AVARY MYRTA LOCKETT

DIXIE AFTER THE WAR

Myrta Avary

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Avary M.

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Содержание

Myrta Lockett Avary
Dixie After the War / An Exposition of Social Conditions Existing in the South, During the Twelve Years Succeeding the Fall of Richmond

INTRODUCTION

This book may be called a revelation. It seems to me a body of discoveries that should not be kept from the public – discoveries which have origin in many sources but are here brought together in one book for the first time.

No book hitherto published portrays so fully and graphically the social conditions existing in the South for the twelve years following the fall of Richmond, none so vividly presents race problems. It is the kind of history a witness gives. The author received from observers and participants the larger part of the incidents and anecdotes which she employs. Those who lived during reconstruction are passing away so rapidly that data, unless gathered now, can never be had thus at first hand; every year increases the difficulty. Mrs. Avary's experience as author, editor and journalist, her command of shorthand and her social connections have opened up opportunities not usually accessible to one person; added to this is the balance of sympathy which she is able to strike as a Southern woman who has sojourned much at the North. In these pages she renders a public service. She aids the American to better understanding of his country's past and clearer concept of its present.

In connection with the book's genesis, it may be said that the author grew up after the war on a large Virginia plantation where her parents kept open house in the true Southern fashion. Two public roads which united at their gates, were thoroughfares linking county-towns in Virginia and North Carolina, and were much traveled by jurists, lawyers and politicians on their way to and from various court sittings; these gentlemen often found it both convenient and pleasant to stop for supper and over night at Lombardy Grove, particularly as a son of the house was of their guild. Perhaps few of the company thus gathered realised what an earnest listener they had in the little girl, Myrta, who sat intent at her father's or brother's knee, drinking in eagerly the discussions and stories. To impressions and information so acquired much was added through family correspondence with relatives and friends in Petersburg, Richmond, Atlanta, the Carolinas; also, in experiences related by these friends and relatives when hospitalities were exchanged; interesting and eventful diaries, too, were at the author's disposal. Such was her unconscious preparation for the writing of this book. Her conscious preparation was a tour of several Southern States recently undertaken for the purpose of collecting fresh data and substantiating information already possessed.

While engaged, for a season, in journalism in New York, she put out her first Southern book, "A Virginia Girl in the Civil War" (1903). This met with such warm welcome that she was promptly called upon for a second dealing with post-bellum life from a woman's viewpoint. The result was the Southern journey mentioned, the accidental discovery and presentment (1905) of the war journal of Mrs. James Chestnut ("A Diary From Dixie"), and the writing of the present volume which, I think, exceeds her commission, inasmuch as it is not only what is known as a "woman's book" but is a "man's book" also, exhibiting a masculine grasp, explained by its origin, of political situations, and an intimate personal tone in dealing with the lighter social side of things, possible only to a woman's pen. It is a very unusual book. All readers may not accept the author's conclusions, but I think that all must be interested in what she says and impressed with her spirit of fairness and her painstaking effort to present a truthful picture of an extraordinary social and political period in our national life. Her work

stimulates interest in Southern history. A safe prophecy is that this book will be the precursor of as many post-bellum memoirs of feminine authorship as was "A Virginia Girl" of memoirs of war-time.

No successor can be more comprehensive, as a glance at the table of contents will show. The tragedy, pathos, corruption, humour, and absurdities of the military dictatorship and of reconstruction, the topsy-turvy conditions generally, domestic upheaval, negroes voting, Black and Tan Conventions and Legislatures, disorder on plantations, Loyal Leagues and Freedmen's Bureaus, Ku Klux and Red Shirts, are presented with a vividness akin to the camera's. A wide interest is appealed to in the earlier chapters narrating incidents connected with Mr. Lincoln's visit to Richmond, Mr. Davis' journeyings, capture and imprisonment, the arrest of Vice-President Stephens and the effort to capture General Toombs. Those which deal with the Federal occupation of Columbia and Richmond at once rivet attention. The most full and graphic description of the situation in the latter city just after the war, that has yet been produced, is given, and I think the interpretation of Mr. Davis' course in leaving Richmond instead of remaining and trying to enter into peace negotiations, is a point not hitherto so clearly taken.

As a bird's-eye view of the South after the war, the book is expositive of its title, every salient feature of the time and territory being brought under observation. The States upon which attention is chiefly focussed, however, are Virginia and South Carolina, two showing reconstruction at its best and worst. The reader does not need assurance that this volume cost the author years of well-directed labour; hasty effort could not have produced a work of such depth, breadth and variety. It will meet with prompt welcome, I am sure, and its value will not diminish with years.

Clement A. Evans.

Atlanta, Ga.

THE FALLING CROSS

CHAPTER I
The Falling Cross

"The Southern Cross" and a cross that fell during the burning of Columbia occur to my mind in unison.

With the Confederate Army gone and Richmond open to the Federal Army, her people remembered New Orleans, Atlanta, Columbia. New Orleans, where "Beast Butler" issued orders giving his soldiers license to treat ladies offending them as "women of the town." Atlanta, whose citizens were ordered to leave; General Hood had protested and Mayor Calhoun had plead the cause of the old and feeble, of women that were with child; and of them that turned out of their houses had nowhere to go, and without money, food, or shelter, must perish in woods and waysides. General Sherman had replied: "I give full credit to your statements of the distress that will be occasioned, yet shall not revoke my orders, because they were not designed to meet the humanities of the case. You cannot qualify war in harsher terms than I will. War is cruelty, and you cannot refine it." "The order to depopulate Atlanta was obeyed amid agonies and sorrows indescribable," Colonel J. H. Keatley, U. S. A., has affirmed.

There are some who hold with General Sherman that the most merciful way to conduct war is to make it as merciless and horrible as possible, and so end it the quicker. One objection to this is that it creates in a subjugated people such hatred and distrust of the conquering army and government that a generation or two must die out before this passes away; and therefore, in a very real sense, the method does not make quick end of conflict.

Richmond remembered how Mayor Goodwin went to meet General Sherman and surrendered Columbia, praying for it his pity and protection. General Sherman had said: "Go home and sleep in peace, Mr. Mayor. Your city shall be safe." Mayor Goodwin returned, praising General Sherman. By next morning, the City of Gardens was almost swept from the face of the earth. The rabble ("my bummers," General Sherman laughingly called his men set apart for such work), pouring into the town, had invaded and sacked homes, driving inmates – among these mothers with new-born babes – into the streets; they had demolished furniture, fired dwellings.

Houses of worship were not spared. The Methodist Church, at whose altar the Sabbath before Rev. William Martin had administered the Sacrament to over four hundred negroes, was burned. So was the Ursuline Convent. This institution was a branch of the order in Ohio; it sheltered nuns and students of both sections; Protestant and Catholic alike were there in sanctuary. One Northern Sister had lost two brothers in the Federal Army. Another was joyously hoping to find in Sherman's ranks one or more of her five Yankee brothers. The shock of that night killed her. A Western girl was "hoping yet fearing" to see her kinsmen. Guards, appointed for protection, aided in destruction. Rooms were invaded, trunks rifled. Drunken soldiers blew smoke in nuns' faces, saying:

"Holy! holy! O yes, we are holy as you!" And: "What do you think of God now? Is not Sherman greater?" Because of the sacred character of the establishment, because General Sherman was a Catholic, and because he had sent assurances of protection to the Mother Superior, they had felt safe. But they had to go.

"I marched in the procession through the blazing streets," wrote the Western girl, "venerable Father O'Connell at the head holding high the crucifix, the black-robed Mother Superior and the *religieuses* following with their charges, the white-faced, frightened girls and children, all in line and in perfect order. They sought the Catholic church for safety, and the Sisters put the little ones to sleep on the cushioned pews; then the children, driven out by roystering soldiers, ran stumbling and terror-stricken into the graveyard and crouched behind gravestones."

One soldier said he was sorry for the women and children of South Carolina, but the hotbed of secession must be destroyed. “But I am not a South Carolinian,” retorted the Western girl, “I am from Ohio. Our Mother Superior was in the same Convent in Ohio with General Sherman’s sister and daughter.” “The General ought to know that,” he responded quickly. “If you are from Ohio – that’s my state – I’ll help you.” For answer, she pointed to the Convent; the cross above it was falling.

They recur to my mind in unison – that cross, sacred alike to North and South, falling above a burning city, and the falling Southern Cross, Dixie’s beautiful battle-flag.

Two nuns, conferring apart if it would not be well to take the children into the woods, heard a deep, sad voice saying: “Your position distresses me greatly!” Startled, they turned to perceive a Federal officer beside a tombstone just behind them. “Are you a Catholic,” they asked, “that you pity us?” “No; simply a man and a soldier.” Dawn came, and with it some Irish soldiers to early Mass. Appalled, they cried: “O, this will never do! Send for the General! The General would never permit it!”

At reveille all arson, looting and violence had ceased as by magic, even as conflagration had started as by magic in the early hours of the night when four signal rockets went up from as many corners of the town. But the look of the desolated city in the glare of daylight was indescribable. Around the church were broken and empty trunks and boxes; in the entrance stood a harp with broken strings.

General Sherman came riding by; the Mother Superior summoned him; calmly facing the Attila of his day, she said in her clear, sweet voice: “General, this is how you keep your promise to me, a cloistered nun, and these my sacred charges.” General Sherman answered: “Madame, it is all the fault of your negroes, who gave my soldiers liquor to drink.”

General Sherman, in official report, charged the burning of Columbia to General Hampton, and in his “Memoirs” gives his reason: “I confess that I did so to shake the faith of his people in him”; and asserts that his “right wing,” “having utterly ruined Columbia,” passed on to Winnsboro.

Living witnesses tell how that firing was done. A party of soldiers would enter a dwelling, search and rifle; and in departing throw wads of burning paper into closets, corners, under beds, into cellars. Another party would repeat the process. Family and servants would follow after, removing wads and extinguishing flames until ready to drop. Devastation for secession, that was what was made plain in South Carolina; if the hotbed of “heresy” had to be destroyed for her sins, what of the Confederate Capital, Richmond, the long-desired, the “heart of the Rebellion”?

“WHEN THIS CRUEL WAR IS OVER”

CHAPTER II
"When This Cruel War is Over"

"When this cruel war is over" was the name of one of our war songs. So many things we planned to do when the war should be over. With the fall of the Southern Capital the war was over, though we did not know it at once.

Again and again has the story been told of Sunday, April 2, in Richmond. The message brought into St. Paul's Church from Lee to Davis, saying Richmond could no longer be defended; the quiet departure of the President; the noble bearing of the beloved rector, Rev. Dr. Minnegerode; the self-control of the troubled people remaining; the solemn Communion Service; these are all a part now of American history of that sad time when brother strove with brother; a time whose memories should never be revived for the purpose of keeping rancor alive, but that should be unfalteringly remembered, and every phase of it diligently studied, that our common country may in no wise lose the lesson for which we of the North and South paid so tremendous a price.

Into Dr. Hoge's church a hurried messenger came. The pastor read the note handed up to him, bowed his head in silent prayer, and then said: "Brethren, trying scenes are before us; General Lee has suffered reverses. But remember that God is with us in the storm as well as in the calm. Go quietly to your homes, and whatever may be in store for us, let us not forget that we are Christian men and women. The blessing of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost be with us all. Amen." So other pastors commended their people.

None who lived through that Sabbath could forget it. Our Government, our soldiers, hurrying off; women saying goodbye to husband, lover, brother, or friend, and urging haste; everybody who could go, going, when means of transportation were insufficient for Government uses, and "a kingdom for a horse" could not buy one – horses brought that day $1,000 apiece in gold; handsome houses full of beautiful furniture left open and deserted; people of all sexes, colors and classes running hither and yon; boxes and barrels dragged about the streets from open commissary stores; explosions as of earthquakes; houses aflame; the sick and dying brought out; streets running liquid fire where liquor had been emptied into gutters, that it might not be available for invading troops; bibulous wretches in the midst of the terror, brooding over such waste; drunken roughs and looters, white and black, abroad; the penitentiary disgorging striped hordes; the ribald songs, the anguish, the fears, the tumult; the noble calm of brave souls, the patient endurance of sweet women and gentle children – these are all a part of American history, making thereon a page blistered with tears for some; and for others, illumined with symbols of triumph and glory.

And yet, we are of one blood, and the triumph and glory of one is the triumph and glory of the other; the anguish and tears of one the anguish and tears of the other; and the shame of one is the shame of both.

The fire was largely due to accident. In obedience to law, Confederate forces, in evacuating the city, fired tobacco warehouses, ordnance and other Government stores, gunboats in the James and bridges spanning the river. A wind, it is said, carried sparks towards the town, igniting first one building and then another; incendiarism lent aid that pilfering might go on in greater security through public disorder and distress.

During the night detonations of exploding gunboats could be heard for miles, the noise and shock and lurid lights adding to the wretchedness of those within the city, and the anxieties of those who beheld its burnings from afar; among these, the advancing enemy, who was not without uneasy speculations lest he find Richmond, as Napoleon found Moscow, in ashes. General Shepley, U. S. A., has described the scene witnessed from his position near Petersburg, as a most beautiful and awful

display of fireworks, the heavens at three o'clock being suddenly filled with bursting shells, red lights, Roman candles, fiery serpents, golden fountains, falling stars.

Nearly all the young men were gone; the fire department, without a full force of operatives, without horses, without hose, was unable to cope with the situation. Old men, women and children, and negro servants fought the flames as well as they could.

Friends and relatives who were living in Richmond then have told me about their experiences until I seem to have shared them. One who appears in these pages as Matoaca, gives me this little word-picture of the morning after the evacuation:

"I went early to the War Department, where I had been employed, to get letters out of my desk. The desk was open. Everything was open. Our President, our Government, our soldiers were gone. The papers were found and I started homeward. We saw rolls of smoke ahead, and trod carefully the fiery streets. Suddenly my companion caught my arm, crying: 'Is not that the sound of cavalry?' We hurried, almost running. Soon after we entered the house, some one exclaimed:

"'God help us! The United States flag is flying over our Capitol!'

"I laid my head on Uncle Randolph's knee and shivered. He placed his hand lightly on my head and said: 'Trust in God, my child. They can not be cruel to us. We are defenseless.' He had fought for that flag in Mexico. He had stood by Virginia, but he had always been a Unionist. I thought of New Orleans, Atlanta, Columbia."

