Guttmachräla

—OR—

Four Years at the Front

AS A PRIVATE.

—BY—

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G Co. 19th Regt. Ohio Vet. Vol. Inft.

Chapter IX.

A border slogan rent the sky
A Home! A Gordon! was the cry,
Loud were the clanging blows.
Advanced — forced back — now low, now high,
The pennons sunk and rose;
As bends the barks mast in the gale
When rent are rigging, shroud's and sail,
It wavered mid the foes.

Scott's, Marmion

Marching out to battle — In front of Murfreesboro — The old fighters experience — The Army compared to a Snake — "Just before the battle" — Plans of Rosecrans and Bragg — The right wing broken — The day saved by Gen Thomas — Beattys brigade to the rescue — Retreived — Preparing for another encounter — Breckenridge assaults — Repulsed and driven from the field — The Artillery — Field hospitals — The loss — Braggs retreat — Rosecrans in Murfreesboro — Louisville and Nashville R.R. Halleck, Stanton and Rosecrans — All quiet on the Potomac — On to Richmond — Apparent hostility to Commander of The Army of the Cumberland.

Small cap

The 19th Ohio Regiment, in Dec. 1862 had present for duty, officers and men all told not far from five hundred. The companies had but little over forty men each for duty, to answer at roll call etc: there being always a large number on special detail about head=quarters, as teamsters, hostlers, cooks musicians, hospital nurses, pioneers, etc etc, which reduced the fighting force materialy.

Dec 26th The whole Army moved out from Nashville towards Murfreesborough

The three Corps comprising the Army each on a seperate road: the corps designated respectively. The Right, Left and Center. commanded by Mc Cook, Crittenden and Thomas. This order was mantained during the short decisive campaign and bloody battle which followed a few days later.

¶ Crittendens Corps marched south on the Murfreesborough pike, with Palmers division in the advance going into camp three or four miles north of Lavergne. The weather was cloudy and damp, and at night a dense fog settled down over the earth, and penetrated the tents and clothing of the men, making them wet and uncomfortable. The mist hung over the landscape on the 27th until noon before it lifted. The advance was begun on that day at an early hour, and the enemys outpasts were found at Lavergne. Skirmishing was kept up with spirit until nearly 11 A.M. with no decisive results. The mist being so dense there could be no general movement made.

¶ About noon the fog lifted and disclosed the enemys position. Hascells brigade pushed forward driving the rebels out of Lavergne, and on beyond south of Stewarts Creek. Van Cleves division was sent to the left of the Murfreesborough pike, and the whole of Crittendens Corps went into camp near Stewartsboro. There were occasional artillery shots fired on our right in front, and also on our extreme

right, some five or six miles distant.

¶ On Sunday the 28th, The Army remained quietly in bivouac as if waiting for news of the enemy's movements, or inviting attack.

Dec. 29th, The advance was begun early, pressing the enemy back steadily all day. Our course was changed to the right, crossing Stewart's Creek and passing through Smyrna, a small station on the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. The Left wing camped at night across the Murfreesboro pike, about 2½ miles from the village. Skirmishing was kept up at intervals during the day, at various points, and everything betokened the approaching storm of battle, in the vicinity of Murfreesboro. The enemy was stubbornly contesting our advance, while bringing his forces into position, within reach of his depot of supplies.

¶ Rosecrans's objective at this time was to drive Bragg beyond the Mountains, and make Nashville secure from attack, and from that point push on to Chattanooga.

The Right Wing under Mc. Cook, and the Center under Thomas, had also made their advance by disignated routes and were both within three miles of Murfreesboro, on the 29th.

¶ On the Morning of Dec. 30th, our Brigade was sent up towards the front, forming in line of battle as if about to attack. Our position was changed several times; each time going nearer the enemys line, which was evidently very near us.

The weather had again turned damp, and fog obscured the vision nearly all day. The ground was mucky and damp; we were bivouaced in line of battle with Arms stacked; no fires allowed in our front or among us. Towards evening the mist cleared disclosing the line of rifle pits along our entire front, extending from near the Stones River for a mile westward, almost in a direct line. We were under fire all day; at intervals musketry or artillery would be

rattling or crashing as the lines of battle would come into position, or as they reconnoitered to disclose the weak and strong points in each others plan.

¶ We shall not endeavor to lay before our readers the plan of the battle and its consummation in detail. It is not the intention of the writer to tell as if we were acquainted with all the movements of Brigade and Division Commanders, during a day or week of conflict. That is a task for the best of Generals, or the learned historian. The story of the Campaign has been well told by General Rosecrans himself, in Magazine Articles. "Cist: Army of the Cumberland" has a good description of the campaign and Battle, lasting from Dec. 26, 1862, until Jan. 3, 1863, eight days in all.

