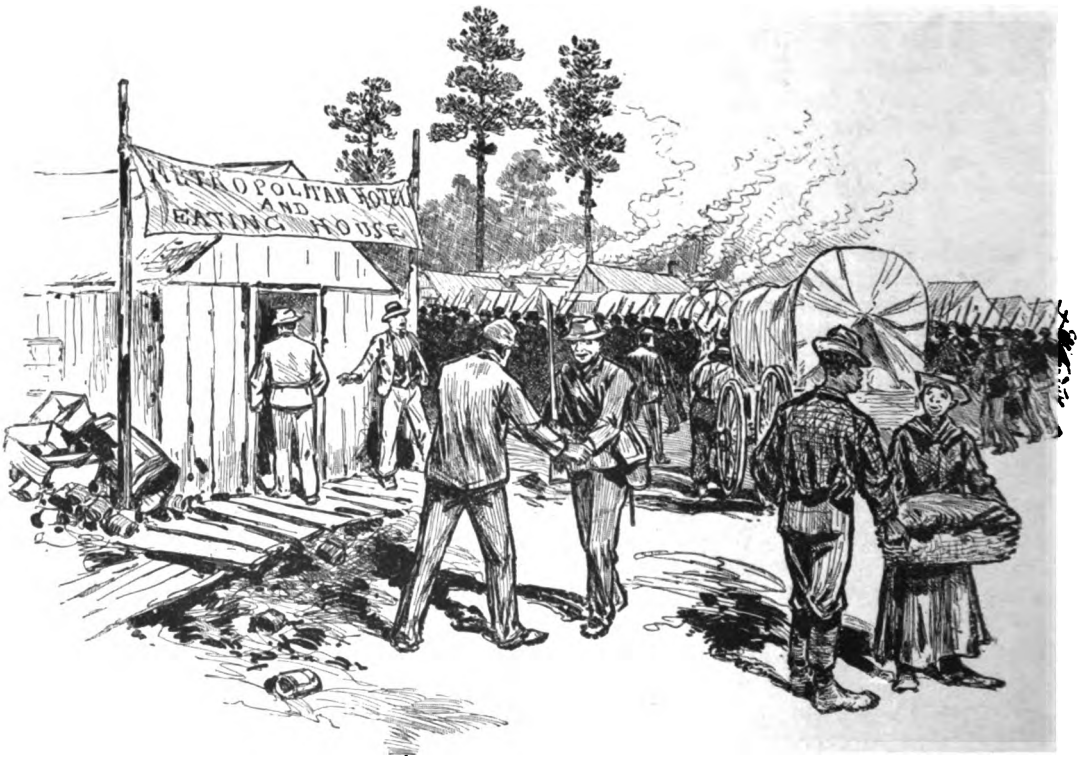
By Joseph Becker, "Special for Leslie's."

City Point, in June, 1864, was a wonderful canvas town. It spread out from the James River under acres of tents, while the stream was packed with steamers—transports, monitors and other features of the motley fleet that followed General B. F. Butler when he seized the site on May 5th. City Point at once became the depot for the Army of the Potomac and the Army of the James. I had recovered from the hardships of the Wilderness campaign and had worked up all my material. An advance to the front was ordered by Mr. Leslie, and I lost no time in getting to City Point, via Baltimore. The final round-up of the Confederacy had begun. The Army of the Potomac, no longer a moving sledge hammer, had sat itself down before the rebel defenses at Petersburg, resolved to break its pathway through to Richmond, while the Army of the James threatened the capital from another quarter. Cavalry raids by Kilpatrick, Gregg and other gallant leaders under Sheridan created bold diversions, but the engineering of Beauregard at Petersburg successfully blocked the advance.

The strange medley of war was more than ever conspicuous at City Point. Troops were coming constantly to replace men killed, wounded and



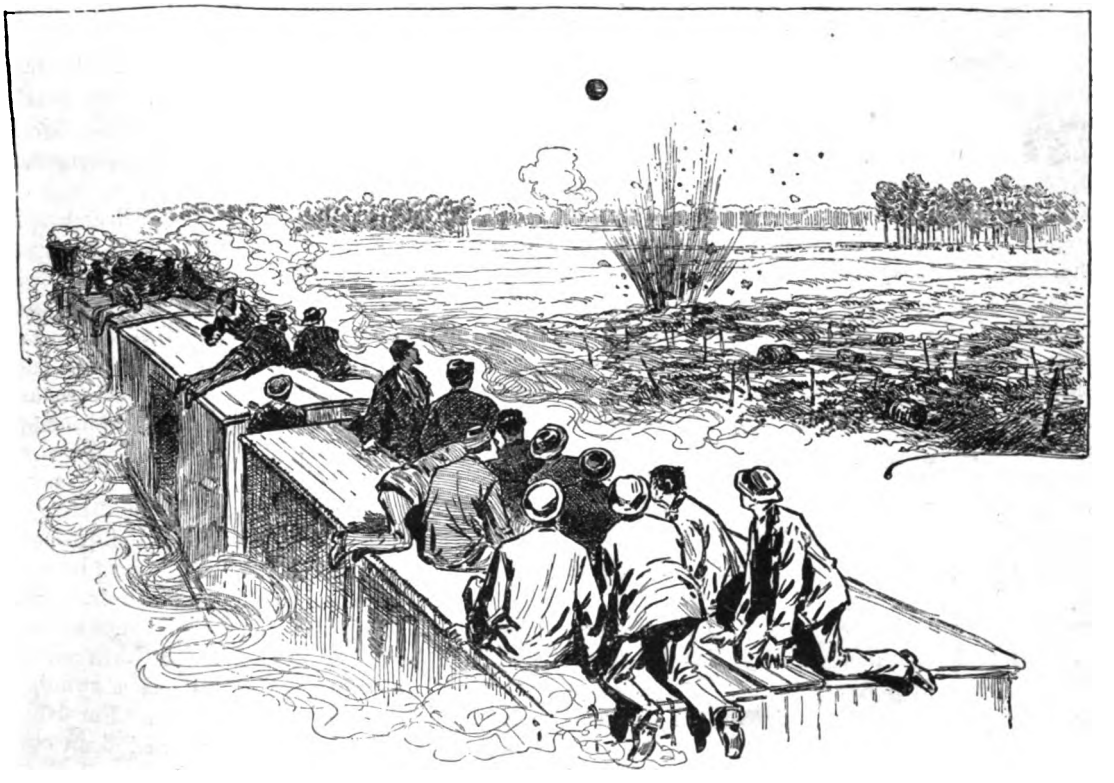
CITY POINT, VIRGINIA, IN 1864.

