

# ROTTEN TOMATO

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## THE CONDUCT OF THE WAR.

### Report of the Joint Committee.

#### THE PENINSULA CAMPAIGN.

Gen. Heintzelman, who commanded the first troops of the army of the Potomac that landed on the peninsula, arrived at Fortress Monroe on the 23d of March, two weeks after the evacuation of Manassas. He had orders to encamp as near Fortress Monroe as possible, in order that the enemy should have no idea of the direction in which the army was to move whether toward Yorktown or Norfolk. Gen. Heintzelman states that shortly after landing he obtained information that the enemy had not more than 10,000 troops at Yorktown and on the Peninsula, and is satisfied that he could have advanced and isolated Yorktown, in which case there would have been no serious obstacle in the way of proceeding directly to Richmond. On the 27th of March he sent out reconnoitering parties as far as Big Bethel and Watt's Creek, and went near the Half Way House, where about 400 of the enemy, and a little artillery were seen. He telegraphed to Gen. McClellan what he was doing, and received a dispatch, in reply, that (Gen. McClellan) hoped that nothing had been done to give the enemy information of the line of operations of the army. The reconnoissance was then withdrawn.

Troops continued to arrive at Fortress Monroe, and on the 2d of April Gen. McClellan himself arrived. On the 4th of April the army commenced its movement in the direction of Yorktown, and on the 6th appeared before the enemy's lines. Gen. McClellan states that he moved from Fortress Monroe sooner than he otherwise would have done, upon hearing that the enemy were sending down re-enforcements.

#### DELAY BEFORE YORKTOWN.

All the testimony goes to prove that when our troops first landed on the Peninsula the force of the enemy there consisted of Magruder's command, variously estimated at from 7,000 to 12,000 men, except by Gen. McClellan, who estimates it at 15,000 to 20,000. The Hon. Lemuel J. Bowden, United States Senator from Virginia—then living within the Rebel lines, near Williamsburg—testifies that the Rebels did not determine to re-enforce Magruder until it was apparent that our forces intended to stop before Yorktown and commence a regular siege of the place. It is now evident, whatever may have been the opinion of our officers at the time, that our forces, when they first appeared before Yorktown, could have pierced the line of works across the Peninsula there without much difficulty, isolating Yorktown, and cutting off re-enforcements, when the place must have fallen in a very short time. Some of our Generals expected and desired that that should be done. Gen. Heintzelman forwarded to Gen. McClellan the application to Gen. Hamilton, commanding a division, for permission to force the enemy's lines. No answer was received to the application.

#### HOW MANY TROOPS, McCLELLAN HAD.

Instead of that, however, a siege was determined upon, contrary to the desire of the President, who, as early as the 9th of April, wrote to Gen. McClellan as follows: "There is a curious mystery about the number of troops now with you. I telegraphed you on the 6th, urging that you had over 100,000 with you. I had just obtained from the Secretary of War a statement, taken, as he said, from your own returns, making 103,000 then with you and en route to you. You now say that you will have not 85,000, when all en route to you shall have reached you. How can this discrepancy of 25,000 be accounted for? I do not know, but I am sure that I understand it is doing for you precisely what a like number of your own would have to do if that command was away."

"I suppose the whole force which has gone forward to you is with you by this time, and if so, I think it is the precise time for you to strike a blow. By delay the enemy will steadily gain on you—that is, he will gain faster by fortifications and re-enforcements than you can by re-enforcements alone."

"And, once more, let me tell you it is indispensable to you that you strike a blow. I am powerless to help this. You will do me the justice to remember I always wished not to rush down the bay in search of a field, instead of fighting at or near Manassas, as only shifting and not surmounting a difficulty; that we should find the same enemy and the same or equal intrenchments at either place. The country will not fail to note—is not now—and the present hesitation to move upon an intrenched position is but the story of Manassas repeated."

And the repetition was made complete nearly a month later, when the enemy, in the face of a superior force, evacuated their works without loss and without the knowledge of the general commanding our army.

