A LAKE MEMORY.

THE lake comes throbbing in with voice of pain
Across these flats, athwart the sunset's glow.
I see her face, I know her voice again,
Her lips, her breath, O God, as long ago.

To live the sweet past over I would fain,
As lives the day in the red sunset's fire,
That all these wild wan marshlands now would stain,
With the dawn's memories, loves, and flushed desire.

I call her back across the vanished years,
Nor vain — a white-armed phantom fills her place;
Its eyes the wind-blown sunset fires, its tears
This rain of spray that blows about my face.

William Wilfred Campbell.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A HISTORY.[1]

JACKSON'S VALLEY CAMPAIGN, AND THE SEVEN DAYS' BATTLES.

BY JOHN G. NICOLAY AND JOHN HAY, PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO THE PRESIDENT.

AS we have seen, it was the intention of the Administration to dispatch the whole of McDowell's corps to reënforce McClellan, as soon as the situation in northern Virginia would permit. Franklin's division was so dispatched, in ample time to have taken part in the operations against Yorktown, though General McClellan made no use whatever of that fine body of troops until Yorktown was evacuated. Preparations were vigorously made by the Government for the march of McDowell towards Richmond; and Shields's division, one of the best in Banks's corps, was ordered to reënforce him. The most important results were expected from such an attack as an officer of McDowell's ability and zeal would have made upon the left flank of the Confederate forces in front of Richmond. It is one of the admitted misfortunes of the war that this attack was never made, and the question as to who was responsible for it has given rise to much heated and more or less disingenuous discussion.

General Thomas Jonathan Jackson, commonly called "Stonewall," had won great credit at the battle of Bull Run, but his first independent campaign resulted in signal defeat. In April, 1862, he was ordered by General Johnston to occupy the attention of Banks in the Shenandoah Valley. He advanced rapidly in pursuance of what he understood to be the spirit of his orders, and came in view of Shields's division at Kernstown, near Winchester, on the 22d of April. A brief skirmish took place that evening, in the course of which General Shields was severely wounded, his arm being broken by the fragment of a shell. He retired to Winchester, and General Nathan Kimball remained on the field in active command of the division. The next day, although it was Sunday, Jackson, thinking he had his enemy at a disadvantage, and unaware either of his numbers or of his disposition, attacked Kimball with great impetuosity, but met with a severe repulse. Kimball, who was ably seconded by Colonels Carroll and Tyler, not only beat off the attack of Jackson from both his flanks, but at the right moment assumed the offensive, and after a hotly contested fight, lasting two hours, as night was closing in he completely defeated the Confederates, who were driven from the field, leaving their dead and wounded and several guns. Banks, coming down from Harper's

Ferry the next day, continued the pursuit up the valley as far as Mount Jackson. Shields's division in this action numbered about 7000; Jackson reported his own force as between 3000 and 4000. The losses reported on each side are: Shields 590, Jackson 718. Jackson frankly acknowledged his defeat, saying to Johnston:

> I engaged the enemy yesterday, about 3 P.M., near Winchester, and fought until dusk; but his forces were so superior to mine that he repulsed me with the loss of valuable officers and men killed and wounded. But from the obstinacy with which our troops fought, and from their advantageous position, I am of the opinion that his loss was greater than mine in troops, but I lost one piece of artillery and three caissons.

Jackson's second campaign in the Shenandoah, which gained him in full measure that fame and position which were so near to his heart, occupied about a month. It may be said to have begun in his attack upon General Milroy's forces at McDowell on the 8th of May. In this affair, as in every battle of this famous campaign, he had much larger forces than those opposed to him — a fact entirely to his credit; there were Union troops enough in the department, if they had been properly brought together, to have overwhelmed him. After a fight of several hours he defeated Milroy, who fell back to join Frémont at the town of Franklin, while Jackson moved eastward to Harrisonburg. On the way he sent dispatches to Richmond, detailing the position of the Union troops, and asking permission to attack them. This was granted, and he at once began a swift and stealthy march through New Market and Luray to Front Royal. It was at this time that McClellan was daily clamoring for reënforcements from Washington; and the Government, yielding to his importunity, had promised that McDowell's corps should march overland to join him. The reasons why this promise could not be kept are best set forth in the following dispatch from Mr. Lincoln, whose communications to his generals were always clearer and more definite than any that he received from them. It is dated May 25:

> General Banks was at Strasburg with about 6000 men, Shields having been taken from him to swell a column for McDowell to aid you at Richmond, and the rest of his force scattered in various places. On the 23d a rebel force of 7000 to 10,000 fell upon one regiment and two companies guarding the bridge at Front Royal, destroying it entirely; crossed the Shenandoah, and on the 24th pushed on to get north of Banks, on the road to Winchester. General Banks ran a race with them, beating them into Winchester yesterday evening. This morning a battle ensued between the two forces, in which General Banks was beaten back in full retreat towards Martinsburg, and probably is broken up into a total rout. Geary, on the Manassas Gap Railroad, just now reports that Jackson is now near Front Royal with 10,000 troops, following up and supporting, as I understand, the force now pursuing Banks. Also that another force of 10,000 is near Orleans, following on in the same direction. [In this Geary was mistaken. Jackson's and Ewell's forces amounted to about 16,000.] Stripped bare, as we are here, I will do all we can to prevent them crossing the Potomac at Harper's Ferry or above. McDowell has about 20,000 of his forces moving back to the vicinity of Front Royal, and Frémont, who was at Franklin, is moving to Harrisonburg; both these movements intended to get in the enemy's rear.
>
> One more of McDowell's brigades is ordered through here to Harper's Ferry; the rest of his force remain for the present at Fredericksburg. We are sending such regiments and dribs from here and Baltimore as we can spare to Harper's Ferry, supplying their places in some sort by calling in militia from the adjacent States. We also have eighteen cannon on the road to Harper's Ferry, of which arm there is not a single one at that point. This is now our situation.
>
> If McDowell's force was now beyond our reach, we should be entirely helpless. Apprehensions of something like this, and no unwillingness to sustain you, have always been my reason for withholding McDowell's forces from you. Please understand this, and do the best you can with the forces you have.[1]

Later in the day, the President, now sure that a large and formidable army was drawing near the Potomac, wrote a sharp dispatch to McClellan urging him either to take this opportunity "to attack Richmond, or give up the job"; to which the general, who was never disturbed by the presence of the enemy anywhere out of his sight, replied calmly that "the object of the movement was probably to prevent reënforcements being sent him," and that the time was very near when he would attack Richmond.

The campaign, opened thus inauspiciously for the Union arms, went rapidly from bad to worse. A series of doleful mischances succeeded, unrelieved by a ray of good fortune or good conduct. Mr. Lincoln, at Washington, was exerting himself to the utmost, sending a dozen dispatches a day to Banks, Frémont, McDowell, and McClellan — all admirable in clearness, intelligence, and temper, always directing the right thing to be done and the best way of doing it; but nothing seemed to avail.

The original surprise was inexcusable. On the 20th of May,[1] Frémont had reported to Banks that Jackson was on the way to attack him, but no proper preparation was made. After the defeat at Front Royal on the 23d, and at Winchester on the 25th, while Banks was in retreat to the Potomac, the only thought of the President was to stop Jackson at the river, and to detain him until a sufficient force could be gathered in the neighborhood of Strasburg to destroy or capture him on his return. Frémont was ordered to cross the mountains to Harrisonburg and come north down the valley with his force. McDowell, with a competent detachment under Shields, was ordered to Front Royal; a considerable army met the victorious forces of Jackson at the Potomac. These last were mostly of raw lev-

[1] War Records.

ies, not inured to marching or to fighting; but they accomplished their purpose of delaying for the moment the advance of Jackson towards Washington. His own intention, as well as his orders from Richmond, were, in the language of General Dabney,[1] "to press the enemy at Harper's Ferry, threaten an invasion of Maryland, and an assault upon the Federal capital." But on the 29th, while at Halltown,[2] preparing for an attack upon Harper's Ferry, he received information of the movement of troops that had been ordered by the President, which, as Dabney says, "imperiously required him to give up that attack and provide for his own safety." He then began his precipitate retreat up the valley, which by its celerity and success gained him even more credit than did his audacious advance.

It ought not to have been allowed to succeed; it was perfectly feasible to prevent it. Had the plain orders of the President been obeyed, Jackson could not have escaped from the predicament where his headlong energy and his contempt for his adversaries had placed him. It is idle to talk of his invincibility; he was generally whipped, like other men, when the conditions were not favorable to him. He was defeated severely at Kernstown in March, when he had been confident of victory; later, at Gaines's Mills, he did not particularly distinguish himself above others; Banks, with one-third his force, gave him all the work he could do at Cedar Mountain; while at Malvern Hill and White Oak Swamp his inefficiency in large tactics was recognized and severely criticized by generals on his own side. If Frémont and McDowell had met him at Strasburg, and Banks had followed upon his heels, as Mr. Lincoln had clearly and explicitly ordered, nothing could have prevented the capture or destruction of his entire command. Each of these generals had his task assigned him; it was in each case perfectly practicable. It involved only an expeditious march to the neighborhood of Strasburg, over roads more or less rough, undisturbed by the presence of an enemy in any considerable force.

General McDowell's part of the work was performed with his habitual energy and promptitude, notwithstanding the chagrin and displeasure with which he received his orders. On the evening of the 24th of May[3] the President sent him a dispatch informing him that Frémont had been ordered by telegraph to move from Franklin on Harrisonburg, to relieve Banks, and to capture or destroy Jackson's or Ewell's forces. Mr. Lincoln continues:

> You are instructed, laying aside for the present the movement on Richmond, to put 20,000 men in motion at once for the Shenandoah, moving on the line, or in advance of the line, of the Manassas Gap Railroad. Your object will be to capture the forces of Jackson and Ewell, either in coöperation with General Frémont, or, in case want of supplies or of transportation interferes with his movements, it is believed that the force with which you move will be sufficient to accomplish this object alone. The information thus far received here makes it probable that if the enemy operate actively against General Banks you will not be able to count upon much assistance from him, but may even have to release him.

It is remarkable that the President saw the situation with such accuracy the day before Banks's defeat at Winchester.

This order McDowell, though he called it "a crushing blow,"[3] obeyed at once, directing Shields to take up his march to Catlett's, a station on the Orange and Alexandria road, about half-way between Fredericksburg and Front Royal, and reporting that he had done so. The President sent him an acknowledgment of his alacrity, at the same time expressing his regret at the change of his orders, and adding, "Everything now depends upon the celerity and vigor of your movements."[3] This encouraged the general to make an earnest though respectful protest, which he sent the same night to the President, setting forth his belief that coöperation between himself and Frémont was not to be counted upon; that it would take him a week or ten days to get to the valley; that by that time the enemy would have retired. We shall see later that these forebodings at least were not realized. At the same time he telegraphed to Wadsworth, in command at Washington, his deep disgust; he did not think the rebel force in the mountains amounted to five thousand men. But with all this grumbling his deeds were better than his words; he pushed Shields forward with the greatest celerity. Shields, who was burning to go to Richmond, marched obediently, but in very bad humor. The dispatches of this officer read like a burlesque of those of his superior. He is loud in contempt of both armies in the Shenandoah. He thought when the movement first began that there was nothing in it; that the enemy would never come north; that if they did, they would be hemmed in and destroyed. As late as the 10th of May he was sure "they were not there to fight."[3] As he went forward to Front Royal his boasting spirit asserted itself more and more. "I want no assistance," he said. He promised to "give Jackson a bloody reception," to "drive the enemy from the Shenandoah," and wanted to know if there was anything else he could do for the President — the task in question being unworthy of his powers.[4]

But neither the chagrin of McDowell nor the gasconading of Shields prevented them

[1] Dabney, p. 386. [2] Ibid., p. 387. [3] War Records. [4] May 26 and 27.

from striving with all their might to do the work assigned them. The President kept McDowell constantly informed of the condition of affairs, detailing the progress of Jackson northward, and urging the value and importance of the service expected of the Union troops. McDowell showed himself, as he always was, worthy of the confidence reposed in him. In spite of all obstacles,— accidents by rail, bad roads, and rough weather,— he got Shields's advance into Front Royal on the 30th of May; that is, in little more than half the time he thought he should require for the purpose. The same day the President sent him a dispatch from Frémont saying that he would be at Strasburg, or where the enemy was, at 4 P. M., May 31; and another from Saxton at Harper's Ferry, indicating that the enemy was still there. The President added, with justifiable exultation, "It seems the game is before you."

It remains to be seen how General Frémont executed his share of the task. On the 24th the President gave him an urgent order to move at once, by way of Harrisonburg, to the relief of Banks. He promptly replied that he "would move as ordered"; but made the unfortunate error of choosing an entirely different route from the one assigned him.[1] Thinking the road to Harrisonburg was more or less obstructed, and off his line of supplies, he moved northward by way of Petersburg and Moorefield, in the great valley lying west of the Shenandoah Mountains, and did not even inform the President of this discretionary modification of his orders, so that, on the 27th, when they were anxiously expecting at Washington to hear from him at Harrisonburg, they were astounded at receiving tidings from him at Moorefield, two good days' march from the line of Jackson's retreat, and separated by two counties and the Shenandoah range from the place where he was desired and expected to be. In response to the President's peremptory question why he was at Moorefield when he was ordered to Harrisonburg, he made an unsatisfactory reply, alleging the necessity of his choice of route, and his assumed discretion as to his orders. Dropping this matter, the President began again urging him forward to Strasburg. There was still time to repair the original error. Jackson was on the Potomac, much farther from the rendezvous than Frémont. But the latter could not be made to see the vital necessity of immediate action — his men were weary, his supplies were deficient, the roads were bad; Blenker's corps was straggling badly. Finally, on the 29th, his medical director told him his army needed a whole day's rest. He promptly accepted this suggestion, and wasted twenty-four hours in this manner, while Jackson was rushing his ragged troops, who had known no rest for a month, up the narrow valley that formed his only outlet from destruction or captivity. In one day, says Major Dabney, the Stonewall Brigade marched "from Halltown to the neighborhood of Newton, a distance of thirty-five miles; and the 2d Virginia accomplished a march of forty miles without rations, over muddy roads and amidst continual showers." The race was to the swift. As Frémont's advance entered Strasburg on the 1st of June the rear-guard of Jackson's force was still in sight, leaving the place. The plan of the President, well combined and reasonable as it was, had failed through no fault of his, and Jackson had escaped. It is the contention of General McClellan and his partisans that the plan could not possibly have succeeded. One critic[2] disposes of the matter by a sneer at the thought of "trapping that wily fox, who knew every gorge and pass of the mountain." But an army of 16,000 men of all arms is not a fox; it must have roads to cross mountains, and bridges to pass over rivers. If Frémont had obeyed orders and had been where he should have been on the 30th of May, and if Banks and Saxton had kept a closer watch at Harper's Ferry and followed more immediately upon Jackson's rear, Jackson would have been surrounded at Strasburg by three times his own force, and would have been captured or his army dispersed and destroyed. This would have been richly worth all its cost, and the most captious or malevolent critic would have had nothing to say against the President who ordered it.

There was little prospect of defeating Jackson after he had slipped through the gap between Frémont and McDowell at Strasburg; but nevertheless an energetic pursuit was begun by Frémont up the Shenandoah and by part of Shields's division up the Luray Valley on the east, the former harassing Jackson's rear with almost daily skirmishes, and the latter running a race with him on a parallel line. There was hardly a possibility now of regaining the lost opportunity. No matter how severely pressed, it was almost surely in Jackson's power to escape across Brown's Gap to Albemarle County, where he would for a time be safe from pursuit; and this course, says Major Dabney, was in his mind as a final resort.[3] But he was not even driven to this. There was one last chance of inflicting great damage upon him. One of Shields's brigades arrived at the bridge at Port Republic before him, and either should have taken and held or destroyed it.[4] The officer in

[1] War Records.
[2] Swinton, "Army of the Potomac."
[3] Dabney, p. 404.
[4] War Records.

command did neither, and the bridge immediately after fell into Jackson's hands, giving him command of both sides of the river. The Confederate general and his adjutant and biographer ascribed the capture of this important position to supernatural means.[1]

> As soon as Jackson uttered his command [to seize the bridge] he drew up his horse, and, dropping the reins upon his neck, raised both his hands towards the heavens, while the fire of battle in his face changed into a look of reverential awe. Even while he prayed, the God of battles heard; or ever he had withdrawn his uplifted hands, the bridge was gained.

It would perhaps be irreverent to add that the bridge was not defended. On the same day, June 8, he fought a sharp but indecisive battle with Frémont at Cross Keys, and retiring in the night, he attacked and defeated Shields's small detachment at Port Republic. The mismanagement of the Union generals had opposed to him on both days forces greatly inferior to his own. Before these battles were fought the President, seeing that further pursuit was useless, had ordered Shields back to McDowell, Frémont to halt at Harrisonburg for orders, and Banks to guard the posts of Port Royal and Luray. The orders came too late to prevent two unfortunate engagements, but they showed that the civilian at Washington was wiser than the two generals at the front. They both passed thereafter into the ranks of the malcontents — the men with grievances. Shields went back to Washington, where he was received with open arms by the habitual critics of the President. Among them were those of his own household; for we read in Mr. Chase's diary that Shields told him, when he was ordered back, that "Jackson's capture was certain," and the general and the Secretary held harmonious council together over the "terrible mistakes" of the President.[2] This was the last important service of Frémont. He remained in charge of his department a few weeks longer, until he was placed, with others of similar rank, under the general command of Pope. He refused to serve under his junior, and was relieved, not appearing again in any conspicuous position, except for a moment in the summer of 1864, as a candidate for the Presidency in opposition to Mr. Lincoln.

THE SEVEN DAYS' BATTLES.

AFTER the battle of Fair Oaks, as well as before it, General McClellan kept up his continual cry for reënforcements. The hallucination that the enemy's force was double his own had become fixed upon him, and all his plans and combinations were poisoned by this fatal error. The President did everything in his power to satisfy the general's unreasonable demands. He resolved to give him absolute control of all the troops on the Peninsula; and knowing that General Wool would never consent to being placed under McClellan's orders,— that veteran having expressed himself with characteristic severity in regard to his junior's insatiable demand for troops,— the President thought best to remove General Wool to Baltimore, transferring General Dix to Fort Monroe and placing him under the direct command of McClellan — a proceeding which greatly displeased General Dix, but to which he yielded under protest.[3] His displeasure did not interfere with his convictions of duty. Immediately on arriving at Fort Monroe he sent to General McClellan a reënforcement of ten of the best regiments there.[3] No efforts were spared to help and to encourage McClellan; both the President and the Secretary of War were perpetually sending him kind and complimentary messages in addition to the troops and guns which they gathered in from every quarter for him. A few days after Fair Oaks, in response to his repeated entreaties, McCall's division of McDowell's corps, a splendid body of about ten thousand men, was dispatched to him. He was for the moment delighted at hearing that these troops were coming; and having thus obtained the greater part of McDowell's corps, he was quite gracious in his acknowledgments to the Government. He said, June 7:

> I am glad to learn that you are pressing forward reënforcements so vigorously. I shall be in perfect readiness to move forward and take Richmond the moment McCall reaches here and the ground will admit the passage of artillery.

McCall and his perfectly appointed division of ten thousand men and five batteries of artillery began to arrive on the 11th, and were all present for duty on the 13th; and as if Providence were uniting with the Government to satisfy both the general's requirements, he was able to telegraph on the 12th that the weather was good and the roads and the ground were rapidly drying. The weather continued remarkably fine for several days; General Keyes on the 15th reported White Oak Swamp dried up so as to be fordable in many places.[3] But the dry spell did not last forever, and on the night of the 15th General McClellan sends to Washington a note of lamentation[3] saying that the rain has begun again, which will "retard his movements somewhat." It is characteristic of him that he always regarded bad weather as exclusively injurious to him, and never to the other side. The President once said of him that he seemed to think, in defiance of Scripture, that Heaven sent its rain only on

1 Dabney, p. 413.
2 Warden, "Life of Salmon P. Chase," pp. 444, 445.
3 War Records.

the just and not on the unjust. To an energetic general all kinds of weather have their uses. Johnston had embraced with alacrity the opportunity afforded by the terrible storm of May 30, and made it his ally in his attack on the 31st.

It must not be forgotten that, although McClellan and his apologists have been for years denouncing the Government for having withheld from him McDowell's corps, the best part of that corps was actually sent to him. Franklin's magnificent division went to him in April, and no use whatever was made of it for several weeks; McCall's equally fine division was dispatched to him before the middle of June. In each case he said he only awaited the arrival of that division to undertake immediate active operations; and in each case, on the arrival of the eagerly demanded reënforcements, he did nothing but wait the good pleasure of the enemy. His own official reports show that he received by way of reënforcements, after his arrival in the Peninsula and prior to the 15th of June, not less than 39,441 men, of whom there were 32,360 present for duty.[1] Yet all this counted for nothing with him; he let hardly a day pass without clamoring for more. He was not even inclined to allow the Administration any discretion in regard to the manner in which he was to be reënforced. He insisted that McDowell should be sent to him by water, and not by land, so that he should come in by his rear instead of by his right flank; and when he was informed that McCall's force was expected to be restored to McDowell's corps, when that army joined him, he bitterly resented it. He said it did not show a proper spirit in McDowell; and added sullenly, "If I cannot fully control all his troops, I want none of them; but would prefer to fight the battle with what I have, and let others be responsible for the results."[2] These selfish and petulant outbursts were met with unwearied patience and kindness on the part of the President. On the 15th of June he wrote:

> The Secretary of War has turned over to me your dispatch about sending McDowell to you by water, instead of by land. I now fear he cannot get to you either way in time. Shields's division has got so terribly out of shape, out at elbows, and out at toes, that it will require a long time to get it in again. I expect to see McDowell within a day or two, when I will again talk with him about the mode of moving. McCall's division has nearly or quite reached you by now. This, with what you get from General Wool's old command, and the new regiments sent you, must give you an increase, since the late battles, of over twenty thousand. Doubtless the battles, and other causes, have decreased you half as much in the same time; but then the enemy have lost as many in the same way. I believe I would come and see you were it not that I fear my presence might divert you and the army from more important matters.[3]

From this it will be seen that McClellan had no right to delay operations an hour after McCall's arrival from any pretended expectation of the immediate coming of McDowell; and, indeed, he admits in his report[4] that as early as the 7th of June he had given up any such expectation. With no reason, therefore, for delay, but with every conceivable incentive to action, with an army amounting, after McCall joined him, to the imposing figure of 156,838, of whom an aggregate present of 127,327 is reported by McClellan himself as of the 20th of June,— though he makes a reduction to 114,691 of those "present for duty equipped," — he wasted the month of June in a busy and bustling activity which was in its results equivalent to mere idleness. He was directly invited to attack by the fine weather of the middle of the month, which he describes as "splendid" in a dispatch of the 17th, and by the absence of Stonewall Jackson in the valley with his 16,000 veterans, reënforced by 10,000 troops from Lee's army, as McClellan himself believed and reported on the 18th. The President, by a dispatch of the same date, urged him to take advantage of this opportunity, saying:

> If this is true, it is as good as a reënforcement to you of an equal force. I could better dispose of things if I could know about what day you can attack Richmond, and would be glad to be informed, if you think you can inform me with safety.

The terms in which General McClellan answered this inquiry are worthy of quotation as an illustration of that false air of energy and determination which he so often introduced into the expression of his intentions, while leaving, as in the last lines of this dispatch, a loophole for indefinite delay:[5]

> Our army is well over the Chickahominy, except the very considerable forces necessary to protect our flanks and communications. Our whole line of pickets in front runs within six miles of Richmond. The rebel line runs within musket range of ours. Each has heavy support at hand. A general engagement may take place any hour. An advance by us involves a battle more or less decisive. The enemy exhibits at every point a readiness to meet us. They certainly have great numbers and extensive works. If 10,000 or 15,000 men have left Richmond to reënforce Jackson, it illustrates their strength and confidence.

This is a singularly characteristic view. The fact of a large detachment having left Lee affords him no encouragement; it simply impresses him all the more with the idea of his enemy's strength.

1 War Records. 2 McClellan's Report, June 14.

3 Lincoln, MS.

4 "As I did not think it probable that any reënforcements would be sent me in time for the advance on Richmond, I stated in the foregoing dispatch (of June 7) that I should be ready to move when General McCall's division joined me." War Records.

5 June 18.

After to-morrow we shall fight the rebel army as soon as Providence will permit. We shall await only a favorable condition of the earth and sky, and the completion of some necessary preliminaries.[1]

With these vague platitudes the President was forced to be content, and to wait, with the general, to see what Providence would ordain the day after to-morrow — or the next day.

As usual, it was the enemy that startled McClellan out of his procrastination. On the 13th of June, General J. E. B. Stuart, with some 1200 Confederate cavalry and a few guns, started to ride around McClellan's army; touching on his way the South Anna Railroad bridge, Hanover Court House, Tunstall's Station on the York River Railway, and thence to Jones's Bridge on the Chickahominy, which he stopped to repair, crossing it on the 15th, and entering Richmond by the river road the next day. It has rarely been the fortune of a general to inflict such an insult, without injury, upon an opponent. General McClellan did not seem to feel that any discredit attached to him for this performance. On the contrary he congratulated himself that Stuart had done so little harm.

The burning of two schooners laden with forage, and fourteen Government wagons, the destruction of some sutlers' stores, the killing of several of the guard and teamsters at Garlick's Landing, some little damage done at Tunstall's Station, and a little *éclat*, were the precise results of this expedition.[2]

McClellan had for some time been vaguely meditating a change of base to the James River, and this raid of Stuart seems to have somewhat strengthened this purpose. Fitz John Porter, who more than any other possessed his confidence, says that he desired to effect this movement as soon as he gave up looking for McDowell to join him, which, we have seen from his report, was in the first week of June. "As early as June 18," Porter says, "he sent vessels loaded with supplies to the James River."[3] It is not intended to intimate that he was fully resolved upon this course; but he appears to have kept it constantly before him, in his undecided, irresolute way, all through the month. His communication with Commodore John Rodgers, who commanded on the James, indicates a purpose to move to some point on that river. He says on the 24th:

In a few days I hope to gain such a position as to enable me to place a force above Ball's and Drewry's bluffs, so that we can remove the obstructions and place ourselves in communication with you so that you can coöperate in the final attack. In the mean time please keep me some gun-boats as near Drewry's Bluff as prudence will permit.[1]

On the 25th he pushed forward his picket line in front of Seven Pines to within four miles of Richmond, a point farther in advance than he had yet reached. At the same time he issued orders to his corps commanders south of the river that they were not to regard these new positions as their field of battle, but were to fall back, if attacked, to their old intrenchments.[1] He had by this time heard of the arrival of Jackson's corps, and also credited a false and impossible rumor of the arrival of Beauregard and his troops from the West. He was fully informed of the attack threatened within a few hours, and yet he sent to Washington for more troops.[1] "If I had another good division I could laugh at Jackson,"[1] he said, while he knew that Jackson was marching upon his right. He made his usual complaint and threat of putting the responsibility where it belonged. These wanton accusations at such a time moved the President, not to anger, but to genuine sorrow. Yet he answered with almost incredible patience:

Your three dispatches of yesterday in relation to the affair, ending with the statement that you completely succeeded in making your point, are very gratifying. The latter one, suggesting the probability of your being overwhelmed by 200,000, and talking of where the responsibility will belong, pains me very much. I give you all I can, and act on the presumption that you will do the best with what you have; while you continue, ungenerously I think, to assume that I could give you more if I would. I have omitted, and shall omit, no opportunity to send you reënforcements whenever I possibly can.

