

## GETTYSBURG.

REPLY TO GENERAL HOWARD.

"The war's over, but the fighting's just begun."

HAVING recently read the account of the "Campaign and Battle of Gettysburg," by General O. O. Howard, in the July number of the "Atlantic Monthly," I feel called upon, in justice to myself as well as in the general interest of truthful history, to correct some of the errors in that article. My purpose is not to attempt a description of that famous battle, which covered three of the most anxious days of our struggle for national perpetuity, but simply to give, from personal knowledge and other evidence, a concise and correct account of those particular operations, on the first day of the engagement, which General Howard has seen fit to present in such a manner as to arrogate to himself services and honors which impartial history must assign to others.

When General Reynolds fell, the command of our forces at the front devolved on General Howard as the senior officer. The Confederate army was advancing toward the town of Gettysburg. Our troops were sorely pressed, and at best were only adequate to the duty, important in itself, of retarding the enemy's hitherto triumphant progress, until our army could be concentrated, on an advantageous line, for a general engagement. After Reynolds's death, when General Buford said, "There seems to be no directing person," and, "We need a controlling spirit," the Commanding General of the Army sent me forward to the scene of action with an order superseding General Howard. It is only natural that a soldier should feel chagrined at being thus relieved, by a junior, on the field. Acting under that feeling, General Howard wrote General Meade a letter in which he said:

"General Hancock's order to assume

command . . . has mortified and will disgrace me." With these few words of explanation it will be easier to account for the special plea in the "Atlantic" article, to shield its author from the lack of confidence apparently implied in the order superseding him in command.

To give a clear understanding of the operations which General Howard has misstated, it is necessary that I should begin with the movements of my own command on the first day of the battle.

On the morning of July 1, in accordance with orders from General Meade, the Second corps marched from Uniontown to Taneytown, where it arrived about 11 A. M. The troops were immediately massed, and I reported in person at headquarters of the Army of the Potomac, which were then at that point. While there, General Meade informed me of his plan for the coming battle. He stated, in general terms, that his intention was to fight on Pipe creek; that he had not examined the ground, but, judging from his maps, it was the strongest position he could find; that the Engineers were examining and mapping it, and that he had made an order for the movement to occupy that line. General Reynolds was in the advance in command of the left wing of the army, consisting of the First, Third, and Eleventh corps, with General Buford's cavalry. I returned to my corps headquarters, and shortly afterward General Meade received information that Reynolds, with the First and Eleventh corps (Howard's) and Buford's cavalry, was engaged with the enemy at Gettysburg. Subsequently, at about 1 P. M., he heard that Reynolds was either killed or mortally

wounded. General Meade came immediately to my headquarters and told me to transfer the command of the Second corps to General Gibbon, and proceed at once to the front, and in the event of the truth of the report of General Reynolds's death or disability, to assume command of the corps on that field—the First and Eleventh, and the Third which was at Emmettsburg. I reminded him that General Caldwell, commanding the First division of the Second corps, was senior to General Gibbon, and that General Howard was senior to myself as Major General of Volunteers. (The commissions of Generals Howard and Sickles, as Major Generals of Volunteers, bore the same date as my own, but their commissions as Brigadiers antedated mine, and that determined our relative rank as Major Generals of Volunteers.) He replied that he had a communication from the Secretary of War authorizing him to make such changes as he saw fit in his commanders, and that any changes made by him would be sustained by the Secretary and the President. Accordingly, written orders directing me to proceed to the front and assume command of our forces on the field were furnished me on the spot, and read as follows:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF POTOMAC, }  
July 1, 1863—1:10 P. M. }

*Commanding Officer, Second Corps.*

The Major General commanding has just been informed that General Reynolds has been killed, or badly wounded. He directs that you turn over the command of your corps to General Gibbon, that you proceed to the front, and by virtue of this order, in case of the truth of General Reynolds's death, you assume command of the corps there assembled, viz.: the Eleventh, First, and Third at Emmettsburg. If you think the ground and position there a better one to fight a battle under existing circumstances, you will so advise the General, and he will order all the troops up. You know the General's views, and General Warren, who is fully aware of them, has gone out to see General Reynolds.

LATER—1:15 P. M.

Reynolds has possession of Gettysburg, and the enemy are reported as falling back from the front of Gettysburg. Hold your column ready to move.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

D. BUTTERFIELD,

Major General and Chief of Staff.

It will be observed that, having been informed of General Meade's in-

tentions to form his forces for the coming conflict on the line of Pipe creek, these orders required me not only to assume command of the troops at the front, but also to examine the ground at Gettysburg, and if I thought the position there a better one to fight a battle under existing circumstances, I was so to advise him and he would order his whole army up.