furloughed, and there was besides the strong civilian contingent incident to the workings of the quartermaster's department under General Rufus Ingalls, who had upon their hands the duty of feeding two great armies.

I lodged at the "Metropolitan Hotel and Eating House," a canvas caravansary with a board floor. The beds were strips of canvas nailed to uprights about two feet from the ground, and the menu was composed of canned goods, newly invented to meet the exigencies of war. The rate was four dollars per day, and one towel sufficed for all the boarders.

low the shot as it plunged out from its birthcloud of smoke and whirred toward us. One well-aimed shell lit in the mud a few rods away from the train side with a prodigious splutter, and then glancing high into the air, exploded. Fragments shattered the locomotive's smokestack, but otherwise no harm was done. It was nervous work watching the missiles. Some eyes, quicker than others, prompted a constant warning cry: "Here she comes, boys! Duck!" We ducked unanimously.

I climbed off the car roof at the first stop, and made myself at home with the men. Most of

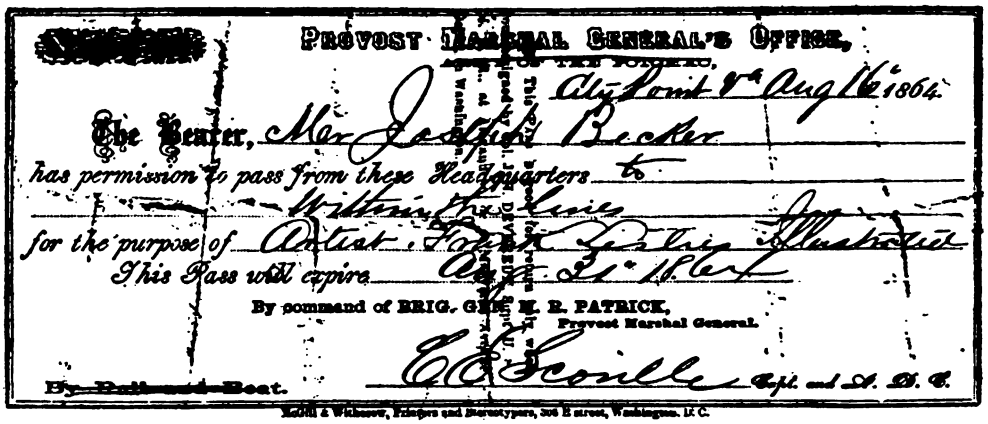


CONFEDERATES SHELLING A TRANSPORT TRAIN.

The railway from City Point to the lines was known locally as the "Branch Road," but was officially dignified as the "United States Military Railroad." Passenger trains were not scheduled, and travelers took chances on the roofs of the box cars laden with supplies for the troops. In this manner I made my first journey to Petersburg. There was a motley crowd with me, officers, men and civilians, variously arrayed. The railway ran past field hospitals close to the lines on approaching Petersburg, and in spots was within the range of the Confederate batteries. The gunners amused themselves with shying shot at our train. The air was clear, and it was easy to fol-

them were lodged in caves dug out under the banks of the abounding ravines, where they were reasonably safe from shells. It was a queer life, full of peril, and molelike in its characteristics and caution. The cannonading was constant.

The night scenes during the fierce bombardments were pictures of the magnificence of war. The sky was arched with fire. From the guns of a hundred batteries screaming shells flashed luridly through the darkness, their glowing lines ending in a bursting bouquet of flame. Death and destruction were their companions, but the splendors of the show drove terror away. The guns on the Confederate redoubts were no less



PROVOST MARSHAL GENERAL'S OFFICE,

City Point Va Aug 16 1864.

The Bearer, Mr Joseph Becker

has permission to pass from these Headquarters to

Washington & Return

for the purpose of Artist. Leslie's Illustrated

This Pass will expire Aug 21st 1864

By command of BRIG. GEN. M. R. PATRICK,
Provost Marshal General.

By Railroad or Boat. E. A. Scoville Capt. and A. D. C.

McGill & Witherow, Printers and Stereotypers, 306 E street, Washington, D.C.

PROVOST MARSHAL'S PASS.

active in affording a spectacle for the people of Petersburg, who peered out of their caves, where they lay in dread, to watch the murderous fireworks. The rebel gunners were apt to shoot over the lines; anyway the firing became a matter of course, though never monotonous. But the pyrotechnics were viewed with nonchalant admiration by the Federal troglodytes. The poker games went on in the little caves unceasingly, though interrupted now and then by a closer shot than common, which jarred the earth with its explosion until soil from the cave roof fell down and covered the "kitty" with clay. This dusted off, the game went on.

The agents of the Sanitary Commission were the envied of the men in the "gopher holes" and trenches. They had regular meals, could wash, and sleep on camp beds, with never a thought of peril.

I passed a few days here, and then went on to take up my residence at the Blick Tavern, headquarters of the Fifth Army Corps, General Gouverneur K. Warren commanding, on the left centre of the line.

