

THE BATTLE OF THE WILDERNESS

X

BY MORRIS SCHAFF

MEANWHILE Hancock's partially collected troops had been adding logs to and otherwise strengthening the breastworks along the Brock Road, besides throwing up near the junction two or three additional lines. His troops were posted from right to left as follows, their order showing the haste with which they were assigned to position. First came Kitching's heavy artillery from Hunt's artillery reserve, its right opposite the knoll; then Eustis's brigade of the Sixth Corps; then, in three lines of battle, two brigades of Robinson's division of the Fifth; then Owen's brigade of the Second; then Wheaton and L. A. Grant of the Sixth, their left resting on the Plank Road at the junction which the day before they had saved. Immediately in rear of them lay Carroll of the Second with his fearless brigade; and behind Carroll, in a third line, stood Rice of the Fifth; no more invincible spirit waited for the attack that all knew was coming. In the road at the junction was a section of Dow's Maine battery under Lieutenant W. H. Rogers. Then came Birney in three lines of battle, then Mott in two lines, and on his left Smyth with his gallant Irish, flying with the Stars and Stripes the golden Harp of Erin on a green field. Webb was next to Smyth, then Barlow. The other four guns of Dow's battery were in an opening behind the left of Mott's second line, and next to him Edgell's six guns of the First New Hampshire.

At 3.15, all being quiet, kind-hearted Lyman asked permission of Hancock to go back to the hospital and look after his boyhood friend, "little" Abbott. The gallant fellow was then breathing his last, and died about four.

A half-hour later Field's doomed line came on. The point which he had chosen to drive it through was Mott's and Birney's front, just to the left of the junction. It was a lucky choice, for a part of the former's division had behaved badly on both days, its conduct in marked contrast with that when Kearney and Hooker used to lead it.

Surmising from the skirmish line reports that the main assault would be south of the Plank Road, a bugler was stationed on Mott's breastworks, with orders to sound the recall at the enemy's first appearance. His notes rang out, and Dow's and Edgell's guns opened at once with spherical case. But on they came, marching abreast to within one hundred paces of the first line of works, in front of which a slashing had been made. There they halted, and for a half-hour poured an uninterrupted fire of musketry across the works, our lines replying with deadly effect. The incessant roar of the crashing volleys that closing afternoon, and the thunder of the guns as they played rapidly, struck war's last full diapason in the Wilderness.

The fire that had crept through the woods from the battle-ground of the

forenoon, had reached the bottom logs of the breastworks in some places and was smoking faintly, waiting for a breath of wind to mount and wrap them in flames. And now, while the battle was raging to its culmination, on came a fanning breeze, Field's opportune and best ally, which swept over him and his men, and up leaped the flames, extending for many hundred paces along Mott's and Birney's front. The breastworks soon became a blazing mass which it was impossible to quench, says one who was present. The heat grew almost intolerable, and the rising wind — what desolated southern home had it passed, or what bugle had it heard! — now lashed the flames and hot blinding smoke down into the faces of the men here and there, driving them from the parapets.

Soon one of Mott's brigades began to waver and then broke, retiring in disorder towards Chancellorsville. At its abandonment of the works, South Carolinian and Texan color-bearers rushed from the woods and planted their flags on the burning parapets, and through the flame and over went the desperate men. At this perilous sight Rogers at the junction began to pour double canister into them, and Dow and Edgell crossed his fire with case and like charges of canister. Dow must have had his eye on a particular battle-flag, for he speaks in his report of shooting one down five times. Meanwhile his own breastworks got on fire and the extra charges that the gunners have brought up from the limbers explode, burning some of the cannoneers severely. Still he keeps on, his guns belching canister.

As soon as the break was made through Mott and his own left, Birney in great haste rode to Robinson, telling him what had happened, that Hancock was cut off, and suggesting that proper disposition be made to receive an

attack on Robinson's left and rear. Lyman, who when the assault began had gone back to headquarters to notify Meade, was met on his return by one of Hancock's aides, who told him that the enemy had broken through, and that there was no communication with the left wing. He rode on, however, and found Birney at the junction, who confirmed the aide's story. It is said that when Birney's aide came to Grant and reported that the enemy had broken the lines, he and Meade were sitting together at the root of a tree, and Grant, after hearing the story, did not stir, but looking up said in his usual low, softly vibrating voice, "I don't believe it."

