

So they both left us, sire and son,  
 With opening leaf, with laden bough :  
 The youth whose race was just begun,  
 The wearied man whose course was run,  
 Its record written on his brow,  
 Are brothers now.

Brothers ! — the music of the sound  
 Breathes softly through my closing strain ;  
 The floor we tread is holy ground,  
 Those gentle spirits hovering round,  
 While our fair circle joins again  
 Its broken chain.

MAY 25th, 1864.

### MEYERBEER.

"THOU knowest not the day nor the hour." Scarcely two years ago the great composer, whose recent death involves so irreparable a loss to the world of musical art, was accosted, while in a Paris coffee-house, by a friend recently arrived from Berlin.

"What do they say of me there?" asked Meyerbeer, after the first salutations.

"They say, with regret, that you are just now as reticent as Rossini."

"Indeed!"

"Yet, after all, they add that you are busier than Rossini, for he is doing nothing, and you, at least, have an opera in your portfolio."

"Ah! I see you are hinting about the 'Africaine.'"

"Yes, I refer to the 'Africaine.'"

"Bah! bah! The Parisians are in a great hurry about it. I am not dead yet, and some fine day I will astonish them in a way they will remember."

Providence decreed that this harmless boast, this careless prediction, should come to nought. While he was yet working on the "Africaine," the hand of death interposed, and, at the cold touch, the pen was laid aside, the music-paper dropped unheeded on the floor, the piano was si-

lent, and the composer left forever the scene of his labors and his triumphs. Few men might, at the last hour, be more justified in pleading, with earnest anxiety, — "Not now! — not now!"

Biographers already differ about the date of Meyerbeer's birth, some asserting that it took place in 1791, while the majority agree that the day was September 5, 1794. Born of a rich family of Jewish bankers, he was, at an early age, stimulated to honorable exertion by the success in other pursuits of his brother William, the astronomer, and Michael, the poet, — successes which, however, at this day, are chiefly remembered from their association with the name made really famous by the composer. His parents encouraged the talent of the youth, who, at as early an age as Mozart himself, manifested plainly the possession of genius; and when only five years old, the boy was placed under the instruction of Lanska, a local celebrity of Berlin. Two years later, little Jacob was a fair performer on the piano-forte, or such an instrument as at that time served for the Érard, the Chickering, the Steinway of the present day. He played, as a prodigy, at the most fashionable amateur-concerts given at the Prussian capital; and a faded old

copy of a Leipsic paper, which bears the date of 1803, yet survives the destruction awarded to all old newspapers, simply because it mentions the youthful prodigy — then nine years old — as one of the best pianists of his native city.

One of those charming old musical enthusiasts who nowadays are met with only in Germany—and but seldom there — about this time visited Berlin. He heard little Jacob play, and at once predicted that the boy would “one day become one of the glories of Europe.” To take lessons in the theory of music was the advice of this old enthusiast, the Abbé Vogler.

So the lad was transferred from the tuition of Lanska to that of Bernard Anselm Weber, a former pupil of old Vogler, and at that time director of the orchestra at the Berlin opera; and from this master the boy learned the art of instrumentation and harmony, to a certain degree at least. Weber was very fond of his pupil, and sent one of his fugues to Vogler, to show the old man that he was not the only one able to turn out accomplished scholars. Two months passed without any answer, and Weber attributed the silence to jealousy, until, one day, a large roll arrived at his house. It contained a complete “Treatise on the Fugue,” written entirely by the hand of the old master, and containing also a critical analysis of little Jacob’s work, exposing its errors, adding example to precept, by contrasting with it a fugue written by the Abbé on the same theme, and also subjecting the two compositions to a severe and logical criticism, which only proved the superiority of the masterly hand over the inexperienced.

Little Jacob was less mortified by this incident than was his poor teacher, Weber. He took the manuscript, and, after a faithful study of its contents, wrote another eight-part fugue, which he sent himself to Vogler. The result was precisely as he desired: he became a pupil of the old musician.