General Warren was the best of soldiers and the most reserved of men. His self-containment verged upon melancholy. He rarely smiled, and I think I can claim credit as the only man who made him laugh while he commanded the Fifth Corps. Edwin Forbes, my predecessor, had invested $100 of Mr. Leslie's money in a fine horse, a trained hunter, nimble of limb and of a beautiful chestnut hue. In leaving the army he had turned this animal over to Edward Mullen, another Leslie artist, whose tastes were as festively pronounced as his talents were artistic. I was to replace Mullen and to hunt up the horse.

"Joseph," said Mr. Leslie, "I believe they have left him without a saddle. Buy a good outfit—good enough for a battle."

I picked out a saddle, bridle and holsters designed for a major general, beautifully trimmed in silver, with spurs to match, and took great pride in exhibiting them in the office. Mr. Leslie was wroth when he saw them, and disgusted when the bill came along.

This outfit reached City Point all right. There I found that Mr. Mullen, in a fit of humor caught from Artemus Ward, the humorist, who was his dearest friend for a time in his early Bohemian days in New York, had pawned the courser to a Massachusetts lieutenant on General Butler's staff to secure a poker debt of $30. The lieutenant accepted my note with chivalric faith, and the horse duly appeared at the Blick Tavern.

I had never ridden a horse, but did not lack confidence. Major Sutor, the commissary, was a Baltimore man and extremely kind-hearted. He took an interest in me, and his "nigger" was ordered to strap the major general's trappings on the horse. This was done, and I mounted. We ambled off nicely. The Weldon Railroad ran in front of the house. Beyond was a swamp spot with a pond in the middle of it. For five hundred yards further the timber had been cut off, and regiments of charred stumps filled the field. I rode about half a mile, and began to lose confidence, although nothing had happened. With considerable diplomacy I coaxed the brute to turn around. Just as his nose was fairly turned toward the rear the sutler and a friend came galloping down the narrow road. The sight of galloping steeds was too much for my hunter. He was stampeded. Then began a ride beside which John Gilpin's was tame. The chestnut headed for the stumps. He scorned to go around one. Instead, he jumped over every stump that lay in his way. If the stumps were not in line he changed his course to strike them. I was too busy holding on to count, but I know he must have sailed over at least two hundred, and then for a *dénouement* plunged through the mire of

the swamp into that pond. The water came up to the charger's back and nearly covered me as I clung to his neck.

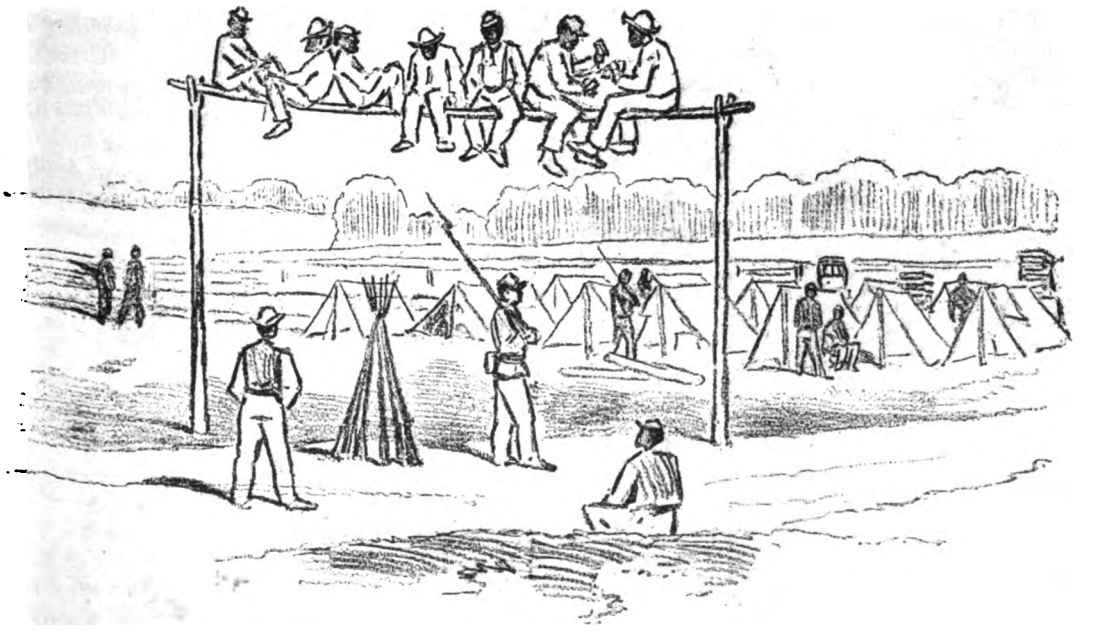
General Warren was on the piazza of the Blick House with Adjutant General Marvin, who has since made his name famous as the inventor of fire- and burglar-proof safes. The general roared with laughter as the negroes fished me out of the pond, and the staff joined in a robust chorus. I never rode again. In a few days the horse was stolen and I did not have to bother about him.

The war correspondent's horse was something of a joke in the army. The expenses of the poker game had to be met somehow, and at times a journalistic "horse" did not cost as much as he was billed to the home office. There were more New York *Herald* men with the troops than from any other paper, and so cheap animals came to be termed "*Herald* horses," a form of identification that will awaken vivid memories in the minds of old war correspondents whose eyes may chance to fall upon this narrative.

