

Presently there was heard from the right a voice, clear and distinct, and a command many of us had heard and obeyed before. It was that of the gallant Steuart. "Attention! Forward, double-quick! March!" At a right-shoulder shift the little battalion started forward to meet death and defeat. But ten feet of woods intervened before the left companies of the Second Maryland and the Virginia regiments and First North Carolina came into the field and were exposed to the view of the enemy strongly posted in the woods less than two hundred yards off. The woods uncovered the men of the regiments on the left of the Second Maryland and they threw themselves upon the ground, and despite the pleadings and curses of their officers refused to go forward. Never shall I forget the expressions of contempt upon the faces of the men of the left companies of the Second Maryland as they cast a side glance upon their comrades who had proved recreant in this supreme moment. But the little battalion of Marylanders, now reduced to about three hundred men, never wavered nor hesitated, but kept on, closing up its ranks as great gaps were torn through them by the merciless fire of the enemy in front and flank, and many of the brave fellows never stopped until they had passed through the enemy's first line or had fallen dead or wounded as they reached it. Three hundred Marylanders and eighteen North Carolinians charging a strong position defended by three brigades!

But flesh and blood could not withstand that circle of fire, and the survivors fell back to the line of log breastworks, where they remained several hours, repulsing repeated assaults of the enemy, until ordered by General Johnson to fall back to Rock Creek.

General Steuart was heartbroken at the disaster, and wringing his hands, great tears stealing down his bronzed and weather-beaten cheeks, he was heard repeatedly to exclaim: "My poor boys! My poor boys!"

In this disastrous charge the noble Murray was killed, and being wounded myself the command devolved upon the next ranking officer present, the veteran Torsch.*

Ah! it was a sad, sad day that brought sorrow to many a poor Maryland mother's heart.

Some years after the battle of Gettysburg the author was going over the field in company with Colonel Batchelder, the Government historian. Arriving at the point where the foremost of the men of the Second Maryland had fallen, Colonel Batchelder said he would tell me an incident related to him by a Federal officer who had assisted in repulsing

* In the "Maryland Line" published in 1866, by an oversight the author said Captain Crane the ranking officer, after the fall of Murray, took command of the battalion when it fell back to the breastworks on the morning of the 3d. Captain Crane became separated from his command in some manner during the charge, and did not immediately rejoin it.