It is impossible to say how long his desultory preparations would have lasted if General McClellan had been left to himself; but after the 23d of June, the power of deciding upon what day he should attack had already passed out of his hands. General Lee had made, at his leisure, all his arrangements for attacking the Union army, and had chosen the time and the manner of onset,— as Johnston did a month before,— without the slightest reference to any possible initiative of McClellan. He had, during the month allowed him by the inactivity of his opponent, brought together from every available source a great army, almost equal in numbers to the Army of the Potomac. Though there is a great disparity in the accounts of the different Confederate officers who have written upon this subject, there is no reason to doubt that the official estimate quoted with approval by General Webb, which states Lee's force as 80,762, is substantially correct. Webb says that McClellan's effective force for the "seven days' battles" was 92,500[4] — considerably less than his own official report of the 20th of June gives him. The Confederate forces were, like the army opposed to them, of the best material the country could furnish;

1 War Records.
2 McClellan's Report. War Records.
3 "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War," Vol. II., p. 325.
4 Webb, "The Peninsula," pp. 119, 120.

and no better men ever went to war, in any age or region. It is an unsolved and now an insolvable question whether the Confederates had gained or lost by the wounding of Johnston and the substitution of Lee as the commander of their principal army. They were both men of the best ability and highest character that the Southern States could produce; both trained soldiers, of calm temper, and great energy; and both equally honorable and magnanimous in their treatment of their subordinates. But General Lee had a great advantage over his predecessor in possessing the perfect confidence and personal friendship of Jefferson Davis, the head of the Confederate Government. He was always sure in his enterprises of what Johnston often lacked, the sincere and zealous support of the Richmond Government. He also enjoyed, to an unusual degree, the warm regard and esteem of those who were brought into personal or official relations with him. His handsome and attractive presence, his dignified yet cordial manner, a certain sincerity and gentleness which was apparent in all his words and actions, endeared him to his associates and made friends of strangers at first sight. Everything he asked for was given him. He had been the favorite of General Scott in the old army; he became the favorite of Mr. Davis in his new command. The army which Johnston gave up to him had been almost doubled in numbers by the time he considered himself ready to employ it against McClellan.[1]

Lee's preparations were promptly and energetically made. Immediately after Stuart's raid was completed he ordered Stonewall Jackson to join him by a letter of the 16th, which gave minute instructions for his march and enjoined upon him the greatest secrecy and swiftness. To mask this movement he ostentatiously sent Jackson two brigades from Richmond, with drums beating and colors flying, a proceeding which was promptly reported to McClellan and caused him at first some perplexity,[2] but which he explained by his usual conclusion that Lee had so overwhelming a force that a few brigades here or there made no difference to him. The manœuvre was of little practical account, however, as McClellan was fully informed of Jackson's approach in time to provide against it, or to anticipate his arrival by taking the offensive. He even knew as early as the 25th that Jackson was to come in on his right and rear,[2] but he made no use of this knowledge except to reproach the Government for not sending him more troops. Jackson reported at Richmond in person on the 23d of June, in advance of his corps; and in a conference with Longstreet and the two Hills the plan of attacking the Federal right wing, north of the Chickahominy, was agreed upon. As Jackson's troops had the greatest distance to march, it was left to him to say when the attack should be made. He named the morning of the 26th of June, giving himself, as it afterwards appeared, too little time.

General Lee matured his plan on the 24th, and issued his orders for the coming campaign. The most striking thing about them is his evident contempt for his opponent. He sent, in effect, almost his entire army to the north side of the Chickahominy to strike McClellan's right wing. The enemy is to be "driven from Mechanicsville"; the Confederates are to

> sweep down the Chickahominy and endeavor to drive the enemy from his position above New Bridge; General Jackson bearing well to his left, turning Beaver Dam Creek, and taking the direction towards Cold Harbor. They will then press forward towards the York River Railroad, closing upon the enemy's rear, and forcing him down the Chickahominy. Any advance of the enemy towards Richmond will be prevented by rigorously following his rear, and crippling and arresting his progress.

He anticipated the possibility of McClellan's abandoning his intrenchments on the south side of the river, in which case he is to be "closely pursued" by Huger and Magruder. Cavalry are to occupy the roads to arrest his flight "down the Chickahominy." General Lee's plan and expectation was, in short, to herd and drive down the Peninsula a magnificent army, superior in numbers to his own, and not inferior in any other respect — if we except the respective commanders-in-chief, who were at least equally distinguished engineers. In this enterprise he deserved and courted defeat by leaving the bulk of McClellan's army between himself and Richmond. When he laid his plan before Jefferson Davis, the latter saw at once this serious defect in it. He says:

> I pointed out to him that our force and intrenched line between the left flank of the enemy and Richmond was too weak for a protracted resistance; and if McClellan was the man I took him for, . . . as soon as he found that the bulk of our army was on the north side of the Chickahominy he would not stop to try conclusions with it there, but would immediately move upon his objective point, the city of Richmond. If, on the other hand, he should behave like an engineer officer, and deem it his first duty to protect his line of communication, I thought the plan proposed was not only the best, but would be a success. Something of his old *esprit de corps* manifested itself in General Lee's first reponse that he did not know engineer officers were more likely than others to make such mistakes; but immediately passing to the main subject, he added, "If you will hold him as long as you can at the intrenchments, and then fall back on the detached works around the city, I will be upon the enemy's heels before he gets there."[3]

But everything shows that he anticipated no

1 Johnston's "Narrative," pp. 145, 146.
2 War Records.
3 Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Vol. II., p. 132.

such action on the part of McClellan. All his orders, all his dispositions, indicate clearly that he thought of nothing but driving him down the Chickahominy towards Yorktown, and capturing or dispersing his army. The measure of success he met with will always be, in the general judgment, a justification of his plan; but the opinion of the best military critics on both sides is that it never could have succeeded had it not been for McClellan's hallucination as to the numbers opposed to him. From the hour that Lee crossed his troops over the Chickahominy, leaving that river and McClellan's army between him and Richmond, he risked the fate of the Confederacy upon his belief that the Union general would make no forward movement. His confidence grew with every step of McClellan's retreat from Beaver Dam Creek to Malvern Hill, and was dearly paid for in the blood of his soldiers.

The first meeting between the two armies resulted in a terrible defeat for the Confederates. About 3 o'clock on the afternoon of the 26th, the rebel forces, commanded by Longstreet, D. H. Hill, and A. P. Hill, attacked the Union troops in position on the east side of Beaver Dam Creek, commanded by General McCall, whose division had been added to Fitz John Porter's corps, ably assisted by Seymour, Meade, and Reynolds. Of the last two, the one gained an undying fame and the other a glorious death at Gettysburg. The Confederates were in greatly superior force, but the Union troops had the advantage of position; and though both sides fought with equal valor, before night fell the rebels were repulsed with great slaughter. General McClellan visited Fitz John Porter's headquarters at night, after the battle. He found an exultant and victorious army, almost unscathed by the fierce conflict of the day. Porter reports his loss at 250 out of the 5000 engaged, and says the enemy lost nearly 2000 of their 10,000 attacking.[1] If Porter, instead of McClellan, had been in command of the army, Richmond might have been under the Union flag the next day. His soldierly spirit, flushed with the day's success, comprehended the full advantage of the situation. He urged McClellan to seize his opportunity; he proposed "to hold his own at the Beaver Dam line, slightly reënforced, while General McClellan moved the main body of his army upon Richmond."[2] The General-in-Chief had not resolution enough to accept or reject this proposition of his gallant subordinate. He returned to his own headquarters to make up his mind, and about "3 or 4 o'clock in the morning" sent his final order to Porter to retire to a position some four miles east, behind Boatswain Swamp, and there await the further attack of the enemy.

General Porter's personal devotion to McClellan, which was afterwards to bring him into lifelong trouble, has never allowed him to criticise this decision of his chief which overruled his own bold and intelligent plan. Let us see how the ablest and most efficient Confederate general engaged in this campaign regarded it. General Longstreet says:

> In my judgment the evacuation of Beaver Dam Creek was very unwise on the part of the Federal commanders. We had attacked at Beaver Dam, and had failed to make an impression at that point, losing several thousand men and officers. This demonstrated that the position was safe. If the Federal commanders knew of Jackson's approach on the 26th, they had ample time to reënforce Porter's right before Friday morning, the 27th, with men and field defenses, to such extent as to make the remainder of the line to the right secure against assault. So that the Federals in withdrawing not only abandoned a strong position, but gave up the *morale* of their success, and transferred it to our somewhat disheartened forces; for, next to Malvern Hill, the sacrifice at Beaver Dam was unequaled in demoralization during the entire summer.[3]

It is hard to understand what General McClellan means when he says in his report that the 26th was "the day he had decided on for our final advance." If he thought it safe to attack Richmond with Lee and his army in front of him, how much more advantageous would such an attack have been with Lee and his army engaged in a desperate battle north of the Chickahominy. There is no indication in his orders or dispatches of these days — if we except one order to Porter, hereafter to be mentioned — that he had any more definite purpose than to await the action of the enemy, and retreat to the James, if necessary. His mind was filled with that fantastic idea he had adopted of an army of 200,000 under Lee. In his report, written a year afterwards, he reiterates and dwells upon this absurd and already disproved fiction, basing his persistent belief on the reports of his ridiculous detective service. This is the only explanation possible of his action during this momentous week while he was flying from phantom myriads which existed only in his own brain, and his brave army was turning and checking Lee's pursuing forces at every halt it made.

On the morning of the 27th Porter withdrew to his new position, famous ever thereafter as the battlefield of Gaines's Mill, or of the Chickahominy, as it is called by Southern writers. His ground, like that of the day before, was admirably chosen for defense. He had less

1 "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War," Vol. II., p. 331.

2 We are here quoting the language of General Webb, whose testimony is beyond question. "The Peninsula," p. 130.

3 "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War," Vol. II., p. 398.

than one-third the number of the host which was marching by every road on the west and north to destroy him.[1] He knew his force was too small to defend so long a line against such numbers, but his appeals to McClellan for reenforcements brought no response until late in the day, when Slocum's division was sent him. With the troops he had he made a magnificent fight, which, in spite of his subsequent history, makes us regret that he had not commanded the entire Army of the Potomac that day.

With the exception of the small detachments left on the south side of the river under Magruder to amuse McClellan, the whole army of General Lee, numbering over 60,000 men, was advancing upon Porter's single corps. It was led by the best generals of the South — Longstreet, the two Hills, Whiting, Hood, Ewell, and the redoubtable Jackson, whose corps, though marching with less than their usual celerity, had turned Beaver Dam Creek the night before, and had now arrived at the post assigned them opposite Porter's right. General Lee commanded on the field in person, and Jefferson Davis contributed whatever his presence was worth.

The battle began at noon, and as evening fell upon the desperately fought field the entire Confederate army, by a simultaneous advance, forced back the Union troops, overcome by numbers and wearied with seven hours of constant fighting.[2] There was no confusion except at the point on the right where Morell's line had been pierced by Hood's brigade, where two regiments were made prisoners. Everywhere else the Union soldiers retired fighting, turning from time to time to beat back the enemy, until night put an end to the conflict. Porter had lost 4000 in killed and wounded, one-sixth of his men; Lee something more, about one-twelfth of his. Lee had absolutely failed in his object — to dislodge the Union army from its position and "drive it down the Chickahominy."

Of the heroic valor of this sanguinary day's work there can be no question. There is much question of the wisdom of it. If McClellan had made up his mind to retreat to the James, he might have withdrawn Porter to the south side of the Chickahominy during the night of the 26th, after his signal victory at Beaver Dam.[3] But, as we have seen, he gave no definite orders until 3 o'clock the next morning, when he directed Porter to retire to Gaines's Mill. During all the terrible conflict of the 27th, he left his gallant subordinate to fight three times his force, with no intimation of his ultimate purpose. Porter had a right to think that the price of his tremendous sacrifice was to be the capture of Richmond. McClellan's orders to him on the 23d included these words:

> The troops on this side will be held ready either to support you directly or to attack the enemy in their front. If the force attacking you is large, the general would prefer the latter course, counting upon your skill and the admirable troops under your command to hold their own against superior numbers long enough for him to make the decisive movement which will determine the fate of Richmond.

In addition to this we have the most unimpeachable authority for saying that Porter on the battlefield was left with the same impression. General Webb, who was present with General Porter during the fight, ordered to that duty from McClellan's headquarters, says:

> He carried with him to General Porter the distinct impression, then prevailing at the headquarters of the army, that he was to hold this large force of the enemy on the left bank of the Chickahominy in order that General McClellan, with the main army, might break through and take Richmond.

It was this inspiring thought which moved Porter and his 20,000 to such a prodigious feat of arms. General Webb says:

> The sacrifice at Gaines's Mill . . . was warranted, if we were to gain Richmond by making it; and the troops engaged in carrying out this plan, conceiving it to be the wish of the general commanding, were successful in holding the rebels on the left bank.[4]

But the general commanding was simply incapable of the effort of will necessary to carry

1 "Porter's force consisted of Morell's, McCall's, and Sykes's divisions; in all, 17,330 infantry for duty. There were present with him 2534 artillery, of which, from the nature of the ground, but a small portion could be used; and 671 of the regular cavalry guarded the bridges." [Webb, "The Peninsula," p. 129.]

2 Porter says: "The forces in this battle were: Union, 50 regiments, 20 batteries; in all, about 27,000 men [including the reënforcements received during the day]. Confederate, 129 regiments, 19 batteries; in all, about 65,000."

3 "At last a moment came when action was imperative. The enemy assumed the initiative, and we had warning of when and where he was to strike. Had Porter been withdrawn the night of the 26th, our army would have been concentrated on the right bank, while two corps at least of the enemy's force were on the left bank. Whatever course we then took, whether to strike at Richmond and the portion of the enemy on the right bank, or move at once for the James, we would have had a concentrated army, and a fair chance of a brilliant result in the first place; and in the second, if we accomplished nothing, we would have been in the same case on the morning of the 27th as we were on that of the 28th — minus a lost battle and a compulsory retreat; or, had the fortified lines (thrown up expressly for the object) been held by 20,000 men (as they could have been), we could have fought on the other side with 80,000 men instead of 27,000; or, finally, had the lines been abandoned, with our hold on the right bank of the Chickahominy, we might have fought and crushed the enemy on the left bank, reopened our communications, and then returned and taken Richmond." [From Report of General Barnard, Chief of Engineers, Army of the Potomac. War Records.]

4 Webb, "The Peninsula," p. 187.

out his share of the plan. He gives us to understand, in his report, and in subsequent articles, that he resolved upon his retreat to the James on the 25th of June. General Webb adopts this theory, and adds that McClellan thought that the capture of Richmond, with Lee beyond the Chickahominy, was not a proper military movement. It is not in the competence of any one to judge what were General McClellan's thoughts and intentions from the 23d to the 27th of June. So late as 8 o'clock on the night of the 27th, a dispatch from him to the War Department indicates that he thought the attack of Magruder on the right bank was more serious than that upon Porter on the left. "I may be forced," he says, "to give up my position during the night, but will not if it is possible to avoid it"; and as a matter of course the usual refrain follows: "Had I twenty thousand fresh and good troops, we would be sure of a splendid victory to-morrow."[1] Magruder, who had been left to guard Richmond with a thin curtain of troops, had been all day repeating the devices which were so successful at Yorktown. He had rattled about McClellan's entire front with so much noise and smoke as to create the impression of overwhelming numbers. Even the seasoned corps commanders were not unaffected by it. Franklin thought it not prudent to send any reënforcements from his line to Porter. Sumner offered to send two brigades, but thought it would be hazardous. The real state of the case can best be seen from Magruder's own report. He says:

> From Friday night until Sunday morning I considered the situation of our army as extremely critical and perilous. The larger portion of it was on the opposite side of the Chickahominy. The bridges had been all destroyed; but one was rebuilt (the New Bridge), which was commanded fully by the enemy's guns from Golding's; and there were but 25,000 men between his army of 100,000 and Richmond. . . . Had McClellan massed his whole force in column, and advanced it against any point of our line of battle,—as was done at Austerlitz, under similar circumstances, by the greatest captain of any age,—though the head of his column would have suffered greatly, its momentum would have insured him success; and the occupation of our works about Richmond, and consequently the city, might have been his reward. His failure to do so is the best evidence that our wise commander fully understood the character of his opponent.[1]

D. H. Hill says the same thing:[2]

> During Lee's absence Richmond was at the mercy of McClellan. . . . The fortifications around Richmond at that time were very slight. McClellan could have captured the city with very little loss of life. The want of supplies would have forced Lee to attack him as soon as possible, with all the disadvantages of a precipitated movement.[3]

General McClellan did not visit the field of battle during the day.[4] At night he summoned Porter across the river, and there made known to him and the other corps commanders, for the first time, his intention to change his base to the James. Porter was ordered to retire to the south bank, and destroy the bridges after him. This was accomplished safely and in good order, and the bridges were destroyed soon after sunrise on the 28th. The movement to the James once resolved upon, it was executed with great energy and ability. General Keyes moved his corps, with artillery and baggage, across the White Oak Swamp, and possessed himself of the ground on the other side, for the covering of the passage of the other troops and the trains, by noon of the 28th. General Porter's corps, during the same day and night, crossed the White Oak Swamp, and established itself in positions that covered the roads from Richmond. Franklin withdrew from the extreme right after a skirmish at Golding's Farm. Keyes and Porter continued in the advance, and established their two corps safely at Malvern Hill, thus securing the extreme left flank of the army in a commanding and important situation.

This movement took General Lee completely by surprise. Anticipating nothing but a retreat down the Chickahominy,[5] he had thrown his left wing and his entire cavalry force in that direction; and when he became aware of his mistake, a good deal of precious time was already lost, and he was deprived,

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1 War Records.

2 "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War," Vol. II., p. 361.

3 The following shows the opinion of two of the most prominent Confederate officers upon this matter. It is an extract from a letter of General J. E. Johnston to General Beauregard, dated Amelia Springs, August 4, 1862, immediately after the Seven Days' Battles:

"But for my confidence in McClellan's want of enterprise, I should on Thursday night, after three-fourths of the troops had crossed the Chickahominy, have apprehended that he would adopt the course you suggest for him. Had he done so, he might have been in Richmond on Friday before midday. By concentrating his troops on the south side of the river before daybreak on Friday he would have been between our main body and the city, with only one-fourth of our force in his way. This fraction he could have beaten in four hours, and marched to Richmond in two hours more." [Published in the "New York Times," June 17, 1883.]

4 "*Question.* Were you with the right or left wing of the army during the battle of Gaines's Mill?

"*Answer.* [General McClellan.] I was on the right bank of the river, at Dr. Trent's house, as the most central position." [Report of the Committee on the Conduct of the War.]

5 "General Lee, presuming that the Federalists would continue to withdraw, if overpowered, towards the York River Railroad and the White House, directed General Jackson to proceed with General D. H. Hill to a point a few miles north of Cold Harbor, and thence to march to that place and strike their line of retreat." [Dabney, p. 443.]

during the three days that followed, of Stuart's invaluable services. But having ascertained on the 29th that McClellan was marching to the James, he immediately started in pursuit, sending his whole force by parallel roads to intercept the Army of the Potomac near Charles City Cross-roads, midway between the White Oak Swamp and the James. Longstreet was to march with A. P. Hill by the Long Bridge road; while Huger was to come up at the same time by the Charles City road, and General Holmes was to take up position below him on the river road. Jackson, crossing the Grapevine Bridge, was to come in from the north on the rear of the Federal army.

Even the terrible lessons of Beaver Dam and Gaines's Mill had not convinced General Lee of the danger of attacking the Army of the Potomac in position. These lessons were repeated all along the line of march. Sumner repulsed Magruder at Allen's Farm, and then, retiring to Savage's Station, he and Franklin met another fierce onslaught from the same force, and completely defeated them. It was with the greatest difficulty that Franklin could induce the gallant old general to leave the field. McClellan's orders were positive that the White Oak Swamp must be crossed that night; but to all Franklin's representations Sumner answered: "No, General, you shall not go, nor will I." When shown McClellan's positive orders, he cried out, "McClellan did not know the circumstances when he wrote that note. He did not know that we would fight a battle and gain a victory."[1] He only gave way and reluctantly took up his line of march for the southward on the positive orders of an aide-de-camp, who had just left McClellan.[2]

The next day occurred the battle of Glendale, or Frayser's Farm, as it is sometimes called. Jackson, with unusual slowness, had arrived at Savage's Station the day before, too late to take part in the battle there; and when he came to White Oak Swamp the bridge was gone and Franklin occupied the heights beyond. His force was therefore paralyzed during the day. He made once or twice a feeble attempt to cross the swamp, but was promptly met and driven back by Franklin. Huger, on the Charles City road, failed to break through some slight obstruction there. Holmes was in terror of the gunboats near Malvern Hill and could give no assistance; so that Longstreet and A. P. Hill were forced to attack the Union center, at Glendale, on pretty nearly even terms. Here a savage and obstinate conflict took place, which was felt on both sides to be the crisis of the campaign. If the Union center had been pierced, the disaster would have been beyond calculation. On the other hand, if our army had been concentrated at that point, and had defeated the army of Lee, the city of Richmond would have been the prize of victory. General Franklin says that the Prince de Joinville, who was at that moment taking leave of the army to return to Europe, said to him with great earnestness, "Advise General McClellan to center his army at this point and fight the battle to-day. If he does, he will be in Richmond to-morrow." Neither side won the victory that day, though each deserved it by brave and persistent fighting. General McClellan, intent upon securing a defensive position for his army upon the James, left the field before the fighting began; while Longstreet, Lee, and Jefferson Davis himself were under the fire of the Union guns during the afternoon. When darkness put an end to the fighting the Federal generals, left to their discretion, had accomplished their purpose. The enemy had been held in check, the trains and artillery had gone safely forward by the road which the battle had protected, and on the next morning, July 1, the Army of the Potomac was awaiting its enemy in the natural fortress of Malvern Hill. It was at this place that General Lee's contempt for his enemy was to meet its last and severest chastisement.

The position strikingly resembled the battle-field of Gaines's Mill. The Union army was posted on a high position, covered on the right and on the left by swampy streams and winding ravines. Woods in front furnished a cover for the formation of the Confederate columns, but an open space intervening afforded full play for the terrible Federal artillery. It was not the place for a prudent general to attack, and Lee was usually one of the most prudent of generals. But he had his whole army well in hand, Jackson having come up in the night, and he decided to risk the venture. D. H. Hill took the liberty of representing the great strength of McClellan's position, and to give his opinion against an assault. Longstreet, who was present, laughed and said, "Don't get scared, now that we have got him whipped." "It was this belief in the demoralization of the Federal army," Hill says, "that made our

[1] "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War," Vol. II., p. 375.

[2] The corps commanders were left almost entirely without directions, as the following, from the report of the Committee on the Conduct of the War, shows:

"*Question.* By whom was the battle of Savage's Station fought? Did you yourself direct the movements of the troops, or were they directed by the corps commanders?

"*Answer.* [General McClellan.] I had given general orders for the movements of the troops; but the fighting was done under the direct orders of the corps commanders."

leader risk the attack." Lee evidently thought the position could be carried by a *coup de main*. The order to his generals of division is a curiosity of military literature:

> Batteries have been established to rake the enemy's line. If it is broken, as is probable, Armistead, who can witness the effect of the fire, has been ordered to charge with a yell. Do the same.

On the part of the Confederates the battle was as ill executed as it was ill conceived. There was a vast amount of blood and valor wasted by them; while on the Union side, under the admirable leadership of Porter, Morell, and Couch, not a drop of blood nor an ounce of powder was thrown away. Successive attacks made by the Confederates from 1 o'clock until 9 were promptly and bravely repulsed by the Union soldiers. Jackson's forces suffered severely in getting into position early in the afternoon. One of Huger's brigades charged upon Couch about 3 o'clock, and was driven back, roughly handled. D. H. Hill waited a long time for the "yell" from Armistead, which was to be his signal for onset. But Armistead's yell in that roar of artillery was but a feeble pipe, and was soon silenced; and when Hill at last heard some shouting on his right and concluded to advance, he was repulsed and fearfully punished by the immovable brigades of Couch and Heintzelman. The most picturesque, perhaps we may say the most sensational, charge of the day was that made by Magruder late in the afternoon. His nine brigades melted away like men of snow under the frightful fire of Sykes's batteries and the muskets of Morell's steadfast infantry. This charge closed the fighting for the day. The Union line had not been broken.

One remarkable feature of the battle of Malvern Hill was that neither of the commanders-in-chief exercised any definite control over the progress of the fight. General Lee, it is true, was on the field, accompanied by Jefferson Davis; but with the exception of that preposterous order about Armistead's yell, he seems to have allowed his corps commanders to fight the battle in their own way. Their reports are filled with angry recriminations, and show a gross lack of discipline and organization. Early in the afternoon Lee ordered Longstreet and Hill to move their forces by the left flank, intending to cut off the expected retreat of McClellan. Longstreet says:

> I issued my orders accordingly for the two division commanders to go around and turn the Federal right, when, in some way unknown to me, the battle was drawn on. We were repulsed at all points with fearful slaughter, losing six thousand men and accomplishing nothing.

General McClellan was seldom on the field. He left it in the morning before the fighting began and went to his camp at Haxall's, which was under the protection of the gunboats. He came back for a little while in the afternoon, but remained with the right wing, where there was no fighting; he said his anxiety was for the right wing, as he was perfectly sure of the left and the center. In this way he deprived himself of the pleasure of witnessing a great victory won by the troops under the command of his subordinate generals. It is not impossible that if he had seen with his own eyes the magnificent success of the Union arms during the day he would have held the ground which had been so gallantly defended. To judge from the accounts of the officers on both sides, nothing would have been easier. The defeat and consequent demoralization of the Confederate forces surpassed anything seen in the war, and it might have been completed by a vigorous offensive on the morning of the 2d. Even Major Dabney, of Jackson's staff, whose sturdy partisanship usually refuses to recognize the plainest facts unfavorable to his side, gives this picture of the feeling of the division commanders of Jackson's corps the night of the battle:

> After many details of loss and disaster, they all concurred in declaring that McClellan would probably take the aggressive in the morning, and that the Confederate army was in no condition to resist him.[1]

But impressed by the phantasm of 200,000 men before him, McClellan had already resolved to retire still farther down the James to Harrison's Landing, in order, as he says, to reach a point where his supplies could be brought to him with certainty. Commodore Rodgers, with whom he was in constant consultation, thought this could best be done below City Point. The victorious army, therefore, following the habit of the disastrous week, turned its back once more upon its beaten enemy, and established itself that day at Harrison's Bar, in a situation which Lee, having at last gained some information as to the fighting qualities of the Army of the Potomac, declined to attack, a decision in which Jackson agreed with him. After several days of reconnaissances he withdrew his army, on the 8th of July, to Richmond, and the Peninsular Campaign was at an end.

