

fully manned, and the disaster that had threatened Breckinridge was averted. The recapture of the works was solely due to the Second Maryland. Finnigan's Brigade contributed no more to the result than the moral support of its presence.

It was a splendid achievement, and one of which every man who participated might well feel proud.

General Breckinridge, after the charge, in a glow of enthusiasm, exclaimed : " I knew I could trust those men ! " and General Lee, in his official report of the battle, complimented the battalion upon its behavior.

From other sources, also, the battalion was spoken of in terms of praise, as the following communication in the *Richmond Sentinel* fully proves :

NEAR RICHMOND, June 6, 1864.

*Mr. Editor :*

The public have already been informed, through the columns of the public journals, of the general results of the late engagements between the forces of General Lee and General Grant. But they have not yet learned the particulars, which are always most interesting, and in some instances, owing to the confusion which generally attends large battles, they have been misinformed on some points. It is now known by the public that the enemy were momentarily successful in one of their assaults on the lines held by Major-General Breckinridge's Division, which might have resulted in disaster to our cause.

It will be interesting to all to know what turned disaster into victory, and converted a triumphant column into a flying rabble. The successful assault of the enemy was made under cover of darkness, before the morning star had been hid by the light of the sun. They came gallantly forward in spite of a severe fire from General Echol's Brigade, and in spite of the loss of many of their men, who fell like autumn leaves, until the ground was almost blue and red with their uniforms and their blood. They rushed in heavy mass over our breastworks. Our men, confused by the suddenness of the charge, and borne down by the rush of the enemy, retreated, and all now seemed lost. At this juncture the Second Maryland Infantry were roused from their sleep. Springing to their arms, they formed in a moment, and, rushing gallantly forward, poured a deadly fire into the enemy and then charged bayonet. The enemy were, in turn, surprised at the suddenness and vim of this assault. They gave back — they became confused. General Finnegan's forces coming up, they took flight ; but not until nearly a hundred men were stretched on the plain, from the fire of the Second Maryland Infantry, and many others captured. Lieutenant Charles B. Wise, of Company B, now took possession of the guns, which had been abandoned by our forces, and with the assistance of some of his own men and some of General Finnegan's command, poured a deadly fire into the retreating enemy.

Thus was the tide of battle turned, and this disaster converted into a success. I am informed that the whole force of the enemy which came within our lines would have been captured had it not been for the mistake of an officer who took the enemy for our own men,