The moment these instructions were given me I turned over the command of the Second corps to General Gibbon, and then started with my personal staff at a very rapid pace for the battlefield, which was distant about thirteen miles. On the way we met an ambulance containing the dead body of the heroic Reynolds. Owing to the peculiar formation of the country, or the direction of the wind at the time, it was not until we had come within a few miles of the field that we heard the roar of the conflict then going on. I hurried to the front, and saw our troops retreating in disorder and confusion from the town, closely followed by the enemy. General Howard was on the crest of Cemetery hill, apparently endeavoring to stop the retreat of his troops, many of whom were passing over the hill and down the Baltimore pike. A portion of Steinwehr's division of Howard's corps, which had been stationed on Cemetery hill by order of General Reynolds, was still in position there, and had thus far taken no part in the battle. (Bates's "Gettysburg," p. 69.)

As soon as I arrived on the field, at about 3:30 P. M., I rode directly to the crest of the hill where General Howard stood, and said to him that I had been sent by General Meade to take command of all the forces present; that I had written orders to that effect with me, and asked him if he wished to read them. He replied that he did not, but acquiesced in my assumption of command. As it was necessary at once to establish order in the confused mass of his troops on Cemetery hill and the Baltimore pike, I lost no time in conversation, but at

once rode away and bent myself to the pressing task of making such dispositions as would prevent the enemy from seizing that vital point; and from that moment until evening, when I transferred the command to General Slocum, I exercised positive and vigorous command over all the troops present, and General Howard, so far as my knowledge goes, gave no orders save to the troops of his own corps, the Eleventh.

This brings me to the first of the incorrect statements which I wish to notice in General Howard's article. On page 58 he writes as follows:

At this moment, 4:30 P. M., according to the time I had gone by all day, General Hancock appeared. (He reports to the Committee on the Conduct of the War that he was at Cemetery hill by 3:30 P. M.) General Doubleday states that his troops did not commence to give way till a quarter before four; and surely it was half an hour later than this that he was leading his corps into position on Cemetery ridge, where he and I first met Hancock. General Hancock greeted me in his usual frank and cordial manner, and used these words: "General Meade has sent me to represent him on the field." I replied, "All right, Hancock. This is no time for talking. You take the left of the pike and I will arrange these troops to the right." He said no more, and moved off in his peculiar gallant style to gather scattered brigades and put them into position. I noticed that he sent Wadsworth's division, without consulting me, to the right of the Eleventh corps, to Culp's hill; but as it was just the thing to do I made no objection—probably would not have made any in any event—but worked away, assisted by my officers, organizing and arranging batteries and infantry along the stone wall and fences toward Gettysburg, and along the northern crest of the ridge. It did not strike me then that Hancock, without troops, was doing more than directing matters as a temporary chief of staff for Meade.

In the next paragraph of his article (page 59) General Howard states that the order superseding him came "just before night," and on the same page appears his letter of complaint, intercession, and excuse to General Meade, dated July 1, which reads thus:

**HEADQUARTERS ELEVENTH CORPS, July 1, 1863.**  
*Major General Meade, commanding Army of the Potomac.*

**GENERAL:** General Hancock's order to assume command reached here in writing at seven (P. M.). At that time, General Slocum being present, having just arrived at this point, I turned over the command to him. This evening I have read an order stating that if General Slocum was present, he would assume command.

I believe I have handled those two corps to-day

from a little past eleven until four o'clock—when General Hancock assisted me in carrying out orders which I had already issued—as well as any of your corps commanders could have done. Had we received reinforcements a little sooner, the first position assumed by General Reynolds and held by General Doubleday till my corps came up might have been maintained; but the position was not a good one because both flanks were exposed, and a heavy force approaching from the north roads rendered it untenable, being already turned, so that I was forced to retire the command to the position now occupied, which I regard as a very strong one.

The above has mortified and will disgrace me. Please inform me frankly if you disapprove my conduct to-day, that I may know what to do. I am, General,

Very respectfully your obedient servant,  
O. O. HOWARD,  
Major General Commanding.

The points at issue in the foregoing extract and letter are: the time of my arrival on the field, the time that General Howard relinquished command, and the meaning of the orders I bore from General Meade.