An impression obtained that to negro troops was assigned the honor of first entering Richmond, hauling down the Southern Cross and hoisting in its place the Stars and Stripes. "Harper's Weekly" said: "It was fitting that the old flag should be restored by soldiers of the race to secure whose eternal degradation that flag had been pulled down." Whether the assignment was made or not, I am unable to say; if it was, it was not very graceful or wise on the part of our conquerors, and had it been carried out, would have been prophetic of what came after – the subversion.

White troops first entered Richmond, and a white man ran up the flag of the Union over our Capitol. General Shepley says that to his aide, Lieutenant de Peyster, he accorded the privilege as a reward for caring for his old flag that had floated over City Hall in New Orleans. On the other hand, it is asserted that Major Stevens performed the historic office, running up the two small guidons of the Fourth Massachusetts Cavalry, which were presently displaced by the large flag Lieutenant de Peyster had been carrying in the holster at his saddle-bow for many a day, that it might be in readiness for the use to which he now put it.

THE ARMY OF THE UNION

CHAPTER III
The Army of the Union: The Children and the Flag

The Army of the Union entered Richmond with almost the solemnity of a processional entering church. It was occasion for solemn procession, that entrance into our burning city where a stricken people, flesh of their flesh and bone of their bone, watched in terror for their coming.

Our broken-hearted people closed their windows and doors and shut out as far as they could all sights and sounds. Yet through closed lattice there came that night to those living near Military Headquarters echoes of rejoicings.

Early that fateful morning, Mayor Mayo, Judge Meredith and Judge Lyons went out to meet the incoming foe and deliver up the keys of the city. Their coach of state was a dilapidated equipage, the horses being but raw-boned shadows of better days when there were corn and oats in the land. They carried a piece of wallpaper, on the unflowered side of which articles of surrender were inscribed in dignified terms setting forth that "it is proper to formally surrender the City of Richmond, hitherto Capital of the Confederate States of America." Had the words been engraved on satin in letters of gold, Judge Lyons (who had once represented the United States at the Court of St. James) could not have performed the honours of introduction between the municipal party and the Federal officers with statelier grace, nor could the latter have received the instrument of submission with profounder courtesy. "We went out not knowing what we would encounter," Mayor Mayo reported, "and we met a group of Chesterfields." Major Atherton H. Stevens, of General Weitzel's staff, was the immediate recipient of the wallpaper document.

General Weitzel and his associates were merciful to the stricken city; they aided her people in extinguishing the flames; restored order and gave protection. Guards were posted wherever needed, with instructions to repress lawlessness, and they did it. To this day, Richmond people rise up in the gates and praise that Army of the Occupation as Columbia's people can never praise General Sherman's. Good effect on popular sentiment was immediate.

Among many similar incidents of the times is this, as related by a prominent physician:

"When I returned from my rounds at Chimborazo I found a Yankee soldier sitting on my stoop with my little boy, Walter, playing with the tassels and buttons on his uniform. He arose and saluted courteously, and told me he was there to guard my property. 'I am under orders,' he said, 'to comply with any wish you may express.'"

Dr. Gildersleeve, in an address (June, 1904) before the Association of Medical Officers of the Army and Navy, C. S. A., referred to Chimborazo Hospital as "the most noted and largest military hospital in the annals of history, ancient or modern." With its many white buildings and tents on Chimborazo Hill, it looked like a town and a military post, which latter it was, with Dr. James B. McCaw for Commandant. General Weitzel and his staff visited the hospital promptly. Dr. McCaw and his corps in full uniform received them. Dr. Mott, General Weitzel's Chief Medical Director, exclaimed: "Ain't that old Jim McCaw?" "Yes," said "Jim McCaw," "and don't you want a drink?" "Invite the General, too," answered Dr. Mott. General Weitzel issued passes to Dr. McCaw and his corps, and gave verbal orders that Chimborazo Confederates should be taken care of under all circumstances. He proposed to take Dr. McCaw and his corps into the Federal service, thus arming him with power to make requisition for supplies, medicines, etc., which offer the doctor, as a loyal Confederate, was unable to accept.

Others of our physicians and surgeons found friends in Federal ranks. To how many poor Boys in Blue, longing for home and kindred, had not they and our women ministered! The orders of the Confederate Government were that the sick and wounded of both armies should be treated alike. True, nobody had the best of fare, for we had it not to give. We were without medicines; it was almost

impossible to get morphia, quinine, and other remedies. Quinine was $400 an ounce, when it could be bought at all, even in the earlier years of the war. Our women became experts in manufacturing substitutes out of native herbs and roots. We ran wofully short of dressings and bandages, and bundles of old rags became treasures priceless. But the most cruel shortage was in food. Bitter words in Northern papers and by Northern speakers – after our defeat intensified, multiplied, and illustrated – about our treatment of prisoners exasperated us. "Will they never learn," we asked, "that on such rations as we gave our prisoners, our men were fighting in the field? We had not food for ourselves; the North blockaded us so we could not bring food from outside, and refused to exchange prisoners with us. What could we do?"

I wonder how many men now living remember certain loaves of wheaten bread which the women of Richmond collected with difficulty in the last days of the war and sent to Miss Emily V. Mason, our "Florence Nightingale," for our own boys. "Boys," Miss Emily announced – sick soldiers, if graybeards, were "boys" to "Cap'n," as they all called Miss Emily – "I have some flour-bread which the ladies of Richmond have sent you." Cheers, and other expressions of thankfulness. "The poor, sick Yankees," Miss Emily went on falteringly – uneasy countenances in the ward – "*can't* eat corn-bread – " "Give the flour-bread to the poor, sick Yankees, Cap'n!" came in cheerful, if quavering chorus from the cots. "*We* can eat corn-bread. Gruel is good for us. We *like* mush. Oughtn't to have flour-bread nohow." "Poor fellows!" "Cap'n" said proudly of their self-denial, "they were tired to death of corn-bread in all forms, and it was not good for them, for nearly all had intestinal disorders."

Along with this corn-bread story, I recall how Dr. Minnegerode, Protestant, and Bishop Magill, Catholic, used to meet each other on the street, and the one would say: "Doctor, lend me a dollar for a sick Yankee." And the other: "Bishop, I was about to ask *you* for a dollar for a sick Yankee." And how Annie E. Johns, of North Carolina, said she had seen Confederate soldiers take provisions from their own haversacks and give them to Federal prisoners *en route* to Salisbury. As matron, she served in hospitals for the sick and wounded of both armies. She said: "When I was in a hospital for Federals, I felt as if these men would defend me as promptly as our own."

In spite of the pillage, vandalism and violence they suffered, Southern women were not so biassed as to think that the gentle and brave could be found only among the wearers of the gray. Even in Sherman's Army were the gentle and brave upon whom fell obloquy due the "bummers" only. I have heard many stories like that of the boyish guard who, tramping on his beat around a house he was detailed to protect, asked of a young mother: "Why does your baby cry so?" She lifted her pale face, saying: "My baby is hungry. I have had no food – and so – I have no nourishment for him." Tears sprang into his eyes, and he said: "I will be relieved soon; I will draw my rations and bring them to you." He brought her his hands full of all good things he could find – sugar, tea, and coffee. And like that of two young Philadelphians who left grateful hearts behind them along the line of Sherman's march because they made a business of seeing how many women and children they could relieve and protect. In Columbia, during the burning, men in blue sought to stay ravages wrought by other men in blue. I hate to say hard things of men in blue, and I must say all the good things I can; because many were unworthy to wear the blue, many who were worthy have carried reproach.

On that morning of the occupation, our women sat behind closed windows, unable to consider the new path stretching before them. The way seemed to end at a wall. Could they have looked over and seen what lay ahead, they would have lost what little heart of hope they had; could vision have extended far enough, they might have won it back; they would have beheld some things unbelievable. For instance, they would have seen the little boy who played with the buttons and tassels, grown to manhood and wearing the uniform of an officer of the United States; they would have seen Southern men walking the streets of Richmond and other Southern cities with "U. S. A." on their haversacks; and Southern men and Northern men fighting side by side in Cuba and the Philippines, and answering alike to the name, "Yankees."

On the day of the occupation, Miss Mason and Mrs. Rhett went out to meet General Weitzel and stated that Mrs. Lee was an invalid, unable to walk, and that her house, like that of General Chilton and others, was in danger of fire. "What!" he exclaimed, "Mrs. Lee in danger? General Fitz Lee's mother, who nursed me so tenderly when I was sick at West Point! What can I do for her? Command me!" "We mean Mrs. Robert E. Lee," they said. "We want ambulances to move Mrs. Lee and other invalids and children to places of safety." Using his knee as a writing-table, he wrote an order for five ambulances; and the ladies rode off. Miss Emily's driver became suddenly and mysteriously tipsy and she had to put an arm around him and back up the vehicle herself to General Chilton's door, where his children, her nieces, were waiting, their dollies close clasped.

"Come along, Virginia aristocracy!" hiccoughed the befuddled Jehu. "I won't bite you! Come along, Virginia aristocracy!"

A passing officer came to the rescue, and the party were soon safely housed in the beautiful Rutherford home.

The Federals filled Libby Prison with Confederates, many of whom were paroled prisoners found in the city. Distressed women surrounded the prison, begging to know if loved ones were there; others plead to take food inside. Some called, while watching windows: "Let down your tin cup and I will put something in it." Others cried: "Is my husband in there? O, William, answer me if you are!" "Is my son, Johnny, here?" "O, please somebody tell me if my boy is in the prison!" Miss Emily passed quietly through the crowd, her hospital reputation securing admission to the prison; she was able to render much relief to those within, and to subdue the anxiety of those without.

"Heigho, Johnny Reb! in there now where we used to be!" yelled one Yankee complacently. "Been in there myself. D – d sorry for you, Johnnies!" called up another.

A serio-comic incident of the grim period reveals the small boy in an attitude different from that of him who was dandled on the Federal knee. Some tiny lads mounted guard on the steps of a house opposite Military Headquarters, and, being intensely "rebel" and having no other means of expressing defiance to invaders, made faces at the distinguished occupants of the establishment across the way. General Patrick, Provost-Marshal General, sent a courteously worded note to their father, calling his attention to these juvenile demonstrations. He explained that while he was not personally disturbed by the exhibition, members of his staff were, and that the children might get into trouble. The proper guardians of the wee insurgents, acting upon this information, their first of the battery unlimbered on their door-step, saw that the artillery was retired in good order, and peace and normal countenances reigned over the scene of the late engagements.

I open a desultory diary Matoaca kept, and read:

"If the United States flag were my flag – if I loved it – I would not try to make people pass under it who do not want to. I would not let them. It is natural that we should go out of our way to avoid walking under it, a banner that has brought us so much pain and woe and want – that has desolated our whole land.

"Some Yankees stretched a flag on a cord from tree to tree across the way our children had to come into Richmond. The children saw it and cried out; and the driver was instructed to go another way. A Federal soldier standing near – a guard, sentinel or picket – ordered the driver to turn back and drive under that flag. He obeyed, and the children were weeping and wailing as the carriage rolled under it."

In Raymond, Mississippi, negro troops strung a flag across the street and drove the white children under it. In Atlanta, two society belles were arrested because they made a detour rather than walk under the flag. Such desecration of the symbol of liberty and union was committed in many places by those in power.

The Union flag is my flag and I love it, and, therefore, I trust that no one may ever again pass under it weeping. Those little children were not traitors. They were simply human. If in the sixties situations had been reversed, and the people of New York, Boston and Chicago had seen the Union

flag flying over guns that shelled these cities, their children would have passed under it weeping and wailing. Perhaps, too, some would have sat on doorsteps and "unbeknownst" to their elders have made faces at commanding generals across the way; while others climbing upon the enemy's knees would have played with gold tassels and brass buttons.

Our newspapers, with the exception of the "Whig" and the "Sentinel," shared in the general wreckage. A Northern gentleman brought out a tiny edition of the former in which appeared two military orders promulgating the policy General Weitzel intended to pursue. One paragraph read: "The people of Richmond are assured that we come to restore to them the blessings of peace and prosperity under the flag of the Union."

General Shepley, Military Governor by Weitzel's appointment, repeated this in substance, adding: "The soldiers of the command will abstain from any offensive or insulting words or gestures towards the citizens." With less tact and generosity, he proceeded: "The Armies of the Rebellion having abandoned their efforts to enslave the people of Virginia, have endeavoured to destroy by fire their Capital… The first duty of the Army of the Union will be to save the city doomed to destruction by the Armies of the Rebellion." That fling at our devoted army would have served as a clarion call to us – had any been needed – to remember the absent.

"It will be a blunder in us not to overlook that blunder of General Shepley's," urged Uncle Randolph.[1] "The important point is that the policy of conciliation is to be pursued." With the "Whig" in his hand, Uncle Randolph told Matoaca that the Thursday before Virginia seceded a procession of prominent Virginians marched up Franklin Street, carrying the flag of the Union and singing "Columbia," and that he was with them.

The family questioned if his mind were wandering, when he went on: "The breach can be healed – in spite of the bloodshed – if only the Government will pursue the right course now. Both sides are tired of hating and being hated, killing and being killed – this war between brothers – if Weitzel's orders reflect the mind of Lincoln and Grant – and they must – all may be well – before so very long."

These were the men of the Union Army who saved Richmond: The First Brigade, Third Division (Deven's Division), Twenty-fourth Army Corps, Army of the James, Brevet-Brigadier-General Edward H. Ripley commanding. This brigade was composed of the Eleventh Connecticut, Thirteenth New Hampshire, Nineteenth Wisconsin, Eighty-first New York, Ninety-eighth New York, One Hundredth and Thirty-ninth New York, Convalescent detachment from the second and third divisions of Sheridan's reinforcements.

"This Brigade led the column in the formal entry, and at the City Hall halted while I reported to Major-General Weitzel," says General Ripley. "General Weitzel had taken up his position on the platform of the high steps at the east front of the Confederate Capitol, and there, looking down into a gigantic crater of fire, suffocated and blinded with the vast volumes of smoke and cinders which rolled up over and enveloped us, he assigned me and my brigade to the apparently hopeless task of stopping the conflagration, and suppressing the mob of stragglers, released criminals, and negroes, who had far advanced in pillaging the city. He had no suggestions to make, no orders to give, except to strain every nerve to save the city, crowded as it was with women and children, and the sick and wounded of the Army of Northern Virginia.