Meanwhile Birney had called on Rice, and Hancock on Carroll; the batteries ceased firing, and together those two fearless commanders with their iron-hearted brigades dashed with bayonets fixed at the enemy and soon hurled them from the works, leaving colors, prisoners and over fifty dead and many wounded within the burning entrenchments. To the south in front of our lines for four or five hundred yards from the junction, clear to where Webb was posted, Confederate dead and helpless wounded dotted the ground. They had charged with great valor.

I have always thought that if Grant had been with Hancock at the time of this repulse, he would have taken advantage of it and ordered an immediate advance. For the Army of the Potomac never had another commander who was so quick as Grant to deliver a counter-blow.

Field's losses were heavy, and he had signally failed to carry the works. He drew his shattered lines back almost to the Widow Tapp field, and at about sundown re-formed them perpendicular to the Plank Road and bivouacked for the night.

And now for the narration of some

personal experiences, not because they were of any great consequence in themselves, but one of them at least, as it so happened, had a part in the history of the day. During the forenoon — from official dates of various orders I know it must have been not later than ten; at any rate it was after my return from trying to find Wadsworth — Warren, who was standing in the dooryard of the Lacy House, saw a guard that had in its charge a small squad of Confederates just in from the front, halt them near the bank of the run. He told me to go down and find out who they were. Noticing a young officer among them, I asked him what regiment he belonged to. He and his companions were tired and not in good spirits over their hard luck, with its long period of confinement before them, for Grant had suspended the exchange of prisoners; and he answered me with sullen defiance in look and tones, "Fifteenth Alabama!" which, if I remember right, was in Law's brigade of Longstreet's corps. Not being very skilful at worming valuable intelligence out of prisoners, I was getting very little from them when a mounted orderly came to me from my immediate commander, the Chief of Ordnance, Captain Edie, to report at Meade's headquarters. On reaching there, Edie told me I was to start at once for Rapahannock Station with despatches to Washington for an additional supply of infantry ammunition to be sent out with all haste. The wagons going to meet the train for the ammunition and other supplies were to be loaded with wounded, who would be transferred to the cars, and thence to the hospitals in Alexandria and Washington.

How the notion got abroad that the supply of ammunition was exhausted I cannot explain, except by the heavy firing. As a matter of fact, we had an abundance; but, somehow or other, Humphreys or Meade was made to

think we were running short, and, as early as seven o'clock, a circular was issued to all corps commanders:—

The question of ammunition is an important one. The Major-General commanding directs that every effort be made to economize the ammunition, and the ammunition of the killed and wounded be collected and distributed to the men. Use the bayonet where possible.

By command of Major-Gen'l Meade.
S. WILLIAMS,
Adjutant-General.

Humphreys in a despatch to Warren said, "Spare ammunition and use the bayonet."

At nine o'clock, corps commanders were told to empty one-half of the ammunition-wagons and issue their contents to the troops without delay, sending the empty wagons to report to Ingalls at Meade's headquarters.

I asked Edie what escort I was to have. He answered, "A sergeant and four or five men." I exclaimed, "A sergeant and four or five men! What would I amount to with that sort of escort against Mosby?"

For those who have been born since the war, let me say that Mosby was a very daring officer operating between the Rapidan and Potomac, his haunt the eastern base of the Blue Ridge. I think every staff officer stood in dread of encountering him anywhere outside the lines, — at least I know I did, — from reports of atrocities, perhaps more or less exaggerated, committed by his men. Colonel Mosby is still living, old age has whitened his hair and given him a benevolent, engaging manner, and I have no doubt that most of his men were not as black as they were painted. I must have worn a most indignant expression, possibly due to just having escaped capture, for Edie roared with

laughter. But I declared that it was no laughing matter, that I had to have more men than that, and I got them, for they sent a squadron of the Fifth New York Cavalry with me, and besides they supplied me with a fresh horse, a spirited young black with a narrow white stripe on his nose.

When I was ready to start, I heard General Grant ask some one near him, "Where is the officer that is going back with despatches?" Those that I had received were from Meade's Adjutant-General. I was taken up to him by either Porter or Babcock. Grant at once sat down with his back against a small pine tree, and wrote a despatch directed to Halleck.