#### McCLELLAN WANTS MORE TROOPS.

Gen. McClellan, however, did not deem his forces sufficient, and objected very strongly to the order of the President detaching McDowell's corps for the defense of Washington, as "imperiling the success of our cause." He called again and again for re-enforcements, asking for Franklin's and McCall's Divisions of McDowell's corps, to be under command of Franklin; insisting that Franklin's Division, at least, should be sent to him. On the 11th of April Franklin's Division was ordered to Alexandria to embark for Fort Monroe. On the 14th, Gen. Franklin reported to Gen. McClellan near Yorktown, but his troops remained on board the transports until after the enemy evacuated the place, when they were ordered to West Point.

#### HE WANTS TRANSPORTATION.

On the 6th of April Gen. McClellan telegraphed to the President. "I have by no means the transportation I must have to move my army even a few miles," and asks that all his orders for wagon trains, &c., may at once be complied with. All was sent to him as desired, until even Gen. McDowell found himself stripped of the transportation designed for his corps, when he moved to Fredericksburg it was with the greatest difficulty he could move supplies for his small force from Aquia to Falmouth until the railroad was completed.

A month was spent before Yorktown, our army, in the opinion of some of our ablest officers, becoming more demoralized by the length of a long siege than it would have been even by an unsuccessful assault.

The returns in the Adjutant-General's office, signed by Gen. McClellan and his Adjutant-General, show that on the 30th of April, 1862, the forces on the Peninsula under Gen. McClellan amounted to 182,392 present for duty.

#### HE WANTS GUNS.

On the 1st of May the President telegraphed to Gen. McClellan: "Your call for Parrott guns from Washington alarms me, chiefly because it argues indefinite procrastination. Is anything to be done?"

#### YORKTOWN EVACUATED—McCLELLAN CHAGRINED.

On the night of the 3d and the morning of the 4th of May, the enemy evacuated Yorktown without loss. One of the witnesses testifies that Gen. McClellan was very much chagrined and mortified at the evacuation, as he had made his preparations to open from his batteries on Monday, the 5th of May.

#### PURSUIT OF THE REBELS.

The evacuation was discovered by daylight on the morning of the 4th. Between 10 and 11 o'clock, Gen. Stoneman, with the cavalry and some light horse artillery, started in pursuit. About 1 o'clock, Gen. Hooker, with his division, left Yorktown, with orders to support Gen. Stoneman. He moved out during the day, with the whole or portions of his corps. About five miles from Yorktown the division of Gen. Hooker was delayed for some time in consequence of other troops, coming from another direction, getting into the road before him.

In the meantime Gen. Stoneman had overtaken the rear of the enemy with his cavalry, and followed them up closely, keeping up a running fire all the time until the enemy reached their works in the neighborhood of Williamsburg, when the pursuit was checked. Gov. Sprague was sent back to hurry up the infantry support under Gen. Hooker. After considerable delay, finding it impossible to pass the troops ahead of him, Gen. Hooker turned off and proceeded by another road, of which he had obtained information from some of the inhabitants, marched till 11 o'clock that night, renewed the march at daylight, and came up to the advanced works of the enemy a little after 7 o'clock, about half a mile from Fort Magruder, and at once engaged the enemy.

#### BATTLE OF WILLIAMSBURG.

There seems to have been great misapprehension and confusion in relation to the management of the troops at Williamsburg. When the pursuit first commenced on Sunday, Gen. Heintzelman was instructed by Gen. McClellan to take charge of operations in front. On the morning of Monday orders were sent to Gen. Sumner to take the command; Gen. McClellan remained behind in Yorktown to superintend the sending of two divisions up the York River to West Point. A heavy rain set in on Sunday, rendering the roads almost impracticable for the passage of troops. The troops of the different commands became mingled, divisions and brigades, to some extent, were separated from each other, and it seems to have been difficult to get the troops up in time.