Headquarters was kind to the artist. He was neither a newspaper correspondent who knew how the war ought to be fought nor a person involved in army speculations. This led to enlarged privileges, not the least of which was a pass to and from Baltimore that permitted me to go and come without being searched. This gave me a chance to bring in occasional necessaries of life, and a little thoughtfulness raised me to a high status with my military associates. Some genius had discovered that the raw commissary whisky could be made smooth and palatable by the addition of a few drops of Boker's bitters. Bitters were not in the sutler's stock, so I usually brought a supply down from Baltimore. This mitigation of the horrors of war was much appreciated. The grinning camp servants learned a formula something like this, from frequent repetitions: "Mas'r Becker, sah! De majah would be much 'bliged ef yo' cud let him have a spoonful of bittahs, so's he kin drink his whisky, sah."

With the whisky thus mercifully tempered, life at headquarters was not so bad. The younger officers fought or gambled as occasion required. When the band played they waltzed about the camp in pairs, with slight regrets for the girls at home. Often half a dozen contrabands, perched straddlewise on a gallows pole ten feet from the ground as punishment for their sins, sang to the sentry below or played cards with a grimy pack as unconcernedly and as sociably as if most pleasantly situated.

My privilege of visiting Baltimore and returning without being searched occasionally embarrassed me with odd errands. The washing at headquarters, where such style as a clean shirt was regularly affected, was done by the buxom daughters of a farmer's family living several miles away from the edge of the lines. A colored man carried the laundry, but the girls usually came with it to collect. The possession of greenbacks bred in them a desire for dress that could not be easily gratified. There was no entrance to beleaguered Petersburg, and the country stores



PUNISHMENT OF REFRACTORY NEGROES.—FAC-SIMILE OF THE ORIGINAL SKETCH.

NOT TRANSFERABLE.

Head-Quarters, Fifth Army Corps,
Army of the Potomac.

Pass

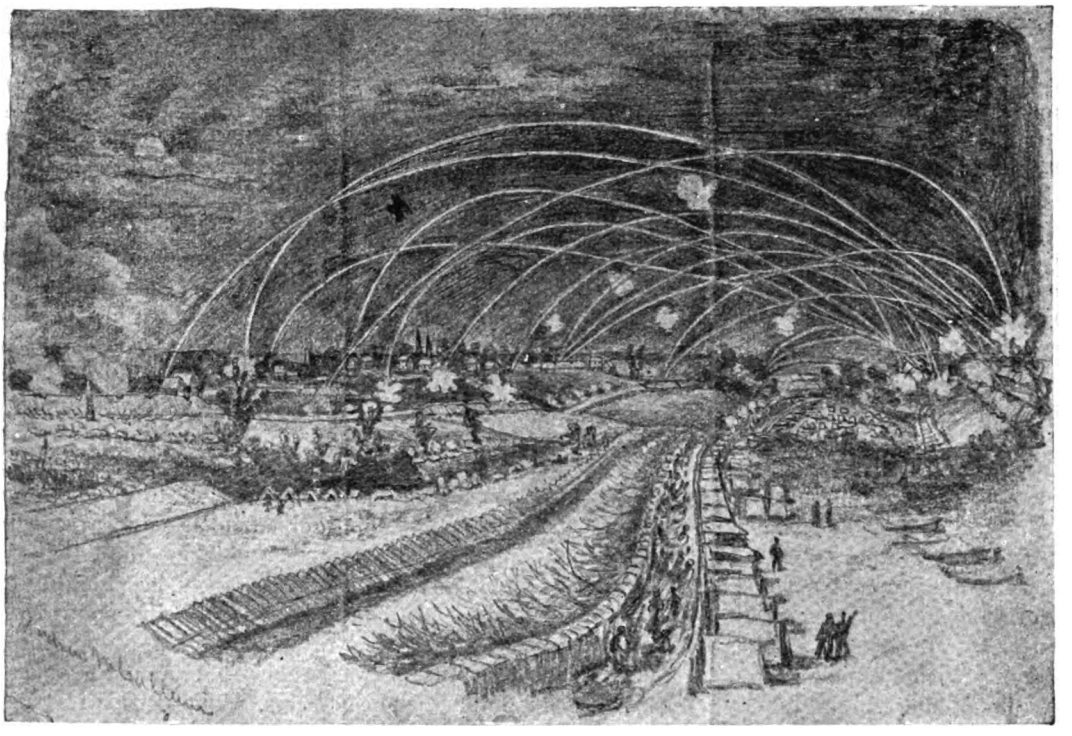
By command of Major General Warren:

Assistant Adjutant General.

NOTE.—The pass to show under what circumstances the person holding it leaves his command.

THE PASS TO BALTIMORE.

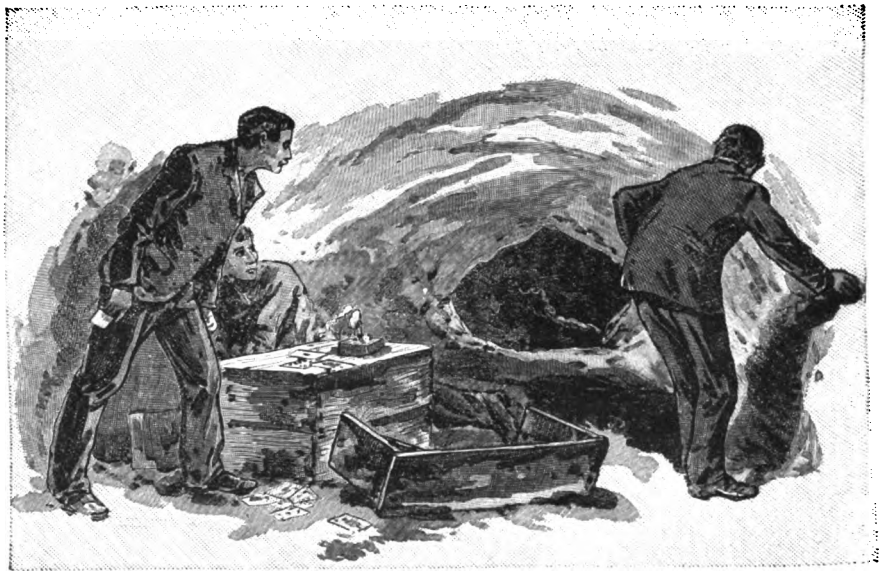
HOW THE PASS WAS UTILIZED.



