IV.—SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF PORT HUDSON.

Port Hudson.—Its Situation.—Admiral Farragut.—Preparing the Fleet.—Running the Batteries.—The Midnight Battle.—Failure and Success.—Death of Lieutenant Cummings.—Loss of the Mississippi.—Various Incidents.—Coolness of Captain Smith.—Investment of Port Hudson.—Sunday Assault.—Heroism of the Soldiers.—Failure.—Fall of Vicksburg.—Surrender of Port Hudson.—Interesting Scenes.

The passage by the Union gun-boats of the tremendous batteries which the rebels had erected at Port Hudson, was one of the most heroic deeds of the war. Port Hudson, or Hickey's Landing, as it used to be called, is situated on a bend, on the eastern side of the Mississippi River, about twenty-two miles above Baton Rouge, and one hundred and forty-seven above New Orleans. It was three hundred miles below Vicksburg. The bluff, rising forty feet above the level of the river, was covered with forts for a distance of nearly four miles, constructed upon the most scientific principles of modern military art, and armed with the most approved and heaviest ordnance, which England, seeking the ruin of our republic, could furnish the rebels. The river, just at the bend, suddenly narrows, and the current, striking upon the west bank, is thrown across, running with great velocity, and carrying the channel almost directly under the base of the precipitous cliffs. Any vessel attempting the passage would be compelled to run the gauntlet of a plunging fire from batteries which commanded the range for several miles above and below.

It was proposed, in order that our fleet might be able to co-operate with General Grant in the siege of Vicksburg, to attack Port Hudson, and, under the fire of the bombardment, to attempt to force a passage, by several of our gun-boats, up the river. Rear-Admiral Farragut, who was intrusted with this perilous adventure, was the man for the hour. He had already acquired world-wide renown in the capture of New Orleans, a feat for which no parallel can be found in the annals of naval warfare.

This distinguished officer was born in Tennessee in 1803. His father was an army offic-
pressed, with a sailor's frankness, his decided opposition to the disloyal proceedings.

"You can not be permitted to remain here," said the traitors, "while you hold such sentiments."

"Very well," replied the Admiral, "I will then go where I can live with such sentiments."

He knew the temper of the rebels, and went home and informed his family that they must take their departure from Norfolk for New York in a few hours. He left the next morning, April 18, 1861. The next night the navy-yard was burned. When he arrived in Baltimore he found that the rebel mob had possession of the streets, having torn up the railroad track. With difficulty he secured a passage to the North in a canal-boat. Reaching New York he obtained a safe retreat for his family at Hastings, on the Hudson, and then went forth to battle for that banner beneath which he had proudly sailed for more than half a century. Had he remained in Norfolk one day longer he would have been imprisoned and perhaps hung for his loyalty.

Treason in the Cabinet had scattered all our ships, that there might be no naval force at hand to oppose the rebels. For several months Admiral Farragut had no command, simply because the Government had no vessel to give him.

At length when the naval expedition was fitted out against New Orleans, he was selected as the right man to lead it. With his entire fleet, in an engagement which impartial history has pronounced almost superhuman in its daring and its accomplishment, he ran the batteries, surmounted all the obstructions in the river, and crushed the gun-boats of the enemy — asked, heroically asked, by Commodore Porter with his mortar-boats. On the 25th of April, 1862, he anchored before the city which treason had seized. Under the menace of his guns he compelled every rebel flag to go down into the dust. For this achievement he was elevated to the rank of Rear-Admiral; and
probably now, after his achievements at Port Hudson and Mobile, no one will dispute his title to be the foremost naval hero of the war. Such was the man who was intrusted with the command of the fleet which was destined to run the batteries of Port Hudson.

The following anecdote, illustrative of his character is worthy of record. The Admiral has always been, from boyhood, thoughtful, earnest, studious. While in foreign ports he was ever busy in acquiring the language of the people. He spoke Italian, Spanish, French, and Arabic with almost as much fluency as his own language. On one occasion, in approaching an island in the Mediterranean, the captain of the ship remarked that he did not know how he should communicate with the people, as he had no interpreter. Just then a boat came alongside filled with natives.

"Captain," said one of the officers, "we have an officer on board who seems to speak all languages. He is doubtless in league with the 'Old Boy.' Suppose you send for him." Lieutenant Farragut was called for. He looked into the boat and saw an old Arab woman there, with whom he immediately entered into conversation, alike to the surprise and amusement of all.
Eight war vessels comprised the expedition to ascend the Mississippi from New Orleans. The splendid flag-ship Hartford led, a first-class steam sloop of war. Her armament consisted of twenty-six 8 and 9 inch Paixhan guns. Then came the Richmond, a ship of the same class, armed with twenty-six 8 and 9 inch Columbiads. The first-class steam sloop of war Mississippi followed with twenty-two guns of the same calibre. The Monongahela, a second-class steam sloop, carried sixteen heavy guns. The gun-boats Kineo, Albatross, Sachem, and Genesee followed, each carrying three Columbiads and two riled 32-pounders. All these vessels were screw-propellers except the Mississippi, which was a side-wheel steamer.

