GRANT UNDER FIRE.

By Theodore R. Davis.

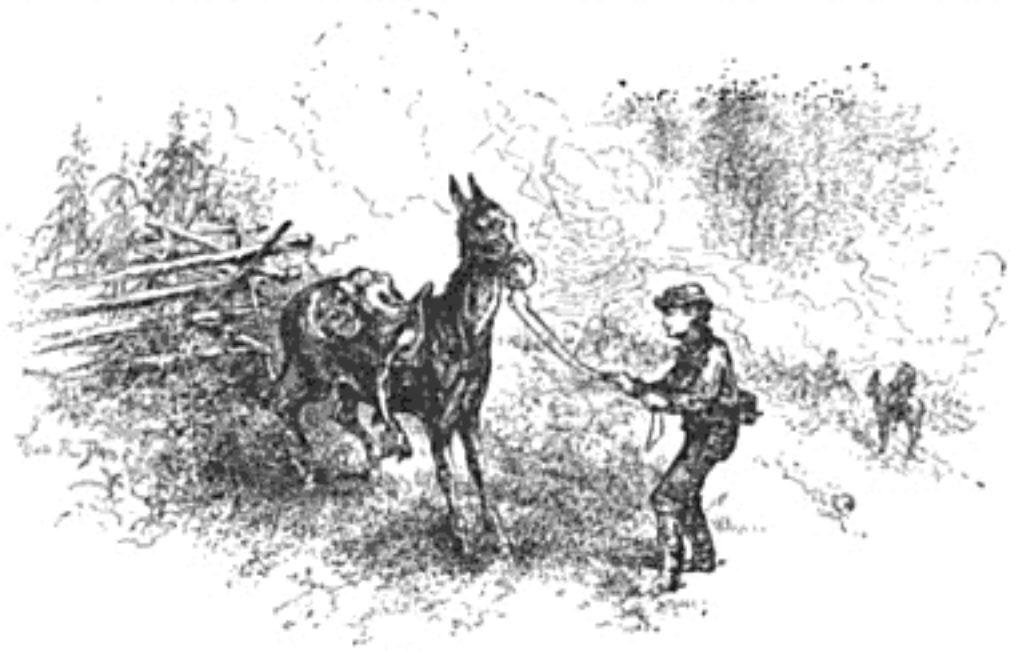
GENERAL GRANT, in the field, accomplished his solution of problems pertinent to the situation with such little disturbance of routine that only results explained the means. And his unostentatious method enabled him to make his way through camp and campaign-ground so entirely without sensation that, trusting appearances only, the odd sobriquet "Old Useless," given him affectionately by his Army of the Tennessee, did not appear in the fulness of its subcomical irony until the battlefield climax of each undertaking was wrought

Theodore Russell Davis was born in Boston, in 1841, and educated at the Rittenhouse academy, Washington. At seventeen he began illustrating for the pictorial press, with which for thirty years he was prominently connected. As a field-artist through our civil war, Mr. Davis gained the friendship of nearly every prominent military and naval commander. His sketch and note books embrace a store of material not elsewhere in existence. Of the artist's field-work, General Logan wrote, "Unquestionably Mr. Davis saw more of the war than any other single person." He witnessed the first shot fired at Fort Sumter, and throughout the war was present and under fire in more than a hundred land and naval battles. In his studio on the beach at Asbury Park, New Jersey, was designed the peculiarly American service which on state occasions graces the president's table in the White House. This porcelain service was made at Limoges, in France, and has a world-wide reputation. The two battle cycloramas Missionary Ridge and Atlanta originated in the beach studio.

out by the persistent "Old Useless."

Soon after the war, General Grant handed their diplomas to a graduating class of West Point cadets. On the morning of graduation-day, as I stood on the steps of Roe's hotel, "talking old times" with the general, a quick hand was laid on my shoulder — emphasis to the newcomer's brisk "Seen Old Useless to speak to him, Davis?" "You certainly remember our old Battery-Captain McMurray, General," was the response. And Grant's eye twinkled while he shook hands with the astonished artilleryman, whose face vied in color with his shoulder-straps.

There was a dearth of photographic portraits of General Grant in the earlier years of the war. And when an illustrated paper printed, with the title "Major-General Ulysses S. Grant, U. S. A.", a



"MACK," OF THE COMMERCIAL.

picture of goodly size, a fair portrait of "Bill" Grant, the beef contractor — the jovial William clad in much regulation uniform and mounted upon a sort of horse, caparisoned with equipments impossible to the General Grant whom soldiers knew — men of the western army regarded the incident as a magnificent joke.

"Describe General Grant to us! How does he impress you?" was an ever-ready request of friends at home. Grant did not impress, and it was necessary to explain his method and work to describe the quiet man, whose dress and requirements were habitually the simplest imaginable.

I think that General Sherman's response to Grant's sincere letter to himself and General McPherson, when Grant was made lieutenant-general, successfully condenses the thoughts that come to those who were near General Grant in army life.