BOMBARDMENT OF PETERSBURG.— FAC-SIMILE OF THE ORIGINAL SKETCH.

ceased to exist when the war was a month old. They found out that I visited Baltimore, and besought me to do some shopping. I had never "shopped" for ladies, but I did my best. Unluckily, one of the desired articles was a hoop-skirt, then a little *passé* in Paris, but just ripe for the Confederacy. The storekeeper had failed to restrain its wiry form within a sufficient wrapper, and the thing broke out. It was not possible to find wrapping paper at City Point, and I had to tote the hideous skeleton on my arm up to headquarters in full view of the staff. Their hilarity was quite out of proportion to the spectacle. I am bound to say that when "Miss Sarah" draped the pink-figured calico which formed another bundle over the crinoline the effect was very fetching.

On the edge of the lines, not far from the headquarters of General Warren, stood a tall tree. It had been stripped of its boughs, and where the topmost limbs branched a crow's nest of planks had been built for observatory purposes. The Confederate sharpshooters used this as a target. It was ninety feet from the ground, and its little telescope gave an



CAVE REFUGE DURING THE BOMBARDMENT.

admirable view of Petersburg and its defenses. The ascent was most uncertain. Rude cleats had been nailed on by a single spike, and these slipped and slanted most distressingly under the feet. In a moment of friskiness, soon regretted, I asked the signal officer in charge of this observatory if I might climb to the top and make a bird's-eye sketch. He said I might if my courage held out. This was insulting, but turned out to be prophetic. He went up ahead and reached the top a dozen cleats ahead of me. He took one look, and then yelled: "Look out! They're going to make a charge!"

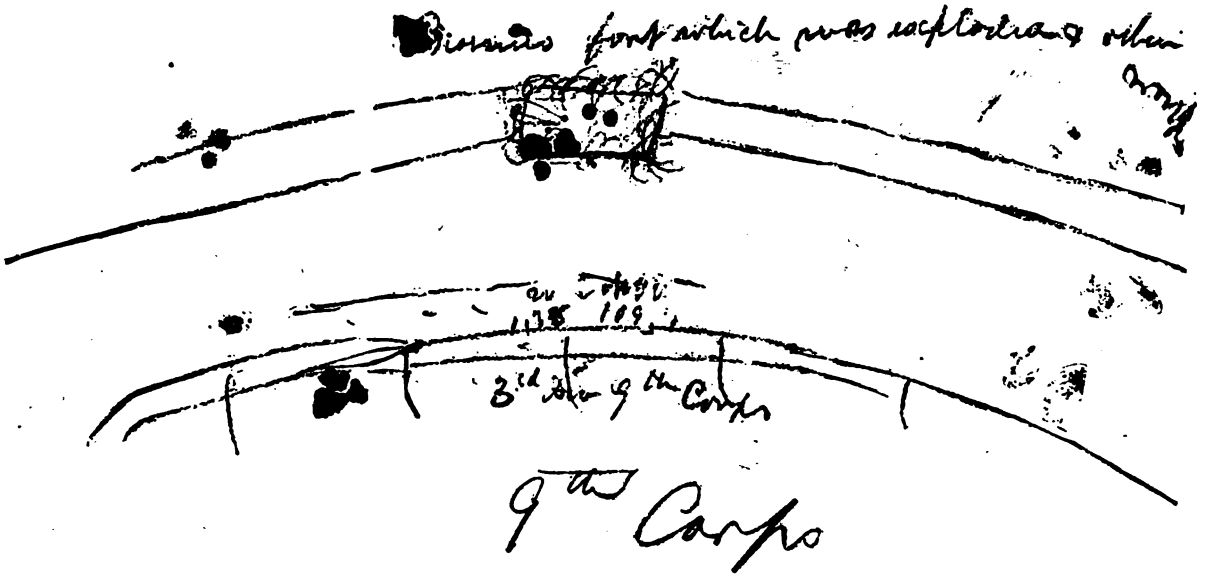
Sure enough they were. The rifles in the breastworks that protected the signal station began to crack. I craned my neck around the tree and saw a straggling lot of rebel skirmishers scampering across the fields toward the tree. Bullets whizzed by. The rickety cleats were gone in places, and others were so loose that they turned unless both feet met on them at once. The agony of that descent was indescribable. With the lieutenant treading on my fingers from above, the chance of being shot in midair or captured at the bottom of the ladder filled me with nervous terror. At last I sank exhausted into a rifle pit near the foot of the tree, completely unnerved. I was quite ill for three days as the result of this adventure.

The Confederates were driven back. On the second day they renewed the attack and captured the tree. On the third day it was retaken. This struck me as useless trouble. They could have kept it for all I cared. I did not want it.

The pickets in the rifle pits developed characteristics both of extreme sociability and intense hostility. In places the lines had moved up to within a biscuit toss, and in these close neighborhoods the sociability was most apparent. Trades of tobacco and coffee, gossip and newspapers were frequent during impromptu moments of truce. My copies of *Frank Leslie's*, passing along from officers to men, generally reached the outposts and went over to the Confederacy in return for some fire-eating sheet printed on wrapping paper. Once in awhile a "Johnny Reb" would be familiar enough to look over the "Yank's" shoulder while the pictures were explained to him.