During Monday forenoon Gen. Hooker, finding himself hard pressed by the enemy, and understanding that Gen. Sumner had 80,000 troops with him sent repeatedly for re-enforcements. So did Gen. Stoneman and Gen. Heintzelman, but no re-enforcements arrived. Gen. Sumner states that, having sent Gen. Hancock to the right, he had at the center only about 3,000 infantry—the cavalry there not being fitted for operations against the enemy, on account of the country being so wooded. Upon receiving the call for re-enforcements to be sent to the left to Gen. Hooker, he sent staff officers to hurry up troops from the rear, his own corps being some ten miles off, and ordered Kearney to re-enforce Hooker. Re-enforcements not coming up to Gen. Hooker as soon as needed, or perhaps expected, the Prince de Joinville and Gov. Sprague went to Yorktown to urge Gen. McClellan to come up to the front, and take charge of matters there. Gov. Sprague arrived at Yorktown about 1 o'clock, having been about an hour in going down. He testifies that when Gen. McClellan was told the condition of affairs at the front, he remarked that he had expected that he would attend to that little matter."

After some time Gen. McClellan started from Yorktown, and reached the vicinity of Williamsburg about 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

#### HOOKER DOES THE FIGHTING.

By that time Gen. Kearney had reached the field and re-enforced Gen. Hooker, taking command, being the senior in rank to General Hooker. Gen. Hancock had been engaged on the right, but, upon being re-enforced, had succeeded in repulsing the enemy, losing about forty men. The principal fighting was done by the troops under Gen. Hooker, his division sustaining a loss of about 1,700 men. Before he was re-enforced, his troops were obliged to hold their position with the bayonet and such ammunition as the men could obtain from the bodies of those who had fallen, the roads being so muddy that it was impossible to bring up fresh ammunition.

#### RETIREAT AND PURSUIT.

That night the enemy evacuated their position at Williamsburg. Gen. McClellan states that after he arrived on the field he was so satisfied that the enemy had been beaten and would be compelled to evacuate their position that night or be taken at a great disadvantage, that he countermanded orders to the divisions of Richardson and Sedgwick and sent them back to Yorktown.

The next day the pursuit was continued for a short distance by Gen. Stoneman and the cavalry, with a small body of infantry. Several of the Generals testify that, had the enemy been promptly followed up after the battle of Williamsburg, they could have been followed right into Richmond—one of them says without firing a gun. Gen. McClellan says that the roads were so bad, in consequence of the rains, that it was impracticable to make a vigorous pursuit.

The battle of Williamsburg appears to have been fought under many and serious disadvantages. Nothing was known of the nature of the country or the defensive works of the enemy until our troops arrived before them; there was no controlling mind in charge of the movements; there was uncertainty in regard to who was in command; each General fought as he considered best; and, by the time the General Commanding appeared on the field, the principal part of the fighting was over.

#### FURTHER DELAY.

Some three or four days were spent at Williamsburg for the purpose of bringing up supplies, &c., and then the line of march was taken up for the Chickahominy. It was about the

time that the army left Williamsburg that Norfolk was taken and the Merrimac destroyed. But preparations had been made before those events occurred to have supplies sent up York River instead of the James, and the line afterwards followed was adopted. The consequence was that the gunboats were of little or no service in the operations against Richmond, and remained entirely inactive, except in some operations against Fort Darling, until they were called upon to protect the army when, in July, it fell back to the James river.

The distance between Williamsburg and the line of operations on the Chickahominy was from forty to fifty miles, and the army was most two weeks in moving that distance. The first troops that crossed the Chickahominy were the corps of Gen. Keyes, which crossed on the 24th of May, followed by the corps of Gen. Heintzelman on the 25th. The rest of our army remained on the left bank of the Chickahominy until the battle of Fair Oaks, when the corps of Gen. Sumner crossed to the assistance of Gen. Heintzelman and Keyes.

