



NEGRO DRIVERS OF THE BAGGAGE-TRAIN ATTACHED TO GENERAL PLEASANTON'S CAVALRY BRIGADE WATERING THEIR MULES IN THE RAPPAHANNOCK RIVER.

Long before the negroes were made available as soldiers, they appeared in the train of the army, and began to play an important part. From the first, the institution of slavery was shattered; it began to disintegrate, and the blacks broke off in this direction and in that. Many naturally joined themselves to the greatest display of force. At first the Union commanders were loth to use them in any way. It had been proclaimed that the war was not waged against slavery; that it was not an abolition war, but a war for the restoration of the Union only. While McClellan was encamped on the Potomac, he refused to receive runaway slaves, or permit them to enter his lines. When any found their way into his camps, they were as a rule expelled. At length circumstances enforced a different policy. The negroes began to be employed as a sort of assistant corps to the army. They gathered in great numbers. They were nearly all expert hostlers, and the Union commanders employed them in that capacity.