¶ We wish to state here, that there were thirty-three Brigades of Infantry and Cavalry in the Army of the Cumberland in the advance on Murfreesboro. Each Brigade was supported by a Battery of Artillery of six guns, ranging from ten to twenty-four pounders.

The Brigades, were composed of from three to five regiments each, which would perhaps average four hundred and fifty men each. The Batteries would not average over sixty five men for duty. For a complete and truthful description of a days battle, along a line of from one mile, to five or eight miles in length, one must necessarily rely upon the reports of individual commanders of Brigades, Regiments and Batteries. These reports were often made up when the importance of the occasion had not dawned upon them, and too little was said at one place, and too much at another, which garbled the meaning of these documents.

Thousands of instances can be pointed out in the Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, from Reports of both Federal and Confederate officers, in substantiation of this statement. They did not realize at the moment that their

written reports would become Public Documents, which would be carefully scanned by future historians, as the basis of their account of the struggle.

The general tone of these reports are correct. But there are so many versions of the story, one is led to think that there was usually but a small part of any battle reported.

We will endeavor to give the reader an idea of the general plan of battle, and the occurrences which came under the immediate notice of the writer, or were well known facts among us at the time.

¶ The mist which made dense the atmosphere on Dec. 30th, was augmented by the artillery duelling and musketry of skirmish firing; the smoke making the air more dense near the earth.

This was probably more an advantage to General Rosecrans than to Bragg, as the Confederate line had been studied for defense and attack; rifle pits were dug, and they were well intrenched behind them.

The Federal Army was maneuvering for position in front of these intrenchments and seeking to draw them out to battle on open ground, or drive them beyond them by making them untenable. The day was passed on this part of the line with but little of note, in our command. A few wounded men from the skirmish line, or troops moving and shifting about, as is always the case where an army is preparing for battle, being the principal feature of the day.

¶ Many writers have essayed to describe the feelings and impulses of soldiers as they are led to battle. For my own part, I have seen no description of the motives, impulses, or mental struggles that moved and swayed and influenced us in the work that was before us.

We judge others by our own motives and actions, only in a greater or less degree, according to the temperament, or constitution of the subject.

The remark is often heard, that after the first volley was fired, all fear and excitement

left the soldier, and he went to work as if used to the business.

We want to put it upon record here, that with an experience on battle-fields and in war for four years, in all that time we did not see a single case of such cold-blooded indifference.

That story was manufactured by some one who was never in battle, and never knew anything of the subject on which he had been questioned, but to which he must make a reply or expose himself. Many men whose names are carried on the rolls of some military organization, were never in battle, and so gained all their experience by hearsay; thus were of that class ever ready to make that old sterotyped answer; it was widely circulated, and generaly beleived without question.

The Old fighters, who were oft engaged; the ones who were ready for duty; possessors of scars received in conflict, were not the large part of each command.

We have often thought of the Army as it pushed it's way southward, and compared it to a huge Serpent, whose head was the part to be feared, while the body and tail-end were drawn out to an almost interminable length.

The army with its route of communication and supply; the rail-roads, wagon roads, and water ways; with their numerous defenses; the depots of supplies, the commissaries, storehouses, hospitals, and all their aggregation, went to make up the great body of the serpent that had little or no venom in it — while the head must defend the whole anatomical structure, or perish.

We beleive we echo the sentiments of ninety-nine hundreths of those who made up the rank and file of the fighting regiments, which composed the aggressive head of the reptile, when we say there was no exultation in the prospect of a battle, except we could see peace for the millions yet unborn.

There was no rejoicing over, or indignities practiced on the vanquished or captured, for we regarded them as erring brethren.

Do not tell me that where one hundred thousand brave men are met in mortal combat, and upon which the fate of nations hangs in the balance, that the pulses do not bound, ... brains throb, and hearts quail for fear.

There cannot be one, but must feel himself stirred to the depths of his soul, or else he is a brutish man. The air was full of tokens of death.

The report of each gun was the rattling of coffins; of clods; of dry bones; the death-rattle of strong men gasping.

The pains of death were upon every man, but they made no moan. Each saw as with the eye of prescience the thousands struggling, maimed in body and limb; tortured with wounds and thirst; hunger and fatigue; heat and cold; or dying in the midst of the conflict.

They saw and heard the weeping and anguish of mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers. The shriek of each shell, was the wailing of widows and orphans, or the cry of a lost soul.