Among the central towns of Germany, few are more pleasing, and, perhaps, none

at all more utterly neglected, than Darmstadt. The capital of a duchy, it contains a harmless, quiet little court, to which are attached a court-church and a court-theatre, alternately attracting the attention of the courtiers. The palace is a quaint old affair, on one side as precise and finished as a modern Italian villa, but taking its revenge by indulging on the opposite side in a series of wild irregularities as incomprehensible as they are picturesque,—old towers, romantic gateways, broken battlements, running ivies, and gay, green foliage, uniting, in charming confusion, to form the most pleasing picture in the dear, lazy old town.

A year or two ago, the quiet, neglected little Darmstadt came temporarily to the surface, and was seen of men. The Princess Alice of England married the heir to the Duchy, and the event aroused (in England especially) a natural curiosity as to the young lady’s future home,—a curiosity which has since quite died away. Darmstadt, about twenty years ago, was also somewhat talked of in a distant Northern land; for from the dull old Ducal palace went forth a pretty, delicate-looking girl, who is now the wife of Alexander II., and the Empress of all the Russias.

In the Darmstadt picture-gallery is an old painting of the city as it was just one century ago,—in 1764. It was a very little and a very shabby city then. People dressed in the most ridiculous of costumes, and the picture shows His Serene Highness, arrayed in scarlet and yellow, getting out of a very clumsy, gilded carriage, amid the adulation of bowing and wigged courtiers. When Meyerbeer was there, however, Darmstadt was much as it is to-day,—a city so quiet that you might almost pitch your tent in the middle of the principal street, and sleep undisturbed for a week at least.

The Abbé Vogler was organist of the cathedral, an ugly, clumsy old building, darkened by wide wooden galleries. Meyerbeer was a Jew, but his parents were liberal enough to send him to the fireside of a Christian, and the boy be-

came an inmate of Vogler's house. For two years he studied faithfully, and by that time was initiated, as he had never been before, into the mysteries of counterpoint. For several years after this he remained with Vogler, studying, working, composing, and enjoying.

Indeed, the biographer who shall give us a permanent "Life of Meyerbeer" must recur to the composer's sojourn in Darmstadt as the most romantic phase of his existence, — when, away from the pleasures and temptations of a great capital, free from the demands of society, with nothing to distract his mind from Art, he consecrated his young life to her service. His few associates of his own age were devoted to the same cause, and all were certainly inspired by a mutual emulation. But only one of the little group, besides the subject of this sketch, has left a name to be remembered, — and that is Carl Maria von Weber. The other two may have had as noble aspirations, as untiring energy, as passionate ambitions; but Fate had decreed that Godefroy von Weber and Gänsbacher should never win the world's applause. Carl Maria and Meyerbeer were the "cronies" of the little school. They were constantly together; they built their air-castles with a view to future joint occupancy; they made their boyish vows of eternal friendship. Among the papers of Weber was found, after his death, one bearing the title, "Cantata, written by Weber for the Birthday of Vogler, and set to Music by Meyerbeer." The words of Weber, it is said, are better than the music of his friend.

All these boys loved their old master, the Abbé, and knew no greater pleasure than to enjoy his personal instructions. The duties of each day were regular, simple, and gladly performed. The Abbé, in his capacity of priest, began by celebrating a mass, at which Carl Maria von Weber assisted, as little boys do in these times at every mass throughout the land. Then, as a *maestro*, the Abbé apportioned to each of his pupils the task for the day,—the *Kyrie*, the *Sanctus*, or

the *Gloria in Excelsis*. Vogler himself joined in the task, and the completed compositions were sent to the various church-choirs in the Duchy for performance. In the twilight hours, there were strolls about the quiet streets of Darmstadt, in the Ducal gardens, or among the tombstones of an old churchyard in the suburbs of the city. Outside the town there was really little to attract the pleasure-seeker, for Darmstadt lies in a flat, cultivated plain, and its surroundings are tame and monotonous. On Sundays they all went to the cathedral, where there were two organs. The Abbé played one, and as he finished some masterly voluntary or some scientific fugue, his pupils would in turn respond on the other instrument, at times playing fanciful variations, on some theme given out by their teacher, and again wandering in rich extemporaneous harmonies over the old yellow keys. Who knows but that, in this way, the quiet, phlegmatic congregation of the Darmstadt cathedral may have heard, unheedingly, from the hand of Weber, sweet strains which afterwards were elaborated in "Oberon" and "Der Freischütz"? or have listened, with dreamy pleasure, to snatches of melody destined in future years to be woven by Meyerbeer into the score of "Robert" or the "Huguenots"?