Marked "private and confidential," the letter says: * * * "I believe you are as brave, patriotic and just as the great prototype Washington; as unselfish, kind-hearted and honest as any man should be; but your chief characteristic is the simple faith in success you have always manifested, which I can liken to nothing else than the faith a Christian has in a Savior. This faith gave you victory at Shiloh, and Vicksburg. Also, when you have completed your best preparations, you go into battle without hesitation, as at Chattanooga—no doubts, no reserves; and I tell you it was that made us act with confidence. I knew, wherever I was, that you thought of me, and that if I got in a tight place you would come, if alive." There is substance in the last sentence—Grant was the friend in need.

My own acquaintance with General Grant began in 1862, and subsequently I had the fullest opportunity to know as much of him as any one could, by intimate association at his camp headquarters and amid dangers of the battlefield, where, if under no other condition, it was possible to feel that you were really very well acquainted and on excellent terms with one of the most vigorous-minded men conceivable.

The campaign ended by the surrender of Vicksburg will certainly increase in interest and importance as the facts connected with it are better known. It is with regret that I see the impracticability of mentioning more than a few of the many incidents which General Grant always found pleasant to chat over with those who were fellow-participants in the weeks of preparation and months of apparently unprofitable work in the muddy bottom-land fringing the farther bank of the mile-wide current that separated Grant's army from the soldiers of Pemberton's command, camped on healthy hillsides in and about Vicksburg.

But a crossing was successfully made, and a secure lodgment effected on the east bank of the Mississippi, thirty miles be-

low Vicksburg, surprising the Confederates, and, I think, astonishing even Grant's soldiers, whose main burden was ammunition and confidence in their commander — "Old Useless" as he was. Grant himself walked into the State of Mississippi without other baggage than the tobacco in his pocket, and was presently contented with the horse, a beast of mild ambition, that General A. J. Smith's soldiers ran down and furnished with an equipment such as teamsters ordinarily ride with. Even Assistant Secretary of War Charles A. Dana footed his way to the battlefield of Port Gibson to make observations from chance points of vantage. The special correspondents were better equipped, for soon after landing, the few that were left from the recent coup, by the Confederates, of the writers Albert D. Richardson, Junius Henri Browne and R. T. Colburn branched out with the skirmishers and secured themselves against the fatigue of walking by finding something to ride. The parent of interviewing, "Mack," of the Commercial, found a mule, and later, to Grant's infinite amusement, illustrated how by strategy a mule backward in disposition, frighted by battle-noise, could be tied to a rail-fence. General Grant afterward said such tender treatment as "Mack" bestowed on the mule showed how some tough subjects may be best handled to induce a retrograde movement expected to represent an advance.

