

Monday evening, May 30, the enemy, having pressed over the Totopotomoy, were immediately attacked and driven back with loss into the earthworks they had erected on the south bank of the creek.

The hostile lines were now stretched east and west over about ten miles of country. Our line, along the south bank of the Totopotomoy, with our left on Alee's and our centre opposite and north of Mechanicsville. The enemy occupied a corresponding position on the north bank of the creek, his right menacing Alee's. Tuesday, May 31, and Wednesday, June 1, there was sharp skirmishing along the lines from Alee's to Cold Harbour, and the enemy made several heavy demonstrations as of a general advance. This continued through-out Thursday morning, when he was particularly threatening on our left. This was believed by us to be a feint, and correctly, as the event showed, for when at four o'clock that evening General Early, who was on our left, pressed forward, he found the enemy weak in his front and not disposed to dispute the ground obstinately. Grant had already massed his bravest columns on our right, and was watching to seize the Cold Harbour road. Wednesday evening he had driven our cavalry and skirmishers from old Cold Harbour back towards new Cold Harbour. Proceeding from Richmond, the Cold Harbour road after passing Gaines' mill on Foxnote creek, ascends a long, high hill. Near the brow of this hill stands new Cold Harbour, and from this point to old Cold Harbour is a very gently sloping plain. The ridge of this hill or high land runs from new Cold Harbour in a south easterly direction, and ends abruptly three hundred yards from the Chickahominy, at McClellan's bridge, a structure which crosses the river ten miles from Richmond. Wednesday night and Thursday morning we threw up earthworks along the ridge at new Cold Harbour, and made dispositions to meet the charges made by Grant in his position. Thursday evening our right was on the crest of new Cold Harbour, and heavy skirmishing was kept up on this part of the line.

At daylight on Friday morning, June 3, Grant made his first real order of battle since crossing the Pamunkey. By heavy and repeated assaults upon our right wing, in each of which he was repulsed—so he felt indeed did he appear to break our line at this point as to induce the belief that the setting of this ridge and then the roads to Richmond that it commands had been the end and object he had had in view from the time he left his position south of the North Anna river. Having failed in all his attempts here, during the morning he made similar assaults on our centre and left as far west as the south bank of the Totopotomoy, and that night renewed his assaults on our right, hoping that darkness would give him some advantage. He was again repulsed as during the day, and on Saturday night made other assaults with the same result. He did not get the position, and there is no impropriety in our saying it is well for us he did not. The importance cannot be over estimated.

On Sunday, June 4th, Grant withdrew from our left and centre, and threatened McClellan's bridge by turning our right flank. Our left pushed his right as L. Whitford and picked up some prisoners. Our right stretched down the crest of the hills leading to the Chickahominy at McClellan's bridge, so as to cover the latter point.

After some stupid prevarication, Grant on Monday asked and obtained a truce, and buried his dead and carried off the thousands of his wounded, many of whom for three days and nights had been howling and writhing in front of our earthworks.

Our loss in these battles will amount to seven hundred killed, wounded and missing. The enemy's loss may probably never be ascertained positively. Grant puts it at seven thousand five hundred. By officers of our army, whose positions gave them opportunities of knowing the truth, it is estimated at fifteen thousand. General Lee has not, we believe, expressed any opinion on the subject, though he has been frequently asked. On Sunday, June 5th, being on a visit at the tent of a major-general who had been hurt during the previous night, the officer asked him twice what he thought was the loss of the enemy. Each time he replied, "General, we punished them very severely."

Grant's present position it is not easy to define. He occupies at the eastern end of the Totopotomoy and between that stream and the White House, on the Pamunkey, and north and east of the Chickahominy, except where our army confronts him on a line running from new Cold Harbour to McClellan's bridge. Simultaneously with his movement on Cold Harbour he abandoned his base at Hanover town and established a new one at Newcastle ferry, on the same stream, six or eight miles lower down. By this time he is no doubt using the York river railroad and draws his supplies from the White House.

On the line which is now "the front," between Cold Harbour and McClellan's bridge, and along the Chickahominy to Bottom's bridge, five miles below McClellan's bridge, the armies are constantly in line of battle between their respective intrenchments, which, at some points, are three hundred, at others six hundred, and at others not more than fifty yards apart. Even where the lines are closest together there are intervals of tacit understanding, amounting to a truce, during which the men of either army walk along the top of their respective intrenchments, plant *carrez de frise* in front of them, or strengthen them with earth from between the lines. But this is a very precarious sort of truce, and is never general, and is liable to be broken at any time by any accident, such as the explosion of a mine, or anything of that sort. When such truces are not in force, sharpshooting is the order of the day, and even when they prevail most, the crack of rifles rarely dies away along the line. The rattle of an empty wagon or a caisson in the hostile camp will always elicit a cannonade.

It is useless to speculate upon what Grant is going to do. He has never been wholly inactive. Having gotten the mass of his army into what he considers a safe and convenient position, he has already sent out two formidable raids. The one failed to take Petersburg; what will be the fate of the other (Sheridan's) remains to be seen.