This little fleet ascended the river from New Orleans, and passing the smouldering ruins of Baton Rouge, the capital of Louisiana, anchored, on the morning of the 14th of April, 1863, a few miles below the long series of rebel batteries at Port Hudson. In ascending the river the starboard sides alone of the ships would be exposed to the fire of the rebels, and the starboard guns alone could be called into action. Every precaution was adopted in preparation for the terrible ordeal. The bulwarks consisted of solid timber, fifteen inches in thickness, impervious to bullets, but offering but little resistance to solid shot or shells. One remarkable feature of the preparation is worthy of special notice. The passage was to be attempted in the darkness of the night. It would not be safe to have any light upon the deck, as that would guide the fire of the foe. The simple yet ingenious measure was adopted of whitewashing the deck, the gun-carriages, and nettings, so that the stands of grape and canister were as visible as a black hat would be upon drifted snow. The effect of this contrivance struck all with surprise.

Early in the morning the squadron reached Prophet's Island, from which place the frowning batteries of the rebels could be plainly seen. Six mortar-boats, prepared to take part in the bombardment, but not designed to run the batteries, were here moored along the shore. They threw ponderous missiles, more destructive than the mythological bolts of Jove. At half past one o'clock these mortars opened fire, at a signal-gun from the Hartford, to try their range. The shells rose majestically into the air, through a curve of between three and four miles, and exploded over the rebel guns, without apparently doing much harm. In the mean time a small land-force, which had been sent by back-country roads to distract the attention of the garrison at Port Hudson by an attack in the rear, signified their arrival at their designated position by opening fire.

At half past nine o'clock at night a red light from the flag-ship signaled the ships and gun-boats to weigh anchor. The Hartford led, towing the Albatross lashed on her starboard side. The Richmond, following, towed the Genesee. The Monongahela towed the Kineo. The Mississippi and the Sachem followed. The mortar-boats were anchored just above Prophet's Island, under shelter of the eastern banks, but from which point they could easily pitch their shells into the works of the foe.

Signal-lights were flashing along the rebel batteries, showing that they were awake to the movements of the Union squadron. Soon the gleam of a fire kindled by the rebels was seen, which blended higher and more brilliant till its flashes illuminated the whole river opposite the batteries with the light of day. This immense bonfire was directly in front of the most formidable of the fortifications, and every vessel ascending the stream would be compelled to pass in the full blaze of its light, exposed to the concentrated fire of the heaviest ordnance. Still it was hoped, notwithstanding the desperate nature of the enterprise, that a few at least of the vessels of the squadron would be able to effect a passage.

Silently in the darkness the boats steamed along, until a rebel field-piece, buried in the foliage of the shore, opened fire upon the Hartford. The challenge thus given was promptly accepted, and a broadside volley was returned upon the unseen foe. The rebel batteries, protected by strong redoubts, extended, as we have mentioned, with small intervening spaces, a distance of nearly four miles, often rising in tier above tier on the ascending bluff. Battery after battery immediately opened its fire; the hillsides seemed peopled with demons hurling their thunder-bolts, while the earth trembled beneath the incessant and terrific explosions. And now the mortar-boats uttered their awful roar, adding to the inconceivable sublimity of the scene. An eye-witness thus describes the appearance of the mammoth shells rising and descending in their majestic curve:

"Never shall I forget the sight that then met my astonished vision. Shooting upward, at an angle of forty-five degrees, with the rapidity of lightning, small globes of golden flame were seen sailing through the pure ether—not a steady, unfading flame, but corsolating like the fitful gleam of a fire-fly, now visible and anon invisible. Like a flying star of the sixth magnitude the terrible missile—a 12-inch shell—nears its zenith, up and still up, higher and higher. Its flight now becomes much slower, till, on reaching its utmost altitude, its centrifugal force becoming counteracted by the earth's attraction, it describes a parabolic curve, and down, down it comes, bursting, it may be, ere it reaches terra firma, but probably alighting in the rebel works ere it explodes, where it scattered death and destruction around."

The air was breathing gently from the east, and dense volumes of billowy smoke hung over the river, drifting slowly across in clouds which the eye could not penetrate, and adding greatly to the gloom and sublimity of the scene. It strains a ship too much to fire all the guns simultaneously. The broadsides were consequently generally discharged by commencing with the
forward gun, and firing each one in its turn in the most rapid manner possible—as fast as the ticking of a clock. The effect of this bombardment, from ship and shore, as described by all who witnessed it, was grand and terrific in the extreme. From the innumerable batteries, very skillfully manned, shot and shell fell upon the ships like hail. Piercing the awful roar, which filled the air as with the voice of ten thousand thunders, was heard the demoniac shrieks of the shells, as if all the demons of the pit had broken loose, and were reveling in hideous rage through the darkness and the storm.