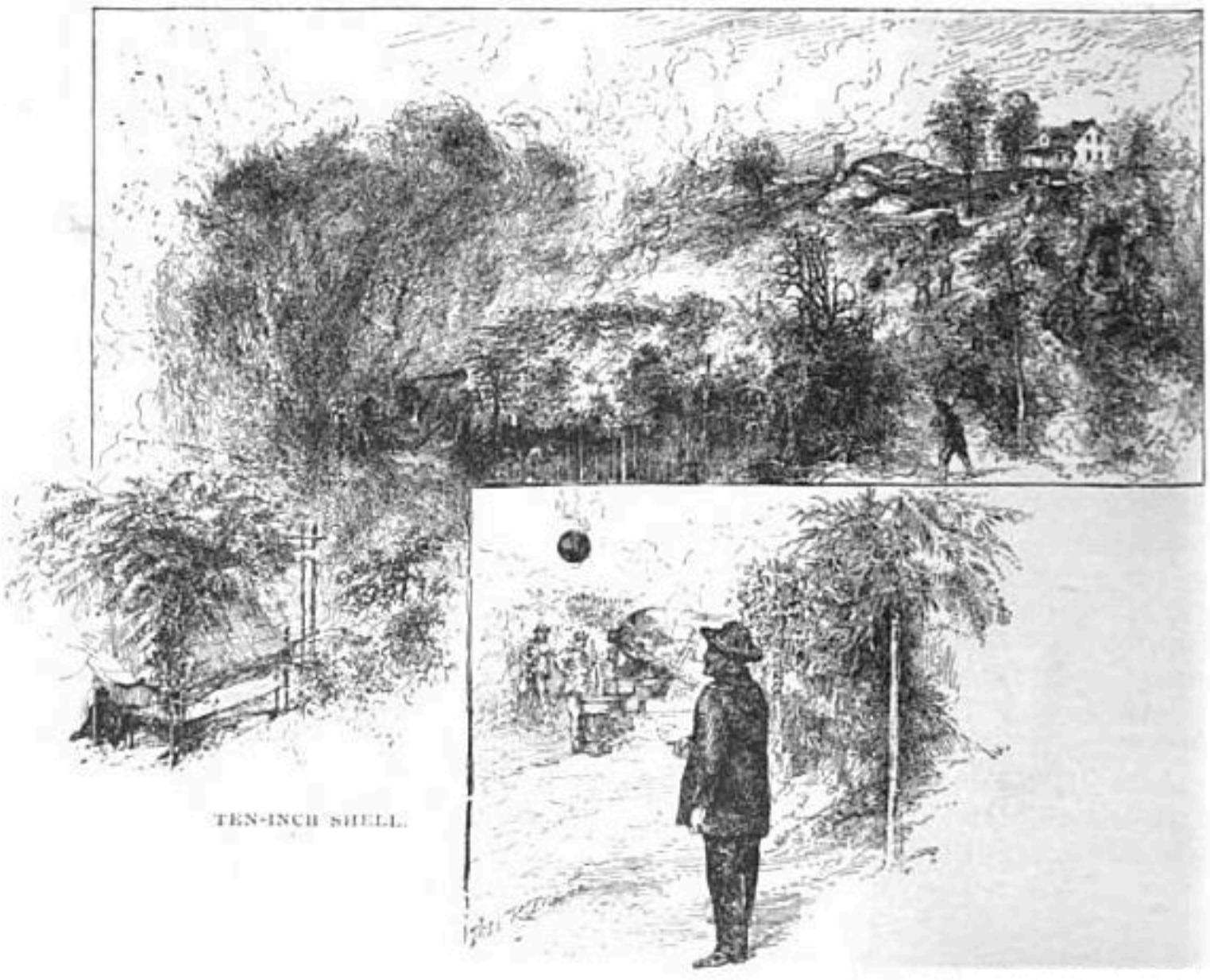
It is a temptation to linger about this battlefield of Port Gibson long enough to leave a few anecdotes in print. General Grant's luncheon came to him that day, because some surgeons abandoned their impedimenta, among which was a goodly stock of comestibles, upon retiring for consultation, from a snug nest on the edge of a canebrake, through which a few bullets, by sound multiplied into many, went clicking noisily into the impenetrable growth of fish-poles. At luncheon I did not offer my canteen, after Rawlins' ominous frown as he sniffed the possibility of its contents, upon learning the source of our food. Night fell on the field of Port Gibson at moonrise, and as the camp-fires grew in brilliancy and number General Grant, without fire or supper, was seated on the ground, surrounded by a group of men, not all of whom have yet passed away, and dictated brief orders and dispatches to Lieutenant-Colonel James H. Wilson of his staff, who wrote by moonlight, amid silence, broken only by his chief's crisply spoken words. The bivouac that night was afterward described by General Grant as fitting exactly the peculiarly rough experiences of the outset of a campaign then without a parallel.

FRED'S BEAUTY.

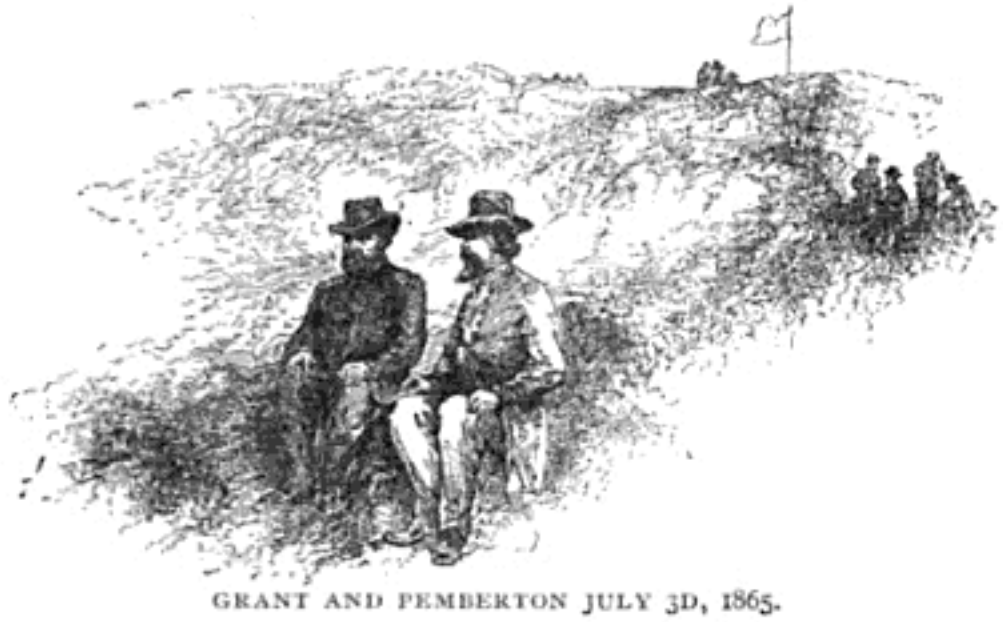
Major-generals, staff-officers and civilians lay slumbering in a row, packed too closely for movement without creating extended disturbance. Every foot of the slab-floored porch of an unpretentious log house was occupied or spoken for. Corn-stalks from adjacent fodder-piles were both mattress and covering for those not blessed with overcoats. My immediate bunk-mates that night were, on one side a major-general who was quiet, and on the other a noble-hearted governor who was not. This was Governor Yates, of Illinois, who came in the small hours of the night to rest after tireless work among the wounded. When the governor claimed with cheerful voice the space by pre-arrangement reserved for him, I was roused by his "Well, Dick, this is the downy where you this night court the balmy." Then as if a wedge he consolidated the row, and his hearty laugh at the circumstance shook the sleepers several generals away.