With reference to the first—the hour of my arrival—I do not know what time General Howard "had gone by all day," but the time of my arrival on the field was noted by my chief of staff and other staff officers, and I am well assured that I fixed it quite accurately in my testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War. As I have already stated, I left Taneytown shortly after receiving my instructions (1:15 P. M.) and rode toward Gettysburg at a very rapid gait. I arrived at Cemetery hill by 3:30 P. M., having had over two hours in which to travel the thirteen miles—a distance very easily covered in that time. And, deeply impressed as I was with the importance of the duty entrusted to me, with Reynolds killed and the enemy pressing on, it is easy to understand that I wasted no time upon the road. My official report of the battle fixes the time of my arrival on the field at even an earlier hour—three o'clock—and I am certain that I met General Howard not later than 3:30 P. M. In his letter to General Meade, quoted above, General Howard himself admits that I was there making dispositions of troops at 4 P. M. There is abundance of direct and cir-

cumstantial evidence to show that I was on the field as early as half-past three. The exact moment of my arrival on the field, however, I do not consider of great importance—the essential matter is, the condition of affairs at the time of my arrival and assuming command, and what subsequently transpired.

With reference to the hour at which General Howard yielded his command, he says in that letter to General Meade, "General Hancock's order to assume command reached here in writing at seven (P. M.)." The apparent intention of that sentence is to convey the impression that he had no knowledge of the existence of that order until that time. But while it may be that 7 P. M. of that day was the time he received from the Adjutant General of the army his copy of the written order, it was not the first time that day he had the opportunity to see that order, because, as I have stated, I offered to show him the original in writing when I first met him on the field and assumed command at about 3:30 P. M. He then said he did not desire to see it, and immediately yielded the command to me. And further, if he pretended to transfer the command to General Slocum at 7 P. M., when, he says, "General Hancock's order to assume command" reached him in writing, he was doing that which he had no authority to do. He knew that he was not vested with the command at that time; he knew that he had yielded it to me, without protest, when I arrived on the field and informed him that I had an order from General Meade to assume command of our forces; he knew that, by virtue of that order and his own relinquishment, I was formally vested with the command, and had actively exercised it from the moment of my arrival until the close of the day, "when," as I stated in my testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, "General Slocum arrived, he being my senior and not included in this order to me, I turned the command over

to him." In fact General Meade instructed me verbally, through General Butterfield, chief of staff, before I left for the front, that I was to do so.

With reference to the meaning of the written order I received from General Meade to assume command of our forces on the field, I must say that in view of the fact that I stated its substance, and offered to hand the order itself to General Howard when I met him on Cemetery hill, his acquiescence therein, and the fact that, to his personal knowledge, I assumed immediate command of those forces and exercised the same for some hours, it is incomprehensible to me how he can state, as he does in the extract already quoted, that it did not strike him then "that Hancock, without troops, was doing more than directing matters as a temporary chief of staff for Meade." Certainly that statement does not accord with the facts as they existed, and as I have related them. Recurring to this point, General Howard, on page 60, says:

As I understood the matter at the time, General Meade really intended, and Hancock so implied in his conversation with me, that he (Hancock) was to represent Meade, as Butterfield, the chief of staff, would have done, on the field of battle.

In the first place General Meade could not have so intended, for, in his conversation with me at Taneytown, and in his written order directing me to assume command of the forces on the field, it is clear as sunlight that he "really intended," and so directed, that General Howard should be superseded; and in the second place, knowing that General Meade had assigned me to that duty, having his written order in my pocket, it is impossible that I could have conveyed to General Howard the implication above quoted. My action and orders on the field show that I had no such idea of my duties as now occurs to General Howard. When I moved off, as he says, "to gather scattered brigades and put them into position," and when I sent Wadsworth's division to Culp's hill, without consulting him, he knew I was ex-

exercising authority which no staff officer would have dared to personally exercise under any circumstances. At 6 P. M. General Meade telegraphed to General Halleck: "General Reynolds was killed this morning, early in the action. I immediately sent up General Hancock to assume command." But to be more explicit: I assert positively that I never implied in any conversation with General Howard that when I arrived at Gettysburg on that occasion I "was to represent Meade as Butterfield, the chief of staff, would have done, on the field of battle."

General Howard claims (page 58) that there was an understanding between us whereby I was to take charge of the troops on the left of the turnpike while he arranged those on the right. He does not disclose the fact that I exercised independent powers, but in his letter to General Meade, already quoted, says, "General Hancock assisted me in carrying out orders which I had already issued." Now, I had no such understanding with General Howard, and I did not so assist him in carrying out orders which he had already issued. The only pretext for his statement of such an understanding is, that as I was about riding away to the left I understood him to indicate to me that he would prefer the right, where his troops were then posted, for his own position, and he said that he would be found there personally; but there was no division of command between General Howard and myself. Indeed, one of the first orders I gave on assuming the command was for the troops of the Eleventh corps (Howard's) to be pushed forward to the stone walls in the next field to give room for development, and to deter the enemy's advance. And about the same time I addressed a few words to his own troops on the left of the pike with a view to encourage them to hold the position while our lines were forming. I then rode on to place the First corps further to the left, in order that we should cover the whole of Cemetery hill, only a