While he was writing, E. B. Washburne, a prominent member of Congress, who, as a fellow townsman of Grant's, had opened the door for his career and had come down to see him start the great campaign (on account of his long-tailed black coat and silk hat the men said that he was an undertaker that Grant had brought along to bury "Jeff" Davis), gave me a letter with a Congressman's frank to be mailed to his family. A number of the staff gave me letters also. A telegraph operator was directed to go with me, and my final instructions were that, if I found communication broken at Rappahannock Station, I was to go to Manassas, or the nearest station where the operator could find an open circuit.

I set out with my despatches, several correspondents joining me, and I remember that I was not half as polite to them as I should have been; but in those days a regular army officer who courted a newspaper man lost caste with his fellows. Soon after crossing the Rapidan we met a battalion of a New Jersey cavalry regiment that had been scouting up the river. It was a newly organized regiment, one of Burnside's, and on account of its gaudy uniforms

was called by all the old cavalymen "Butterflies," and most unmercifully jibed by them. But the "Butterfly" soon rose to the occasion, and paid the old veterans in coin as good as their own. As we were riding by them, one of our men inquired if they had seen anything of Mosby, and, on being answered in the negative, observed sarcastically in the hearing of the "Butterfly," "It's mighty lucky for Mosby," and rode on with a grin of a Cheshire cat.

We followed the road to Sheppard's Grove and then across country to Stone's or Paoli Mills on Mountain Run. From there we made our way to Providence Church on the Norman's Ford Road, passing over a part of the field where the lamented Pelham was killed. The old church stood on a ridge, and if ever it had a door-yard and fences about it, the latter were gone and some of its windows broken; desolated fields lay around it. When we reached it the sun had set, and I remember how red was its outspread fan in the low western sky. Rappahannock Station was in sight, and over the works which occupied the knolls on the north side of the river, which the Sixth Corps had carried one night by assault after twilight had fallen the preceding autumn, to my surprise a flag was flying. I had supposed that the post had been abandoned, but for some reason or other Burnside had left a regiment there. Our approach being observed, the pickets were doubled, for they took us for some of the enemy's cavalry.

I went at once, after seeing the officer in command, to the little, one-story, rough-boarded house that had served as the railroad station; and, while the operator was attaching his instrument that he carried strapped to his saddle, I opened Grant's despatch and read it. In view of its being his first from the Wilderness, I will give it entire: —

WILDERNESS TAVERN,
May 6, 1864 — 11.30 A. M.

MAJOR-GENERAL HALLECK,
Washington, D. C.

We have been engaged with the enemy in full force since early yesterday. So far there is no decisive result, but I think all things are progressing favorably. Our loss to this time I do not think exceeds 8000, of whom a large proportion are slightly wounded. Brigadier-General Hays was killed yesterday, and Generals Getty and Bartlett wounded. We have taken about 1400 prisoners. Longstreet's, A. P. Hill's, and Ewell's corps are all represented among the prisoners taken.

U. S. GRANT,
Lieutenant-General.

Meanwhile the operator's instrument had clicked and clicked, but could get no answer, and he decided we should have to go on possibly as far as Fairfax Station. Thereupon I talked with the commander of the escort; I wish I could recall his name, for he and his men were with Hammond at Parker's store on the morning of the 5th. He thought the march should not be resumed till the horses had fed and had a good rest, as it was at least thirty miles to Fairfax Station.

The colonel gave us some supper and wanted to know all about the battle; but I was very tired and in those days with strangers very reserved, so I am afraid I disappointed him, and soon went to sleep, with the understanding that we should start on not later than half-past ten o'clock. Saddling had begun when I was waked up by the officer of the guard, who said that a civilian had just been brought in from the picket-line claiming to be a scout from Grant's headquarters with orders from him to me. I did not recognize the man, though I may have seen him about the provost-marshal's headquar-

ters. He handed me a small envelope containing the following order:—

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
May 6, 1864 — 2 P. M.

LIEUT. MORRIS SCHAFF,
Ordnance Officer.

The commanding general directs that you return with your party and despatches to these headquarters, the orders directing the procuring of an additional supply of ammunition having been recalled.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

S. WILLIAMS,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

The original in the same little envelope is lying before me now; it is beginning to wear an old look and is turning yellow. You, envelope, and your associations are dear to me, and as my eye falls on you, old days come back and I see the Army of the Potomac again. In a little while we shall part; and I wonder if in years to come it will dream of that night when we first met on the Rappahannock, hear the low intermittent swish of the water among the willows on the fringed banks as then, and in its dream go back under the dim starlight to the Wilderness and a boy mounted on a young black horse that had a little white snip on its nose.