On the following morning two portly carriage-horses, white always in color, but obviously silvered with years, were brought to the scene of bivouac. "Voters" said Colonels Rawlins and Wilson simultaneously. "Age is usually entitled to respect," suggested General Grant, with a quiet smile, when told that Mr. Dana, who was not then the excellent judge of horses he is today, had requested a gentle horse, and these were subjects for his choice. The assistant secretary of war, quite undisturbed by banter, made his selection, and the remaining member of the ancient pair which, according to General Grant, would not run away, was devoted temporarily to the transportation of little Fred, the general's twelve-year-old son, who grown now to manhood is Colonel F. D. Grant, United States minister to Austria.

Mr. Dana rested comfortably upon the rotund back of his mount, but the toes of little Fred's shoes pointing skyward created sympathy; which, presently acting on a contraband's information that proved reliable, led to a visit to the Jeff and Jo Davis plantations, on a point of land made by a great bend of the Mississippi midway between Bruinsburg and Vicksburg, the landing and objective points of the campaign. Among the results of this excursion was the introduction at Grant's headquarters of a Shetland pony whose prominently ugly appearance provoked the general's mirthful criticism, notwithstanding the beast was "Fred's Beauty," and Mr. Dana, for whose



TEN-INCH SHELL.



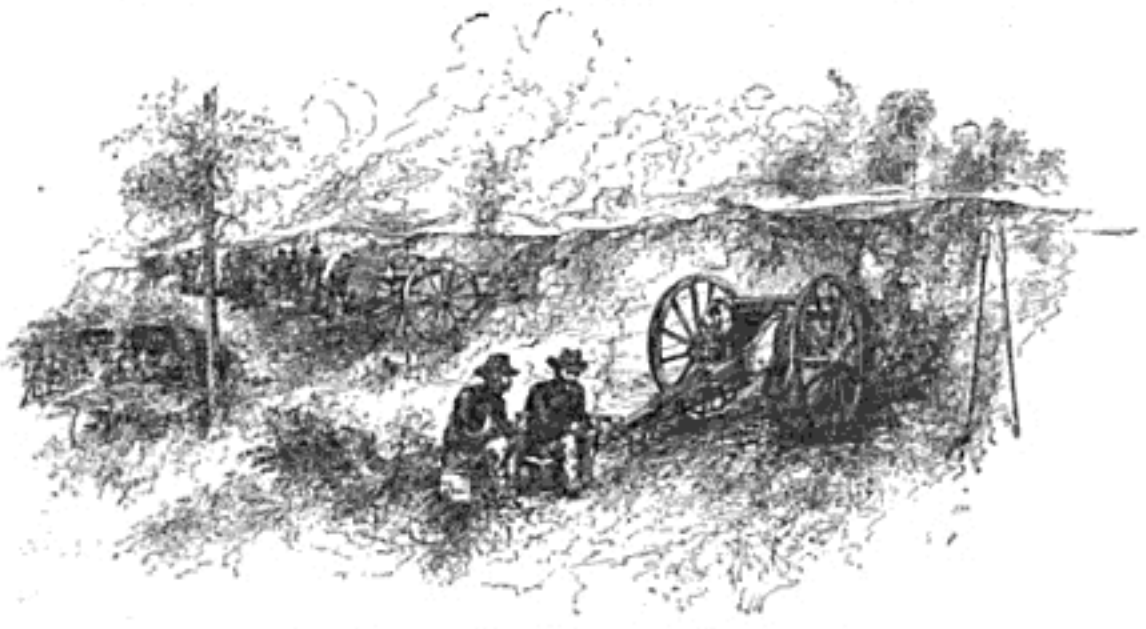
GRANT AND PEMBERTON JULY 3D, 1865.

opinion Fred had unvarying regard, good-naturedly concurred in much that only Fred saw in his new and more suitable mount.

General Grant's own horses and baggage did not reach him until several days of the campaign had elapsed, and his pleasure at being again suitably mounted was noticeably greater than even the consciousness that many hardships would be modified. Certainly up to this time General Grant had frequently been in situations to envy comforts readily reached by the opportunities of private soldiers. His cheerfulness was unwonted, and to Captain De Golyer, a favorite battery-commander, the general's "Git up and hurry things!" culminated at Champion's Hill, the principal and severest battle of the campaign, when after halting a few moments near De Golyer's battery, then in action, and looking steadily toward a point of heavy conflict, Grant put spur to his horse and made haste to reach the scene of danger by a route which was direct, if obstacles were not considered. "Didn't he look happy, and didn't he act so?" suggested De Golyer.* "And the staff got left, too." It was one of the few times that I ever saw General Grant in haste. The incident made a page in history.

