CHAPTER XIII

In the Trans-Mississippi Campaign under Van Dorn — A Virginian's Hospitality — Incidents of the Retreat from Corinth, after Shiloh — The Adventures of Jem, the Colored Boy, a Type of the Loyal Servant — His Encounter with General Price — A Quaint and Humorous Character

ON leaving Manassas, I went to Richmond and procured an assignment to the army of Fredericksburg, with headquarters at Brooke's Station. General Holmes was its commander.

I was much impressed by the excellent drill and discipline of the troops and the ability and high accomplishment of the officers. I had never seen as good drilling in any infantry troop or artillery of the United States army as I found in these volunteers. The officers a few months before had been in their law-offices, or in their counting-houses, and the rank and file in their various civil vocations, but already they were in excellent condition for the active service. They were eager to learn and work. Perhaps the Fortieth Virginia Infantry, Brockenborough's, was in the most complete state of efficiency. The Georgia Regiment of Colonel Simms, the North Carolina Regiment of Colonel Pettigrew, one of the ablest soldiers and most cultivated gentlemen who fell in our war, and the regiments of Colonel Stokes, of Colonel Gaston Mears, of Colonel Tew, were all in fine order. Every one of these able commanders was killed in battle, and had made a command worthy of him. Two fine regiments of Texans came along on the route

to Dumfries; the Fourth Texas under Colonel Hood, and the Fifth under Colonel Archer.

The only survivors of that roll of able and brave colonels are Colonel Fagin, then of the First Arkansas Regiment, since a prominent general; Colonel Bates, since governor, and now senator of Tennessee; and Colonel Ransom, of North Carolina. Another Texas regiment was afterwards added to the Fourth and Fifth to make up the famous Texas Brigade under Hood, which was accounted invincible. The Fourth Texas had over four hundred native-born Virginians in it. It was this Texas brigade which caught Lee's bridle when he wished to lead it to the assault at Spottsylvania, and said, "You go to the rear, and we'll drive them to hell."

After the victory of the first Manassas, both armies lay quiescent for many months. Johnston, commanding the Confederate forces, was confronted by McClellan, commanding the great Army of the Potomac. In February, 1862, General Earle Van Dorn was made commander of the Trans-Mississippi Department, and I was ordered to proceed at once and report to him as Chief of Staff of the Department. While a distinguished honor, this was a sore trial to me; for it took me far away from my wife and mother and from my native State, Virginia, when my chief ambition was to fight for her.

I overtook Van Dorn and his staff at Jacksonport, in Arkansas. With him were several officers of the old army, with whom it was my destiny to serve through more than one campaign. The story of the war has been so often told that I shall give only the prominent events in which I bore my part, and of which I have personal knowledge, omitting reports and battles of campaigns heretofore published.

After our defeat at Elkhorn, we remained several weeks

in Van Buren, resting and refitting the army. One night it was reported that forty men had died in the hospitals, poisoned by morphine, given to them through mistake for quinine. A box, marked quinine, had been smuggled in from St. Louis. All of the bottles were labelled quinine. One, as the fatal result proved, was morphine, and was administered in quinine doses. We had no means of ascertaining whether the mistake was the result of accident or of a cruel fraud. There was no remedy and no appeal. The government of the United States had declared medicines contraband of war. In all the wars of history, Wellington alone in his Spanish campaigns had proclaimed this inhuman war measure.

Restless at this enforced inaction, Van Dorn told me that he would send a dispatch to General Sidney Johnston that he would join our army of the West to Johnston's forces at Corinth, destroy Grant's army at Shiloh, and clear Kentucky and Tennessee of the enemy. General Johnston desired this to be done, so we put our forces at once upon the march, while we hastened on in advance to consult with General Johnston about our plans.

The battle of Shiloh was fought before we reached there, and Buell rescued Grant before our fresh troops could complete Johnston's success. We brought about 16,000 men to reinforce Beauregard, holding the works about Corinth, against which Halleck was very slowly and timidly advancing with overwhelming forces. Three times we moved out of our works, and invited Halleck to attack, but each time he drew back. Finally, our troops suffered so much from bad water and a bad commissariat, that we evacuated the lines on the night of May 30th, and retired by slow marches upon Tupelo, where we had good water, fresh provisions, and plenty of time for drills, reviews, etc.