The more distant sentinels became hunters of men. Bullets "pinged" at every spot of blue or gray that came into view. The blood hunger of the hunter was upon them, and they laid for shots with eagerness. The little fortresses in which the men lay hidden were secure enough if caution was exercised, but the least recklessness of exposure cost a life. The sharpshooters became deadly experts. One Confederate caused a

THE DEAD SHARPSHOOTER.



COLONEL CATLIN'S PLAN OF THE ATTACK ON PETERSBURG.

reign of terror within range of his rifle. Carefully concealed, the puff of smoke from his gun was the only trace he gave of his whereabouts. His list of victims grew until it was really frightful. Determined efforts were made to dislodge him. At last two brave men crept snakelike into a deserted building, climbed up into the attic, broke a hole through the roof without detection, and picked off their man from behind the chimney. I went over and made a sketch of him as he lay in his rifle pit. He was a stalwart, handsome youth. A little purple spot in the centre of his forehead told how true had been the aim that slew him.

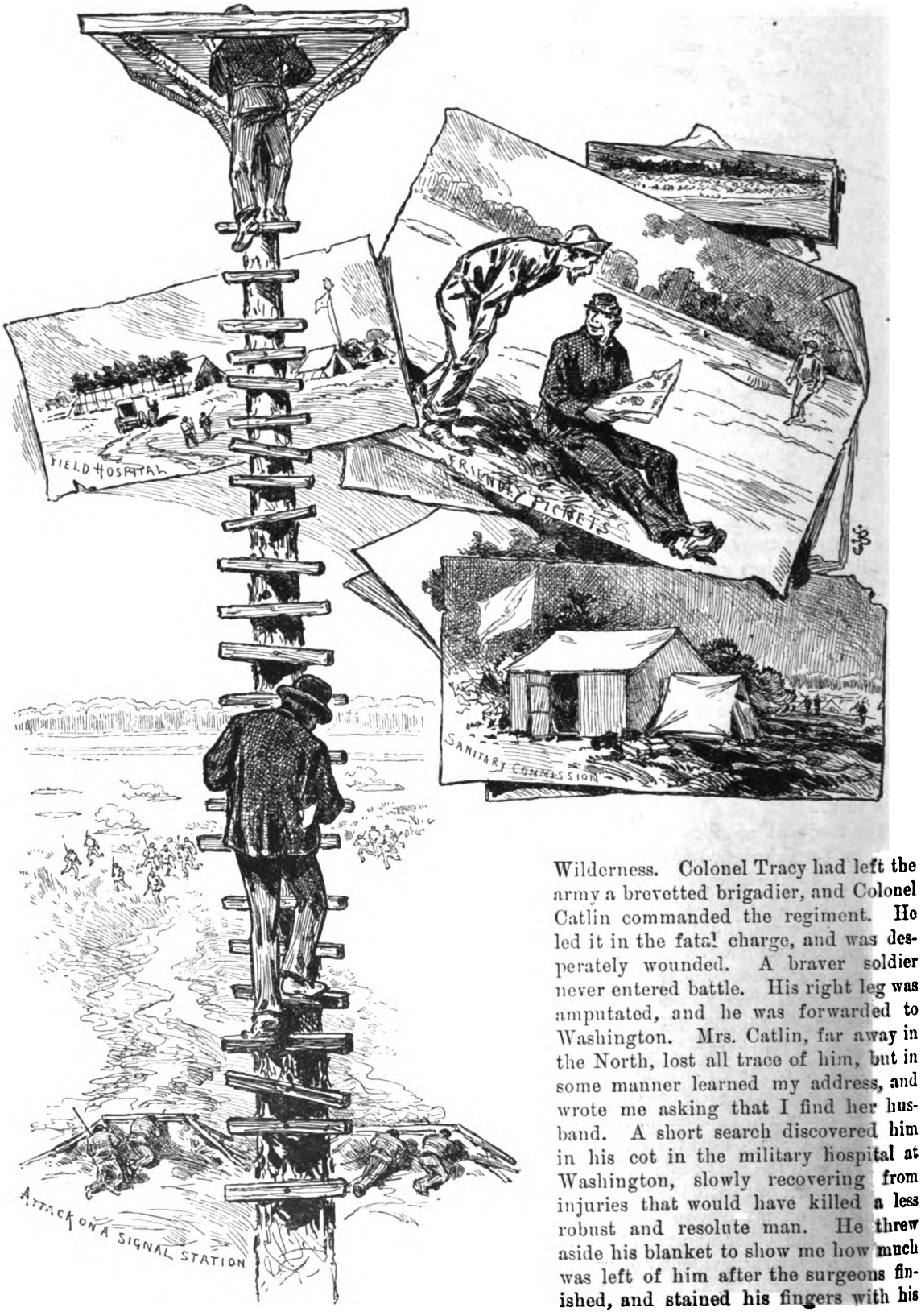
The frequent assaults upon the lines by Lee's soldiers furnished enough fatalities. On one of my trips to Baltimore I played cards with five young officers. One day after a conflict I went into the lines and inquired after them. "They're over there," said a captain. Three of them were "over there"—dead under a blanket. The other two had been severely wounded.

My room in the Blick Tavern was on the second floor, and I shared it with a *Tribune* correspondent, Mr. McAlpin. The room was bare, save for a couple of rude canvas cots. The wainscoting, doors and door casings had been stripped for fuel. A ragged canvas curtain swung where the door into the next room had been. One warm evening, worn out with the fatigues of the day, I fell asleep on my cot, to be awakened by loud talking in the other apartment. The plan of a military movement, evidently of great importance, was under discussion. I pushed the curtain aside a little and looked in. The room was full of cigar smoke and major generals. Warren, Hancock, Birney, Wright and Burnside, the corps commanders, were grouped around a long table covered with maps. It flashed through my mind that Lee would give a good deal to know as much as I had learned. Then it occurred to me that I might be considered a spy and be in for summary treatment, despite my safe conduct. This notion stimulated a chill. I crept softly out of the house and held my tongue. In a day or two the feint planned was executed to divert Lee's attention to the extreme left while the assault was made on the mine.

