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The Volunteer Review,

AND

MILITARY AND NAVAL GAZETTE.

"Unbribed, unbought, our swords we draw,
To guard the Monarch, fence the Law."

OTTAWA, TUESDAY, SEPT. 2, 1873.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Letters addressed to either the Editor or Publisher, as well as Communications intended for publication, must, invariably, be *pre-paid*. Correspondents will also bear in mind that one end of the envelope should be left open, and at the corner the words "Printer's copy" written; and a two or five cent stamp (according to the weight of the communication) placed thereon will pay the postage.

IMMEDIATELY after the evacuation of Savannah, the Federal General made the necessary preparations for the next great strategical movement, which would have the effect of paralyzing all further resistance. It also involved the necessity for great preparation, inasmuch as the garrisons of those towns still held by the Confederates on the coast would naturally, by well devised resistance at appropriate positions, render the operation a far more delicate and dangerous affair than the *march to the sea* had been.

The ground to be traversed was precisely that which Earl CORNWALLIS had marched and fought over eighty-four years previously, and the manoeuvres now to be undertaken will illustrate in no ordinary degree the axiom that there is really nothing new in the science of strategy, and no improvement in grand tactics, since that epoch.

In devising this second march, General SHERMAN has shown himself to be the first strategist in this country; because the ultimate end attained by the operation was that of not only bringing the defence of Rich-

mond to a close, but preventing the possibility of further resistance. It was General GRANT's desire to transport SHERMAN's army from Savannah to Richmond by sea, for the purpose of crushing by the mere weight of force the resistance offered by the Confederate troops under LEE; and had he succeeded in doing so, the war would not have closed by the evacuation of Richmond, nor would there be any necessity for the surrender which followed that event; because in rear of that city were two lines of railway, by which the Confederate troops could have concentrated at any available point in North or South Carolina, and by falling back on the Mississippi river prolong the contest till some favourable contingency would arrive; and a full consideration of the circumstances in which the Confederate government and armies were now placed showed that this was the proper course to be undertaken.—By evacuating Richmond, they would have lost in prestige alone. Every march towards Columbia or Augusta, would be drawing nearer to the source of their supplies amongst friends, and the army would be strengthened by the accessions of the useless garrisons of the coast towns, as well as by the remnants of Hood's army; in addition to which, the foreign relations of the Federal States were not in such a condition as to preclude the possibility of intervention, and in that case all that the Confederacy had lost on the coast would be instantaneously recovered. Therefore, to General SHERMAN is due the strategy that brought this war to a successful conclusion, and established his right to be called one of the first, if not the first captain of the age.

Having made all necessary dispositions, the Federal General, with a well-equipped force of 60,000 infantry, 10,000 cavalry, and a proper proportion of field artillery, commenced one of the most arduous marches which any army has undertaken during the present century—not because the military obstacles were of any consequence; there was in fact no opposition where it could be effective, and what was offered did not delay the advance for twenty four hours.

The coast of North and South Carolina is intersected by creeks and bays running for long distances inland; and for nearly one hundred miles from the coast line proper the country is covered by swamp, which can only be crossed on raised causeways, as well as wide rivers. The real obstacles to be overcome were those offered by the natural features of the country, and the army General SHERMAN commanded was in an eminent degree fitted to deal with that class of impediments. Every farmer's son on this continent is an expert with the axe. He is obliged to depend upon himself for aid in transporting his grain to market; can readily repair his waggon, if broken down, and also extricate it from a mud-hole; fill up the breach in the continuity of the waggon track, caused by a flood or rain storm, and supply the want in the log bridge over

which his horses must pass. Timber is almost always at hand; and very little time indeed is required, to make a passable road over what seemed a real slough of despond.

During the long and dreary march through these swamps, the mechanical capabilities of the Federal troops were tried to the utmost, and they have proved themselves the first soldiers in the world with the spade, pick, and axe.

Such troops, accustomed to fight behind hastily improvised defences constructed of the most convenient material at hand, commanded by a General acting on a well devised plan, boldly advanced into those swamps on the first of February—the objective point being Goldsboro, on the Neuse river, at the junction of the Wilmington and Weldon and the North Carolina Railways; the former connecting it directly with Richmond and Wilmington on the Cape Fear River; and the latter with Newberne, at the mouth of the Neuse, and with Greensboro on the Richmond, Danville, and Piedmont Railway,—thus touching the remaining vital points of the Confederacy on the east and west as well as on the north and south, in the State of South Carolina, and, once the objective was attained, reducing the defences to the area of the Peninsula between the James and York rivers.

Between General SHERMAN and his objective, the garrisons of Charleston and Wilmington alone intervened. At the former place, about 11,000, under General HARDEE, still held the city for the Confederate cause; and at this period of distraction it seems that no sufficient authority existed to compel the relinquishment of that city, or of Wilmington, concentrating them in front of the Federal advance, and by contesting the crossing of the Savannah, Salkehatchie and Edisto rivers, attempt to cover Columbia, the capital of South Carolina, force the enemy to the northwards into a country still more difficult, owing to the multiplication of the various rivers to be crossed, and the almost impossibility of obtaining supplies. With the exception of a small corps of cavalry under the command of the Confederate General, WADE HAMPTON, who offered but little opposition, the obstructions opposed to the Federal army were merely natural, and on the 12th of February it crossed the several branches of the Edisto, driving back that General on Columbia and cutting off detachments which he had stationed at Orangeburg and Branchville, at which latter place the South Carolina Railway from Augusta to Charleston sends a branch to Columbia. This operation at once turned the defences of Charleston; and as the Confederate General was needlessly sensitive about Augusta, Gen. SHERMAN, by feinting in that direction, prevented the junction of WHEELER'S and CHEATHAM'S force with HAMPTON'S. The Federal force found no difficulty in crossing the Congaree, which is the name of that part of the river known as the Santee between the junction