HARRISON'S LANDING.

GENERAL MCCLELLAN was greatly agitated by the battle of Gaines's Mill,[2] and by the emo-

1 Dabney, p. 473.

2 Lieutenant-Colonel B. S. Alexander, of the Corps of Engineers, gave the following sworn evidence before the Committee on the Conduct of the War [p. 592]. He said he saw, on the evening of the 28th, at General McClellan's headquarters at Savage's Station, an order

tions incident to his forced departure for the James. Under the influence of this feeling he sent to the Secretary of War from Savage's Station, on the 28th of June, an extraordinary dispatch, which we here insert in full, as it seems necessary to the comprehension of his attitude towards, and his relations with, the Government:

I now know the full history of the day. On this side of the river (the right bank) we repulsed several strong attacks. On the left bank our men did all that men could do, all that soldiers could accomplish; but they were overwhelmed by vastly superior numbers, even after I brought my last reserves into action. The loss on both sides is terrible. I believe it will prove to be the most desperate battle of the war. The sad remnants of my men behave as men. Those battalions who fought most bravely, and suffered most, are still in the best order. My regulars were superb, and I count upon what are left to turn another battle, in company with their gallant comrades of the volunteers. Had I 20,000 or even 10,000 fresh troops to use to-morrow, I could take Richmond; but I have not a man in reserve, and shall be glad to cover my retreat, and save the material and personnel of the army. If we have lost the day we have yet preserved our honor, and no one need blush for the Army of the Potomac. I have lost the battle because my force was too small. I again repeat that I am not responsible for this, and I say it with the earnestness of a general who feels in his heart the loss of every brave man who has been needlessly sacrificed to-day. I still hope to retrieve our fortunes; but to do this the Government must view the matter in the same earnest light that I do. You must send me very large reënforcements, and send them at once. I shall draw back to this side of Chickahominy, and think I can withdraw all our material. Please understand that in this battle we have lost nothing but men, and those the best we have. In addition to what I have already said, I only wish to say to the President that I think he is wrong in regarding me as ungenerous when I said that my force was too weak. I merely intimated a truth which to-day has been too plainly proved. If at this instant I could dispose of 10,000 fresh men, I could gain a victory to-morrow. I know that a few thousand more men would have changed this battle from a defeat to a victory. As it is, the Government must not and can not hold me responsible for the result. I feel too earnestly to-night; I have seen too many dead and wounded comrades to feel otherwise than that the Government has not sustained this army. If you do not do so now, the game is lost. If I save this army now, I tell you plainly that I owe no thanks to you or to any other person in Washington. You have done your best to sacrifice this army.[1]

It is probable that no other general ever retained his commission for twenty-four hours after the receipt of such a communication by his superiors; but it is easy to see the reason why he was never called to account for it. The evident panic and mental perturbation which pierces through its incoherence filled the President with such dismay that its mutinous insolence was entirely overlooked. He could only wonder what terrible catastrophe already accomplished, or to come, could have wrung such an outcry as this from the general commanding. Even the surrender of the army was not an impossible disaster to expect from a general capable of writing such a dispatch. Secretary Chase has left a memorandum showing that some such action was regarded as indicated by General McClellan's dispatches, and that even after his arrival at Harrison's Landing, General Marcy, his father-in-law and chief of staff, in a visit to Washington spoke of it as a possibility.[2] Not knowing the extent of the mischance which had fallen upon the army, the President hastened at once to send a kind and encouraging answer to McClellan's dispatches:

Save your army, at all events. Will send reënforcements as fast as we can. Of course they cannot reach you to-day, to-morrow, or next day. I have not said you were ungenerous for saying you needed reënforcements. I thought you were ungenerous in assuming that I did not send them as fast as I could. I feel any misfortune to you and your army quite as keenly as you feel it yourself. If you have had a drawn battle, or a repulse, it is the price we pay for the enemy not being in Washington. We protected Washington and the enemy concentrated on you. Had we stripped Washington, he would have been upon us before the troops could have gotten to you. Less than a week ago you notified us that reënforcements were leaving Richmond to come in front of us. It is the nature of the case, and neither you nor the Government are to blame. Please tell at once the present condition and aspect of things.[1]

The President also, with the greatest diligence, sent dispatches on the same day to General Dix, at Fort Monroe, to Admiral Goldsborough, commanding the naval forces in the James, and to General Burnside, in North Carolina, directing all three of them to strain every nerve in order to go to McClellan's assistance. At the same time he ordered[3] Halleck to send a large portion of his forces to the rescue.

As the 29th and 30th of June passed with-

directing the destruction of the baggage of the officers and men, and he thought also the camp equipage; appealing to the officers and men to submit to this privation because it would be only for a few days, he thought the order stated. He went to the general at once, and remonstrated with him against allowing any such order to be issued, telling him he thought it would have a bad effect upon the army — would demoralize the officers and men; that it would tell them more plainly than in any other way that they were a defeated army, running for their lives. This led to some discussion among the officers at headquarters, and Colonel Alexander heard afterward that the order was never promulgated, but suppressed.

1 War Records.

2 This is the language of Mr. Chase's memorandum: "General McClellan himself, in his dispatches before reaching Harrison's Landing, referred to the possibility of being obliged to capitulate with his entire army; and after reaching that place, General Marcy, ... who had been sent up to explain personally the situation to the President, spoke of the possibility of his capitulation at once, or within two or three days." [Schuckers, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 447.]

3 This order was afterwards revoked on Halleck's representation that the detachment of so large a force would be equivalent to the abandonment of Tennessee. [War Records.]

out news of any further catastrophe, the President and the Secretary of War began to think better of the situation, and concluded that it might possibly be improved by change of base to the James. Mr. Stanton telegraphed to General Wool that it looked "more like taking Richmond than at any time before." But on the 1st of July a dispatch, dated at Turkey Bridge, arrived from General McClellan, who was still under the influence of great agitation, announcing that he is "hard pressed by superior numbers," and fearing that he shall be forced to abandon his material and save his men under cover of the gunboats. "If none of us escape, we shall at least have done honor to the country. I shall do my best to save the army. Send more gunboats."[1] While waiting for his troops to come to the new position he had chosen for them, he continued asking for reënforcements. "I need," he says, "50,000 more men, and with them I will retrieve our fortunes." The Secretary of War at once answered that reënforcements were on the way, 5000 from McDowell and 25,000 from Halleck. "Hold your ground," he says encouragingly, "and you will be in Richmond before the month is over."[1] On the morning of the battle of Malvern, McClellan writes again, "I dread the result if we are attacked to-day by fresh troops. . . . I now pray for time." It has been seen that his dread was uncalled for. Meanwhile, before hearing of the battle, the President had telegraphed:

It is impossible to reënforce you for your present emergency. If we had a million of men we could not get them to you in time. We have not the men to send. If you are not strong enough to face the enemy you must find a place of security, and wait, rest, and repair. Maintain your ground if you can, but save the army at all events, even if you fall back to Fort Monroe. We still have strength enough in the country and will bring it out.

On the 2d, the flurry of the week having somewhat subsided, the President sent him the following:

Your dispatch of Tuesday morning induced me to hope your army is having some rest. In this hope allow me to reason with you a moment. When you ask for 50,000 men to be promptly sent you, you surely labor under some gross mistake of fact. Recently you sent papers showing your disposal of forces made last spring for the defense of Washington, and advising a return to that plan. I find it included in and about Washington 75,000 men. Now please be assured I have not men enough to fill that very plan by 15,000. All of Frémont's in the valley, all of Banks's, all of McDowell's not with you, and all in Washington taken together do not exceed, if they reach, 60,000. With Wool and Dix added to those mentioned I have not, outside of your army, 75,000 men east of the mountains. Thus the idea of sending you 50,000, or any other considerable force, promptly is simply absurd. If in your frequent mention of responsibility you have the impression that I blame you for not doing more than you can, please be relieved of such impression. I only beg that, in like manner, you will not ask impossibilities of me. If you think you are not strong enough to take Richmond just now, I do not ask you to try just now. Save the army, material, and personnel, and I will strengthen it for the offensive again as fast as I can. The governors of eighteen States offer me a new levy of 300,000, which I accept.

This quiet and reasonable statement produced no effect upon the general. On the 3d he wrote again in a strain of wilder exaggeration than ever. He says:

It is of course impossible to estimate, as yet, our losses; but I doubt whether there are to-day more than 50,000 men with their colors. To accomplish the great task of capturing Richmond and putting an end to this rebellion, reënforcements should be sent to me, rather much over than much less than 100,000 men. I beg that you will be fully impressed by the magnitude of the crisis in which we are placed.[1]

The didactic, not to say magisterial, tone of this dispatch formed a not unnatural introduction to the general's next important communication to the President, laying before him an entire body of administrative and political doctrine, in which alone, he intimates, the salvation of the country can be found:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
CAMP NEAR HARRISON'S LANDING, VIRGINIA,
July 7, 1862.

MR. PRESIDENT: You have been fully informed that the rebel army is in our front with the purpose of overwhelming us [2] by attacking our positions or reducing us by blocking our river communications. I cannot but regard our condition as critical, and I earnestly desire, in view of possible contingencies, to lay before your Excellency, for your private consideration, my general views concerning the existing state of the rebellion, although they do not strictly relate to the situation of this army or strictly come within the scope of my official duties. These views amount to convictions, and are deeply impressed upon my mind and heart. Our cause must never be abandoned; it is the cause of free institutions and self-government. The Constitution and the Union must be preserved, whatever may be the cost in time, treasure, and blood. If secession is successful, other dissolutions are clearly to be seen in the future. Let neither military disaster, political faction, nor foreign war shake your settled purpose to enforce the equal operation of the laws of the United States upon the people of every State. The time has come when the Government must determine upon a civil and military policy covering the whole ground of our national trouble. The responsibility of determining, declaring, and supporting such civil and military policy, and of directing the whole course of national affairs in regard to the rebellion, must now be assumed and exercised by you, or our cause will be lost. The Constitution gives you power sufficient even for the present terrible exigency.

This rebellion has assumed the character of a war. As such it should be regarded, and it should be conducted upon the highest principles known to Christian civilization. It should not be a war looking to the subjugation of the people of any State in any event. It should not be at all a war upon population, but against armed forces and political organizations. Neither con-

1 War Records.

2 This was at a time when Lee had given up all thought of attacking the Union army at Harrison's Landing.

fiscation of property, political executions of persons, territorial organization of States, or forcible abolition of slavery should be contemplated for a moment.

In prosecuting the war all private property and unarmed persons should be strictly protected, subject only to the necessities of military operations; all private property taken for military use should be paid or receipted for; pillage and waste should be treated as high crimes, all unnecessary trespass sternly prohibited, and offensive demeanor by the military toward citizens promptly rebuked. Military arrests should not be tolerated, except in places where active hostilities exist; and oaths not required by enactments — constitutionally made — should be neither demanded nor received. Military government should be confined to the preservation of public order and the protection of political rights. Military power should not be allowed to interfere with the relations of servitude, either by supporting or impairing the authority of the master, except for repressing disorder, as in other cases. Slaves, contraband under the act of Congress, seeking military protection, should receive it. The right of the Government to appropriate permanently to its own service claims to slave labor should be asserted, and the right of the owner to compensation therefor should be recognized. This principle might be extended upon grounds of military necessity and security to all the slaves within a particular State, thus working manumission in such State; and in Missouri, perhaps in western Virginia also, and possibly even in Maryland, the expediency of such a military measure is only a question of time. A system of policy thus constitutional and conservative, and pervaded by the influences of Christianity and freedom, would receive the support of almost all truly loyal men, would deeply impress the rebel masses and all foreign nations, and it might be humbly hoped that it would commend itself to the favor of the Almighty.

Unless the principles governing the further conduct of our struggle shall be made known and approved, the effort to obtain requisite forces will be almost hopeless. A declaration of radical views, especially upon slavery, will rapidly disintegrate our present armies. The policy of the Government must be supported by concentrations of military power. The national forces should not be dispersed in expeditions, posts of occupation, and numerous armies; but should be mainly collected into masses and brought to bear upon the armies of the Confederate States. Those armies thoroughly defeated, the political structure which they support would soon cease to exist.

In carrying out any system of policy which you may form, you will require a commander-in-chief of the army; one who possesses your confidence, understands your views, and who is competent to execute your orders by directing the military forces of the nation to the accomplishment of the objects by you proposed. I do not ask that place for myself. I am willing to serve you in such position as you may assign me, and I will do so as faithfully as ever subordinate served superior.

I may be on the brink of eternity, and as I hope forgiveness from my Maker, I have written this letter with sincerity towards you and from love of my country. Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

G. B. McCLELLAN,
Major-General Commanding.

His Excellency ABRAHAM LINCOLN, *President.*[1]

This letter marks the beginning of General McClellan's distinctively political career. He had always been more or less in sympathy with the Democratic party, and consequently in an attitude of dormant opposition to the Administration; although, after the manner of officers of the regular service, he had taken no pronounced political attitude. In fact, on his first assuming command of the Army of the Potomac, he had seemed to be in full sympathy with the President and Cabinet in the proceedings they thought proper to adopt for the suppression of the rebellion. He had even entered heartily into some of the more extreme measures of the Government. His orders to General Banks directing the arrest of the secessionist members of the Maryland legislature might have been written by a zealous Republican. "When they meet on the 17th," he says, "you will please have everything prepared to arrest the whole party, and be sure that none escape." He urges upon him the "absolute necessity of secrecy and success"; speaks of the exceeding importance of the affair — "If it is successfully carried out it will go far towards breaking the backbone of the rebellion." This was in September, 1861.[2] Later in that year he was repeatedly urged by prominent Democratic politicians to declare himself openly as a member of their party. They thought it would be to his advantage and to theirs to have the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Potomac decidedly with them. At this time he declined their overtures, but they were pressingly repeated at Yorktown and afterwards; and he appears finally to have yielded to their solicitations, and the foregoing letter was the result. It is not at all probable that this document was prepared during the flight from the Chickahominy, or during the first days of doubt and anxiety at Harrison's Landing. It had probably been prepared long before, and is doubtless referred to in the general's dispatch of the 20th of June, in which he says, "I would be glad to have permission to lay before your Excellency my views as to the present state of military affairs throughout the whole country." He had at that time some vague and indefinite hope of taking Richmond; and such a manifesto as this, coming from a general crowned with a great victory, would have had a far different importance and influence from that which it enjoyed issuing from his refuge at Harrison's Bar, after a discrediting retreat. But the choice of occasion was not left to him. The letter could not be delayed forever; and such as it was, it went forth to the country as the political platform of General McClellan, and to the President as a note of defiance and opposition from the general in command of the principal army of the United States. Though more moderate in form, this letter was as mutinous in substance as the dispatch from Savage's Station.

[1] Slight errors having crept into this letter in its manifold publications, we print it here from the original manuscript received by the President.

[2] McPherson, "History of the Rebellion," p. 153.

He assumes to instruct the President as to his duties and the limits of his constitutional power. He takes it for granted that the President has no definite policy, and proceeds to give him one. Unless his advice is followed, "our cause will be lost.". He postures as the protector of the people against threatened arbitrary outrage. He warns the President against any forcible interference with slavery. He lets him know he can have no more troops, except on conditions known and approved. He tells him plainly that "a declaration of radical views, especially upon slavery, will rapidly disintegrate our present armies." Finally, he directs him to appoint a commander-in-chief of the army, and thinks it necessary to inform him that he does not ask the place for himself.

The President, engrossed with more important affairs, paid no attention, then or afterwards, to this letter. He simply passed it by in good-natured silence. General McClellan continued his dispatches, constantly announcing an impending attack upon his position, and constantly asking for reënforcements. He continued this until General Lee withdrew his army to Richmond, a movement which General McClellan at once characterized as "a retreat."

During all the time that McClellan remained at Harrison's Landing his correspondence with the Government was full of recrimination and querulousness; and his private letters, which have been published since his death, show an almost indecent hostility to his superiors. He writes:

> Marcy and I have just been discussing people in Washington, and conclude they are a "mighty trifling set." . . . I begin to believe they wish this army to be destroyed.[1]
>
> When you contrast the policy I urge in my letter to the President with that of Congress and of Mr. Pope, you can readily agree with me that there can be little natural confidence between the Government and myself. We are the antipodes of each other.[2]
>
> I am satisfied that the dolts in Washington are bent on my destruction. . . . Halleck is not a gentleman.[3]

We need not multiply these utterances of a weak and petulant mind. They have already been judged by the highest authority. General Sherman says, referring to this period, "The temper of his correspondence, official and private, was indicative of a spirit not consistent with the duty of the commanding general of a great army."[4]

The President had been much disturbed by the conflicting reports that reached him as to the condition of the Army of the Potomac, and he therefore resolved by a personal visit to satisfy himself of the state of affairs. He reached Harrison's Landing on the 8th of July, and while there conferred freely, not only with General McClellan himself, but with many of the more prominent officers in command. With the exception of General McClellan, not one believed the enemy was then threatening his position. Sumner thought they had retired, much damaged; Keyes, that they had withdrawn to go towards Washington; Porter, that they dared not attack; Heintzelman and Franklin thought they had retired. Franklin and Keyes favored the withdrawal of the army from the James; the rest opposed it. Mr. Lincoln came back bearing a still heavier weight of care. One thing that gave him great trouble was the enormous amount of absenteeism in the army. On returning to Washington he wrote this note to General McClellan, which, like most of his notes, it is impossible to abridge:

> I am told that over 160,000 men have gone into your army on the Peninsula. When I was with you the other day we made out 86,500 remaining, leaving 73,500 to be accounted for. I believe 23,500 will cover all the killed, wounded, and missing in all your battles and skirmishes, leaving 50,000 who have left otherwise. Not more than 5000 of these have died, leaving 45,000 of your army still alive and not with it. I believe half or two-thirds of them are fit for duty to-day. Have you any more perfect knowledge of this than I have? If I am right, and you had these men with you, you could go into Richmond in the next three days. How can they be got to you, and how can they be prevented from getting away in such numbers for the future?

To this note the general replied in a letter which can hardly be regarded as a satisfactory answer to the President's searching questions. He says, in general terms, that there is always a difference between the returns and the effective force of armies. He thinks, but is not certain, that the force given to him is not so much as 160,000, but admits that he has at that moment, present for duty, 88,665; absent by authority, 34,472; without authority, nearly 4000. This is very far from the "50,000 with their colors" which he reported a few days before; and he gives no adequate reason for the vast aggregate of those absent by authority.[5]

But another question, far more important and more grievous, was, what was to be done with the Army of the Potomac? General McClellan would listen to nothing but an enormous reënforcement of his army and another chance to take Richmond. Many of his prominent officers, on the contrary, thought that an advance on Richmond under existing conditions would be ill-advised, and that for the army to remain in its present position during the months of August and September would be more disastrous than an unsuccessful battle. The President had already placed General John Pope at the head of the Army of

1 July 31. 2 August 2. 3 August 10.
4 In his paper on "The Grand Strategy of the War of the Rebellion," THE CENTURY for February, 1888.
5 War Records.

Virginia, in front of Washington, and he now resolved to send to Corinth for General Halleck, whom he placed in chief command of the armies of the United States. This was done by an order of the 11th of July, and General Halleck was requested to start at once for Washington. As soon as he could place his command in the hands of General Grant, the next officer in rank in his department, he came on to Washington, assumed command of the army on the 23d, and the very next day was sent to the camp of General McClellan, where he arrived on the 25th. He asked the general his wishes and views in regard to future operations. McClellan answered that he purposed to cross the James River and take Petersburg. Halleck stated his impression of the danger and impracticability of the plan, to which McClellan finally agreed. The General-in-Chief then told him that he regarded it as a military necessity to concentrate Pope's army and his on some point where they could at the same time cover Washington and operate against Richmond; unless it should be that McClellan felt strong enough to take the latter place himself with such reënforcements as would be given him. McClellan thought he would require 30,000 more than he had. Halleck told him that the President could only promise 20,000; and that, if McClellan could not take Richmond with that number, some plan must be devised for withdrawing his troops from their present position to some point where they could unite with General Pope without exposing Washington. McClellan thought that there would be no serious difficulty in withdrawing his forces for that purpose; but he feared the demoralizing influence of such a movement on his troops, and preferred that they should stay where they were until sufficient reënforcements could be sent him. Halleck had no authority to consider that proposition, and told him that he must decide between advising the withdrawal of his forces to meet those of Pope, or an advance upon Richmond with such forces as the President could give him. Halleck gained the impression that McClellan's preference would be to withdraw and unite with General Pope; but after consultation with his officers, he informed Halleck the next morning that he would prefer to take Richmond. He would not say that he thought the probabilities of success were in his favor, but that there was "a chance," and that he was "willing to try it." His officers were divided on the subject of withdrawing or of making an attack upon Richmond. McClellan's delusion as to the number of the enemy had infected many of the most intelligent generals in his command. General Keyes, in a letter to Quartermaster-General Meigs, assured him that the enemy "have 200,000 — more than double our number." At the same time General Meigs himself, simply from reading the Richmond newspapers and using his common sense in connection with their accounts, had formed an estimate of the rebel force very much nearer the truth than that made by the generals in front.[1] He found it to consist of 152 regiments, which, at an average of 700 men,— too high an average,— would give a total force of 105,000. By General McClellan's returns for the 10th of August he himself had an aggregate present of 113,000 men.[1]

Halleck's return to Washington was followed by a shower of telegrams from McClellan urging the reënforcement of his army. "Should it be determined to withdraw it," he says on the 30th of July, "I shall look upon our cause as lost, and the demoralization of the army certain"— a statement which certainly was lacking in reserve. The weight of opinion, however, among the generals of highest rank was on the other side. General Keyes wrote in the strongest terms urging the withdrawal of the army.[1] General Barnard, McClellan's chief of engineers, and General Franklin counseled the immediate withdrawal from the James to reunite with the forces covering the Capital.[1] Upon General Halleck's return to Washington this course was resolved upon. General Halleck's first order in that direction was dated the 30th of July, and requested McClellan to send away his sick as quickly as possible. Four days afterwards, without having taken in the mean while any steps to obey the order, he sent General Hooker to Malvern Hill. He drove the Confederates from there after a sharp cavalry skirmish. This so brightened McClellan's spirits that he telegraphed to Halleck on the 5th that "with reënforcements he could march his army to Richmond in five days" — a suggestion to which Halleck made the curt rejoinder, "I have no reënforcements to send you."[2]

1 War Records.

2 General Hooker told the Committee on the Conduct of the War a curious story about this affair. He said that after General McClellan received his orders to abandon Harrison's Landing he went to him voluntarily and suggested that, with the forces they had there, they could take Richmond, and urged him to do it. So confident was Hooker, that he was willing to take the advance, and so assured McClellan. On reaching his camp, about two hours after that interview, he says he found on his table an order from General McClellan to prepare himself with three days' rations and a supply of ammunition, and be ready to march at 2 o'clock the next day. "I firmly believe," said Hooker, "that order meant Richmond. I had said to McClellan that if we were unsuccessful it would probably cost him his head, but that he might as well die for an old sheep as for a lamb. But before the time arrived for executing that order it was countermanded." [Hooker, Testimony, Report of the Committee on the Conduct of the War.]

The order to dispose of the sick was not promptly obeyed, because General McClellan insisted upon knowing the intentions of the Government in regard to his army; and after being informed that it was to be withdrawn from the James, several days more were wasted in wearisome interchange of dispatches between himself and Halleck, McClellan protesting with the greatest energy and feeling against this movement, and Halleck replying with perfect logic and temper in defense of it. In a long and elaborate dispatch, in which Halleck considered the whole subject, he referred to the representation made to him by McClellan and some of his officers that the enemy's forces around Richmond amounted to 200,000, and that McClellan had reported that they had since received large reënforcements. He adds:

> General Pope's army is only about 40,000; your effective force, about 90,000. You are 30 miles from Richmond and General Pope 80 or 90, with the enemy directly between you, ready to fall with his superior numbers on one or the other as he may elect. Pope's army could not be diminished to reënforce you; if your force is reduced to strengthen Pope, you would be too weak to hold your present position against the enemy. You say your withdrawal from your present position will cause the certain demoralization of the army. I cannot understand why this should be, unless the officers themselves assist in that demoralization, which I am satisfied they will not. You may reply, "Why not reënforce me here so that I can strike Richmond from my present position?" You told me that you would require 30,000 additional troops; you finally said that you would have "some chance of success" with 20,000; but you afterwards telegraphed me you would require 35,000. To keep your army in its present position until it could be so reënforced would almost destroy it in that climate. In the mean time Pope's forces would be exposed to the heavy blows of the enemy without the slightest hope of assistance from you.

He tells McClellan, in conclusion, that a large number of his highest officers are decidedly in favor of the movement.

Weary at last of arguments, Halleck became more and more peremptory in his orders; and this failing to infuse any activity into the movements of McClellan, he had recourse to sharp dispatches of censure which provoked only excuses and recriminations. In some of his replies to Halleck's urgent dispatches, enjoining the greatest haste and representing the grave aspect of affairs in northern Virginia, McClellan replied in terms that indicated as little respect for Halleck as he had shown for the President and the Secretary of War. On the 6th of August, in answer to an order insisting on the immediate dispatch of a battery of artillery to Burnside, he calmly replies, "I will obey the order as soon as circumstances permit. My artillery is none too numerous now." On the 12th, little or no progress having yet been made, he says:

> There shall be no unnecessary delay, but I cannot manufacture vessels. It is not possible for any one to place this army where you wish it, ready to move, in less than a month. If Washington is in danger now, this army could scarcely arrive in time to save it. It is in much better position to do so from here than from Aquia.

At the same time the Quartermaster-General reported that "nearly every available steam vessel in the country was then under the control of General McClellan." Only on the 17th of August was McClellan able to telegraph that he had left his camp at Harrison's Bar, and only on the 27th of the month, when Pope's campaign had reached a critical and perilous stage, did he report himself for orders at Alexandria, near Washington.

"O YE SWEET HEAVENS!"

O YE sweet heavens! your silence is to me
More than all music. With what full delight
I come down to my dwelling by the sea
And look out from the lattice on the night!
There the same glories burn serene and bright
As in my boyhood; and if I am old
Are they not also? Thus my spirit is bold
To think perhaps we are coeval. Who
Can tell when first my faculty began
Of thought? Who knows but I was there with you
When first your Maker's mind, celestial spheres,
Contrived your motion ere I was a man?
Else, wherefore do mine eyes thus fill with tears
As I, O Pleiades! your beauty scan?

T. W. Parsons.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A HISTORY.[1]

FIRST PLANS FOR EMANCIPATION.

BY JOHN G. NICOLAY AND JOHN HAY, PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO THE PRESIDENT.[2]

COMPENSATED ABOLISHMENT.