As there was no occasion for hurrying back, and the scout and his horse both called for rest, I waited till two o'clock and then set off on our return, the scout taking the lead. That night the stars were dim, and in the woods it was very dark. We had been on our way some time, during which I had paid no attention to the direction we were going, when, for some reason or other, I asked the scout if he were sure of being on the right road. He answered that he was, and we rode on. But shortly after I heard the roaring of water falling over

a dam away off to our right, and asked, "Where is that dam?" He said on the Rappahannock. "If that's the case," I replied, "we are heading the wrong way, it should be on our left."

Well, he reckoned he knew which way he was going; but I was not satisfied, and after going a bit farther told the captain to countermarch. At this the scout was very much provoked, declaring we should soon be completely lost in the woods. He went his way and I went mine, and within a mile I struck a narrow lane which led to a house with a little log barn or shed just opposite, and in a flash I knew where we were, for I had particularly noticed the shed on our way out.

It was really a great relief, as any one will appreciate who has tried to find his way in a dark night across an unfamiliar country.

The water we heard that still night was Mountain Run flowing over the dam and lashing among the boulders below it at Paoli Mills. On my visit to the Wilderness last May I went to the dam, and then to the old, weather-beaten, forsaken mill that stands alone some two hundred yards away in a field. Its discontinued race was empty and grass-grown, and some of the members of a small, scattered flock of sheep ready for shearing were feeding along its brushy banks. By the roadside, below the boulders, is a shadowed, gravelly edged, shallow pool, and as I approached it a little sandpiper flitted away.

Daylight had just broken when we reached Madden's, and, as we were passing a low, hewed log house, a powerful, lank, bony-faced woman appeared at the door combing a hank of coarse gray hair.

I said, "Good-morning, madam, how far is it to Germanna Ford?"

She replied surlily to my question, and then with a hard smile added, "I

reckon you'uns got a right smart good whipping last night."

"What do you mean," I asked.

"Well, you'll find out when you get back." And she gave me a spurning look that as much as said, "You caught h—l and deserved it."

The other day when I travelled the road a catbird was singing in the neglected garden. The woman had long since died. Her name was Eliza Allen.

To fully comprehend what Eliza denominated as a "right smart good whipping" necessitates an account of the operations on the right of the army during the afternoon and late evening of the first day. And for reasons that will be disclosed later, I'll suggest that we walk leisurely up the Flat Run Road and thence to where lay Sedgwick's right.

And before we set off from the junction of the Flat Run with the Germanna Road let me tell you that the darkish, weatherworn roof and stubby red chimney that you see a half-mile or more away across the deserted fields, are those of the old Spotswood manor-house. It is partially concealed by that intervening heave in the ground, and its mistress, Lady Spotswood, is buried on the plantation known as "Superba," near Stevensburg.

In a few steps the fenceless road, a mere two-wheeled track winding among the trees, will lead us through deep and lonely woods. I passed over it twice last May, and azaleas and dogwoods were blooming, and I think I can point out the identical giant huckleberry — it was on the left of the road — whose white pendulous flowers first caught my eye with their suggestion of bells tolling for the dead. And as we walk by them I venture to say that no finer or larger violets are to be seen anywhere in the world, or more pleasing little houstonias. Later on I can promise you the sight of cowslips gilding

patches of shallow, stagnant water; for as we draw nearer to where Sedgwick was engaged, we shall come to the swampy head of Caton's Run and the uppermost waters of the tributaries of Flat Run. The road is between them, the former on our left, the latter on the right. Hark a minute! that must be the same herd of cattle I met with last year: I came on them at this sudden turn and up went every head wildly. I recognize the bells. Yes, the same lonely *kling, klung*: we shall not see them, they are feeding off toward Warren's lines.

We have walked at least a mile. How much farther? Only a short way, a new road is always long. "What is this low, continuous mound that we see on both sides of the road?" halting suddenly, you ask. That is all that is left of Sedgwick's entrenchments. Let us follow it to the right, if for nothing else on account of its soliciting lonesomeness. I am sure it will enjoy our presence, for think of the days and nights it has lain here dreaming, dreaming of the dead. Do you imagine the spirits of those boys ever come back? Oh, yes, they are here over and over again, in line, with flags flying and the roses of youth in their cheeks. And think of the fires that swept through the woods that night! I wonder if they break out anew with the reappearance of the dead? No, and if spectral flames were to rekindle, the trees would shiver down the fallen dew and quench them; for the trees dread to hear those cries again.