In the midst of this scene of terror, conflagration, and death, as the ships were struggling through the fire against the swift current of the Mississippi, there was heard from the deck of the Richmond, coming up from the dark rushing stream, the cry of a drowning man. "Help! oh, help!"

The unhappy sufferer had evidently fallen from the Hartford, which was in advance. In such an hour there could not be even an attempt made to rescue him. Again and again the agonizing cry pierced the air, the voice growing fainter and fainter as the victim floated away in the distance, until he sank beneath the turbid waves.

The whole arena of action, on the land and on the water, was soon enveloped in a sulphurous canopy of smoke, pierced incessantly by the vivid flashes of the guns. The vessels could no longer discern each other or the hostile batteries on the shore. It became very difficult to know how to steer; and as in the impenetrable gloom the only object at which they could aim was the flash of the guns, the danger became imminent that they might fire into each other. This gave the rebels great advantage; for with their stationary guns trained upon the river, though they fired into dense darkness, they could hardly fire amiss. Occasionally a gust of wind would sweep away the smoke, slightly revealing the scene in the light of the great bonfire on the bluff. Again the black, stifling canopy would settle down, and all was Egyptian darkness.

At one time, just as the Richmond was prepared to pour a deadly fire into a supposed battery, whose flash the gunners had just perceived, Lieutenant Terry shouted out, "Hold on, you are firing into the Hartford!" Another quarter
of a minute would have discharged a deadly broadside into the bosoms of our friends. Just then another flash of the Hartford's guns revealed the spars and rigging of the majestic ship just along-side of the Richmond. The demons of war were now flapping their wings on the blast, and death and misery held high carnival. The surgeons were busy in their humane yet awful tasks. The decks were becoming slippery with blood. The shrill cry of the wounded often pierced the thunder of the conflict. The gloom, the smoke, the suffocation, the deafening roar, the bewilderment of the ships struggling through the darkness, presented a scene which war’s panorama has perhaps never before unrolled.

Still the ships kept up an incessant fire from their starboard guns, and from brass howitzers stationed in the tops, whenever the lifting of the smoke would give them any chance to strike the foe. The ships were now all engaged. Many of them were within sixty feet of the batteries. The Monongahela had two immense rifled Parrott guns, each of which threw shot weighing two hundred pounds. The thunder of these guns and of the mammoth mortars rose sublime-ly above the general roar of the cannonade. A shell from a rebel battery entered the forward
starboard port of the Richmond, and burst with a
terrible explosion directly under the gun. One
fragment splintered the gun-carriage. Another
made a deep indentation in the gun itself. Two
other fragments struck the unfortunate boat-
swain's mate, cutting off both legs at the knee
and one arm at the elbow. He soon died, with
his last breath saying, "Don't give up the ship,
lads!" The whole ship rocked under the con-
ungression as if tossed by an earthquake.

The river at Port Hudson, as we have men-
tioned, makes a majestic curve. Rebel cannon
were planted along the concave brow of the cres-
ccent-shaped bluffs of the eastern shore, while
beneath the bluff, near the water's edge, there
was another series of what were called water-
batteries lining the bank. As the ships entered
this curve, following the channel which swept
close to the eastern shore, they were, one after
the other, exposed to the most terrible enfilading
fire from all the batteries following the line of
the curve. This was the most desperate point
of the conflict; for here it was almost literal-
ly fighting muzzle to muzzle. The rebels dis-
charged an incessant cross-fire of grape and can-
ister, to which the heroic squadron replied with
double-shotted guns. Never did ships pass a
more fiery ordeal.

Lieutenant-Commander Cummings, the ex-
cutive officer of the Richmond, was standing
with his speaking-trumpet in his hand cheering
the men, with Captain Alden by his side, when
there was a simultaneous flash and roar, and a
storm of shot came crashing through the bul-
warks from a rebel battery, which they could
almost touch with their ramrods. Both of the
officers fell as if struck by lightning. The Cap-
tain was simply knocked down by the windage,
and escaped unharmed. The speaking-trumpet
in Commander Cummings's hand was battered
flat, and his left leg was torn off just below the
knee.

As he fell heavily upon the deck, in his gush-
ing blood, he exclaimed:

"Put a tourniquet on my leg, boys. Send my
letters to my wife. Tell her that I fell in doing
my duty!"

As they took him below, and into the sur-
geon's room, already filled with the wounded,
he looked around upon the unfortunate group,
and said,

"If there are any here hurt worse than I am
let them be attended to first."