small portion of which was occupied when I arrived upon the field. General Doubleday, commanding the First corps, after the fall of Reynolds, can give positive evidence that I assumed immediate command and directed the dispositions of his troops, as soon as he fell back to Cemetery hill. General Buford was also directed by me to hold his command in the flat to the left and front of Cemetery hill as long as possible in order to give me time to form our line of battle on the hill itself. I took charge of all our forces on the field, as my orders directed me to do, and, seeing the importance of the point, immediately sent Wadsworth's division and a battery to occupy Culp's hill. I had no idea of consulting General Howard as to the propriety of that movement, which he states he noticed, but to which he "made no objection." I ordered the movement because, as commander of the troops, and being responsible for what was done on the field, I considered it proper that it should be promptly made.

In regard to the service done by that division and the battery on the occasion referred to, I give the following extract from one of General Lee's despatches, as quoted in an article on Gettysburg, by the late Brigadier General C. H. Morgan:

With reference to Ewell's advance upon Culp's hill, Lee's report says:

"General Ewell was therefore instructed to carry the hill occupied by the enemy if he found it practicable, but to avoid a general engagement until the arrival of the other divisions which were ordered to hasten forward. In the mean time the enemy occupied the point which General Ewell designed to seize (Culp's hill)."

Before proceeding further I shall quote a despatch to Major General Halleck, General-in-Chief, from General Meade, a portion of the latter's testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, a part of the testimony of General Warren, chief engineer of the Army of the Potomac, before the same committee, with my own verbal despatch to General Meade, just after my arrival on the field, sent by my aide, all of which are given to show that his intentions and instruc-

tions to me, and my understanding of the same, were in perfect accord in regard to the fact that I was sent to Gettysburg to relieve General Howard of the command of all our forces there, and to determine and inform General Meade whether or not, in my opinion, Gettysburg was the place to fight the battle.

General Meade's despatch to General Halleck is as follows:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, }  
VIA FREDERICK, July 1, 1863—6 P. M. }

*General Halleck.*

The First and Eleventh corps have been engaged all day in front of Gettysburg. The Twelfth, Third, and Fifth have been moving up, and all, I hope, by this time on the field. This leaves only the Sixth, which will move up to-night. General Reynolds was killed this morning early in the action. I immediately sent up General Hancock to assume command. A. P. Hill and Ewell are certainly concentrating. Longstreet's whereabouts I do not know. If he is not up to-morrow, I hope, with the force I have concentrated, to defeat Hill and Ewell; at any rate I see no other course than to hazard a general battle. Circumstances during the night may alter this decision, of which I will try to advise you.

I have telegraphed Couch that if he can threaten Ewell's rear from Harrisburg, without endangering himself, to do so.

GEORGE G. MEADE, Major General.

At the time the above telegram was written the Second corps (whose position General Meade does not give) was on the march to and within a few miles of the battlefield.

General Meade, in his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, page 330, says:

On the 1st day of July, my headquarters being at Taneytown, and having directed the advance of two corps the previous day to Gettysburg, with the intention of occupying that place, about one or two o'clock in the day, I should think, I received information that the advance of my army, under Major General Reynolds of the First corps, on their reaching Gettysburg had encountered the enemy in force, and that the First and Eleventh corps were at that time engaged in a contest with such portions of the enemy as were there.

The moment I received this information I directed Major General Hancock, who was with me at the time, to proceed without delay to the scene of the contest, and having in view this preliminary order which I had issued to him as well as to other corps commanders [the order referred to here was the one for the proposed occupation of the general line of Pipe Clay creek], I directed him to make an examination of the ground in the neighborhood of Gettysburg, and to report to me, without loss of time, the facilities and advantages or disadvantages of that ground for receiving bat-

tle. I furthermore instructed him that in case, upon his arrival at Gettysburg—a place which I had never seen in my life, and had no more knowledge of than you have now—he should find the position unsuitable, and the advantages on the side of the enemy, he should examine the ground critically as he went out there, and report to me the nearest position in the immediate neighborhood of Gettysburg where a concentration of the army would be more advantageous than at Gettysburg.

Early in the evening of July 1, I should suppose about 6 or 7 o'clock, I received a report from General Hancock, I think in person, giving me such an account of a position in the neighborhood of Gettysburg which could be occupied by my army, as caused me at once to determine to fight a battle at that point; having reason to believe, from the account given to me of the operations of July 1, that the enemy were concentrating there. Therefore, without any reference to, but entirely ignoring the preliminary order [the order for the general line of Pipe Clay creek], which was a mere contingent one, and intended only to be executed under certain circumstances which had not occurred, and therefore the order fell to the ground, the army was ordered immediately to concentrate, and that night did concentrate on the field of Gettysburg, where the battle was eventually fought.