THE annual message of President Lincoln at the opening of Congress in December, 1861, treated many subjects of importance — foreign relations, the condition of the finances, a reorganization of the Supreme Court, questions of military administration, the building of a military railroad through Kentucky to east Tennessee, the newly organized Territories, a review of military progress towards the suppression of rebellion. It contained also a vigorous practical discussion of the relations between capital and labor, which pointed out with singular force that "the insurrection is largely, if not exclusively, a war upon the first principle of popular government — the rights of the people." In addition to these topics, it treated another question of greater importance than all of them, but for the present in so moderate a tone, and with such tentative suggestions, that it excited less immediate comment than any other. This was the question of slavery.

It had not escaped Mr. Lincoln's notice that the relations of slavery to the war were producing rapidly increasing complications and molding public thought to new and radical changes of opinion. His revocation of Frémont's proclamation had momentarily checked the clamor of importunate agitators for military emancipation; but he saw clearly enough that a deep, though as yet undefined, public hope clung to the vague suggestion that slavery and rebellion might perish together. As a significant symptom of this undercurrent of public feeling, there came to him in November a letter from George Bancroft, the veteran Democratic politician and national historian; a man eminent not only for his writing upon the science of government, but who as a member of President Polk's cabinet had rendered signal and lasting service in national administration. Mr. Bancroft had lately presided at a meeting in New York called to collect contributions to aid the suffering loyalists of North Carolina. As it happened on all such occasions, the inflamed popular patriotism of the hour sprang forward to bold speech and radical argument. Even the moderate words of Mr. Bancroft on taking the chair reflected this reformatory spirit:

> If slavery and the Union are incompatible, listen to the words that come to you from the tomb of Andrew Jackson: "The Union must be preserved at all hazards." . . . If any one claims the compromises of the Constitution, let him begin by placing the Constitution in power by respecting it and upholding it.[3]

In the letter transmitting these remarks and the resolutions of the meeting to Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Bancroft made a yet more emphatic suggestion. He wrote:

> Your administration has fallen upon times which will be remembered as long as human events find a record. I sincerely wish to you the glory of perfect success. Civil war is the instrument of Divine Providence to root out social slavery; posterity will not be satisfied with the result, unless the consequences of the war shall effect an increase of free States. This is the universal expectation and hope of men of all parties.[4]

Such a letter, from a man having the learning, talent, and political standing of its author, is of itself historic; but Mr. Lincoln's reply gives it a special significance. November 18, 1861, he wrote:

> I esteem it a high honor to have received a note from Mr. Bancroft, inclosing the report of proceedings of a New York meeting taking measures for the relief of Union people of North Carolina. I thank you and all others participating for this benevolent and patriotic movement. The main thought in the closing paragraph of your letter is one which does

[2] It will be remembered that in announcing editorially "Abraham Lincoln: A History," November, 1886, it was stated as follows: When "the military portion of this history is reached in magazine publication, care will be taken to avoid as much as possible the repetition of details already given in THE CENTURY'S war series, while fully presenting that part of the military narrative in which is explained the relation of the President to these events." In order to avoid all possibility of misunderstanding, this statement is here repeated. It is expected that, with the excisions referred to, the work will extend through twelve or thirteen numbers more of the magazine.—EDITOR OF THE CENTURY.

[3] "The New York Times," Nov. 8, 1861.

[4] Unpublished MS.

not escape my attention, and with which I must deal in all due caution, and with the best judgment I can bring to it.[1]

This language gives us the exact condition of Mr. Lincoln's mind on the subject of slavery at that time. He hoped and expected to effect an "increase of free States" through emancipation; but we shall see that this emancipation was to come through the voluntary action of the States, and that he desired by this policy to render unnecessary the compulsory military enfranchisement which Frémont had attempted and which his followers advocated.

The prudent caution and good judgment which President Lincoln applied to the solution of this dangerous problem becomes manifest when we reëxamine its treatment in his annual message mentioned above. Not referring directly to any general plan or hope of emancipation, he nevertheless approached the subject by discussing its immediate and practical necessities in phraseology which gave him limit for expansion into a more decisive policy. It is worth while, not merely to quote the whole passage, but to emphasize the sentences which were plainly designed to lead Congress and the country to the contemplation of new and possible contingencies.

> Under and by virtue of the act of Congress entitled "An Act to Confiscate Property used for Insurrectionary Purposes," approved August 6, 1861, the legal claims of certain persons to the labor and service of certain other persons have become forfeited; and numbers of the latter, *thus liberated, are already dependent on the United States, and must be provided for in some way*. Besides this, it is not impossible *that some of the States will pass similar enactments* for their own benefit respectively, and by operation of which persons of the same class will be thrown upon them for disposal. In such case I recommend *that Congress provide for accepting such persons from such States*, according to some mode of valuation, *in lieu, pro tanto, of direct taxes*, or upon some other plan to be agreed on with such States respectively; that such persons, on such acceptance by the General Government, *be at once deemed free;* and that, in any event, steps be taken *for colonizing both classes* (or the one first mentioned, if the other shall not be brought into existence) at some place or places in a climate congenial to them. It might be well to consider, too, whether the free colored people already in the United States could not, so far as individuals may desire, be included in such colonization. . . . The war continues. In considering the policy to be adopted for suppressing the insurrection, I have been anxious and careful that the inevitable conflict for this purpose shall not degenerate into a violent and remorseless revolutionary struggle. I have, therefore, in every case, thought it proper to keep the integrity of the Union prominent as the primary object of the contest on our part, leaving all questions which are not of vital military importance to the more deliberate action of the legislature.
>
> In the exercise of my best discretion I have adhered to the blockade of the ports held by the insurgents, instead of putting in force, by proclamation, the law of Congress enacted at the late session for closing those ports. So, also, obeying the dictates of prudence, as well as the obligations of law, instead of transcending, I have adhered to the act of Congress to confiscate property used for insurrectionary purposes. If a new law upon the same subject shall be proposed, its propriety will be duly considered. The Union must be preserved; and hence, *all indispensable means must be employed*. We should not be in haste to determine that radical and extreme measures, which may reach the loyal as well as the disloyal, are indispensable.[2]

Apparently these propositions covered the simple recommendation of colonization, an old and familiar topic which had friends in both free and slave States; but the language, when closely scanned, is full of novel suggestions: that the war has already freed many slaves; that the war may free many more; that the President will impartially consider any new law of Congress increasing emancipation for rebellion; that he will not hastily adopt extreme and radical measures; but that, finally to preserve the Union, *all indispensable means* must be employed. These declarations, in fact, cover the whole of his subsequent treatment of the slavery question.

Congress was too busy with pressing practical legislation to find time for immediately elaborating by debate or enactment any of the recommendations thus made. It is not likely that the President expected early action from the national legislature, for he at once turned his own attention to certain initiatory efforts which he had probably carefully meditated. He believed that under the pressure of war necessities the border slave-States might be induced to take up the idea of voluntary emancipation if the General Government would pay their citizens the full property value of the slaves they were asked to liberate; and this experiment seemed to him most feasible in the small State of Delaware, which retained only the merest fragment of a property interest in the peculiar institution.

Owing to the division of its voters between Breckinridge, Bell, Lincoln, and Douglas, the electoral vote of Delaware had been cast for Breckinridge in the presidential election of 1860; but more adroit party management had succeeded in effecting a fusion of the Bell and Lincoln vote for member of Congress, and George P. Fisher had been elected by a small majority. It is of little importance to know the exact shade of Mr. Fisher's politics during the campaign: when the rebellion broke out he was an ardent Unionist, a steadfast friend of

1 Unpublished MS.

2 "Congressional Globe," Appendix, Dec. 3, 1861.

Mr. Lincoln, and perhaps more liberal on the subject of slavery than any other border State representative. He entered readily into Mr. Lincoln's views and plans, which were to induce the legislature of Delaware to pass an act of gradual emancipation of the 1798 slaves which it contained by the census of 1860, on condition that the United States would pay to Delaware, to be distributed among its slave owners in proper ratio, the sum of $400 for each slave, or a total of $719,200.

Mr. Lincoln during the month of November had with his own hand written drafts of two separate bills embracing the principal details of the scheme. By the first, all negroes in Delaware above the age of thirty-five years should become free on the passage of the act; all born after its passage should remain free; and all others, after suitable apprenticeship for children, should become free in the year 1893; also, that the State should meanwhile prevent any of its slaves being sold into servitude elsewhere.[1] The provisions of the second draft were slightly different. Lincoln's manuscript explains:

> On reflection I like No. 2 the better. By it the nation would pay the State $23,200 per annum for thirty-one years. All born after the passage of the act would be born free. All slaves above the age of thirty-five years would become free on the passage of the act. All others would become free on arriving at the age of thirty-five years until January, 1893, when all remaining of all ages would become free, subject to apprenticeship for minors born of slave mothers, up to the respective ages of twenty-one and eighteen.[1]

Upon consultation with the President, Mr. Fisher undertook to propose and commend the scheme to his influential party friends in Delaware, and if possible to induce the legislature of that State to adopt it.

One of the drafts prepared by Mr. Lincoln was rewritten by the friends of the measure in Delaware, embodying the necessary details to give it proper force and local application to become a law of that State. In this shape it was printed and circulated among the members of the legislature, then holding a special session at Dover. The legislature of Delaware is not a large body; nine members of the Senate and twenty-one members of the House constituted the whole number. No record remains of the discussions, formal or informal, which the proposition called forth. The final action, however, indicates the sentiment which prevailed. The friends of emancipation probably ascertained that a hostile majority would vote it down, and therefore the laboriously prepared bill was never introduced. The pro-slavery members, unwilling to lose the opportunity of airing their conservatism, immediately prepared a joint resolution reciting the bill at full length and then loading it with the strongest phrases of condemnation which their party zeal could invent. They said it would encourage the abolition element in Congress; that it evinced a design to abolish slavery in the States; that Congress had no right to appropriate a dollar for the purchase of slaves; that they were unwilling to make Delaware guarantee the public faith of the United States; that when the people of Delaware desired to abolish slavery within her borders they would do so in their own way; and intimated that the "suggestions of saving expense to the people" were a bribe, which they scornfully repelled. A majority of the twenty-one members of the House passed this joint resolution; but when it came to the Senate, on the 7th of February, four of its nine members voted "aye," four voted "no," and one was silent or absent; and so the joint resolution went back "non-concurred in."[2] This seems to have closed the legislative record on the subject.

Mr. Lincoln was doubtless disappointed at this failure to give his plan of compensated gradual abolishment a starting-point by the favorable action of the State of Delaware. But he did not abandon the project, and his next step was to bring it, through Congress, to the attention of the country and the States interested. On the 6th of March he sent to the Senate and the House of Representatives a special message, recommending the adoption of the following joint resolution:

> *Resolved,* That the United States ought to co-operate with any State which may adopt gradual abolishment of slavery, giving to such State pecuniary aid, to be used by such State in its discretion, to compensate for the inconveniences, public and private, produced by such change of system.[3]

His message explained that this was merely the proposal of practical measures which he hoped would follow. He said:

> The point is not that all the States tolerating slavery would very soon, if at all, initiate emancipation; but that while the offer is equally made to all, the more northern shall, by such initiation, make it certain to the more southern that in no event will the former ever join the latter in their proposed confederacy. I say "initiation" because, in my judgment, gradual, and not sudden, emancipation is better for all. . . . Such a proposition on the part of the General Government sets up no claim of a right by Federal authority to interfere with slavery within State limits, referring, as it does, the absolute control of the subject in each case to the

[1] Unpublished MS.

[2] Delaware Senate Journal, Special Session, 1861–62.

[3] "Congressional Globe," March 6, 1862, p. 1102.

State and its people immediately interested. It is proposed as a matter of perfectly free choice with them. In the annual message last December, I thought fit to say, "The Union must be preserved; and hence, all indispensable means must be employed." I said this, not hastily, but deliberately. War has been made, and continues to be, an indispensable means to this end. A practical reacknowledgment of the national authority would render the war unnecessary, and it would at once cease. If, however, resistance continues, the war must also continue; and it is impossible to foresee all the incidents which may attend and all the ruin which may follow it. Such as may seem indispensable, or may obviously promise great efficiency towards ending the struggle, must and will come.[1]

To this public recommendation he added some cogent reasons in private letters to influential persons. Thus, three days after his message, he wrote to the editor of "The New York Times":

I am grateful to the New York journals, and not less so to "The Times" than to others, for their kind notices of the late special message to Congress. Your paper, however, intimates that the proposition, though well intentioned, must fail on the score of expense. I do hope you will reconsider this. Have you noticed the facts that less than one-half day's cost of this war would pay for all the slaves in Delaware, at four hundred dollars per head?—that eighty-seven days' cost of this war would pay for all in Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Kentucky, and Missouri at the same price? Were those States to take the steps, do you doubt that it would shorten the war more than eighty-seven days, and thus be an actual saving of expense? Please look at these things, and consider whether there should not be another article in "The Times."[2]

So again, to Senator McDougall, who was opposing the scheme with considerable earnestness in the Senate, he wrote privately on March 14:

As to the expensiveness of the plan of gradual emancipation, with compensation, proposed in the late message, please allow me one or two brief suggestions. Less than one-half day's cost of the war would pay for all the slaves in Delaware at four hundred dollars per head. Thus:

All the slaves in Delaware by the census of 1860 are	1798
	$400
Cost of slaves	$719,200
One day's cost of the war	$2,000,000

Again, less than eighty-seven days' cost of this war would, at the same price, pay for all in Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Kentucky, and Missouri. Thus:

Slaves in Delaware	1,798
" " Maryland	87,188
" " District of Columbia	3,181
" " Kentucky	225,490
" " Missouri	114,965
	432,622
	$400
Cost of slaves	$173,048,800
Eighty-seven days' cost of the war	$174,000,000

Do you doubt that taking the initiatory steps on the part of those States and this District would shorten the war more than eighty-seven days, and thus be an actual saving of expense? A word as to the *time* and *manner* of incurring the expense. Suppose, for instance, a State devises and adopts a system by which the institution absolutely ceases therein by a named day—say January 1, 1882. Then let the sum to be paid to such State by the United States be ascertained by taking from the census of 1860 the number of slaves within the State, and multiplying that number by four hundred—the United States to pay such sums to the State in twenty equal annual installments, in six per cent. bonds of the United States. The sum thus given, as to *time* and *manner*, I think would not be half as onerous as would be an equal sum raised *now* for the indefinite prosecution of the war; but of this you can judge as well as I.[2]

It was between the dates of these letters that President Lincoln made the most important personal effort to secure favorable action on his project of gradual abolishment. At his request such members of Congress from the border slave-States of Delaware, Maryland, [West] Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri as were present in Washington came in a body to the Executive Mansion on March 10, where a somewhat lengthy interview and discussion of this subject ensued, the substance of which was authentically reported by them. In reading the account of the interview, it must be remembered that Lincoln was addressing the representatives of such slave States as had remained loyal, and his phrases respecting his attitude and intention towards slavery were not intended by him to apply to the States whose persistent rebellion had forfeited the consideration and rights which the others could justly claim.

In explanation of his message the President recited to the assembled border State members the complications and embarrassments resulting from army operations among loyal or partly loyal communities, and the irritating conflicts of opinion produced thereby in the Northern States. Disclaiming any intention to injure or wound the loyal slave States, and recognizing that the right of emancipation was exclusively under their own control, he had proposed this offer in good faith—not as a threat, but as the shortest and easiest way to end the war by eliminating its cause and motive.

He did not ask an immediate answer, but pressed it upon their serious consideration, and hoped that after earnest conference and inquiry their views of duty and the interests of their constituents might enable them to accept it

1 "Congressional Globe," March 6, 1862, page 1102.

2 Unpublished MS.

voluntarily and in the same patriotic spirit in which it was made.[1]

It is not to be wondered at that his auditors were unable to give him affirmative replies, or even remote encouragement. Representing slaveholding constituencies, their natural attitude was one of unyielding conservatism. Their whole tone was one of doubt, of qualified protest, and of apprehensive inquiry. They had not failed to note that in his annual message of December 3, and his special message of March 6, he had announced his determination to use all "indispensable means" to preserve the Union, and had hinted that necessity might force him to employ extreme measures; and one of them asked pointedly "if the President looked to any policy beyond the acceptance or rejection of this scheme." His answer was frank and direct. Mr. Crisfield of Maryland writes:

> The President replied that he had no designs beyond the action of the States on this particular subject. He should lament their refusal to accept it, but he had no designs beyond their refusal of it. . . . Unless he was expelled by the act of God or the Confederate armies, he should occupy that house for three years, and as long as he remained there Maryland had nothing to fear, either for her institutions or her interests, on the points referred to.[2]

The day on which this interview was held, Roscoe Conkling introduced into the House of Representatives the exact joint resolution which the President had recommended in his message of the 6th, and debate on the subject was begun. The discussion developed a wide divergence of views among representatives. Moderate Republicans generally supported the resolution; even somewhat extreme antislavery men, such as Lovejoy in the House and Sumner in the Senate, indicated their willingness to join in the liberal compensation the President had proposed, if the loyal slave States would consent to relinquish their portion of the disturbing and dangerous evil. Since it was not a practical measure, but simply an announcement of policy, the opposition was not strenuous; a few border State representatives and the more obstinate Democrats from free States joined in a somewhat ill-natured dissent. The resolution was passed on the following day (yeas, 89; nays, 31). The action of the Senate was very similar, though the debate was a little more delayed. The resolution was passed in that body April 2 (yeas, 32; nays, 10), and received the President's signature on the 10th of April, 1862.

By his initiative and influence Mr. Lincoln thus committed the executive and legislative departments of the Government to the policy of compensated emancipation; and there is no doubt that, had his generous offer been accepted by the border States within a reasonable time, the pledge embodied in the joint resolution would have been promptly redeemed. Though it afterwards turned out that this action remained only sentimental and prospective, it nevertheless had no inconsiderable effect in bringing to pass a very important practical measure.

In its long contest for political supremacy,

[1] An extended quotation from the abstract of the President's remarks as written out by Mr. Crisfield, representative from Maryland, will be read with interest: "After the usual salutations and we were seated, the President said, in substance, that he had invited us to meet him to have some conversation with us in explanation of his message of the 6th; that since he had sent it in, several of the gentlemen then present had visited him, but had avoided any allusion to the message, and he therefore inferred that the import of the message had been misunderstood, and was regarded as inimical to the interests we represented; and he had resolved he would talk with us, and disabuse our minds of that erroneous opinion. The President then disclaimed any intent to injure the interests or wound the sensibilities of the slave States. On the contrary, his purpose was to protect the one and respect the other. That we were engaged in a terrible, wasting, and tedious war; immense armies were in the field, and must continue in the field as long as the war lasts; that these armies must, of necessity, be brought into contact with slaves in the States we represented, and in other States as they advanced; that slaves would come to the camps, and continual irritation was kept up. That he was constantly annoyed by conflicting and antagonistic complaints: on the one side, a certain class complained if the slave was not protected by the army — persons were frequently found who, participating in these views, acted in a way unfriendly to the slaveholder; on the other hand, slaveholders complained that their rights were interfered with, their slaves induced to abscond and protected within the lines. These complaints were numerous, loud, and deep; were a serious annoyance to him, and embarrassing to the progress of the war; that it kept alive a spirit hostile to the Government in the States we represented; strengthened the hopes of the Confederates that at some day the border States would unite with them and thus tend to prolong the war; and he was of opinion, if this resolution should be adopted by Congress and accepted by our States, these causes of irritation and these hopes would be removed, and more would be accomplished towards shortening the war than could be hoped from the greatest victory achieved by Union armies. That he made this proposition in good faith, and desired it to be accepted, if at all, voluntarily, and in the same patriotic spirit in which it was made; that emancipation was a subject exclusively under the control of the States, and must be adopted or rejected by each for itself; that he did not claim, nor had this Government, any right to coerce them for that purpose; that such was no part of his purpose in making this proposition, and he wished it to be clearly understood. That he did not expect us there to be prepared to give him an answer, but he hoped we would take the subject into serious consideration, confer with one another, and then take such course as we felt our duty and the interests of our constituents required of us." There followed after this much informal discussion, also reported in brief by Mr. Crisfield, for which there is not room in this note. The whole will be found in McPherson, "History of the Rebellion," p. 210 *et seq.*

[2] McPherson, "History of the Rebellion," p. 211.

slavery had clung with unyielding tenacity to its foothold in the District of Columbia, where it had been the most irritating eyesore to Northern sentiment. Whatever might be conceded to the doctrine of State sovereignty, antislavery men felt that the peculiar institution had no claim to the exclusive shelter of the Federal flag; on the other hand, proslavery men saw that to relinquish this claim would be fatal to their determination to push it to a national recognition and existence. Hence the abolition or the maintenance of slavery in the District of Columbia had become a frequent issue in party politics. The prohibition of the slave trade in the District was indeed effected in the great compromise of 1850; but this concession was more than counterbalanced by the proslavery gains of that political bargain, and since then the abolition of slavery itself in this central Federal jurisdiction seemed to have become impossible until rebellion provoked the change. Under the new conditions antislavery zeal was pushing its lance into every joint of the monster's armor, and this vulnerable point was not overlooked. The Constitution placed the District of Columbia exclusively under the legislation of Congress, and by their rebellious withdrawal from their seats in the two houses the Southern members and senators had voluntarily surrendered this citadel of their propagandism.

President Lincoln had not specifically recommended abolishment in the District in his annual message; but he had introduced a bill for such a purpose when he was a member of Congress in 1849, and it was well known that his views had undergone no change. Later on, the already recited special message of March 6 embraced the subject in its larger aspects and recommendations. Thus, with perfect knowledge that it would receive executive sanction, the House on April 11 (yeas, 92; nays, 38) and the Senate on April 3 (yeas, 29; nays, 14) passed an act of immediate emancipation of the slaves in the District of Columbia, with compensation to the owners, to be distributed by a commission, the whole not to exceed an aggregate of $300 per slave. The act also appropriated the sum of $100,000 for expenses of voluntary emigration to Hayti or Liberia.

President Lincoln signed the act on the 16th of April, and in his short message of approval said:

> I have never doubted the constitutional authority of Congress to abolish slavery in this District; and I have ever desired to see the National capital freed from the institution in some satisfactory way. Hence there has never been in my mind any question upon the subject except the one of expediency, arising in view of all the circumstances. . . . I am gratified that the two principles of compensation and colonization are both recognized and practically applied in the act.[1]

Certain omissions in the law, which the President pointed out, were remedied by supplementary enactments, which among other safeguards and provisions added to the boon of freedom the privilege of education by opening public schools to colored children.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

BEFORE enough time had elapsed to judge of the probable effect of Lincoln's offer of compensation to the border States, a new incident occurred which further complicated the President's dealings with the slavery question. About the middle of May he was surprised to learn from the newspapers that General David Hunter, whom he had recently sent to command the Department of the South, had issued an order of military emancipation. Reciting that the Department of the South was under martial law, the order declared, "Slavery and martial law in a free country are altogether incompatible. The persons in these three States — Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina — heretofore held as slaves are therefore declared free."

So far as can be judged, General Hunter was moved to this step by what seemed to him the requirements of his new surroundings and the simple dictates of natural justice. He was a warm personal and political friend of President Lincoln, was entirely free from motives of selfish ambition, and was not a man who would suffer himself to be made the instrument of a political combination. Of strong antislavery convictions, his duty as a soldier in the service of the Union was as single-hearted and as sacred as that of a crusader sent to rescue the Holy Sepulcher from the Infidel. In his eyes rebellion and slavery were intertwined abominations to be struck and conquered simultaneously.

When he took command of the Department of the South he found himself surrounded by new conditions. The capture of Port Royal in the preceding November had been followed by the flight of the whole white population, leaving the entire coast from North Edisto River to Warsaw Sound, a distance of sixty or seventy miles, in the hands of the captors. This was the region of the famous sea island cotton plantations, in which the slaves outnumbered the whites nearly five to one. In their sudden flight the whites were compelled to abandon their slaves as well as their homes, and a large negro population thus fell immediately to the care and protection of the Union army.

[1] "Congressional Globe," April 16, 1862.

The exercise of common humanity forced the military administration of the department beyond mere warlike objects. The commander, General Thomas W. Sherman, issued an address[1] to the white inhabitants, inviting them to return and reoccupy their lands and homes, and continue their peaceful vocations under the auspices and protection of the Government of the United States. Except in a very few instances the friendly invitation was defiantly refused. They not only preferred ruin and exile, but did such mischief as lay in their power by ordering their cotton to be burned[1] and circulating among the blacks the statement that the Yankees would seize them, send them away, and sell them into slavery in Cuba. Such was the distrust excited by the falsehood, that a month after the capture of Port Royal but about 320 blacks had ventured into Sherman's camps; nearly all these were decrepit, or were women and children, there being only sixty able-bodied men among them.[2]

For the present the slaves made most of their abrupt holiday. But their scanty clothing wore out, the small stock of provisions on the plantations was exhausted. At the time of their masters' flight much of the cotton crop was still in the fields. In the increasing demand for this product it became an object for the Government to collect and preserve what was left; and this work, begun under the joint orders of the War and Treasury departments, set on foot the first organization of the colored population for labor and government. Military orders divided the country into districts, with agents to superintend the plantations, to enroll and organize the blacks into working parties, to furnish them necessary food and clothing, and to pay them for their labor.

Private philanthropy also gave timely and valuable assistance. Relief societies, organized in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, collected funds and employed teachers, some fifty of whom reached Beaufort the 9th of March, 1862, and began a much-needed work of combined encouragement, guardianship, and instruction, thus replacing the elements of social government which the slaves had lost by the withdrawal of their masters and mistresses.

The control of the captured and abandoned cotton and other property fell to the Treasury Department, and in this connection Secretary Chase, at the President's request, gave the educational enterprise his official sanction and supervision; later on, the War Department assumed and continued the work. Compelled from the first to rely upon "contrabands" for information and assistance, and to a large extent for military labor, it gave them in return not only wages for the actual service performed, but necessary food and shelter for the destitute, and with the return of the spring season furnished them, so far as possible, seed and implements of husbandry, and encouraged them to renew their accustomed labor in the gardens and fields of the abandoned plantations, in order to provide for, or at least contribute to, their own maintenance. Under this treatment confidence was quickly established. In two months the number of blacks within the Union lines increased from 320 to over 9000.[3]

When General Hunter took command of the Department of the South, this industrial and educational organization of the blacks was just beginning. Military usefulness was of the first importance in his eyes, particularly as his forces were insufficient for offensive movement. It was not unnatural that, seeing the large colored population within his lines, much of it unemployed, his thoughts should turn to the idea of organizing, arming, and training regiments of colored soldiers; and assuming that the instructions of the War Department conferred the necessary authority, he began the experiment without delay. It was amid all these conditions, which at that time did not exist elsewhere, that General Hunter issued the already recited order announcing that slavery and martial law were incompatible, and declaring free all slaves in his department. The presence of the Union army had visibly created a new order of things, and he doubtless felt it a simple duty to proclaim officially what practically had come to pass.