Did anyone think at such times? Yes! Thoughts were multiplied and magnified. The brain was in a whirl and a life time was passing in each moment; days were concentrated into a point of time; — while time itself was annihilated.

When the battle broke over our heads and around us on every side, the thunderous noise; the horrible din; blood-curdling yells; commands of officers; blare of bugles; galloping of horses, and the rattle of artillery wheels, as they rushed madly into position; — these, and a thousand other sights and sounds, sent a chill of terror to the heart of every man.

The troops bivouaced in line of battle on the ground occupied during the day of Dec. 30th. Men slept soundly, and the night passed silently. On the 31st, we were all astir

long before day, awaiting an attack along our entire front. General Rosecrans plan was to make a strong demonstration on his extreme left flank, with Crittenden's Corps, by sending it to the east side of Stone River, and drive all of the enemy from that part of the line, and occupy Murfreesboro, which was almost directly in rear of their line of the 30th.

Bragg's plan was laid down on the same general principles; Except, he was to assault the Federal line at one of its strong points, while Rosecrans expected to find a weak and vulnerable place. Each made a move on the others right. Bragg's forces had been in motion very early in the morning, and were ready for an attack at the earliest moment of daylight. McCook's men had been roused before day, and awaited in line of battle, till day was well upon them. They then stacked arms and, in some instances, began to get breakfast, or to water and feed the artillery horses. Here was a fatal mistake. Just at the time when all should have been at their posts, the attack came. The rush was made in two or three lines deep. The skirmishers were driven in, and men tried in a manner to check the enemy's charging columns.

Confusion fell upon many of the commands; before order could be restored, the wave of battle swept along the whole front of Mc. Cook's Corps.

Crittenden's Corps was sent to the ford, nearly north of our position on the line, and Beatty's Brigade was across the river, going into line in the open fields bordering the stream.

The noise of battle grew louder each moment. The sun had not yet risen, and as the daylight advanced the roar increased, moving towards our part of the line.

Aides and Orderlies were galloping madly about in every direction, as we went

down over the banks of the stream and dashed across the shallow ford.

A staff officer rushed up to General Beatty and delivered an order, then gallopped away again. The Regiments were halted, about-faced, and went back again pell-mell until we arrived on the same ground, where we were in the early morning.

¶ As we came over towards the turnpike, a terrible spectacle met our view.

The Enemy was coming in heavy columns, driving our forces before them in great disorder.

Beatty's Brigade was the first to meet the shock, on this part of the line. The 19th Ohio was formed on the turnpike about 100 yards from the point where it crosses the railroad, with the 79th Indiana on our right, and the Kentucky regiments going into line beyond them. In the excitement of the moment, but little attention was paid to movement but the men came promptly into solid line, and the command was given to "commence firing"!

¶ Other troops were hurrying into position on our right, extending across the open fields into the woods beyond, where McCook Corps was reforming. Thomas Corps was also taking up a new position facing west to meet the exultant rebels who were still moving down upon us on our extreme right.

¶ When Beatty's Brigade opened fire, the enemy was pouring into and through a dense tract of Cedar timber about 200 yards west of our position. Their line of battle was soon obscured by the smoke of their guns, and towards this our fire was directed.

The effect was instantaneous. They stopped moving. Here was begun the action which was the turning point of an apparent defeat; and to what was finally the victory to our Arms.

Batteries of Artillery were going into position on the higher ground east of the railroad, and getting in excellent work, firing over the

heads of our troops in front. Immediately after the enemy received this check, the troops of General Thomas began to assume the offensive.

¶ Rosecrans seeing at once the overwhelming disaster which had overtaken Mc.Cook's Corps, abandoned his plan of attack on Bragg's right, and hurried Van Cleves division to the right on a new formation of his line, which extended in a semicircular manner from the rail-road across the turnpike, sweeping around westward of the pike and southward again, crossing the pike and eastward to the ford on Stone River.

¶ Beattys Brigade was again engaged and did excellent work, meeting every assault of the enemy with a firmness and determination that sent them back in disorder. The battle waged fiercely along the whole line with varying success. The defeat of Mc Cooks Corps, had presaged an easy victory for Bragg. But the stubborn resistance of Thomas and Crittenden was not so assuring. Rosecrans plan was to give his left wing his personal attention, But he was called back to his right, and assisted in the formination of the new line. His presence gave assurance and new confidence in their Commander, as he moved among them, or galloped from point to point. A slight wound on the head, and the blood trickling over his face made him a warrior whom they were well proud to own.

¶ Bragg was expecting the Federals to retreat to Nashville, after the battle of the 31st.