The report referred to by General Meade, in the foregoing extract, as having been received by him about 6 or 7 P. M., and which he thinks was from me in person, was a message sent by me from the field by my aide-de-camp, Major W. G. Mitchell. About 4 P. M. I sent that officer with a verbal message to General Meade, describing the state of affairs on the field at that time, and informing him that I could hold the position until night-fall, and that I thought that the place to fight our battle. Major Mitchell's report to me states that he arrived at General Meade's headquarters about 6 P. M., delivered my message to the General in person, and that General Meade replied, "I shall order up the troops." Other and later messages in writing were sent to General Meade.

General Meade, on page 348 of the report of the Committee on the Conduct of the War, continues:

About 1 o'clock on the 1st of July I received the sad intelligence of the fall of General Reynolds, and the actual engagement of my troops at Gettysburg. Previous to receiving this intelligence I had had a long consultation with General Hancock, and explained to him fully my views as to my determination to fight in front, if practicable; if not, then to the rear or to the right or the left, as circumstances might require. Without any

further reflection than the fact that General Reynolds was the officer upon whom I had relied under my instructions, and anxious to have some one in front who understood and who could carry out my views, I directed General Hancock to proceed to Gettysburg and take command of the troops there, and particularly to advise me of the condition of affairs there, and the practicability of fighting a battle there.

On page 349 he says:

I will call the attention of the committee to another despatch received by me from General Buford, marked "I," and dated 20 minutes past 3 o'clock, and which must have been received by me after General Hancock had gone to the front. I read it to show that my sending General Hancock there was in a measure justified by the opinion of that distinguished officer, General Buford, now deceased.

The despatch from General Buford, then at Gettysburg, mentioned by General Meade, reads thus:

HEADQUARTERS FIRST CAVALRY DIVISION, }  
July 1, 1863—20 minutes past 3.  
*General Pleasanton.*

I am satisfied that Longstreet and Hill have made a junction. A tremendous battle has been raging since 9 1-2 A. M., with varying success. At the present moment the battle is raging on the road to Cashtown, and in short cannon range of this town; the enemy's line is a semicircle on the height from north to west. General Reynolds was killed early this morning. In my opinion there seems to be no directing person.

JOHN BUFORD,

Brigadier General of Volunteers.

We need help now.

BUFORD.

I have also in my possession a letter informing me that General Buford earlier in the day, directly after General Reynolds's death, wrote a despatch to General Meade in the note book of his signal officer, Lieutenant A. B. Jerome, which throws a still stronger light upon his views of how matters were going upon the field at that time, and the necessity for a "directing person" there. The letter is as follows:

NEW YORK, October 18, 1865.

*Major General Hancock.*

GENERAL: A few moments after the death of Major General Reynolds the late General Buford wrote a short despatch in my note book to Major General Meade. If that message could be found, it would add still greater lustre to your well won reputation. The purport of that despatch was this: "For God's sake, send up Hancock. Everything is going at odds, and we need a controlling spirit." Yet, General, in all the parade that has taken place since, of names and incidents, memories oratorical and poetical, from Edward Everett to General Howard, have you not noticed that your friend, the heroic Buford, has been nearly

disregarded? I was a young lieutenant and staff officer, and loved the General, and I am sure you will pardon me if I call your attention to this injustice.

A squadron of the "First Cavalry division" entered Gettysburg, driving the few pickets of the enemy before them. The General and staff took quarters in a hotel near the seminary. As signal officer I was sent to look out for a prominent position and watch the movements of the enemy. As early as 7 A. M. I reported their advance, and took my station in the steeple of the "Theological Seminary." General Buford came up and looked at them through my glass, and then formed his small cavalry force. The enemy pressed us in overwhelming numbers, and we would have been obliged to retreat, but looking in the direction of Emmetsburg, I called the attention of the General to an army corps advancing, some two miles distant, and shortly distinguished it as the "First," on account of their "corps flag." The General held on with as stubborn a front as ever faced an enemy for half an hour unaided, against a whole corps of the rebels, when General Reynolds and a few of his staff rode up on a gallop, and hailed the General, who was with me in the steeple, our lines being but shortly advanced. In a familiar manner General Reynolds asked Buford "how things were going," and received the characteristic answer, "Let's go and see." In less than thirty minutes Reynolds was dead, his corps engaged against fearful odds, and Howard only in sight from my station, while the enemy were advancing on the right flank in numbers as large as our whole front. It was then the despatch before alluded to was written. I carried a verbal message to General H., asking him to "double quick" for life or death. When evening came the enemy had possession of the town, but many of the First division rode round rather than retreat through it.

