

The Battle of Bull's Run.

The numerous letters which we print this week, from actors in the unfortunate conflict of Sunday week, will give our readers the most copious details we could possibly furnish in addition to what we have already laid before them. All accounts agree that the New York City regiments behaved admirably; but above and before all the 69th, under the lead of the brave Corcoran, the lamented Haggerty, and our lion-hearted Meagher, covered themselves with immortal glory. In gallant rivalry with them we find the Fire Zouaves, three fourths of them indisputably Celts, and many of whom, in the heat of the conflict, gravitated naturally to wards the 69th, as they desired "to be with a fighting regiment." A lucky alliance it proved: for it was a gallant Zouave, Capt. Wildy, who, when the color-bearer of the 69th was shot down, in front of a battery, rushed forward and rescued the flag of the regiment, killing two Secessionists who had seized it.

The following were the Field and Staff officers of the 69th in action on the 21st:— Michael Corcoran, Colonel; James Haggerty, acting Lieut. Colonel, in place of Lieut. Colonel Nugent, disabled some days before by a violent fall from his horse; Capt. Thomas Francis Meagher, acting as Major and Special Aid to the Colonel, acting Major John McKean having been ordered the day before to take command at Fort Corcoran; and Capt. John Nugent, acting as Adjutant.

The following letter from a member of Captain Meagher's Company, the "Irish Zouaves," Co. K, 69th, was received by R. J. Lalor, Esq., by whom we have been kindly allowed its use:—

FORT CORCORAN, ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, July 22, 1861.

Doubtless you have heard of this, of the terrible engagement of last Sunday. It is of such importance to our annals that I hasten to give you a succinct account of it. After the bad affair of Thursday at Bull's Run Ford, where we had a good many men of the Union army, our regiment was ordered to engage and in the immediate vicinity, were engaged in and around Centerville, on each side of the road lead to that place and towards Manassas Gap. We remained perfectly quiet on our respective camping grounds, save only our pickets and those of the enemy met. That the rebels were receiving reinforcements, was proved by the constant arrival of trains every night, as well as by outside intelligence. We, too, were receiving reinforcements, and by Saturday night were ready for making an attack. We were ordered to hold ourselves in readiness by midnight, and accordingly, by that time we were awake, prepared for marching. We reached the road, we were ordered to march for nearly two miles. Then having crossed a bridge safe and gained the hill top, which had been obstructed by the enemy, we turned into the woods and remained there for some time, drawing up our lines of battle.

Our good chaplain, Father O'Reilly, blessed us, and many were the prayers sent up to heaven that our arms might be proved to strike terror into our enemies, and thus save our distracted country. The large gun "Long Tom," commenced throwing shells at 6.30 a. m. The rebels did not answer, but reserved their fire for a more favorable opportunity. Failing to bring them out, and our regiment having the right of the line, or advance post, we were ordered to move our quarters and approach in front. In doing so, we were ordered to move at double quick most of the way, and to ford a stream or two, knee-high. This was a serious disadvantage to us, but our brave boys seemed not to mind it. Still further on, we had to defile along a narrow path way among trees and shrubbery. Even this we did in safety, and soon gained an open plain, where we could perceive the position of the enemy, from the constant discharge of heavy guns.

As changing our locality, we had to move through some meadow; and, just nearly as we passed the last one, a murderous fire was opened upon us from a ravine to the left by the enemy's sharpshooters. Our entire regiment halted, and some one offered no less than seven dollars to shoot without seeing them. This stopped their fire, and upon examination afterwards, we found that terrible chastisement had been inflicted upon them by us. The place was strewn with their dead, and one officer had no less than seven wounds on him. But we paid well for it; for one of the first men to fall was our recently appointed Lieut. Colonel, Captain Haggerty, of Co. A. His loss to us was a great repair, every man of us, and was endeared to us all. He was brimful of courtesy and kindness to the humblest as well as to the highest in rank or station, though seemingly rough at times in his manner.