On the night of our evacuation of Corinth, I commanded the rear guard of the army of the West. The splendid Missouri Brigade, Wade's or Bledsoe's battery, and two fine regiments — one the Third Arkansas, and the other the Sixth Texas — made up my command. We marched at 1 A.M., and by daybreak had taken up a strong position just beyond the Five Mile Creek. We felt that the whole army could not drive us from that position. We waited unmolested until about 10 A.M., when a staff-officer came back from Van Dorn with orders for the rear guard to close up with the army, which was halted for the day in battle order about six miles beyond us. We were neither followed nor molested by any one, yet next day General Halleck sent a telegraphic dispatch, announcing to the country that General Pope reports the capture of 10,000 rebels and 20,000 stand of arms. Had he come across that creek, he would have found nearly 3000 of us, and would have probably thought we were 10,000. At sunrise, I sent two couriers back by the road over which we had marched, with instructions to General Beal, commanding the cavalry left in Corinth, to destroy all stores. Those couriers met nobody upon the road. Pope had a very general reputation amongst army people of mistaking his imaginations for facts.

Meanwhile, my family had found protection and generous friendship from Mr. Dick Clarke, an old Virginian, who had greatly prospered, and lived at Verona. He had a new and spacious residence, and for several months they were his guests; for he would never permit me to pay him. Our affectionate relations with him and his household have continued always. When the army moved away towards Iuka, I pressed Mr. Clarke to permit me at least to remunerate him for our mess-

bill. He firmly declined, and said: "General Maury, I am a money-making man. If you were to put me on an island in the middle of the ocean, I should find some way to make money. But I thank God I always can use my means to help deserving people. And now you must leave Mrs. Maury and the children here with me, while you go on into Kentucky, and feel sure she will be in every way as well cared for as if she were in her own father's home in Virginia; and in case you are made prisoner and taken sick, you may need money. Here are letters of credit to my correspondents in Kentucky, which will protect you."

At Iuka, Rosecrans struck us a heavy blow. Grant failed to co-operate, fortunately, and we got back to Tupelo considerably worsted. We had marched northward because we had information that all of Grant's forces had crossed into Tennessee to join Buell. We found they hadn't. Then came the terrible Corinth business, which has been fully written up heretofore.

When I was at Brooke's Station, a very likely negro boy, named Jem, was employed about the stables. He was a native of Fredericksburg, and was born free, yet he didn't seem to know it, or to care about it. His unfailing good-humor was equal to any tax upon his exertions or any disregard of his dignity or rights as a free man. He did whatever he was told to do, but did it in his own way.

My own boy was not able to accompany me on so long and arduous a journey as that before me, so Major Seth French called up Jem and told him to go with me to Arkansas by next train, and he went as my body-servant, and for three years we took care of each other. That is, I took care of Jem, and Jem didn't take care of me or my things, that I was ever aware of. At Chattanooga, I

left Jem on the platform of the depot in charge of my baggage, etc., while I went to attend to some business matters. When I returned, my fine elk robe, blankets, and camp bedding were all gone, and Jem seemed very much surprised, quite innocent of any responsibility for it, and imperturbably good-humored under my remarks about it, which were caustic.

When we reached Memphis, I left Jem in charge of my room and effects while I went off for a short time. On my return, Jem placidly informed me, "Colonel, somebody done took bof dem pistols of yourn when you was gone."

Another time, he left my ambulance and team of lively mules, hitched ready for a trip, while he amused his leisure moments. The team started, the bar over the top of the stable-yard gate was too low for the carriage to pass under it, and the mules went through, taking the body of the ambulance, the top of it remaining under the gateway. Jem's only emotions were of surprise "that them mules is sich fools."