McClellan still calling for more troops. Gen. McClellan continued calling for re-enforcements, representing that the force of the enemy in his front was superior to his own, and that the force under Gen. McDowell would do more for the protection of Washington, if sent to his army, than in any other position in which it could be placed. In a letter written on the 21st of May he asks that Gen. McDowell's corps be sent him by water, rather than by land, as the more expeditious mode, and that he and his forces be explicitly placed under his orders, "in the ordinary way." He closes his letter by saying:

"I believe there is a great struggle before this army, but I am neither dismayed nor discouraged. I wish to strengthen its force as much as I can; but, in any event, I shall fight it with all the skill, and caution, and determination that I possess. And I trust that the result may either obtain for me the permanent confidence of my Government, or that it may close my career."

In reply to the request of Gen. McClellan that Gen. McDowell should join his forces by water, the President states, on the 21st of May: "Gen. McDowell can reach you by land sooner than he could get aboard of boats if the boats were ready at Fredericksburg, unless his march to the river, by the route of the Chesapeake, be so arranged that he can reach you at Richmond. By land he will reach you in five days after starting; whereas, by water, he would not reach you in two weeks, judging by past experience. Franklin's single division did not reach you in ten days after I ordered it."

#### JACKSON IN THE SHENANDOAH.

Preparations were accordingly made for General McDowell to leave Fredericksburg on the 25th of May to join Gen. McClellan. Just at that time, however, Jackson commenced his expedition down the Shenandoah Valley, and Gen. McDowell, together with Gen. Fremont, in Western Virginia, was sent to the assistance of Gen. Banks, and to intercept Jackson in his retreat. Upon being informed of this, Gen. McClellan replied that the movement of Jackson was probably intended to prevent re-enforcements being sent to him. The President replied, giving him full information as to the condition of affairs in the Valley, and closing by saying:

"If McDowell's force was now beyond our reach we should be utterly helpless. Apprehensions of something like this, and an unwillingness to sustain you, has always been my reason for withholding McDowell's force from you. Please understand this, and do the best you can with the forces you now have."

#### BATTLE OF THE SEVEN PINES.

On the 31st of May and the 1st of June the battles of Seven Pines and Fair Oaks were fought. As there has been so much controversy in regard to the conduct of some of the troops engaged in that battle, your Committee will refer, particularly, to the testimony of Gen. Casey, who commanded the advanced division, upon which the attack was first made. Gen. Casey states that, when the campaign of the Peninsula commenced, his division consisted principally of raw and inexperienced troops. They had suffered greatly from the labors and exposures incident upon the siege of Yorktown and the advance of the troops up the Peninsula. Some of them had been for weeks without shelter, being compelled to leave their camp equipment behind when ordered on the pursuit of the enemy after the evacuation of Yorktown. That division took the lead across the Chickahominy, taking up a high position at Seven Pines, where it established itself by throwing up intrenchments and cutting abatis. A few days before the battle of Seven Pines, contrary to the advice and opinion of Gen. Keyes and Gen. Casey, the division was ordered three-quarters of a mile to the front, within five miles of Richmond, his pickets extending within five miles. They had no support upon their right or their left, the remainder of the corps to which they belonged (Keyes) being in their rear. They at once commenced digging rifle-pits and cutting abatis, the pickets at night being attacked by the enemy, who were repulsed. About 11 o'clock on the morning of the 31st the pickets reported the enemy approaching, and an aid of General Johnson was captured and brought in with important papers upon him. Gen. Casey, with this aid and his general officer of the day, went to General Keyes and reported the circumstances to him. Gen. Keyes testifies that for some days before the attack he sent to Gen. McClellan reports of his condition, the threatening attitude of the enemy in his immediate vicinity, and urged that Gen. Sumner be sent across to his support. This was not done, however, until after the attack commenced. Reports continued to come in of the approach of the enemy. The division was called out and formed, the working men called in, and preparations made to meet the coming attack. Two lines of battle were formed—one in the rifle-pits, and another about one-third of a mile in advance—composed of five or six regiments and four pieces of artillery. A regiment had previously been sent out to support the pickets. About 20 minutes to 1 o'clock the enemy commenced the attack in force, supposed to amount to about 85,000 men, attacking in front and on both flanks. After fighting for some time, the enemy continuing to come in force, the forces in front fell back to the rifle-pits, and fought there until nearly surrounded. Re-enforcements had been promised, and Gen. Casey had selected the position to which they were to be assigned; but no re-enforcements came up in position until just before he was forced to fall back from his second line, when a single regiment arrived. After about three hours' fight-

