in a negligent attitude on his horse, talking to some infantry officers. I asked him how he was "getting on." He said, "We have had it pretty rough, but I think we can hold them. I think we ought to be re-enforced." I told him we didn't have a man to send him and he would have to do the best he could. Just then a man from the picket line toward Atlanta came running up and said, "General, they are coming." Whereupon General Smith warned his men to get over the works, and passed through an embrasure to the other side.

General Smith was a typical Western man, and belonged to a fighting family. His older brother, Morgan L. Smith (an ex-sergeant of the Regular Army), raised the 8th Missouri Infantry, and became its colonel. After a few desperate battles in the West he was made a brigadier-general, and his brother Giles became colonel of the regiment. The same fortune fol-

lowed him, and after one of the sharp campaigns in the West he was promoted, and his brother-in-law, Coleman, became colonel of the Fighting 8th. Giles Smith was about 5 feet 11 inches in height, and weighed perhaps 150 pounds; he had sandy hair, a bright blue eye, and always a pleasant smile and a cheerful word. His negligent air was never changed in battle, and no excitement could be detected except by the enlargement and brilliancy of his eyes. He was just the man to hold the position, and well did he sustain his own and the reputation of the gallant division which he commanded.

After trying to drive our men out of the works, and failing after six assaults, the enemy formed a line at right angles to ours, and by enfilading with artillery drove the command down to Leggett's Hill. This point, which was the key of our line, was called "Leggett's Hill" by us in honor of that distinguished officer who had taken it from the enemy on the 21st. He and General Blair, with their respective staffs, had been busily engaged in collecting and organizing the stragglers who drifted from the left, and finding the original line untenable, formed a new line, placed at right angles to the old one, the right of this new line resting on "Leggett's Hill," its left reaching down into the valley in the general direction of the Sixteenth Corps, which was meantime gallantly maintaining its position. An effort was made to cover the men by hastily constructed breastworks, but before this could be done the enemy made their last desperate effort. They came out of the woods in heavy lines and advanced steadily up the gentle slope, leaving the ground behind them covered with their dead and wounded. It looked at one time as if nothing could withstand their constancy, but when they had nearly reached our position a counter-charge was made by a portion of our line, which was unprotected by works, and after a hand-to-hand struggle, in which flags were taken and retaken, they were rolled back into the ravine, which became a perfect slaughter pen. This substantially ended the battle, although the enemy maintained a position on the hills within thirty yards of our works until nearly midnight, from which point they kept up a heavy fire. Finally they silently withdrew, taking most of their wounded, but leaving their dead piled up in our front.

After some difficulty we found our camp and obtained some food and a few hours' rest, which was much needed in our exhausted condition. Before daylight of the 23d of July we were again on the line expecting another attack, but as it gradually grew light we ascertained that the enemy had

withdrawn within the main works of Atlanta, leaving us in possession of the field strewn with all the horrible *débris*.

The most prolonged fighting having been in the vicinity of "Leggett's Hill," there was the greatest carnage. In some places the dead of both Armies were piled six and eight deep. One fair-haired boy of 16 or 17 years lay prostrate within twenty feet of our line, his face and figure looking as if he was in a gentle sleep. I could not help thinking of his mother, who would never see his handsome face again. In a short time a flag of truce was seen advancing from Atlanta. I was sent out to meet it at the picket line, several hundred yards in advance of our works. I found it in charge of a colonel of the staff, whose name I have forgotten. He desired a truce for the purpose of removing the dead and wounded. As I had no authority to grant it I sent an officer back to General Blair, who referred it to General Logan, commanding the Army of the Tennessee in place of General McPherson. While waiting for a reply the Confederate colonel asked my permission to search among the dead near our lines for a relative of his. I told him I could not let him approach our lines, as we had been strengthening them. He replied with a significant smile that the precaution was unnecessary, as they had seen enough of them the day before. In a few minutes General Logan sent word that the truce would be granted in a couple of hours.

I then ascertained that the "relative" the colonel was seeking was his Corps commander, General Walker, whose body had been recognized and taken within our lines. It was, I believe, promptly delivered to the officer. General Sherman, I was informed, was loath to believe that the Army of the Tennessee had fought two-thirds of Hood's Army the day before, but when he overlooked the field during the truce he became convinced of the severity of the action, and no doubt regretted that the Armies of the Cumberland and Ohio had not carried the works of Atlanta during the absence of its defenders.