He was about six feet two inches in stature, of a most joyous and happy disposition, and a ready wit, which made him a great favorite with all about headquarters, whether black or white. I cannot recall that I ever saw him show any anger or resentment, or wear a jacket. When he was summoned from the stable to go with me to Arkansas, he came right along just as he was. Nor can I ever remember seeing him use water, or take a bath, except when our canoe upset in Black River, Arkansas, when he had to swim for his life.

Dick Holland was my first cousin. When I was made brigadier-general for conduct in the Elkhorn campaign, I found Dick at Corinth, after Shiloh, sergeant-major of a Mississippi regiment. On my application, he was

appointed captain and aide-de-camp to me; and a more genial, gallant fellow never wore a sword than Dick. He was the model of an aide-de-camp, — knew everybody worth knowing in the army, and made a friend of every man who ever came to headquarters.

My staff were all bright, harmonious, and active young fellows. We had one large mess, and care was taken to keep up a comfortable table, to which every gentleman, whether a general or a private, was welcome and sure of a good dinner. Dick looked after all this, and had a peculiar aptitude for finding good things to eat and good places to rest for himself. His success in making himself comfortable while he was helping all of us, made him the subject of many a joke amongst us.

I had a very fine horse which I never rode because he was too tall for me. He suited Dick exactly, and he quietly appropriated him, until Jem spoke of him as "Marse Dick's horse." Once while Dick was off on a furlough, a very gallant and able officer, Major Brown, reported to me on the eve of a little fight. He asked my permission to go into it, which I gave, when he said, "General, my horses are not up yet; can you mount me?" I called to Jem to catch his Marse Dick's horse for Major Brown. The engagement was a skirmish with Sherman's rear guard on his retreat from us at Chickasaw Bluff, and before long I saw Brown coming back, carrying his saddle and bridle, and on foot. I said, "Major, what's the matter?"

"Well, sir, I was down on the levee, when a shell from a gunboat knocked that horse's head off. So I thought the best thing for me to do was to bring the saddle and bridle back."

Some days after Dick returned from his trip, all the staff gathered about him to hear his experiences and to

tell him of ours. Jem selected his opportunity and made his way to greet him, saying: "Sarvant, Marse Dick. I'se mighty glad to see you safe back. Ah, Marse Dick, if you had a been here, dat horse would never have got killed in dis world." Dick joined in the laugh, and the staff told the story over town; and the papers having announced that Major Brown, of General Maury's staff, had his horse shot under him, the girls called Dick Major Brown ever after.

In the winter of 1862–63 we were on the Tallahatchee, holding Grant's army in check, when news came that I had been made a major-general. Jem was much elated at this increase of rank, and swaggered over the other headquarters darkies accordingly. The weather was bitter cold, and he was making up my camp bed next morning. I said: "Jem, you must tuck in those blankets better at the foot of the cot. My feet stuck out last night and were almost frozen." With an indescribable air of humorous impudence, he turned towards me and said, "Why, you ain't growed no longer 'en what you was, sir, is yer, since yer been promoted?"

Jem's stature exceeded mine by about one foot. He used to brag over the other negroes because he was a "Virginny nigger," and had been in the terrible battle of the first Bull Run. In his opinion, "Thar is no soldiers like them we all left in Virginny. The privates dar was better dan some of dese yer kurnels," and there never was service so dangerous as he had seen in the battle of Manassas.

It was on the evening of the critical fight for the passage of the Hatchie, after our two days' fighting about Corinth, that I sent a courier to the rear to bring up a fresh horse. The bay mare I was riding had been under saddle all of the two previous days of action, and it was

time to relieve her. Jem came galloping up to me on my finest horse, Roy. It was against orders for him ever to mount him. He had his "own mar'," and he informed me that "mor'n one man had dun shuck two hundred dollars at him fur dat mar'"; which, considering the easy terms on which he had acquired her, would certainly have been a good speculation. She had strayed one morning into the field where my horses were, and Jem took her in there and then.

