

Chickamauga.

By Captain F. A. MITCHELL.

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(Continued from last week.)

CHAPTER XXV. STORMING THE RIDGE.

Mark Maynard was standing holding Madge by the hand, surveying the battlefield. He heard a gun fired from the crest of the ridge so important to both armies. He turned and saw the shell it sent whirl in a spiral, screaming above the heads of two officers, evidently of high rank, standing in a field near the center of the horseshoe. One of them, a large, massive man, he recognized as General Thomas. The other was the commander of the newly arrived division. As Maynard looked the latter rode away. He was going with orders to retake the ridge.

Maynard had not seen General Thomas for months. Indeed he had met him but a few times since the days when he was the general's favorite scout. Remembering his disgrace, he was about to go away, not caring, in his altered condition, to meet the man for whom of all the army he felt the greatest reverence. But the general turned before he could do so and looked in his direction. It was too late to go away unobserved, and Maynard felt a desire to discover if there were not something, after all, in this great soldier so great that he could afford to give him a kind word. He walked toward the spot where the general stood.

"What are you doing here, my man?" said the commander of all there was left of the Army of the Cumberland sternly, seeing the begrimed Maynard in private's uniform and not recognizing him. "Why are you not with your regiment?"

"I have no regiment, general."
"Your troop, then?"
"I have no troop. I am not a soldier."

"Who are you?"
"Mark Malone."

The sternness on the general's face slightly relaxed. "Ah, Colonel Maynard. Pardon me. I did not recognize you."

"No, general. I was Colonel Maynard. I am now a private citizen. I would be glad to assume my old scouting name, Mark Malone."

"I heard of your—misfortune. I regretted it doubly, remembering your services when you were scouting."
"Yes, general. Then my services had some value. I was fitted for a scout—a spy. You thought I was fitted for something better and advanced me. I was vain enough to think you right. I did not know myself. As a spy I needed no conscience. I was not subservient to any principle. When as a brigade commander I was obliged to choose on higher ground, I failed in the choice. I have proved myself unworthy of your confidence. I have sunk to the level from which I started."

The general did not reply. He was watching the newly arrived division getting into position.

"You connived at the escape of a spy, I think?" he said presently.

"Worse. I assisted in that escape."

"A woman, was she not?"

"She was, general."

"It isn't a pleasant task to shoot a woman. Yet a soldier must do his duty."

Maynard did not reply.

"Colonel, there is going to be a weak spot there. I would like you to go and see that that gap is closed. My staff are all away, as you see, on some duty. Ah! Never mind. They are marching by the flank, I see. Now it's all right."

He was so intent upon the forming of the line that for a moment Maynard thought he had forgotten his presence.

"Who was this woman?" the general asked presently.

"You remember when I went to Chattanooga to bring you information of Bragg's movements to Kentucky I met a Confederate officer—a Captain Fitz Hugh—who twice gave me my life?"

"Yes, yes, I remember. They're standing well down there in the center and with so little ammunition. They'll get their new cartridges presently from those brought by the reserve division. The ammunition comes as opportunely as the men."

"They're making a good fight everywhere," observed Maynard.

"Let me see. You say you were called upon to shoot a woman. She was some relative to this Captain?"

"Now, Colonel Fitz Hugh. A sister."

"That made it pretty hard for you, colonel. But a soldier must do his duty."

"Have the Confederates possession of that ridge, general?"

"They have."

"And are our men going to retake it?"

"They're going to try."

Maynard swept his eye over the position.

"They must take it."
The general shot a quick glance at the degraded officer.

"You think it important?"
"The fate of this part of an army—it can't be called a whole one—depends upon it."

"You are right, colonel. We must take that ridge or before nightfall be flying over this field like the right and center, or, what is worse, be captured. This is not the first time I have observed that your eye is made for war."

waited for him to speak further, but he did not. Minutes passed, while Maynard watched the absorbed commander, who in turn was watching the line forming below.

"Colonel Maynard," he said at last, "do you see that regiment down there? It seems to be short of officers. So far as I can judge from its movements, no one is in command. I shall have to make an infantryman of you, though you are of the cavalry. Go and lead that regiment in the attack about to be made on the ridge."

"But, general!"
"There is no time for buts, sir."
"I am a civilian, with no right to command."

"You are in the service till the finding of the court that condemned you has been approved." Then to an aid, who rode up at that moment: "Captain, go with Colonel Maynard and place him in command of that regiment," pointing. "And let there be no mistake. If the order is questioned, say that the exigencies of a critical moment demand that it be obeyed."