ing the division fell back from its second line with a loss of 1,433 in killed, wounded and missing. In the course of an hour more the enemy's division had been driven back, the remainder of our forces were swept back from a mile and a half to two miles from Casey's first line, when the enemy were checked, and the fighting ceased for the day.

During the battle Gen. Sumner, whose corps was on the left bank of the Chickahominy, was ordered by Gen. McClellan to hold his forces in readiness to cross. Gen. Sumner not only did that, but at once called out his forces and moved them until the heads of the columns were at the bridge ready to cross, thereby saving between one and two hours. When the order came to cross he immediately moved his forces in the direction of the field of battle, came up with and engaged the enemy, and relieved the pressure upon the troops engaged upon his left.

#### ROUTE OF FAIR OAKS.

The next day, the 1st of June, the enemy attacked Gen. Sumner at Fair Oaks. General Sumner, who had been ordered forward the day before by Gen. McClellan, meeting with one half of his division, hearing the firing of the enemy upon Gen. Sumner's forces, proceeded at once in that direction and engaged the enemy. In a short time the enemy were repulsed, and fell back in confusion. There was no communication between the forces under Gen. Sumner and those under General Heintzelman (Hooker's), but each fought as he deemed best under the circumstances. Gen. McClellan was with the main part of the army on the left bank of the Chickahominy. After fighting was over he came across to the right bank of the river.

#### HOOKER'S RECONNOISSANCE.

On the morning of Monday Gen. Heintzelman ordered Gen. Hooker to make a reconnoissance in force, which he did, advancing to within one mile of Richmond, meeting with no resistance except a little from the enemy's pickets. Upon being informed by Gen. Heintzelman of what he had done, Gen. McClellan ordered the troops to be recalled and occupy the position that had been held by Casey's division. The officers engaged in that battle, who have been examined, testify that the army could have pushed right on to the City of Richmond with little resistance; that the enemy were very much broken and demoralized, throwing away arms, clothing, &c., that might impede their flight. Gen. McClellan seems to have contemplated an immediate movement upon Richmond, for the day after the battle, June 2d, he writes to the Secretary of War:

"The enemy attacked in force and with great spirit yesterday morning, but are everywhere most signally repulsed with great loss. Our troops charged frequently on both days, and uniformly broke the enemy. The result is, that our left is within four miles of Richmond. I only wait for the river to fall to cross with the rest of the force, and make a general attack. Should I find them holding firm in a very strong position, I may wait for what troops I can bring up from Fort Monroe. But the morale of my troops is now such that I can venture much. I do not fear the odds against me. The victory is complete, and all credit is due to the gallantry of our officers and men."

#### MORE REINFORCEMENTS.

On the 6th of June, M'Call's division of Gen. McDowell crossed over and joined the army on the peninsula. On the 8th of June Gen. McClellan telegraphed: "I shall be in perfect readiness to move forward and (take Richmond) the moment that M'Call reaches here and the ground will permit the passage of artillery." On the 10th and 11th of June General M'Call's troops commenced arriving at the White House.

McClellan continued to be made at Washington to send down by land from Fredericksburg the remainder of Gen. McDowell's corps, he being directed to co-operate fully with Gen. McClellan, but retaining an independent command. This does not appear to have been in accordance with General McClellan's wishes; for, on the 16th of June, he telegraphs to the Secretary of War:

"It ought to be distinctly understood that McDowell and his troops are completely under my control. I received a telegram from him requesting that M'Call's division might be placed so as to join him immediately upon his arrival. That request does not breathe the proper spirit; whatever troops come to me must be disposed of so as to do the most good. I do not feel that in such circumstances as those in which I am now placed Gen. McDowell should wish the general interest to be sacrificed for the purpose of increasing his command. If I cannot fully control all his troops I want none of them, but would prefer to fight the battle with what I have, and let others be responsible for the results."