Thus the quiet music-life at Darmstadt passed on, each of the four boys living but for their art. Meyerbeer was the foremost in success; for, when but seventeen years old, he wrote a religious *cantata*, called "God and Nature," which, performed before the Duke, secured to him the title of Composer to the Court. In 1811 a still greater excitement disturbed the serenity of Meyerbeer's period of study. Vogler closed his school, and started with his scholars on a tour through the principal cities of Germany. Each of the young composers carried with him a portfolio of original compositions, though they were generous enough to consider a manuscript opera by Meyerbeer, called "The Vow of Jephthah," as the ablest work, and at Munich

aided heartily in preparing it for the stage. In this critical Bavarian capital Meyerbeer made his first appeal to public favor as an operatic composer, — and failed. He was not hissed or ridiculed, but “The Vow of Jephthah” fell coldly on the audience, and was shortly withdrawn.

Doubting whether he was destined to succeed as a composer, Meyerbeer went to Vienna, a city not unfrequently called by musicians Pianopolis, and there he heard Hummel play the piano. He had already taken a few lessons of Clementi, but no sooner did he listen to the former master than he recognized his own inefficiency, and saw work before him. He determined to unite in himself, as a pianist, the brilliancy of execution of Clementi, and the charm, the grace, and purity of Hummel’s style. He succeeded, and made his *début* at a concert at Vienna with the most flattering applause. At this day the amateur would give much to hear exactly how such men as Meyerbeer, and Hummel, and Clementi played, and to compare them with Thalberg, Gottschalk, and Satter. It is impossible to say in what respects Meyerbeer may have fallen behind or surpassed these accomplished executants; but certain it is, that, in the beginning of the present century, and while scarce out of his teens, the favorite pupil of the Abbé Vogler was the favorite pianist of the Vienna public.

Yet, after all his triumphs in the concert-room, he yearned for the greater triumphs of the stage, and leaving the piano to his renowned successors, Chopin and Liszt, he turned again to composing. He wrote an opera called “The Two Caliphs,” which, like his previous effort, was replete with strange harmonies, very sparing in melody, and met with the same (lack of) success. The celebrated Metternich — an authority in Art as well as in diplomacy — was present at the production of “The Two Caliphs,” but only once ventured to applaud. The old master, Vogler, and the dearer friend, Von Weber, still encouraged the young composer with their approbation, and

only blamed a stupid audience that would not discern the beauties appreciable by their sharper ears.

Meyerbeer had good sense, and with a modesty perhaps more unusual in a musician than in any one else, he was disposed rather to blame himself than the public. A prominent amateur composer of Vienna — Salieri by name — advised him to go to Italy; and to Venice, as the nearest point, he hastened without delay.

In these days of universal travel, when every tourist can talk glibly of the different theatres and composers of the Old World, it seems almost incredible that a young man of wealth and taste like Meyerbeer should not have visited Italy till almost forced to do so. Yet such was the case. Meyerbeer was a man of one idea, and that idea was music. No journey which had any other object possessed attractions for him. To the influences of history, to the grandeur of that land which should not be named without an almost holy veneration, he was quite indifferent. It was not the Cæsars that drew him to Italy, nor the Popes, nor the Raphaels, nor the Michel Angelos, — it was Rossini and the modern opera.

At that time the composer of “Semiramide” was at the height of his popularity, and Meyerbeer heard “Tancredi,” and for the first time felt the delicious fascination of Italian melody. He determined to transplant it into the rugged soil of his own masculine musical science; and three years after the Rossinian revelation at Venice, his first Italian opera, “Romilda e Costanza,” was produced at that dismal old metropolis of necromancy, Padua, Signora Pisoni taking the principal part. It pleased, as did his next work, “Semiramide Riconosciuta,” produced at Turin, though neither was so successful as his “Emma di Risburgo,” first heard at Venice, and for some time a rival in popularity to “Tancredi.”

