

anybody that a large army could leave its communications and subsist on supplies gathered in the enemy's country; so Grant gave up this part of his plan and moved back toward Memphis.

But Sherman and Porter, not hearing of the disaster at Holly Springs, had proceeded with their preparations, embarked the troops, and gone down the river in a long procession, the gunboats being placed at intervals in the line of transports.

The expedition arrived at Milliken's Bend on Christmas, where a division was left, and whence a brigade was sent to break the railroad from Shreveport. The next day the boats, with the three remaining divisions, ascended the Yazoo to a point opposite the bluffs north of Vicksburg, where the troops were landed. The bluffs were crowned with artillery, and along their base was a deserted bed of the Yazoo. Most of the bridges were destroyed, and the whole district was subject to inundation. It was ugly ground for the operations of an army; but Sherman, confident that Grant was holding Pemberton, felt sure there could not be a heavy force on the heights, and resolved to capture them without delay. The 27th and 28th were spent in reconnoitering, selecting points for attack, and placing the troops. On the 29th, while the gunboats made a diversion at Haines' Bluff, and a part of Steele's division made feint on the right, near Vicksburg, the main force crossed the intervening bayous at two points and attacked the centre of the position. The battle was begun by a heavy artillery fire, followed by musketry, and then the rush of the men. They had to face guns, at the foot of the bluff, that swept the narrow approaches, and at the same time endure a cross-fire from the heights. Blair's brigade reached the base of the hills, but was not properly supported by Morgan's and had to fall

back again. The 6th Missouri regiment, at another point, had also gone forward unsupported, reached the bluff, and could not return. The men quickly scooped niches in the bank with their hands and sheltered themselves in them, while many of the enemy came to the edge of the hill, held out their muskets vertically at arm's length, and fired down at them. These men were not able to get back to their lines till night-fall.

This assault cost Sherman 1848 men, and inflicted upon the Confederates a loss of but 200. The next day a rain set in. Sherman observed the water-marks on the trees ten feet above his head, and he saw whole brigades of reinforcements marching into the enemy's intrenchments. He knew then that something must have gone wrong with Grant's co-operating force, and so he re-em-

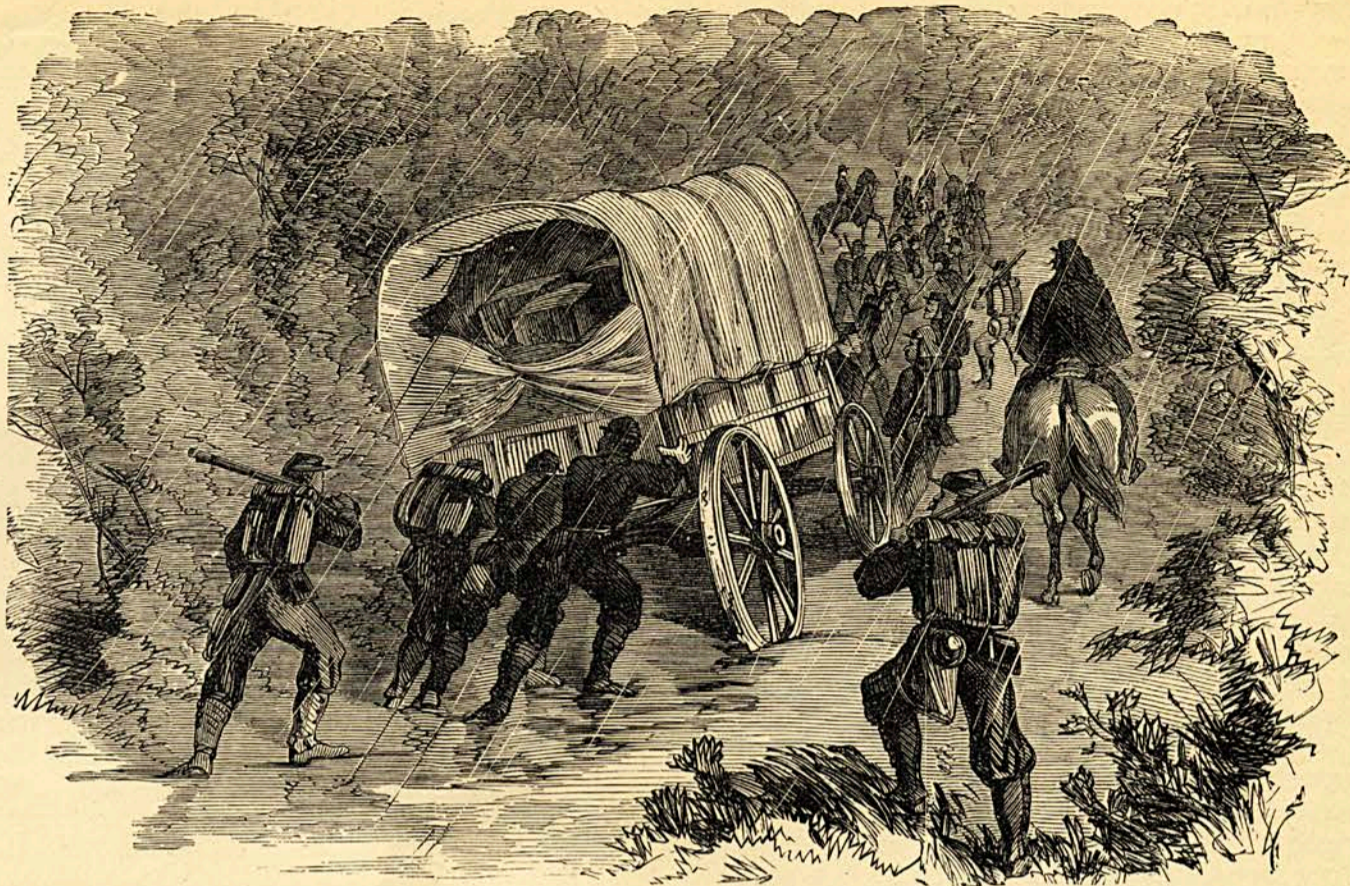
barked his men and munitions, and steamed down to the mouth of the Yazoo.

