



EDWIN VOSE SUMNER.

communication with the blockading fleet, was elaborately protected with ditches, palisades, and *chevaux-de-frise*; but General William B. Hazen's division made short work with it, going straight over everything and capturing the fort on the 13th of December, losing 92 men in the assault, and killing or wounding about 50 of the garrison. That night General Sherman, with a few officers, pulled down the river in a yawl and visited a gunboat of the fleet at Ossabaw Sound. Four days later, having established full communication, Sherman demanded the surrender of the city, which General William J. Hardee, who was in command there with a considerable force, refused. Sherman then took measures to make its investment complete; but on the morning of the 21st it was found to be evacuated by Hardee's forces, and General John W. Geary's division of the Twentieth Corps marched in. The next day Sherman wrote to the President: "I beg to present you as a Christmas gift the city of Savannah, with 150 heavy guns and plenty of ammunition, also about 25,000 bales of cotton." Sherman's entire loss in the march had been 764 men.

That phase of war which reaches behind the armies in the field and strikes directly at the sources of supply, bringing home its burdens and its hardships to men who are urging on the conflict without participating in it, was never exhibited on a grander scale or conducted with more complete success. This in fact is the most humane kind of war, since it accomplishes the purpose with the least destruction of life and limb.

When Hood found that he could not lure Sherman away from Atlanta, he turned toward Nashville, under orders from Richmond, hoping to destroy the army that Thomas was organizing. He was hindered by heavy rains, and it was late in November when he arrived at Duck River, about 40 miles south of the city. Here he found a force under General Schofield, which was easily flanked by crossing the river, whereupon Schofield fell back to Franklin, on Harpeth River, 18 miles from Nashville, intrenched a line south and west of the town, with both flanks resting on bends of the river, and got his artillery and trains across the stream, placing the guns where they could play upon any attacking force. Schofield had about 25,000 men, and Hood over 40,000. In the afternoon of November 30, the attack was made. Schofield's rear guard, instead of falling back to the main body, as ordered, so as to permit the fire of the whole line to be poured into the advancing enemy, attempted to withstand the

Confederate onset. Of course it was quickly swept back, and as the men rushed in confusion into the lines they were closely followed by the enemy, who captured a portion of the intrenchments. From a part of the line thus seized they were driven in turn, but they clung tenaciously to the remainder, and Schofield established a new line a few rods in the rear. Here the fight continued long after dark, with no special advantage to either side. Hood lost 6300 men, and Schofield 2500. At midnight Schofield crossed the river and retreated to Nashville. Hood followed him, and there confronted Thomas' whole army.

Everybody complained of Thomas' slowness, and he was in imminent danger of being superseded; but he would not assume the offensive till he felt that his army was prepared to make sure work. When all was ready, he still had to delay because of bad weather; but on the 15th of December the long-meditated blow was given. Thomas' army advanced against Hood's, striking

it simultaneously in front and on the left flank. The weight of the attack fell upon the flank, which was completely crushed, and a part of the intrenchments with their guns fell into the hands of the National forces. In the night Hood retreated a mile or two, to another line on the hills. He was seriously embarrassed by the absence of a large part of Forrest's cavalry. In the afternoon of the 16th, Thomas, having sent Wilson's cavalry around the enemy's left flank, attacked with his whole force. He made no headway against Hood's right, but again he crushed the left flank, and followed up the advantage so promptly and vigorously that all organization in the Confederate army was lost, and what was left of it fled in wild confusion toward Franklin, pursued by Wilson's cavalry. Thomas captured all their artillery, and took 4500 prisoners. The number of their killed and wounded was never reported. His own loss was about 3000.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE FINAL BATTLES.

AFTER Sherman's army had marched through Georgia and captured Savannah, he and Grant at first contemplated removing it by water to the James, and placing it where it could act in immediate connection with the Army of the Potomac against Petersburg and Richmond. But several considerations soon led to a different plan. One was, the difficulty of getting together enough transports to carry 65,000 men and all their equipage without too much delay. A still stronger one was the fact that in a march through the Carolinas Sherman's army could probably do more to help Grant's and bring the war to a speedy close than if it were set down beside it in Virginia. The question of supplies, always a vital one for an army, had become very serious in the military affairs of the Confederacy. The trans-Mississippi region had

been cut off long ago, the blockade of the seaports had been growing more stringent, Sheridan had desolated the Shenandoah Valley, Sherman had eaten out the heart of Georgia. And now if that same army, with its increased experience and confidence, should go through South and North Carolina, living on the country, Lee's position in the defences of Richmond would soon become untenable from mere lack of something for his army to eat. After tarrying at Savannah three weeks, Sherman gathered up his forces for another strike toward the final victory.

The right wing was concentrated at Pocotaligo, 40 miles north of Savannah, and the left at Robertsville, 20 miles west of Pocotaligo. The northward march was begun on the 1st of February. Sherman had sent out rumors that represented both Charleston and Augusta as his immediate goal; but he pushed straight northward, on a route midway between them, toward Columbia.

This march, though not so romantic as that through Georgia, where a great army was for several weeks hidden from all its friends, was really much more difficult and dangerous. In the march from Atlanta to the sea, the army moved parallel with the courses of the rivers, and found highways between them that it was not easy for any but a large force to obstruct or destroy. But in the march through the Carolinas all the streams had to be crossed. A single man could burn a bridge and stop an army for several hours. Moreover, after the disasters that befell Hood at Franklin and Nashville, public sentiment in the Confederacy had demanded the reinstatement of General Joseph E. Johnston, and that able soldier had been placed in command of whatever remained of Hood's army, to which were added all the scattered detachments and garrisons that were available, and with this force he took the field against his old antagonist.

Sherman expected to meet serious opposition at Columbia, for it was the capital of the State; but the Confederate leaders were holding their forces at Charleston and Augusta, confidently expecting those cities to be attacked, and nothing but Hampton's cavalry was left to take care of Columbia. The main difficulty was at the rivers, where



JOHN M. SCHOFIELD.