Much has been said about the manner in which a portion of our breastwork was taken (temporarily) in the late battle near Cold Harbour. From those who ought to know we have obtained, and will now attempt to give, a statement of the facts: General Breckinridge's division was posted in the following order: Wharton's brigade on the right, Echols' (commanded by Colonel George S. Patton) on the left, with the Maryland battalion in reserve, supported by Finnegan's Florida brigade. The left of Echols' brigade was held by the Twenty-sixth Virginia battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel George M. Edgar, and was posted in a salient angle. A considerable part of this battalion was out as skirmishers, and the rest were distributed along both sides of the angle, extending over a very long line. The enemy advanced in great force, driving to the line of skirmishers at a run and entering the angle with them. Our men in the works could not fire until the enemy were upon them; but refusing to abandon the position, the enemy dashed over them, killing, wounding and capturing a number. Colonel Edgar was bayoneted in the works and wounded by a ball. Others were also bayoneted and knocked down with clubbed guns. Major Woodruff, next in command, was wounded, and the Adjutant, Lieutenant H. B. Craig, killed. Colonel Patton, seeing the position of affairs, called on the force supporting him to advance. Gallantly did the Marylanders and the Florida brigade respond. Advancing with a rush, they drove the enemy at once out of the angle and over the works, re-taking the captured guns. The Twenty-second Virginia regiment, on Colonel Ed-

gar's right, although their left was uncovered, stood their ground and poured into the enemy a murderous volley. He, retreating before the determined attack of Finnegan and the Maryland line and fired, upon from both flanks, retired in great disorder, much faster indeed than he had advanced, leaving a large number of killed, wounded and some prisoners in our hands. The enemy's attack was mainly in this salient angle, the rest of the division not being very warmly engaged. Had the works which formed the angle been fully manned the enemy would not have gained even a temporary advantage.

### THE WAR NEWS—THE ENEMY STRIKING OUT FROM STAUNTON—LEXINGTON TAKEN BY THEM—THEY CROSS TO THIS SIDE OF THE BLUE RIDGE—THEIR OPERATIONS IN NELSON COUNTY—THREATENED ADVANCE ON LYNCHBURG.

The news this morning is highly important. The enemy has struck out from Staunton and the Valley, advanced and taken Lexington, crossed to this side of the Blue Ridge mountain, and is moving rapidly through Nelson and Amherst counties, with the view, it is reported, of advancing on Lynchburg. We give such details of their operations and movements as we have been able to gather.

Some days after occupying Staunton, the enemy started off a force against Lexington. The number of this force is not known, but it is supposed to have been quite formidable, as they are reported to have advanced on Lexington by three different directions: one column, under Averill, crossing the North river, eight miles above Lexington, another by the Brownsboro road, and another by the Greensboro; or what is known as the Stage road. Our forces, under command of McCausland, met the enemy as they approached Lexington, and had a sharp fight with them, but owing to the overpowering numbers of the enemy, they having both cavalry and artillery, our forces were compelled to fall back, when all resistance being overthrown, the enemy entered the town.

A despatch received last evening by Governor Smith, from Colonel Smith, the superintendent of the Military Institute, gave full confirmation of the occupation of Lexington by the enemy, and some particulars of their advance. It appears that as the enemy were advancing and were within a short distance of Lexington, General McCausland, with his small force, met and fought them gallantly, when finding that he was flanked, by the enemy approaching by different roads, he was compelled to fall back. Our forces retired in the direction of Balcony Falls, on the James, just below the mouth of the North river, almost midway between Lexington and Lynchburg. The enemy entered and occupied Lexington on Saturday about two o'clock. We have no information of what the enemy did after entering the town, our accounts being brought up only to that time.

The caudets were not in the fight McCausland had with the enemy, Colonel Smith having taken the wise precaution to withdraw the corps from Lexington before the enemy came up.

### THE ENEMY ON THIS SIDE OF THE BLUE RIDGE.

Soon after this news of the occupation of Lexington came, dispatches were received of the appearance of the enemy on this side of the Blue Ridge mountains. By what route they came, or in what force they are, is not known. Some think they are the same force that captured Lexington, but this can hardly be, as they appeared on this side of the mountain one Saturday morning.

Dispatches received yesterday state that during Saturday they struck the Lynchburg and Charlottesville railroad at Arrington's depot, tore up the track and burned the depot. From this point they are reported to have gone off in the direction of Lovingston, the county seat of Nelson county, and Amherst Court House, both of which points, it was stated last night, they had reached. It was also rumored last night that they were advancing on Lynchburg, and a dispatch is said to have been received announcing that they had been heard from within some eight miles of Lynchburg.

The enemy are reported to have reached the river warehouse, and to have burned the bridge across the river there. This point is immediately on the James river, about thirty miles below Lynchburg.

### FROM GENERAL LEE'S ARMY.

We have nothing new from either the north or south side of the river. Persons who came up last evening from General Lee's army reported all quiet yesterday, but say that some skirmishing occurred on Saturday night.