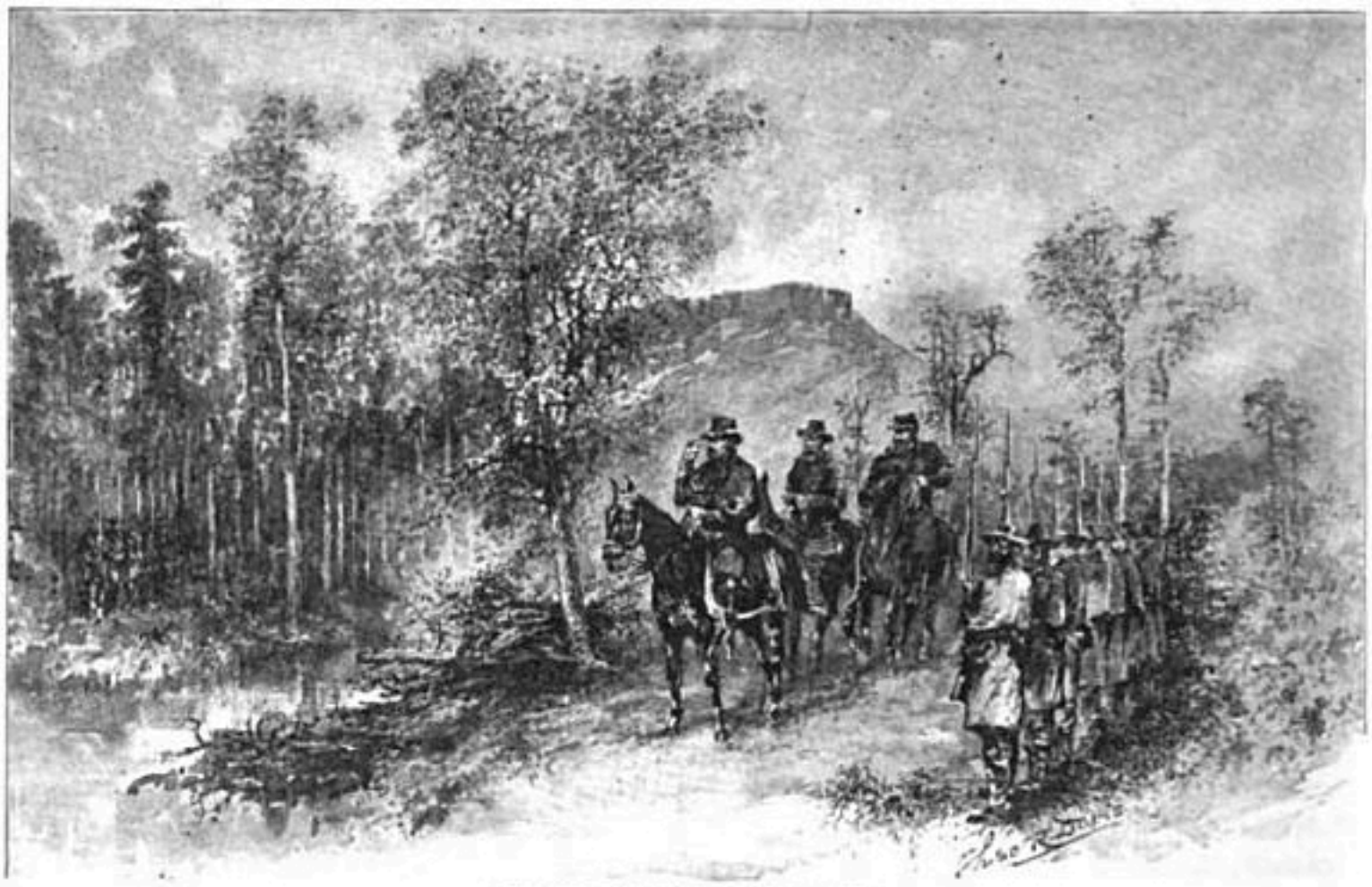
General Grant's quick perception and prompt action in moments of exceeding danger were shown one afternoon during the siege of Vicksburg, as he came sauntering on foot toward the navy battery on Logan's front. The locality was known as the "Shell-basket," from the frequency ten-inch mortar-shells dropped deep into the earth, which when the explosion came was thrown into masses and clouds of dust that obscured everything in the vicinity for some moments.

In this instance a few of us had watched for several seconds the flight of the shell, but the general saw the bomb only the moment before it struck, and its windage threw him to the ground. He was unhurt, and conscious that time was precious, before the explosion he had rolled himself sufficiently away to escape shock, but not the earthy shower—from the dust of which he presently emerged, intently considering an unlit cigar. "Logan," he said cheerily to that general, who in the full bloom of a clean white shirt hastened to him, "how can you keep so clean in such a dusty place?" This escape was followed by another a few afternoons later, when a shell landed by the front pole of the awning before Logan's tent; and eight generals, Grant among them, rolled hastily out of the shelter to meet uninjured when the dust cleared away from the recent place of conference. Such happenings did not deter General Grant from



THE GENERAL IN POWELL'S BATTERY.