He was shifting the saddles; Roy was bridled and saddled, and I mounted him and found he had cast a shoe — was dead lame. Just then a shell burst in the trunk of the tree a few feet above us. I turned to tell Jem to give me back the mare, but he was gone at full speed, lying close down on the mare and urging her on. He was about to throw his saddle on her when the shell burst. He dropped the saddle and away he went.

Two days afterwards Jem made his appearance in the "avalanche," looking as chirpy as if he had won the battle. He gave his experience since his sudden disappearance with his usual fluency.

"Gen'l, when dat shell busted de mar' runned straight away." I had seen the flight; the rascal didn't stop to put her saddle on, but went off head down on her crest, with legs pounding her sides. "Ole Gen'l Price an' 'bout a dozen of dem colonels of hisn, dey was back dar, — 'bout a hundred yards behin' whar we all was, — and she busted plum thro' 'em. De Gen'l did cuss! 'Stop, you black rascal! Somebody kill dat nigger! He'll stampede dis whole army!' Now, Gen'l, I always 'lowed Gen'l Price had mo' sense 'en dat. Dat warn't no time to stop, an' Gen'l Price ought to ha' knowed it. De mar', she never stopt nuther — not till plum at de avalanche — and I got in de avalanche, and ain't leff it sense, cause I knowed you hilt me 'sponsible for yo' things what was in the avalanche." Investigation showed the mess-chest to be empty, on which Jem evinced much surprise and indignation at the want of integrity "of dese here Southern soldiers."

After this episode Jem lost credit as a fire-eater; but his loyalty to me never faltered, and he stayed with me until the very last moment, when we parted affectionately. He went to Mobile just in the flush cotton times, and when I last saw him he was the prosperous owner and driver of a cotton flat. I heard that he had become quite a politician in the reconstruction times of Alabama.

CHAPTER XIV

Promoted to Brigadier-General — An Interrupted Christmas Dinner — Captain Bledsoe — Incidents of Van Dorn's Campaign in Mississippi — Ross' Brigade of Undisciplined Texans — Measures for the Defence of Vicksburg — Operations of Porter and Sherman — Repelling General Quinby

THE battles and military operations in which I was concerned have heretofore been fully written about and published. The only application for service I ever made during the war was for service in the field in the army of northern Virginia. This I made when Pemberton was placed in command of Mississippi and its forces, and I renewed it by every influence I could bring to bear, until I became absorbed in the active operations of my own department. At any time I would have given up the higher position I held in the service to take command of a division in the army of northern Virginia. General Early kindly explained to me that it would have been felt an injustice to the generals who had been so long and actively engaged in Virginia, to place me over their heads, as would have been the case with several of the major-generals of that army.

Great as was the compliment and the opportunity, I deplored my promotion to the trans-Mississippi department, and did all I could properly do to have the order suspended. As soon as I joined Van Dorn, I told him that while I would do everything in my power to organize his forces, I was not willing in such a war to do only

office work. In his hearty, generous way, Van Dorn replied, "I appreciate your soldierly feelings, and assure you I will not disappoint you by keeping you in an office any longer than may be necessary for the organization of my army, when I will secure for you a proper command in the field." I was accordingly promoted to brigadier-general after the Elkhorn campaign, and had an opportunity to make up a fine brigade, and very soon after a fine division.

When General Van Dorn and I went to Corinth to confer with General Albert Sidney Johnston, Van Dorn said to him: "General, I met upon the river a fine Texas regiment, the Second Texas, Colonel John C. Moore commanding. I ordered it to come at once to you for this impending battle. Please remember that it is to be one of the regiments of the brigade I am going to make up for General Maury." General Johnston replied: "I will remember; but I wish you would leave Maury with me now, and I could at once make up a good brigade for him." Van Dorn said he could not spare me then, and so I escaped the disastrous battle of Shiloh. General Johnston was a high and great man. No man could have met him without feeling respect, confidence, and love for him.

It was on the day before Christmas, 1862, that the news came to us at Granada of the complete success of Van Dorn's bold dash around Grant's army and of Grant's precipitate retirement from our front. On Christmas Day, a prominent and prosperous gentleman of Granada, Mr. Mister, a native of Maryland, gave a grand dinner to General Price and his generals, and a sumptuous table it was that we sat down to. All were in fine humor to enjoy it, for Grant was gone and there was no one to make us afraid.