### GRANT SOUTH OF THE PANUNKEY.

After the battles of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania Court House, which occurred in the early half of the month of May, all of the numerous newspaper correspondents who followed our army gave us detailed, and some few of them tolerably clear, descriptions of the different battle fields, besides very glowing accounts of the fighting. They dwell long and interestingly upon the character of the country known as the "Wilderness," told us how thick and tangled grew the whortleberry bushes and other undergrowth, and how, in consequence, it was impossible to use artillery with effect; how the turnpike, the plank and Catbarp roads ran, and how they were used by the hostile armies. All this was excellent. It enabled the distant reader to understand something of how matters were going, and heightened the interest of the letters proportionately. When the field of battle was transferred to Spotsylvania Court House, the letter-writers still gave some of the topographical features of the neighbourhood, but their descriptions were feebler and less minute, either from want of attention, or, which is barely possible, want of information. When the tide of war again rolled further South, when Grant put his great army on the south bank of the North Anna river, within twenty-two miles of Richmond and its every movement, and every road and ditch and tree in its neighbourhood, and every turf beneath its soldiers' feet became matters of keenest interest to our whole people, the topography of the war correspondents gave up entirely. They told us Grant had crossed the river, and General Lee told us the same thing, so there was no doubt about that; but they did not inform us by how many or what lines he crossed, or how he disposed his forces; whether east or west of the Fredericksburg railroad. The next thing they gave us about him was that he had crossed the South Anna. From that time to this, though the movements of the enemy have been fraught with interest painfully deep, these gentlemen, upon whom we are supposed to be in a measure dependent for all our information relative to military operations, have ignored topography and geography altogether. This is, we think, to be regretted.

Even at this late day, when we consider that Grant has not moved a dozen miles away from the point where he crossed the Pamunkey, and that it is possible he may not have altogether abandoned the object with which he crossed that river, some account of his movements during the past two weeks, the routes by which he moved and the ground he occupied will not be entirely devoid of interest, and may be of use to the reader in enabling him to comprehend events which have occurred and events which may yet occur at any moment. Of course our account must be brief and general; were we to attempt to be minute and precise, any one day's operations would exceed the space we can now command.

On Thursday night, May 26th, Grant crossed the South Anna river, and the roads being picketed by his cavalry, moved by a forged march down the north bank to Hanover town ferry, some ten or twenty miles by the roads he was obliged to follow, from the position he had just abandoned on the North Anna. Hanover town ferry is northeast of Richmond twenty miles, by the most direct road, which crosses the Chickahominy at Meadow bridge, near the Central railroad, and is known beyond the Chickahominy as the Hanover town road. Another road to this ferry runs south four miles to Old Church and thence in a southwesterly direction by old Cold Harbour to new Cold Harbour, Gaines' mill and New bridge to Richmond, entering the city over Union Hill. From the city to New bridge this is known as the New bridge, or Nine mile road; beyond the New bridge, as the Cold Harbour or Old Church road. Hanover town ferry is three or four miles further from Richmond by this than the road previously mentioned. Haver's shop is three miles south of the ferry, on the direct road to Richmond. Hanover Court House is situated northwest of the ferry some eight or ten miles. Another road from Richmond to Hanover town ferry is the Mechanicsville, which leaves the city by Howard's grove, crosses the Chickahominy a couple of miles east of Meadow bridge, and passing Dr. Lempkin's residence, a point six miles from the city, known as Mechanicsville, falls into the Hanover town road six miles further on and a mile north of Totopotomoy creek. Alee's station, on the Central railroad, is nine miles north of Richmond and three miles northwest of Mechanicsville. From Alee's to old Cold Harbour on the Old Church road, by the crown hills, the distance is about nine miles; by any other road it is several miles further. Totopotomoy creek rises near Alee's station, and running southeast to Foxnote meeting house, turns thence northeast and empties into the Pamunkey ten miles below Hanover town. Old Cold Harbour is ten miles from Richmond, new Cold Harbour, on the same road, is from a mile and a half to two miles nearer the city, and Gaines' mill yet a quarter of a mile nearer. The country between Hanover town and Mechanicsville by the direct road consists of large cleared fields and patches of heavy forest, there being no streams worthy of note except the Totopotomoy; on the Old Church road the country is more wooded.

Grant's cavalry crossed to the south bank of the Pamunkey at Hanover town ferry. Friday morning, May 27, under a heavy fire from our horse artillery; that night his entire army made the passage of the river. The next day he threw forward his cavalry to Haver's shop, where, on the same evening, they were attacked by our cavalry. This was a reconnaissance on our part, the object being to ascertain whether Grant had crossed with his infantry or was still moving down the north bank of the Pamunkey to West Point. We drove the enemy back upon heavy masses of his infantry, and, the object of the reconnaissance having been thus attained, withdrew in the direction of Richmond. Sunday and Monday Grant advanced, with a bold show of marching on Richmond by the roads leading to Meadow and Mechanicsville bridges. There was a good deal of infantry skirmishing during these two days, our troops falling back in a hasty manner to a line which had been selected on the south bank of the Totopotomoy.