Rosecrans having lost 28 pieces of Artillery in the assault of Wednesday morning, and the rebel cavalry having swept around in the rear striking the wagon train and capturing and burning about two hundred wagons, running off the teams, and capturing many prisoners, while the battle was in progress at the front.

Everything was favorable to the success of the Rebel Army. They were superior to us

in numbers, and were flushed with victory

Some of Rosecrans General Officers, were ready to discontinue the fight; others of his regimental commanders had skulked away with a fragment of their commands.

Rosecrans Chief of Staff, Colonel J P Garasche, was killed late in the afternoon, being struck in the head with a shell. Brigadier General J W Sill, of Mc Cooks Corps, was killed early in the forenoon; and also Colonels G W Roberts, and J W Schaeffer, who were acting brigade commanders. Brigadier Gen's T J Wood and H P Van Cleve were wounded, and also Acting Brig Gen, E W Kirk. Brig Gen, August Willich had his horse shot under him and was captured. Rosecrans had lost in all, nearly seven thousand men in killed wounded and missing, in the days fight; and the battle was not yet over.

There was a council of war held at Rosecrans Head Quarter, with all his principal officers and military family, at which it was decided to remain and finish the fight next day, if there was any disposition on the part of the enemy to remain, and contest the issue.

The Rebels had been roughly handled, and were in bad condition, although claiming a victory. Victories so dearly bought, are usualy barren of results. They had lost heavily in killed and wounded, and were scarcely in shape to assume the offensive.

Rosecrans had received a reenforcement of two brigades which made up for nearly all his loss. All day Jan 1st 1863, the two armies were awaiting each other. Troops were moved about and new positions taken, and plans laid for another battle. The ammunition train was brought up, and our empty cartridge boxes again filled; broken regiments were reorganized and placed in line.

The artillery took on a new supply of ammunition

rations were issued to the men, and all preparation made for battle.

Bragg had expected, and we may well surmise, had hoped that the Federals would retire to Nashville. But by skillfully feeling for the lines of our forces, he became satisfied they still awaited him. Making certain that Rosecrans was ready, Bragg then turned his attention to the left wing of our Army, with the intention of crushing it as he had the right on Dec. 31st. The original plan of Gen. Rosecrans was still adhered to, viz: strike Bragg's right wing, and sweep into Murfreesboro behind him.

The two antagonists were each moving simultaneously upon each other.

There was skillful fencing and maneuvering on both sides, but no real fighting, except artillery dueling at long range, or an occasional volley of musketry, during the whole day of Jan. 1st.

Preparations were made for a retreat by placing all baggage on the wagons, and it was sent to the rear, and parked out of sight behind the timber.

No fires were made along the line during the day; all cooking being done in the rear behind the timber or in sheltered places.

There were no rifle pits dug by our forces; all the fighting so far had been done in open fields that were nearly level, with an uninterrupted view of from one half to one mile in range. The rebels were in possession of most of the ground fought over.

About 3 o'clock in the afternoon, Van Cleve's Division was sent over to the east side of Stones River, under the Command of Brigadier General Sam Beatty.

Two Brigades were placed upon the front line; Price's Brigade on the right, next to the river, Fyffe's Brigade on the left, with Beatty's Brigade in command of Col. Grider of the 9th Ky. as support. One Brigade of Palmer's Division, was posted on the extreme left

to protect our flank. Drury's, 3rd Wisconsin Battery, was posted in the rear of our line.

The advanced picket or skirmish line was well advanced in front, and occupied a crest or high ground next the river, from which if held by the enemy, our lines could be enfiladed and driven back to the west bank.

¶ There was but little demonstration on the east side of Stone River on the 1st, and we remained in comparative security. Our Wagons came up and left blankets and cooking utensils intrenching tools, etc., and immediately left, going back to the rear.

¶ On Jan. 2nd, there was more activity on both sides. The pickets or skirmishers were persistent, and kept up a spiteful encounter whenever an opportunity offered a good shot.

The Artillery on both sides were aggressive and exchanged shots at intervals, at different points along the line.

¶ About 8 o'clock A.M., the enemy opened a terrific fusilade of Artillery on Rousseau's Division, with four batteries concentrating their fire on Loomis' 1st Mich. Battery. This was replied to by Loomis and other batteries of our guns, which soon silenced them.

Bragg sent two brigades of Cavalry to support Breckenridge, and a strong force of Artillery to the East bank of Stone River.

¶ The lines remained quiet till near noon, and it was again evident that the enemy was preparing to assault in our front.