The walking is not easy, I know, for the limbs are low and the trees are thick. Moreover it is growing rougher and swampier; more and more, too, the green vines impede our way. Test their strength if you care to do so. But here is the right of the line near the head of a branch. If we were to follow it till it meets the run, and then a bit farther northward, we should come in sight of

some old fields, but we will not penetrate deeper; let us pause and rest a moment. We are in one of the very depths of the Wilderness. Notice the tufts of moss tagging those forlorn young trees; that dark pool, that leaning stub with its one spotted, leprous limb, and that motionless, fallen tree, those short, gray, melancholy vistas. Were you ever in a quieter spot or one where you felt the living presence of a vaster, more wizardly, brooding loneliness? No, your voice even sounds strange; and, excuse me, if I remark a glint of wildness in your eyes, — that atavistic glint which comes only in places like this.

On the afternoon of the first day about here the right of Keifer's brigade formed — it ought to be known in history as Keifer's, for Seymour had just been assigned to it. It consisted of the Sixth Maryland, One Hundred and Tenth, One Hundred and Twenty-second, One Hundred and Twenty-sixth Ohio, Sixty-seventh and One Hundred and Thirty-eighth Pennsylvania; and Ohio, Maryland and Pennsylvania may well be proud of their record on this ground. On their left were those sterling brigades of Russell and Neill of the Sixth Corps, only a few of the men visible, the bulk completely buried by the thick undergrowth. Well, the first day, as the sun was on the point of setting, orders came for them to go ahead, and ahead they went.

If in your mind's eye you care to go forward with them I'll go with you; and for the sake of my old state, let us join the One Hundred and Tenth Ohio under Colonel Binkley. The first line under Keifer is made up of that regiment and the Sixth Maryland, the latter on the left, connecting with the Fourth New Jersey. Behind us in a second line are the One Hundred and Twenty-second Ohio, then the One Hundred and Thirty-eighth Pennsyl-

vania, and then the One Hundred and Twenty-sixth Ohio. Colonel John W. Horn, commanding the Sixth Maryland, is sending out skirmishers to cover his front; they are under Captain Prentiss, a very gallant man, who in the final charges on the forts of the Petersburg lines led a storming party and, as he crossed the parapet, had his breastbone carried away by a piece of shell, exposing his heart's actions to view. The Confederate commanding the battery which had just been overpowered fell also, and the two officers lying there side by side recognized each other as brothers. Captain Luther Brown of the One Hundred and Tenth Ohio is in charge of the skirmishers in his regiment's front, and he and Prentiss are both soon hotly engaged. Now the order comes for the first line to move forward.

The colors advance; let us go with them. That firm, earnest-eyed man commanding the regiment is Binkley; and there is McElwain, one of the bravest of the brave. The fire is soon terrific, men are falling, but the colors are going ahead and the men are going with them. Did you see the look in that sergeant's face as he fell? and now comes a horrid thud as a shot strikes a corporal full in the breast. But pushing aside the low, stubborn limbs and scrambling over these wretched vines, on goes the line. How hard it is for us to keep up with them, let alone carrying a musket and loading it as we go! There is no silence in the dismal Wilderness now. Smoke is billowing up through it, the volleys are frequent and resounding; bullets in sheets are clipping leaves and limbs, and scoring or burying themselves deep in the trunks of the trees. On go the sons of Ohio and Maryland. I wonder how much longer they can stand it. Look, look, how the men are going down! But don't let us cast our eyes behind us; as long as

those brave fellows go ahead, let us go with them.

The lines are slowing up under that frightful, withering fire. Now they stand, they can go no farther, for just ahead (behind logs hurriedly assembled) on that rising ground are the enemy, and they mean to hold it. Moreover, it has grown so dark that their position is made known only by the deep red, angrily flashing light from the levelled muzzles of their guns. Although Keifer has reported that unless reinforced he doubts being able to carry the position, yet back comes the command to attack at once. The line obeys, but is checked by a terrible fire. Some brave fellow cries out, "Once more"; they try it again, but the fire is too heavy. Here they hold, and bullets at highest speed, for it is very close range, are converging across their flank from right and left, showing that the enemy are overlapping the line. For nearly three hours they stand that scourging fire, Keifer, although seriously wounded, staying with them.