At this period Meyerbeer adopted the name of Giacomo, — the Italian transla-

tion of Jacob, — which he ever after retained. His true name was Meyer Liebmann Beer, but he suppressed the Liebmann, because that word in German, when joined with Beer, could by weak punsters be translated into “a philanthropic bear”; so he Italianized his pre-nomen, dropped his middle name, and joined the two other words in one, — the result of all these liberties in nomenclature being “Giacomo Meyerbeer.”

Thus, doubly armed with an Italian name and an Italian reputation, he returned to Germany, but was coldly welcomed. Even Weber charged him with being a renegade to the cause of German Art, and, while “Emma di Risburgo” was played at one of the Berlin theatres, had “The Two Caliphs” revived at another. Meyerbeer thus could have heard his two styles of composition exemplified in the same night. Weber, indeed, always looked upon Meyerbeer’s Italian operas as a sad falling away from grace, and in a letter written to his brother, Godefroy, — the fourth of the little group of Darmstadt students, — says, —

“Meyerbeer has promised on his return to Berlin to write a German opera. God be praised for it! I appealed strongly to his conscience in the matter.”

Returning to Italy, Meyerbeer produced “Margherita d’ Angiu” at La Scala, Milan, following it with “L’ Esule di Granata”; and then in 1824 Venice saw and heard the “Crociato.” This last opera made the tour of the world, carried the name of the composer to every place where musical art was cultivated, and won for Meyerbeer, from the distant Emperor of Brazil, the decoration of the Cross of the South.

In Paris alone — Paris, which afterwards made such an idol of the composer — did the “Crociato” fail to meet with immediate success. In nonsense and folly it may be truly said of the Parisians that “a little child shall lead them”; and so it happened on this occasion. In the admirable quartette of the second act a child is introduced, as in “Norma,” to awaken the sympathies

of an untractable tenor papa. This juvenile, by no means a young Apollo, took not the slightest interest in the music, and was so indifferent to the publicity of the situation, so utterly *blasé*, (and sleepy,) as to yawn during the most affecting passages. At the first yawn, the audience smiled; the *prima donna*, proceeding with her part, exclaimed in tragic Italian, “Restrain thy tears!” — and the child gaped again for the second time, while the audience grinned. “Heaven will comfort thee!” shrieked the singer, — whereat the child gave such a prodigious yawn that the house burst into laughter, and the vocalist could not finish the piece.

In 1827 Meyerbeer married, and retired from public life for a while. Two of the children born to him died, their loss casting so deep a shade on his soul that for nearly two years he composed only religious music to words selected from the Book of Psalms, or written by Klopstock. He also wrote a collection of melodies, among them an elegy entitled “At the Tomb of Beethoven.” But ere long the glorious old instinct for operatic composition returned. On the seventeenth of September, 1829, M. Lubbert, then director of the opera, received a letter couched in these terms: —

“17 *Septembre*, 1829.

“J’ai l’honneur de vous prévenir, Monsieur, que par décision de ce jour j’ai accordé à M. Meyerbeer, compositeur, ses entrées à l’Académie Royale de Musique. . . .

“L’Aide-de-Camp du Roi,  
“Directeur-Général des Beaux-Arts,  
“VICOMTE DE LAROCHEFOUCAULD.”

And two years later, on the twenty-first of September, 1831, Dr. Véron, the successor of Lubbert, opened his doors for the first performance of “Robert le Diable.” This wonderful and popular opera was written in French, to a *libretto* sent to Berlin by Scribe, and was at first intended for the Opéra Comique, but its three acts were subsequently increased to five, and its destination changed to

the Grand Opéra. Meyerbeer himself had to bear much of the expense of preparing the stage-appointments, though not to such an extent as on the production of his "Romilda" in Italy, when he bought the *libretto*, gave the music gratis, paid the singers, and provided the costumes.

