

P. 183

became an absolute necessity. It was not more than half-an-hour from the time when the last of the Eleventh corps regiments had passed out Carlisle street, until they were being precipitated backward in wild and tumultuous retreat. The fight had then been in progress seven hours, and had been waged along a semi-circular line of almost three miles in length. At the time the troops retreated, not only were they pressed by a solid front of the foe on this line, from Biddle on the Hagerstown to Barlow on the Harrisburg roads, but were overlapped by equally dense masses for at least a half mile on either flank. Howard, as commander of the field, proved himself the fearless hero, cool and judicious. He was ably assisted by the brave Doubleday and the cultured Schurz, in command of the two corps.

A SAD SIGHT.

On the side of Gettysburg, nearest the Eleventh corps' battle-line, is York street. After the battle, in an enclosed lot a few yards from this street, beside a small stream of water, was found a corpse in Federal blue. Nothing unusual that—for the dead were everywhere for miles of trodden, blood-soaked battlefield. Tightly grasped in the dead soldier's hand was the likeness of three sweet, innocent, little children, and on them his last gaze had been fastened as, alone and unattended, on the dreary field of slaughter, his soul had departed to its God. That awoke the tenderest sympathies of those who found him, dead and unknown, another of the numberless sacrifices on the altar of an imperilled nation. He was buried at the time on a lot of Judge Russell's, near where he had been found.

Some gentleman had thousands of copies struck of the picture found in his

hand. They were widely circulated, and at length one reached Cattaraugus county, N. Y., and was there recognized as a likeness of the three children of a man named Hummiston, who had left his humble home to enlist in the 154th N. Y. This regiment belonged to Coster's brigade of the Eleventh corps, and Hummiston had been killed whilst Coster was striving to save the line of retreat, as mentioned in the preceding section. The remains of Orderly-Sergeant Hummiston now rest in grave No. 14, section B of the New York lot in the National Cemetery. His children were for several years in the Orphans' Home, at one time located in Gettysburg, within a few rods of the National Cemetery. The Philadelphia branch of the Sanitary Commission offered a prize of \$50 for the best poem upon this touching incident. The award was made to James G. Clark of Dansville, N. Y., for the thrilling and well-known stanzas:

Upon the field of Gettysburg  
 The summer sun was high,  
 When freedom met her traitorous foe  
 Beneath a Northern sky:  
 Among the heroes of the North,  
 Who swelled her grand array—  
 Who rushed, like mountain eagles forth,  
 From happy homes away,  
 There stood a man of humble fame,  
 A sire of children, three,  
 And gazed, within a little frame,  
 Their pictured forms to see;  
 And blame him not if, in the strife,  
 He breathed a soldier's prayer—  
 "O! Father, guard the soldier's wife,  
 And for his children care."

Upon the field of Gettysburg  
 When morning shone again,  
 The crimson cloud of battle burst  
 In streams of dery rain:  
 Our legions quelled the awful flood  
 Of shot, and steel, and shell,  
 While banners, marked with ball and  
 blood,  
 Around them rose and fell:  
 And none more nobly won the name

*J. Howard Wert, a complete Handbook of the  
 Monuments and Indications and Guide to the Positions  
 on the Gettysburg Battle-Field, Harrisburg: R. M. Sturgeson & Co., Publishers,  
 1886*

only a few yards from the Baltimore road. It is planted alongside of a stone wall behind which the regiment, in 1863, partly shielded themselves from the tempest of death which swept over these exposed heights.

The evening of April 18th, 1861, Col. Small with 500 men of the Washington brigade, (subsequently the 27th regiment), left Philadelphia, by order of the Secretary of War, for the succor of Washington City in hourly danger of capture. The following day, the memorable 19th of April, they, with the Sixth Massachusetts, were attacked by the Baltimore mob. The Sixth were armed and fought their way through the city. The Pennsylvania boys were unarmed and, after having several killed and wounded by the infuriated mob, were driven back and obliged to return to Philadelphia. The muse of Pennsylvania's poet, Bayard Taylor, never silent when freedom was struck, burst forth on this occasion with one of the most impassioned poems of our language in which occurs the stanza:

"We had no arms; as friends we came,  
As brothers evermore,  
To rally around ONE COMMON NAME,  
The charter of our wealth and fame;  
We had not dreamt of guilt or shame  
In Baltimore."

At Gettysburg the Twenty-Seventh, belonging to Coster's brigade of the Second, (Von Steinwehr's), division, did not reach the field in the afternoon until the First and Third divisions of the Eleventh corps were in action north of the town. The regiment was instructed to occupy the commanding hill at the intersection of High and Stratton streets, where are located the jail, public-school building and German Reformed church, Early's men having already formed along Rock creek, less than a mile north-

east of this. With the remainder of the brigade they were soon advanced to the brick-kiln in the northern suburbs, to try to stay the rebel advance. The 134th New York was on their left; then came the 154th New York, with a gap between the two regiments. A battalion of the 27th was ordered to fill this gap, but in the din of battle the order was not generally heard and only about fifty men under Lieutenant Vogelbach went to this place. These men and part of the 154th New York did not retire as soon as the rest of the brigade and were surrounded by the foe. The lieutenant was shot down and all the men with him captured or killed. It was then that Sergeant Hummiston fell, whose sad story was related at the close of the last chapter.

In the position where their monument stands, they passed through a trying ordeal at the time of the fierce rebel assault of the evening of July 2nd. At different points on the crest of this hill there was hand to hand fighting. Of this we shall speak further on. It was here that their Adjutant, the brave Briggs, was killed. During the thickest of the fight, an officer in Federal blue, splendidly mounted, came dashing from the town, up to the stone wall and ordered them to fall back to another wall to the rear. The men refused to obey and the rider turned his horse and rode back into town. He was evidently a rebel officer in disguise. Had the order of this daring man been obeyed the result might have been most disastrous to the Unionists. On the 3rd this regiment, with all on this exposed crest, was obliged to endure the tornado of shot and shell which was hurling through the air from all sides. The night of the 3rd a portion of the regiment advanced