His shattered limb was immediately ampu-
tated. Soon after, as he lay upon his couch,
exhausted by the operation and faint from the
loss of blood, he heard the noise of the escape
of steam as a rebel shot penetrated the boiler.
Inquiring the cause, and learning that the ship
had become disabled, he exclaimed, with fervor,

"I would willingly give my other leg if we
could but pass those batteries!"

A few days after this Christian hero died of
his wound. He adds another to the honored
list of those martyrs who have laid down their
lives to rescue our beloved country from the
most wicked rebellion which ever disgraced the
history of this world. A reporter of one of the
New York papers, describing the scene just be-
fore the battle, writes:

"In conversation with Mr. Cummings I asked
him whose post in time of action was on the
bridge—a narrow platform even with the tops
of the rail across the ship from side to side—
where the best view can be had of the whole
ship fore and aft. With a quiet smile he only
pointed to his own breast. You may well be-
lieve that I often recalled this with great inter-
est. There never was a more enthusiastic, chiv-
ailles, and high-minded corps of officers than
those on board the Richmond. They had toned
up the whole ship's crew to their own valor."

The chaplain, Rev. Dr. Bacon, of New Or-
leans, was aiding with the group around the
gun when Lieutenant Cummings fell; but he
escaped unharmed. Like most of our chap-
lains during the war he avoided none of the
peril of battle. No officer on board was more
heroic than he, in facing every danger, as he
animated the men to duty. Just above the bat-
teries were several rebel gun-boats. They did not
venture into the melee, but anxiously watched the
fight, until, apprehensive that some of our
ships might pass, they put on all steam and ran
up the river as fast as their web-feet could carry
them. But now denser and blacker grew the
dark billows of smoke. It seemed impossible,
if the steamers moved, to avoid running into
each other or upon the shore. An officer of
each ship placed himself at the prow, striving
to penetrate the gloom. A line of men passed
from him to the stern, along whom, even through
the thunders of the battle, directions could be
transmitted to the helmsman. Should any of the
ships touch the ground beneath the fire of such
batteries their destruction would be almost sure.

It was a little after 11 o'clock at night when
the first shot had been fired. For an hour and
a half the unequal conflict had raged. The flag-
ship Hartford and the Albemarle succeeded in
forcing their way above the batteries, and in
gaining the all-important object of their
enterprise. The Richmond, following, had just
passed the principal batteries when a shot pen-
etrated her steam-chest, so effectually disabling
her for the hour that she dropped, almost help-
less, down the stream. The Genesee, which
was along-side, unable to stem the rapid current
of the river, with the massive Richmond in tow,
bore her back to Prophet's Island. Just as the
Richmond turned a torpedo exploded under her
stern, throwing up the water mast-head high,
and causing the gallant ship to quiver in every
timber.

The Monongahela and Kineo came next in line
of battle. The commander of the Monongahela,
Captain McKimtry, was struck down early in
the conflict. The command then devolved on a
gallant young officer, Lieutenant Thomas. He
manfully endeavored through all the storm of
battle to follow the flag-ship. But in the dense
smoke the pilot lost the channel. The ship
grounded directly under the fire of one of the principal rebel batteries. For twenty-five minutes she remained in this perilous position, swept by shot and shell. Finally, through the efforts of her consort, the *Kineo*, she was floated, and again heroically commenced steaming up the river. But her enginery soon became so disabled under the relentless fire, that the *Monongahela* was also compelled to drop down with the *Kineo* to the position of the mortar fleet. Herloss was six killed and twenty wounded.

In obedience to the order of Admiral Farragut, the magnificent ship *Mississippi* brought up the rear, with the gun-boat *Sacken* as her ally, bound to her larboard side. She had reached the point directly opposite the town, and her officers were congratulating themselves that they had surmounted the greatest dangers, and that they would soon be above the batteries, when the ship, which had just then been put under rapid headway, grounded on the west bank of the river. It was an awful moment; for the guns of countless batteries were immediately concentrated upon her. Captain Smith, while with his efficient engineer Rutherford he made the most strenuous exertions to get the ship afloat, ordered his gunners to keep up their fire with the utmost possible rapidity. In the short
was a vivid flash, shooting upward to the sky in the form of an inverted cone. For a moment the whole horizon seemed ablaze with fiery missiles. Then came booming over the waves a peal of heaviest thunder. The very hills shook beneath the awful explosion. This was the dying cry of the Mississippi, as she sank to her burial beneath the waves of the river from which she received her name.

Captain Caldwell of the Essex who, as soon as he saw the Mississippi to be on fire, gallantly steered to her aid, directly under the concentrated fire of the batteries, succeeded in picking up many who were struggling in the waves, and in rescuing others who had escaped to the shore. There were about three hundred men on board the Mississippi. Of these sixty-five officers and men were either killed, wounded, or taken prisoners. Seventy who escaped to the shore, wandered, for many miles, down the western banks of the stream, in constant danger of being taken captive, wading the bayous, and encountering fearful hardships, until they finally reached the ships below. Two ships, the Hortford and the Albatross, succeeded in running the gauntlet. We have not space here to recount their subsequent exploits.