"After requesting Major-General Weitzel to have all the other troops marched out of the city, I took the Hon. Joseph Mayo, then Mayor of Richmond, with me to the City Hall, where I established my headquarters. With the help of the city officials, I distributed my regiment quickly in different sections. The danger to the troops engaged in this terrific fire-fighting was infinitely enhanced by the

[1] Gentlemen of the old regime would say: "A woman's name should appear in print but twice – when she marries and when she dies"; the "Society" page of to-day was unknown to them. They objected to newspaper notoriety for themselves, and were prone to sign pseudonyms to their newspaper articles. Matoaca, loyal to her uncle's prejudices, requires that I print him only by the name she gives him and the title, one which was affectionately applied to him by many who were not his kin. To give his real name in full would be to give hers.

vast quantities of powder and shells stored in the section burning. Into this sea of fire, with no less courage and self-devotion than as though fighting for their own firesides and families, stripped and plunged the brave men of the First Brigade.

"Meanwhile, detachments scoured the city, warning every one from the streets to their houses… Every one carrying plunder was arrested… The ladies of Richmond thronged my headquarters, imploring protection. They were sent to their homes under the escort of guards, who were afterwards posted in the center house of each block, and made responsible for the safety of the neighborhood… Many painful cases of destitution were brought to light by the presence of these safeguards in private houses, and the soldiers divided rations with their temporary wards, in many cases, until a general system of relief was organised."[2]

THE COMING OF LINCOLN

[2] General Ripley, in "Confederate Column" of the "Times-Dispatch," Richmond, Virginia, May 29, 1904.

CHAPTER IV
The Coming of Lincoln

The South did not know that she had a friend in Abraham Lincoln, and the announcement of his presence in Richmond was not calculated to give comfort or assurance.

"Abraham Lincoln came unheralded. No bells rang, no guns boomed in salute. He held no levee. There was no formal jubilee. He must have been heartless as Nero to have chosen that moment for a festival of triumph. He was not heartless." So a citizen of Richmond, who was a boy at the time, and out doors and everywhere, seeing everything, remembers the coming of Lincoln.

One of the women who sat behind closed windows says: "If there was any kind of rejoicing, it must have been of a very somber kind; the sounds of it did not reach me." Another who looked through her shutters, said: "I saw him in a carriage, the horses galloping through the streets at a break-neck speed, his escort clearing the way. The negroes had to be cleared out of the way, they impeded his progress so." He was in Richmond April 4 and 5, and visited the Davis Mansion, the Capitol, Libby Prison, Castle Thunder and other places.

His coming was as simple, business-like, and unpretentious as the man himself. Anybody who happened to be in the neighbourhood on the afternoon of April 4, might have seen a boat manned by ten or twelve sailors pull ashore at a landing above Rockett's, and a tall, lank man step forth, "leading a little boy." By resemblance to pictures that had been scattered broadcast, this man could have been easily recognized as Abraham Lincoln. The little boy was Tad, his son. Major Penrose, who commanded the escort, says Tad was not with the President; Admiral Porter, General Shepley and others say he was.

Accompanied by Admiral Porter and several other officers and escorted by ten sailors, President Lincoln, "holding Tad's hand," walked through the city, which was in part a waste of ashes, and the smoke of whose burning buildings was still ascending. From remains of smouldering bridges, from wreckage of gunboats, from Manchester on the other side of the James, and from the city's streets smoke rose as from a sacrifice to greet the President.

A Northern newspaper man (who related this story of himself) recognizing that it was his business to make news as well as dispense it, saw some negroes at work near the landing where an officer was having débris removed, and other negroes idling. He said to this one and to that: "Do you know that man?" pointing to the tall, lank man who had just stepped ashore.

"Who *is* dat man, marster?"

"Call no man marster. That man set you free. That is Abraham Lincoln. Now is your time to shout. Can't you sing, 'God bless you, Father Abraham!'"

That started the ball rolling. The news spread like wild-fire. Mercurial blacks, already excited to fever-heat, collected about Mr. Lincoln, impeding his progress, kneeling to him, hailing him as "Saviour!" and "My Jesus!" They sang, shouted, danced. One woman jumped up and down, shrieking: "I'm free! I'm free! I'm free till I'm fool!" Some went into the regular Voodoo ecstasy, leaping, whirling, stamping, until their clothes were half torn off. Mr. Lincoln made a speech, in which he said:

"My poor friends, you are free – free as air. But you must try to deserve this priceless boon. Let the world see that you merit it by your good works. Don't let your joy carry you into excesses. Obey God's commandments and thank Him for giving you liberty, for to Him you owe all things. There, now, let me pass on. I have little time here and much to do. I want to go to the Capitol. Let me pass on."

Henry J. Raymond speaks of the President as taking his hat off and bowing to an old negro man who knelt and kissed his hand, and adds: "That bow upset the forms, laws and customs of centuries; it was a death-shock to chivalry, a mortal wound to caste. Recognize a nigger? Faugh!"

Which proves that Mr. Raymond did not know or wilfully misrepresented a people who could not make reply. Northern visitors to the South may yet see refutation in old sections where new ways have not corrupted ancient courtesy, and where whites and blacks interchange cordial and respectful salutations, though they may be perfect strangers to each other, when passing on the road. If they are not strangers, greeting is usually more than respectful and cordial; it is full of neighbourly and affectionate interest in each other and each other's folks.

The memories of the living, even of Federal officers near President Lincoln, bear varied versions of his visit. General Shepley relates that he was greatly surprised when he saw the crowd in the middle of the street, President Lincoln and little Tad leading, and that Mr. Lincoln called out:

"Hullo, General! Is that you? I'm walking around looking for Military Headquarters."

General Shepley conducted him to our White House, where President Lincoln wearily sank into a chair, which happened to be that President Davis was wont to occupy while writing his letters, a task suffering frequent interruption from some one or other of his children, who had a way of stealing in upon him at any and all times to claim a caress.

Upon Mr. Lincoln's arrival, or possibly in advance, when it was understood that he would come up from City Point, there was discussion among our citizens as to how he should be received – that is, so far as our attitude toward him was concerned. There were several ways of looking at the problem. Our armies were still in the field, and all sorts of rumors were afloat, some accrediting them with victories.

A called meeting was held under the leadership of Judge Campbell and Judge Thomas, who, later, with General Joseph Anderson and others, waited on Mr. Lincoln, to whom they made peace propositions involving disbandment of our armies; withdrawal of our soldiers from the field, and reëstablishment of state governments under the Union, Virginia inaugurating this course by example and influence.

Mr. Lincoln had said in proclamation, the Southern States "can have peace any time by simply laying down their arms and submitting to the authority of the Union." It was inconceivable to many how we could ever want to be in the Union again. But wise ones said: "Our position is to be that of conquered provinces voiceless in the administration of our own affairs, or of States with some power, at least, of self-government." Then, there was the dread spectre of confiscation, proscription, the scaffold.

Judge Campbell and Judge Thomas reported: "The movement for the restoration of the Union is highly gratifying to Mr. Lincoln; he will give it full sympathy and coöperation."

"You people will all come back now," Mr. Lincoln had said to Judge Thomas, "and we shall have old Virginia home again."

Many had small faith in these professions of amity, and said so. "Lincoln is the man who called out the troops and precipitated war," was bitterly objected, "and we do not forget Hampton Roads."

A few built hopes on belief that Mr. Lincoln had long been eager to harmonize the sections. Leader of these was Judge John A. Campbell, ex-Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, and ex-Assistant Secretary of War of the expiring Confederacy. He had served with Mr. Hunter and Mr. Stephens on the Hampton Roads Peace Commission, knew Mr. Lincoln well, had high regard for him and faith in his earnest desire for genuine reconciliation between North and South. When the Confederate Government left the city, he remained, meaning to try to make peace, Mr. Davis, it is said, knowing his purpose and consenting, but having no hope of its success.

Only the Christmas before, when peace sentiments that led to the Hampton Roads Conference were in the air, striking illustrations in Northern journals reflected Northern sentiment. One big cartoon of a Christmas dinner in the Capitol at Washington, revealed Mr. Lincoln holding wide the doors, and the seceded States returning to the family love feast. Olive branches, the "Prodigal's Return," and nice little mottoes like "Come Home, Our Erring Sisters, Come!" were neatly displayed around the margin. Fatted calves were not to be despised by a starving people; but the less said

about the pious influences of the "Prodigal's Return" the better. That Hampton Roads Conference (February, 1865) has always been a sore spot. In spite of the commissioners' statements that Mr. Lincoln's only terms were "unconditional surrender," many people blamed Mr. Davis for the failure of the peace movement; others said he was pusillanimous and a traitor for sanctioning overtures that had to be made, by Lincoln's requirements, "informally," and, as it were, by stealth.

"We must forget dead issues," our pacificators urged. "We have to face the present. The stand Mr. Lincoln has taken all along, that the Union is indissoluble and that a State can not get out of it however much she tries, is as fortunate for us now as it was unlucky once."

"In or out, what matters it if Yankees rule over us!" others declared.

"Mr. Lincoln is not in favor of outsiders holding official reins in the South," comforters responded. "He has committed himself on that point to Governor Hahn in Louisiana. When Judge Thomas suggested that he establish Governor Pierpont here, Mr. Lincoln asked straightway, 'Where is Extra Billy?' He struck the table with his fist, exclaiming, 'By Jove! I want that old game-cock back here!'"

When in 1862-3 West Virginia seceded from Virginia and was received into the bosom of the Union, a few "loyal" counties which did not go with her, elected Francis H. Pierpont Governor of the old State. At the head of sixteen legislators, he posed at Alexandria as Virginia's Executive, Mr. Lincoln and the Federal Congress recognizing him. Our real governor was the doughty warrior, William Smith, nick-named "Extra Billy" before the war, when he was always asking Congress for extra appropriations for an ever-lengthening stage-coach and mail-route line, which was a great Government enterprise under his fostering hand.

Governor Smith had left with the Confederate Government, going towards Lynchburg. He had been greatly concerned for his family, but his wife had said: "I may feel as a woman, but I can act like a man. Attend to your public affairs and I will arrange our family matters." The Mansion had barely escaped destruction by fire. The Smith family had vacated it to the Federals, had been invited to return and then ordered to vacate again for Federal occupation.

Mr. Lincoln said that the legislature that took Virginia out of the Union and Governor Letcher, who had been in office then, with Governor Smith, his successor, and Governor Smith's legislature, must be convened. "The Government that took Virginia out of the Union is the Government to bring her back. No other can effect it. They must come to the Capitol yonder where they voted her out and vote her back."

Uncle Randolph was one of those who had formally called upon Mr. Lincoln at the Davis Mansion. Feeble as he was, he was so eager to do some good that he had gone out in spite of his niece to talk about the "policy" he thought would be best. "I did not say much," he reported wistfully. "There were a great many people waiting on him. Things look strange at the Capitol. Federal soldiers all about, and campfires on the Square. Judge Campbell introduced me. President Lincoln turned from him to me, and said: 'You fought for the Union in Mexico.' I said, 'Mr. Lincoln, if the Union will be fair to Virginia, I will fight for the Union again.' I forgot, you see, that I am too old and feeble to fight. Then I said quickly, 'Younger men than I, Mr. President, will give you that pledge.' What did he say? He looked at me hard – and shook my hand – and there wasn't any need for him to say anything."

Mr. Lincoln's attitude towards Judge Campbell was one of confidence and cordiality. He knew the Judge's purity and singleness of purpose in seeking leniency for the conquered South, and genuine reunion between the sections. The Federal commanders understood his devotion and integrity. The newspaper men, in their reports, paid respect to his venerable, dignified figure, stamped with feebleness, poverty, and a noble sorrow, waiting patiently in one of the rooms at the Davis Mansion for audience with Mr. Lincoln.

None who saw Mr. Lincoln during that visit to Richmond observed in him any trace of exultation. Walking the streets with the negroes crowding about him, in the Davis Mansion with the Federal officers paying him court and our citizens calling on him, in the carriage with General Weitzel

or General Shepley, a motley horde following – he was the same, only, as those who watched him declared, paler and wearier-looking each time they saw him. Uncle Randolph reported:

"There was something like misgiving in his eyes as he sat in the carriage with Shepley, gazing upon smoking ruins on all sides, and a rabble of crazy negroes hailing him as 'Saviour!' Truly, I never saw a sadder or wearier face in all my life than Lincoln's!"

He had terrible problems ahead, and he knew it. His emancipation proclamation in 1863 was a war measure. His letter to Greeley in 1862, said: "If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If I could preserve the Union without freeing any slaves, I would do it; if I could preserve the Union by freeing all the slaves, I would do it… What I do about the coloured race, I do because I think it helps to save the Union."

To a committee of negroes waiting on him in the White House, August 14, 1862, Mr. Lincoln named colonisation as the one remedy for the race trouble, proposing Government aid out of an appropriation which Congress had voted him. He said: "White men in this country are cutting each other's throats about you. But for your race among us, there would be no war, although many men on either side do not care for you one way or the other… Your race suffers from living among us, ours from your presence." He applied $25,000 to the venture, but it failed; New Grenada objected to negro colonisation.

Two months before his visit to Richmond, some official (Colonel Kaye, as I remember) was describing to him the extravagancies of South Carolina negroes when Sherman's army announced freedom to them, and Mr. Lincoln walked his floor, pale and distressed, saying: "It is a momentous thing – this liberation of the negro race."

He left a paper in his own handwriting with Judge Campbell, setting forth the terms upon which any seceded State could be restored to the Union; these were, unqualified submission, withdrawal of soldiers from the field, and acceptance of his position on the slavery question, as defined in his proclamations. The movement gained ground. A committee in Petersburg, headed by Anthony Keiley, asked permits to come to Richmond that they might coöperate with the committee there.

"Unconditional surrender," some commented. "Mr. Lincoln is not disposed to humiliate us unnecessarily," was the reassurance. "He promised Judge Campbell that irritating exactions and oaths against their consciences are not to be imposed upon our people; they are to be encouraged, not coerced, into taking vows of allegiance to the United States Government; Lincoln's idea is to make allegiance a coveted privilege; there are to be no confiscations; amnesty to include our officers, civil and military, is to be granted – that is, the power of pardon resting with the President, he pledges himself to liberal use of it. Lincoln is long-headed and kind-hearted. He knows the best thing all around is a real peace. He wishes to restore confidence in and affection for the Union. That is plain. He said: 'I would gladly pardon Jeff Davis himself if he would ask it.'"