*At the most advanced point of the Vicksburg line, I handed De Golyer Harper's Weekly illustrating his battery at Champion's Hill. The captain presently went to an apparently safe place, and while there interested in the paper, was struck by a rifle-bullet which caused his death.



GRANT ON THE PICKET LINE.

frequently visiting a point that commanded not only a desirable view, but the key point which, when projected work should have been finished, would cease to bar the situation.

Powell's battery, then the compact but dangerous snuggery of the present chief of the United States Geological Survey, was frequently the loitering-place of General Grant during his siege of Vicksburg. Intrusive rifle-bullets were a feature there, but even the occasional introduction of explosive specimens did not incline General Grant to make his calls less frequent, and it was a usual thing to see General Grant and Major Powell seated for an unconcerned chat in the battery, while officers and soldiers not at the moment on duty retired to safer locations near by.

General Grant's headquarters in front of Vicksburg were less pretentious than those of his corps-commanders, and his mess—I speak from personal experience—was unnecessarily inferior as to viands and equipment. Of this Grant was contentedly conscious, and he reverted to the fact when a guest at McPherson's excellent mess, with its superabundance of decorated French china treasure-trove, dug up by soldiers of the Seventeenth corps, while burrowing with pick and spade toward fortifications in their front.

Work at General McPherson's headquarters was never lax, although this group of cane-bowered tents, thrifty in keep and surroundings, was distinctively the social headquarters of the Army of the Tennessee, which General Grant enjoyed visiting at evening to listen with pleased attention to songs of staff-officers and their visitors. There was then at McPherson's a portly man, whose skin showed a tinge of negro blood. His name, Blake, was presently lost in that of "Old Shady" the title of a song General Grant invariably asked for, when Blake's skilful fingers swept sweet strains of prelude from an excellent guitar. The airs of Blake's songs were generally simple melody. Music which Grant preferred, and enjoyed even more than the admirably-rendered songs of Jules and Frank Lombard, who, when for a short time guests at McPherson's, went one night to the advanced saps, after a negotiation to "quit shooting for a while," and for a half-hour serenaded the beleaguered Confederates, some of whom instantly recognized the voices of the singers and called for special songs. General

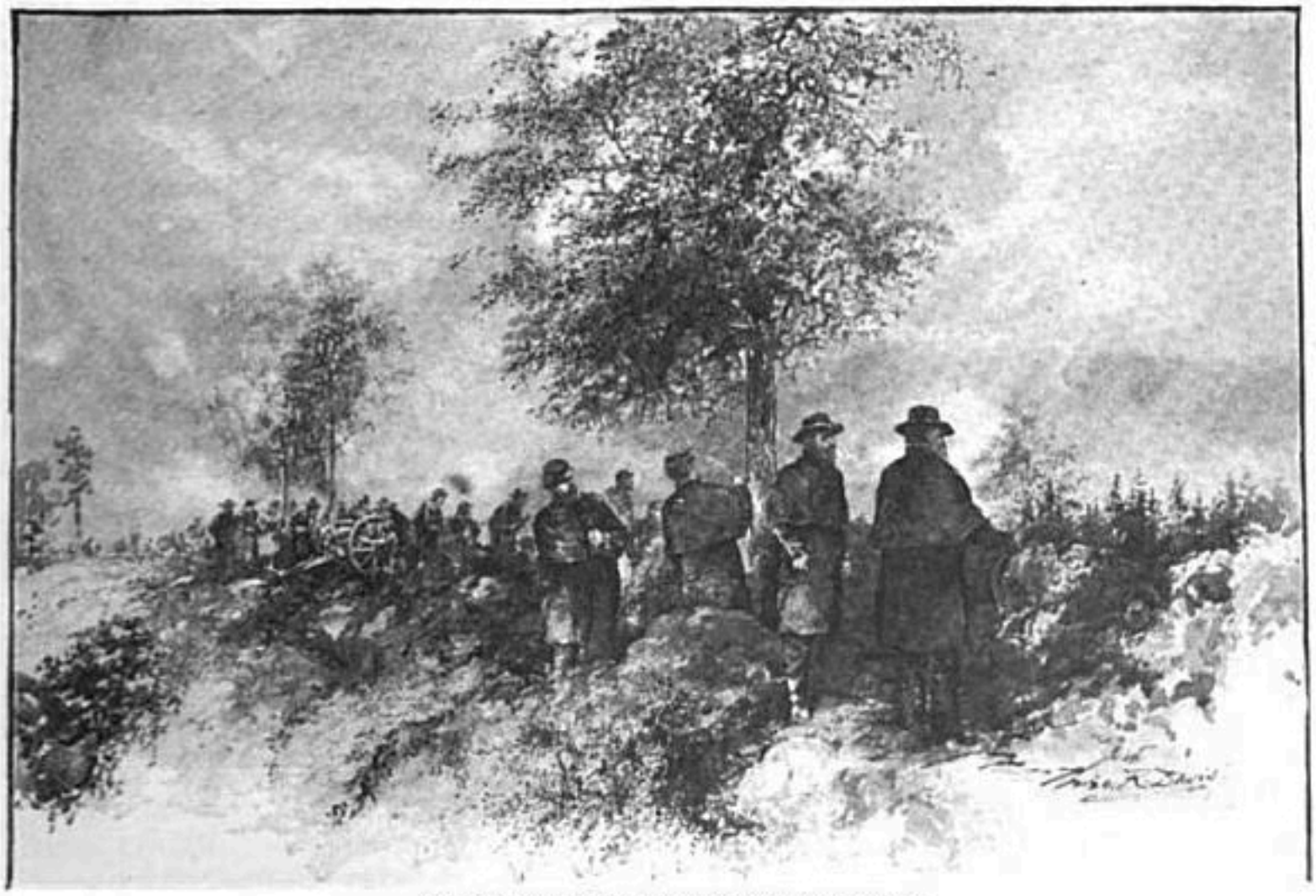
NOTE:—In a foot-note to the article published in the COSMOPOLITAN, With Sherman in his Army Home, mention was made of the surviving members of General Sherman's personal mess. The name of Charles G. Eddy, the confidential cipher-clerk, was unintentionally omitted. Mr. Eddy's home is Roanoke, Va. He is a vice-president of the Norfolk and Western R.R.