Two months now passed away, during which vigorous preparations were made in New Orleans to attack and capture Port Hudson, so that efficient aid might be contributed to General Grant, who was at that time besieging Vicksburg. In the mean time the rebels had been very busy, and the batteries at Port Hudson were surrounded, on the land side, by as powerful a series of ramparts and redoubts as modern science could construct. A large patriot fleet and army were assembled at Baton Rouge. The rebel works were soon invested. The lines of the Union army extended in a semicircle from Thompson's Bayou, five miles above Port Hudson, to Springfield's Landing, about the same distance below. While this movement of the land-forces was taking place the fleet was attracting the attention of the rebels by an incessant bombardment. The Hortford and Albatross, which had run the blockade, attacked the upper batteries; while the Richmond, Monongahela, Genesee, and Essex opened their hottest fire upon the batteries below.

General Banks was in command of the land-force. The extreme right was commanded by General Weitzel, the centre by Generals Emory and Grover, the left by General T. W. Sherman. The artillery brigade was under the command of General Arnold. On the morning of Wednesday, the 27th of May, 1863, the great battle began. Our troops were to march up with bare bosoms against one of the strongest positions in the world. An almost impenetrable abatis of felled trees covered the ground before them. Sharp-shooters occupied every available point to pick off the officers. The ramparts bristled with artillery, double-shotted with grape and canister. Dense lines of rebels of desperate valor crouched behind the earth-works, with
muskets loaded and capped, prepared, while almost safe from danger themselves, to hurl such a storm of lead into the faces of the advancing patriots as mortal bravery has rarely encountered.

The patriots who were to face this fiery ordeal were men who detested war. With great reluctance they had but recently left their homes of peaceful industry. They loved their wives and their children, and scenes of destruction and carnage were abhorrent to all their feelings. But the free institutions, so priceless, which their fathers had bequeathed to them, were endangered, and for the integrity of their country they were nobly willing to lay down their lives.

The line of battle was formed at daybreak. Weitzel, Grover, Angur, Sherman—men already renowned in this great strife for popular rights—marshaled their enthusiastic men in the dim twilight for the day of blood. The signal for the onset was given, and the whole majestic line moved forward. At the same signal every gun in the fleet which could be brought to bear upon the foe opened its thunders. Every rebel battery and musket responded, and for a circuit of leagues the deafening roar of battle filled the air. Hour after hour there was no intermission. Both parties fought with the utmost possible determination. Through mutilation and death, and over every obstacle, the patriots pressed resolutely forward. The rebels contested every inch. Guns were clubbed. Bayonets crossed each other. Hand clenched hand and breast pressed breast in the deadly strife. The patriots drove the rebels from several portions of their works, seized their guns, and turned them upon the retiring foe. These young men, fresh from their homes and from all the ennobling pursuits of industry, moved steadily forward against and clambered over these bristling ram-
parts, under the most murderous fire of shot, shell, grape, canister, and musketry, with all the firmness of veterans.

The Second Regiment of Louisiana Native Guards, under Colonel Nelson, made one of the most heroic charges of the day. They went in nineteen strong. When they came out six hundred answered to the roll-call. They poured one charge of bullets in upon the foe, and then, through a concentric fire of musketry and batteries, rushed forward with fixed bayonets. The Sixth Michigan and the One Hundred and Twenty-eighth New York were in the same charge. General Sherman led in person, and was carried from the field severely wounded. General Neal Dow, of Maine, was also wounded. Each of these two regiments lost nearly one half of its effective men. The patriots, in this heroic attack, upon the right, gained the ground they fought for. But they could not hold it, for it was commanded by other and more formidable batteries in their rear.

In the centre the onset by Augur and Grover was no less impetuous. The rebels were driven foot by foot from their rifle-pits and outer intrenchements into their main works, from which they never emerged again until they marched out prisoners of war. The rebels had placed every obstacle in the way of the Union advance which art could suggest, and all the most terrible engines of war exhausted their energies in the work of slaughter. And yet these young patriots, all inexperienced in war's horrible science, who had enlisted but for nine months, carried line after line of intrenchments, with precision of movement not surpassed by the veteran soldiers of Waterloo or Sevastopol.

Our loss amounted to about a thousand men in killed, wounded, and missing. But we gained very important advantages. Several guns were captured, the rebels were driven back, and positions of great military importance were secured for future operations. The efforts of the fleet were equally successful. The accuracy of the firing was very remarkable. Five of the heaviest guns of the rebels were dismounted.