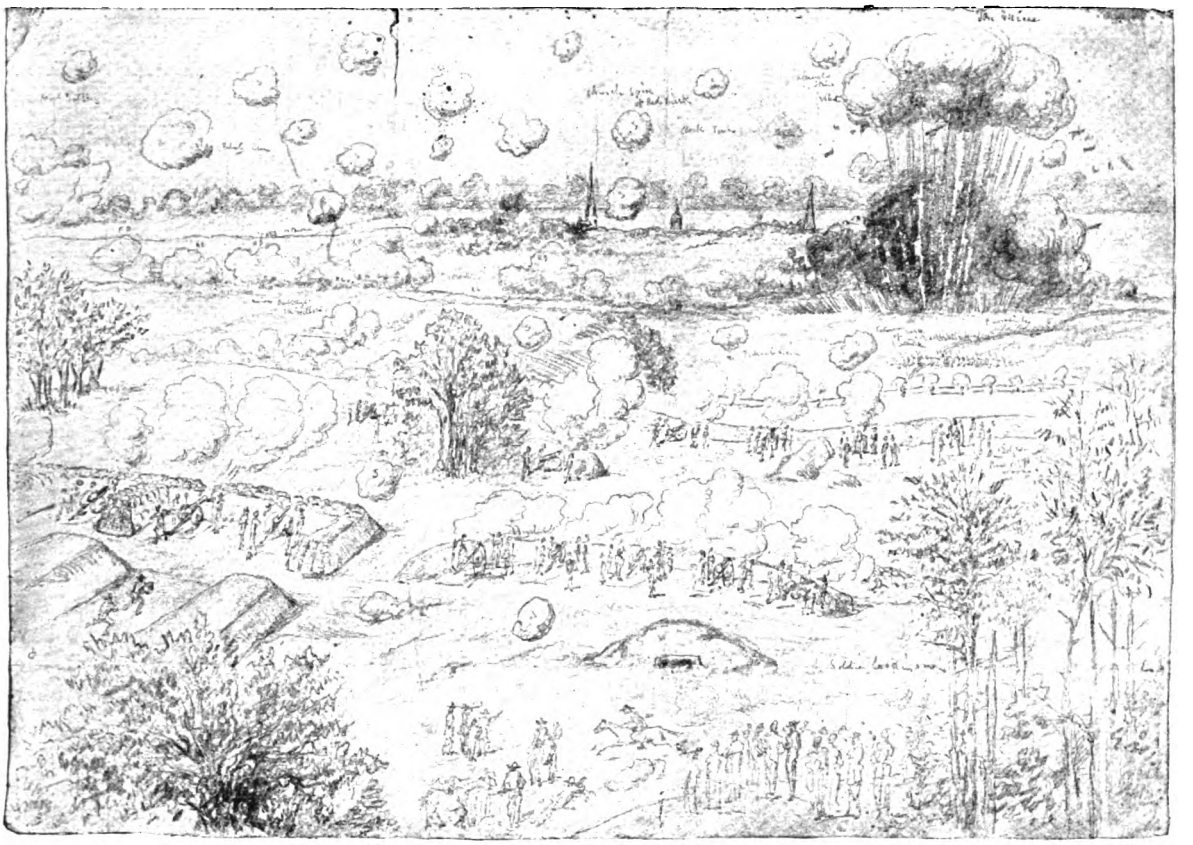
Curiously, many of the men in Colonel Pleasants's Schuylkill regiment, who were digging the tunnel under the rebel works, were schoolmates of mine, from Pottsville, Pa. This enabled me to know much about the work and to fill my sketchbook for use when the move was made. I was not present at the explosion. It had been secretly set for 3:30 A.M., July 30th, when two men were to creep in and light the fuse. It was nearly two hours later when the earthworks blew up and Burnside blundered his troops into the hands of the enemy.

"The effort was a stupendous failure," says General Grant, in his memoirs. He does not speak in further comment, as if he had expected much from it; but the army did, and the disaster was most depressing.

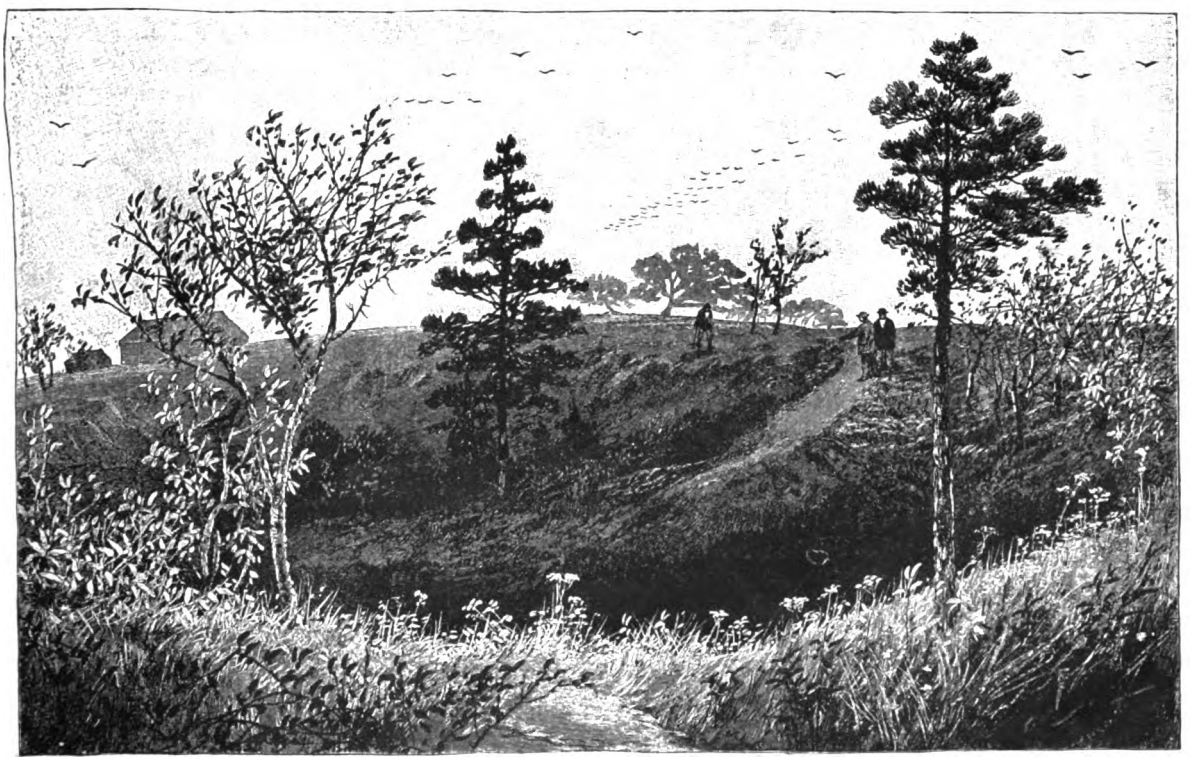
The massacre at the crater had for many of its victims my old friends of the One Hundred and Ninth New York, with whom I had parted at the