Grant's choice was as usual "Old Shady."

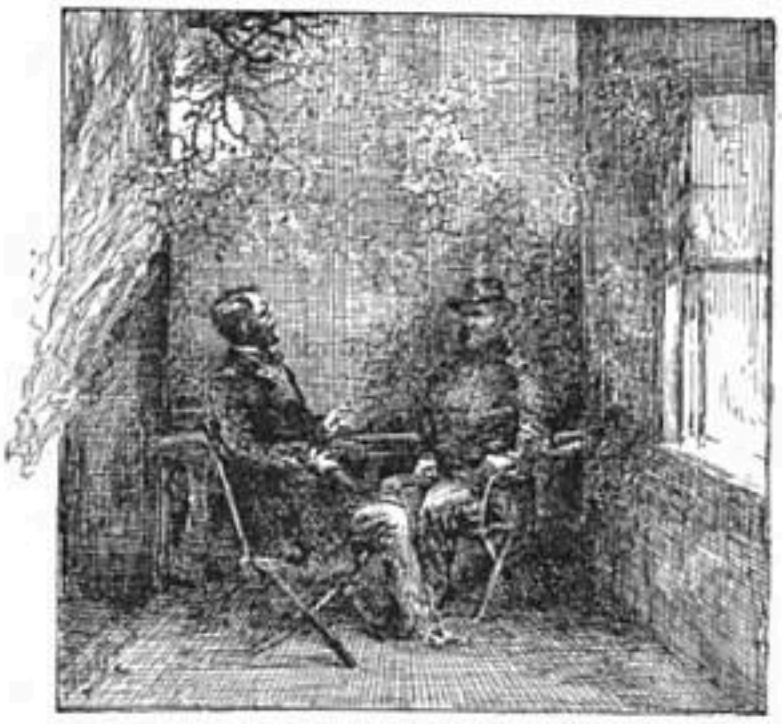
This incident happened not far from the point where a few days later the interview between Generals Grant and Pemberton resulted in the surrender of Vicksburg. And the memorandum-sketch for the illustration herewith was made beneath the shading limbs of the Vicksburg oak, with the sturdy forms of Mr. Dana and Colonel Rawlins as screen for pencilling, which if observed might have been mistaken for an effort to gain topographical memoranda.

General Grant rode into Vicksburg on the forenoon of July the 4th, and that day I left his army, by the first dispatch-boat, in company with Mr. Dana. We had with us the son of Admiral Dahlgren, an invalid from injuries received while on duty with the navy battery in Logan's Shell-basket. And I next met General Grant late in October, when, as commander of the military division of the Mississippi, the general came to Chattanooga to work out his next problem. His method had not changed, but owing to Burnside's critical situation at Knoxville, 120 miles away, General Grant, although suffering from an injury received during the summer in New Orleans, pushed both himself and others with increasing vigor. Painful hours in the saddle were spent in personal reconnaissance of the rugged ground presently to be the theatre of historical scenes. Yet the general's bodily health steadily improved, and mentally he was exceptionally cheerful, and confident of successful outcome of the work confronting him. On the evening of my first meeting with General Grant in Chattanooga he surprised me by familiarity with my whereabouts after parting from his army at Vicksburg, and his questions were incisive as to the work and situation at Morris island and points near Charleston, illustrations of which I had made since the Vicksburg campaign. And when at his request the note-book was brought containing many memorandum-sketches that had not been elaborated for publication, both the general and Rawlins said quickly, "These clear up the situation far better than printed descriptions that have reached us."