I have heard one very pretty story about Mr. Lincoln's visit to Richmond. General Pickett, of the famous charge at Gettysburg, had been well known in early life to Mr. Lincoln when Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Johnson, General Pickett's uncle, were law partners in Illinois. Mr. Lincoln had taken warm interest in young George Pickett as a cadet at West Point, and had written him kindly, jovial letters of advice. During that hurried sojourn in Richmond, Abraham Lincoln took time for looking up Mr. Johnson. His carriage and armed retinue drew up in front of the old Pickett mansion. The General's beautiful young wife, trembling with alarm, heard a strange voice asking first for Mr. Johnson and then about General Pickett, and finally: "Is General Pickett's wife here?" She came forward, her baby in her arms. "I am General Pickett's wife." "Madam, I am George's old friend, Abraham Lincoln." "The President of the United States!" "No," with a kindly, half-quizzical smile, "only Abraham Lincoln, George's old friend. And this is George's baby?" Abraham Lincoln bent his kindly, half-sad, half-smiling glance upon the child. Baby George stretched out his hands; Lincoln took him, and the little one, in the pretty fashion babies have, opened his mouth and kissed the President.

"Tell your father," said Lincoln, "that I will grant him a special amnesty – if he wants it – for the sake of your mother's bright eyes and your good manners." A short while after that – when Lincoln was dead – that mother was flying, terror-stricken, with her baby to Canada, where General Pickett, in fear of his life, had taken refuge.

Mr. Lincoln left instructions for General Weitzel to issue passes to the legislators and State officials who were to come to Richmond for the purpose of restoring Virginia to the Union. The "Whig" had sympathetic articles on "Reconstruction," and announced in due order the meeting of citizens called "to consider President Lincoln's proposition for reassembling the Legislature to take Virginia back into the Union." It printed the formal call for reassembling, signed by the committee and many citizens, and countersigned by General Weitzel; handbills so signed were printed for distribution.

General Shepley, whose cordial acquiescence in the conciliation plan had been pronounced, said in after years that he suffered serious misgivings. When General Weitzel directed him to issue the passes for the returning legislators, he inquired: "Have you the President's written order for this?" "No. Why?" "For your own security you should have it, General. When the President reaches Washington and the Cabinet are informed of what has been done and what is contemplated, this order will be rescinded, and the Cabinet will deny that it has ever been issued."

"I have the President's commands. I am a soldier and obey orders."

"Right, General. Command me and I obey."

Mr. Lincoln's written order reiterating oral instructions came, however.

Admiral Porter, according to his own account, took President Lincoln to task for his concessions, and told him in so many words that he was acting outside of his rights; Richmond, being under military rule, was subject to General Grant's jurisdiction. The Admiral has claimed the distinction of working a change in the President's mind and of recovering immediately the obnoxious order from Weitzel, killing, or trying to kill, a horse or so in the undertaking. He characterised the efforts of Judges Campbell and Thomas to serve their country and avert more bloodshed as "a clever dodge to soothe the wounded feelings of the people of the South." The Admiral adds: "But what a howl it would have raised in the North!"

Admiral Porter says the lectured President exclaimed: "Well, I came near knocking all the fat in the fire, didn't I? Let us go. I seem to be putting my foot into it here all the time. Bless my soul! how Seward would have preached if he had heard me give Campbell permission to call the Legislature! Seward is an encyclopedia of international law, and laughs at my horse sense on which I pride myself. Admiral, if I were you, I would not repeat that joke yet awhile. People might laugh at you for knowing so much more than the President."

He was acting, he said, in conjunction with military authorities. General Weitzel was acting under General Grant's instructions. The conciliatory plan was being followed in Petersburg, where General Grant himself had led the formal entry.

"General Weitzel warmly approves the plan."

"He and Campbell are personal friends," the Admiral remarked significantly.

Whatever became of those horses driven out by Admiral Porter's instructions to be killed, if need be, in the effort to recover that order, is a conundrum. According to Admiral Porter the order had been written and given to General Weitzel while Mr. Lincoln was in the city. According to Judge Campbell and General Shepley, and the original now on file in Washington, it was written from City Point.

Dated, "Headquarters Department of Virginia, Richmond, April 13, 1865," this appeared in the "Whig" on the last afternoon of Mr. Lincoln's life:

"Permission for the reassembling of the gentlemen recently acting as the Legislature is rescinded. Should any of the gentlemen come to the city under the notice of reassembling already published, they will be furnished passports to return to their homes. Any of the persons named in the

call signed by J. A. Campbell and others, who are found in the city twelve hours after the publication of this notice will be subject to arrest, unless they are residents. (Signed) E. O. C. Ord, General Commanding the Department."

General Weitzel was removed. Upon him was thrown the blame of the President's "blunder." He was charged with the crime of pity and sympathy for "rebels" and "traitors." When Lincoln was dead, a high official in Washington said: "No man more than Mr. Lincoln condemned the course General Weitzel and his officers pursued in Richmond."

In more ways than one General Weitzel had done that which was not pleasing in the sight of Mr. Stanton. Assistant Secretary of War Dana had let Stanton know post-haste that General Weitzel was distributing "victuals" to "rebels." Stanton wired to know of General Weitzel if he was "acting under authority in giving food supplies to the people of Richmond, and if so, whose?" General Weitzel answered, "Major-General Ord's orders approved by General Grant."

Mr. Dana wrote Mr. Stanton, "Weitzel is to pay for rations by selling captured property." General Weitzel apologised for magnanimity by explaining that the instructions of General Ord, his superior, were "to sell all the tobacco I find here and feed those in distress. A great many persons, black and white, are on the point of starvation, and I have relieved the most pressing wants by the issue of a few abandoned rebel stores and some damaged stores of my own." "All receivers of rations must take the oath," Mr. Stanton wrote back.

In Northern magazines left by Federal soldiers visiting negroes in Matoaca's yard, black Cato saw caricatures of Southern ladies mixing in with negroes and white roughs and toughs, begging food at Yankee bureaus. "Miss Mato'ca," he plead earnestly, "don' go whar dem folks is no mo'. It will disgrace de fam'ly." She had put pride and conscience in her pocket, drawn rations and brought home her pork and codfish.

Revocation of permission for the reassembling of the Virginia Legislature was one of Mr. Lincoln's last, if not his last, act in the War Department. Stanton gave him no peace till it was written; he handed the paper to Mr. Stanton, saying: "There! I think that will suit you!" "No," said the Iron Chancellor of the Union. "It is not strong enough. It merely revokes your permission for the assembling of the rebel legislators. Some of these men will come to Richmond – are doubtless there now – in response to the call. You should prohibit the meeting." Which was done. Hence, the prohibitory order in the "Whig."

Mr. Lincoln wrote, April 14, to General Van Alen, of New York: "Thank you for the assurance you give me that I shall be supported by conservative men like yourself in the efforts I may use to restore the Union, so as to make it, to use your own language, a Union of hearts as well as of hands." General Van Alen had warned him against exposing himself in the South as he had done by visiting Richmond; and for this Mr. Lincoln thanked him briefly without admitting that there had been any peril. Laconically, he had thanked Stanton for concern expressed in a dispatch warning him to be careful about visiting Petersburg, adding, "I have already been there."

When serenaded the Tuesday before his death, he said, in speaking of the bringing of the Southern States into practical relations with the Union: "I believe it is not only possible, but easier to do this, without deciding, or even considering, whether these States have ever been out of the Union. Finding themselves safely at home, it would be utterly immaterial whether they had ever been abroad."

His last joke – the story-tellers say it was his last – was about "Dixie." General Lee's surrender had been announced; Washington was ablaze with excitement. Delirious multitudes surged to the White House, calling the President out for a speech. It was a moment for easy betrayal into words that might widen the breach between sections. He said in his quaint way that he had no speech ready, and concluded humorously: "I have always thought 'Dixie' one of the best tunes I ever heard. I insisted yesterday that we had fairly captured it. I presented the question to the Attorney-General and he gave his opinion that it is our lawful prize. I ask the band to give us a good turn upon it." In that little speech, he claimed of the South by right of conquest a song – and nothing more.

THE LAST CAPITAL

CHAPTER V
The Last Capital of the Confederacy

From Richmond, Mr. Davis went to Danville. Major Sutherlin, the Commandant, met him at the station and carried him and members of his Cabinet to the Sutherlin Mansion, which then became practically the Southern Capitol.

The President was busy night and day, examining and improving defenses and fortifications and planning the junction of Lee's and Johnston's forces. Men were seeking his presence at all hours; couriers coming and going; telegrams flying hither and thither.

"In the midst of turmoil, and with such fearful cares and responsibilities upon him, he did not forget to be thoughtful and considerate of others," I have heard Mrs. Sutherlin say. "He was concerned for me. 'I cannot have you troubled with so many interruptions,' he said. 'We must seek other quarters.' But I would not have it so. 'All that you call a burden is my privilege,' I replied. 'I will not let you go.' He had other quarters secured for the Departments, but he and members of his Cabinet remained my guests."

In that hospitable home the table was set all the time for the coming and the going. The board was spread with the best the bountiful host and hostess could supply. Mrs. Sutherlin brought out all her treasured reserves of pickles, sweetmeats and preserves. This might be her last opportunity for serving the Confederacy and its Chieftain.

The Sutherlins knew that the President's residence in their home was a perilous honour. In case the Confederacy failed – and hope to the contrary could not run high – their dwelling would be a marked spot.

Major Sutherlin had been a strong Union man. Mrs. Sutherlin has told me how her husband voted against secession in the first convention to which he was a delegate, and for it in the second, with deep regret. "I saw in that convention," he told his wife, "strong, reserved men, men of years and dignity, sign the Secession Ordinance while tears coursed down their cheeks."

It is just to rehearse such things of men who were called "traitors" and "rebels." It is just to remember how Jefferson Davis tried to prevent secession. His letters to New England societies, his speeches in New England and in Congress, testified to his deep and fervent desire for the "preservation of the bond between the States," the "love of the Union in our hearts," and "the landmarks of our fathers."

But he believed in States' Rights as fervently as in Union of States; he believed absorption of State sovereignty into central sovereignty a violation of the Constitution. Long before secession (1847) he declined appointment of Brigadier General of Mississippi Volunteers from President Polk on the ground that the central government was not vested by the Constitution with power to commission officers of State Militia, the State having this authority.[3]

Americans should not forget that this man entered the service of the Union when a lad; that his father and uncles fought in the Revolution, his brothers in the War of 1812. West Point holds trophies of his skill as a commander and of his superb gallantry on the fields of Mexico. That splendid charge without bayonets through the streets of Monterey almost to the Plaza, and the charge at Buena Vista, are themes to make American blood tingle! Their leader was not a man to believe in defeat as long as a ray of hope was left.

As Secretary of War of the United States, Mr. Davis strengthened the power that crushed the South; in every branch of the War Department, his genius and faithful and untiring service wrought

[3] In 1793, 1803, 1812-14, 1844-50, Northern States threatened to secede. Of Massachusetts' last movement Mr. Davis said in Congress: "It is her right." Nov. 1, Dec. 17, Feb. 23, 1860-61, the "New York Tribune" said: "We insist on letting the Cotton States go in peace … the right to secede exists."

improvements. In the days of giants like Webster, Clay and Calhoun, the brilliant Mississippian drew upon himself many eyes and his course had been watched as that of a bright particular star of great promise. The candidacy of Vice-President of the United States had been tendered him – he had been mentioned for the Presidency, and it is no wild speculation that had he abjured his convictions on the States' Rights' issue, he would have found himself some day in the seat Lincoln occupied. He has been accused of overweening ambition. The charge is not well sustained. He did not desire the Presidency of the Confederacy.

In 1861, "Harper's Weekly" said: "Personally, Senator Davis is the Bayard of Congress, *sans peur et sans reproche*; a high-minded gentleman; a devoted father; a true friend … emphatically one of those born to command, and is doubtless destined to occupy a high position either in the Southern Confederacy or in the United States." He was "gloriously linked with the United States service in the field, the forum, and the Cabinet." The Southern Confederacy failed, and he was "Davis, the Arch-Traitor."

"He wrote his last proclamation on this table," said Mrs. Sutherlin to me, her hand on the Egyptian marble where the President's fingers had traversed that final paper of state which expressed a confidence he could not have felt, but that he must have believed it duty to affirm. He had tried to make peace and had failed. Our armies were still in the field. A bold front on his part, if it could do no more, might enable our generals to secure better terms than unconditional surrender. At least, no worse could be tendered. That final message was the utterance of a brave soul, itself disheartened, trying to put heart into others. All along the way to Danville, people had flocked to the railroad to hear him, and he had spoken as he wrote.

He was an ill man, unutterably weary. He had borne the burden and heat of the day for four terrible years; he had been a target for the criticism even of his own people; all failures were laid at the door of this one man who was trying to run a government and conduct a war on an empty treasury. It must have cost him something to keep up an unwavering front.

Lieutenant Wise, son of General Henry A. Wise, brought news that Lee's surrender was imminent; on learning of it, he had taken to horse and run through the enemy's cavalry, to warn the President. Starvation had brought Lee's army to bay. Men were living off grains of parched corn carried in their pockets. Sheridan's cavalry had captured the wagon-trains of food supplies. Also, the President was called from the dinner-table to see an old citizen, who repeated a story from some one who had seen General Lee in General Grant's tent. Other information followed.

Scouts came to say that Federal cavalry were advancing. There was danger that the President's way to the South might be cut off, danger that he might be captured. All were in haste to get him away; a special train was made up. The Sutherlin carriage drove hurriedly to the Mansion, the President and Major Sutherlin got out and entered the house.

"I am to bid you goodbye," said he to Mrs. Sutherlin, "and to thank you for your kindness. I shall ever remember it."

"O, but it is a privilege – an honour – something for me to remember!"

As explanations were being made and preparations hastened, the President said: "Speak low, lest we excite Mr. Memminger or distress his wife more than need be."

Mr. Memminger, ex-Secretary of the Treasury, was upstairs, very ill; the physician had just left after giving him a hypodermic of morphine and ordering absolute quiet. Friends decided that the sick man and his wife ran less risk in remaining than in following the President. But Mrs. Memminger, leaning over the balustrade, heard; and she and her husband came down and went after the President in a rude farm wagon, the only vehicle Mrs. Sutherlin could impress.

"Mr. Davis kept up a cheerful countenance the whole time he was here," his hostess has borne witness, "but I was sure that deep down in his heart he was not cheerful – I felt it. He was brave, self-possessed. Only once did he betray evidence of break-down. When he was leaving, I knew that he had no money in his pockets except Confederate notes – and these would buy next to nothing. We

had some gold, and I offered it to him, pressed it upon him. He shook his head. Tears came into his eyes. 'No, no, my child,' he said, 'you and your husband are much younger than I am. You will need it. I will not.' Mr. Davis did not expect to live long. He was sure he would be killed."

When General Sherman was accused by Stanton of treachery because he was not hotter on the scent of "Jeff Davis and his $13,000,000 treasure-trains," he retorted indignantly that those "treasure-trains dwindled down to the contents of a hand-valise" found on Mr. Davis when captured.