One of the men of Co. K—a recent arrival from Waterford, Ireland, and beloved by us for his amiability and tenderness of character, fell also in this first fire, with three balls in his chest and right arm. They both died easily, almost instantaneously. When the seat of life to permit them to suffer long. When we had rounded the house used by our sharpshooters as a hospital, directly in the enemy's front, we were permitted to halt and rest after our severe march, and to recruit for the coming struggle. We could see one regiment after another of our forces assault the enemy and advance upon his position, but it was evident to us that up to this time no effect had been produced upon his batteries, though death and destruction were dealt out to him by our brave volunteers.

At last the order came for the 69th to try and do what the rest had failed in. We ran forward with hopeful hearts in close line of battle, exposed to the hot shot and shell which were instantly poured into our ranks, though, fortunately, at first with little effect. One ball, however, came near killing our brave Colonel, who treated the matter quite coolly.

A field of over a quarter of a mile had to be crossed, then a fence to be cleared, and then another field of equal length till we reached the bank of the river, which was completely by the enemy. Here we halted a few moments, and then flanked along to the right across another field of equal length, and through an entrenchment and high stream, and then up a hill, till we stopped to fire at the enemy a proof of our fighting capacities. Worn out by our long and quick march, still more so by the fatigue of clearing fences, ditches and streams, we stopped for a moment and fired deliberately into the enemy. Then another volley, then another, and we charged up the heights to their battery with all the impetuosity of our race; but we were "like sheep sent to the slaughter." The cannon belched forth their shells in all directions, and the men in groups, and scattering them in all directions. But, even then, they halted, tried to close up, and fired again; and then, just as we seemed to be carrying our point, we found ourselves fired into on the right flank and rear by the rebel cavalry, who struck from the woods and struck down and picked off all the men near them. It is even said that we were fired into by our own troops—of course, by mistake. But of this I am certain, that the cavalry, who had partly broken our ranks, when charging up the hill, were not to be found when we needed their protection.

Our flag of the Stars and Stripes was well struck, and the standard-bearer of the dear old flag was shot down; but the flag was instantly raised again. One of our wounded men who carried a flag was shot down, and the flag was torn from his grasp. Raising himself up, he again attacked his rebel antagonist, struck him down, and carried off the Secessionist flag; but this was not long permitted to remain with him, for he was again charged upon, and the trophy taken from him, besides being taken prisoner. However, having a loaded revolver, he shot down two soldiers in charge of him and captured a Captain's sword and a prisoner, both of which he brought in safety to our camp. His name is John D. Keefe, and he is worthy of being recorded among the truly brave men.

There are many other instances of bravery deserving of record, but it would not be possible to do justice to all.

Captain Thomas Francis Meagher gained the greatest credit of the day, his horse was shot under him and he reached the field, he halted, then and killing one of Company E, and when we reached the gap at the foot of the hill, he brandished his sword and called upon the brave Zouaves and the 69th to follow him. His valor and courage during the entire battle is the theme of every tongue. Lieut. E. K. Butler also distinguished himself, and gained much in the favor of his scattered and decimated company. Our Colonel, too, showed great courage and bravery in the fight. He stood to the right, and rallied the remnant of his scattered forces, and took us off the field in a square and with our colors flying high; but he didn't do this till after all the other regiments had got on or were retiring. When he rallied and gained the road, and had halted, the temporary hospital, were we charged by the cavalry regiments, who made sad havoc among the flying remains of every regiment which had not gained the road. They broke and fled in all directions, and were pursued and cut down at all points. Such a scene was scarcely ever before witnessed.

This was the last point at which I saw our gallant Colonel, who, as I told you, was wounded. He fell, he slipped quietly off his horse, and tried to rally his men; but the crowd and the pressure of the remnants of all the other regiments, rendered it impossible.

We remained of our regiment rallied round the Green Flag in Centerville, and after consultation it was thought best to retire to Fort Corcoran and recruit, as we had not a field officer left to direct our movements. Captain Meagher here joined us and led us home, when we had come to this decision.

This bold and leg up that hill clean into the enemy's batteries, will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. Our company can only muster this morning about 30 men, though we were 1000 when we started for the Fort, out of 123 Lieutenant Conolly, a really brave man, has not been heard of since we rallied round our flag and formed the square. His loss will be deplorably regretted by all.