The mails from the Department of the South could only come by sea; hence a week elapsed after the promulgation of Hunter's order before knowledge of it came to the President through its publication in the New York newspapers. The usual acrimonious comments immediately followed: radicals approved it, Democrats and conservatives denounced it; and the President was assailed for inaction on the one hand and for treachery on the other. Lincoln's own judgment of the act was definite and prompt. "No commanding general shall do such a thing, upon *my* responsibility, without consulting me," he wrote in answer to a note from Chase, who wished the order to stand.

Three days later (May 19, 1862) the President published a proclamation reciting that the Government had no knowledge or part in the issuing of Hunter's order of emancipation, that neither Hunter nor any other person had been authorized to declare free the slaves of any State, and that his order in that respect was altogether void. The President continued:

1 War Records.

2 T. W. Sherman to Thomas, Dec. 15, 1861. War Records.

3 T. W. Sherman to Adjutant-General, Feb. 9, 1862. War Records.

I further make it known that whether it be competent for me, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, to declare the slaves of any State or States free, and whether at any time, in any case it shall have become a necessity indispensable to the maintenance of the Government to exercise such supposed power, are questions which, under my responsibility, I reserve to myself, and which I cannot feel justified in leaving to the decision of commanders in the field. These are totally different questions from those of police regulations in armies and camps.

While the President thus drew a sharp distinction between the limited authority of commanders in the field and the full reservoir of executive powers in his own hands, for future contingencies, he utilized the occasion for a forcible admonition to the border slave-States. Reminding them that he by recommendation, and Congress by joint resolution, had made them a formal tender and pledge of payment for their slaves if they would voluntarily abolish the institution, he counseled them in words of parental wisdom and affection not to neglect this opportunity of financial security to themselves and patriotic benefit to their country. He said:

To the people of those States I now earnestly appeal. I do not argue; I beseech you to make the arguments for yourselves. You cannot, if you would, be blind to the signs of the times. I beg of you a calm and enlarged consideration of them, ranging, if it may be, far above personal and partisan politics. This proposal makes common cause for a common object, casting no reproaches upon any. It acts not the Pharisee. The changes it contemplates would come gently as the dews of heaven — not rending or wrecking anything. Will you not embrace it? So much good has not been done by one effort in all past times as, in the providence of God, it is now your high privilege to do. May the vast future not have to lament that you have neglected it.[1]

The "signs of the times" were indeed multiplying to a degree that ought to have attracted the notice of the border States, even without the pointing finger of the President. How far the presence of the Confederate armies, embodying a compact proslavery sentiment, had up to that time interfered locally with the relations of master and slave we have no means of knowing; we do know that before the end of the rebellion the conditions of war — military necessity — brought even the rebel Government and the unconquered slave communities to the verge of emancipation and the general military employment of the blacks. But Northern armies, embodying a compact antislavery sentiment, stationed or moving in slave communities, acted on the "institution" as a disturbing, relaxing, and disintegrating force, constant in operation, which no vigilance could shut out and no regulations could remedy. Whether in Kentucky or Virginia, Missouri or Mississippi, the slave gave the Union soldiers his sympathy and his help; while for services rendered, and still more for services expected, the soldiers returned friendship and protection, finding no end of pretexts to evade any general orders to the contrary.

From the army this feeling communicated itself sometimes directly to Congress, sometimes to the soldier's Northern home, from which it was in turn reflected upon that body. The antislavery feeling at the North, excited by the ten-years' political contention, intensified by the outbreak of rebellion, was thus fed and stimulated, and grew with every day's duration of the war. Conservative opinion could not defend a system that had wrought the convulsion and disaster through which the nation was struggling. Radical opinion lost no opportunity to denounce it and attack its vulnerable points.

Of the operations of this sentiment the debates and enactments of Congress afford an approximate measure. During the long session from December 2, 1861, to July 17, 1862, the subject seemed to touch every topic at some point, while the affirmative propositions of which slavery was the central and vital object were of themselves sufficiently numerous to absorb a large share of the discussions. Leaving out of view the many resolutions and bills which received only passing attention, or which were at once rejected, this second session[2] of the Thirty-seventh Congress perfected and enacted a series of antislavery measures which amounted to a complete reversal of the policy of the General Government. At the date of the President's proclamation quoted above calling attention to the "signs of the times," only a portion of these measures had reached final enactment; but the drift and portent of their coming was unmistakable. In the restricted limits of these pages it is impossible to pass them in review separately or chronologically; nor does the date of their passage and approval always indicate the relation in which they engrossed the attention of Congress. The consideration of the general subject was, we may almost say, continuous, and the reader will obtain a better idea of their cumulative force and value from a generalized abstract, showing the importance and scope of the several acts and sections as related to each other.

First. One of the earliest forms of the discussion arose upon the constantly recurring question of returning to slave-owners such runaways as sought the protection of the Union camps, and regarding which various command-

1 Proclamation, May 19, 1862.

2 The first session of the Thirty-seventh Congress was the special session held in July and August, 1861, under President Lincoln's proclamation.

ers had issued such different and contradictory orders. It has already been stated that the President left his officers full discretion on this point, because it fell properly within the necessities of camp and police regulations. The somewhat harsh and arbitrary order No. 3, issued by General Halleck in Missouri, provoked widespread comment and indignation; and though the general insisted that the spirit of the order was purely military, and not political, it undoubtedly hastened and intensified congressional action. By an act approved March 13, 1862, a new article of war was added to the army regulations, which enjoined, under usual penalties, that "All officers or persons in the military or naval service of the United States are prohibited from employing any of the forces under their respective commands for the purpose of returning fugitives from service or labor who may have escaped," etc. Later, Section 10 of the Confiscation Act[1] was virtually an amendment of the fugitive-slave law; providing that the claimant might not use its authority until he had taken an oath of allegiance, and prohibiting any person in the army or navy from surrendering a fugitive slave, or presuming to decide the validity of the owner's claim.

Second. No less to fulfill the dictates of propriety and justice than for its salutary influence on the opinion of foreign nations, the annual message of the President had recommended a recognition of the independence and sovereignty of Hayti and Liberia, and the appointment of diplomatic representatives to those new states. This was duly authorized by an act approved June 5, 1862. Similar reasons also secured the passage of "An act to carry into effect the treaty between the United States and her Britannic Majesty for the suppression of the African slave-trade," approved July 11, 1862. That this action betokened more than mere hollow profession and sentiment is evinced by the fact that under the prosecution of the Government, the slave-trader Nathaniel P. Gordon was convicted and hanged in New York on the 21st of February, 1862, this being the first execution for this offense under the laws of the United States, after their enforcement had been neglected and their extreme penalty defied for forty years.

Third. The third marked feature of congressional antislavery enactment was one which, in a period of peace, would have signalized the culmination of a great party triumph and taken its place as a distinctive political landmark. Now, however, in the clash and turmoil of war it was disposed of, not so much in the light of a present party conquest, as the simple necessary registration of accomplished facts, wrought beyond recall by passing events, recognized by public opinion, and requiring only the formality of parliamentary attestation. Its title was, "An act to secure freedom to all persons within territories of the United States," approved June 19, 1862. This was the realization of the purpose which had called the Republican party into being, namely, the restoration of the Missouri Compromise, its extension and application to all Territories of the United States, and as a logical result the rejection and condemnation of the proslavery doctrines of the Dred Scott decision, the demand for a congressional slave code, and the subversive "property theory" of Jefferson Davis. These were the issues which had caused the six-years' political contention between the North and the South; and upon its defeat at the ballot-box by the election of President Lincoln, the South had appealed to the sword.

Fourth. Still advancing another step in the prevalent antislavery progress, we come to the policy of compensated emancipation so strenuously urged by the President. Action on this point has already been described, namely, the joint resolution of Congress, approved April 10, 1862, virtually pledging the aid of the Government to any State which would adopt it, and the act, approved April 16, 1862, with its amendments, actually abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia, with compensation to owners. The earnestness of Congress in this reform is marked by the additional step that under acts approved May 21 and July 11, 1862, certain provisions were made for the education of colored children in the cities of Washington and Georgetown, District of Columbia.

Fifth. By far the most important of all the antislavery laws of this period, both in scope and purpose, was a new Confiscation Act, perfected after much deliberation, passed at the close of the session, and approved by the President July 17, 1862. The act of August 6, 1861, only went to the extent of making free the slaves actually employed in rebel military service. The new law undertook to deal more generally with the subject, and indeed extended its provisions somewhat beyond the mere idea of confiscation. While other subjects were included, its spirit and object would have been better expressed by the title of "An act to destroy slavery under the powers of war." In addition to other and usual penalties for treason or rebellion, it declared that slaves of persons guilty and convicted of these crimes should be made free; that slaves of rebels escaping and taking refuge within the army lines, slaves captured from rebels or deserted by them and coming under the control of the United States Government, and slaves of rebels found in

[1] Approved July 17, 1862.

any place occupied by rebel forces and afterwards occupied by the Union army, should all be deemed captives of war and be forever free.

Sixth. Coupled with the foregoing sweeping provisions, intended to destroy title in slave property as a punishment for treason and rebellion, were other provisions, which, under guarded phraseology, looked to the active organized employment of slaves as a substantial military force — which military service should in its turn also, in specified cases, work enfranchisement from bondage. Thus, in certain amendments of the militia laws[1] it was enacted that the President might enroll and employ contrabands in such camp labor or military service as they were fitted for, and that their wives, mothers, and children, if they belonged to armed rebels, should become free by virtue of such service. Section 11 of the Confiscation Act, however, conferred a still broader authority upon the Government for this object. It provided:

> That the President of the United States is authorized to employ as many persons of African descent as he may deem necessary and proper for the suppression of this rebellion, and for this purpose he may organize and use them in such manner as he may judge best for the public welfare.

This section allowed a latitude of construction which permitted the organization of a few of the earliest regiments of colored soldiers.

In tracing the antislavery policy of President Lincoln, his opinions upon some of the prominent features of these laws become of special interest. He followed the discussion and perfecting of the Confiscation Act with careful attention, and as it neared its passage prepared a veto message, pointing out several serious defects, which Congress hastily remedied in anticipation by an explanatory joint resolution. When the bill and resolution were submitted to him he signed both, as being substantially a single act, and, to place himself right upon the record, transmitted with his notice of approval a copy of the draft of his intended veto message. The constitutional objection and the imperfections of detail in the original bill do not require mention here, but his views on emancipation and military employment of slaves may not be omitted.

> There is much in the bill to which I perceive no objection. It is wholly prospective; and it touches neither person nor property of any loyal citizen, in which particular it is just and proper. . . . It is also provided that the slaves of persons convicted under these sections shall be free. I think there is an unfortunate form of expression, rather than a substantial objection, in this. It is startling to say that Congress can free a slave within a State, and yet if it were said the ownership of the slave had first been transferred to the nation, and that Congress had then liberated him, the difficulty would at once vanish. And this is the real case. The traitor against the General Government forfeits his slave at least as justly as he does any other property; and he forfeits both to the Government against which he offends. The Government, so far as there can be ownership, thus owns the forfeited slaves, and the question for Congress in regard to them is, "Shall they be made free or be sold to new masters?" I perceive no objection to Congress deciding in advance that they shall be free. To the high honor of Kentucky, as I am informed, she has been the owner of some slaves by *escheat,* and has sold none, but liberated all. I hope the same is true of some other States. Indeed, I do not believe it would be physically possible for the General Government to return persons so circumstanced to actual slavery. I believe there would be physical resistance to it which could neither be turned aside by argument nor driven away by force. In this view I have no objection to this feature of the bill. . . . The eleventh section simply assumes to confer discretionary power upon the Executive. Without the law, I have no hesitation to go as far in the direction indicated as I may at any time deem expedient. And I am ready to say now, I think it is proper for our military commanders to employ, as laborers, as many persons of African descent as can be used to advantage.[2]

The number and variety of antislavery provisions cited above show how vulnerable was the peculiar institution in a state of war, and demonstrate again the folly and madness of the slaveholders' appeal to arms. All the penalties therein prescribed were clearly justifiable by the war powers of the nation and sustained by military necessity. So far the laws had not touched a single right of a loyal slaveholder in a slave State, either within or without the territory held by Confederate arms; but day by day it became manifest that the whole slave system was so ramified and intertwined with political and social conditions in slave States, both loyal and disloyal, that it must eventually stand or fall in mass. In short, the proof was more absolute in war than in peace that slavery was purely the creature of positive law in theory, and of universal police regulations unremittingly enforced in practice.

It must not be supposed that the discussion and enactment of these measures proceeded without decided opposition. The three factions of which Congress was composed maintained the same relative position on these topics that they had occupied since the beginning of the rebellion. The bulk of the resistance was furnished by the Democratic members,

[1] An act to amend the act calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions, approved February 28, 1795, and the acts amendatory thereof, and for other purposes, approved July 17, 1862, sections 12 and 13.

[2] Senate Journal, July 17, 1862, pp. 872, 873.

who, while as a rule they condemned the rebellion, reiterated their previous accusations that the Republican party had provoked it. Now again at every antislavery proposition, no matter how necessary or justifiable, they charged that it was a violation of express or implied political faith, and a stumbling-block to reconciliation, which, against the plainest evidences, they assumed to be still possible. In a hopeless minority, and with no chance to affect legislation affirmatively even by indirection, they yet maintained the attitude of an ill-natured opposition, yielding assent only to the most necessary war measures, while with sophistical and irritating criticism they were industriously undermining public confidence in the President and his adherents by every party and parliamentary device they could invent.

There is little doubt that this action of the Democrats in Congress, in addition to its other pernicious effects, served to render the border-State delegations more stubborn and intractable against making any concessions towards the liberal and reformatory policy which President Lincoln so strongly urged. The statesmen and politicians of the border slave-States were quick enough to perceive the danger to their whole slave system, but not resolute enough to prepare to meet and endure its removal, and accept a money equivalent in exchange. Against evidence and conviction they clung tenaciously to the idea that the war ought to be prosecuted without damage to slavery; and their representatives and senators in Congress, with a very few brave exceptions, resisted from first to last all antislavery enactments. We may admit that in this course they represented truly the majority feeling and will of their several constituencies; but such an admission is fatal to any claim on their part to political foresight or leadership. Indeed, one of the noticeable and lamentable features of the earlier stages of the rebellion was the sudden loss of power among border-State leaders, both at home and in Congress. We can now see that their weakness resulted unavoidably from their defensive position. During the secession stage they only ventured to act defensively against that initial heresy, and as a rule the offensive and unscrupulous conspirators kept the advantage of an aggressive initiative. Now in the new stage of antislavery reaction they were again merely on the defensive and under the disadvantage which that attitude always brings with it. In Congress, as a faction, they were sadly diminished in numbers and shorn of personal prestige. They could count only a single conspicuous representative — the venerable John J. Crittenden; but burdened with the weight of years, and hedged by the tangles and pitfalls of his conservative obligations, he was timid, spiritless, despondent. The record of the border-State delegations, therefore, during this strong antislavery movement of congressional enactment is simply one of protests, excuses, appeals, and direful prophecies.

Against them the positive affirmative progress of antislavery sentiment gathered force and volume from every quarter. Whatever the momentary or individual outcry, it was easy to perceive that every antislavery speech, resolution, vote, or law received quick sustaining acceptance from public sentiment in the North and from the fighting Union armies in the South. The Republican majority in Congress noted and responded to these symptoms of approval, and the radical leaders in that body were constantly prompted by them to more advanced demands and votes. Antislavery opinion in Congress not only had the advantage of overpowering numbers, but also of conspicuous ability. A high average talent marked the Republican membership, which, as a rule, spoke and voted for the before-mentioned antislavery measures; while among those whose zeal gave them especial prominence in these debates, the names of Charles Sumner in the Senate and of Thaddeus Stevens and Owen Lovejoy in the House need only be mentioned to show what high qualities of zeal and talent pursued the peculiar institution with unrelenting warfare.

To the rebellious South, to the loyal population of the border slave-States, and to the extreme conservatism of the North, particularly that faction represented by Democratic members of Congress, President Lincoln's proposal of gradual compensated abolishment doubtless seemed a remarkable if not a dangerous innovation upon the practical politics of half a century. But this conservatism failed to comprehend the mighty sweep and power of the revolution of opinion which slavery had put in motion by its needless appeal to arms. In point of fact, the President stood sagaciously midway between headlong reform and blind reaction. His steady, cautious direction and control of the average public sentiment of the country alike held back rash experiment and spurred lagging opinion. Congress, with a strong Republican majority in both branches, was stirred by hot debate on the new issues. The indirect influence of the Executive was much greater than in times of peace: a reckless President could have done infinite damage to the delicate structure of constitutional government. As it was, antislavery resentment was restrained and confined to such changes of legislation as were plainly necessary to vindicate the Constitution, laws, and traditions which the rebellion had wantonly violated; but these were sufficiently numerous and pointed to mark a pro-

found transformation of public policy in little more than a year. Under the occasion and spur which the rebellion furnished, a twelvemonth wrought that which had not been dreamed of in a decade, or which would otherwise have been scarcely possible to achieve in a century.

Four months had now elapsed since President Lincoln proposed and Congress sanctioned the policy of compensated emancipation in the border slave-States. Except in its indirect influence upon public opinion, no definite result had as yet attended the proposal. Great fluctuations had occurred in the war and great strides had been made in legislation; but the tendency so far had been rather to complicate than simplify the political situation, to exasperate rather than appease contending factions and conflicting opinions. This condition of things, while it might have endured for a while, could not prolong itself indefinitely. Little by little the war was draining the lifeblood of the republic. However effectually the smoke and dust of the conflict might shut the view from the general eye, or however flippantly small politicians might hide the question under the heat and invective of factional quarrel, President Lincoln, looking to the future, saw that, to replenish the waste of armies and maintain a compact popular support, the North must be united in a sentiment and policy affording a plain, practical aim and solution, both political and military. The policy he decided upon was not yet ripe for announcement, but the time had arrived to prepare the way for its avowal and acceptance. As the next proper step in such a preparation, the President, on the 12th of July, 1862, again convened the border-State delegations at the Executive Mansion, and read to them the following carefully prepared second appeal to accept compensation for slaves in their respective States:

GENTLEMEN: After the adjournment of Congress, now near, I shall have no opportunity of seeing you for several months. Believing that you of the border States hold more power for good than any other equal number of members, I feel it a duty which I cannot justifiably waive to make this appeal to you. I intend no reproach or complaint when I assure you that, in my opinion, if you all had voted for the resolution in the gradual emancipation message of last March the war would now be substantially ended. And the plan therein proposed is one of the most potent and swift means of ending it. Let the States which are in rebellion see definitely and certainly that in no event will the States you represent ever join their proposed confederacy, and they cannot much longer maintain the contest. But you cannot divest them of their hope to ultimately have you with them so long as you show a determination to perpetuate the institution within your own States. Beat them at elections, as you have overwhelmingly done, and, nothing daunted, they still claim you as their own. You and I know what the lever of their power is. Break that lever before their faces, and they can shake you no more forever. Most of you have treated me with kindness and consideration, and I trust you will not now think I improperly touch what is exclusively your own when, for the sake of the whole country, I ask, "Can you, for your States, do better than to take the course I urge?" Discarding punctilios and maxims adapted to more manageable times, and looking only to the unprecedentedly stern facts of our case, can you do better in any possible event? You prefer that the constitutional relation of the States to the nation shall be practically restored without disturbance of the institution; and if this were done, my whole duty, in this respect, under the Constitution and my oath of office, would be performed. But it is not done, and we are trying to accomplish it by war. The incidents of the war cannot be avoided. If the war continues long, as it must if the object be not sooner attained, the institution in your States will be extinguished by mere friction and abrasion — by the mere incidents of the war. It will be gone, and you will have nothing valuable in lieu of it. Much of its value is gone already. How much better for you and for your people to take the step which at once shortens the war, and secures substantial compensation for that which is sure to be wholly lost in any other event. How much better to thus save the money which else we sink forever in the war. How much better to do it while we can, lest the war ere long render us pecuniarily unable to do it. How much better for you as seller, and the nation as buyer, to sell out and buy out that without which the war could never have been, than to sink both the thing to be sold and the price of it in cutting one another's throats. I do not speak of emancipation at once, but of a decision at once to emancipate gradually. Room in South America for colonization can be obtained cheaply and in abundance, and when numbers shall be large enough to be company and encouragement for one another, the freed people will not be so reluctant to go.

I am pressed with a difficulty not yet mentioned — one which threatens division among those who, united, are not too strong. An instance of it is known to you. General Hunter is an honest man. He was, and I hope still is, my friend. I valued him none the less for his agreeing with me in the general wish that all men everywhere could be freed. He proclaimed all men free within certain States, and I repudiated the proclamation. He expected more good and less harm from the measure than I could believe would follow. Yet, in repudiating it, I gave dissatisfaction, if not offense, to many whose support the country cannot afford to lose. And this is not the end of it. The pressure in this direction is still upon me, and is increasing. By conceding what I now ask you can relieve me and, much more, can relieve the country in this important point. Upon these considerations I have again begged your attention to the message of March last. Before leaving the capital, consider and discuss it among yourselves. You are patriots and statesmen, and as such I pray you consider this proposition; and at the least commend it to the consideration of your States and people. As you would perpetuate popular government for the best people in the world, I beseech you that you do in no wise omit this. Our common country is in great peril, demanding the loftiest

views and boldest action to bring a speedy relief. Once relieved, its form of government is saved to the world, its beloved history and cherished memories are vindicated, and its happy future fully assured and rendered inconceivably grand. To you, more than to any others, the privilege is given to assure that happiness and swell that grandeur, and to link your own names therewith forever.

It is doubtful whether the President expected any more satisfactory result from this last appeal to the border-State representatives than had attended his previous one. He had had abundant occasion to observe their course in the congressional debates; the opportunity had been long before them and they had not taken advantage of it; amid the revolutionary impulse and action which were moving the whole country their inaction on this subject was equivalent to resistance. This effort therefore, like the former one, proved barren: most of them answered with a qualified refusal; twenty of them [1] signed a written reply on July 14, which, while it pledged an unchangeable continuance of their loyalty, set forth a number of mixed and inconsequential reasons against adopting the President's recommendation. They thought the project too expensive. They said slavery was a right which they ought not to be asked to relinquish, that the proposition had never been offered them in a tangible shape, that a different policy had been announced at the beginning of the war, that radical doctrines had been proclaimed and subversive measures proposed in Congress. In short, it was a general plea for non-action. Seven others [2] of their number drew up an address dissenting from the conservative views of the majority, and promising that "We will, as far as may be in our power, ask the people of the border States calmly, deliberately, and fairly to consider your recommendations." Two others [3] wrote separate replies in the same spirit; but with only a minority to urge the proposition upon their people, it was plain from the first that no hope of success could be entertained.

EMANCIPATION PROPOSED AND POSTPONED.

MILITARY events underwent great fluctuations in the first half of the year 1862. During the first three months Union victories followed each other with a rapidity and decisiveness which inspired the most sanguine hopes for the early and complete suppression of the rebellion. Cheering news of important successes came from all quarters — Mill Springs in Kentucky, Roanoke Island in North Carolina, Forts Henry and Donelson in Tennessee, Pea Ridge in Arkansas, Shiloh in Tennessee, Island No. 10 in the Mississippi River, the reduction of Forts Jackson and St. Philip on the lower Mississippi, the capture of New Orleans in Louisiana, and, finally, what seemed the beginning of a victorious advance by McClellan's army upon Richmond. In the month of May, however, this tide of success began to change. Stonewall Jackson's raid initiated a series of discouraging Union defeats, and McClellan's formidable advance gradually changed into disastrous retreat.

No one noted this blighting of a longed-for fruition with a keener watchfulness and more sensitive suffering than did President Lincoln. As the military interest and expectancy gradually lessened at the circumference and slowly centered itself upon the fatal circles around the rebel capital, his thoughts by day and anxiety by night fed upon the intelligence which the telegraph brought from the Union camps on the Chickahominy and the James. It is safe to say that no general in the army studied his maps and scanned his telegrams with half the industry — and, it may be added, with half the intelligence — which Mr. Lincoln gave to his. It is not surprising, therefore, that before the catastrophe finally came the President was already convinced of the substantial failure of McClellan's campaign as first projected, though he still framed his letters and telegrams in the most hopeful and encouraging language that the situation would admit. But aware of the impending danger, he took steps to secure such a reënforcement of the army, and provide for such a readjustment of the campaign, as might yet secure the final and complete victory which had lain so temptingly within McClellan's grasp. A part of this programme was the consolidation of an army under Pope. The culmination of disaster doubtless came sooner than he thought possible. McClellan himself did not seem apprehensive of sudden danger when on June 26 he telegraphed:

> The case is perhaps a difficult one, but I shall resort to desperate measures, and will do my best to outmaneuver, outwit, and outfight the enemy. Do not believe reports of disaster, and do not be discour-

[1] From Kentucky, Senator Garrett Davis and Representatives Henry Grider, Aaron Harding, Charles A. Wickliffe, George W. Dunlap, Robert Mallory, John J. Crittenden, John W. Menzies, and James S. Jackson; from Missouri, Senator Robert Wilson and Representatives James S. Rollins, William A. Hall, Thomas L. Price, and John S. Phelps; from Maryland, Representatives John W. Crisfield, Edwin H. Webster, Cornelius L. L. Leary, Francis Thomas, and Charles B. Calvert; from Virginia, Senator John S. Carlile.

[2] From Missouri, Representative John W. Noell; from Kentucky, Representative Samuel L. Casey; from Tennessee, Representative Andrew J. Clements; from Delaware, Representative George P. Fisher; from Virginia, Senator Waiteman T. Willey and Representatives William G. Brown and Jacob B. Blair.

[3] Senator John B. Henderson of Missouri and Representative Horace Maynard of Tennessee.

aged if you learn that my communications are cut off, and even Yorktown in possession of the enemy. Hope for the best, and I will not deceive the hopes you formerly placed in me.[1]

This was the language of a man still possessing courage and faith, but the events of the two days following robbed him of both. Early on the morning of the 28th he sent the Secretary of War his memorable telegram already quoted, which was a mere blind cry of despair and insubordination:

I have not a man in reserve, and shall be glad to cover my retreat and save the material and personnel of the army. . . . If I save this army now, I tell you plainly that I owe no thanks to you or to any other persons in Washington. You have done your best to sacrifice this army.

