

Worn out with the long day's work, the men had scarcely settled for sleep when an order came to build a second line of works, fifty paces in rear of the first. The companies were divided into reliefs, and all night long the woods resounded with the music of axes, picks and spades, fires being allowed along the line. These two parallel lines of works are distinctly visible to this day.

Wilderness—Third Day.

Daylight came, but not the expected attack. The morning was occupied mainly in clearing brush and timber in front of the works thrown up during the night, in strengthening the position, and in burying the dead.

As the heat of the sun increased, the men began to spread their shelter tents, and to construct brush arbors. Here they slept awhile, waking up now and then as the skirmish firing came closer and hotter, suddenly swelling at times into a volume like that of a line of battle, and then subsiding to a scatter.

It is an interesting fact that fighting caused little interruption in the postal service, and mails were, with more or less regularity, collected and distributed on the battlefield. About 10 A. M. the brigade mail carrier collected letters from the different regimental headquarters. A hasty note from those of the Seventh said: "As I write, our skirmishers are engaged about 500 yards to the front, and heavy firing is heard on the right. My trust is in the mercy of God. If we are defeated, I have no wish to survive so immense a disaster. If we are victorious and I should fall, I shall be satisfied to have my memory associated with so glorious a triumph."

Later in the day the brigade was moved back to an edge of the clearing before mentioned, in the vicinity of a fine strong spring, where arms were stacked and beef slaughtered and distributed. The battle of the Wilderness had passed into history, as a "wild, weird struggle, where 200,000 men were mixed up, like a hole full of snakes, with their tales intertwined" (F. Lee's "Life of Lee"). In the quaint words of an old English ballad :

"They both did fight, they both did beat,
They both did run away ;
They both quick marched,—again to meet,
The quite contrary way."

The Famous Night March.

Soon after eight o'clock began the historic forced night march to turn Lee's right. The movement was by the left flank, fifth corps leading ; Robinson's division and Maryland brigade in advance, which was thus the leading infantry brigade of the army.

At first, nobody knew whether it was advance or retreat. Soon, the apparent direction, jubilant spirit and extreme rapidity of the movement gave currency to the flattering rumor that Lee's whole army was in full retreat, and that Grant was after him, hot foot. The double lines of Hancock's Corps, through which we were being rushed, rapturously cheered our advance as conclusive proof, and their cheers, in turn, confirmed our confidence.

The first halt was to throw out flankers on the right, when, after an hour or more of hard marching, the long lines of works were at last cleared. Plunging into the mysterious gloom of a deep cut and washed out road, men occasionally tumbled into rocky