Dr. Véron, in his *Memoirs*, gives an amusing account of the accidents which attended the first production of "Robert." In the third act, a chandelier fell, and the *prima donna* Dorus had a narrow escape from being hit by the falling glass; after the chorus of demons, a cloud, rising from the cave to hide the stage, reached a certain elevation, and then, giving way, tumbled on the boards, nearly striking Taglioni the dancer, who, as *Elena*, was extended on her tomb, ready for the next scene; and in the last act, Nourrit, the *Robert* of the evening, in the excitement of the moment, leaped down the trap-door by which Levasseur (the *Bertram*) had just disappeared. This last event received different interpretations. On the stage there was alarm and weeping, because it was then thought Nourrit in his leap had been killed or maimed; by the audience it was supposed that the author intended *Robert* should share with *Bertram* the infernal regions; while under the stage Levasseur greeted the tenor with mingled surprise and disgust: — "*Que diable faites vous ici? Est ce qu'on a changé le dénouement?*" Luckily, Nourrit was unhurt, the curtain was raised again, the singers made their conventional acknowledgments, and the names of the authors were announced amid the wildest enthusiasm.

After that night Meyerbeer had to pay no more money to get his operas on the stage. The tables were so completely turned that he thenceforth could command almost any price he chose to ask. To follow his career more minutely, after this period of his emergence into the bright light of fame, would be but to recount a story with which almost every one is familiar.

The "Huguenots" was the next opera, and it was produced only after infinite delays; indeed, just before the rehearsal, Madame Meyerbeer fell ill, and her husband decided to convey her to Italy. He took the music from the orchestra-desks, forfeited a fine of thirty thousand francs, and a few hours later he and his "Huguenots" were on the way to Nice. When finally produced at Paris, this opera was as well received as the "Robert." It appears, that, after the first general rehearsal, Nourrit, the tenor, found fault with the sublime music of the fourth act. Meyerbeer returned home in a very unpleasant frame of mind, and told his troubles to the friend with whom he lodged. "If I only had," said he, "a few stanzas to arrange as an *andante* and *duo*, all would be right. But I cannot ask Scribe to add more verses." The friend immediately called a literary acquaintance, Émile Deschamps, who was playing cards in a neighboring *café*, explained to him the situation, and in a few minutes the verses were written. It was about midnight, and the composer, seating himself at the piano with the words before him, in a fever of inspiration threw out the splendid *duo* between *Raoul* and *Valentine* which closes the act, and which always equally enchants performers and audience; and when this music was performed at the next rehearsal, the orchestra, players, and vocalists carried the composer in triumph on the stage to receive their spontaneous plaudits and congratulations, while Nourrit embraced him with tears of delight.

Eight years later came another triumph of elaborate Art in "Le Prophète," a work which is generally underrated by the leading French critics, though it contains many of the very noblest inspirations of the genius of Meyerbeer. To this opera followed "L'Étoile du Nord," and "Le Pardon de Ploermel," while to these will soon follow "L'Africaine," so long promised, and in behalf of which the composer was visiting Paris at the time of his death. The score of the opera has been completed since 1860.



On Friday, the twenty-second of April last, Meyerbeer dined alone at his residence, his meal being, as usual, very frugal. On Saturday, the twenty-third of April, he felt unwell, but a physician was not sent for till the next week, and in the mean time Meyerbeer was busy superintending the copyists engaged in his house on the score of "*L'Africaine*," for which he had, instead of his customary orchestral introduction, just written a long overture. On the following Sunday, the first of May, his disorder, which was internal, grew worse, and his weakness increased so that he became almost irritable about it, — he was so anxious to continue at the work of the orchestration of his new opera, and so annoyed by the illness which prevented him. His family were sent for by telegraph, but were mostly too late to hold converse with him; for on Sunday night, before they arrived, he turned in his bed and bade them farewell with a faint smile, as he said, "I now bid you good-night till to-morrow morning." These were his last words; for when the morning was come, and daylight peered into the windows of the tall house at Paris, he was shadowed by the mystery of that night which awaits a resurrection-morning.