On the 18th of June, Gen. McClellan telegraphs to the Secretary of War that he has received information from deserters to the effect that troops have left Richmond to re-enforce Jackson; that the movement commenced on the 8th; and that if re-enforcements have gone to Jackson, they are probably not less than 10,000 men; that he cannot touch for the truth of the statement, but that it seems pretty certain that it is believed in Richmond and among the Rebel troops. To this the President replies, on the same day, that the information is corroborated by a dispatch from Gen. King at Fredericksburg, and remarks: "If this is true, it is as good as a re-enforcement to you of an equal force."

On the same day General McClellan telegraphs to the President:

"A general engagement may take place at any hour. An advance by us involves a battle more or less decisive. The enemy exhibit at every point a readiness to meet us. They certainly have great numbers and extensive works. If ten or fifteen thousand men have left Richmond to re-enforce Jackson, it illustrates their strength and confidence. After that we shall fight the Rebel army as soon as Providence will permit. We shall await only a favorable condition of the earth and sky, and the completion of some necessary preliminaries."

#### STRENGTH OF THE ARMY.

The returns of Gen. McClellan to the Adjutant-General's office give the following as the strength of the army on the peninsula on the 20th of June. Present for duty, 115,102; special duty, sick and in arrest, 11,225; absent, 29,511—total, 155,838.

#### STUART'S RAID.

About this time the Rebel General, Stuart,

with his cavalry, made his celebrated raid, making the entire circuit of the army unharmed, and discovering the nature of our communications with the York River.

#### JACKSON THREATENS AN ATTACK.

On the 24th and 25th of June, Gen. McClellan telegraphs the Secretary of War that he is informed by deserters and contrabands that Jackson is contemplating an attack upon his right and rear. As this dispatch of Gen. McClellan, and the one of the President in reply, are dated immediately previous to the "seven days' battle," they are given here in full.

#### Received 8.50 p. m.

"I have just returned from the field, and find your dispatch in regard to Jackson. Several contrabands, just in, give information confirming the supposition that Jackson's advance is at or near Hanover Court House, and that Beauregard arrived, with strong re-enforcements, in Richmond yesterday. I incline to think that Jackson will attack my right and rear. The Rebel force is stated at 200,000, including Jackson and Beauregard. I shall have to contend against vastly superior odds if these reports be true; but this army will do all in the power of man to hold their position and repulse an attack. I regret my great inferiority of numbers, but feel that I am in no way responsible for it, as I have not failed to represent repeatedly the necessity of re-enforcements; that this was the decisive point; and that all the available means of the Government should be concentrated here. I will do all that a general can do with the splendid army I have the honor to command; and if it is destroyed by overwhelming numbers, can at least die with it, and share its fate. But if the result of the action which will occur to-morrow, or within a short time, is a disaster, the responsibility cannot be thrown on my shoulders; it must rest where it belongs."

"Since I commenced this, I have received additional intelligence confirming the supposition in regard to Jackson's movements and Beauregard's. I shall probably be attacked to-morrow, and now go to the other side of the Chickahominy to arrange for the defense on that side. I feel that there is no use in my again asking for re-enforcements."

#### Geo. B. McClellan, Major General.

#### Hon. E. M. Stanton, Sec'y of War.

The answer of the President is as follows:

"ASSISTANT, June 20, 1862.

"Your three dispatches of yesterday in relation to the affair, ending with the statement that you completely succeeded in making your point, are very gratifying.

"The later one of 6 1/2 p. m., suggesting the probability of your being overwhelmed by 200,000 men, and talking of whom the responsibility will belong, pains me very much. I give you all I can, and act on the presumption that you will do the best you can with what you have; while you continue, ungenerously, I think, to assume that I could give you more if I would. I have omitted, I shall omit, no opportunity to send you re-enforcements whenever I possibly can."