The skirmishers were more in earnest, and there was hurrying of Aides and Orderlies, as if in anticipation. Between 3 and 4 O'clock, P.M., a signal gun was fired from the Rebel Center on the West side of the River, in front of Bragg's Head Quarters, when the advance was begun. Where our skirmishers were stationed in front of Beatty's Division, the ground sloped gently away for a distance of six hundred yards, across an open field,

over which the rebels must cross before reaching our lines, or a point where they could inflict damage on us. The skirmishers held their position until driven from it by the skirmishers of Breckenridge's Div.

As our first line retired and was absorbed by the several commands, the Brigades of Jaffe and Price moved forward to the crest of the hill. The onslaught of the enemy by this time, was telling fearfuly on our ranks, both in front and in reserve. Wounded men were pouring to the rear, or being carried off. Beatty's Brigade led by Col. Grider was sent forward and were hotly engaged at close range, until finally compelled to abandon the field because of superior numbers.

The line was driven back in confusion to the west bank of Stone River, or farther down along the east side out of range of the enemy's guns. It was here that the writer received a musket shot through the right groin, and was disabled while crossing the river at the ford; he was part way over, having reached a small island on which at the time was growing a sycamore tree. The Enemy had cut off our retreat by appearing on the west side of the river in the stalks of corn, which covered the whole field on that side.

P It is to be hoped the reader will pardon us if we digress a little here, and recite a few of the circumstances which was our misfortune to witness as we lay here under the guns of the rebel lines.

We recall the fact that three of us were shot almost simultaneously within six feet of each other. A sergeant of the 59th Ohio was shot through the fleshy part of both thighs; another boy of about my own age had been wounded in the hand, and was crossing the river, when he was shot through both arms and his body, from side to side, and drofped in the stream. I can give no

account of the lad, further than to say that he dropped in the water, which was at this point, less than one foot in depth. An instant later Lieut. Reefy, of Co. F dashed into the creek, carrying the nineteenth Ohio flag in his hand which he thrust down into the water hiding it as securely as possible in the short time allowed him, about the roots of the sycamore tree and the creek bank.

A short end of the flagstaff alone was in sight, and this I rolled over and covered with the skirts of my overcoat and lower extremities.

Reefy then made a plunge for the opposite bank and ran for his life, with a shower of bullets spattering the rocks and trees on that side, up which he went on the jump, and escaped unhurt.

¶ It was only a moment or two until the 26th Tenn. Regiment formed in line of battle on the river bank, less than twenty feet from where we lay, and immediately opened fire on our forces.

Two of their men came onto the island where we were, and posting themselves behind the tree spoken of, fired at random, as skirmishers, at whoever was in sight. They were ugly and insolent in their talk to us, ordering us to get up and go to the rear of their line, which we insisted was impossible; as did also the Sergeant who was there with me. For about a half hour after our line had recrossed the river, the rebels made good use of their ammunition, and seemed to have a clear field before them.

Then our batteries opened on them with a tremendous cannonade from over fifty pieces, when an advance was made by the Division of General Negley, and the rallied Troops of Van Cleves Division, led by General Sam Beatty, driving the enemy back over the ground from which they had so lately retreated.

¶ The conflict was not long, but the slaughter on both sides was great.

The attack was made by Breckenridges Division, with two brigades of Cavalry on the extreme

right of Breckenridges line although they were not engaged in the fight, but held as reserves.

One Confederate color bearer with a small flag crossed the river and waved his standard defiantly at our line from behind a tree which stood near the shore. This man was captured with the flag, and I saw a mounted officer with it, riding along in front of our lines of reserves, on the west bank of the river. When the enemy had been driven away, we then made an effort to rise, and finally succeeded in getting on our feet with an old musket as a crutch to assist, and reached the west bank, dragged ourself up the steep rocky shore, to the high ground behind the house, where was posted a battery of Artillery it being the point against which the enemy had directed their charge.

The writer managed to hobble back a couple of hundred yards, where he was met by Sergeant Pratt, of his own Company, who took him in hand, placing him on a stretcher and carried him to the ambulances which were stationed near the river, a half mile in the rear of the battle ground. He was then carried back along the Murfreesboro pike about three miles and left upstairs in an unfinished frame house, on the east side of the road, which was designated as Sheridan's Division Hospital. He remained here one week, when a detail of an officer with a train of ambulances was sent out to collect all the wounded that could be found, belonging to the 19th Ohio. Lieut. Reed of Co. C was fortunate in finding us and we were hauled a half mile or more nearer to Murfreesboro and placed in a tent, at our own Division Hospital, and made very comfortable. He remained here about ten days, and was then sent to Nashville, and there put in General Hospital No. 18, nearly opposite the Head Quarters of General R.B. Mitchell, on Market Street. The hospital being in the Store room corner of Market and Church Street

There was about one hundred of my own Regiment in this building, which was under

the superintendence of our Major Surgeon, F. T. Hurxthall. There were others in the building of various commands, but the larger number was from our own.