Maynard tried to speak the grateful words that rose to his lips, but either he could not or he saw that the general's eye had caught a new point of danger and was absorbed in it. Mounting Madge, he rode away with the staff officer.

There was wonder on the faces of the men who saw a new commander in the uniform of a private of cavalry put temporarily in place to lead them. For a moment a murmur ran along the line, but some one recognized him—one who knew his mettle—and word was passed, "It's the cavalryman, Colonel Maynard."

None cared at that critical moment for his recent trial so long as there was one at their head who could lead them in what they all saw must be a desperate effort.

Amid the incessant thunders that burst everywhere around the line of that horseshoe curve of battle is one place where there is no firing. It is at the ridge, where men are forming at its base for a desperate attempt, and on its top others are preparing to receive them with lead enough to teach them the futility of so presumptuous a move.

All is ready. The line is formed. Seventy-five hundred men are about to push toward the realms of death, and a larger proportion of them are to enter there. At the word "Forward!" the skirmishers move out into the thicket that covers the side of the disputed ridge, followed by the regular battle line, all climbing the hill together.

Glance the eye along the line. There is the officer, his mind intent on keeping his men up to the trying work before them. The officer intent in keeping himself steady before the eyes of the line he leads. There are the faces in the ranks, most of them, if not all, stamped with a serious cast, a dread under control, with the thought of each that in a few minutes he may be lying, pierced by a bullet or maimed by a shell. A few there are whose remarkable physical nerve or in whom a natural excitable temperament gives them an appearance of exhilaration, but such are often the most depressed just before they are well in the fight.

While the line of blue climbs the side of the ridge all is quiet above—a quiet that brings a suspense harder to bear than a scattering fire. It promises a tempest when it comes. And it comes soon. From a concealed line near the top suddenly there is a myriad of explosions. Every missile known to war is sent down to stagger that blue line. The first crop of human flesh lies under the reaper.

There was pandemonium on that hillside for 40 minutes. It was an eventful fight for many a man, not considering those who were laid low by missiles of war. There were a few whose place it was to lead in whom a constitutional inability rendered it impossible for them to face such a storm. They were ordered back, their places filled by those made of sterner stuff. There were soldiers in the ranks who skulked, but their officers drove them on. The main force of that reserve division of Union troops showed a united strength of purpose, which, if it could be transformed to a different field, a field of moral heroism, would make an army of gods.

Mark Maynard climbed with the rest. For a moment when that storm burst the instincts of a human being, acting upon him suddenly, made him recoil. A number of quick recollections flashed before him. His position, the chance given him to redeem the past, the consciousness that men looked to him for strength in that trying moment—they were all as nothing compared with another, one which prevented any further giving back. It was not a desire for death. That was too near. It was not a desire to show prowess at a moment when men were either quailing or making records as heroes. At that terrible moment there came before him a picture so sweet, so innocent, that one may well wonder how it could have appeared amid such frightful scenes. It was the photograph of his wife and boy. With it flashed the thought: "All for them. For myself, nothing."

Whether he needed this to nerve him to do his duty, certain it is that from this moment he forgot danger. One idea absorbed his entire being—that whether

he lived or died word should go back to those he loved better than himself that he was at least not among the finchers. Once this idea possessed him he was a machine, a cog moving 300 wheels. He knew nothing of the deafening sounds; he was oblivious to bullets or shells. Like the picture of the Sistine Madonna was ever present the gentle face and figure of a woman holding up a child. Mother and child, in the famous painting, have for centuries stood forth, a divine light to lead the world from sin. Mother and child, in the eyes of Mark Maynard, were a divine light to lead him out of the depths into which he had fallen by a violation of principle.

The time of probation was short, but not too short for Maynard's bearing to have its effect. Among the few who held the men together during that brief struggle for the life of the army he took an important part. The ridge was won, and one of the first regiments on it was that commanded by Colonel Mark Maynard.

The ridge was not only won; it was held. But who can depict the holding? It was by a repetition of struggles like the one that took it, only the gray attacked, while the blue defended. Eight times the Confederates charged, and eight times they were driven back. Night came; there was no light whereby to make another. The ridge was in Union keeping; the Army of the Cumberland was saved.

Relinquishing his command, Maynard rode through 2,500 dead and wounded of the 7,500 men who climbed the hillside a few hours before to General Thomas's headquarters.