The kind and patient words with which President Lincoln replied to this unsoldierly and unmanly petulance, and the vigorous exertions put forth by the War Department to mitigate the danger with all available supplies and reënforcements, have been related. The incident is repeated here to show that the President and Cabinet promptly put into execution a measure which had probably been already debated during the preceding days. The needs of the hour, and Lincoln's plan to provide for them, cannot be more briefly stated than in the two letters which follow, the first of which, written on this 28th day of June, he addressed to his Secretary of State. It was evidently written in a moment of profound emotion produced by McClellan's telegram, for nowhere in all his utterances is there to be found a stronger announcement of his determination to persevere unfalteringly in the public and patriotic task before him:

My view of the present condition of the war is about as follows: The evacuation of Corinth and our delay by the flood in the Chickahominy have enabled the enemy to concentrate too much force in Richmond for McClellan to successfully attack. In fact, there soon will be no substantial rebel force anywhere else. But if we send all the force from here to McClellan, the enemy will, before we can know of it, send a force from Richmond and take Washington. Or if a large part of the Western army be brought here to McClellan, they will let us have Richmond, and retake Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, etc. What should be done is to hold what we have in the West, open the Mississippi, and take Chattanooga and east Tennessee without more. A reasonable force should, in every event, be kept about Washington for its protection. Then let the country give us a hundred thousand new troops in the shortest possible time, which, added to McClellan directly or indirectly, will take Richmond without endangering any other place which we now hold, and will substantially end the war. I expect to maintain this contest until successful, or till I die, or am conquered, or my term expires, or Congress or the country forsake me; and I would publicly appeal to the country for this new force, were it not that I fear a general panic and stampede would follow, so hard is it to have a thing understood as it really is. I think the new force should be all, or nearly all, infantry, principally because such can be raised most cheaply and quickly.[2]

This letter was of course not needed for the personal information of Mr. Seward, but was placed in his hands to enable him to reassure those who might doubt the President's courage and determination. The other letter, written in advance and dated the 30th, was addressed to the governors of the loyal States. It ran as follows:

The capture of New Orleans, Norfolk, and Corinth by the National forces has enabled the insurgents to concentrate a large force at and about Richmond, which place we must take with the least possible delay; in fact, there will soon be no formidable insurgent force except at Richmond. With so large an army there the enemy can threaten us on the Potomac and elsewhere. Until we have reëstablished the National authority, all these places must be held, and we must keep a respectable force in front of Washington. But this, from the diminished strength of our army by sickness and casualties, renders an addition to it necessary in order to close the struggle which has been prosecuted for the last three months with energy and success. Rather than herald the misapprehension of our military condition and of groundless alarm by a call for troops by proclamation, I have deemed it best to address you in this form. To accomplish the object stated, we require, without delay, one hundred and fifty thousand men, including those recently called for by the Secretary of War. Thus reënforced, our gallant army will be enabled to realize the hopes and expectations of the Government and the people.[2]

Armed with these letters, Mr. Seward proceeded hastily to New York City. The brief correspondence which ensued indicates the progressive steps and success of his mission. On this same 30th of June he telegraphed from New York to Secretary Stanton:

Am getting a foundation for an increase of one hundred and fifty thousand. Shall have an important step to communicate to-night or to-morrow morning. Governors Morgan and Curtin here, and communicate with others by telegraph. Let me have reliable information when convenient, as it steadies my operations. . . . Will you authorize me to promise an advance to recruits of $25 of the $100 bounty? It is thought here and in Massachusetts that without such payment recruiting will be very difficult, and with it probably entirely successful.[2]

To this the Secretary of War replied on the following day:

The existing law does not authorize an advance of the bounty. . . . Discreet persons here suggest that the call should be for 300,000 men,—double the number you propose,—as the waste will

[1] McClellan to Stanton, June 26, 1862, 12 M. War Records.

[2] Unpublished MS.

be large. Consider the matter. The President has not come into town yet; when he arrives you will receive his answer.

Later in the day he added to the above:

The President approves your plan, but suggests 200,000, if it can be done as well as the number you mention.[1]

It is probable that a further discussion, and perhaps also further information of the disaster and despondency on the Peninsula, brought more fully to the minds of President and Secretary of War the gravity of the crisis and the need of decisive action; for Mr. Stanton sent a third telegram to Mr. Seward, saying:

Your telegram received. I will take the responsibility of ordering the $25 bounty out of the nine millions [appropriation] at all hazards, and you may go on that basis. I will make and telegraph the order in an hour. The President's answer has already gone.[1]

Mr. Seward's answer to this was all that could be desired under the circumstances:

The Governors respond, and the Union Committee approve earnestly and unanimously. . . Let the President make the order, and let both papers come out [in] to-morrow morning's papers, if possible. The number of troops to be called is left to the President to fix. No one proposes less than 200,000; make it 300,000 if you wish. They say it may be 500,000 if the President desires. Get the $25 advance fixed, and let the terms be made known.[1]

Accordingly, on the morning of July 2 there appeared in the newspapers a formal correspondence, purporting to be the voluntary request of eighteen governors of loyal States to the President,

that you at once call upon the several States for such numbers of men as may be required to fill up all military organizations now in the field, and add to the army heretofore organized such additional numbers of men as may, in your judgment, be necessary to garrison and hold all of the numerous cities and military positions that have been captured by our armies. . . . All believe that the decisive moment is near at hand, and to that end the people of the United States are desirous to aid promptly in furnishing all reënforcements that you may deem needful to sustain our Government.

To which the President's reply announced:

GENTLEMEN: Fully concurring in the wisdom of the views expressed to me in so patriotic a manner by you in the communication of the 28th day of June, I have decided to call into the service an additional force of 300,000 men.

"It was thought safest to mark high enough,"[1] said Mr. Lincoln in a private telegram to Governor Morgan of New York; while in another private circular to all the governors he explained his desire a little more fully.

I should not want the half of 300,000 new troops if I could have them now. If I had 50,000 additional troops here now, I believe I could substantially close the war in two weeks. But time is everything; and if I get 50,000 new men in a month I shall have lost 20,000 old ones during the same month, having gained only 30,000, with the difference between old and new troops still against me. The quicker you send, the fewer you will have to send. Time is everything; please act in view of this. The enemy having given up Corinth, it is not wonderful that he is thereby enabled to check us for a time at Richmond.[1]

It was doubtless the sudden collapse of McClellan's Richmond campaign which brought President Lincoln to the determination to adopt his policy of general military emancipation much sooner than he would otherwise have done. The necessity of a comprehensive rearrangement of military affairs was upon him, and it was but natural that it should involve a revision of political policy. The immediate present was provided for in the call just issued for 300,000 volunteers; but he had learned by experience that he must count new possibilities of delays and defeats, and that his determination, so recently recorded, to "maintain this contest" to ultimate triumph, compelled him to open new sources of military strength. He recognized, and had often declared, that in a republic the talisman which wrought the wonders of statesmanship and the changes of national destiny was public opinion. We now know that in the use of this talisman he was the most consummate master whose skill history has recorded. We are justified in the inference that his foresight had perceived and estimated the great and decisive element of military strength which lay as yet untouched and unappropriated in the slave population of the South. To its use, however, there existed two great obstacles — prejudice on the part of the whites, the want of a motive on the part of the blacks. His problem was to remove the one and to supply the other. For the first of these difficulties the time was specially propitious in one respect. In the momentary check and embarrassment of all the armies of the Union, generals, soldiers, and conservative politicians would tolerate reprisal upon rebels with forbearance if not with favor; and for their consent to the full military employment of the blacks he might trust to the further change of popular sentiment, the drift of which was already so manifest. The motive which would call the slaves to the active help of the Union armies lay ready made for his use — indeed, it had been in steadily increasing action from the beginning of hostilities till now, as far and as effectively as the Government would permit.

1 Unpublished MS.

McClellan's change of base occurred about the 1st of July, 1862. Lincoln's final appeal to the border States took place shortly afterward, on July 12; and his vivid portrayal of the inevitable wreck of slavery in the stress of war doubtless gathered color and force from recent military events. Already, before the border-State delegations gave him their written replies, he knew from their words and bearing that they would in effect refuse the generous tender of compensation; and he decided in his own mind that he would at an early day give notice of his intention to emancipate the slaves of rebellious States by military proclamation. His first confidential announcement of the new departure occurred on the day following his interview with the border-State representatives, and is thus recorded in the diary of Secretary Welles:

On Sunday, the 13th of July, 1862, President Lincoln invited me to accompany him in his carriage to the funeral of an infant child of Mr. Stanton. Secretary Seward and Mrs. Frederick Seward were also in the carriage. Mr. Stanton occupied at that time, for a summer residence, the house of a naval officer, I think Hazzard, some two or three miles west or north-westerly of Georgetown. It was on this occasion and on this ride that he first mentioned to Mr. Seward and myself the subject of emancipating the slaves by proclamation in case the rebels did not cease to persist in their war on the Government and the Union, of which he saw no evidence. He dwelt earnestly on the gravity, importance, and delicacy of the movement; said he had given it much thought, and had about come to the conclusion that it was a military necessity, absolutely essential for the salvation of the nation, that we must free the slaves or be ourselves subdued, etc., etc. This was, he said, the first occasion where he had mentioned the subject to any one, and wished us to frankly state how the proposition struck us. Mr. Seward said the subject involved consequences so vast and momentous that he should wish to bestow on it mature reflection before giving a decisive answer; but his present opinion inclined to the measure as justifiable, and perhaps he might say expedient and necessary. These were also my views. Two or three times on that ride the subject, which was of course an absorbing one for each and all, was adverted to, and before separating, the President desired us to give the subject special and deliberate attention, for he was earnest in the conviction that something must be done. It was a new departure for the President, for until this time, in all our previous interviews, whenever the question of emancipation or the mitigation of slavery had been in any way alluded to, he had been prompt and emphatic in denouncing any interference by the General Government with the subject. This was, I think, the sentiment of every member of the Cabinet, all of whom, including the President, considered it a local domestic question appertaining to the States respectively who had never parted with their authority over it. But the reverses before Richmond, and the formidable power and dimensions of the insurrection, which extended through all the slave States and had combined most of them in a confederacy to destroy the Union, impelled the Administration to adopt extraordinary measures to preserve the national existence. The slaves, if not armed and disciplined, were in the service of those who were, not only as field laborers and producers, but thousands of them were in attendance upon the armies in the field, employed as waiters and teamsters, and the fortifications and intrenchments were constructed by them.

Within the next four days Congress finished its business and adjourned, the Confiscation Act being an important part of its final work. The President, as we have seen, signed the bill with its amendatory resolution, and the Government was thus brought face to face with the practical duty of enforcing its provisions through military directions and orders in further detail. It has been explained how the Confiscation Act and other laws broadened and multiplied the forfeitures of title to slaves for the crimes of treason and rebellion. We have the evidence of the President's written comments that he considered these penalties just and the imposition of them constitutional. In the administration of the laws thus enacted there therefore remained to be examined only the convenience of their practical enforcement and the general effect upon public opinion of the policy they established.

We have no record of the specific reasoning of President Lincoln upon these points. We only know that within the five days following the adjournment of Congress (July 17 to July 22, 1862) his mind reached its final conclusions. The diary of Secretary Chase contains the following record of what occurred at the Cabinet meeting at the Executive Mansion on July 21:

I went at the appointed hour, and found that the President had been profoundly concerned at the present aspect of affairs, and had determined to take some definite steps in respect to military action and slavery. He had prepared several orders,[1] the first

[1] WAR DEPARTMENT,
WASHINGTON, July 22, 1862.

First. Ordered that military commanders within the States of Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, and Arkansas in an orderly manner seize and use any property, real or personal, which may be necessary or convenient for their several commands, for supplies, or for other military purposes; and that while property may be destroyed for proper military objects, none shall be destroyed in wantonness or malice.

Second. That military and naval commanders shall employ as laborers, within and from said States, so many persons of African descent as can be advantageously used for military or naval purposes, giving them reasonable wages for their labor.

Third. That as to both property and persons of African descent, accounts shall be kept sufficiently accurate and in detail to show quantities and amounts, and from whom both property and such persons shall have come, as a basis upon which compensation can be made in proper cases; and the several departments of

of which contemplated authority to commanders to subsist their troops in the hostile territory; the second, authority to employ negroes as laborers; the third, requiring that both in the case of property taken and of negroes employed accounts should be kept with such degree of certainty as would enable compensation to be made in proper cases. Another provided for the colonization of negroes in some tropical country. A good deal of discussion took place upon these points. The first order was universally approved. The second was approved entirely, and the third by all except myself. I doubted the expediency of attempting to keep account for the benefit of the inhabitants of rebel States. The colonization project was not much discussed. The Secretary of War presented some letters from General Hunter, in which he advised the department that the withdrawal of a large proportion of his troops to reënforce General McClellan rendered it highly important that he should be immediately authorized to enlist all loyal persons, without reference to complexion. Messrs. Stanton, Seward, and myself expressed ourselves in favor of this plan, and no one expressed himself against it. (Mr. Blair was not present.) The President was not prepared to decide the question, but expressed himself as averse to arming negroes.[1]

This Cabinet discussion came to no final conclusion, and we learn from the same diary that on the following day, Tuesday, July 22, 1862,— which was regular Cabinet day,— the subject was resumed. Further conference was had on organizing negro regiments, but Lincoln decided that the moment had not yet arrived when this policy could be safely entered upon. Writes Chase:

> The impression left upon my mind by the whole discussion was, that while the President thought that the organization, equipment, and arming of negroes like other soldiers would be productive of more evil than good, he was not unwilling that commanders should, at their discretion, arm, for purely defensive purposes, slaves coming within their lines.

But on the kindred policy of emancipation the President had reached a decision which appears to have been in advance of the views of his entire Cabinet. Probably greatly to their surprise, he read to them the following draft of a proclamation warning the rebels of the pains and penalties of the Confiscation Act, and while renewing his tender of compensation to loyal States which would adopt gradual abolishment, adding a summary military order, as Commander-in-Chief, declaring free the slaves of all States which might be in rebellion on January 1, 1863. The text of this first draft of the Emancipation Proclamation is here printed for the first time:

> In pursuance of the sixth section of the act of Congress entitled, "An act to suppress insurrection and to punish treason and rebellion, to seize and confiscate property of rebels, and for other purposes," approved July 17, 1862, and which act and the joint resolution explanatory thereof are herewith published, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do hereby proclaim to and warn all persons within the contemplation of said sixth section to cease participating in, aiding, countenancing, or abetting the existing rebellion, or any rebellion against the Government of the United States, and to return to their proper allegiance to the United States, on pain of the forfeitures and seizures, as within and by said sixth section provided.
>
> And I hereby make known that it is my purpose, upon the next meeting of Congress, to again recommend the adoption of a practical measure for tendering pecuniary aid to the free choice or rejection of any and all States, which may then be recognizing and practically sustaining the authority of the United States, and which may then have voluntarily adopted, or thereafter may voluntarily adopt, gradual abolishment of slavery within such State or States; that the object is to practically restore, thenceforward to be maintained, the constitutional relation between the General Government and each and all the States wherein that relation is now suspended or disturbed; and that for this object the war, as it has been, will be prosecuted. And as a fit and necessary military measure for effecting this object, I, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, do order and declare that on the first day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or States wherein the constitutional authority of the United States shall not then be practically recognized, submitted to and maintained, shall then, thenceforward, and forever be free.[2]

Of the Cabinet proceedings which followed the reading of this momentous document we have unfortunately only very brief memoranda. Every member of the council was, we may infer, bewildered by the magnitude and boldness of the proposal. The sudden consideration of this critical question reveals to us with vividness the difference in mental reach, readiness, and decision between the President and his constitutional advisers. Only two of the number gave the measure their unreserved concurrence, even after discussion. It is strange that one of these was the cautious Attorney-General, the representative of the conservative faction of the slaveholding State of Missouri, and that the member who opposed the measure as a whole, and proposed to achieve the result indirectly through the scattered and divided action of local commanders in military departments, was the antislavery Secretary

this Government shall attend to and perform their appropriate parts towards the execution of these orders.

By order of the President,

EDWIN M. STANTON, *Secretary of War.*

1 Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 439.

2 The indorsement on the above paper, also in Lincoln's own handwriting, is as follows: "Emancipation proclamation as first sketched and shown to the Cabinet in July, 1862." The diary of Secretary Chase shows the exact date to have been July 22, 1862.

of the Treasury, Mr. Chase, representing perhaps more nearly than any other the abolition faction of the free State of Ohio. All were astonished, except the two to whom it had been mentioned a week before. None of the others had even considered such a step. But from the mind and will of President Lincoln the determination and announcement to his Cabinet came almost as complete in form and certain in intention on that memorable Tuesday of July as when, two months later, it was given to the public, or as officially proclaimed on the succeeding New Year's Day, an irrevocable executive act.

A fragmentary memorandum in the handwriting of Secretary Stanton shows us distinctly the effect produced upon the assembled council. The manuscript is here reproduced as nearly as the types conveniently permit. The very form of the record shows the Secretary's strong emotion and interest in the discussion:

Tuesday, July 22.

The President proposes to issue an order declaring that, all Slaves in states in rebellion on the —— day of —— —— ——

The Attorney-General and Stanton are for its immediate promulgation.

Seward against it; argues strongly in favor of cotton and foreign governments.

Chase silent.

Welles ——

Seward argues—— That foreign nations will intervene to prevent the abolition of slavery for sake of cotton. Argues in a long speech against its immediate promulgation. Wants to wait for troops. Wants Halleck here. Wants drum and fife and public spirit. We break up our relations with foreign nations and the production of cotton for sixty years.

Chase—— Thinks it a measure of great danger, and would lead to universal emancipation—— The measure goes beyond anything I have recommended.

The omissions in this bit of historical manuscript are exceedingly provoking, but some of them are supplied by President Lincoln's own narrative, recorded and published by the artist Carpenter, whose application for permission to paint his historical picture of the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation called it forth:

"It had got to be," said he [Mr. Lincoln], "midsummer, 1862. Things had gone on from bad to worse, until I felt that we had reached the end of our rope on the plan of operations we had been pursuing; that we had about played our last card, and must change our tactics, or lose the game. I now determined upon the adoption of the emancipation policy; and without consultation with, or the knowledge of, the Cabinet, I prepared the original draft of the proclamation, and, after much anxious thought, called a Cabinet meeting upon the subject. . . . All were present excepting Mr. Blair, the Postmaster-General, who was absent at the opening of the discussion, but came in subsequently. I said to the Cabinet that I had resolved upon this step, and had not called them together to ask their advice, but to lay the subject-matter of a proclamation before them, suggestions as to which would be in order after they had heard it read. Mr. Lovejoy was in error when he informed you that it excited no comment excepting on the part of Secretary Seward. Various suggestions were offered."[1]

At this point we interrupt the President's relation a moment to quote in its proper sequence the exact comment offered by Secretary Chase,[2] as recorded in his diary:

I [Chase] said that I should give to such a measure my cordial support, but I should prefer that no new expression on the subject of compensation should be made; and I thought that the measure of emancipation could be much better and more quietly accomplished by allowing generals to organize and arm the slaves (thus avoiding depredation and massacre on one hand, and support to the insurrection on the other), and by directing the commanders of departments to proclaim emancipation within their districts as soon as practicable. But I regarded this as so much better than inaction on the subject, that I should give it my entire support.[3]

The President's narrative continues:

"Mr. Blair, after he came in, deprecated the policy on the ground that it would cost the Administration the fall elections. Nothing, however, was offered that I had not fully anticipated and settled in my own mind until Secretary Seward spoke. He said in substance, 'Mr. President, I approve of the proclamation, but I question the expediency of its issue at this juncture. The depression of the public mind, consequent upon our repeated reverses, is so great that I fear the effect of so important a step. It may be viewed as the last measure of an exhausted government, a cry for help; the Government stretching forth its hands to Ethiopia, instead of Ethiopia stretching forth her hands to the Government.' His idea," said the President, "was that it would be considered our last *shriek,* on the retreat. [This was his precise expression.] 'Now,' continued Mr. Seward, 'while I approve the measure, I suggest, sir, that you postpone its issue until you can give it to the country supported by military success, instead of issuing it, as would be the case now, upon the greatest disasters of the war.'" Mr. Lincoln continued: "The wisdom of the view of the Secretary of State struck me with very great force. It was an aspect of the case that, in all my thought upon the subject, I had entirely overlooked. The

[1] Carpenter, "Six Months at the White House," pp. 20–23.

[2] On this point the President is reported as saying: "Secretary Chase wished the language stronger in reference to the arming of the blacks." (Carpenter, "Six Months at the White House," p. 21.) If these were his words, his memory was slightly at fault. There was nothing in the proposed proclamation of emancipation about arming the blacks. That branch of the discussion, while it occurred at the same time, had exclusive reference to the military order quoted on page 291, also then under consideration.

[3] Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 440.

result was that I put the draft of the proclamation aside, as you do your sketch for a picture, waiting for victory."

Instead of the proclamation thus laid away, a short one was issued three days after, simply containing the warning required by the sixth section of the Confiscation Act. The already quoted military order to make seizures under the act had been issued on the day when the proclamation was discussed and postponed; meanwhile the Government, by its new military arrangements, sending reënforcements to McClellan, organizing a new army under Pope, and calling Halleck from the West to exercise a superior and guiding control over a combined campaign towards Richmond, seemed to have provided the needful requirements for early and substantial success.

"MINC"—A PLOT.

By the author of "Two Runaways," "Sister Todhunter's Heart," "De Valley an' de Shadder," etc.

THE trim little steamboat that plies Lake Harris, the loveliest of all Florida waters, emerged from the picturesque avenue of cypress and trailing moss called Dead River, which leads out of Eustis, and glided as a shadow betwixt sea and sky towards its harbor, fourteen miles away. It had been the perfection of a May day, and the excursionists, wearied at last of sight-seeing, were gathered upon the forward deck. The water-slopes of the highlands on the right, with their dark lines of orange-trees and their nestling cottages, lay restful in the evening shadow fast stretching out towards the boat, for the sun was dipping below the horizon with the stately pines in silhouette upon his broad red face. "Home, Sweet Home," "Old Kentucky Home," and "Old Folks at Home" had been rendered by the singers of the party with that queer mixture of pathos and bathos so inseparably connected with excursion songs, and a species of nothing-else-to-be-done silence settled over the group, broken only by the soft throb of the engine and the swish of dividing waters. Suddenly some one began a dissertation upon negro songs, and by easy stages the conversation drifted to negro stories. Among the excursionists sat a gray-haired, tall, soldierly looking gentleman whom every one called "Colonel," and whose kindly eyes beamed out from under his soft felt hat in paternal friendliness upon all.

"It is somewhat singular," he said at length, when there had come a lull in the conversation, "that none of the story-writers have ever dealt with the negro as a resident of two continents. Why could not a good story be written, the scene laid partly in Africa and partly in the South? I am not familiar enough with the literature of this kind and the romances that have been written about our darkies to say positively that it has not been already done, but it seems to me that the opportunity to develop a character from the savage to the civilized state is very fine and would take well. Victor Hugo has a negro in one of his West India romances whose name I forget now — the story used to be familiar — "

"Bug-Jargal," suggested some one.

"So it was. But in this reference is made only to the man's ancestry; and I never thought the character true to life. Hugo did not know the negro."

"But, Colonel, is it not true that these people were the veriest savages, and would it not be too great a strain upon the realistic ideas of the day to venture into Africa for a hero, especially since Rider Haggard has idealized it?"

"I don't think so. We have no way of ascertaining just how much the imported slaves really knew, but it is a fact that a few were remarkable for some kind of skill and intelligence. They were not communicative, and soon drifted into the dialect of their new neighbors, forgetting their own. I had a negro on my plantation who undoubtedly came from Africa. I was present when my father bought him upon the streets of Savannah, becoming interested in his story soon after he was landed. His mother

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A HISTORY.[1]

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF EMANCIPATION.

BY JOHN G. NICOLAY AND JOHN HAY, PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO THE PRESIDENT.

POPE'S VIRGINIA CAMPAIGN.

IN order to understand the unfortunate consequence of the long delay of McClellan in moving his army from the James to the Potomac, a few words of retrospect are here necessary. On June 26, 1862, General John Pope was appointed to the command of the Army of Virginia, consisting of the corps of Frémont, Banks, and McDowell. Frémont, having refused to serve under his junior, was relieved of his command, and his place taken by General Franz Sigel. McDowell and Banks, who might with much more reason have objected to the arrangement, accepted it with soldierly and patriotic promptness. General Pope, though still a young man, was a veteran soldier. He was a graduate of the class of 1842 at West Point, had served with distinction in the Mexican War, and had had a great success in the capture of Island No. 10 in the Mississippi River in the spring of 1862. He had made a very favorable impression, not only upon the President but upon most members of the Cabinet. He remained in Washington for several weeks after having been assigned to his new command, awaiting the arrival of General Halleck, the new General-in-Chief, and only left there to put himself at the head of his troops on the 29th of July.

In the latter part of June the President, being deeply anxious in regard to the military situation, and desiring to obtain the best advice in his power, had made as privately as possible a visit to General Scott in his retirement to ask his counsel. The only record of this visit is a memorandum from Scott approving the President's own plan of sending McDowell's command to reënforce McClellan before Richmond, a plan the execution of which was prevented by Lee's attack. It is probable that at this same interview the appointment of Halleck as General-in-Chief was again suggested by General Scott. Secretary Chase says in his diary that so far as he knew no member of the Cabinet was consulted in regard to it.[2] The appointment when made was received with general approval. Halleck was not McClellan, which was sufficient for the more vehement opponents of that general; and he was not a Republican, which pleased the other party. In fact he shocked the Secretary of the Treasury by saying at the first Cabinet meeting he attended, "I confess I do not think much of the negro." If Halleck never fulfilled the high expectations at first entertained of him, he at least discharged the duties of his great office with intelligence and fidelity. His integrity and his ability were alike undoubted. His deficiencies were rather those of temperament. In great crises he lacked determination and self-confidence, and was always more ready to avoid than to assume embarrassing responsibility.

General Halleck had arrived from the West, had taken command of all the armies of the Republic on July 23, and started at once on a visit to the Army of the Potomac. After his return from the James the question of McClellan's removal from command of the Army of the Potomac was much discussed in Administration circles. The President himself was averse to it. Secretary Chase was the most prominent member of the Government in its favor. He urged it strongly upon General Halleck, thinking it necessary to the revival of the credit of the country. Halleck agreed with him in condemning McClellan's military operations, but thought that "under his orders" McClellan "would do very well." Pope, in conversation with the Secretary of the Treasury, said he had warned the President that he could not safely command the Army of Virginia if its success was to depend on the coöperation of McClellan, for he felt assured that his coöperation would fail at some time when it would be most important. But the resolution was taken, upon Halleck's report, to withdraw McClellan with his army. On the 30th, as we have seen, McClellan was ordered to send away his sick. On the 3d of August he was directed to move his army to Aquia Creek. Reiterated orders, entreaties, arguments, and reproaches were all powerless to hasten his

2 Secretary Welles says Scott, Stanton, and Pope favored Halleck's appointment.— *Lincoln and Seward.*

movements or to bring him to the Potomac in less than three weeks. His first troops, Reynolds's division, joined the Army of Virginia on the 23d of August.

In the mean time Pope had begun his campaign with an error of taste more serious than any error of conduct he ever committed. He had issued an address to his army containing a few expressions which had made almost all the officers of the Army of the Potomac his enemies.[1]

This address, which had no other purpose than to encourage and inspirit his men, was received, to Pope's amazement, with a storm of angry ridicule which lasted as long as he remained in command of the Army of Virginia, and very seriously weakened his hold upon the confidence of his troops and the respect of the public. As a matter of course it rendered impossible any sincere sympathy and support from General McClellan and those nearest to him. It may even be doubted whether there had been from the beginning any probability of a good understanding between them. From the moment Pope arrived from the West he was regarded with jealousy by the friends of McClellan as a certain rival and possible successor.