The 19th Ohio had lost heavily in this battle, both on Dec 31st, and Jan 2nd following. The loss was in officers killed 3. men killed, 24. Officers wounded 3. men wounded, 122. captured and missing, 34. Total loss, 186. Killed and wounded 152. The regiment went into action with 449 men. This was perhaps a little above the average loss in the various regiments.

Rosecrans loss in his entire army was, Officers killed 92; Enlisted men killed 1441. Officers wounded, 384. Enlisted men wounded 6861. Total loss. 8778. or 20.03 % He lost in prisoners 3000 Total killed 1533. Total wounded 7245. Killed wounded and missing. 11.778.

We will spare our readers the account of our five months in various hospitals, on the battle field, in Nashville and New Albany Indiana. Or an account of the pain, suffering and disabilaties of the many serious cases, we met. But will return to the story of the regiment and its doings.

The battle of Jan 2nd closed as darkness came on. The rebels under Breckenridge had suffered a defeat, and serious loss. The whole army of Bragg was in a decimated, and broken condition; while Rosecrans had largely recovered from his sudden breaking up on Wednesday, Dec. 31st. There was confidence in our leader, and the General officers under him. The Federal line was advanced to the high ground occupied previous to the assault, and during the night, they threw up a line of earthworks to cover their front from another assault.

The enemy when the retreat began did not halt but passed on through Murfreesborough and only two brigades of dismounted cavalry confronted our line. During the night, Andersons brigade of Hoods division, was placed on their front line, and later Cleburnes division was sent over; the whole being under the command of the rebel Gen. W J Hardee. About midnight, after the fight on Jan 2 correspondence was begun between General Bragg and his Lieutenants, looking toward a retreat; so that before midnight of Jan. 3rd. his whole force was under way except a small cavalry force, which kept up a show in front of Murfreesborough, until Monday Jan. 5th, when they withdrew, closely followed by our cavalry under General D S Stanley. General Rosecrans moved his head quarters into Murfreesborough the same day, and the army went into camp around the town. It was at once strongly fortified, and made a Past of supply and a base for future operations. The dead were buried, and the wounded cared for, and all the disasters of the battle were repaired as far as possible.

The weather was clear and bright until Saturday P.M. when a change occurred, and

rain began falling, making the situation very uncomfortable for both armies.

Picket firing had been kept up all day by the enemy, which was a serious annoyance to our forces. Late in the evening, General Rousseau requested permission to dislodge the enemy and drive him back at a point east of the Murfreesboro pike, where they were intrenched to cover the passage of a ford.

With two regiments from his own Division and two from Negley's Division, he charged them at six P.M. and drove them out of their intrenchments. They then fell back across the river, and continued their retreat that night, with the main body of Bragg's army.

The falling rain and darkness prevented our forces from continueing in pursuit, or from reconnoitering: hence it was not known positively, that Bragg had retreated until it was discovered by our cavalry forces on Sunday, Jany. 4th. The rear guard of the enemy, consisting of a small cavalry force, remained in the vicinity of Murfreesboro until Monday morning, when they left to refoin the main body of the rebels, and to cover their retreat to Shelbyville.

¶ On the morning of Jan. 4th, rain and sleet were falling, the weather threatening to turn cold; so that the movement of infantry and artillery was impeded, except upon the macadamized turnpikes. It was considered impracticable to either show fight, or make vigorous pursuit in case they had withdrawn.

The day was spent by our forces in burying the dead, and in making such readjustment as was practicable under the circumstances; or in rendering aid and assistance to the wounded, who were scattered for miles around at the farms and residences, or in tents hastily set up near the scene of action.

¶ Bragg, withdrew his whole force

to the south bank of Duck River, with his head quarters at Shelbyville. His extreme left being at Columbia, his right at McMinnville, with his infantry and artillery in force at Wartrace, Tullahoma, and Shelbyville, about forty miles south of Murfreesboro.