We had better fall back, but let us take this little fellow with us and help him along. Amid flying bullets, we lift him, he puts his arms around our necks, and, colliding with trees, limbs raking our faces, we stagger along over the uneven ground in the dark. Now we stumble headlong over a body, and as we fall, our friend moans piteously, and so does the unfortunate man our feet have struck, who says faintly, "I belong to Stafford's brigade [Confederate]; will you get me some water?" I hear you say right heartily, "Yes, indeed, we will. You help our man and bring a canteen; I'll stay here till you come back." Missing the course on my return, "Where are you?" I cry. "Here we are; come quickly, for the fire in the woods is making this way fast." And the soldier in gray is borne to the rear.

We come suddenly upon Keifer —

who is this riding up in the darkness saying sharply to him, "Support must be sent, for the enemy are flanking us"? And just then by the flash of a number of guns we recognize the daring McElwain; down goes his horse, and that is the last of the gallant fellow; he and many others are burned beyond recognition. Let us close our eyes to the scene and our ears to the cries, and leave this volley-crashing and heart-rending pandemonium. The Sixth Maryland has lost, out of 442, 152 officers and men; and the One Hundred and Tenth Ohio, 115 killed and wounded.

Do you know why I asked you to go over this ground with me, Reader? It is because Grant, through misinformation, reported to Halleck two days later that this brigade had not behaved well, and for years and years they have had to stand this bitter injustice. It is true that the next night this brigade, as well as Shaler's, which was sent to its right, was swept away by Gordon in the discomfiture referred to by Mrs. Allen; but let us look into the facts. And while we are doing so the narrative will be making its approach to the end, for a few turns more and it will have run its course.

The impetuous attacks of Russell's, Neill's, and Keifer's brigades were met by those of Hays, Pegram, and Stafford, during which Pegram was severely and Stafford mortally wounded. The losses on both sides were heavy, and toward the close of the action Gordon was sent for by Ewell to go to the support of his staggering troops. Owing to the darkness and the nature of the wood, it was well along in the night, and the fighting was over, before his big brigade reached a position on the extreme left of Ewell's line, which at this point swung back a little north-westwardly. Gordon directed his men to sleep on their arms, and at once sent out scouts to feel their way and find

the right, if possible, of Keifer's position. At an early hour these scouts reported that his lines overlapped it and that it was wholly unprotected.

This news was of such importance that he sent the scouts back to verify it. Satisfied on their return the second time that they had not been deceived, and keenly appreciating what his adversary's unprotected flank invited, he waited impatiently for daybreak; then, mounting his horse, he was guided by his explorers of the night before to a spot where he dismounted, and then, creeping forward some distance, saw through a narrow vista with his own eyes our exposed flank, the men unconscious of danger seated around little camp-fires boiling their coffee. Colonel Ball of the One Hundred and Twenty-second Ohio says that General Seymour, then in command of the brigade, was repeatedly notified during the night that the enemy were engaged cutting timber for their works and moving to our right. For some reason or other General Seymour did not give heed to this significant information and throw up a line for the safety of his right. On regaining his lines Gordon rode at once, burning with his discovery, to his division commander, Jubal A. Early, a sour, crabbed character, who, unlike Gordon and the big-hearted and broad-minded Confederates, bore a gloomy heart, cursing his country to the last. What is bleaker than an old age a slave to Hate!

Readers and Friends, if our higher natures have a dwelling-place, I cannot believe that you will find such splenetic personalities as that of Jubal A. Early occupying chairs before their cheerfully radiant hearth. No, there as here, the Spirit loves the man and soldier who takes his defeats and disappointments with a gentleman's lofty, tender manliness.

Gordon laid the situation before

Early, expecting him to jump at the chance to strike a blow such as that which made Stonewall famous. But, to Gordon's amazement, Early refused to entertain his suggestion of a flank attack, alleging as a reason that Burnside was on the Germanna Road directly behind Sedgwick's right and could be thrown at once on the flank of any attacking force that should try to strike it. If this interview took place between daylight and seven o'clock, Early was probably right as to the presence of a part, at least, of Burnside's troops on the Germanna Road, for, as we have already seen, the head of his rear division, the First, did not reach the Pike till about seven o'clock.