In the last days of June, when McClellan made his first intimation of a change of base, Pope had suggested, and the President had conveyed his suggestion to McClellan, that it would be better for the latter, if forced to leave the line of the Chickahominy, to fall back on the Pamunkey. The source from which the suggestion came was sufficient to insure its rejection if there had been no other reason. Pope had taken great pains to establish friendly relations with McClellan, writing him, as soon as he assumed command, a long and cordial letter giving him a full account of his situation and intentions, and inviting his confidence and sympathy in return. McClellan answered a few days later in a briefer letter, in which he clearly foreshadowed an intention to resist the withdrawal of his army from its present position. Handicapped by this lack of cordial sympathy for him in the Army of the Potomac, Pope left Washington on the 29th of July to begin his work, the first object of which was to make a demonstration in the direction of Gordonsville to assist in the withdrawal of McClellan's army from the James. In pursuance of this intention Generals Banks and Sigel were ordered to move to Culpeper Court House. Banks promptly obeyed his orders, arriving there shortly before midnight on the 8th of August. Sigel, from some mistake as to the road, did not get there until the evening of the next day. By that time Banks had gone forward to Cedar Mountain, and at that point, with a force of less than 8000 men of all arms, he attacked the army corps of Stonewall Jackson, consisting of Ewell's, Hill's, and Jackson's divisions, with such vigor and impetuosity that he came near defeating them. He inflicted such a blow upon Jackson as to give him an exaggerated idea of his numbers; and hearing two days afterwards that Banks had been reënforced, Jackson thought best to retire to the Rapidan.

By this time General Lee, having become convinced that McClellan was about to leave the Peninsula, concluded to concentrate a large force upon Pope's advance, to attack and if possible to destroy it. On the 13th of August General Longstreet was ordered to the Rapidan with the divisions of Longstreet and Jackson, and Stuart's cavalry corps. General Lee disposed of an army of about 55,000 men. Pope, finding himself so greatly outnumbered, wisely retreated behind the Rappahannock, where he established himself without loss on the 20th of August.

Thus far Pope had made no mistake. He had succeeded in checking the advance of Jackson, in withdrawing such a force of the enemy from Richmond as to leave McClellan's retreat unmolested, and had established his army in good condition on the north bank of the Rappahannock. Under orders from General Halleck he held the line of this river for eight days, repulsing several attempts of the enemy to cross, in hope, as the General-in-Chief said, "that during this time sufficient forces from the Army of the Potomac would reach Aquia Creek to enable us to prevent any further advance of Lee, and eventually, with the combined armies, to drive him back upon Richmond."[2] Baffled in his repeated attempts to cross the Rappahannock in front of Pope's position, General Lee resolved upon a flank movement to the left and intrusted it to Stone-

[1] . . . I have come to you from the West, where we have always seen the backs of our enemies; from an army whose business it has been to seek the adversary and to beat him when found — whose policy has been attack, and not defense. . . . I presume that I have been called here to pursue the same system and to lead you against the enemy; and it is my purpose to do so, and that speedily. . . . I desire you to dismiss from your minds certain phrases which I am sorry to find much in vogue amongst you. I hear constantly of taking strong positions, and holding them; of lines of retreat, and of bases of supplies. Let us discard such ideas. The strongest position that a soldier should desire to occupy is one from which he can most easily advance against the enemy. Let us study the probable lines of retreat of our opponents, and leave our own to take care of themselves. Let us look before us, and not behind. Success and glory are in the advance; disaster and shame lurk in the rear. . . . [Pope's address "To the Officers and Soldiers of the Army of Virginia," July 14, 1862.]

[2] Halleck, Report of Nov. 25, 1862. War Records.

wall Jackson. The latter executed the task with amazing audacity and swiftness, marching round the left and rear of the Union army through the villages of Amissville, Orlean, and Salem, pouring his forces through Thoroughfare Gap in the Bull Run Mountains and striking Pope's line of communication and a valuable depot of supplies at Manassas Junction. Jackson retired from this place and took up his position in the morning of the 28th of August just north of the Warrenton Turnpike, near the old battlefield of Bull Run. Longstreet's corps was so far behind Jackson that a rapid change of front and concentration of all the troops at Pope's and Halleck's disposal ought to have destroyed Jackson, isolated as he was from the rest of Lee's army. But his position was not ascertained as soon as it should have been. Owing to causes which have led to infinite controversy, the Union forces were not brought together with the energy and celerity required, and therefore it came about that in the morning of August 29 Pope's main army confronted Jackson on the Warrenton Pike at Groveton; Porter was some three miles on the left near the Manassas Gap Railroad, and Longstreet was on the march from Thoroughfare Gap to effect his junction with Jackson's right. There was still an opportunity to win a great victory.

General Fitz John Porter, when at Warrenton Junction on the evening of the 27th of August, had received an order from General Pope to march at 1 A. M. to Bristoe Station; but, in the exercise of his own discretion, he did not march until dawn. This delay, however, had as yet no specially disastrous results, and would probably never have been brought into such prominence as it afterwards assumed had it not been for the light which it was supposed to cast upon subsequent events. Porter was, however, in his place on the morning of the 29th, with his splendid corps in fighting trim some distance from General Pope's left and a little in rear of his line of battle. He had been ordered to Centreville the night before, but his orders had been changed, early in the morning, to proceed to Gainesville instead. No time had been lost by this change, as his new order found him, on his march, at Manassas Junction, whence he pushed out his column on the Gainesville road to a little stream called Dawkins Branch, where he halted.

About 9 o'clock General Pope issued to McDowell and Porter a joint order[1] directing them to move their commands towards Gainesville, and to establish communication between themselves and the main body on the Warrenton Turnpike. General McDowell relates in his testimony before the general court-martial of Fitz John Porter that he met General Porter near the little stream just mentioned, about five miles from Manassas Junction and three miles from Gainesville. They had some conversation in regard to the joint order, and McDowell communicated to Porter a dispatch he had just received from General Buford, to the effect that a considerable body of Confederate troops was approaching from the direction of Gainesville. Concluding from this and other circumstances that there was immediate need of the presence of one of them on the left flank of the main body of the Union army then engaged with the enemy at Groveton, McDowell resolved to take his troops in that direction. On leaving General Porter he said to him, "You put your force in here and I will take mine up the Sudley Springs road on the left of the troops engaged at that point." McDowell reached Pope about 5 P. M. and reported to him with King's division, commanded by Hatch, as King was suffering from a severe illness.

The battle which had raged all day between Pope's and Jackson's armies was ebbing to its close, neither side having gained any decided advantage. McDowell's men were put in at the left of the line for the last sharp hour of fighting; they lost heavily, but fought with the greatest gallantry. They finally retired in good order, leaving one gun in the hands of the enemy, which had "continued to fire," says the Confederate Colonel Law, "until my men were so near it as to have their faces burnt by its discharges." At 4:30 Pope, who had waited all day for Porter's flanking attack upon Jackson's right and rear, sent Porter a peremptory order directing him to push forward into action, keeping his right in communication with Pope's left.

There is much discussion whether this order was delivered at 5 or 6 o'clock. Captain Douglas Pope, who bore it, says it was delivered at the earlier hour; General Porter claims that it was an hour later; but, at all events, Porter, who had found indications of a strong force in his front, waited in position till it grew dark and then retired in the direction of Manassas Junction. That night General Pope in deep exasperation sent an order to Porter, couched in harsh and peremptory terms, directing him to report in person with his command on the field for orders. Early next morning, August 30, Porter reported with all of his command but one brigade; and on this day one of the most sanguinary conflicts of the war, the second battle of Bull Run, was fought. It was a battle which General Pope was under no necessity of fighting. He might easily have retired behind Bull Run and waited until Franklin's corps, which had been moving from Alexandria with inexplicable slowness, had joined him and replenished his supplies. But the reports of a retreat by the enemy, the

[1] War Records.

admirable fighting qualities of his troops displayed on the 29th before his eyes, and the fact that on the 30th he had Porter's magnificent corps under his immediate orders, and more than all perhaps the temperament of the man, who was always ready to fight when there was a fair chance for him, determined him to stay where he was and to risk a new battle on that historic field. He made a mistake in supposing that the principal force against him was north of the Warrenton Turnpike. He placed, therefore, the bulk of his own army on that side and attacked with great energy early in the afternoon. Porter's corps fought with its old-time bravery; but his troops having come within the range of the enfilading fire of Longstreet's guns, the attack failed on the left. Later, Longstreet advanced on the Confederate right. A furious struggle took place for the position of Bald Hill, west of the Sudley Springs road; and later Sykes's regulars, successfully defending into the night the Henry House Hill from the assault of the Confederates, covered the retreat of the Union army across the Stone bridge to Centreville. On both sides it was one of the hardest fought battles of the war.

The day after the battle General Lee made no attempt to pursue or molest Pope's army; but on the evening of the 1st of September he essayed his usual flanking experiment with Jackson's corps upon the Union right wing at Chantilly. Pope had foreseen this, and prepared for it, and a very severe action took place, beginning at sunset and terminating in the darkness, in the midst of a furious thunder-storm. Jackson had gone too fast and too far. He was readily repulsed, but the Union army met with a heavy loss in the death of Generals Philip Kearny and Isaac I. Stevens. There were few men in the service more able, industrious, modest, and faithful than Stevens; and Kearny was an ideal soldier — brave, cool, patient, and loyal.

On the morning of the 1st, Pope, who seemed far more dispirited and discouraged by the evident hostility towards him existing among the officers of the Army of the Potomac than by any of his losses in battle, had telegraphed to General Halleck his opinion that the army should be withdrawn to the intrenchments in front of Washington, and in that secure place reorganized and rearranged. "When there is no heart in their leaders," he says, "and every disposition to hang back, much cannot be expected from the men."[1] These orders were given the next day, and the army was brought back without molestation.

General Pope attributed the failure of this campaign to General Porter's inaction and his disobedience of orders upon the 27th and 29th, and in this opinion many officers of the highest rank and integrity agreed. The general court-martial by which the charges were considered found General Porter guilty and sentenced him to be cashiered. He, assured of his own integrity, persistently protested against the injustice of this sentence and sought in every possible way to have it reversed.[2] It became in a certain sense a political question; and when, a quarter of a century later, the Democratic party had gained control of the House of Representatives and the Presidency, General Porter was restored to his former position in the army. With all the testimony adduced, it is probable that Porter would not have been convicted had it not been for his own letters written during the progress of the campaign. These show a spirit of contempt and scorn for his superior officer which go far to explain his behavior on this occasion.[3] It was these letters which furnished the theory of the prosecution of Porter: that he sincerely felt the good of the army and of the country required that Pope should be deposed from the command for which he honestly believed him unfit, and that McClellan should have his old army back again. His magnificent courage and conduct on other fields have a tendency to blind the eyes of just criticism in this matter; but there seems no resemblance between this languid soldier of the 29th of August and that son of thunder who at Beaver Dam and Gaines's Mill withstood the

1 War Records.

2 A board of three general officers appointed by President Hayes to reëxamine the case acquitted General Porter of all blame except for indiscreet and unkind criticism of his superior officer. A bill was passed by Congress restoring him to the army, but it was vetoed by President Arthur, who, however, removed Porter's continuing disabilities by an Executive order. After the accession of President Cleveland the bill was once more passed and this time approved by the President, and General Porter was restored to his place in the army and honorably retired.

3 In a letter of August 27th to Burnside from Warrenton Junction he says: "I find a vast difference between these troops and ours. . . . I hear that they are much demoralized, and need some good troops to give heart and, I think, head. We are working now to get behind Bull Run, and I presume will be there in a few days if strategy does not use us up. The strategy is magnificent, and tactics in an inverse proportion. . . . I would like to be ordered to return to Fredericksburg. . . . I do not doubt the enemy have a large amount of supplies provided for them, and believe they have a contempt for the Army of Virginia. I wish myself away from it with all our old Army of the Potomac, and so do our companions. . . . If you can get me away, please do so." Later he indulges in a pardonable pleasantry at the expense of his commander's magniloquent address to his troops: "Our line of communication is taking care of itself, in compliance with orders." On the morning of the 29th he wrote: "I hope Mac is at work and we shall soon be ordered out of this. It would seem, from proper statements of the enemy, that he was wandering round loose; but I expect they know what they are doing, which is more than any one here or anywhere knows."

onset of Lee and his army from noon to night of a long summer's day, with the same men and guns who were idling in the shade that afternoon by Dawkins Branch. What he gallantly and gladly did for the glory and honor of a commander he loved and admired he was incapable of doing when the glory and honor was to inure to the benefit of a commander whom he hated and despised.

General Pope regarded the inefficiency of McClellan in forwarding reënforcements to him from Alexandria as another important factor in his failure. He says in his report that Reynolds's division, which joined him on the 23d of August at Rappahannock station, and the corps of Heintzelman and Porter, about 18,000 between them, which arrived on the 26th and 27th at Warrenton Junction, were "all of the 91,000 veteran troops from Harrison's Landing which ever drew trigger under my command." Franklin and Sumner with 20,000 effectives reported to him at Centreville too late to redeem the campaign. It is a fact not without significance that the last troops which joined him before the hard fighting began did so before McClellan took charge at Alexandria. General Sumner, that brave old warrior who considered it a personal injury to be kept from any battlefield within his reach, broke out in hot anger when he learned that McClellan had said his corps was not in a condition for fighting. "If I had been ordered to advance right on," he said afterwards,[1] "from Alexandria by the Little River Turnpike, I should have been in that Second Bull Run battle with my whole force." He was made to waste forty-eight hours in camp and in a fruitless march to the Aqueduct bridge.

In the matter of Franklin's corps the correspondence of General McClellan himself furnishes the most undeniable evidence that he did not think best to hurry matters in reenforcing Pope. Halleck on the 27th had telegraphed him the probability of a general battle. "Franklin's corps," he said, "should move out by forced marches, carrying three or four days' provisions." This order was repeated later in the day in more urgent terms, that "Franklin's corps should move in the direction of Manassas as soon as possible." McClellan answered, not that Franklin had started, but that he had sent orders to him to "prepare to march." He afterwards discovered that Franklin was in Washington, and gave orders to place the corps in "readiness to move." In the afternoon he sent dispatches indicating his belief that it might be better for Franklin not to go, and questioning whether Washington was safe; and in the evening of the same day this conviction had gained such strength in his mind that he squarely recommended that the troops in hand be held for the defense of the capital. On the morning of the 28th Halleck telegraphed direct an order to Franklin to move towards Manassas, but at 1 o'clock in the afternoon General McClellan replied, "The moment Franklin can be started with a reasonable amount of artillery, he shall go." At 4:10 o'clock he added: "General Franklin is with me here. I will know in a few minutes the condition of artillery and cavalry. We are not yet in a condition to move; may be by to-morrow morning." Halleck, in despair at this inertia, had telegraphed at 3:30 o'clock: "Not a moment must be lost in pushing as large a force as possible towards Manassas so as to communicate with Pope before the enemy is reënforced." To this, after the lapse of an hour, McClellan answered:

> Your dispatch received. Neither Franklin or Sumner's corps is now in condition to move and fight a battle. It would be a sacrifice to send them now. . . .

At night General Halleck, with vehement earnestness, ordered —

> There must be no further delay in moving Franklin's corps towards Manassas. They must go to-morrow morning, ready or not ready. If we delay too long, there will be no necessity to go at all; for Pope will either be defeated or be victorious without our aid. If there is a want of wagons, the men must carry provisions with them till the wagons can come to their relief.

At last McClellan answered that he had ordered Franklin to march at 6 in the morning of the 29th. He then enumerated the force he had in hand, amounting to about thirty thousand men, and added, with a naïveté which in view of Halleck's urgent telegrams for two days would be comical if the consequences had not been so serious, "If you wish any of them to move towards Manassas, please inform me."

On the 29th of August he got Franklin started, but still protested against the order to move him, and continually through the day sent dispatches suggesting that Franklin should go no farther, until at last Halleck, even his excessive patience giving way, replied at 3 o'clock, "I want Franklin's corps to go far enough to find out something about the enemy. . . . I am tired of guesses." At a quarter before 3 in the afternoon of the 29th, General McClellan sent the following extraordinary dispatch to Mr. Lincoln, which to do him justice must be given entire:

> The last news I received from the direction of Manassas was from stragglers, to the effect that the enemy were evacuating Centreville and retiring

[1] Sumner's testimony. Report of the Committee on the Conduct of the War.

towards Thoroughfare Gap. This by no means reliable. I am clear that one of two courses should be adopted: first, to concentrate all our available forces to open communications with Pope; second, to leave Pope to get out of his scrape, and at once use all our means to make the capital perfectly safe.

No middle ground will now answer. Tell me what you wish me to do and I will do all in my power to accomplish it. I wish to know what my orders and authority are. I ask for nothing, but will obey whatever orders you give. I only ask a prompt decision, that I may at once give the necessary orders. It will not do to delay longer.

There can be no mistaking the transparent menace of this dispatch. Of the alternatives he suggested, he meant but one. By his protests of the last three days, as well as by his actions, he had clearly shown his disinclination to attempt to open communication with Pope. There is but one course, therefore, left which commends itself to his judgment; that is, to leave the Army of Virginia to its fate. This dispatch was sent directly to the President in answer to a request from him for news, and the President replied, one must confess, with more of magnanimity than of dignity:

I think your first alternative, "to concentrate all our available forces to open communication with Pope," is the right one, but I wish not to control. That I now leave to General Halleck, aided by your counsels.

During the two entire days, the 29th and 30th, while Pope was engaged in his desperate struggle at Bull Run with the whole of Lee's army, the singular interchange of telegrams between Halleck and McClellan continued — the one giving orders growing more and more peremptory every hour, and the other giving excuses more or less unsatisfactory for not obeying them. But late at night of the 31st of August, when the fighting was virtually over, General Halleck, upon whom the fatigue and excitement of the past week had had a most depressing effect, suddenly betrayed that weakness of character which so often surprised his friends, and sent to McClellan a dispatch breathing discouragement in every word, in which, saying that he was "utterly tired out," he begged McClellan "to assist him in this crisis with his ability and experience." To this General McClellan replied with unusual promptness a few minutes after receiving it, asking for an interview to settle his position. In a letter an hour later he gave his decided opinion that Pope had been totally defeated and that everything available should be drawn in at once: he thinks such orders should be sent immediately; he has no confidence in Pope's dispositions; "to speak frankly," he says,—"and the occasion requires it,— there appears to be a total absence of brains, and I fear a total destruction of the army." He falls back again into his sententious strain:

The occasion is grave and demands grave measures. The question is the salvation of the country. . . . It is my deliberate opinion that the interests of the nation demand that Pope shall fall back to-night if possible, and not one moment is to be lost.

The same advice was repeated by Pope the next morning, and Halleck at once gave the necessary orders. On September 1, General McClellan visited Washington and conversed with Halleck and the President. Mr. Lincoln had been greatly distressed and shocked by the account Pope had given of the demoralization of the Army of the Potomac, which in his opinion proceeded from the spirit of hostility and insubordination displayed openly by some of its most prominent officers. He requested McClellan to use his great personal influence with his immediate friends in that army to correct this evil. McClellan, while not crediting the report of Pope, nevertheless complied with the request of the President, and sent a letter to Porter urging him and all his friends, for his sake, to extend to General Pope the same support they had always given him, to which Porter replied in loyal and soldierly terms. On the next day (September 2), Mr. Lincoln placed the defenses of Washington and the command of the troops as they arrived from the front in the hands of General McClellan. There is no other official act of his life for which he has been more severely criticised, but we need not go far to find a motive for it.

The restoration of McClellan to command was Mr. Lincoln's own act. The majority of the Cabinet were strongly opposed to it. The Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Treasury agreed, upon the 29th of August, in a remonstrance against McClellan's continuance in command of any army of the Union. They reduced it to writing; it was signed by themselves and the Attorney-General, and afterwards by the Secretary of the Interior. The Secretary of the Navy concurred in the judgment of his colleagues, but declined to sign it, on the ground that it might seem unfriendly to the President. In the Cabinet meeting of the 2d of September the whole subject was freely discussed. The Secretary of War disclaimed any responsibility for the action taken, saying that the order to McClellan was given him directly by the President and that General Halleck considered himself relieved from responsibility by it, although he acquiesced and approved the order. He thought that McClellan was now in a position where he could shirk all responsibility, shielding himself under Halleck, while Halleck would shield himself under the President. Mr. Lincoln took a dif-

ferent view of the transaction, saying that he considered General Halleck as much in command of the army as ever, and that General McClellan had been charged with special functions, to command the troops for the defense of Washington, and that he placed him there because he could see no one who could do so well the work required.[1] The Secretary of the Treasury in recording this proceeding does not disguise his scorn for the lack of spirit displayed by the President, and on a later date he adds:

> It is indeed humiliating, but prompted I believe by a sincere desire to serve the country, and a fear that should he supersede McClellan by any other commander no advantage would be gained in leadership, but much harm in the disaffection of officers and troops.

Mr. Lincoln certainly had the defects of his great qualities. His unbounded magnanimity made him incapable sometimes even of just resentments. In regard to offenses committed against himself he used laughingly to say, "I am in favor of short statutes of limitations." General McClellan's worst offenses had been committed against the President in person. The insulting dispatch from Savage's Station and the letter from Harrison's Landing, in which he took the President to task for the whole course of his civil and military administration, would probably have been pardoned by no other ruler that ever lived; yet Mr. Lincoln never appeared to bear the slightest ill-will to the general on account of these affronts. He did feel deeply the conduct of McClellan towards Pope. He was outraged at McClellan's suggestion to leave Pope to his fate. He said to one of his household on the 30th of August, "He has acted badly towards Pope; he really wanted him to fail";[2] and after he had placed him again in command of the Army of the Potomac he repeated this severe judgment, but he added, "There is no one in the army who can man these fortifications and lick these troops of ours into shape half as well as he can." Again he said, "We must use the tools we have; if he cannot fight himself, he excels in making others ready to fight." In the interests of the country he condoned the offenses against Pope as readily as those against himself.

It may perhaps even be said that McClellan, so far from suffering at the President's hands for his unbecoming conduct towards him, gained a positive advantage by it. It was not alone for his undoubted talents as an organizer and drill-master that he was restored to his command. It was a time of gloom and doubt in the political as well as in the military situation. The factious spirit was stronger among the politicians and the press of the Democratic party than at any other time during the war. Not only in the States of the border, but in many Northern States, there were signs of sullen discontent among a large body of the people that could not escape the notice of a statesman so vigilant as Lincoln. It was of the greatest importance, not only in the interest of recruiting, but also in the interest of that wider support which a popular government requires from the general body of its citizens, that causes of offense against any large portion of the community should be sedulously avoided by those in power. General McClellan had made himself, by his demonstration against the President's policy, the leader of the Democratic party. Mr. Lincoln, for these reasons, was especially anxious to take no action against McClellan which might seem to be dictated by personal jealousy or pique; and besides, as General Pope had himself reported, there was a personal devotion to McClellan among those in high command in the Army of the Potomac which rendered it almost impossible for any other general to get its best work out of it. General Hitchcock, one of the most accomplished officers of the old army, gave this as the reason for his declining the command of that army.

It is difficult to regard without indignation the treatment, however necessary and justifiable, which the principal actors in this great transaction received. McClellan, whose conduct from beginning to end can only be condemned, received command of a great army, reorganized and reënforced, and with it a chance for magnificent achievement, if he had been able to improve it, which no officer before or since ever enjoyed on this continent. Pope, who had fought with the greatest bravery and perseverance a losing battle against Lee's entire army all the way from the Rapidan to the Potomac, encouraged at every point with the hope of reënforcements which only reached him too late, and finally by his misfortunes adding a new illustration to the prestige of his rival and enemy, received simply the compliments and congratulations of his superiors and was then removed to a distant department of the frontier, to take no further part in the stirring scenes of a war in which he was so well qualified to bear an honorable part. McDowell, a perfect soldier, among the bravest, ablest, and most loyal officers of the army, who had done his whole duty and much more, who zealously went before and beyond the orders of his superiors, always seeking the post of utmost danger and toil, was found at the close of this campaign, of which he was the true hero, with his reputa-

[1] Chase's Diary. Warden, p. 456 et seq.
[2] J. H., Diary.

tion so smirched and tarnished by senseless and malignant calumny that he was never after during the war considered available for those high and important employments for which he was better equipped than almost any of his comrades. A court of inquiry, it is true, vindicated him completely from every charge that malice or ignorance had invented against him; but the two disasters of Bull Run, in successive summers, for neither of which he was to blame, remained in the general mind inseparably connected with his name.

General McClellan himself never appreciated the magnanimity with which he had been treated. In fact, he thought the magnanimity was all upon his side. As time wore on he continually exaggerated in his own mind the services he had rendered and the needs of the Government at the time he had been placed in command, until he created for himself the fantastic delusion that he had saved the Administration from despair! In the last lines he ever wrote, shortly before his death, he gives this absolutely new and most remarkable account of the visit which Lincoln and Halleck made to him on the 2d of September:

> He [the President] then said that he regarded Washington as lost, and asked me if I would, under the circumstances, as a favor to him, resume command and do the best that could be done. Without one moment's hesitation, and without making any conditions whatever, I at once said that I would accept the command and would stake my life that I would save the city. Both the President and Halleck again asserted that it was impossible to save the city, and I repeated my firm conviction that I could and would save it. They then left, the President verbally placing me in entire command of the city and of the troops falling back upon it from the front.[1]

It is possible that in the lapse of twenty years General McClellan's memory had become so distorted by constant dwelling upon imagined wrongs that he was at last capable of believing this absurd fiction. It was a fancy adopted in the last years of his life. A year after his removal from command he wrote a voluminous report of his entire military history, filling an octavo volume. He was then the acknowledged favorite of the Democratic party, the predestined candidate for the Presidency in opposition to Lincoln. He embodied in that report every incident or argument he could think of to justify his own conduct and to condemn that of the Government. Yet in this interminable document there is no hint that Lincoln or Halleck thought the capital was lost. He apparently never dreamed of such a thing while Lincoln lived; he gave no intimation of such a charge while Halleck survived, although their relations were frankly hostile. Only after both these witnesses had passed away, and a direct contradiction was thus rendered impossible, did it occur to him to report this conversation between his patriotic heroism and their craven despair!

There is another proof that this story was an after-thought. In a letter to his family, written on the 2d, the very morning of this pretended conversation, he merely says:

> I was surprised this morning, when at breakfast, by a visit from the President and Halleck, in which the former expressed the opinion that the troubles now impending could be overcome better by me than by any one else. Pope is ordered to fall back upon Washington, and as he reënters everything is to come under my command again.

When we consider that in these private letters he never omits an opportunity for heroic posturing, it is impossible to believe that if Lincoln and Halleck an hour or two before had been imploring him to save the capital, he would not have mentioned it. The truth is, McClellan himself has left evidence of the fact that he thought Washington in danger. He wrote to his wife:

> I do not regard Washington as safe against the rebels. If I can quietly slip over there I will send your silver off.