We had just taken our seats, when a courier arrived with a telegram from General Pemberton, ordering Maury's division to march at once to reinforce General Stephen D. Lee at Vicksburg, who with only 2300 men was attacked by Sherman with a corps of 30,000. General Price handed the dispatch to me, and I arose at once, bade farewell to Mr. Mister and his brilliant company of generals and colonels, and proceeded to put the First Division in motion to succor Lee, as noble and gallant a soldier as ever bore that name. We had to go by rail to Jackson, thence to Vicksburg, over the very worst line of road in the State. It was dark of the next day before we rolled into Vicksburg with the advance train, bearing only 400 men; the rest of the division were distributed along the route from Jackson.

The train bearing the Thirty-fifth Mississippi and Bledsoe's battery was detained in Jackson several hours. Colonel Barry and Captain Bledsoe were capital fellows and good friends. Barry was one of the most popular and eloquent men of Mississippi. Genial, gentle, and humorous, he never seemed to harbor an unkind thought. Bledsoe was one of the most distinguished battery captains of Price's Missourians. They were convivial that night, and occupied a box-car together, in which, after some hours of congenial enjoyment, they rolled themselves in their blankets and slumbered. Bledsoe was about six feet three inches tall, and paid but little attention to any elegance of attire. He wore boots of extraordinary size and length, which came half-way up his long legs, and were innocent of any coloring save the native yellow of the unpolished hide. Barry awoke first, and seeing Bledsoe's great boots standing by, called a negro and gave him a dollar to black them. The darky performed his task well, replacing them carefully.

Then Barry aroused Bledsoe, told him it was time to be up, and lay chuckling as Bledsoe searched the car for his yellow boots.

When at last he realized that the freshly blackened pair before him were his own, and that he had furnished fun for the company, his wrath arose against Barry, and he challenged him to a duel. But that jovial colonel declined to fight him because he "was only a captain, and he could not think of waiving rank." Poor Barry died of consumption soon after the war, loved and lamented by all classes of people. Bledsoe, when I last heard of him, was a prosperous business man in Missouri, where every one respected him.

I met Stephen Lee upon the battle-field from which he had driven Sherman. The night was black as a wolf's mouth, a cold rain was falling, and all around us lay the dead and wounded, whose piteous moans went out for help to the surgeons and litter-bearers, the flickering light of whose battle lanterns appeared here and there about the field.

On reaching Vicksburg, I said: "Lee, I am here with only four hundred men, but the whole division will be up soon after daylight. Please dispose of my force where and how you think best, for though I rank you I don't know anything about the conditions here. I don't know where your line lies, I don't know where the enemy is; in fact, I don't know where I am. I entrust everything to you with the assurance that you shall have all the glory, and I will be responsible if anything goes wrong." This surprised and pleased him, too. He said, "General, that is very generous, and I thank you"; and he went to work accordingly, my only suggestion being to urge him not to expose himself so much as he continually did.

Stevenson came up in a day or two with a large force — over eight thousand men. We had carried on a light skirmish with Sherman until all of Stevenson's division arrived, when we resolved to attack the enemy; but at early dawn we discovered Sherman's smokes along the Yazoo as he retreated. I sent Lee with six or seven regiments to worry his retiring forces. Lee won great praise for his admirable conduct of this expedition, and after my warm endorsement and earnest request was promoted to major-general. He is a splendid fellow, and is now president of the admirable Agricultural College of Mississippi.

The day before Sherman's retreat, a flag of truce brought us a letter requesting permission to bury his dead. The letter was signed by General Morgan, and the permission to bury was signed by Lee, who immediately after the fight had attempted to remove Sherman's wounded, but had been forced to desist in his humane efforts because his people were fired upon by the enemy. His litter-bearers therefore retired until after dark, when all of the Federal wounded were brought to our hospitals.