#### A. LINCOLN.

#### Major-General McClellan.

#### BATTLE OF MECHANICVILLE.

On the afternoon of the 26th of June, between 2 and 3 o'clock, the enemy, in considerable force, made a vigorous attack upon the troops of Gen. McClellan's Division, stationed at Mechanicville, consisting of the two brigades of Seymour and Reynolds. The action lasted until midnight, when the enemy were repulsed. Troops were sent up by Gen. Porter to the assistance of those engaged; but they were not in the battle, though some of them were in position to support the right of the line.

About 12 o'clock that night the troops were ordered to fall back to Gaines's Mill, which was accomplished without loss.

#### BATTLE OF GAINE'S MILL.

On the 27th the battle of Gaines's Mill was fought, principally by the troops under Gen. Porter. Our forces there engaged were from 27,000 to 30,000; the force of the enemy being from two to three times that number. The enemy were in such superior force that, although our troops fought with exceeding bravery, they were driven back with a loss of about 9,000 men, in killed, wounded and missing.

Gen. McClellan was questioned as to the policy of leaving the right wing, consisting of only about 30,000 men, to meet the attack of the superior force of the enemy, instead of withdrawing it to the right bank of the Chickahominy before the battle of Gaines's Mill. His testimony on that point is as follows:

"Question. Whatever might have been the intentions of the enemy, as the attack was to have been made by him, would it not have been better to have placed both wings of our army on the same side of the Chickahominy prior to the battle of Gaines's Mill?"

"Answer. I do not think they ought to have been brought to the same side of the river before they actually were."

"Question. What advantage was gained by leaving the right wing of our army to be attacked by a greatly superior force?"

"Answer. It prevented the enemy from getting on our flank and rear, and, in my opinion, enabled us to withdraw the army and its material."

"Question. Will you explain what was done by the right wing of our army at or about the time the left was engaged, which saved our flank from attack and enabled the army and its material to be withdrawn?"

"Answer. By desperate fighting they inflicted so great a loss on the enemy as to check his movement on the left bank of the river, and gave us time to get our material out of the way."

#### RETIREAT OF THE WHOLE ARMY DECIDED ON.

During the night after the battle of Gaines's Mill, all our forces were concentrated on the right bank of the Chickahominy, and the next day the movement to the James River was determined upon. Gen. Heintzelman testified before the President that he was advised by Gen. McClellan; that he found everything packed, ready to leave; that Gen. McClellan said there were two things to be done—to concentrate his forces and risk all on a battle, or to withdraw to the James River; that if he risked a battle there, and was beaten, the army was destroyed. Gen. Heintzelman advised him not to risk a battle under such circumstances, for if that army was lost the cause would be lost; that it were better to go to the James River and await reinforcements. Gen. McClellan replied that he was of that opinion himself, and that was determined upon. That night, at 2.30 a. m., Gen.

McClellan telegraphed to the Secretary of War that he (Gen. McClellan) is not responsible for the result, but he feels that the Government has not sustained his army.

To this the President replies, on the 28th: "If you have had a drawn battle, or a repulse, it is the price we pay for the enemy not being in Washington. We protected Washington and the enemy concentrated on you. Had we stripped Washington he would have been upon us before the troops sent could have gotten to you."

"Save your army at all events. Will send re-enforcements as fast as we can. Of course they cannot reach you to day, to-morrow, or next day."

The 28th of June passed without any serious fighting. Col. B. S. Alexander testifies that on the afternoon of that day he was sent for by Gen. McClellan, and went to his headquarters at Savage's Station, arriving there about dark. He received instructions to proceed with an escort to the James River, send back a sufficient number of men to act as guides for the different columns of the army, communicate with the gunboats, and order supplies to be brought up the river; to examine both shores of the James to the mouth of the Chickahominy, and ascertain the landing places; proceed up the Chickahominy to the head of navigation and ascertain the places where the army could cross, in case of success; and then return to headquarters, and report. He left Savage's station that night and reached the James River the next afternoon. By the time he had completed his examination the army had reached the James River at Malvern.