¶ The Army of the Cumberland under General Rosecrans, after the Battle of Stone River, remained encamped all winter in the vicinty of Murfreesboro. The whole force was put in excellent condition, in the matter of equipment and discipline, excepting one particular — that troubled the Commander, and was a hinderance to any future operations. He felt that he was hampered because of the insufficiency of his Cavalry Arm, and the insecurity of his line of Communication northward, consisting of a single line of railroad from Nashville to Louisville, a distance of nearly two hundred miles, with the enemy's cavalry swarming round, and thoroughly scouting every foot of the whole distance. The Superintendent of the Louisville and Nashville R.R., in his report for the year from July 1st 1862, to July 1st 1863, shows that the road was in operation its whole length for seven months and twelve days. Every bridge and trestle work on the line, but five, had been destroyed; some were destroyed twice, and others three times. The track was torn up, tunnells blown up and burned out for a distance of several hundred feet. Stations and water tanks destroyed, Cars and engines ruined by wreck and by fire, and the supplies either carried off or burned.

¶ To remedy this in a measure, the War Dept. assigned the Cumberland River, with Forts Henry and Donaldson, to General Rosecrans Dept, thereby giving him another means of communication and source of supply. But even this had to be carefully patrolled, and fleets convoyed with gun boats

to keep it open. Navigation was uncertain at times, because of low water, and at such times attacks were frequently made upon the transport fleets; particularly in the neighborhood of the Harpeth Shoals, below Nashville. The Confederates at one time succeeded in capturing and destroying a fleet of transports, together with a large amount of valuable stores.

During the winter and spring months, numerous raids, reconnoisances, or incursions, were made into the domains of the enemy, none of which were productive of any great result; and in several cases were really disastrous, because of the tendency to lower the morale of our army, and at the same time increase the confidence of the rebels.

The Potomac Army had been a source of much comment by the troops of our Department: and now that the months were wearing away, and a period of inactivity seemed to have settled down upon us, it was a subject of Criticism, not only among ourselves, but the press of the North was engaged in it.

While the Army of the Cumberland was moving and actively campaigning, there was but little interference with its Commander, even when his own troops and subordinate officers were the most severe critics. But as June approached, affairs were brought to a climax in a correspondence between the General-in-Chief, Halleck, and General Rosecrans, which caused a breach between them.

Both Halleck, and Sect. of War, Stanton, pursued Rosecrans by a series of retaliations which it was in their power to inflict upon him, in withholding reenforcement of men and means; and also in urging him to make an advance into the enemy's territory, in the face of great difficulties and obstacles, which could only be known

by an officer commanding in person, with an accurate knowledge of the country and all its obstacles before him. Halleck, from a comfortable office in Washington, projected immense campaigns, on maps and charts, and designated routes, and plans for commanders of Armies, which were largely impracticable. Rosecrans was, now after the battle of Stones River, more than 200 miles from his base of supplies, with an immense force of rebel cavalry hovering on his flanks and rear. The Confederates had at this time, more than three times as many cavalry forces as we had. Rosencrans great desire was to have this arm of service enlarged, in order to be able to protect himself from their repeated depredations. On the other hand, the Washinton authorities were continually urging him to move his army against Bragg, and take Chattanooga. The almost insuperable obstacles which lay between Rosecrans Army and Chattanooga, was a mountain range of nearly fifty miles in width, comprising the main range and spurs, with a wide tract of foothills, and detached mountains. Chattanooga was on the south bank of the Tennessee river, which was, at that point, a half mile in width. Between, lay several smaller streams, viz: Duck and Elk Rivers.

¶ The mountain range was almost devoid of farms and offered no chance for subsistence or forage for animals. Hence a campaign in that region must necessarily require a month's rations for both man and beast, as well as heavy supplies of Ammunition, and other needful stores for troops enroute. The early spring months was no fit time to expect forage for animals, with part of the route on the high table lands, which are almost devoid of water. So that an army could with difficulty be sustained, or be expected to succeed in a campaign against a superior force.

¶ The inactivity of the Potomac Army, which lay almost under the eyes of the authorities at Washington, and which, at no time was so far away but it could be reached inside of

24 hours time had become proverbial; in fact, it was discussed in all its bearings, and had almost passed into belief that the great Army of Officers and civilians, who make up the population of Washington at all times, were actually afraid to have the Potomac Army venture far away on the search of Lees Army, because of the danger in getting lost, captured, killed, or badly defeated, which was too much of a risk to run. And then there would be nothing to hinder the rebels from walking right into Washington. So by common consent, with no other end in view, it remained in Virginia nearly all the time during the first three years of the war; while the Army of The Ohio, now the Army of the Cumberland, could go sweeping all over Kentucky, Tennessee, northern Mississippi and Alabama. And did do so, time and again. The Army of the Potomac, at the time of which we write, the Spring of 1863, was a force of not less than 150,000 effectives; While Rosecrans' whole force from Louisville to Murfreesboro would not exceed 60,000 men.