Our Company suffered more than any in the regiment, on account of their red jackets. I suppose. Three men went out with me from the Fort to the battle field. I alone returned. Many others were the same story to tell. The Fire Zouaves, Fourteenth New York, and the Second Rhode Island, acted nobly and bravely in the grand charge they made upon the enemy when he showed himself before his batteries. So, also, did the Thirtieth New York. But it is as a story that no man made a bolder stand or a grander charge, and retired so slowly and steadily, and in such good order as did the 69th, when the fate of the battle was decided. The Herald and other papers were full of a "great victory," but by being engaged in the battle it cannot be considered anything but a great defeat. The generalship displayed was none of the highest, as you will believe when you learn that of the immense force of Union troops in the field, not more than 2000 were at a time was ordered forward, and these at different points. We were not even protected by the cavalry and artillery. The former were not near us when we wanted them, though they were promised to come down on our rear, and to guard the Fort, out of 123 Lieutenant Conolly, a really brave man, has not been heard of since we rallied round our flag and formed the square. His loss will be deplorably regretted by all.

them, ordered them off. They then moved to our right, and in a charge of all, it was for us a great success. The most terrible loss was made upon us by the Rebel cavalry, who rushed out of the woods upon our men when their backs were turned, and they were engaged in charging upon the backed ranks of our men down and trampled them to death. Most of the men lost by Company K were lost or taken prisoners here.

I blame none, censure none, for these blunders and omissions, nor do I offer any better plan of attack than that which was here adopted. I must say that I think the 69th, and those who are appointed, and are supposed to possess the requisite qualifications of good generals. I trust they will be held responsible for the immense sacrifice of life on that terrible day. I must say that I think the 69th, and those who are appointed, and are supposed to possess the requisite qualifications of good generals. I trust they will be held responsible for the immense sacrifice of life on that terrible day.

Of the many moving in our company, and in all the other regiments, I can only mention a few. I killed many more than only wounded—unless they have subsequently fallen into the hands of the Secessionists. Other are missing, of whom nothing at all is known. I trust that they may yet be recovered, but I do not think it is safe restoration to their many friends in and out of the regiment. We deeply deplore their loss for we can attest to their courage and manly bearing on that day. I saw poor Maguire, for the last time, and he died, waving it as if he were a sword, and calling upon the rebels to make one more bold charge and the rebels. I fear he is lost.

The annexed letter was commenced before the engagement, but finished in Fort Corcoran after the unfortunate rout:—

KENTREVILLE, VA., July 20, 1861.

Our position is unchanged since 7 p. m. Thursday, and I expect we will begin to fight about 10 this morning. Several very heavy guns were placed in position. The great trouble in all this affair, is that we have brought up to the front at will without being permitted to proceed to the batteries of the enemy. One regiment after another were ordered to the front, and there they had to stand and be slaughtered like sheep. Not a shot did we fire, but had to receive all that came from our enemies. The reason I do not give is, because we could see no enemy. They had a trap or masked battery (their old trick). Our men are boiling to retrieve the disasters of yesterday; some of the men and regiments of our brigade disgraced themselves by their conduct yesterday. Some were lither: burning houses and sacking them, shooting, stealing and killing all the live pigs, turkeys, and ducks; and supplying themselves with all the edibles within their reach. Three of us found a pig, and the other two were killed. We had baked four good cakes, which were of service to us from Wednesday night till yesterday. It was darkies who cooked for us and whom I paid. There are no white people left here, all have gone with the rebel army, and the rebels are now Col. Sherman, who commanded our brigade, has the names of forty-five men who disgraced themselves as above mentioned, but not one of them belongs to the 69th. Thank God there are few such Vandals among us. The rebels have been completely sacked, and every article of value stolen; what could not be taken away was torn up and destroyed. This is desecrating of reprobation, and it will, besides, hurt our character with our friends at home. General Dowell has issued general orders censuring such conduct and announcing penalties for any like offence.

It was a long and tedious march, under a scorching mid-day sun of July, for nearly a hundred and fighting for as much water as would wet their lips, but to nineteen twentieths of them their efforts were in vain; water was only obtainable by a very few, and they were the ones who could not get it. The heat was so great that I was earliest down to 3 p. m., to get a tin-foil to quench my thirst, but failed; once, when I had a cup full in my hand and was already anticipating the refreshment of half an hour's patience and perseverance, my cup was snatched from me by an unseen hand, and both cup and water "faded from my view." Thank God I bore it well, but went away sorrowfully after my regiment; this was the first and only time I left my regiment and staid behind.