Among his papers in his travelling-portfolio was found a packet marked, "To be opened after death," containing directions, written in German, of which the following is a literal translation: —

"I desire the following details to be observed after my decease.

"I wish to be left lying on my bed, with my face exposed to view, just as I was previously to my death, for four days, and on the fifth day to have incisions made in the brachial artery and in the foot. After this, my body is to be conveyed to Berlin, where I wish to be interred in the tomb of my dearly beloved mother. Should there be no room, I beg that I may be laid by the side of my two dear children, who died at a very early age.

"Should I happen to die far from

those related to me, the same measures are to be pursued, and two attendants are to watch my body day and night to see whether I do not give any signs of life.

"If, owing to any particular circumstances, it is necessary to take me to a dead-house, I desire, that, according to custom, little bells shall be fastened to my hands and feet, in order to keep the attendants on the alert.

"Having always feared being buried alive, my object in giving the above directions is to prevent the possibility of any return of life.

"The will of God be done, and His name sanctified and blessed in heaven and on earth! Amen!"

All these directions were complied with; while the funeral arrangements — in Paris at least — were very theatrical and "Frenchy," though at Berlin they were conducted with greater dignity. The line of procession, led by a band playing extracts from Meyerbeer's music, passed the Opéra Comique and the Grand Opéra, both of which were dressed in black. Auber was among the pall-bearers, and Gounod among the mourners. Behind the coffin were carried on a cushion the various decorations with which sovereigns and societies had decked the composer. At the Northern Railway station, (also draped in mourning,) orations were delivered, and *applauded* by the listeners, and sometimes interrupted by the impatient steam-whistles of departing trains. An incident of the funeral was the decoration of the *catafalque* with a silver cross: Meyerbeer was a Jew, and the inconsistency was not noticed till there was barely time to tear away the Christian emblem before the body of the Israelite composer was laid in its place. That same night, at the Grand Opéra, the "*Huguenots*" was performed, and never did Sax, Gueymard, Faure, and Beisal sing or act with greater effect. After the fourth act the curtain was raised; and while the orchestra played the Coronation March from the

"Prophète," the bust of the composer was crowned with laurel by the performers.

The family, in accordance with the curious European custom, sent around to their friends a circular worded as follows:—

"SIR,—Madame Meyerbeer (widow); Mlles.Cécile and Cornélie Meyerbeer; the Baron and Baroness De Korf; and Son; M. and Madame Georges Beer; M. and Madame Jules Beer and Children; M. and Madame Alexandre Oppenheim; M. and Madame S. de Haber, Madlle. Laure de Haber; and Madlle. Anna Eberty, have the honor to announce to you the sad loss they have just suffered by the death of M. Giacomo Meyerbeer, their husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather, uncle, and great-uncle, who died at Paris on the 2nd May, 1864, aged seventy-two."

Meyerbeer was, up to the last, full of plans for the future, and while getting "*L'Africaine*" ready was looking for the *libretto* of a comic opera to compose "for amusement," as a repose between grander works. It is said that he has left another completed opera, on the Biblical story of Judith and Holofernes; and he also had a vague idea of writing a grand historical opera on an English subject, the idea having been suggested by a visit to the Princess Theatre, London, when Charles Kean was playing, with unusual scenic accessories, Shakspeare's "*Henry VIII.*" The proposed opera was to have been equally as grand a work as the "*Huguenots*," and the peculiarities of old English music—the style of melody of Locke, Purcell, and Arne—were to have been imitated with that skill of which Meyerbeer was so eminently a master. He never would write an oratorio, because he had no hope of excel-

ling Mendelssohn in that branch of musical art. His last composition was an aria written to Italian words for a Spanish lady-friend, the Señorita Zapater; and he was about to arrange the accompaniment for the orchestra when his last illness came on.