I did not realize the good name of Price's corps until, on one occasion when Grant seemed to be preparing a descent in force upon our lines, General Stevenson ordered me to place two regiments of my division on picket to defend the expected point of attack. After the usual tour of twenty-four hours, I was informed that the rations were all gone, and went to see Stevenson about relieving them with some other troops. He said confidentially, "We are not willing to entrust any other troops with the defence of that point."

"Oh!" said I, delighted; "just let me tell them that, and they will stay there till Gabriel blows his horn,"

and galloped off to tell the colonels to let their regiments know that they held the post of honor.

In organizing that division, Van Dorn appointed Generals Moore, Cabell, and Phiffer, excellent disciplinarians, to command its three brigades, and in the campaign against Grant in September and October at Corinth they had shown great tenacity, being in action three days. They went in with 4800 Rifles the first day, and on the third three-fourths of their number were gone, yet the remaining 1200 fought from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. with unfaltering devotion. General Rosecrans himself paid a marked and generous compliment to the bravery of that division. When Van Dorn, after the battle, detailed a party under Colonel Barry to bury our dead, Rosecrans courteously replied that "he could not admit them within his works, for reasons which General Van Dorn could appreciate, but that the latter might rest assured that all possible care would be bestowed upon the wounded and all respect showed the dead, especially those who fell so bravely as the men of Maury's division."

Rosecrans was a great soldier and a generous gentleman. He had been my instructor at West Point, and our relations had always been of a very cordial nature. After the battle, he sent me a message through one of my most gallant battery captains, Tobin, who was captured that day, bidding him, "Tell Maury, with my regards, I never used to think when I taught him, a little, curly-headed boy at West Point, that he would ever trouble me as he has to-day." Rosecrans buried Colonel Rogers of the Second Texas, which led the assault, with the honors of war, and marked and enclosed his grave.

On our retreat before Grant, down through Mississippi,

our rear guard had a skirmish with his advance at Coffeeville. My division was ordered to march at 4 P.M., to send all baggage, etc., to a station ten miles below us, and to bivouac there for the night. A cold, sleety rain fell upon us until 10 A.M., when the head of the column halted at Mr. Brooks' large and comfortable plantation home. He was a thrifty planter, and his fields and fences were in good order. On his large lawn about his house stood several dozen bee-hives, all well stored with honey, and on both sides of his long lane, for a mile or more, high worm fences guarded his broad fields of cotton and corn. The division filled the whole lane. It had been carefully trained to respect private property, and especially never to burn rails, but as soon as we halted I ordered Flowerree, my chief of staff, to send along the line the order that "the division will burn rails to-night."

A great shout, a genuine Confederate yell, roared along the line, as they charged those fences. In a few minutes, both sides of the lane were cleared of rails, and huge, blazing fires cheered our wet and weary men. The fence around the yard disappeared too, and the bee-hives vanished, and nothing was left but the stile blocks, over which old Mr. Brooks had been passing for forty years, and over which he still uncompromisingly climbed as he came in to report some fresh disaster, though nothing was left to bar his passage through his fenceless yard. I heard of no colds or pleurisies caused by that night's march. I told the old gentleman to make out a liberal account of the damage to his property and it should be promptly paid, and a few days after he brought in a bill of damages amounting to six hundred dollars. The quartermaster paid it at once, and at that time Confederate money was about as good as greenbacks, so Mr. Brooks was happy in receiving ample value for his losses and I was glad my men escaped much illness.

The old gentleman and his wife were as kind and hospitable as could be, and we were sumptuously entertained at supper and breakfast, and comfortably bedded all of that inclement night. There were more than a dozen of us, generals and staff-officers, who received liberal hospitality at the hands of that old Virginia family.

One night about eleven o'clock I was roused from my slumber upon my saddle blanket under a bush, by the trampling, almost upon us, of a horseman who called out to know, "Where is General Maury?" Flowerree scratched a match and read, "General Maury will turn over the command of the rear guard to the next officer in command, and proceed at once to the head of the army, assume command of the First Division, and march punctually at 2 A.M." It was my third successive night without sleep. The good and great Father Ohannon, chaplain to Price's Missourians, was near me. He is now in high favor with the Pope, as he ought to be, for he promptly said, "General, you are very tired; take a drop of the cratur'; 'twill do you good, and then you can get a nap till half-past one." The good Father never drank a drop himself, but he was indefatigable in his care for his wounded and wearied people, and always carried into battle a quart canteen full of good whiskey.