We were ordered up the narrow road leading to the masked battery, the order was given to throw away blankets and knapsacks, but the latter contained all my food, and a few little valuables which I prized next to my life, and I therefore retained it, but the blankets I threw away. I found it frustrating on my return. The India rubber blanket is my chief protection, as it has raised every night since we came here. I place my musket on the ground and cover myself and the rubber blanket. My hat and the night previous I was awakened by the firing of musketry, in each case bullets falling right into the ranks of our company. In the day time I was much more cool and collected, but I thought to be over when expecting to die by the bullets of the enemy, but this night-work is not at all to my taste. I am pleased to tell you that not one of our boys have shown the white feather. Tyler, McDowell and every officer of rank in the regular army, and that our colonel's conduct was beyond all praise. Let me be said, though, in di-praise of others, for as far as I have seen, all behaved bravely and stood to their colors.

Lieut. Dalton, of the 69th, was shot in the forehead by a ball—it even turned the hat on his head and struck the man next him and wounded him severely. The flag of Sherman's Battery was torn to ribbons, leaving nothing but the staff; but one man was killed and another wounded of the entire battery. Many poor fellows who had been begged to be killed outright; still I heard but few of these cries, save when joined over the stoney road. Col. Corcoran gave out remarkable expressions of grief and condolence to the wives of our God, who comforted to the prayers of our good women at home;" and I endorse his opinion, and hope they will continue to pray until we are all safe and our country free from rebellion and war. The time of many of the regiments expired this week and last week, but as yet none have returned home, and we all feel, since we marched, that our country really needs us, and, therefore, do not complain; action is all we want if we are to stay longer.

Capt. Meagher is winning laurels and is appointed Provost Marshal of the brigade; his bravery since Thursday, is proved.

Some of the First Massachusetts, I hear, marched clear upon the masked battery before they knew it, and had to fight with knives and revolvers; they could not use their muskets and were terribly cut up.

Myet blistered the first night's march. Men drank freely of the brooks and streams where dozens were washing their bodies and clothes; the mud too was as thick as in your roads after a rain, yet all drank as though it was milk or good soup. I trust I shall never again see men so eager for drink, even officers and educated men were as greedy for it as others. I fortunately got a little vinegar from the Captain before the fight, and mixed it with water, this saved me from some poor artillerymen, who needed it, when retreating from the scene of our disaster; I swallowed a little myself, dust and all, and felt greatly relieved.

P. J. R.

FORT CORCORAN, July 21, 1861.

I have to record to total defeat of our first yesterday. We fought twelve hours and were marching six hours previously. A remnant of our brave regiment saved themselves by a march of fifty miles last night among the rest. Thank God, I have not even a scratch, though my best friends are either dead or wounded or in the hands of the enemy. I am laid up and only reached here at 4 a. m. to day (over forty miles in eight hours). We were taken to the shambles to be slaughtered, but we got no chance of being stood until we were more than half lost; all we have saved is our honor. We have lost our principal officers, and have made the bravest stand during the day, save the Second Rhode Island and the Fire Zouaves.

