

CEASE FIRING

caisson of an isolated gun had been exploded by a Federal shell. Horses and men lay beside it, mangled. Farther away yet, and earlier yet, they had seen a reconnoitring party enter a finger of land crooking toward the Federal lines, and beyond the cover of the grey guns. The blue, too, had seen, and thrusting forward a regiment cut off the grey party. The bulk of the latter hewed its way through, back to the shelter of the grey Parrotts, but there were officers and men left wounded in the wood. — The day was gloomy, gloomy! The smoke from Stephen Lee's guns and from the answering Federal batteries hung clogged and indiffusible, dark and hard.

"Somebody's going to get hurt this day," said the men in the rifle-pits. "There ain't any joke about this place."

"Do you know I think they're going to charge us? Just as brave as they are foolish!"

"I don't think much of Sherman's capacities as a general. Grant's the better man."

"They're getting ready. — Well, I always did hate waste, whatever colour it was dressed in!"

"My God! Even their bugles don't sound cheerful! —

*Chickasaw — Chickasaw Bayou
The death of you — the death of you ! "*

Edward Cary, loading his rifle, had the cartridge knocked from between his fingers by the swaying against him of the man on the right. He moved, and the corpse slid softly down upon the miry bottom of the pit.

The man on the left began to talk, a slow, quiet discourse not at all interfering with eye or hand. "Western troops, I reckon! They've always the best sharpshooters. — Is he dead? I'm sorry. I liked Abner. He had an application in for furlough. Wife ill after the baby was born, and the doctor writing that there might be a chance to save her mind if she could see Abner. Told me last night he was sure he'd get the furlough. — Can you see for those damned bushes? There's a perfectly hellish fuss down there."

"The guns echo so. Here they come! And God knows I am sorry for them — for Abner here and Abner there! Martin, I hate War."

"It ain't exactly Christian, and it's so damned avoidable. — The baby died, and I reckon his wife — and she was a sweet, pretty girl — 'll go to the Asylum at Williamsburg —"