Accordingly I was aroused at half-past one, and proceeded to hunt up my new command. I found them peacefully sleeping, the lines of white blankets looking weird in the flickering light of the camp-fires. We had some trouble in arousing five thousand men under such circumstances. One fierce old Texan called

out to me, "Somebody'll shoot you directly, ef you don't quit goin' about here makin' so much fuss!" But we got them into the road at last, and marched punctually at two o'clock. We expected to encounter the enemy at daylight.

This Texas brigade was one of the finest bodies of men ever seen in any service, but had no idea of accurate discipline. Their colonel was a very handsome, poetical-looking young fellow, with voice and manner gentle as a woman's, and the heart of a true soldier of Texas, and the head to raise him afterwards to the Executive Chair of his great State. May Heaven soon send him there again! He had not then the least conception of discipline; so I and my staff devoted ourselves to Ross' brigade, for every potato patch and green apple tree drew them from the ranks until we drove them back again. On the march, I usually dressed in an old suit of corduroy and a light felt hat, and these Texans had never seen or heard of me before.

I heard one fellow say: "I wonder who that little fellow is, in that white coat, anyhow? Where did he come from? He's goin' to keep us closed up, you bet; he keeps on at it." Another called out to his comrades plundering a melon patch, "Look out, boys! Here comes the *pro vo!*" A third informed Ross, confidentially, to whom he was giving some green peas just foraged, "If that little fellow don't quit his foolishness, he'll git the stuffin' knocked out of him, first thing he knows."

I devoted especial attention to this brigade for nearly a month, and they hated me accordingly. But after we had been into action together, they used to cheer me whenever they saw me, and called me "Little Dab." One thing in my favor with those Texans was my fine

horses, and the way they would carry me over places when some of the staff would have to ride around. That brigade and Ector's brigade of Texans, and the famous Missouri brigade, organized, instructed, and fought by General Henry Little of Maryland, and my Louisiana brigade might have taken the contract for the conquest of the Soudan, and would have kept it, too. It is very certain they would never have formed a square in an aggressive campaign or made, before battle, all of their preparations for defeat. They would never have murdered a wounded man, or destroyed the Abb-bhu-Clea wells when defeated there and compelled to retreat, for they were true men and self-reliant soldiers. Each man with his repeating rifle was a small fortress.

After Ross had remounted his brigade, he one day caught a Federal gunboat on the Yazoo River, lying in security with all her fires out. He placed a section of his battery above her and another below, smashed every boat on her, and, driving her people all under deck, compelled her to surrender. He had no boat in which to board her, so the sergeant of the battery — it was an Arkansas battery — and twelve men stripped, swam out to the steamer, and, stark naked, received the surrender. She was armed with six twenty-four-pound bronze howitzers, which were sent to me at Mobile, and did great service in the defence of Spanish Fort. Ross has now become one of the leaders in politics in his State. He is gentle as ever, and has always been an example of how the gentlest are ever the bravest. He is a man of culture, too, "an excellent thing" in a governor.

After we drove Sherman from Vicksburg, in December, Grant, having been defeated in his invasion of Mississippi by Van Dorn's brilliant *coup*, was permitted to organize a great army for the capture of that city.

He brought Sherman back there with him, and meantime we had assembled all available forces, over thirty thousand effectives, to resist his attack. Our army extended from Haines Bluff, seventeen miles above the city, to Warrenton, ten miles below. General Johnston thought that this was a faulty disposition. His view was that a strong fort should have been made, commanding the river at the turn above the city, to be garrisoned by two or three thousand good troops, and the rest of the army left to operate in the field.

