

## THE CIVIL WAR IN THE UNITED STATES.

Some of the shot entered her open ports, killed or wounded 19 men, and broke two of her guns; but all that struck the armor bounded off like peas. Rifled shot from the "Merrimac" raked the "Cumberland," and then she ran into her so that her iron prow cut a great gash in the side. The "Cumberland" at once began to settle; but the crew stood by their guns, firing broadside after broadside without producing any impression on the iron monster, and receiving in return shells and solid shot that made sickening havoc. The commander, Lieutenant Morris, refused to surrender; and at the end of 45 minutes, when the water was at the gun-deck, the crew leaped overboard and with the help of the boats got ashore, while the frigate heeled over and sank. Her topmasts projected above the surface, and her flag was flying. While this was

But it was never put into practical use till the National Government contracted with John Ericsson to build an iron-clad with such a turret and a deck rising hardly more than a foot above the water. She was built in about a hundred days, at Brooklyn, N. Y., was named "Monitor," and was placed under the command of Captain John L. Worden. He hurried her down to Hampton Roads, in a stormy and dangerous passage, and on the very morning after his arrival met and fought the "Merrimac." Buchanan had been wounded in the action of the previous day, and Lieutenant Jones now commanded the Confederate iron-clad. The "Monitor" placed herself between the wooden ships and their enemy, and a fight of four hours ensued. The shot of the "Merrimac" glanced off as harmlessly from the "Monitor's" turret and decks as the "Cumberland's"

James River; but she got aground, and was finally abandoned and blown up. When the Confederates refitted her they re-christened her "Virginia," but the original name sticks to her in history. In December of that year the "Monitor" attempted to go to Beaufort, N. C., towed by a steamer; but she foundered in a gale off Cape Hatteras and went to the bottom, carrying with her a dozen of the crew.

### CHAPTER VIII.

#### THE CAMPAIGN OF SHILOH.

WHEN the first line that the Confederates had attempted to establish from the mountains to the Mississippi was broken by the battle of Mill Springs and the fall of Forts



THE FIRST MICHIGAN REGIMENT AND THE ELLSWORTH ZOUAVES IN THE INTRENCHMENTS AT ALEXANDRIA, VA.

going on, three Confederate steamers came down and attacked the "Congress" with such effect that her commander tried to run her ashore. Having finished the "Cumberland," the "Merrimac" came up and opened a deliberate attack on the "Congress," and finally set her on fire, when the crew escaped in their boats. She burned for several hours, and in the night blew up. Of the other National vessels in the Roads, one got aground in water too shallow for the "Merrimac" to approach her, and the others were not drawn into the fight.

The next morning the "Merrimac" came down from Norfolk to finish up the fleet, but found that a new antagonist had arrived. When they first saw it, her men called it "a cheese box on a raft." The idea of a revolving tower or turret for heavy guns was at least half a century old, and had been set forth by several inventors.

broadside had from hers. One shell, however, struck the little square pilot-house at an instant when Captain Worden had his eyes at the sight-hole. The explosion temporarily blinded him, and the command fell upon Lieutenant Greene. It was not known how much damage, if any, the great guns, fired sometimes when the vessels almost touched each other, had inflicted upon the "Merrimac;" but she withdrew that afternoon to Norfolk, and did not come down to fight again. It was said that she had broken off her prow when she rammed the "Cumberland," and but for this she might have proved a more formidable antagonist; though the "Monitor" had the advantage of drawing less water, and in some parts of the Roads could steam quite around the "Merrimac."

In May, when Norfolk was captured, an attempt was made to take the "Merrimac" up

Henry and Donelson, their forces at Columbus were withdrawn down the river to the historic latitude of  $36^{\circ} 30'$ . Here the Mississippi makes a great sigmoid curve.

In the first bend is Island No. 10 (the islands are numbered from the mouth of the Ohio southward); and at the second bend, on the Missouri side, is New Madrid. Both of these places were fortified, under the direction of General Leonidas Polk. A floating dock was brought up from New Orleans, converted into a floating battery, and anchored near the island; and there were also eight gunboats commanded by Commodore George N. Hollins. The works on the island were supplemented by batteries on the Tennessee shore, back of which were impassable swamps. Thus the Mississippi was sealed, and a position established for the left (or western extremity) of a new line of defence.