The First Regiment of Louisiana engineers rendered efficient service in this action. It was composed exclusively of colored men. General Banks, speaking of them in his report, says:

"In many respects their conduct was heroic. No troops could be more determined or more daring. They made, during the day, three charges upon the batteries of the enemy, suffering very heavy losses, and holding their position at nightfall with the other troops on the right of our line. Whatever doubt may have existed heretofore as to the efficiency of organizations of this character, the history of this day proves conclusively to those who were in condition to observe the conduct of these regiments, that the Government will find in this class of troops effective supporters and defenders."

A fortnight now passed away of cannonading, of skirmishing, of incessant action of sharpshooters, of throwing up intrenchments, and digging parallels. On the 14th of June all things were ready for another grand assault. The point of attack now chosen was the extreme northeastern corner of the rebel works. Witzel and Kimball and Morgan and Paine and Grover had massed their forces here for another great struggle. For several days a heavy fire of artillery had been kept up at this point upon the hostile batteries, and several of their most important guns had been dismounted. We had been steadily drawing nearer to their works, picking off their gunners with our sharp-shooters wherever we could get sight of a head or a hand, and now our batteries were in many places within three hundred yards of those of the foe.

At 10 o'clock at night of Saturday, June 13, General Augur, who had just returned from the head-quarters of General Banks, gave orders that all were to be in readiness for the grand assault at 3 o'clock the next morning, Sunday. Eager as all the soldiers were for the movement, and sanguine as they were of success, there probably was not a Christian man in the army who did not regret that the assault was to be made on the Sabbath day. Rarely during the war had a party making an offensive movement on Sunday been successful. The fact had attracted the attention even of the most thoughtless men.

The day had not dawned when the brigades were moving by routes which had been carefully marked out to them for the impetuous assault. During several previous days the engineers had been employed constructing a covered way through which the assaulting column could advance to within about three hundred yards of the enemy's position. Through this they marched in single file to the point where they spread out in line of battle, as for a grand assault over an old cotton-field. But the rebels had filled it with lines of ditches, which were covered and concealed by an abatis of fallen trees and vines. The rifle-pits of the foe commanded every inch. It was impossible for horses to move across this plain, and infantry could by no possibility keep in regular order of battle. The entire line of rebel works extended eight miles by land and three or four by water. Along this whole circuit the assault was to be made simultaneously by the army and navy, and with the utmost determination that there might be no concentration of rebel troops to repel the main assault, which was to be made upon the northeast angle of the rebel lines. Elsewhere the attack was merely to distract attention, and to keep the foe engaged.

Before the dawn the most terrible cannonading commenced along the whole line afloat and ashore. Every gun within the rebel intrenchments and from the patriot opposing batteries was fired with the utmost rapidity. Not a man on those grounds had ever before heard thunders of war so awful. The air was filled with shrieking, bursting shells. The hills shook beneath the tremendous explosions. Dense clouds of smoke, which hung heavily over the whole ex-
pans, gave the place the appearance of a vast volcano in violent eruption.

The grand assaulting column was under the immediate command of General Paine. It was led by the Eighth New Hampshire and the Fourth Wisconsin regiments. Then came the Fourth Massachusetts and the One Hundred and Tenth New York. Then came the Third Brigade under Colonel Gooding, consisting of the Thirty-
tirst, Thirty-eighth, and Fifty-third Massachu-
setts, and the One Hundred and Fifty-sixth and One Hundred and Seventy-fifth New York. The Second Brigade followed, under Colonel A. Fear-
ring. Its carried ranks were composed of the One Hundred and Thirty-third and the One Hun-
dred and Seventy-third New York. The re-
mainder of this brigade were detailed as skirm-
ishers. Then came the First Brigade under Colonel Ferris. It was composed of the Twen-
ye-eight Connecticut, the Fourth Massachu-
setts, and four companies of the One Hundred and Tenth New York. The necessary number of pioneers and Nims's Massachusetts Battery were added.

Such was the immense battering-ram which military science had devised and constructed to break through the rebel intrenchments. While the storm of war was beating with the utmost fierceness along a circuit twelve miles in extent, this ponderous force was to be hurled headlong, with all conceivable impetuosity, upon a single point. Success seemed certain. The battle can not be described. It was a de
dirious scene of terror, tumult, and blood. The following words from one who was a participant in the scene may give a faint idea of its horrors:

"The moment we turned into the road shot, shell, grape, and canister fell like hail around us. On we went. A little higher a new gun opened upon us. Still farther they had a cross-
fire—oh, such a terrible one! But on we went bending, as, with screening shrouds, the grape and canister swept over us. I had no thought, after a short prayer, but for my flag. The col-
or-bearer fell, but the flag did not. Half the guard fell, but the flag was there. When about three hundred yards from the works I was stra
eck. The pain was so intense that I could not go on. I turned to my second lieutenant, and said, 'Never mind me, Jack; for God's sake jump to the colors.' I don't recollect any thing more until I heard Colonel Benedict say, 'Up, men, and forward!' I looked, and saw the rear regi-
ments lying flat to escape the fire, and Colonel Benedict standing there, the shot striking all about him, and he never flinched. It was grand to see.