On the 4th of January, 1863, General McClelland assumed command of the two corps that were commanded by Generals Sherman and George W. Morgan. It was known that there was a Confederate garrison of 5000 men at Fort Hindman, or Arkansas Post, on the Arkansas. It occurred to Sherman that there could be no safety for boats on the Mississippi near the mouth of the Arkansas till this post was captured or broken up; and accordingly he asked McClelland to let him attack it with his corps, assisted by some of the gunboats. McClelland concluded to go himself with the entire army, and Porter also accompanied in person. They landed on the 10th below the fort, and drove in the pickets. That night the Confederates toiled all night to throw up a line of works reaching from the fort northward to an impassable swamp. On the 11th the whole National force moved forward simultaneously to the attack, the gunboats steaming up close to the fort and sweeping its bastions with their fire, while Morgan's corps moved against its eastern face, and Sherman's against the new line of works. The men advanced steadily, so annoying the artillerymen with their sharpshooting that the guns could not be well served. When the gunboats arrived abreast of the fort and enfiladed it, the gunners ran down into the ditch, a man with the white flag appeared on the parapet, and presently white flags and rags were fluttering all the line. Firing was stopped at once, and the fort was surrendered. About 150 of the garrison had been killed, and the remainder, numbering 4800, were made prisoners. The National loss was about 1000. The fort was dismantled and destroyed, and the stores taken on board the fleet.

In accordance with instructions from Washington, Grant now took personal command of the operations on the Mississippi, dividing his entire force into four corps, to be commanded by McClelland, Sherman, Stephen A. Hurlbut and James B. McPherson. Hurlbut's corps was left to hold the lines east of Memphis, while the other troops, with reinforcements from the North, were united in the river expedition.

McClelland and Sherman went down to the peninsula enclosed in the bend of the river opposite Vicksburg, and with immense labor dug a canal across it. Much was hoped from this, but the river would not flow through it. Furthermore, there were bluffs commanding the river below Vicksburg, and the Confederates had already begun to fortify them.

Grant was surveying the country in every



SOLDIERS OF THE TWELFTH MASSACHUSETTS DRAGGING THEIR BAGGAGE-TRAIN DURING A STORM.



INCIDENT IN THE MARCH OF GENERAL BANKS' DIVISION IN WESTERN MARYLAND.