General Carter L. Stevenson, a veteran and most complete soldier, commanded Vicksburg and all of its dependencies. He assigned me to the command of all of the forces above the town, including twenty thousand men, while General Barton commanded all below the town, about ten thousand men. Stephen D. Lee commanded all of the artillery of the place.

During the period of high water, all of the streams were in flood, and Admiral Porter availed himself of the opportunity to pass with his light-draft steamers up into one of the tributaries of the Yazoo, get above Vicksburg, and cut off communication with its back country. Sherman supported the movement with a large body of troops, and it seemed very near to success, when General Sam Ferguson, a vigilant and daring young officer, intercepted it, stopped Porter's advance, and caused his abandonment of the whole enterprise. Along my part of the line we could note the progress of the expedition by the smoke of the steamers above the tree-tops, eight or ten miles in my front. Ordering Featherston's brigade to reinforce Ferguson, I sent Stephen Lee in a skiff through the overflow to see if it were practicable to throw a force behind Sherman, and so capture the whole expedition. If he found it impossible to move

a sufficient force to accomplish this, then Lee was to make a demonstration and create the impression that he was there in strength, and cause the information to reach Sherman, so as to lead him to retreat. This was all that could be done in his rear; Ferguson had done all possible in his front. Had Ferguson been reinforced and left in command, it seems probable we should have captured that whole expedition instead of only defeating and driving it away.

Our plan was successful, and the whole expedition was a failure, and retreated precipitately out of the country. Ferguson reported the abandonment by the enemy of ten fine boats left on his hands, including the commodore's gig, which he sent to us at Vicksburg, and which we found useful as a flag-of-truce boat. This was Sherman's second failure with which Lee and I had to do. But for Ferguson's fine conduct, Porter might have reached the Yazoo.

Soon after this General Quinby came down through the Yazoo Pass, with a corps, intending to get into the Yazoo River at Greenwood. Loring repulsed and detained him there until I could get to him with a force of four thousand men from Vicksburg. The rivers were out of their banks, the lowlands were under water, skiffs were moored to doors of the farm-houses, and buffalo gnats swarmed over the horses and cattle. I lost twenty-four mules one night from their poisonous bites. In repulsing Quinby's advance, Loring used the famous Second Texas sharp-shooters, who fought in water up to their waists. I could scarce find dry land enough on which to form a line of battle, and smokes were made all along the line that the horses might stand in them and in some measure be protected from the gnats.

General Lloyd Tilghman was a very gallant brigadier

from Maryland, whose brigade joined my right. He proposed that we should try and break up the enemy's headquarters about a mile away from our front. Tilghman had been a civil engineer, and he had a county map showing the position of the farm-house where Quinby had his headquarters. He trained his guns by the compass, while I sent in a body of sharp-shooters through the woods upon the enemy's right. We opened at the signal, and broke up the whole establishment, which retreated hastily for the Mississippi by way of the Yazoo.

CHAPTER XV

Mysterious Disappearance of Young John Herndon Maury — Grant and Porter aid in the Search for him — Conjectures and Theories regarding his Fate — A Christening under Fire — Anecdotes of Dr. Lord — A Magnificent Spectacle when Porter ran the Vicksburg Batteries — An Interrupted Ball

IT was about a month after we had driven Sherman's forces away from our front that an event occurred which plunged my family and staff into the deepest and most anxious suspense, and which furnished one of the most unusual and inexplicable mysteries in the many tragedies of all the sorrowful period of our Civil War.

One morning in the latter part of January, I, accompanied by my chief of artillery, Colonel Burnett, and my young aide-de-camp, John Herndon Maury, son of Commodore Maury, rode to General Stevenson's headquarters, and, after the conclusion of my business there, sent these two gentlemen of my staff to make a reconnoissance near the Big Black Road. This was about ten o'clock in the morning. I have never seen my young aide-de-camp and kinsman since that moment, nor have I ever been able to ascertain what was his fate.

Burnett returned to dinner at headquarters and reported that at about one o'clock P.M., having finished their business on the Big Black Road, young Maury left him in order to ride down to a point opposite the canal, and observe what the enemy were about there. No uneasi-