Early declining to make the attack, Gordon went to Ewell and urged it upon him; but he hesitated to overrule Early's decision, and so Gordon had to go back to his brigade, cast down and doubtless disgusted through and through with the lack of enterprise on the part of his superiors and seniors. He was only thirty-two or three, while Ewell and Early were approaching fifty years of age. By the time Gordon had returned from his fruitless mission, Shaler's brigade had been sent to Seymour's right. Thus Ewell's lines lay quiescent throughout the livelong day behind their entrenchments, unmoved by Longstreet's and Field's desperate battling on the Plank Road to the southeast of them.

Stung by disappointment over his failure to carry the Brock Road, Lee set off for Ewell's headquarters, the declining sun admonishing him that

only a few hours remained in which to reap his expectations of the morning. The course he took, if one cares to follow, was, for a mile or more, through a leaf-strewn, overarching wood-road to the Chewning Farm, his general direction almost due northwest. At Chewning's he passes Pegram's and McIntosh's batteries; they salute, — the Confederates cheered rarely, — he lifts his hat, carries his gauntleted left hand a little to the right, presses his high-topped boot against Traveller's right side, and the well-trained gray, feeling rein and leg, changes to almost due north, and with his strong, proudly-daring gallop brings his master to the Pike and Ewell.

When Lee reined up at Ewell's headquarters, he asked sharply, — I think I can see the blaze in his dark brown eye, — "Cannot something be done on this flank to relieve the pressure upon our right?" It so happened that both Early and Gordon were with Ewell when this guardedly reproving question was put. After listening as a young man and subordinate should to the conference of his superiors, he felt it his duty to acquaint Lee with what the reader already knows. Early, with his usual obstinacy, vigorously opposed the movement, maintaining that Burnside was still there; Lee, having just thrown Burnside back from the Plank Road, over two miles from where Early was putting him, heard him through with grim look and thereupon promptly ordered Gordon to make the attack at once. By this time the sun was nearly set.

(To be concluded.)

"MR. JOHN'S MISS BEST"

BY MARY BORDEN TURNER

It was in one of those wide glittering towns of Southern India, whose bazaars crawl in a sunny stupor about the base of their great gigantic fantastic temple; one of those low-voiced murmuring Hindu cities that are not at all disturbed by the clamor of the railway train and the meagre fringe of bungalow that mark the watchful presence of the "Heaven-born Sahib," but seem wrapped in a kind of sundream, a hot torpid delirium of a dream. We went to see the temple, and by accident we found her, little Miss Helen Best, from Pennsylvania, hidden away within the apathetic indifference of that Indian community. She was safe there, as safe as a woman of an Indian *zeñana* is safe from the prying eyes of the world beyond her lattice; and if it had not been for my unwitting falsehood, Mr. John would never have allowed us to hunt her down in her retreat. He guarded his little mistress as jealously as if she were his own child, and he revered her solitude as only an Indian can reverence the mute inactivity of the ascetic. When all is said, I am sure that he deemed her a holy woman, a kind of priestess.

We were three weary, bewildered tourists struggling against that indefinable sense of an atmosphere, somehow vindictive and oppressive, that drags at the vitality of aliens in India. We caught sight of him as our train drew in to the station, afar down the platform, rising head and shoulders above the brilliant undulating sea of many-colored turbans; and even at a

distance he was a sight to refresh us. His turban, his shirt, and his folded skirt were of spotless white muslin; the uncovered parts of his compact, well-formed body shone like burnished bronze; he smiled broadly as he approached, but with an air of control and self-respect.

He was the one person in all the confused throng.

Calmly he gathered us up and deposited us in the shade of the waiting-room. The Colonel took off his *topé*, wiped an aristocratic gray mustache with a large silk handkerchief, and looked at him over his glasses.

"Are you Mr. John, the guide?" he asked. The Colonel seemed somehow less impressive than usual.

"Yes, sir," answered the magnificent Indian quietly.

The afternoon sun struck in an unwilling, diminished glare through the green straw screens that hung before the doors. The long dining-room table, laid for some thirty imaginary diners, gave the impression of having been laid thus for interminable, timeless days. A servant lay asleep on the floor by the counter, where bottles of "Rose's Lime Juice," ginger beer, and "Old Scotch," stood guard among the flies. A lizard hung motionless on the wall over the clock. The electric fan whirled smoothly overhead. The train had moved on; the crowd had melted away, absorbed into the blazing light outside.

"Are there any missionaries here?" Aunt Nora's chin condemned the long table and all the terrible array of soup