A TRIUMPH OF THE WET-PLATE

It seems almost impossible that this photograph could have been taken before the advent of modern photographic apparatus, yet Mr. Gardner's negative, made almost fifty years ago, might well furnish a striking exhibit in a modern photographic salon. The view is of Quarks' Mill, on the North Anna River, Virginia. In grassy fields above the mill the tents of the headquarters of Grant and Meade were pitched for a day or two during the march which culminated in the siege of Petersburg. Among the prisoners brought in while the army was here in camp was a woman clad in Confederate gray, apparently performing the duties of a scout. She was captured astride of a bony steed and asserted that she belonged to a battery of artillery. This wild creature, with her tangled black locks hanging down her neck, became the center of interest to the idlers of the camp. At these she would occasionally throw stones with considerable accuracy, particularly at the negroes, who gave her a wide berth. As the faithful camera indicates, the river current at this point is strong and rapid. While General Thomas L. Crittenden's division of the Federal Ninth Corps was crossing the North Anna (June 24, 1864) by fording the mill-dam, many sturdy foot-soldiers as well as horsemen were swept over the falls. However, the division got across in good fighting shape and formed a line of battle around the ford on the southern bank just in time to head off a bold Confederate dash for the same coign of vantage. Crittenden's advance guard was hotly engaged in the woods beyond the mill and being roughly handled when the rear of the column reached the southern bank.