Mrs. Sutherlin pointed out to me the President's sleeping-room, an upper chamber overlooking the lawn with its noble trees, in whose branches mocking-birds lodge. At his first breakfast with her, Mr. Davis told Mrs. Sutherlin how the songs of the mocking-birds refreshed him.

Another thing that cheered him in Danville was the enthusiasm of the school-girls of the Southern Female College; when these young ladies, in their best homespun gowns, went out on dress parade and beheld Mr. Davis riding by in Major Sutherlin's carriage, they drew themselves up in line, waved handkerchiefs and cheered to their hearts' content; he gave them his best bow and smile – that dignified, grave bow and smile his people knew so well. I have always been thankful for that bright bit in Mr. Davis' life during those supremely trying hours – for the songs of the mocking-birds and the cheers of the school-girls.

Some weeks after his departure, General Wright, U. S. A., in formal possession of Danville, pitched his tent opposite the Sutherlin Mansion. The next Mrs. Sutherlin knew, an orderly was bearing in a large pitcher, another a big bowl, and between them General Wright's compliments and his hopes "that you may find this lemonade refreshing" and "be pleased to accept this white cut sugar, as the drink may not be sweet enough for your taste." Another day, an orderly appeared with a large, juicy steak; every short while orderlies came making presentation.

The Sutherlins accepted and returned courtesies. "We had as well be polite," said Major Sutherlin. "There's no use quarrelling with them because they have whipped us." When they came to him for official information as to where Confederate Government ice-houses were, he responded: "It is not my business to give you this information. Your commanders can find out for themselves. Meanwhile, General Wright and his staff are welcome to ice out of my own ice-houses." They found out for themselves with little delay.

On the verandah where the Confederate President and his advisers had lately gathered, Federal officers sat at ease, smoking sociably and conversing with the master of the house. If a meal-hour arrived, Major Sutherlin would say: "Gentlemen, will you join us?" Usually, invitation was accepted. Social recognition was the one thing the Northern soldier could not conquer in the South by main strength and awkwardness; he coveted and appreciated it.

All were listening for tidings of Johnston's surrender. At last the news came. Around the Sutherlin board one day sat six guests: three Federal officers in fine cloth and gold lace, three Confederate officers in shabby raiment. A noise as of a terrific explosion shook the house. "Throw up the windows!" said the mistress to her servants, an ordinary command when shattering of glass by concussion was an every-day occurrence in artillery-ridden Dixie. Save for this sentence, there was complete silence at the table. The officers laid down their knives and forks and said not one word. They knew that those guns announced the surrender of Johnston's army. I suppose it was the salute of 200 – the same that had been ordered at every post as glorification of Lee's surrender.

Some time after this, Mayor Walker came to Major Sutherlin with a telegram announcing that General Meade and his staff would stop in Danville over night. They had been or were going to South Carolina on a mission of relief to whites who were in peril from blacks. At the Mayor's request, Major Sutherlin met the officers at the train.

"General," was his cordial greeting to General Meade, a splendid-looking officer at that day, "I am here to claim you and your staff as my guests." General Meade, accepting, said: "I will have my ambulance bring us up." "O, no, General! You come in my carriage, if you will do me that honour. It is waiting."

At breakfast, General Meade said to his hostess: “Madam, Southern hospitality has not been praised too highly. I trust some day to see you North that I may have opportunity to match your courtesy.” Another time: “Madam, I trust that no misfortune will come to you because of the troubled state of our country. But if there should, I may be of service to you. You have only to command me, and I ask it as a favour that you will.”

A Northern friend had warned her: “Mrs. Sutherlin, I fear your property may be confiscated because of the uses to which it has been put in the service of the Confederate Government. You should take advantage of General Wright’s good will and of the good will of other Federal officers towards Major Sutherlin to make your title secure.” Did she ask General Meade now to save her home to her?

“General, hospitality is our privilege and you owe us no debt. But I beg you to extend the kindly feelings you express toward Major Sutherlin and myself to one who lately sat where you now sit, at my right hand. I would ask you to use your influence to secure more gracious hospitality to our President who is in prison.”

Dead silence. One could have heard a pin fall.

Wholesale confiscation of Greensboro was threatened because of Mr. Davis’ stop there. Major Sutherlin strove with tact and diligence to prevent it. He lost no opportunity to cultivate kindly relations with Northerners of influence, and to inaugurate a reign of good-will generally. Receiving a telegram saying that Colonel Buford, a Northern officer, and his party, would pass through Danville, the Major went to his wife and said: “I am going to invite those Yankees here. I want you to get up the finest dinner you can for them.” Feeling was high and sore; she did not smile. The day of their arrival he appeared in trepidation. “I have another telegram,” he said. “To my surprise, there are ladies in the party.”

This was too much for the honest “rebel” soul of her. Men she could avoid seeing except at table; but with ladies for her guests, more olive branches must be exchanged than genuine feeling between late enemies could possibly warrant. But her guests found her a perfect hostess, grave, sincere, hospitable.

There was a young married pair. When her faithful coloured man went up to their rooms to render service, they were afraid of him, were careful he should not enter, seemed to fear that of himself or as the instrument of his former owners he might do them injury.

Such queer, contradictory ideas Yankees had of us and our black people. A Northern girl visiting the niece of Alexander H. Stephens at a plantation where there were many negroes, asked: “Where are the blood-hounds?” “The blood-hounds! We haven’t any.” “How do you manage the negroes without them? I thought all Southerners kept blood-hounds – that only blood-hounds could keep negroes from running away.” “I never saw a blood-hound in my life,” Miss Stephens replied. “I don’t know what one is like. None of our friends keep blood-hounds.”

But to the Sutherlin Mansion. The bride asked: “Mrs. Sutherlin, what room did Mr. Davis occupy?”

“That in which you sleep.”

The bride was silent. Then: “It is a pleasant room. The mocking-birds are singing when we wake in the morning. Sometimes, I hear them in the night.”

A shadow fell on the hostess’ face. The words recalled the thought of Mr. Davis, now shut out from the sight of the sky and the voice of the birds.

It has been said of this or that place at which Mr. Davis, moving southward from Danville, stopped, that it was the “Last Capital of the Confederacy.” He held a Cabinet meeting in Colonel Wood’s house in Greensboro; was in Charlotte several days; held a Cabinet meeting or council of war in the Armistead Burt House, Abbeville, S. C.; and in the Old Bank, Washington, Ga. He said in council at Abbeville: “I will listen to no proposition for my safety. I appeal to you for our country.”

He stopped one night at Salisbury, with the Episcopal minister, whose little daughter ran in while all were at the breakfast-table, and standing between her father and Mr. Davis, cried out in

childish terror and distress: “O, Papa, old Lincoln’s coming and is going to kill us all!” President Davis laid down his knife and fork, lifted her face, and said reassuringly: “No, no, my little lady! Mr. Lincoln is not such a bad man, and I am sure he would not harm a little girl like you.”

While the President was at Charlotte, there was another memorable peace effort, Sherman and Johnston arranging terms. Johnston’s overture was dated April 13; Sherman’s reply, “I am fully empowered to arrange with you any terms for the suspension of hostilities,” April 14, the last day of Lincoln’s life. Mr. Davis wrote General Johnston: “Your course is approved.” Mr. Stanton nearly branded Sherman as a traitor. Sherman gave Johnston notice that he must renew hostilities. Mr. Davis left Charlotte, thinking war still on.

In Washington, Ga., the first town in America named for the Father of his Country, the Confederate Government breathed its last. A quiet, picturesque, little place, out of track of the armies, it was suddenly shaken with excitement, when Mr. Davis, attended by his personal staff, several distinguished officers, besides a small cavalry escort, rode in.

Mrs. Davis had left the day before. As long as her wagons and ambulances had stood in front of Dr. Ficklen’s house, the people of Washington were calling upon her; first among them, General Toombs with cordial offers of aid and hospitality, though there had been sharp differences between him and Mr. Davis. Here, it may be said, she held her last reception as the First Lady of the Confederacy. She had expected to meet her husband, and went away no doubt heavy of heart – herself, her baby, Winnie, and her other little children, and her sister, Maggie Howell, again to be wanderers of woods and waysides. With them went a devoted little band of Confederate soldiers, their volunteer escort, Burton Harrison, the President’s secretary, and one or two negro servants whose devotion never faltered.

On a lovely May morning, people sat on the Bank piazza asking anxiously: “Where can Mr. Davis be?” “Is he already captured and killed?” Dr. Robertson, an officer of the bank, and his family lived in the building. With them was General Elzey, on parole, his wife and son. Kate Joyner Robertson and her brother, Willie, sixteen years old and a Confederate Veteran, were on the piazza; also David Faver, seventeen, and a Confederate Veteran; these boys were members of the Georgia Military Institute Battalion. A description of this battalion was recently given me by Mr. Faver:

“There were as many negroes – body-servants – in our ranks as boys when we started out, spick and span. We saw actual service; guarded the powder magazines at Augusta and Savannah, fought the Yankees at Chattanooga, stood in front of Sherman in South Carolina. Young Scott Todd lost his arm – Dr. Todd, of Atlanta, carries around that empty sleeve today. I bore handsome Tom Hamilton off the field when he was shot. I was just fifteen when I went in; some were younger. Henry Cabaniss and Julius Brown were the smallest boys in the army. We were youngsters who ought to have been in knee pants, but the G. M. I. never quailed before guns or duty! I remember (laughing) when we met the Cits in Charleston. They were all spick and span – ‘Citadel Cadets’ blazoned all over them and their belongings. We were all tattered and torn, nothing of the G. M. I. left about us! Rags was the stamp of the regular, and we ‘guyed’ the Cits. We had seen fighting and they had not.” Sixteen-year-old Lint Stephens, Vice-President Stephens’ nephew, was of this juvenile warrior band. On the occasion of his sudden appearance at home to prepare for war, Mr. Stephens asked what he had quit school for. “To fight for the fair sex,” he replied. And to this day some people think we fought to keep negroes in slavery!

A “Georgia Cracker” rode in from the Abbeville road, drew rein before the bank, and saluting, drawled: “Is you’uns seen any soldiers roun’ here?” There were Confederate uniforms on the piazza. “What kind of soldiers?” he was asked, and General Elzey said: “My friend, you have betrayed yourself by that military salute. You are no ignorant countryman, but a soldier yourself.” The horseman spurred close to the piazza. “Are there any Yankees in town?” “None. Tell us, do you know anything about President Davis?” After a little more questioning, the horseman said: “President Davis is not an hour’s ride from here.”

The piazza was all excitement. “Where should the President be entertained?” Ordinarily, General Toombs was municipal host. Everybody is familiar with the reply he made to a committee consulting him about erecting a hotel in Washington: “We have no need of one. When respectable people come here, they can stop at my house. If they are not respectable, we do not want them at all.” Everybody knew that all he had was at the President’s command. But – there had been the unpleasantness. “Bring the President here,” Mrs. Robertson said promptly. Dr. Robertson added: “As a government building, this is the proper place.” Willie Robertson, commissioned to convey the invitation, rode off with the courier, the envy of every other G. M. I. in town. The little “Bats” were ready to go to war again.

Soon, the President dismounted in front of the bank. Mrs. Faver (Kate Joyner Robertson that was) says: “He wore a full suit of Confederate gray. He looked worn, sad, and troubled; said he was tired and went at once to his room. My mother sent a cup of tea to him. That afternoon, or next morning, all the people came to see him. He stood in the parlor door, they filed in, shook hands, and passed out.” So, in Washington, he held his last Presidential reception.

“To hear Mr. Davis,” Mr. Faver reports, “you would have no idea that he considered the cause lost. He spoke hopefully of our yet unsurrendered forces. Secretary Reagan, General St. John and Major Raphael J. Moses were General Toombs’ guests. That night after supper, they walked to the bank; my father’s house was opposite General Toombs’. I walked behind them. I think they held what has been called the Last Cabinet Meeting that night.”

Mr. Trenholm, too ill to travel, had stopped at Charlotte; Secretary of State Benjamin had left Mr. Davis that morning; at Washington, Secretary of the Navy Mallory went; Secretary of War Breckinridge, whom he was expecting, did not come on time. News reached him of Johnston’s surrender. General Upton had passed almost through Washington on his way to receive the surrender of Augusta. The President perceived his escort’s peril. To their commander, Captain Campbell, he said: “Your company is too large to pass without observation, and not strong enough to fight. See if there are ten men in it who will volunteer to go with me without question wherever I choose?” Captain Campbell reported: “All volunteer to go with Your Excellency.”

He was deeply touched, but would not suffer them to take the risk. With ten men selected by Captain Campbell, and his personal staff, he rode out of Washington, the people weeping as they watched him go. When he was mounting, Rev. Dr. Tupper, the Baptist minister, approached him, uttering words of comfort and encouragement. “‘Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him,’” the President responded gently. He had made disposition of most of his personal belongings, giving the china in his mess-chest to Colonel Weems, the chest to General McLaws; to Mrs. Robertson his ink-stand, table, dressing-case, some tea, coffee, and brandy, portions of which she still retained when last I heard; the dressing-case and ink-stand she had sent to the Confederate Museum at Richmond.

His last official order was written at the old bank; it appointed Captain H. M. Clarke Acting Treasurer of the Confederacy. The last Treasury Department was an old appletree at General Basil Duke’s camp a short distance from Washington, under whose shade Captain Clarke sat while he paid out small amounts in coin to the soldiers. General Duke’s Kentuckians, Mr. Davis’ faithful last guard, were the remnant of John H. Morgan’s famous command.

Soon after his departure, the treasure-train, or a section of it, reached Washington. Boxes of bullion were stored in the bank; Mrs. Faver remembers that officers laughingly told her and her sisters if they would lift one of the boxes, they might have all the gold in it; and they tried, but O, how heavy it was! She recalls some movement on the part of her parents to convey the treasure to Abbeville, but this was not practicable.

“It was a fitting conclusion of the young Government … that it marked its last act of authority by a thoughtful loyalty to the comfort of its penniless and starved defenders,” says Avery’s “History of Georgia,” commenting on the fact that under that act Major Raphael J. Moses conveyed to Augusta

bullion exceeding $35,000, delivering it to General Molineux on the promise that it would be used to purchase food and other necessaries for needy Confederate soldiers and our sick in hospitals.