Excuse me, General, but it will be difficult to find a parallel in history to the resistance made by a small force of cavalry against such odds of infantry men.

This letter has been suggested by a paragraph in the New York papers, stating that you had just returned from Gettysburg, and giving an account of your remarks, etc. Will you not, General, endeavor to bring General Buford's name more prominently forward?

Every one knows that he "in his day" was "first and foremost." I have the honor to enclose an extract from his report, which will show, I presume, that I speak from actual experience.

I have the honor to be, General,

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. B. JEROME.

As commander of our forces at Gettysburg, just after my arrival on the field, I sent Geary's division of the Twelfth corps, which had just arrived, to occupy the ground to the left, near Round Top, commanding the Gettysburg and Emmetsburg road, as well as the Gettysburg and Taneytown road to our rear. This was a part of General Slocum's corps; and although I had not been directed by General

Meade to assume command of other than the First, Third, and Eleventh corps, I felt that in the urgency of the case (not having heard of General Slocum's arrival in person), and seeing that division approaching the field, my duty as commander required me to place it at the point where it would best protect our left and rear. In December, 1865, more than two years after the battle, I received from General Geary the subjoined letter, relating to my disposition of his division on the occasion above described:

NEW CUMBERLAND, CUMBERLAND CO., PA., }  
December 5, 1865. }

*Major General Hancock.*

DEAR GENERAL: While in Washington I failed to obtain access to my report on the battle of Gettysburg.

Upon my return here I examined my retained copy, and I find that portion of it relating to the occupancy of the extreme left of the line under your orders is tolerably satisfactory. It is as follows:

"Not finding General Howard (to whom I was ordered to report), I reported to Major General Hancock, commanding Second corps, who informed me the right could maintain itself, and the immediate need of a division on the left was imperative. By his direction, upon this threatening emergency, I took a position on the extreme left of the line of battle, as the enemy were reported to be attempting to flank it, and cavalry were already skirmishing in front of that position.

"At 5 P. M. this movement was consummated, and my line extended at that time from about half a mile west of the Baltimore turnpike, the left of the First A. C., to a range of hills south and west of the town, which I occupied with two regiments of the First brigade. These hills I regarded as of the utmost importance, since their possession by the enemy would give him an opportunity of enfilading our entire left wing and centre with a fire which could not fail to dislodge us from our position.

"This line was held by the First and Third brigades. The Second brigade, with two pieces of Battery K, Fifth U. S. Artillery, pursuant to orders from Major General Slocum, were detached during the march to take position in reserve on the immediate left of the turnpike, about two miles from Gettysburg.

"No serious attack was made upon me at either point, the speedy formation of the line on the left frustrating the enemy's designs, which would, if successful, have proved so disastrous to the entire position. The command rested on their arms during the night."

Most respectfully submitted for your information.

Your devoted friend,  
JNO. W. GEARY,  
Brevet Major General.

Major General G. K. Warren, Chief Engineer of the Army of the Potomac,

testified before the Committee on the Conduct of the War:

On the morning of the 1st of July we got information from General Buford that the enemy were moving down upon him at Gettysburg, from the direction of Fairfield. I do not know how orders were issued; but I know that about that time General Reynolds moved forward to the support of General Buford, passing through the town of Gettysburg, and engaged the enemy there. This news came in very early in the morning. General Meade ordered me to go to Gettysburg to obtain information about it, and examine the ground. In consequence of mistaking my road, I went to Emmetsburg, a little out of the way. Almost at the same time that I left news came down that General Reynolds had been killed. General Meade then sent up General Hancock, with discretionary orders, I think, either to hold that place, if he thought it a good one, or, if not, then to fall back to the line of Pipe creek, keeping General Meade informed. General Hancock got there a little before I did. At that time General Reynolds's corps, the First corps, had fallen back pretty badly damaged, and what there was of the Eleventh corps (Howard's), that had gone out to help him, was coming back in great confusion. General Howard was then on Cemetery ridge with one division. General Buford's cavalry was all in line of battle between our position there and the enemy. Our cavalry presented a very handsome front, and I think probably checked the advance of the enemy. General Hancock made a great deal of personal effort to get our troops into position; and I think his personal appearance there did a great deal toward restoring order.

I went over the ground with General Hancock, and we came to the conclusion that if that position could be held until night, it would be the best place for the army to fight on if the army was attacked. General Hancock himself reported that to General Meade, who ordered all the army up to that position.