A. J. ALEXANDER.

A MORTAL COMBAT.

Some years ago I was one of a small party hunting in the Rocky Mountains. So far our hunt had been very successful, and we had made an ideal hunters' camp on a south-eastern slope of the mountains near the crest, in a scrub-oak thicket which afforded us the best fuel in abundance. The dense timber protected both men and animals from the cold winds, and plenty of "bunch grass" made our animals comfortable. As the huge camp-fire lit up the surrounding trees, there came into view carcasses of white and black-tail deer, bear and mountain sheep hanging on convenient limbs. Our supper had been a beautiful one consisting of such choice parts of the different varieties of game as each one desired. Then came one of those happy periods which only a hunter knows, when fresh logs were piled on the fire, and the delicious aroma of the after-dinner pipe, floated lazily on the air. Each one disposed his tired frame in the most agreeable attitude, and the events of the day, and the prospects for the morrow, were pleasantly discussed.

Among our party was a mountaineer who had spent many years on the mountains, and had undergone all the vicissitudes of fortune incident to that wild life. The question came up as to which of the savage animals was most powerful. This elicited the following story from the old mountaineer. I wish I could narrate it in his own words, and give his powerful picture of the scene he described, which would add much to the effect.

He said he was hunting once in the "Rockies," with an Indian as his companion. They saw at a distance a buffalo on one of the foot-hills, and at once commenced stalking him. As any one knows who has visited the Rocky Mountains, they break off gradually to the eastward in ridges divided by deep and rugged ravines or canyons. The hunters approached under shelter of the ridge next to the one on which they had perceived the buffalo, and when opposite him, and within easy rifle-shot, crawled slowly to the crest, carrying bushes in their hands to conceal their heads. Upon reaching the crest of the ridge they had a full view of the buffalo, which proved to be a bull of the largest size in full flesh and vigor.

Their attention was at once attracted to the curious conduct of the magnificent animal. His head was turned partially from them, looking toward the ravine on the opposite side. He was emitting the low, bellowing roar peculiar to the buffalo when excited, throwing up the dirt, and raising his tail as they do when enraged. The hunters thought he was challenging another buffalo, and waited to see the result. In a few moments they saw an enormous grizzly bear moving slowly up to the knoll, where the buffalo awaited his coming.

The bear approached cautiously, stopping every few yards to observe his antagonist, whose excitement and rage seemed to increase, and whose continuous muffled roar drowned all other sounds.

Finally, when the bear had arrived within a few rods of his noble enemy, on the narrow bench of nearly level ground, the buffalo brought matters to a crisis by lowering his gigantic head, and charging with all his strength. The bear immediately raised himself on his hind legs, and, skillfully avoiding the buffalo's horns, caught him around the head with his left arm, seizing him at the same time by the back of his neck with his powerful jaws. Then came a grand exhibition of strength, the buffalo using all his tremendous power to get his horns under the bear, and free himself from the close embrace of his adversary, while the latter, clinging with his teeth and one arm, used the other in an attempt to cripple the buffalo by the most terrific blows on his left shoulder and side. In this tremendous struggle, they turned in a circle several times, until finally the buffalo accomplished his object, and threw the bear from him.

For a few moments they remained gazing at one another, evidently recovering their breath, somewhat exhausted by their previous efforts. The buffalo was bleeding from several wounds in the neck, and the bear from wounds on his side. They both exhibited the extreme of savage anger, the buffalo bellowing, tearing the earth, and shaking his great shaggy head, while the bear returned his challenge, by continuous roars, showing his great teeth and swinging his massive head from side to side. The buffalo brought the truce to a close by a rapid charge, which the bear eluded, striking his adversary a tremendous blow as he passed, which again brought blood. The buffalo turned with the rapidity peculiar to the animal, and repeated the charge several times, without effecting his object. At last they closed in the final struggle, the bear clinging to the buffalo's head and shoulders, while the latter maneuvered to get his horns under his formidable antago-

nist. Round and round they went, tearing up rocks and bushes, until the buffalo succeeded in his efforts, forced the bear over the edge of the little plateau, and, in the impetuosity of his charge, fell on the bear with all his enormous weight, and turned a complete summersault down the steep decline.

