

strongly that it could be held against the combined Confederate forces. But in June, 1863, he decided to make a movement to secure the possession of Middle Tennessee, and he succeeded in doing so, being ably seconded by General Thomas. Bragg fell back to Chattanooga, where he intrenched himself and made arrangements to stay. It was a position of great strength, surrounded by high mountains, with a deep stream winding around one side, and heavily fortified. It could have been held by a small force of men against ten times their number. Rosecrans, however, determined to push on into Georgia, and as a necessary step for this purpose, an attack had to be made on Chattanooga. The Tennessee river and the Cumberland mountains interposed, and rarely in military annals has a more hazardous and difficult march occurred. While it was still in progress, Bragg with all his troops evacuated his strong position at Chattanooga, and the forces met in battle at Chickamauga. Here one of the most terrible conflicts of the war took place, and Thomas, by his steadfast courage, won the title of the "Rock of Chickamauga." At the close of the day, the army under his guidance and control pitched its tents at Chattanooga, and there for many weeks held its position, although surrounded by the enemy, and suffering much from disease and want of supplies.

The war department had become dissatisfied with General Rosecrans, because Bragg had not been driven from Georgia, and issued orders for his removal, and the appointment of Thomas in his place. He assumed command under most discouraging circumstances. The troops were on short rations, and the difficulty of obtaining supplies was increasing, the enemy command-

ing the river at several points below Chattanooga. The department telegraphed to Thomas to know how long he could hold his position. His reply was, "We will hold it until we starve," and both he and his men were fully resolved to suffer anything rather than relinquish their post to the enemy. But in order to relieve his soldiers, Thomas planned an able movement which opened the river to them from Bridgeport to Chattanooga. Generals Hooker, Palmer, Smith, and Hazen took part in this movement. Hooker took possession of the enemy's position on Lookout mountain; the range of hills below was occupied by the Union troops; thus the means of obtaining supplies was established, and the Army of the Cumberland saved from the slow destruction by famine which had seemed to await it.

In the campaign which drove Bragg and his forces from Missionary ridge General Thomas added to his laurels as a commander. It was said of him that "he never made a mistake or lost a battle." He was accused of slowness, for he never permitted himself to be hurried into battle until he had decided that he was ready for it. It is said that his habits of deliberation were the cause of his cognomen of "Slow Trot," although the sobriquet has also been traced to an anecdote told of him to the effect that riding along one day, lost in thought and probably somewhat overcome with fatigue, he fell asleep, while his horse moved on almost at a foot-pace. Waking up, and finding himself riding far in the rear of his command, he rose in the stirrups, shouting, "Slow trot, boys, slow trot," and then moved on briskly until he regained his proper position at the head of the lines.

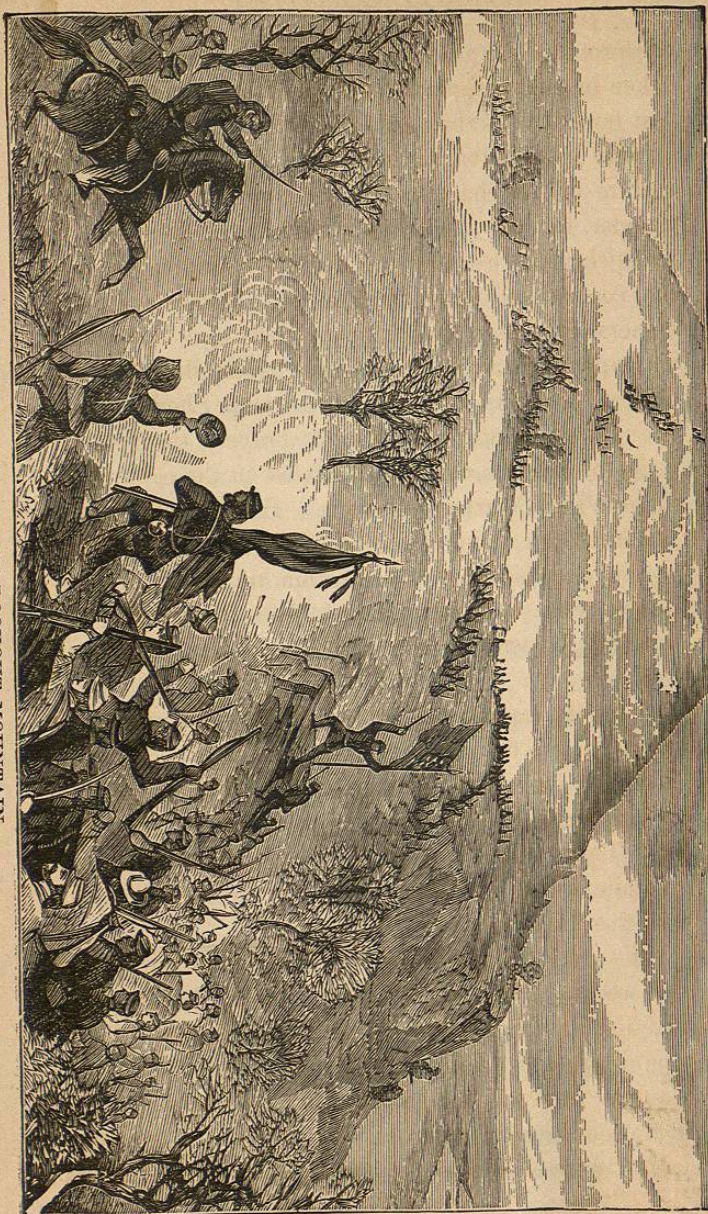
However that may be, his system if slow was sure.