I have now given more than sufficient evidence, of a nature not to be questioned, to prove that I was sent to Gettysburg, when General Reynolds's death or fatal wounds became known to General Meade, to assume command of our forces there; that I did assume such command at once upon my arrival, and held the same, with all its great responsibilities, until nearly dark that evening, when I transferred it to General Slocum about 7 P. M.; and that General Howard was well aware of all the facts connected therewith; and I think also that I have fully shown the incorrectness and speciousness of his statement that it did not strike him "that Hancock, without troops, was doing more than directing

matters as a temporary chief of staff for Meade."

The inaccuracies in the "Atlantic" article are glaring, and it is important in the interests of truthful history that they should be pointed out; but they are not so certain to convey unreliable information concerning the battle of Gettysburg as similar errors embraced in his official report, which will be a public record for all time, and which I have seen since my attention was attracted to that article. In his official report of his operations at Gettysburg to the Adjutant General of the Army of the Potomac, dated August 31, 1863, which was made when he had all the facts fresh in his mind, and presumably the order to which he refers before his eyes, General Howard says:

General Hancock came to me about this time (4:30 P. M.), and said General Meade had sent him on learning the state of affairs; that he had given him his instructions while under the impression that he was my senior."

This proves that General Howard contradicts himself. In this report he admits that when I arrived upon the field he knew General Meade had sent me to supersede him, and in his article he says it did not strike him then "that Hancock, without troops, was doing more than directing matters as a temporary chief of staff for Meade." If he stands by his report, he falls by his article; if he stands by his article, he falls by his report. But the fact is that he falls by both, for both statements, as he makes them, are incorrect as well as contradictory. I have shown that his statement in his article that I implied that General Meade had sent me to represent him "as Butterfield, the chief of staff, would have done, on the field of battle," has no foundation in fact. I now most emphatically assert that I made no such statement to General Howard as that contained in the foregoing extract from his report. General Meade was well aware that General Howard was my senior, as Major General of Volunteers, before I left Taneytown for the front, because, as I said in the begin-

ning, I called his attention to the fact before I separated from him, and his answer to me was that the Secretary of War had authorized him to make such changes as he saw fit in his commanders, and that any such changes made by him would be sustained by the Secretary and the President.

Nor was this the only instance during the Gettysburg campaign in which General Meade superseded commanders by their juniors in rank. On that very occasion when I was about setting out from Taneytown for Gettysburg, as I have already stated, he placed General Gibbon in command of the Second corps, although General Caldwell, commanding the First division, was senior to Gibbon, who commanded the Second division of that corps. He also superseded General Doubleday, in command of the First corps, on the battlefield, by General Newton, his junior, as is well known, and as General Doubleday states in his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War; and both Gibbon and Newton held the commands thus assigned them until the close of the battle.

General Howard is careful to forget that I assumed command of the left wing of our army at all on the first day. As bearing on the subject, I attach an extract giving a striking description of these occurrences at the time I took command of the left wing at Gettysburg, written by the late Brigadier General C. H. Morgan, United States Army, then my chief of staff, who accompanied me to the battlefield from Taneytown:

About 3:30 he (General Hancock) reached Cemetery hill. Near the cemetery gate he met General Howard, and announced that he had been ordered to assume command. General Howard did not ask to see the order, but remarked that he was pleased that General Hancock had come. No time was spent in conversation, the pressing duty of the moment, it was evident, being to establish order in the confused mass on Cemetery hill.

Buford's cavalry was holding the front in the most gallant manner; the horse holders in some instances voluntarily giving up their horses to retreating infantrymen and going themselves to the skirmish line. General Buford himself was on Cemetery hill with General Warren, where Gene-

ral Hancock met them for a moment. Generals Howard, Buford, and Warren all assisted in forming the troops. By threats and persuasion the tide flowing along the Baltimore turnpike was diverted, and lines of battle formed behind the stone walls on either side of the road. To show the disorder into which General Howard's troops had been thrown by the unequal conflict they had waged during the day, it is only necessary to mention that 1,500 fugitives were collected by the provost guard of the Twelfth corps some miles in rear of the field.

Wadsworth's division and Hall's Fifth Maine battery were at once sent to the western slope of Culp's hill, which important position they held during the entire battle. The brave Wadsworth was by no means daunted or weakened by the day's work, but was still full of fight.

The lines having been so established as to deter the enemy from further advance, General Hancock despatched his senior aide, Major Mitchell, with a verbal message to General Meade, "that General Hancock could hold Cemetery hill until nightfall, and that he considered Gettysburg the place to fight the coming battle." Major Mitchell left Gettysburg about 4 o'clock, and arrived at Taneytown before 6 o'clock. Having delivered his message to General Meade, the latter replied, "I will send up the troops."