Soon after the treasure-train left Washington, some one galloped back and flung into General Toombs' yard a bag containing $5,000 in gold. The General was in straits for money with which to flee the country, but swore with a great round oath he would use no penny of this mysterious gift, and turned it over to Major Moses, who committed it to Captain Abrahams, Federal Commissary, for use in relieving needy Confederates home-returning. At Greensboro, General Joseph E. Johnston had taken $39,000 for his soldiers. There have been many stories about this treasure-train.[4] It carried no great fortune, and Mr. Davis was no beneficiary. He meant to use it in carrying on the war.

The point has been made that Mr. Davis should have remained in Richmond and made terms. Since governments were governments, no ruler has followed the course that would have been. He thought it traitorous to surrender the whole Confederacy because the Capital was lost. Even after Lee's surrender the Confederacy had armies in the field, and a vast domain farther south where commanders believed positions could be held. He believed it would be cowardly to fail them, and that it was his duty to move the seat of government from place to place through the Confederacy as long as there was an army to sustain the government. To find precedent, one has but to turn to European history. In England, the rightful prince has been chased all over the country and even across the channel. Mr. Davis believed in the righteousness of his cause; and that it was his duty to stand for it to the death.

His determination, on leaving Washington, was to reach the armies of Maury, Forrest, and Taylor in Alabama and Mississippi; if necessary, withdraw these across the Mississippi, uniting with Kirby-Smith and Magruder in Texas, a section "rich in supplies and lacking in railroads and waterways." There the concentrated forces might hold their own until the enemy "should, in accordance with his repeated declaration, have agreed, on the basis of a return to the Union, to acknowledge the Constitutional rights of the States, and by a convention, or quasi-treaty, to guarantee security of person and property." What Judge Campbell thought could be secured by submission, Mr. Davis was confident could only be attained by keeping in the field a military force whose demands the North, weary of war, might respect. What he sought to do for his people in one way, Judge Campbell sought to do in another. Both failed.

While Mr. Davis was riding out of Washington, Generals Taylor and Maury, near Meridian, Mississippi, were arranging with General Canby, U. S. A., for the surrender of all the Confederate forces in Alabama and Mississippi. These generals were dining together and the bands were playing "Hail Columbia" and "Dixie."

THE COUNSEL OF LEE

[4] For full statement, see Captain H. M. Clarke's paper in Southern Hist. Society Paper, Vol. 9, pp. 542-556, and Paymaster John F. Whieless' report, Vol. 10, 137.

CHAPTER VI
The Counsel of Lee

"A few days after the occupation, some drunken soldiers were heard talking in the back yard to our negroes, and it was gathered from what they said that the Federals were afraid General Lee had formed an ambuscade somewhere in the neighbourhood of the city, and that he might fall upon them at any time and deliver Richmond out of their hands. How our people wished it might be so!" Matoaca relates. "Do not buoy yourself up with that hope, my dear," said her monitor. "There's no hope save in the mercy of our conquerors. General Lee is a great soldier, an extraordinary tactician, but he cannot do the impossible. Our army cannot go on fighting forever without money and without food."

When our beloved general came home, the doctrine he taught by precept and example was that of peace. "The stainless sword of Lee" had been laid down in good faith. We had fought a good fight, we had failed, we must accept the inevitable, we must not lose heart, we must work for our country's welfare in peace. The very first heard of him in his modest, unheralded home-returning, he was teaching this.

Young William McCaw, his courier for four years, rode in with him; and General Lee, before going to his own home, delivered William, safe and sound, to his father. Dr. McCaw came out when they stopped in front of his door, and General Lee said:

"Here, Doctor, is your boy. I've brought him home to you."

William was standing beside Traveller, his arm clasped around General Lee's leg, and crying as if his heart would break. The General put his hand on William's head and said:

"No more fighting – that's all over. You've been a good fighter, Will – now I want to see you work for your country's welfare in peace. Be a good boy. I expect a fine Christian manhood of you. Goodbye," and he rode away to his own home, where his invalid wife awaited him.

It was good to have them home again, our men in gray; good though they came gaunt and footsore, ragged and empty-handed. And glad was the man in gray to cross his own threshold, though the wolf was at the door. Our men were ready enough for peace when peace – or what they mistook for peace – came; that is, the mass of them were. They had fought and starved their fill. The cries of destitute women and children called them home. They had no time to pause and cavil over lost issues, or to forge new occasions for quarrel. All they asked now was a chance to make meat and bread and raiment for themselves and those dependent on them.

Yet some young spirits were restive, would have preferred death to surrender. The lesson of utter submission came hard. The freeborn American, fearless of shot and shell, and regarding free speech as his birthright, found the task of keeping close watch over his tongue difficult. General Lee knew the mettle of the fiery young courier to whom he uttered the parting words that have been recorded. To many another youth just out of armor, he gave the same pacific counsel:

"We have laid down the sword. Work for a united country."

One high-strung lad seeing a Federal soldier treat a lady rudely on the street (a rare happening in Richmond), knocked him down, and was arrested. The situation was serious. The young man's father went to General Ord and said: "See here, General, that boy's hot from the battle-field. He doesn't know anything but to fight." General Ord's response was: "I'll arrange this matter for you. And you get this boy out of the city tonight."

There happened to be staying in the same house with some of our friends, a young Confederate, Captain Wharton, who had come on sick leave to Richmond before the evacuation, and who, after that event, was very imprudent in expressing his mind freely on the streets, a perilous thing to do in those days. His friends were concerned for his safety. Suddenly he disappeared. Nobody knew what

had become of him. Natural conclusion was that free speech had gotten him into trouble. At last a message came: “Please send me something to eat. I am in prison.”

Ladies came to know if Matoaca would be one of a committee to wait on the Provost-Marshal General in his behalf. She agreed, and the committee set out for the old Custom House where the Federals held court. They were admitted at once to General Patrick’s presence. He was an elderly gentleman, polite, courteous. “I was surprised,” says Matoaca, “because I had expected to see something with hoof and horns.”

“General,” she said, “we have come to see you about a young gentleman, our friend, Captain Wharton. He is in prison, and we suppose the cause of his arrest was imprudent speech. He has been ill for some time, and is too feeble to bear with safety the hardships and confinement of prison life. If we can secure his release, we will make ourselves responsible for his conduct.” She finished her little speech breathless. She saw the glimmer of a smile way down in his eyes. “I know nothing about the case,” he said kindly. “Of course, I can not know personally of all that transpires. But I will inquire into this matter, and see what can be done for this young gentleman.” Soon after, Captain Wharton called on Matoaca. She could hardly have left General Patrick’s presence before an orderly was dispatched for his release.

Friction resulted from efforts to ram the oath down everybody’s throat at once. I recite this instance because of the part General Lee took and duplicated in multitudes of cases. Captain George Wise was called before the Provost to take the oath. “Why must I take it?” asked he. “My parole covers the ground. I will not.” “You fought under General Lee, did you not?” “Yes. And surrendered with him, and gave my parole. To require this oath of me is to put an indignity upon me and my general.” “I will make a bargain with you, Captain. Consult General Lee and abide by his decision.”

The captain went to the Lee residence, where he was received by Mrs. Lee, who informed him that her husband was ill, but would see him. The general was lying on a lounge, pale, weary-looking, but fully dressed, in his gray uniform, the three stars on his collar; the three stars – to which any Confederate colonel was entitled – was the only insignia of rank he ever wore. “They want me to take this thing, General,” said the captain, extending a copy of the oath. “My parole covers it, and I do not think it should be required of me. What would you advise?”

“I would advise you to take it,” he said quietly. “It is absurd that it should be required of my soldiers, for, as you say, the parole practically covers it. Nevertheless, take it, I should say.” “General, I feel that this is submission to an indignity. If I must continue to swear the same thing over at every street corner, I will seek another country where I can at least preserve my self-respect.”

General Lee was silent for a few minutes. Then he said, quietly as before, a deep touch of sadness in his voice: “Do not leave Virginia. Our country needs her young men now.”

When the captain told Henry A. Wise that he had taken the oath, the ex-governor said: “You have disgraced the family!” “General Lee advised me to do it.” “Oh, that alters the case. Whatever General Lee says is all right, I don’t care what it is.”

The North regarded General Lee with greater respect and kindness than was extended to our other leaders. A friendly reporter interviewed him, and bold but temperate utterances in behalf of the South appeared in the “New York Herald” as coming from General Lee. Some of the remarks were very characteristic, proving this newspaper man a faithful scribe. When questioned about the political situation, General Lee had said: “I am no politician. I am a soldier – a paroled prisoner.” Urged to give his opinion and advised that it might have good effect, he responded:

“The South has for a long time been anxious for peace. In my earnest belief, peace was practicable two years ago, and has been since that time whenever the general government should see fit to give any reasonable chance for the country to escape the consequences which the exasperated North seemed ready to visit upon it. They have been looking for some word or expression of compromise and conciliation from the North upon which they might base a return to the Union, their own views being considered. The question of slavery did not lie in the way at all. The best men of the South have

long desired to do away with the institution and were quite willing to see it abolished. But with them in relation to this subject, the question has ever been: 'What will you do with the freed people?' That is the serious question today. Unless some humane course based upon wisdom and Christian principles is adopted, you do them a great injustice in setting them free." He plead for moderation towards the South as the part of wisdom as well as mercy. Oppression would keep the spirit of resistance alive. He did not think men of the South would engage in guerilla warfare as some professed to fear, but it was best not to drive men to desperation. "If a people see that they are to be crushed, they sell their lives as dearly as possible." He spoke of the tendency towards expatriation, deploring it as a misfortune to our common country at a time when one section needed building up so badly, and had, at the best, a terribly depleted force of young, strong men. Throughout, he spoke of the North and South as "we," and expressed his own great willingness to contribute in every way in his power to the establishment of the communal peace and prosperity.

A brave thing for a "rebel" officer to do, he spoke out for Mr. Davis. "What has Mr. Davis done more than any other Southerner that he should be singled out for persecution? He did not originate secession, is not responsible for its beginning; he opposed it strenuously in speech and writing."

Wherever he appeared in Richmond, Federal soldiers treated him with respect. As for our own people, to the day of his death Richmond stood uncovered when General Lee came there and walked the streets. If, as he passed along, he laid his hand on a child's head, the child never forgot it. His words with our young men were words of might, and the cause of peace owes to him a debt that the Peace Angel of the Union will not forget.

"THE SADDEST GOOD FRIDAY"

CHAPTER VII
"The Saddest Good Friday"

In Matoaca's little devotional note-book, I read: "Good Friday, 1865. This is the saddest Good Friday I ever knew. I have spent the whole day praying for our stricken people, our crushed Southland." "The saddest Good Friday I ever knew"; nearly every man and woman in the South might have said that with equal truth.

Her "Journal" of secular events contains a long entry for April 14; it is as if she had poured out all her woes on paper. For the most part it is a tale of feminine trivialities, of patching and mending. "Unless I can get work and make some money," she writes, "we must stay indoors for decency's sake." Her shoes have holes in them: "They are but shoes I cobbled out of bits of stout cloth." The soles are worn so thin her feet are almost on the ground. The family is suffering for food and for all necessaries. "O God, what can I do!" she cries, "I who have never been taught any work that seems to be needed now! Who is there to pay me for the few things I know how to do? I envy our negroes who have been trained to occupations that bring money; they can hire out to the Yankees, and I can't. Our negroes are leaving us. We had to advise them to go. Cato will not. 'Me lef' Mars Ran?' he cried, 'I couldn' think uv it, Miss Mato'ca!'"

Woes of friends and neighbours press upon her heart. Almost every home has, like her own, its empty chair, its hungry mouths, its bare larder, though some are accepting relief from the Christian Commission or from Federal officers. Of loved ones in prison, they hear no tidings; from kindred in other parts of the South, receive no sign. There are no railroads, no mail service. In the presence of the conquerors, they walk softly and speak with bated breath. The evening paper publishes threats of arrest for legislators who may come to town obedient to the call Judge Campbell issued with Mr. Lincoln's approval.

Good Friday was a day of joy and gladness North. From newspapers opened eagerly in radiant family circles men read out such headlines as these: "War Costs Over. Government Orders Curtailing Further Purchase of Arms, Ammunition and Commissary Stores." "Drafting and Recruiting Stopped." "Military Restrictions on Trade and Commerce Modified." Selma, Alabama, with its rich stores of Confederate cotton, was captured. Mr. Lincoln's conciliatory policy was commented on as "a wise and sagacious move." Thursday's stock market had been bullish.

Rachel weeping for her children was comforted because they had not died in vain. Larders were not bare, clothes were not lacking. The fastings and prayers of the devout were full of praise and thanksgiving. For the undevout, Good Friday was a feast day and a day of jollification.

In Charleston, South Carolina, gaping with scars of shot and shell of her long, long, siege, the roses and oleanders and palmettoes strove to cover with beauty the wounds of war, and in their fragrance to breathe nature's sympathy and faithfulness. Her own desolate people kept within doors. The streets were thronged with a cheerful, well-clad crowd; the city was overflowing with Northern men and women of distinction. In the bay lay Dahlgren's fleet, gay flags all a-flying. On land and water bands played merrily.

Fort Sumter's anniversary was to be celebrated. The Union flag was to be raised over the ruined pile by General Robert Anderson, who had lost the fort in 1861. In the company duly assembled were Henry Ward Beecher, Theodore Tilton, William Lloyd Garrison, Rev. Dr. Storrs. Mr. Beecher uttered words of kindly sentiment towards the South. He gave God thanks for preserving Lincoln's life, accepting this as a token of divine favor to the Nation. Dr. Storrs read: "'When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.'" The people: "'Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing.'" And so on through the 126th Psalm. Then: "'Some trust

in chariots and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.'" And: "'They are brought low and fallen, but we are risen and stand upright.'"

"The Star-Spangled Banner" was sung, and the guns of Dahlgren's fleet thundered honours to the Stars and Stripes, which, rising slowly and gracefully, fluttered out in triumph against the Southern sky. At sunset, guns boomed again, proud signal to the ending of the perfect day. The city, silent and sad as far as its own people were concerned, rang with the strangers' joyaunce. Social festivities ruled the hour. General Gillmore entertained at a great banquet. The bay was ablaze with fireworks; all forts were alight; the beautiful Sea Islands, whose owners roamed in destitute exile, gleamed in shining circle, the jewels of the sea.

