

single cannon ball that had plunged through a tree.

The army had been assembled during the night, but there was some delay in adjusting the lines. From the beginning of the battle this day to the finish there was an incessant booming of artillery, and simply a constant roar of musketry that varied only in intensity; and our army made continuous progress. During the first part of the day my regiment was in the second line, which was more trying than we had ever found the first. The contest was very severe about 11 o'clock, and we were hugging the ground closely, bullets cutting the brush over us, when an officer whose coolness and bravery excited our admiration, rode up, and spoke to some of the officers. My brother William, then a sergeant, came to me, and handing me his canteen, said: "Go back to the ravine, and fill this and your own; and don't you come back without water." I found no water directly in the rear, and had to follow the ravine a long distance. When I returned the regiment was gone. I simply wandered and followed the line, making fruitless inquiries till our sacked and plundered camp was reached, late in the afternoon. In 1889, 27 years after the battle, my brother explained to me for the first time, that he overheard the officer ask what regiment it was, and say to the reply, it was just the one he wanted; that he wanted to drive the enemy from a certain position, etc., etc. "Not believing I would live through the rush," said my brother, "nor seeing how anyone could, I thought I would try to save you." What followed this order, though interesting, is no part of this paper.

Our regimental quartermaster was in arrest for having secured in his zeal another complete uniform for the regiment, under the misunderstanding that it had none. The enormous pile of boxes (here in the field) had been emptied by our friends, the enemy. Old shoes covered the ground for a radius of a hundred yards. Not a blanket or a stitch of clothing was left in our tents. I then and there formed the resolution to wear thereafter my best clothing in battle.

The vigilance of Colonel Peabody saved the Union army from utter surprise; he was inspired, no doubt, by his energetic adjutant, Captain Donnelly, and guided by him and Major Powell, both men of military experience. Peabody and Donnelly, like all my regiment, having lived in a slave state, and served in one nearly a year, understood the spirit, energy, enterprise, and terrible earnestness of the secessionists. When our government resorted to war to save the Union, the South knew that failure meant the death-knell to slavery. A proud, spirited, fiery, warlike people, they threw their whole souls into the contest, and were willing to sacrifice their property, and if need be their lives. The fall of Forts Henry and Donelson,

and the concentration of an army at Pittsburg Landing, was turning the impregnable position of Columbus—"The Gibraltar of America," that blocked the Mississippi. It was a wedge splitting in twain the confederacy, and lopping off at the west the great source of supplies of its armies and people. It caused the greatest consternation and alarm, and called for a spontaneous and unanimous effort of the people to hurl the invaders back, or all would be lost. A proclamation was issued to the governors of the states, who in turn made passionate appeals to the people, who bent every effort in response. The invading army should be met before strengthened by the arrival of Buell's troops.

Military organizations of whatever name or nature rushed to the rescue, some of their governors accompanying them, to urge them on to victory. The confederate generals were overwhelmed, and could not handle or organize the hordes that came pouring in, and delayed the start.

On the other hand, our army was only a rapidly-concentrated, badly-organized aggregation of armed raw material. The battles at Forts Henry and Donelson had been won more by superb fighting qualities than from generalship or military skill. The necessity that placed General Grant in command on the eve of battle "was swapping horses in the middle of the stream," and gave him no time to compass the situation. The almost absolute necessity that no battle should be fought before the arrival of Buell's army seemed to forbid scouting or anything that might appear aggressive. Ignorance of the resources, energy, and enterprise of the enemy, lulled our commanders into fancied security. The day before the battle—the day the enemy arrived within two and a half miles of camp, and delayed attack till morning only to have more daylight, General Grant sent this official report: "I have scarcely the faintest idea of an attack (general one) being made upon us, but will be prepared should such a thing take place."

The regiments to compose this army had not all arrived; Prentiss' Third brigade was still on the steamers. Divisions were not camped within supporting-distance, and there were wide gaps in the same line. Our left, due in part to the non-arrival of Prentiss' other brigade, was too far from the river, and unsupported. Indeed, it was never expected that a battle would be fought at Shiloh. The concentration of troops had been so rapid, that officers were entirely unacquainted, and did not know what regiments were to the right or left. Many regiments wore uniforms furnished by their state, and some of them were mistaken in the battle for the enemy, and vice versa. There was a great variety of small-arms and artillery; and troops became paralyzed from want of proper ammunition alone; and

some regiments had never loaded their arms before the battle. In fact, there had been no proper training, and there was no system. The only soldierly quality present was a desire to fight.

The battle was simply a series of fierce combats. So many brigade and regimental commanders fell, and their successors knew so little as to what orders had been received, or whence they came, that the reports simply defy a tangible connection for an accurate account of the struggle. The confederate army, with its great bulk at the front, struck our short lines and enveloped them, so they had to give way or be captured.

But they would not yield a step without determined resistance. They would then fall back upon fresh troops, or take a strong position and repulse assault after assault; and the ground was particularly favorable for such fighting. The enemy fought to conquer or to fall, and they fell by thousands. As the strength of the confederate forces will never be known, from the very conglomeration and lack of returns, so, too, will never be known the number of their countless dead upon that sanguinary field. The number must have been largely in excess of our own, which, God knows, was horrible enough. Companions, no people can be true to themselves who send untrained the flower of their youth to such wanton slaughter. Had our government maintained, at moderate expense, a reasonable sized army, it could have re-enforced promptly the garrison at Fort Sumter and other points, and nipped the rebellion in the bud. Our political questions would have been settled without bloodshed, and thousands of millions of treasure, and a half a million of lives, would have been saved, and incalculable suffering and misery averted. None like the old soldier knows the real cost and horrors of war. Then let us, a band of old soldiers and patriots devoted to our country, keep impressed upon the people that if we would avert the cost and horrors of war, we simply have to be always prepared for one.

HISTORY CORRECTED.

From St. Louis, Missouri, in 1860, R. M. Rolfe, Joe Barrett, Kennard and Sid Shepherd sent the big bowie knife to Mr. Potter. The republican delegates to the Chicago convention had nothing to do with it.

DIARMID.

Some weeks ago THE CONSERVATIVE commented on a reference of Rudyard Kipling's to a Celtic hero named Diarmid, and wondered why he called him, as he did, Diarmid of the Golden Collar.

A civil inquiry addressed to the author has elicited the information that Mr. Kipling does not now himself know where he got that title for Diarmid.