A more disastrous affair could not well be imagined—eight or ten thousand of our boys dying, panic stricken and firing upon each other. My feet are black and swollen, and I fear that I shall be unable to march for some time. I have been ordered to go to a hospital, but I have refused to do so, as I would not attempt to describe the battle. I feel very deeply Haggerty's death; he was the first man of the 69th that fell, pierced through the heart; he never closed his eyes, but believed that he was still with a fitting fate—as many as fifty bullets pierced him; he fired from behind a tree. I have lost some friends both in this and other regiments. There is not on this continent a braver man than Thomas Meagher. When his horse was actually torn from under him by a rifle cannon ball, he sprang on one of their outside parapets, and, waving his sword above his head, pointed to the green flag following, shouting "Boys! look out for the flag!" and "Ireland is at Fontenoy"—all the while the bullets rained around him. It was nothing but rally, charge and repulse. We could see no enemy; they fought from the woods and from masked batteries. What we did charge upon were the woods not one of them was to be seen—all the while their secreted riflemen and artillery, with every advantage of position, pouring their hail over and around us. When Corcoran ordered the flag to be lowered, I am not sure that I was the man that bore it, "No, colonel, I'll never lower it," and was almost instantly killed; another sprang to it, and met the same fate. One thing was evident, not a man in the regiment moved forward the day after the battle, unless we have it safe. You must bear in mind we had to fight fresh men on their own ground, while we were after a weary march of fully 30 miles on a cracker pan day with horrible ditches water for our food, laying down our arms whenever halted; still the boys went to their work like bricks. Corcoran made a regular target of himself; I have not seen him since; I understand he's wounded; he is a brave officer, but Meagher's valor and devotion to his regiment was everywhere; and made all the enquiries possible to find where Haggerty's body lay, but could not find it; his wife, I know, will be in a dreadful state; I did not wish to say so, but cannot help expressing it; if his wife writes to her, he died a hero. Yours, &c.

M. CROSSIE.

Co. E, 69th, Fort Corcoran.

The following letter was received from Alexander Carolina, a private in the Sixty-ninth Regiment, and is addressed to his father, Mr. Dennis Carolina, 12-Alderman of the Fourth Ward. Private Carolina took part

in the entire combat, and was an eye-witness of the death of Captain Haggerty:—

FORT CORCORAN, July 23, 1861.

Dear Father—We had orders to move on Saturday evening at six o'clock for our encampment near Centerville. We did not start until two o'clock in the morning. At about five o'clock we reached a place between Bull's Run and Manassas Gap, where we came to a halt. Two Ohio regiments and the Seventy-ninth of New York were with our linn. Our regiment moved about trying to get the enemy to attack us. We had Sherman's battery with us, besides a battery of field cannon. Our column kept up a fire on the woods, on the opposite side of the ravine, to a distance of about a quarter of a mile, trying to find out the masked batteries, but the enemy would not return the fire. About ten o'clock we discovered two batteries, and drove the enemy out. The Sixty-ninth advanced. We went off at a run, but could not overtake the enemy, as they scattered in every direction through the woods. The man who rode the horse, turned to the right, waded through streams, climbed steep hills, left our bay behind us and outflanked the enemy, and came on them when we did not expect. The Louisiana Zouaves were doing big damage when we came on them. We gave a yell that could be heard far above the roar of the cannon. We leaped into them and charged them with the bayonet. They were panic stricken, and fled. We covered the field with their dead. Haggerty rushed forward to take a prisoner, and lost his life. The man who would not return the fire, besides driving the enemy before us for some time, then got into line and had them surrounded. General McDowell came up just then, took off his hat and said, "You have gained the victory." Our next fire was at a South Carolina regiment. We killed about three hundred of them. After fighting hard for some time we cleared the field of all the enemy. The enemy again rallying, the real fight then commenced. We were drawn up in line, and saw the other regiments trying to take the masked batteries. They were to pieces and scattered. We were then ordered forward to attack the batteries. We fought desperately, but we were cut down. We lost our flag, but took it back again with the assistance of a few of the Fire Zouaves, who fought like devils. We charged a second time, but were mowed down by the grape and rifles of the enemy. We came together again to make another charge, but we could not get together over two hundred men. We formed into a hollow square, when we saw the enemy turn out their cavalry, about a mile in length, and the hills all about covered with them, trying to surround us. All the regiments on our side were scattered and in disorder, except what was left of the 69th. The Fire Zouaves had to retreat, leaving a number of wounded on the field. Haggerty's body was laid in a house when we were retreating back. Col. Corcoran asked me to assist in carrying back the body, and I accordingly went back. We carried the body for some miles on a door, the shot falling thick around us. We had to leave the body on the road Col. Corcoran, I hear, was afterwards wounded and taken prisoner. What we could gather together of our regiment marched back to Fort Corcoran during the night. I am trying to cross the river to send you a telegraphic despatch, but the government will not allow any soldiers to cross. I escaped about; although the men on each side in front and rear were either killed or wounded.

I remain yours, affectionately,

ALEXANDER CAROLIN.