¶ The loyal people of the United States were shouting and clamoring at the President with the War Cry, "On to Richmond! while Halleck, and others in that department, in order to distract attention from that point, kept up a nagging system of warfare on Generals in all other departments; namely, Grant at Vicksburg; Burnside at Cumberland Gap, who had lately been placed in Command there, he having been unsuccessful in the Dept of Washington. So a great Naval demonstration was planned and an attack made on Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor Rosecrans who had now incurred the displeasure of Gen. Halleck, and through him of Sect. of War Stanton, in a letter replying to an offer of promotion, in which he (Gen. Rosecrans) intimated that promotion was to be given by purchase rather than merited.

His appeals to the War Dept. for men and material were ignored, or evaded by sophism, that was exasperating. However, as the months of Spring wore away and Summer came on, finding he was not likely to receive any assistance, he laid his plans for a forward movement. Grant at Vicksburg, at this time, had the rebel army under Pemberton completely invested, and had united with Halleck and Stanton in urging Rosecrans forward, to keep Bragg's army employed, prevent him from reenforcing the rebels in Mississippi and thus compel him to raise the siege.

¶ The Corps Commanders of The Army of The Cumberland were against any forward movement. But Gen. Garfield, Gen Rosecrans' Chief-of-Staff, urged him to assume the offensive as a political measure, and to allay the rising feeling against him.

Measures were at once undertaken to get all his forces together and, as far as possible, recoup his losses sustained at the Battle of Stone River

¶ The troops in the field had, some months previous to this, received an addition to their ranks by drafting; these were largely nine months men, and their term was about expired, which would materially reduce his force of effectives.

The wounded men, many of whom by this time had recovered, were all sent back to their Commands, and every man who was fit for service was pushed to the front.

The writer, after treatment in Hospital in Nashville until early in May, was sent north and placed in hospital at New Albany, Ind. This hospital was in charge of Surgeons who were not in Army Service and they had no authority over the men to discharge or furlough them.

When orders came to send every man who was able to travel back to the front,

we were among the number who were sent forward to refoin the command, and found them about a mile east of Murfreesboro, and about the same distance from the place where we were wounded on Jan 2".

P The Village or town had been made a Post of supplies, and was strongly fortified;

The army had not been idle, although it had accomplished nothing in Campaigning: discipline was vigorously enforced; the men were in excellent health and spirits; well fed, well clothed, and except in numerical strength, were fully up to the standard.

P There had been but little aggression on the part of the Army of the Cumberland; it had turned all its attention to repairing and keeping open the railroad to Louisvill, and to the opening of the Cumberland River as an additional line of supplies, by patroling with gunboats, and detachments of mounted men along the route at certain points.

P The Army of the Potomac under General McClellan, with Halleck as commander-in-chief, was a huge toy; used apparently for the amusement and aggrandizement of the Powers at Washington and elsewhere; and because of its being in such easy reach of the authorities it was hampered in all its movements.

Halleck was a theorist. With rule and compass he measured distances and planned campaigns upon maps, that presented no natural barriers, nor obstacles except distance, — if one might be allowed to judge from his orders. Sect Stanton was a man of vigorous action; and both Halleck and Stanton were men of settled convictions and their minds made up in regard to the Army and its movements, they were unyielding and inflexible in their orders.

We feel it but due to The Army of the Cumberland and also its Commander, that this explanation be made and fully understood in all its details by the general public, in order that there may be a better understanding of the Campaign for

the possession of Chattanooga and all East Tennessee. Notwithstanding, the apparent disaster of Chicamauga, which followed, the objective was gained; and our Army was firmly planted south of the Tennessee River, in a position from which it never receded, and moved forward continuously from Victory to Conquest.

As a last resort, before General Rosecrans abandoned all hope of assistance from the War Dept, he sent General, Lovell H. Rousseau, as an ambassador to Washington, carrying letters and recommendations, together with offers of assistance from Governors Yates of Illinois, and Curtin of Pennsylvania, asking for reinforcements for his department, and in particular, that he have an increase of his cavalry or mounted force. Stanton read the request and replied to Gen. Rousseau in his customary rough, insolent manner: "I would rather you had come to ask for the Command of the Army of the Cumberland, than to ask for reinforcements for General Rosecrans. He shall not have another d——— man"!

This hostility against the Commander of the Army of the Cumberland was soon apparent; nor did it cease entirely on his removal. It cropped out at intervals and in unexpected places, and in various guise, even down to the moment when they fought their last battle, and annihilated completely, in a fair field fight, their enemy at Nashville. With all the impediments placed in its way, and in the face of all the difficulties which surrounded its Commanders, It moved steadily, grandly to every performance of duty, even after it was reduced by more than one half of its numerical strength.