The 14th was a red-letter day in the National Capital. Everything spoke of victory and gladness. Washington held the two idols of the North – Lincoln and Grant. It was Mr. Lincoln's perfect hour. He went about with a quiet smile on his face. The family breakfast at the White House was very happy; Captain Robert Lincoln was visiting his parents. General Grant was present at the Cabinet meeting during the forenoon, Mr. Lincoln's last. These are some of the President's words:

"I think it providential that this great rebellion is crushed just as Congress has adjourned and there are none of the disturbing elements of that body to hinder and embarrass us. If we are wise and discreet we shall reanimate the States and get their governments in successful operation with order prevailing, and the Union reëstablished before Congress comes together in December. I hope there will be no persecution, no bloody work, after the war is over. No one need expect me to take any part in hanging or killing these men. Enough lives have been sacrificed. We must extinguish resentment if we expect harmony and Union. There is too great a disposition on the part of some of our very good friends to be masters, to interfere with and dictate to these States, to treat the people not as fellow-citizens; there is too little respect for their rights." He made it plain that he meant the words of his second inaugural address, hardly six weeks before, when he promised that his mission should be "to bind up the wounds of the Nation."

"Very cheerful and very hopeful," Mr. Stanton reported, "spoke very kindly of General Lee and others of the Confederacy, and of the establishment of the Government of Virginia." Also, he spoke of the state government in Louisiana, and that which he had mapped out for North Carolina. General Grant was uneasy about Sherman and Johnston. The President said: "I have no doubt that favourable news will come. I had a dream last night, my usual dream which has preceded every important event of the war. I seemed to be on a singular and indescribable vessel, always the same, moving with great rapidity toward a dark and indefinite shore."

He did not know that on that day Sherman was writing Johnston, "I am empowered to make terms of peace." But he knew he had so empowered Sherman. I can imagine that through his heart the refrain was beating: "There will be no more bloodshed, no more devastation. There shall be no more humiliations for this Southern people, and God will give it into my hands to reunite my country."

He went for a long, quiet drive with his wife. "Mary," he said, "we have had a hard time of it since we came to Washington; but the war is over, and with God's blessing we may hope for four years of peace and happiness. Then we will go back to Illinois and pass the rest of our days in quiet." He longed for quiet. The Sabbath before, while driving along the banks of the James, he said: "Mary, when I die, I would like to lie in a quiet place like this," and related a dream which he felt to be presage of death.

Sailing on the James, he read aloud twice, and in a manner that impressed Charles Sumner, who was present, this passage from Macbeth:

> "'Duncan is in his grave;
> After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;
> Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,
> Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,

Can touch him further.'"

He was going, safe and whole, from the land of "rebels" to Washington. "We have had a hard time in Washington, Mary." Read Sherman's "Memoirs," and see what little liking great Federal generals had for journeys to Washington; how for peace and safety, they preferred their battle-fields to the place where politicians were wire-pulling and spreading nets.

The conclusion to his perfect day was a box in Ford's Theatre, his wife and a pair of betrothed lovers for company; on the stage Laura Keene in "Our American Cousin." The tragic sequel is indelibly impressed on the brain of every American – the people leaning forward, absorbed in the play, the handsome, slender figure of young Wilkes Booth moving with easy, assured grace towards the President's box, the report of the pistol, the leap of Booth to the stage, falling as the flag caught his foot, rising, brandishing his weapon and crying: "*Sic Semper Tyrannis!*", his escape with a broken ankle through the confused crowds; the dying President borne out to the boarding-house on Tenth Street.

Seward's life was attempted the same evening by Booth's confederate, Lewis Payne, who penetrated to the Secretary's sick-room and wounded him and his son; Payne escaped. General Grant's death was a part of the plot; he and Mrs. Grant had declined invitation to share the President's box, and started west; Mr. Stanton's murder was also intended; but he escaped, scathless of body but bitterer of soul than ever, bitterer than Mr. Seward, who was wounded.

In a letter which Matoaca wrote years afterward, she said: "I well remember the horror that thrilled our little circle when the news came. 'Now, may God have mercy on us!' Uncle exclaimed. He sat silent for a while and then asked: 'Can it be possible that any of our own people could do this thing? Some misguided fanatic?' And then, after a silence: 'Can some enemy of the South have done it? Some enemy of the South who had a grudge against Lincoln, too?' 'What sort of secret service could they have had in Washington that this thing could happen? How was it that the crippled assassin was able to make his escape?' he said when full accounts appeared. The explanations given never explained to him.

"I heard some speak who thought it no more than just retribution upon Mr. Lincoln for the havoc he had wrought in our country. But even the few who spoke thus were horrified when details came. We could not be expected to grieve, from any sense of personal affection, for Mr. Lincoln, whom we had seen only in the position of an implacable foe at the head of a power invading and devastating our land; but our reprobation of the crime of his taking off was none the less. Besides, we did not know what would be done to us. Already there had been talk of trying our officers for treason, of executing them, of exiling them, and in this talk Andrew Johnson had been loudest.

"I remember how one poor woman took the news. She was half-crazed by her losses and troubles; one son had been killed in battle, another had died in prison, of another she could not hear if he were living or dead; her house had been burned; her young daughter, turned out with her in the night, had died of fright and exposure. She ran in, crying: 'Lincoln has been killed! thank God!' Next day she came, still and pale: 'I have prayed it all out of my heart,' she said, 'that is, I'm not glad. But, somehow, I *can't* be sorry. I believe it was the vengeance of the Lord.'"

Jefferson Davis heard of Lincoln's death in Charlotte. A tablet in that beautiful and historic city marks the spot where he stood. He had just arrived from Greensboro, was dismounting, citizens were welcoming him when the dispatch signed by Secretary of War Breckinridge was handed him by Major John Courtney. Mrs. Courtney, the Major's widow, told me that her husband heard the President say: "Oh, the pity of it!" He passed it to a gentleman with the remark, "Here are sad tidings." The Northern press reported that Jefferson Davis cheered when he heard of Lincoln's death.

Mrs. Davis, at the Armistead Burt House, Abbeville, received a message from her husband announcing his arrival in Charlotte and telling of the assassination. Mrs. Davis "burst into tears, which

flowed from sorrow and a thorough realization of the inevitable results to the Confederates," – her own words.

General Johnston and General Sherman were in Mr. Bennett's house near Raleigh. Just before starting to this meeting, General Sherman received a dispatch announcing Mr. Lincoln's assassination. He placed it in his pocket, and, as soon as they were alone, handed it to General Johnston, watching him narrowly. "He did not attempt to conceal his distress," General Sherman relates. "The perspiration came out in large drops on his forehead." His horror and detestation of the deed broke forth; he earnestly hoped General Sherman would not charge this crime to the Confederacy. "I explained," states General Sherman, "that I had not yet revealed the news to my own personal staff or to the army, and that I dreaded the effect when it was made known." He feared that "a worse fate than that of Columbia would befall" Raleigh, particularly if some "foolish man or woman should say or do something that would madden his men." He took pains when making the calamity known to assure his army that he did not consider the South responsible.

Mr. Davis, under arrest, and on the way to Macon, heard that Andrew Johnson had offered a reward of $100,000 for his arrest, charging him, Clement C. Clay and other prominent Southerners with "inciting, concerting, procuring" the "atrocious murder" of President Lincoln. Between threatening soldiery, displaying the proclamation and shouting over his capture, Mr. Davis and his family rode and walked.

At Macon, General Wilson received him with courtesy; when the proclamation was mentioned, Mr. Davis said one person at least in the United States knew the charge to be false, and that was the man who signed it, for Andrew Johnson knew that he preferred Lincoln to himself.

In Augusta, Colonel Randall (author of "Maryland, My Maryland"), meeting Clement C. Clay on the street, informed him of the proclamation. The old ex-Senator at once surrendered, asking trial.[5]

In Southern cities citizens held meetings condemning the murder and expressing sorrow and regret at the President's death. Ex-Governor Aiken, known as the largest slave-owner in South Carolina, led the movement in Charleston, heading a petition to General Gillmore for use of the Hibernian Hall that the people might have a gathering-place in which to declare their sentiments.

Even the Confederates in prison were heard from. The officers confined at Fort Warren signed with General Ewell a letter to General Grant, expressing to "a soldier who will understand" their detestation of Booth's horrible crime. The commandant of the Fort, Major William Appleton, added a note testifying to their deep sincerity.

THE WRATH OF THE NORTH

[5] The account which I had from Colonel Randall at the home of Mr. John M. Graham, Atlanta, Ga., in the spring of 1905, does not quite coincide with that given by Mrs. Clay in "A Belle of the Fifties." In years elapsing since the war, some confusion of facts in memory is to be expected.

CHAPTER VIII
The Wrath of the North

The mad act of crazy Wilkes Booth set the whole country crazy. The South was aghast, natural recoil intensified by apprehension. The North, convulsed with anguish, was newly inflamed, and even when the cooler moment came and we were acquitted of any responsibility for Booth's crazy act, the angry humour of a still sore heart was against us. We, of both sections, who suffered so lately as one people in the death of President McKinley, can comprehend the woe and unreason of the moment.

Indignation and memorial meetings simply flayed the South alive. At one in the New York Custom House, when the grieving, exasperated people did not know whether to weep or to curse the more, or to end it by simply hanging us all, Mr. Chittenden rose and said: "Peace, be still!" And declared the death of Lincoln providential, God removing the man of mercy that due punishment might be meted out to rebels. Before the pacific orator finished, people were yelling: "Hang Lee!" and "The rebels deserve damnation!" Pulpits fulminated. Easter sermons demanded the halter, exile, confiscation of property, for "rebels and traitors"; yet some voices rose benignly, as Edward Everett Hale's, Dr. Huntington's, and Rufus Ellis', in words fitting the day. Beecher urged moderation.

The new President, Andrew Johnson, was breathing out threatenings and slaughter before Lincoln's death. Thousands had heard him shout from the southern portico of the Patent Office, "Jeff Davis ought to be hung twenty times as high as Haman!"

In Nicolay and Hay's Life of Lincoln, the following paragraph follows comment upon unanimity in Southern and Northern sentiment: "There was one exception to the general grief too remarkable to be passed over in silence. Among the extreme Radicals in Congress, Mr. Lincoln's determined clemency and liberality towards the Southern people had made an impression so unfavourable that, though they were shocked at his murder, they did not, among themselves, conceal their gratification that he was no longer in the way. In a political caucus held a few hours after the President's death, 'the thought was nearly universal,' to quote the language of one of their most representative members, 'that the accession of Johnson to the Presidency would prove a godsend to the country.'"

The only people who could profit by Lincoln's death were in the Radical wing of the Republican party. These extremists thought Johnson their man. Senator Wade, heading a committee that waited on him, cried: "Johnson, we have faith in you! By the gods, it will be no trouble now running the Government!"

"Treason," said the new President, "is the highest crime in the calendar, and the full penalty for its commission should be visited upon the leaders of the Rebellion. Treason should be made odious." It is told as true "inside history" that the arrest and execution of General Lee had been determined upon; General Grant heard of it and went in the night to see President Johnson and Secretary Stanton and said to them: "If General Lee or any of the officers paroled by me are arrested while keeping the terms of their parole, I will resign my commission in the United States Army."

But on April 15, even General Grant was of a divided mind, for he wired General Ord: "Arrest J. A. Campbell, Mayor Mayo, and members of the old Council who have not yet taken the oath of allegiance, and confine them in Libby Prison … arrest all paroled officers and surgeons until they can be sent beyond our lines unless they have taken the oath of allegiance. Extreme rigour will have to be observed whilst assassination is the order of the day with rebels."

General Ord replied: "The two citizens we have seen. They are old, nearly helpless, and, I think, incapable of harm. Lee and staff are in town among the paroled prisoners. Should I arrest them under the circumstances, I think the rebellion here would be reopened. I will risk my life that present paroles will be kept, if you will allow me to so trust the people here, who are ignorant of the assassination, done, I think, by some insane Brutus with but few accomplices. Judge Campbell and Mr. Hunter

pressed me earnestly yesterday to send them to Washington to see the President. Would they have done so if guilty?"

General Grant answered: "I leave my dispatch of this date in the light of a suggestion to be executed only as far as you may judge the good of the service demands." But the venerable peace-maker and his associates were not to escape vengeance.

General Halleck, from Richmond, to General Grant, May 5: "Hunter is staying quietly at home, advises all who visit him to support the Union cause. His hostility to Davis did much to make Davis unpopular in Virginia. Considering this, and the fact that President Lincoln advised against arresting Hunter, I would much prefer not to arrest him unless specially ordered to do so. All classes are taking the Amnesty Oath; it would be unfortunate to shake by unnecessary arrests this desire for general amnesty. Lee's officers are taking the oath; even Lee himself is considering the propriety of doing so and petitioning President Johnson for pardon."

May 11, Halleck to Stanton: "R. M. T. Hunter has, in accordance with General Grant's orders, been arrested, and is now on a gunboat in the James. Judge Campbell is still at his house. If necessary, he can be confined with Mr. Hunter. He voluntarily submits himself to such punishment as the Government may see fit to impose. He is very destitute and much broken down, and his case excites much sympathy."

Fortress Monroe, May 22, General Halleck wires General Ord, Richmond: "The Secretary of War directs that John A. Campbell be placed in the Libby or some other secure prison. Do this at once." Announcements of arrivals at Fort Pulaski in June would have made a fine page for any hotel desiring a brilliant register, thus: "Ex-Senator R. M. T. Hunter, Virginia; ex-Assistant Secretary of War Judge J. A. Campbell, Alabama; ex-Senator D. L. Yulee, Florida; ex-Governor Clark, Mississippi; ex-Secretary of the Treasury G. A. Trenholm, South Carolina;" and so on. Pulaski had rivals in other Federal prisons.

A reward of $25,000 for "Extra Billy" did not bring him in, but he delivered himself up to General Patrick, was paroled, and went to his home in Warrenton, Fauquier, and set to work with a will, though he was, to quote General Halleck, "seventy years old and quite feeble." The rightful Governor of Virginia, he advised her people to cheerful acceptance of Pierpont.

As soon as the aged Governor of Mississippi learned that General Dick Taylor would surrender, he convened the Legislature; his message, recommending the repeal of the secession ordinance and deploring Lincoln's murder, was not more than read, when General Osband, under orders from Washington, dissolved the Legislature with threats of arrest. Governor Clark was arrested: "The old soldier straightened his mangled limbs as best he could, with great difficulty mounted his crutches, and with a look of defiance, said: 'General Osband, I denounce before high Heaven this unparalleled act of tyranny and usurpation. I am the duly and constitutionally elected Governor of Mississippi, and would resist, if in my power, to the last extremity the enforcement of your order.'"