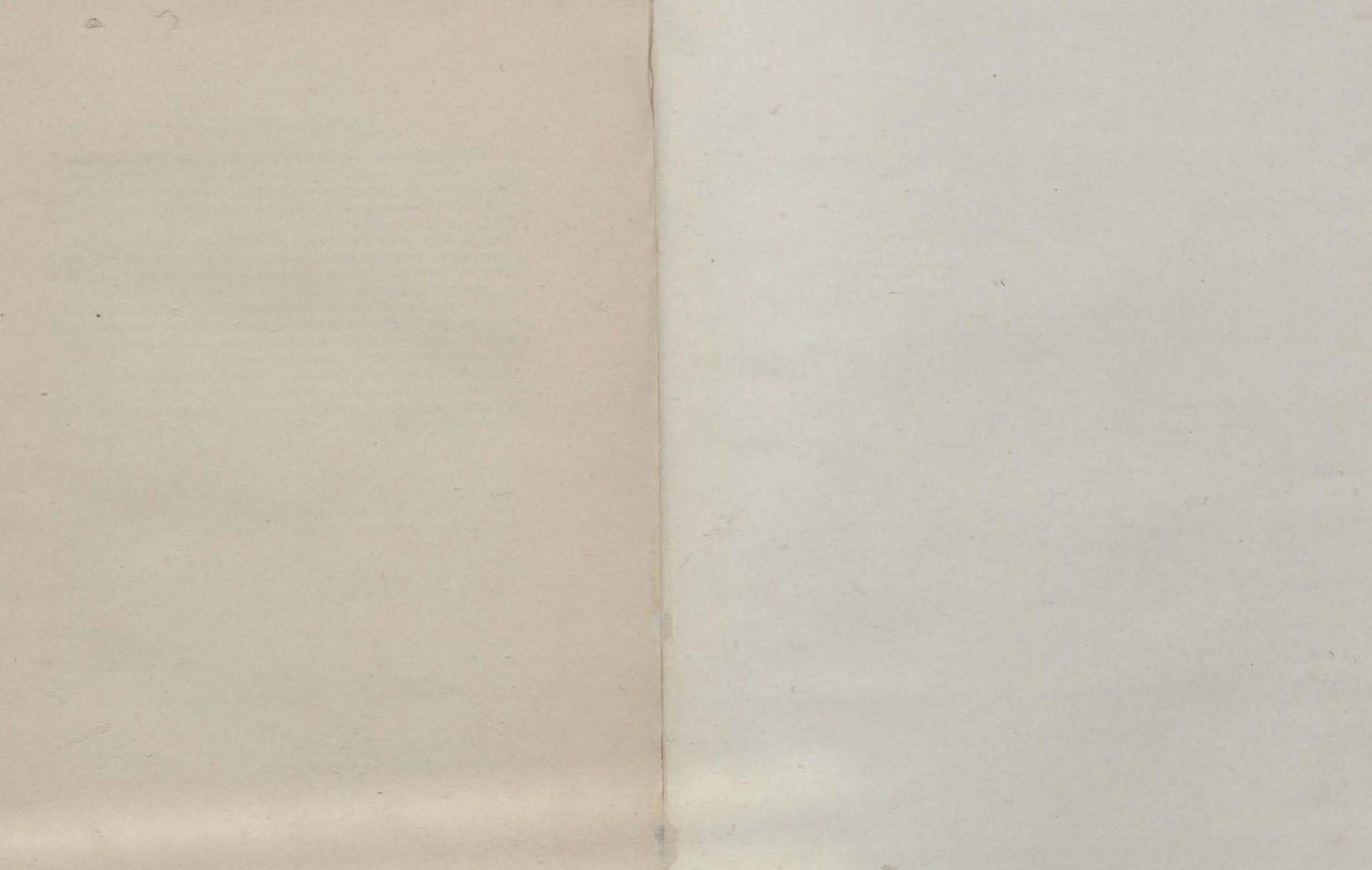
For an instant both lay still, but the buffalo soon recovered himself, and staggering slowly to his feet, again faced his antagonist with undiminished resolution. The bear, however, lay quiet, breathing heavily, and evidently *hors du combat*.

After waiting a few moments for a renewal of the attack, the buffalo slowly approached his fallen enemy, and, applying his great strength, rolled him over, when, finding him dead, he slowly ascended to the scene of battle and proclaimed his victory by triumphant bellowing.

The white hunter raised his rifle to shoot him, but the Indian sprang forward and put his hand on the rifle, and, turning it away, said, "No shoot! Big brave!" and allowed the victor to march slowly away to seek his comrades.

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THE END.



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