Personally, Giacomo Meyerbeer had many characteristics which were not inviting. He was fond of money, yet willing to lavish it whenever Art demanded the sacrifice. He took snuff, and wore green spectacles, was careless, often shabby in his dress, and would stroll through the streets of Paris wearing a wretched hat, inwardly composing music as he walked along; on grand occasions, however, he would go to the opposite extreme in matters of toilet, and appear radiant with the numerous decorations presented to him by the different sovereigns of Europe. He knew the power of the press, and was not too delicate to invite the leading critics to elaborate dinners at the *Trois Frères* the night before a first performance.

It is not intended here to enter into a critical or scientific analysis of Meyerbeer as a composer. As far as the present development of Art would indicate, his name seems to us destined to go down to posterity encircled by a fadeless halo of glory; and at the same time we must remember that there have been other composers who, though now forgotten, yet in their time and at their death have similarly impressed their contemporaries. But certain it is, that, in our day and generation, and at least during the life of every one now existing, the fame of Meyerbeer will be brilliant indeed, and the music of the "*Robert*," the "*Huguenots*," and the "*Prophète*" will challenge the admiration and love of all susceptible to the influence of the grandest and noblest strains that musical science has yet evoked.



## THE MAY CAMPAIGN IN VIRGINIA.

THERE are few months in the calendar of centuries that will have a more conspicuous place in history than the month of May, 1864. It will be remembered on account of the momentous events which have taken place during the present military operations. It inaugurates one of the greatest campaigns of history. We who are in it are amazed, not by its magnitude merely, for there have been larger armies, heavier trains of artillery, greater preparations, in European warfare,—but we are overwhelmed by a succession of events unparalleled for rapidity. We cannot fully comprehend the amount of endurance, the persistency, the hard marching, the harder fighting, the unwearied, cheerful energy and effort which have carried the Army of the Potomac from the Rappahannock to the Chickahominy in thirty days, against the stubborn opposition of an army of almost equal numbers. There has not been a day of rest, scarcely an hour of quiet. Morning, noon, and midnight, the booming of cannon and the rattling of musketry have echoed unceasingly through the Wilderness, around the hillocks of Spottsylvania, along the banks of the North Anna, and among the groves of Bethesda Church and Coal Harbor.

A brief *résumé* of the campaign, thus far developed, is all that can be attempted in the space assigned me. I must pass by the efforts of individuals, as heroic and soul-stirring as those of the old Cavaliers renowned in story and song, where all the energies of life are centred in one moment,—the spirited advance of regiments, the onset of brigades, and the resistless charges of divisions. I can speak only of the movements of corps, without dwelling upon those scenes which stir the blood and fire the soul,—the hardihood, the endurance, the cool, collected, reserved force, abiding the time, the calm facing of death, the swift advance, the rush, the plunge into the thickest

of the fight, where hundreds of cannon, where fifty thousand muskets, fill the air with iron hail and leaden rain!

### THE GENERAL PLAN.

THE army wintered between the Rappahannock and the Rapidan. There had been a reduction and reconstruction of its corps,—an incorporation of the First and Third with the Fifth and Sixth, with reinforcements added to the Second. The Second was commanded by Major-General Hancock, the Fifth by Major-General Warren, the Sixth by Major-General Sedgwick. No definite statement of the number of men composing the army can be given, for the campaign is not yet ended; and no aid or comfort, no information of value to the enemy, can be tendered through the columns of the loyal “Atlantic.”

These three corps, with three divisions of cavalry commanded by General Sheridan, composed the Army of the Potomac, commanded by Major-General Meade. The Ninth Corps, commanded by Major-General Burnside, was added when the army took up its line of march.

There was concentration everywhere. General Gillmore, with what troops could be spared from the department of the South, joined his forces to those already on the Peninsula and at Suffolk; Sigel had several thousand in the Shenandoah; Crook and Averell had a small army in Western Virginia; while at Chattanooga, under Sherman and Thomas, was gathered a large army of Western troops.

The *dramatis personæ* were known to the public, but the part assigned to each was kept profoundly secret. There was discussion and speculation whether Burnside, from his encampment at Annapolis, would suddenly take transports and go to Wilmington, or up the Rappahannock, or the James, or the York, uniting his forces with Butler's. Would