"When I heard him speak I forgot all else, and running forward, did not stop till at the very front and near the colors again. There, as did all the rest, I lay down, and soon learned the trouble. Within two hundred yards of the works was a ravine parallel with them, com-
pletely impassable from the fallen timber in it. Of course we could not move on. To stand up was certain death. So was retreat. Naught was left but to lie down, with such scanty cover as we could get. We did lie down in that hot, scorching sun. I fortunately got behind two small logs, which protected me on two sides, and lay there, scarcely daring to turn, for four hours, till my brain reeled and surged, and I thought that I should go mad. Death would have been preferable to a continuance of such torture. Lots of poor fellows were shot as they were lying down; and to lie there and hear them groan and cry was awful. Just on the other side of the log lay the gallant Colonel Bryan with both legs broken by shot. He talk-
ed of home, but bore it like a patriot. Near him was one of my own brave boys with five balls in him. The Colonel got out of pain sooner than some, for he died after two hours of intense agony. Bullets just grazed me as they passed over. One entered the ground within an inch of my right eye. I have been in many battles, but I never saw, and never wish to see, such a fire as that poured on us on June 14. It was not merely terrible. It was HORRIBLE.'"

After eight hours of desperate fighting as was ever witnessed on earth, our charging col-
umns were repulsed with great slaughter. About 11 o'clock A.M. the fighting ceased. The ground in front of the rebel redoubts was covered with the patriot dead and wounded. But till night darkened the scene the rebels inhumanly fired upon the wounded writhing in their blood; and no one could carry to them a cup of cold water without being struck by the bullet of a sharpshooter. General Paine was severely wounded by a ball which broke both bones of his leg just below the knee. He could not be brought from the field until after dark. Before he was struck down he had got five regiments within four rods of the rebel works, and some of his skirmishers had actually clambered over the ramparts. Not being promptly supported, they were speedily cut down. As General Paine lay upon his back hour after hour in the blistering sun, slightly protected between two rows of the cotton-field, he dared not attempt to cover his face with his cap, for if the rebels saw the slightest move-
ment a shower of balls was instantly poured upon him. Our whole loss during the day amounted to about seven hundred and fifty. It was a sad Sabbath day's work. We had lost much, and gained nothing. The next day, un-
der a flag of truce, the dead and wounded were removed.

Port Hudson was in reality but an outpost of Vicksburg, where General Grant was day by day cutting off the resources of the rebels, cap-
turing their outlying batteries, and driving them within narrower limits. The fall of either of these great fortresses rendered the other no longer tenable. On the 4th of July, 1863, the garrison at Vicksburg, more than thirty thou-
sand strong, were compelled to an unconditional surrender to General Grant. The joyful tid-
ings were speedily conveyed down the river to the patriot army surrounding Port Hudson. Sal-
vos of artillery and shouts from thirty thousand patriot throats conveyed the news to the rebels within their strong intrenchments. General Banks was just preparing for another assault, when he received a communication from General Gardner, who was in command of the rebel works, offering to surrender. General Frank Gardner at Port Hudson and General Pemberton at Vicksburg were both Northern men. They had both gone from their free homes in the North to fight against that banner beneath whose folds they were born, and for the destruction of that Constitution to which our country was indebted for all its prosperity and power.

As we have mentioned, Port Hudson was three hundred miles below Vicksburg. It was not until the morning of the 7th that General Banks received the news of the surrender. General Gardner sent to him that afternoon a communication containing the following words:

"Having received information from your troops that Vicksburg has been surrendered, I make this communication, to ask you to give me the official assurance whether this is true or not; and if true, I ask for a cessation of hostilities with a view to the consideration of terms for surrendering this position."

In General Banks's brief response, dated July
8, he stated: "I have the honor to inform you that I received yesterday morning, July 7, at 45 minutes past 10 o'clock, by the gun-boat General Price, an official dispatch from Major-General Ulysses S. Grant, United States Army, whereof the following is a true extract:

"The garrison of Vicksburg surrendered this morning. The number of prisoners, as given by the officers, is twenty-seven thousand, field-artillery one hundred and twenty-eight pieces, and a large number of siege-guns, probably not less than eighty."

"I regret to say that under present circumstances I can not consistently with duty consent to a cessation of hostilities for the purpose you indicate."