I have mentioned Grant's examination of his surroundings at Chattanooga. They were thorough, although the attention even of his own army was not attracted to the fact that the general commanding had carefully conned the situation. Incidents were numerous during this recon-



GRANT AND THOMAS ON ORCHARD KNOB.

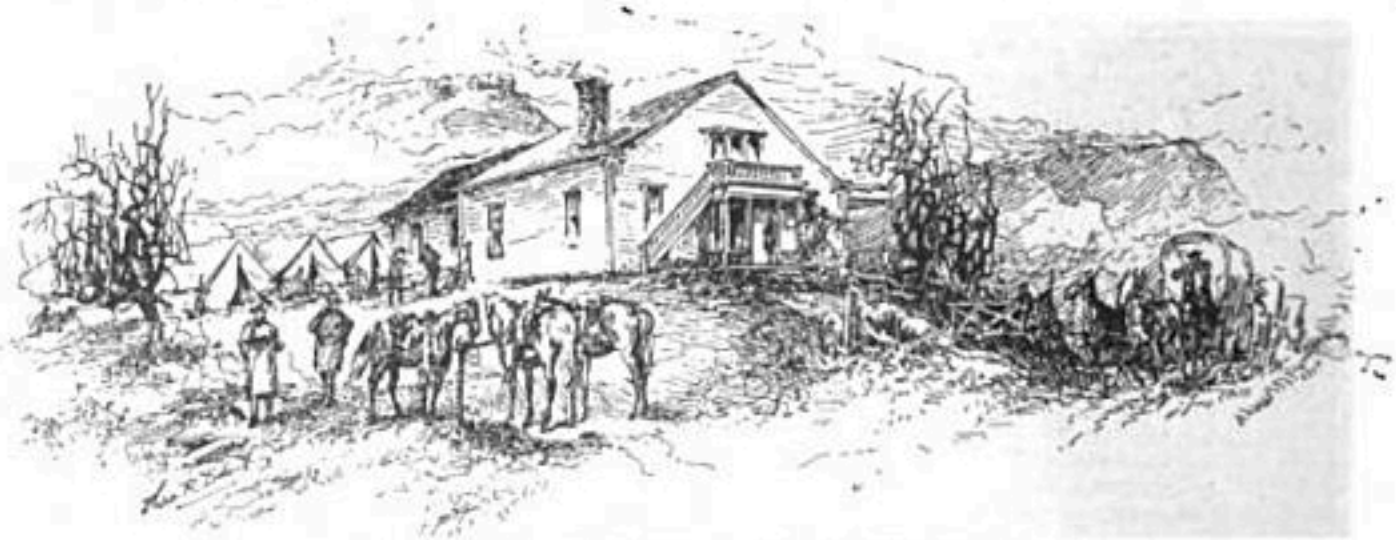


GRANT'S VISIT TO RALEIGH, APRIL, 1865.

naissance. One happened under the shadow of Lookout mountain, that was the subject of much banter between Johnny and Yank across the separating waters of Chattanooga creek, where invitations to turn out the guard for the Duke of Wellington, Napoleon Bonaparte and Julius Cæsar were frequent, after a soldierly act of respect to General Grant, in which the Confederate picket-guard had promptly joined the Union soldiers, whose subsequent statement that General Grant had just halted to acknowledge their salute was not credited. In referring to the situation, the general smiled as he said, "Haste under some circumstances is simple imprudence." Apropos of General Grant's perfect self-control in moments of danger, Mr. Charles A. Dana, who saw the battle of Missionary ridge from General Grant's standpoint on Orchard knob, in speaking of the scene recently, said: "Of the persons present, only Generals Grant and Thomas ignored entirely the shell that hurtled near enough to rend the branches above them. The rest of us ducked. Grant and Thomas did not. They were as immovable as the rocks among which they stood."

The evening of Grant's return from his trip around the world was spent chatting with him, in his Galena home, of army days and friends, and as from memory I wrote at his request the names of his old-time staff at Fort Donaldson, Grant aiding in recalling them, it was found to the general's surprise that all had passed away save Colonel Rowley, who was with us to pencil his own name beneath that of the general. Now no member of the staff survives.

A prominent trait of General Grant's character—one that is seldom mentioned, but for which there is abundant material to dwell upon at length—was his apparent ease in overlooking an injury of principal concern to himself. While he did not forget the wrong, thoughts of retroaction were not fostered. Even the injustice and indignity he more than once mentioned as being heaped upon him by General Halleck did not prevent concerted action with that general—without friction on General Grant's part—and retribution was unthought of. Grant's stout maintenance of friendship was well shown in his visit to Sherman in Raleigh, during the pendency of Johnston's surrender, when Grant sat for a long evening out on the moonlit porch of the gubernatorial mansion, then Sherman's headquarters, listening with good-natured attention to Sherman's hot words; and later, Grant's soothing influence was the power that controlled the actions of his lieutenant, brother-soldier and friend, whose name history, in placing their mutual actions in events, will ever link with his own.



GRANT'S HEADQUARTERS AT CHATTANOOGA.