He provided for all dilemmas and obstacles, was never taken by surprise, made no disastrous experiments, and lost fewer troops than any other of our generals in proportion to the advantages gained. It was an admirable feature of his character that, although an able commander, he was a willing subordinate. Even at the time when the country was filled with admiration of his conduct at Chickamauga and Missionary ridge General Sherman, his junior in years and experience, was appointed over him to the command vacated by Grant. Thomas took his place under Sherman with cheerful obedience, and fought bravely through the series of combats which culminated in the capture of Atlanta and Northern Georgia. In the words of the brilliant leader himself, "Old Thomas was the wheel-horse," and his loyal co-operation under all circumstances was one of the chief agents in crushing out the armed power of the rebellion in that section of country.

After the capture of Atlanta, when Sherman decided on his famous march to the sea, Thomas was commissioned to protect the rear by encountering the enemy at whatever point the latter might choose to give battle. The Southern commander, General Hood, decided to make a stand in Tennessee, and accordingly Thomas with his forces moved on Nashville.

The army remained inactive at that point for nearly two weeks. Thomas had about 33,000 men. Hood had 55,000, all veteran troops. Knowing that a defeat would probably delay the close of the war for years, Thomas resolved not to meet his adversary until he made complete preparations. The authorities at Washington were displeased at the delay, and even Grant



THE BATTLE OF LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN.



was inclined to censure Thomas for not advancing against Hood. Telegrams fairly rained on Thomas, but he declined to move until he felt that he could do so with success. On the 15th of December, 1864, the forces met in front of Nashville. Thomas won a magnificent victory. Hood's army was literally broken up and destroyed. The pursuit was continued for two days. Whole regiments were taken prisoners, and the rear-guard of the flying and dispirited enemy was driven across the Tennessee river. Sixty-eight pieces of artillery, several thousand small arms, and over thirteen thousand prisoners were captured.

Thomas received the highest honor for this splendid achievement. He was thanked by a vote of the senate and house of representatives, the State of Tennessee voted him a gold medal, and the appointment of major-general was conferred on him. The victory at Nashville proved to be one of the closing scenes of the great drama, and when, a few months later, the Confederacy collapsed, Thomas was appointed to command the "military division of the Tennessee," with headquarters at Nashville. Here he remained some months engaged in the difficult task of re-establishing civil order in the disturbed States in his department. He was afterwards placed in command of the Department of the Cumberland, where he remained until 1869, when he was appointed to take charge of the military division of the Pacific with headquarters at San Francisco. He visited all the posts in his command, even including Alaska, and made a detailed report of his observations.

On returning to San Francisco he resumed the duties of his position, and while occupied in his office on the



28th of March, 1870, he was suddenly prostrated by illness. In a few hours he became insensible, and before evening fell, the brave and gifted soldier breathed his last. His death was attributed to the rupture of a blood-vessel in the brain. His body was conveyed to Troy, New York, escorted by his staff and a suitable guard, and was interred there April 8th, 1870. Eight major-generals acted as pall-bearers, among whom were Meade, Rosecrans, and Hooker.

A monument to the memory of Thomas was erected at Washington, and at the unveiling of the statue which forms the monument, tributes were paid to the dead general by many of the commanders with whom he had served. A splendid eulogy on his character and services is contained in a memorial oration delivered at Cleveland in 1870 by the lamented President Garfield, who held Thomas in the highest honor.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### WILLIAM TECUMSEH SHERMAN.

Parentage—Birthplace—His Friend, Hon. Thomas Ewing—Cadet—Graduated—In Florida War—In California—President of Louisiana Military Academy—Resignation—In Federal Army—At Fort Corcoran—Pittsburg Landing—Grant's Opinion—Major-General at Corinth—Pursuing Johnston after capture of Vicksburg—Brigadier-General—Chattanooga—Missionary Ridge—Expedition through Mississippi—Captures Atlanta—March to the Sea—To Washington via Richmond—Sherman and Stanton—Commander at St. Louis—Character of Sherman.

IN the war of the rebellion Ohio seems to have furnished more than her quota of distinguished and successful officers. It was her fortune to give to the country the five military men who hold the first rank, viz., Stanton, Grant, Sherman, McPherson, and Sheridan, to say nothing of the long list of minor heroes.

The subject of this sketch was born in Lancaster, Fairfield county, Ohio, February 8, 1820. His father, being an admirer of the great Indian chief, gave him that name. His mother, being left a widow in 1829 with eleven children, relinquished William, then nine years old, to the care of his father's friend, Hon. Thomas Ewing, who legally adopted him, sending him to good schools until he was sixteen, then entering him as a cadet at West Point, where he graduated in 1840, in rank the sixth in his class. He entered the service as second lieutenant of the Third Artillery, and served