Preparations had already been made for an immediate assault. Our troops were flushed with the joyful news which they had heard, and which rendered the downfall of Port Hudson certain. They were anxious to be led instantly against the foe, that they might storm and take his batteries before the fleet and the army should have time to descend from Vicksburg and deprive them of a portion of the honor. The rebels knew that their doom was sealed. They could
not escape, and they could not resist the forces now to be arrayed against them. Nothing whatever could be gained by prolonging the contest. General Gardner accordingly sent back a reply couched in the following terms:

"Having defended this position as long as I deem my duty requires, I am willing to surrender to you, and will appoint a commission of three officers to meet a similar commission appointed by yourself at 9 o'clock this morning, for the purpose of agreeing upon and drawing up the terms of surrender, and for that purpose I ask for a cessation of hostilities."

The commissioners immediately met, and the articles of capitulation were signed, by which the fortress with all its garrison, its stores, and its armament, was surrendered to the National Government. At the earliest dawn of the next morning, Thursday, July 9, the whole patriot camp was alive with joyful animation to witness the glorious spectacle the day was to usher in. It was a splendid morning. The air was filled with the flutterings of the Star-spangled Banner, and from scores of martial bands our national airs were pealed forth over the water and land.

General Andrews, chief of staff of General Banks, at 7 o'clock, with a strong column of the victors, made the grand entrance into the rebel fortifications. The rebel army were drawn up in an immense line upon the bluff, with their backs toward the river. Their officers, in great dejection, were grouped together on one side. The patriot army advanced with gleaming weapons, and were spread out in a double line in face of the conquered garrison. The patriot officers each took his position in front of his men. General Gardner then advanced toward General Andrews and offered him his sword. General Andrews declined receiving it, courteously saying,

"In appreciation of your bravery, however mistreated, you are at liberty to retain your sword."

General Gardner then said, "General, I will now formally surrender my command to you; and for that purpose will give the order to ground arms."

The order was given. Five thousand men bowed their heads, deposited their arms upon the ground, and rose prisoners of war. Armed guards were then placed over the captives, and the glorious old flag of the Union rose and floated forth like a meteor from the flag-staff. It was unfurled to the breeze from one of the highest bluffs by the men of the steamship \textit{Richmond}. The flag was saluted by the thunders of a battery whose reverberations rolled majestically along the broad surface of the Mississippi. And thus this great national river, upon whose banks uncounted millions are yet to dwell, and which treason had insanely attempted to wrest from the nation, was restored to its rightful owners. Treason has done its utmost to rob the nation of the Mississippi, and has failed. The banner of rebellion will never again go up upon those shores. The Stars and Stripes will never again go down.

As the immediate fruit of this capture fell into our hands 5500 prisoners, 20 pieces of heavy artillery, 5 complete batteries numbering 31 pieces of field artillery, a large supply of balls and shells, 44,800 pounds of cannon powder, 5000 stand of arms, 150,000 rounds of ammunition, 2 steamers, and a considerable amount of commissary stores.

The rebel General Gardner admitted that even if Vicksburg had not fallen he could not have held out three days longer. He had made up his mind that he could not repel another assault. He was therefore anxiously watching every movement, intending that so soon as there should be decisive indications of an assault that he would surrender. The capture of Port Hudson consequently redounds to the glory of the heroic army which surrounded it. It was the result of the Herouleian exertions and the military ability of the fleet and the army under Commodore Farragut and General Banks. To them belong the undivided honor.

\textbf{MY STAR.}

I \textit{LOOKED} upon the starry heavens one night
Long ago, when I was but a boy;
Then \textit{Life} seemed brimming over with delight—
Filled was the cup with sweetest draughts of joy.

Among the glittering host which gemmed the skies
I chose one star, and said, "It shall be mine;"
And often in the night my boyish eyes
Turned to that star to watch it gleam and shine.

And oft in childish thought I wondered then
If those bright spheres were teaming worlds like ours,
If cities shone thereon, and crowds of men
Surmmed the long streets, or toiled through weary hours.

The years slid by—the boy to manhood grew;
No longer only roses strewed \textit{Life}'s ways,
Her paths were rugged, and the strong winds blew
Harder and rougher than in other days.

And like a breeze which over gardens blows,
Laden with faint perfumes of many flowers;
Or as the sun, long hidden, when he glows
Through cloud and mist which veiled his face for hours,
Came the forgotten fancy back again
Through Memory's crystal gates, which stood ajar,
And the \textit{Man}, looking on the jeweled plain,
Searched the broad heavens in vain for that one star.

Had it gone wandering through the realms of space
Like a lost Pleiad, or had his dull eyes
Forgotten, in the growth of years, its place
Aim'd the glittering splendor of the skies?

One time he stood with her his heart held dear.
With her he deemed the fairest of the fair;
And words of love had blessed her willing ear.
Falling like gentile dew upon the air.

That night she pointed to a brilliant star,
And called it hers, with all its myriad rays;
And lo! within the shining heavens afar
He saw the last star of his boyhood's days.

Since then, somehow, the skies have seem grown
A child of love and joy, that once had been,
And \textit{Life}'s rugged paths have blown
Sweet-scented buds, and fragrant, lovely flowers.