Governors, generals and statesmen were arrested in all directions. No exception was made for Alexander H. Stephens, the invalid, the peace-maker, the gentlest Roman of them all. At Liberty Hall, Mr. Stephens and a young friend, Robert W. Hull, were playing casino, when Tim, a negro, ran in, exclaiming: "Marster, de town is full uh Yankees! Whole heaps uv 'em, gallopin' all about, carryin' guns." Mr. Stephens rose and said to his guest: "I have been expecting this. They have come for me. Excuse me, please, while I pack." He went into his bedroom and began this task, when an officer called. Mr. Stephens met him in the parlor. The officer said, "Are you Alex Stephens?" "That is my name." "I have an order for your arrest." "I would like to have your name and see your order." "I am Captain Saint, of the 4th Iowa, acting under General Upton's orders. Here is the order." Mr. Stephens saw that himself and General Toombs were to be brought before General Upton in Atlanta. "I have been anticipating arrest," he said quietly, "and have been careful not to be out of the way, remaining here at home. General Upton need not have sent an armed force for me. A simple intimation from

him that my presence was desired would have taken me to Atlanta." His negroes were weeping when he was carried away; one, by special permission, accompanied him.

He was left under guard in a shanty on the road; the troops went on to Washington, "to be back in a little while with Bob Toombs." "Where is General Toombs?" asked Mr. Stephens, when they returned. "We don't know," was the rejoinder. "He flanked us." Thus:

General Toombs, going to the basement doorway of his house in Washington, exclaimed suddenly: "My God! the blue-coats!" turned and went rapidly through his house and out at the back door, saying to his wife: "Detain them at the front as long as you can." Their daughter, Mrs. Du Bose, helped her. "Bob Toombs" was asked for. Mrs. Du Bose went to bring "Bob Toombs"; she reappeared leading a lovely boy. "Here is Bob Toombs," she said, "Bob Toombs Du Bose, named for my father, General Toombs."

Mrs. Toombs took them through the house, showing them into every room – keys of which were lost and had to be looked for. They would burn the building, they insisted, if General Toombs was not produced. "Burn," she said, "and burn me in it. If I knew my husband's hiding-place, I would not betray him." They told her to move her furniture out. She obeyed. They changed their minds about the burning and went off. General Toombs escaped to the woods, where he remained hidden until nightfall. His friend, Captain Charles E. Irvin, got some gold from Mrs. Toombs, and carried the money to him, together with his mare, Gray Alice. From Nassau Island he crossed to England, where the doughty "rebel" was mightily liked.

Mr. Davis, Mr. Stephens, Mr. Clay, General Wheeler, and General Ralls met aboard the steamer at Augusta, all prisoners. The President's arrest occurred the day before Mr. Stephens', near Irwinsville. Picture it. Gray dawn in the Georgia woods. A small encampment of tents, horses, and wagons. Horses saddled and bridled, with pistols in holsters, picketed on the edge of the encampment. A negro watching and listening. Suddenly, he hurries to one of the tents: "Mars Jeff!" His call wakes a man lying fully dressed on one of the cots. "What's the matter, Jim?" "Firin' 'cross de branch, suh. Jes behin' our camp. Marauders, I reckon."

After leaving Washington, Mr. Davis had heard that marauders were in pursuit of his wife's cortege, and turning out of his course, he rode hard across country, found his family, conveyed them beyond the present danger, as he thought, and was about to renew his journey south. Horses for himself and staff were ready, when he heard that marauders were again near; he concluded to wait, and so lay down to rest. At Jim's call, he went to the tent-door, then turned to where his wife bent over her sleeping baby, Winnie. "They are not marauders," he said, "but regular troopers of the United States Army."

She begged him to leave her quickly. His horses and weapons were near the road down which the cavalry was coming. In the darkness of the tent, he caught up what he took to be his raglan, a sleeveless, waterproof garment. It was hers. She, poor soul, threw a shawl over his head. He went out of the tent, she keeping near. "Halt!" cried a trooper, levelling a carbine at him. He dropped his wraps and hurried forward. The trooper, in the dark, might miss aim; a hand under his foot would unhorse him; when Mr. Davis would mount and away. Mrs. Davis saw the carbine, cast her arms about her husband, and lost him his one chance of escape.

In one of her trunks, broken open by pilferers of the attacking party, a hoop-skirt was found. I shall refer to this historic hoop-skirt again.

I left Generals Johnston and Sherman discussing Mr. Lincoln's death and arranging terms of peace, based upon what Sherman recognized as the object of the war – salvation of the Union; and upon instructions received from Mr. Lincoln's own lips in their last interview when the President authorized him to "assure Governor Vance and the people of North Carolina that, as soon as the rebel armies will lay down their arms, they will at once be guaranteed all their rights as citizens of a common country; and that, to avoid anarchy, the State Governments now in existence will be recognized."

"When peace does come, you may call upon me for anything. Then, I will share with you the last crust and watch with you to shield your homes and families against danger from every quarter." Thus Sherman closed his reply to Calhoun's protest against the depopulation of Atlanta. Now that war was over, he was for living up to this.

In soldierly simplicity, he thought he had done an excellent thing in securing Johnston's guarantee of disbandment of all Confederate forces, and settling all fear of guerilla warfare by putting out of arms not only regular Confederates, but any who might claim to be such.

Stanton disposed of the whole matter by ordering Grant to "proceed to the headquarters of Major-General Sherman and direct operations against the enemy." This was, of course, the end to any terms for us. As is known, General Johnston surrendered on the same conditions with Lee. Grant so ordered his course as not to do Sherman injustice.

General Sherman wrote a spicy letter for Mr. Stanton's benefit: the settlement he had arranged for would be discussed, he said, in a different spirit "two or three years hence, after the Government has experimented a little more in the machinery by which power reaches the scattered people of this vast country known as the South." He had made war "hell"; now, the people of "this unhappy country," as he pityingly designated the land he had devastated, were for peace; and he, than whom none had done more to bring them to that state of mind, was for giving them some of its fruits. "We should not drive a people to anarchy"; for protection to life and property, the South's civil courts and governments should be allowed to remain in operation.

"The assassination has stampeded the civil authorities," "unnerved them," was the conclusion he drew when he went to Washington when, just after the crime, the long roll had been beaten and the city put under martial law; public men were still in dread of assassination. At the grand review in Washington, Sherman, hero of the hour, shook hands with the President and other dignitaries on the stand, but pointedly failed to accept Mr. Stanton's.

After Mr. Lincoln's death, leniency to "rebels" was accounted worse than a weakness. The heavy hand was applauded. It was the fashion to say hard things of us. It was accounted piety and patriotism to condemn "traitors and rebels." Cartoonists, poets, and orators, were in clover; here was a subject on which they could "let themselves out."

THE CHAINING OF JEFFERSON DAVIS

CHAPTER IX
The Chaining of Jefferson Davis

Strange and unreal seem those days. One President a fugitive, journeying slowly southward; the other dead, journeying slowly north and west. Aye, the hand of God was heavy on both our peoples. The cup of defeat could not be made more bitter than it was; and into the cup of triumph were gall and wormwood poured.

Hunters pursuing one chieftain with hoarse cries of “rebel!” and “traitor!” For the other, bells tolling, guns booming requiem, great cities hung with black, streets lined with weeping thousands, the catafalque a victor’s chariot before which children and maidens scattered flowers. Nearly a month that funeral march lasted – from Washington through Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Albany, Cleveland, Columbus, Indianapolis, Chicago – it wound its stately way to Springfield. Wherever it passed, the public pulse beat hotter against the Southern chieftain and his people.

Yet the dead and the hunted were men of one country, born in the same State. Sharp contrasts in many ways, they were yet enough alike in personal appearance to have been brothers. Both were pure men, brave, patriotic; both kindly and true. The dead had said of the living: “Let Jeff escape.”

Johnson’s proclamation threw the entire South into a white rage and an anguish unutterable, when it charged the assassination to Mr. Davis and other representative men of the South. Swift on it came news that our President was captured, report being spread to cast ridicule upon him that, when caught, he was disguised in his wife’s garments. Caricatures, claiming to be truthful portraiture, displayed him in hoops and petticoats and a big poke bonnet, of such flaming contrasts as certainly could not have been found in Mrs. Davis’ wardrobe.

In 1904, I saw at a *vaudeville* entertainment in a New York department store, a stereopticon representation of the War of Secession. The climax was Mr. Davis in a pink skirt, red bonnet, yellow bodice, and parti-coloured shawl, struggling with several Federals, while other Federals were rushing to the attack, all armed to the teeth and pointing warlike weapons at this one fantastic figure of a feeble old man. The theatre was full of children. The attraction had been running some time and thousands of young Americans had doubtless accepted its travesties as history. The Northern friend with me was as indignant as myself.

When Mr. Davis’ capture was announced in theatres and other places of amusement in the North, people went crazy with joy, clapping their hands and cheering, while bands played “Yankee Doodle” and “Star-Spangled Banner.” Many were for having him hung at once. Wendell Phillips wanted him “left to the sting of his own conscience.”

Presently, we heard that the “Clyde” was bringing Mr. Davis, his family, General Wheeler, Governor Vance, and others, to Fortress Monroe. And then – will I ever forget how the South felt about that? – that Mr. Davis was a prisoner in a damp, casemated cell, that lights were kept burning in his face all night until he was in danger of blindness; that human eyes were fixed on him night and day, following his every movement; that his jailer would come and look at him contemptuously and call him “Jeff”; that sightseers would be brought to peer at him as if he were some strange wild beast; that his feeble limbs had been loaded with chains; that he was like to lose his life through hardships visited upon him! To us who knew the man personally, his sensitiveness, dignity, and refinement, the tale is harrowing as it could not be to those who knew him not thus. Yet to all Americans it must be a regrettable chapter in our history when it is remembered that this man was no common felon, but a prisoner of State, a distinguished Indian-fighter, a Mexican veteran, a man who had held a seat in Congress, who had been Secretary of War of the United States, and who for four years had stood at the head of the Confederate States.

When they came to put chains upon him, he protested, said it was an indignity to which as a soldier he would not submit, that the intention was to dishonour the South in him; stood with his back to the wall, bade them kill him at once, fought them off as long as he could – fought them until they held him down and the blacksmiths riveted the manacles upon his wasted limbs. Captain Titlow, who had the work in charge, did not like his cruel task, but he had no choice but to obey orders.[6]

And this was in Fortress Monroe, where of old the gates fell wide to welcome him when he came as Secretary of War, where guns thundered greeting, soldiers presented arms, and the highest officer was proud to do him honour! With bated breath we speak of Russian prisons. But how is this: "Davis is in prison; he is not allowed to say a word to any one nor is any one allowed to say a word to him. He is literally in a living tomb. His position is not much better than that of the Turkish Sultan, Bajazet, exposed by his captor, Tamerlane, in a portable iron cage." ("New York Herald," May 26, 1865.) The dispatch seemed positively to gloat over that poor man's misery.

A new fad in feminine attire came into vogue; women wore long, large, and heavy black chains as decorations.

The military murder of Mrs. Surratt stirred us profoundly. Too lowly, simple, and obscure in herself to rank with heroic figures, her execution lifts her to the plane where stand all who fell victims to the troubled times. Suspicion of complicity in Mr. Lincoln's murder, because of her son's intimacy with Wilkes Booth, led to her death. They had her before a military tribunal in Washington, her feet linked with chains.

Several men were executed. Their prison-life and hers was another tale to give one the creeps. They were not allowed to speak to any one, nor was any one allowed to speak to them; they were compelled to wear masks of padded cloth over face and head, an opening at the mouth permitting space for breathing; pictures said to be drawn from life showed them in their cells where the only resting-places were not beds, but bare, rough benches; marched before judges with these same horrible hoods on, marched to the gallows with them on, hanging with them on.

One of the executed, Payne, had been guilty of the attack on Mr. Seward and his son; the others had been dominated and bribed by Booth, but had failed to play the parts assigned them in the awful drama his morbid brain wrought out.

OUR FRIENDS, THE ENEMY

[6] Fac-simile of the order under which Mr. Davis was chained appears in Charles H. Dana's "Recollections of the Civil War," p. 286. The hand that wrote it, when Mr. Davis died, paid generous tribute to him in the "Sun," saying: "A majestic soul has passed."

CHAPTER X
Our Friends, the Enemy

There was small interchange of civilities between Northern and Southern ladies. The newcomers were in much evidence; Southerners saw them riding and driving in rich attire and handsome equipages, and at the theatre in all the glory of fine toilettes.

There was not so much trouble opening theatres as churches. A good many stage celebrities came to the Richmond Theatre, which was well patronised. Decorated with United States flags, it was opened during the first week of the occupation with "Don Cæsar de Bazan." The "Whig" reported a brilliant audience. Mrs. Lincoln and Mrs. Grant, who had been driving over the city, were formally invited by General Weitzel to attend the play, but did not appear.

The band played every evening in the Square, and our people, ladies especially, were invited to come out. The Square and the Capitol were at one time overrun with negroes. This was stopped. Still, our ladies did not go. Federal officers and their ladies had their music to themselves. "There was no intentional slight or rudeness on our part. We did not draw back our skirts in passing Federal soldiers, as was charged in Northern papers; if a few thoughtless girls or women did this, they were not representative. We tried not to give offense; we were heart-broken; we stayed to ourselves; and we were not hypocrites; that was all." So our women aver. In most Southern cities efforts were made to induce the ladies to come out and hear the band play.

The day Governor Pierpont arrived, windows of the Spotswood and Monumental were crowded with Northern ladies waving handkerchiefs. "I only knew from the papers," Matoaca tells, "that the Mansion was decorated with flowers for his reception. Our own windows, which had been as windows of a house of mourning, did not change their aspect for his coming. Our rightful governor was a fugitive; Governor Pierpont was an alien. We were submissive, but we could not rejoice." This was the feminine and social side. On the political and masculine side, he was welcomed. Delegations of prominent Virginians from all counties brought him assurances of coöperation. The new Governor tried to give a clean, patriotic administration.

Northerners held socials in each others' houses and in halls; there were receptions, unattended by Southerners, at the Governor's Mansion and Military Headquarters. It might have been more politic had we gone out of our way to be socially agreeable, but it would not have been sincere. Federal officers and their wives attended our churches. A Northern Methodist Society was formed with a group of adherents, Governor and Mrs. Pierpont, and, later, General and Mrs. Canby among them. "We of the Northern colony were very dependent upon ourselves for social pleasures," an ex-member who now considers herself a Southerner said to me recently. "There were some inter-marriages. I remember an elopement; a Petersburg girl ran away with a Federal officer, and the pair sought asylum at my father's, in Richmond's Northern colony. Miss Van Lew entertained us liberally. She gave a notable reception to Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase and his beautiful daughter, Kate." Miss Van Lew, a resident, was suspected of being a spy during the war.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.