McClellan proposes to destroy his baggage. While at headquarters receiving his instructions, he was shown, as he testified, a printed order, not then issued, directing the destruction of the baggage of officers and men, and the tents, camp, and equipment, and things of that kind; appealing to the army to submit to this privation, as it would be only temporary—only for a few days." He remonstrated with Gen. McClellan against issuing such an order; that it would have a bad effect, would demoralize the army, as it would be telling them more plainly than they could be told in any other way that they were defeated and running for their lives. The order was not issued, and Gen. McClellan testifies that he has no recollection of any such order.

#### THE RETREAT TO JAMES RIVER.

The retreat to James River having been decided upon, the army took up its march, being attacked by the enemy in the day time, and however successful in repelling those attacks, evacuating their positions during the night. The actions of Savage's Station, Glendale and Malvern were fought during the movement of the army to the James, the enemy being repulsed in each day's fighting, and our army falling back, under orders, during the night.

It would appear, from all the information your Committee can obtain, that the battles were fought, the troops having been disorganized and old men changed entirely by the corps commanders, without directions from the Commanding General. He would place the troops in the morning, then leave the field and seek the position for the next day, giving no directions with the close of the day's fighting, when the troops would be ordered to fall back during the night to the new position selected by army. In that manner the army reached the James river.

#### BATTLE OF MALVERN HILL.

The battle of Malvern Hill, of the 1st of July, was the most fearful conflict of any upon the Peninsula. The troops were engaged in the morning, under the direction of Gen. McClellan, who then left the field, returning to it again in the afternoon. The first action of the day commenced about 10 o'clock in the forenoon, but did not continue long. The principal action, when the enemy attacked most vigorously and persistently, commenced late in the afternoon and continued till after dark, the enemy being repulsed several times every point. Many of the officers committed by your committee are of the opinion that the enemy were so severely punished on that day that they could be followed into Richmond had our army followed them up vigorously.

It is true that our army had been severely tried during the preceding week, fighting as they did, nearly every day, and retreating several times. The army commanders and the troops under them fought most bravely, and were better than they were before. However disheartened they may have become by what all must have regarded as a precipitate retreat during the night, they still fought with the most obstinate bravery when attacked in the day time by an exultant and successful enemy.

#### McCLELLAN STILL RETREATS.

The commanding general, however, determined to fall back from Malvern to Harrison's Bar, notwithstanding the victory won there by our army. He seems to have regarded his army as entirely exhausted to meet the enemy, for on the day of the battle at Malvern, evidently before that battle took place, he writes to the Adjutant-General of the army from Hazlett's plantation:

"My men are completely exhausted, and I dread the result if we are attacked to-day by fresh troops. If possible I shall retire to-night to Harrison's Bar, where the gunboats can render more aid in covering our position. Permit me to urge that not an hour should be lost in sending me fresh troops. More gunboats are much needed."

On the 2d of July the President telegraphs to Gen. McClellan:

"Your dispatch of yesterday morning induces me to hope your army is having some rest. In this hope allow me to reason with you for a moment. When you say to 50,000 men to be promptly sent you, you must surely labor under some gross mistake of fact. Recently you sent papers showing your disposal of forces made last spring for the defense of Washington, and advising a return to that plan. I had included in and about Washington 75,000 men. Now please be assured that I have not men enough to fill that very plan by 15,000. All of General Fremont's in the valley; all of General Banks' all of Gen. McDowell's not with you; and all in Washington, taken together do not exceed, if they reach, 60,000, with General Wool and Gen. Dix added to those mentioned. I have not outside of your army 75,000 men east of the mountains. Thus the idea of sending you 50,000 men, or any other considerable force, promptly, is simply absurd. If, in your frequent mention of responsibility, you have the impression that I blame you for not doing more than you can, please be relieved of such