The following is the disposition of the troops as made by General Hancock: The First corps—except Wadsworth's division, which was placed as above—was on the right and left of the Taneytown road. The Eleventh corps was on its right, on both sides of the Baltimore turnpike.

Apparently to make his claim for honors at Gettysburg still stronger, General Howard (page 59) says: "I know that afterward General Hancock said in substance to Vice-President Hamlin concerning this battle: 'The country will never know how much it owes to your Maine General, Howard.'"

In regard to this I have only to say that I have rarely lost an opportune occasion to speak in exalted terms of the *Maine troops* who served under me during the war; and in conversation with General Howard's friends, I have never felt called upon to dissent from their claims for faithful services rendered by him during the period of his connection with the Army of the Potomac, in which he held high command, and in whose battles he lost an arm, and often risked his life.

I recollect an accidental conversation with the distinguished citizen of Maine referred to, whom I met at St. Paul, Minnesota, and it is probable that the character and services of the

*Maine troops* were mentioned then, and those of General Howard as well. I do not now recall the conversation in detail, but I am well satisfied that if the gentleman informed General Howard that I made the remarks concerning him which he quotes in his article in the "Atlantic Monthly," he either misunderstood my meaning, and applied what I said of the *Maine men* to General Howard personally, or that he had forgotten the exact purport of what I did say.

In concluding this subject General Howard (pages 60-61) says: "Of course it will make very little difference to posterity whether I served under Hancock unwittingly for two hours and a half or not, but it is of importance to me and mine to explain the facts of the case." Whatever posterity may think of the matter, if it think anything at all, it might just as well have "the facts of the case" as they transpired. That General Howard "served under Hancock unwittingly for two hours and a half" on that occasion is certainly not a fact. On the contrary, that I assumed absolute command of our forces at Gettysburg immediately on my arrival, exercising the same for several hours, until I transferred it to General Slocum, and did so with the full knowledge of General Howard, are "facts of the case" which cannot be refuted.

Had Gettysburg gone against us instead of crowning our arms with a great success, few would come forward to claim the responsibilities and possible censures of those anxious hours. Now, however, a claimant for undue honors steps forward, and I have found it necessary to show in part what his claim is worth. I have heretofore avoided making any publication concerning the operations of my command during our civil war, and any writings other than my official reports save when called upon to correct mistakes or verify facts for others. For myself I have been quite content to leave the historian of the future to say what was the value of the services I was enabled

to render my country during the period of her great extremity. As the terrible contest at Gettysburg contributed in its results probably more than any other battle of the war to the maintenance of the Union in its integrity, so, far above private interests or individual reputations rises the great renown won on that field by the grand old Army of the Potomac.

Cemetery hill has since become consecrated ground. The place where General Howard was superseded in command on the first day of the fight is now covered with the graves of thousands of gallant soldiers whose bones lie buried at the base of the beautiful monumental column which commemorates their fame. Two of the marble statues ornamenting the pedestal personify War and History. War, symbolized by a soldier resting from the conflict, narrates to History the story of the struggle, and the deeds of the martyr-heroes who fell in that famous battle. In remembrance of those noble comrades who laid down

their lives for the general weal, it were simply sacrilege for any survivor to pour into the ears of History an incorrect account of the contest, still more to assume to himself honors belonging perhaps less to the living than to the dead.

The historian of the future who essays to tell the tale of Gettysburg undertakes an onerous task, a high responsibility, a sacred trust. Above all things, justice and truth should dwell in his mind and heart. Then, dipping his pen as it were in the crimson tide, the sunshine of heaven lighting his page, giving "honor to whom honor is due," doing even justice to the splendid valor alike of friend and foe, he may tell the world how the rain descended in streams of fire, and the floods came in billows of rebellion, and the winds blew in blasts of fraternal execration, and beat upon the fabric of the Federal Union, and that it fell not, for, resting on the rights and liberties of the people, it was founded upon a rock.

WINFIELD S. HANCOCK.

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## PRIDE.

### I.

I HAD a little rosebud given to me;  
 I dropped it as I wore it one fair day:  
 I would not turn to seek it—no; for then  
 'Twere plain I prized it; so I went my way.

### II.

I had a love that made my life a joy;  
 It seemed to falter, one bright summer day:  
 I could have won it back with but a smile:  
 I would not smile, and so I went my way.

### III.

O pride, thou stealst our most treasured things—  
 Things which to gain we'd risk all else beside!  
 Lost, lost, my rosebud, lost my love, alas!  
 I might have found them but for thee, O pride!