"Have you any further commands, general?" he asked.
"Ah, Colonel Maynard! Let me thank you among others for your work. You men over there have saved us. I want you to go back to the cavalry and command one of several forces intended to cover our retreat. We must get back tonight to a safer position."

"I await your orders, general."
"Colonel," added the general, turning upon him a kindly, approving eye, "there are a number to be rewarded for today's work, among them yourself. If we get safely out of this, I shall make a suitable acknowledgment of your services."

[To be Continued.]

ABOUT CANADA'S FORESTS.

Her Great Resources in Timber Are Rapidly Being Depleted.

Canada is killing the goose that lays the golden egg so far as her pine forests are concerned, writes a Quebec correspondent. Rapidly as this depletion of her once apparently almost inexhaustible forest wealth has proceeded for the last century, some millions of dollars' worth of it still remain. But the lessons taught by the experience of older lands are being thrown away, and at the present rate of consumption Canadian pine will in a quarter of a century be a thing of the past, so far at least as its availability for commercial purposes is concerned. An official statement has just been prepared upon the subject, which shows that in Ontario the standing area of pine is about 19,404,000,000 feet and in Quebec 15,734,000 feet. The Ontario forests will be exhausted in twenty-six years at the present rate of consumption, and the Quebec forests in a little less. As an instance of the national impoverishment that must follow this condition of affairs, it may be mentioned that Canada's raw forest productions now amount to \$80,071,415 per annum, and adding to this the \$120,392,000 which represents the value of the output of wood industries, there is shown a total of some \$200,000,000 as the value of the material taken from the forests and converted one way or another into articles of home consumption or export. The lumbering and cognate industries employ nearly \$100,000,000 as capital, and distribute wages to the amount of over \$30,500,000 yearly. Sawmills alone employ 51,575 persons.

Now for a Spin.

Wellesley girls show no diminution in their fondness for aquatic sports. There has just been shipped from the works of a Connecticut boat builder a fine eight-oared barge, intended for the use of the class of '97. The barge is described as 45 feet long, 3 feet beam, and is constructed throughout of Spanish cedar, lap-streaked, with copper fastenings. The fittings are made up of patent roller slides, swivel rowlocks, and adjustable foot braces. It sounds like a racing boat, but it has not been built for that purpose, as the students are not permitted to race on the lake near the college, but it is safe to say there will be some pleasant and not too slow spins taken in the new barge.

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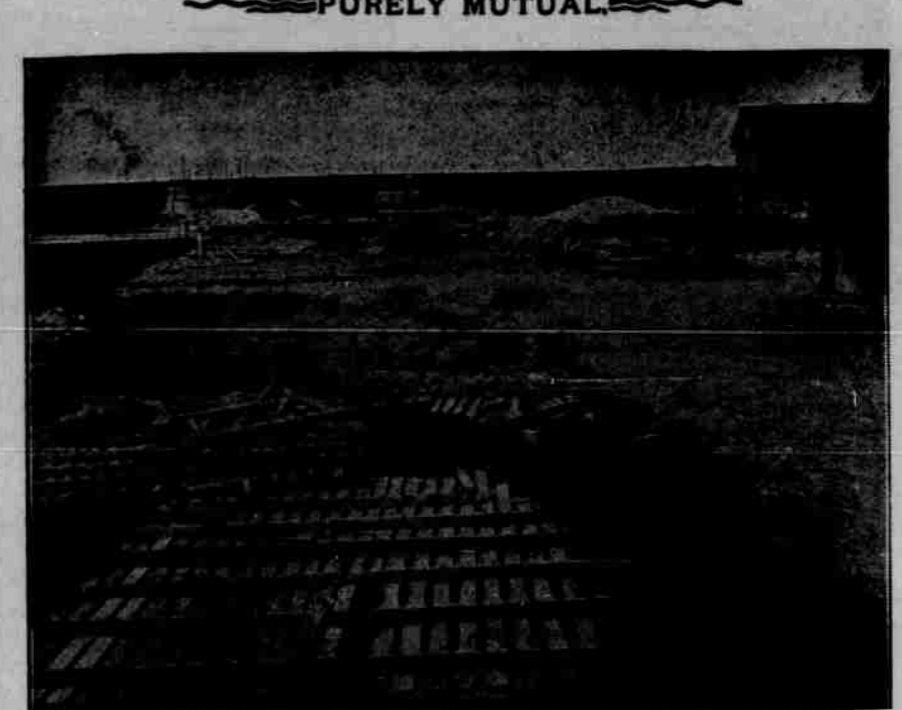
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