Wilderness. Colonel Tracy had left the army a brevetted brigadier, and Colonel Catlin commanded the regiment. He led it in the fatal charge, and was desperately wounded. A braver soldier never entered battle. His right leg was amputated, and he was forwarded to Washington. Mrs. Catlin, far away in the North, lost all trace of him, but in some manner learned my address, and wrote me asking that I find her husband. A short search discovered him in his cot in the military hospital at Washington, slowly recovering from injuries that would have killed a less robust and resolute man. He threw aside his blanket to show me how much was left of him after the surgeons finished, and stained his fingers with his



EXPLOSION OF THE MINE — FAC-SIMILE OF THE ORIGINAL SKETCH.



PRESENT APPEARANCE OF THE "CRATER" OF THE EXPLODED MINE.

blood on the bandages. Then he drew me a rude diagram of the assault on a bit of note paper. I have it yet, blotted with his blood, and reproduce it as a curious war relic, the existence and origin of which I presume he has long since forgotten.

Thirty years after I visited the scene of the explosion. The lines of the "crater" were there still, but softened with grass and shrubs, while tall trees had grown up around the edge of the artificial volcano where so many brave men had thrown their lives away. The operations at Petersburg soon after the mine disaster became less active, and I was ordered to join the Army of the James, where, as usual, General Butler was doing something to attract attention. At the moment it was the Dutch Gap Canal. I was warned that the undertaking was perilous, but I had my orders, and was entirely willing to obey them, the pressure at Petersburg having fallen below interest point.

(To be continued.)

A STUDY IN AGRICULTURE.

THE LARGEST DIVERSIFIED FARM IN THE WORLD.

By M. V. Moore.

One of the most conspicuous traits in human character lies in the direction of hero worship. Men and women everywhere feel peculiar interest in the man of great phenomenal success, and his history is never devoid of its attractive and instructive features. The possessor of this interest is frequently quite unconscious of its presence and of its force and effect; yet nevertheless it exists and manifests itself—it rising, as a rule, above that point in admiration where there is the suggestion of fawning or flattery.

After all, it is but natural that we should desire to know something of the life and character, as well as something of the manner and methods, of those of our fellow beings who have become eminently famous or fortunate in any of the avocations of life. Somehow or other we are led to think—indeed, it may be said that the result often inspires the very hope itself—that in studying the history of that success we may ourselves obtain some "pointer" (if I may here use the popular slang expression), some fact pregnant with rich secrecies, in the successful man's career—secrecies or elements which will prove of high value to our own selves in the struggle to reach the summit of human hope and endeavor.

Much of the most popular of the world's best literature embraces the experiences of famous or successful men and women. The secret of the popularity often lies in the fact that the reader or interpreter sees in those histories so much of that element called "human nature" which is akin to the throbbings and aims in his or her own heart. The soil tillers of the world—a class now touching the sympathies and interests of the purely intellectual world in a degree hitherto unknown in our own country—a class also now constituting a body of intelligent and thinking readers larger than they have ever heretofore presented in history—these people are now, of course, most specially interested in the career of men who have achieved greatest results in their calling in life. But a great and successful industry of any character is never without its attractive features to the general and universal reader.

I desire to present here something of the history and experience of one who has attained to what is in all probability the greatest and most remarkable and satisfactory success ever achieved by any single unaided individual in the world in the mere cultivation of the soil and in its legitimate accompaniments, the propagation and sale of cattle and swine and their products. The individual here referred to is the Hon. James M. Smith, of Georgia. Mr. Smith is now regarded as the largest cultivator of diversified crops known anywhere—*the largest farmer in the world*, in other words.

It would not be in accord with truth to say that Mr. Smith tills more soil than any other man in the world. But using the term "farming" in its fullest sense, as applied to the production of a variety of crops on a great scale, on a single estate, managed by a single individual, then we are justified in the assertion that he is undoubtedly the most extensive grower of general farm products now known anywhere in the world.

There are many men in the United States who cultivate more soil than does Mr. Smith. There are several planters in the South who individually produce more cotton and more sugar than he. There are agriculturists in the great West whose fields yield more corn—men whose wheat harvest is larger, whose acreage in cultivation largely exceeds his. There are individuals all over the country who own more cattle, or who fatten more