

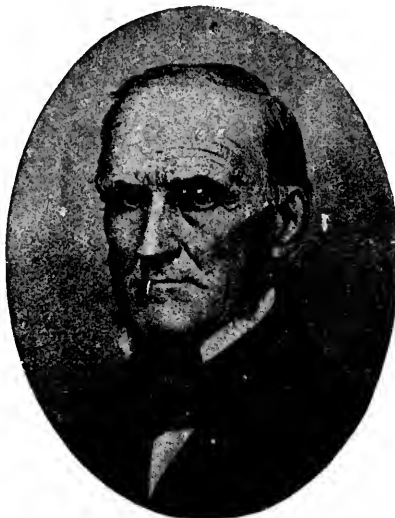
of his entrance upon his military career. With other young men in Boston, when the civil war drew near, he had taken lessons in drill from an old French officer named Salignac. A sum of about one thousand dollars, given to him by his father, he devoted to recruiting a company, and borrowed twenty-five hundred dollars more from a wealthy uncle, for which he gave his note. Company E of the Twenty-second Massachusetts Infantry was duly raised, and he was commissioned as its captain. But on the evening before the regiment was to start for Virginia, Governor Andrew sent a messenger to request him to give up that commission "to an older man," and to accept one instead as first lieutenant of the company. The future general protested against this injustice, but at length submitted, on reflecting that he "had enlisted to fight the enemies of his country, and not to fight the governor of his State."

Those who were with the young officer at the outset of his career speak of his tireless energy as the trait that most struck them—"his incessant activity," as one brigade commander phrased it. For it must here be noted that he was soon detailed from his regiment, as an aide-de-camp on the staff of General Howard in the Peninsula campaign. "Other men let up once in a while," said one of his associates, "but he kept at it always." He was a tall, graceful young officer, and an admirable horseman, whose resolute, handsome face soon became well known in the brigade, for every battlefield, prosperous or adverse, somehow yielded him laurels. At Fair Oaks, the officer commanding the left wing of one of the regiments of Howard's brigade was killed. "Stop here and rally them," said the General to Miles, as he rode on with the rest of his staff; and very quickly the lad who a few months before had been considered as too young to head a company, was leading half a regiment, and winning official mention for his success.

After Fair Oaks followed Savage's Station, White Oak Swamp, Glendale, and Mal-

vern Hill. Miles volunteered to cut a road through the woods from Allen's Farm to Savage's Station, and, collecting axemen from various regiments, made a road practicable for artillery, and saved three batteries from falling into the enemy's hands. Finding Colonel Barlow's regiment, the Sixty-first New York, hard pressed, he led reinforcements to it under a heavy fire, and by great exertions also got forward a field-piece that silenced a destructive musketry fire.

These last exploits had a remarkable sequel; for on the recommendation of Colonel Barlow, whose official report had praised Miles's skill and gallantry in the highest terms, Governor Morgan appointed the young officer to the vacant lieutenant-colonelcy of the Sixty-first New York. "It was an unusual proceeding," wrote the governor, years afterward, "to take a lieutenant from another State and thus promote him over the officers of the regiment, but my action was more than justified by the brilliant career of Colonel Miles."



DANIEL MILES, FATHER OF GENERAL MILES.

III.

So closed the young soldier's experience as a staff officer; but his new command quickly opened other opportunities for distinction. The scene of combat for the Army of the Potomac was shifted northward; and at Antietam, where Colonel Barlow was severely wounded and carried from the field, Miles took command in his stead; and when, soon after, Barlow was promoted, Miles became colonel of the Sixty-first New York. He was then but a little over twenty-three years old.

Each of the next two battles, however, came near proving fatal to him. At Fredericksburg he was shot in the throat by a bullet that left a track on the neck several inches long, the scar of which lasts to this day. Riding back to the field hospital, holding one hand to his throat, he met General Hancock, to whom, with mind still intent on the fortunes of the day, he pointed out the value of a bayonet charge against "the stone wall," and offered to lead it.