If it was worth while to cumber these pages with the refutation of a calumny so transparently false, we could bring the testimony of a score of witnesses to show that Mr. Lincoln, during the first days of September, was unusually cool and determined. Grieved and disappointed as he was at the failure of Pope's campaign, his principal preoccupation was not at any time the safety of Washington. It was that Lee's army, as he frequently expressed it, "should not get away without being hurt." On Monday morning he said: "They must be whipped here and now. Pope must fight them; and if they are too strong for him, he can gradually get back to these fortifications." At the time McClellan falsely represents him as hopeless of saving Washington he had no thought of the safety of that place in his mind, except as a secondary and permanent consideration. He was making ready a force to attack the enemy. On the 3d of September he wrote with his own hand this order, which sufficiently shows the mood he was in:

> *Ordered*, that the General-in-Chief, Major-General Halleck, immediately commence and proceed with all possible dispatch to organize an army for active operations from all the material within and coming within his control, independent of the forces he may deem necessary for the defense of Washington, when such active army shall take the field.

[1] THE CENTURY, May, 1886. "McClellan's Own Story," p. 535.

This order, countersigned by the Secretary of War, was delivered to Halleck by General Townsend, and the work of preparing the army for the offensive was at once begun. McClellan, under Halleck's direction, went heartily to work to execute these orders of the President. He had none of the protecting airs he gives himself in his memoirs; his conduct was exemplary. "McClellan," said Lincoln on the 5th, "is working like a beaver. He seems to be aroused to doing something by the sort of snubbing he got last week." The work he was now engaged upon was congenial staff work, and he performed it with great zeal and efficiency. It suited him in after years to pretend that he was acting without orders and without communication with the Government. It was his favorite phrase that he went to Antietam with a "halter about his neck." But his letters written at the time contradict those assertions. He wrote from Washington, on the 7th of September:

> I leave here this afternoon to take command of the troops in the field. The feeling of the Government towards me, I am sure, is kind and trusting.

ANTIETAM.

As soon as General McClellan was replaced in command of the Army of the Potomac he began to put the forces in order; and the ease and rapidity with which this was accomplished show that both he and General Pope, with very different intentions, had equally exaggerated the state of their demoralization. The troops were not in so bad a condition at Centreville as Pope imagined, and the army that Mr. Lincoln handed over to McClellan at Washington was both in numbers and morale a formidable host. Its morning returns show an aggregate of over 100,000 men, and General McClellan himself reports that he had at Antietam 87,000. But the vast discrepancy between the force on paper and the effectives in battle gives a margin of which writers sometimes avail themselves according to their prejudices or prepossessions. General Palfrey, who took part in the campaign and who has since examined the reports on both sides with scrupulous care, says that in this single instance McClellan overstated the number of his troops in action, and that 70,000 would be nearer the mark. It is true he could afford it, as in the same estimate he very nearly doubled the number of the enemy. The Confederate rosters show some forty-five brigades of infantry, exclusive of cavalry and artillery. Lee says in his report that he commanded at Antietam about 40,000 troops.[1]

McClellan's time for training and drilling his recovered army was brief; for within a few days the news came that Lee had crossed the Potomac into Maryland. There was no time now for indecision, and Lincoln's stern and constantly repeated injunction, "You must find and hurt this enemy now," had to be obeyed.

General Lee has given in his own report a sufficiently clear statement of what he hoped to accomplish by his invasion of Maryland. The supplies of rich and productive districts were thus made accessible to his army, and he wished to "prolong this state of affairs in every way desirable, and not to permit the season for active operations to pass without endeavoring to inflict further injury upon the enemy." He also makes an acknowledgment which shows that he, in common with others at Richmond, had been grossly deceived by the accounts which rebel refugees from Maryland, and their sympathizing correspondents at home, had given of the oppressive tyranny of Lincoln, and the resentment it had caused in that commonwealth. He says:

> The condition of Maryland encouraged the belief that the presence of our army, however inferior to that of the enemy, would induce the Washington Government to retain all its available force to provide against contingencies which its course towards the people of that State had given it reason to apprehend. At the same time it was hoped that military success might afford us an opportunity to aid the citizens of Maryland in any efforts they might be disposed to make to recover their liberties. The difficulties that surrounded them were fully appreciated, and we expected to derive more assistance in the attainment of our object from the just fears of the Washington Government than from active demonstration on the part of the people, unless success should enable us to give them assurance of continued protection.

In a hasty note he informed the Richmond Government of his purpose, and took the initial steps to execute it with great promptness. He crossed his entire army between the 4th and 7th of September near Leesburg, and camped in the vicinity of Frederick. He took it for granted that our force at Harper's Ferry would be at once withdrawn; thereafter he intended to move the army into western Maryland, establish his communications with Richmond through the Shenandoah Valley, and then to move into Pennsylvania and draw McClellan from his base to fight in a field of his own selection. If all his surmises had been correct, if Miles had been withdrawn from Harper's Ferry, if Maryland had risen in revolt, if McClellan had allowed him to range through western Maryland at his leisure, the plan would have been an admirable one and the results of it most fruitful; but all these expectations failed. After two days at Frederick he found that Maryland was contented

[1] War Records.

with the oppressor's yoke, and that Miles remained at Harper's Ferry. He therefore considered it necessary to detach a large portion of his force under Jackson, McLaws, and Walker to surround and capture the garrison at that place: the rest of the army withdrew from Frederick to Boonsboro'.

Meantime McClellan was slowly approaching. He felt, of course, the need of more troops. With an army about him so enormous that, as he says in his report,[1] it would occupy fifty miles of road in marching order, he still paused on the 11th to write to General Halleck, begging for reënforcements. He first assures him that the capital is in no danger and that all the troops there may safely be sent to him; but in order to guard against any possible rejoinder he adds, "Even if Washington should be taken while these armies are confronting each other this would not, in my judgment, bear comparison with the ruin and disaster which would follow the defeat of this army," an opinion which has no especial value except as showing what General McClellan's judgment was worth in such a matter. Except when he was in Washington, he always regarded its possible capture as a trifling affair. But his demand was complied with: Porter's corps was ordered to join him, with a kind message from the President, which he acknowledged courteously, and then — asked for Keyes's corps! He was in no haste; he ordered his officers beforehand to avoid collisions. He attempts in his report to account for his tardy marching on the ground that the authorities at Washington wished him not to go too far from the capital. General Halleck says that no order capable of bearing this construction was ever given. He says:

> I telegraphed him that he was going too far, not from Washington, but from the Potomac. . . . I thought he should keep more upon the Potomac and press forward his left rather than his right, so as more readily to relieve Harper's Ferry, which was the point then in most danger.[2]

But two days after the above-mentioned letter asking for reënforcements, McClellan received information which was enough to put a soul of enterprise into the veriest laggard that ever breathed. There never was a general so fruitlessly favored by fortune as McClellan, and never was such a piece of good luck offered, even to him, as that which fell into his hands on the 13th of September. He had been advancing in his leisurely manner from Washington on parallel roads, making only about six miles a day, when on the 13th he arrived at Frederick and one of his officers brought to him Lee's special order of the 9th, that a private soldier had found, containing his entire plan of campaign. By this he learned that his enemy was before him, a day's march away; that his whole force was inferior to his own; and that it was divided into two portions, one in camp near Boonsboro' and the other besieging Miles at Harper's Ferry. It is not too much to say that his enemy had been delivered into his hands. After he had read this order the contest between him and Lee, other things being equal, would have been like a fight between a man blindfolded and one having use of his eyes. He not only knew of the division of his enemy's army in half, but he knew where his trains, his rear-guard, his cavalry, were to march and to halt, and where the detached commands were to join the main body.[3]

He seemed to appreciate the importance of his discovery,[4] but it was not in his nature to act promptly enough. Franklin was at Buckeystown, about twelve miles east of South Mountain, a prolongation northward of the Blue Ridge, beyond which Lee's army lay. Instead of giving him immediate orders to march with all possible speed to Harper's Ferry, he wrote at his leisure a long and judicious instruction directing him to march to that point the next day. The weather was perfect; the roads were in good order. McClellan knew there was no enemy between him and Crampton's Gap. Every possible consideration urged him to make use of every instant of time.[5] The precious opportunity was neglected, and it was noon the next day, the 14th of September, when Franklin stormed the crest of the mountain after a brilliant and easy victory over General Cobb's detachment of McLaws's division, which had been left to guard the pass. The Union right wing spent the whole of the same day in a stubborn fight for the position of Fox's and Turner's Gaps, some six miles farther north.

1 McClellan, "Army of the Potomac," p. 188.

2 Halleck's testimony. Report Committee on Conduct of the War.

3 Palfrey, "The Antietam and Fredericksburg," p. 20 et seq.

4 He telegraphed to the President: "I have the whole rebel force in front of me, but am confident, and no time shall be lost. . . . I think Lee has made a gross mistake, and that he will be severely punished for it. . . . I have all the plans of the rebels, and will catch them in their own trap if my men are equal to the emergency." [War Records.]

5 If he had thrown forward his army with the vigor used by Jackson in his advance on Harper's Ferry, the passes of South Mountain would have been carried before the evening of the 13th, at which time they were very feebly guarded; and then, debouching into Pleasant Valley, the Union commander might next morning have fallen upon the rear of McLaws at Maryland Heights and relieved Harper's Ferry, which did not surrender till the morning of the 15th. But he did not arrive at South Mountain until the morning of the 14th, and by that time the Confederates, forewarned of his approach, had recalled a considerable force to dispute the passage. [Swinton, "Army of the Potomac," p. 202.]

After sharp fighting, in which General Reno, an officer of the highest merit, was killed, and Colonel Hayes, afterwards President of the United States, was wounded, advanced positions were secured. At neither Crampton's nor Turner's was the victory pushed to advantage. Franklin did nothing to relieve the beleaguered garrison at Harper's Ferry, and the force at Turner's Gap rested on the ground that they had won until, when the mists of the morning cleared away on the 15th, they saw the enemy had retreated from their front. Much valuable time had been lost, and more than time; for early on the morning of the 15th the blundering and bewildered defense of Harper's Ferry had ceased by the surrender of the garrison, its unhappy commander having been killed after he had displayed the white flag.

But McClellan had not yet lost all his advantage; and the sacrifice of Harper's Ferry would have been amply compensated if he had moved at once with all possible speed upon Lee, who, with only Longstreet's and D. H. Hill's troops, had taken up his position at Sharpsburg. Jackson was still south of the Potomac. He had no fear of night marches, and was making all possible speed to join Lee through the day and night of the 15th. The force of McLaws got away from in front of Franklin, and, though making a long détour and crossing the Potomac twice, still joined the main army at Sharpsburg on the 17th. All this time, while the scattered detachments of Lee were moving with the utmost expedition to join their main body, making two or three times the distance which separated Lee from McClellan, the latter made his preparations for an attack, as if, to quote Johnston again, "time was of no especial value to him." On the 15th he marched down to Antietam Creek and placed his soldiers in position. He rode from end to end of his line, enjoying one of the grandest greetings ever given by an army to its commander. The thunder of cheers which met him at every point showed that there was no lack of morale in that mighty army, and that they were equal to any service their beloved commander might choose to require of them.

It seems almost incredible, as we write it, and it will appear inexplicable to such readers as may come after us, that McClellan made no movement during the afternoon[1] of Monday, the 15th, and did nothing during the entire day of the 16th but to advance a portion of his right wing across Antietam Creek, and this while the ragged legions of Lee were streaming in from across the Potomac to take up their positions for the impending conflict. Every minute which he thus let slip was paid for in the blood of Union soldiers next day. Never had McClellan's habit of procrastination served him so ill a turn as during the whole day of the 16th. Lee's error of dividing his army would have been fatal to him if even on the morning of the 16th McClellan had advanced upon him in force. The loss of the afternoon of the 15th in that case would scarcely have been felt. The reduction of Harper's Ferry had taken a day longer than Lee expected, and when night fell the divisions of McLaws, Anderson, A. P. Hill, and Walker were still beyond the Potomac.[2] He would have been compelled to withstand the attack of McClellan's whole army with nothing but the divisions of D. R. Jones and D. H. Hill on the right and center, and of Hood, Ewell, and J. R. Jones on the left. But before noon of the 17th most of Lee's forces were on the ground, and the rest arrived during the battle. McClellan had rejected the proffered favors of fortune. His delay had given back to Lee all the advantages afforded McClellan by the separation of Lee's army and the discovery of his plan of campaign. Lee had had unbroken leisure for forty-eight hours to study his ground and the dispositions of his antagonist, which had been made in plain view under his eyes. Lee's advantage of position was fully equal to McClellan's advantage of numbers; and it was therefore on even terms between the two armies that the battle of Antietam began.

The ground was highly favorable to Lee. In front of him was Antietam Creek, the high wooded ground affording an advantageous position and cover for his batteries. There was little field for maneuvering, and little was attempted. From daylight till dark of the 17th the battle went on. There was nothing of it but sheer, persistent, brutal slaughter. McClellan's plan was to throw forward his right wing, the corps of Hooker leading, supported by that of Mansfield, and by those of Sumner and Franklin if necessary; when the battle became well engaged on the right, the left wing, under Burnside, was to cross the lower bridge to try to turn the enemy's right. On this simple plan the battle was contested. Hooker advanced early in the morning and fought until his corps, giving and receiving about equal injuries, was shattered to pieces, and himself borne from the field, severely wounded. General Meade succeeding him in command, Mansfield came to his assistance. His corps also did heroic service, and its veteran commander was killed in the front of his foremost line. His corps was led during the rest of the day by General A. S. Williams. As our left remained entirely inactive, Lee was able to use most of his force

[1] McClellan in his memoirs, p. 586, blames Burnside for the slowness of the march on the 15th.

[2] Lee to Davis, September 18, 1862. War Records.

on our right, and his resistance was so obstinate that Sumner's corps was drawn into the conflict, where it met with heavy losses; Richardson, one of the best division commanders in the army, received a mortal hurt, and Sedgwick was twice wounded. Before the battle ended on the right even Franklin's corps, which it had been intended to hold in reserve, was drawn into the whirlpool of blood and fire. Corps by corps, division by division, one might almost say brigade by brigade, those brave and devoted troops were hurled in succession, without intelligent plan, without any special concert of action, against Lee's left. The carnage was frightful, the result in no proportion to the terrible expense. It was afternoon before the left wing, under Burnside, began its part of the work. The lower bridge was crossed about 1 o'clock and the west bank gained, but no farther advance was made by Burnside until after 3. He then moved forward his forces, under General Cox's command, upon the enemy's right, making good progress, until, late in the afternoon, as if good fortune, weary of having her favors rejected by General McClellan, had turned to the other side, the Light Division of A. P. Hill, which had marched seventeen miles in seven hours, arrived on the field from Harper's Ferry and made a vigorous attack upon our extreme left, killed General Rodman, and threw his division into some disorder. This unlooked-for demonstration checked the advance of the Federal column, and it fell back a little distance to the hills on the west of the Antietam. Night came on, and the long, desperate battle was at an end. The tactical advantage was with General McClellan. On his left, his center, and his right he had gained a little ground. Both armies had suffered losses which it shocks the sense to contemplate. They were almost equal — over 12,000 killed and wounded on the Union side, over 11,000 on the Confederate;[1] but Lee's loss was more than one-fourth of his army, while McClellan's was only one-sixth of his. In his report General McClellan says:

> The night brought with it grave responsibilities. Whether to renew the attack on the 18th or to defer it, even with the risk of the enemy's retirement, was the question before me.

There could be little doubt of his decision of the question. He was keenly alive to the sufferings of his army. He loved them, and was loved by them in return. The piled heaps of the slain, the thousands of wounded and dying, the wreck and havoc of the conquered field, all impressed his imagination so powerfully that he was unable to conceive the worse condition of the enemy. There rose before his mind also an appalling picture of the consequences that would ensue if he risked another battle and lost it. He saw Lee's army marching in triumph on Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York, the country ravaged, the cause lost.[2] Every impulse of his heart and conscience forbade him to assume so enormous a responsibility. He would not absolutely decide which course to adopt, but, after his habit, concluded to wait until the 19th before making a final decision.[3]

The occasion, however, would not wait for him. General Lee knew, if McClellan did not, that his army was in no condition to risk another battle. The straggling of McClellan's force was one of the reasons that induced him to delay. No doubt there was a great deal of it in his command. One day President Lincoln, exasperated at the discrepancy between the aggregate of troops he had sent to McClellan and the number McClellan reported as having been received, exclaimed in a simile of concise grotesqueness, "Sending men to that army is like shoveling fleas across a barnyard; not half of them get there." But the case on the other side was worse still. Lee reported to Jefferson Davis on the 21st of September that the efficiency of his army was "paralyzed by the loss to its ranks of the numerous stragglers."[4] "On the morning after the battle," he says, "General Evans reported to me on the field, where he was holding the front position, that he had but 120 of his brigade present, and that the next brigade to his, that of General Garnett, consisted of but 100 men. General Pendleton reported that the brigades of Generals Lawton and Armistead, left to guard the ford at Shepherdstown, together contained but 600 men. This," he adds feelingly, "is a woful condition of affairs." But of course General McClellan had no personal knowledge of this; and, as we have seen in the course of this narrative, he was utterly destitute of those intuitions of the situation and the intention of his enemy which we find in all great commanders. The fight of the day before had been so terri-

[1] On the Union side 12,410 at Antietam and 15,203 in the campaign, not including the losses at Harper's Ferry, which were 12,737. The closest estimate that can be made shows a loss of about 11,172 to the Confederates at Antietam, and of 13,964 during the campaign.

[2] McClellan, "Army of the Potomac," p. 211.

[3] It is hard to say whether these words, from a letter written by General McClellan on the 18th, are more comic or pathetic: "Those in whose judgment I rely tell me that I fought the battle splendidly and that it was a masterpiece of art. . . . God has been good in sparing the lives of all my staff. Generals Hooker, Sedgwick, Dana, Richardson, and Hartsuff, and several other general officers, wounded. Mansfield is dead, I fear." On the 20th he wrote: "I feel that I have done all that can be asked in twice saving the country." ["McClellan's Own Story," p. 612.]

[4] War Records.

ble in the struggle and carnage, he had made his personal influence so little felt on the field,[1] he had gained so little advantage in comparison with his frightful losses, that it would be unjust to expect to find in him on the morning of the 18th that alacrity and elation of victory which would have impelled him in pursuit of his shattered enemy. Beaten as Lee was, his promising campaign brought to a disastrous failure by his own error, he was still less affected by it than was McClellan by his victory. He even thought for the moment, before twilight had settled on the battle on the 17th, of executing with his usual instrument his usual movement, of sending Stonewall Jackson by the left to attack the right flank of McClellan's army.[2] He opposed a bold front to his ill fortune, and closes his description of the battle by saying that he deemed it injudicious to push his advantage further.

McClellan was almost alone in his decision not to continue the battle on the 18th. General Burnside, who commanded on the left, testified before the Committee on the Conduct of the War[3] that he thought the attack should be renewed at early dawn, and gave this opinion to McClellan the night of the battle. General McClellan said he would think the matter over and make up his mind before morning, and a staff-officer of Burnside's was kept in waiting through the night at McClellan's headquarters to learn his decision.

General Franklin, in command of the center, also testified that he showed McClellan a position on our right of great importance, and advised an attack on that place in the morning. He says there was no doubt that we could carry it, as we had plenty of artillery bearing on it. He thought that by this means the whole left flank of the enemy would have been uncovered. When asked what reasons were given for rejecting this plan,[4] he repeated McClellan's customary fatal excuse for delay, that he would prefer to wait for reënforcements. Hooker, who had commanded the right wing, was also of the opinion that the attack should be resumed, although his wounds would have prevented his taking part in it.

But it was too much to expect of General McClellan that he should follow such advice. He had had, it is true, a moment of elation on the morning of the 15th after the engagement at South Mountain. To attack an enemy in position, and drive him, was to McClellan so new a sensation that he was evidently greatly exhilarated by his success at Turner's Gap. He reported Lee as admitting "that he had been shockingly whipped" and "making for Shepherdstown in a perfect panic."[5] But after the terrible conflict at Antietam the cold fit came on, and his only dispatches to Washington were of his heavy losses and of holding what he had gained. He evidently thought more of being attacked on that day than of attacking. "The battle," he says, "will probably be renewed today. Send all the troops you can, by the most expeditious route."[6] It was therefore with feelings of the greatest relief that he saw Lee's rearguard disappear across the Potomac, and in the forenoon of the 19th he joyfully telegraphed to Washington, "Our victory was complete. The enemy is driven back into Virginia. Maryland and Pennsylvania are now safe."[7]

The President received this news, as was natural, with mingled gratitude and disappointment. He was glad and thankful for the measure of success which had been achieved, but the high hope he had entertained of destroying Lee's army before it recrossed the Potomac was baffled. His constant entreaty to McClellan, from the time he put him in command of the army up to the day of the battle, was, "Please do not let him get off without being hurt."[8] It was with this hope and purpose that he had given McClellan everything he asked for, infusing his own indomitable spirit into all the details of work at the War Department and the headquarters of the army. It was by his order that McClellan had been pushed forward, that Porter had been detached from the defense of Washington, that the militia of Pennsylvania had been hurried down to the border. He did not share General McClellan's illusion as to the monstrous number of the enemy opposed to him; and when he looked at the vast aggregate of the Army of the Potomac by the morning report on the 20th of September, "93,149 present for duty," he could not but feel that the result was not commensurate with the efforts made and the resources employed.

1 He did very little in the way of compelling the execution of the orders which he did give. He passed the whole day till towards the middle of the afternoon, when all the fighting was over, on the high ground near Fry's house, where he had some glasses strapped to the fence. . . . He made absolutely no use of the magnificent enthusiasm which the army then felt for him. [Palfrey, "The Antietam and Fredericksburg," p. 119.]

2 While the attack on our center was progressing, General Jackson had been directed to endeavor to turn the enemy's right, but found it extending nearly to the Potomac, and so strongly defended with artillery that the attempt had to be abandoned. [Report of General Lee. War Records.]

3 General McClellan in his memoirs contradicts this testimony.

4 Franklin, testimony. Report Committee on Conduct of the War.

5 War Records.

6 McClellan to Halleck, Sept. 18, 1862. War Records.

7 McClellan to Halleck. War Records.

8 Lincoln to McClellan, Sept. 12, 1862. War Records.

EMANCIPATION ANNOUNCED.

WHEN, on the 22d of July, after full Cabinet discussion, President Lincoln decided to postpone the proclamation of emancipation which he had first prepared, in order to wait for a victory, all indications afforded a reasonable hope that the delay would not be a long one. The union of the armies of McClellan and Pope had been ordered, and once combined they would outnumber any force they were likely to meet. Halleck had been called to Washington to exercise chief command and secure unity of orders and movements. The new call for volunteers was expected to bring quick reënforcements.

We have seen through what deplorable shortcomings of McClellan and some of his officers this reasonable hope was frustrated, and how, instead of an expected victory, an unnecessary and most disheartening defeat augmented President Lincoln's difficulties and responsibilities; how the combined armies were forced back upon Washington in such disaster and discouragement that the President felt compelled to intrust their reorganization to the very man whose weakness and jealousy had been the main cause of the result.

The damaging effect of these reverses extended beyond mere military results; they gave a new and serious character to the political conditions and complications which were an inseparable part of the President's great task. They sharpened anew the underlying prejudice and distrust between the two factions of his supporters — radicals and conservatives, as they began to be called; or, more properly speaking, those who were anxious to destroy and those who were willing to preserve slavery. Each faction loudly charged the other with being the cause of failure, and clamored vehemently for a change of policy to conform to their own views. Outside of both was the important faction of those Democrats who either yielded the war only a sullen support or opposed it as openly as they safely might, and who, on the slavery issue, directed their denunciations wholly against the radicals. It may be safely said that at no time were political questions so critical and embarrassing to Mr. Lincoln as during this period. His own decision had been reached; his own course was clearly and unalterably marked out. But the circumstances surrounding him did not permit his making it known, and he was compelled to keep up an appearance of indecision which only brought upon him a greater flood of importunities. During no part of his administration were his acts and words so persistently misconstrued as in this interim by men who gave his words the color and meaning of their own eager desires and expectations. To interpret properly Mr. Lincoln's language it must be constantly borne in mind that its single object was to curb and restrain the impatience of zealots from either faction. If we group together his several letters and addresses of this period, we may see that his admonitions and rebukes were given to both with equal earnestness and impartiality. Occasions were not wanting; for all request and advice which came to him was warped to one side or the other by the culminating contest, in which he alone could give the final and deciding word. On the 26th of July, 1862, he wrote the following letter to Reverdy Johnson, then on public business at New Orleans, who had made communications touching affairs in the Department of the Gulf:

Yours of the 16th, by the hand of Governor Shepley, is received. It seems the Union feeling in Louisiana is being crushed out by the course of General Phelps. Please pardon me for believing that it is a false pretense. The people of Louisiana — all intelligent people everywhere — know full well that I never had a wish to touch the foundations of their society, or any right of theirs. With perfect knowledge of this they forced a necessity upon me to send armies among them, and it is their own fault, not mine, that they are annoyed by the presence of General Phelps. They also know the remedy — know how to be cured of General Phelps. Remove the necessity of his presence. And might it not be well for them to consider whether they have not already had time enough to do this? If they can conceive of anything worse than General Phelps within my power, would they not better be looking out for it? They very well know the way to avert all this is simply to take their place in the Union upon the old terms. If they will not do this, should they not receive harder blows rather than lighter ones? You are ready to say I apply to friends what is due only to enemies. I distrust the wisdom if not the sincerity of friends who would hold my hands while my enemies stab me. This appeal of professed friends has paralyzed me more in this struggle than any other one thing. You remember telling me the day after the Baltimore mob in April, 1861, that it would crush all Union feeling in Maryland for me to attempt bringing troops over Maryland soil to Washington. I brought the troops notwithstanding, and yet there was Union feeling enough left to elect a legislature the next autumn, which in turn elected a very excellent Union United States Senator![1] I am a patient man — always willing to forgive on the Christian terms of repentance, and also to give ample time for repentance. Still, I must save this Government, if possible. What I cannot do, of course I will not do; but it may as well be understood, once for all, that I shall not surrender this game leaving any available card unplayed.[2]

Two days later to a citizen of Louisiana he sent another letter, full of phrases quite as positive and significant. He wrote:

1 Mr. Reverdy Johnson himself.
2 Unpublished MS.

Mr. Durant complains that in various ways the relation of master and slave is disturbed by the presence of our army, and he considers it particularly vexatious that this, in part, is done under cover of an act of Congress, while constitutional guaranties are suspended on the plea of military necessity. The truth is, that what is done and omitted about slaves is done and omitted on the same military necessity. It is a military necessity to have men and money; and we can get neither, in sufficient numbers or amounts, if we keep from, or drive from, our lines slaves coming to them. . . . He speaks of no duty—apparently thinks of none—resting upon Union men. He even thinks it injurious to the Union cause that they should be restrained in trade and passage without taking sides. They are to touch neither a sail nor a pump, but to be merely passengers,—dead-heads at that,—to be carried snug and dry throughout the storm, and safely landed, right side up. Nay, more; even a mutineer is to go untouched, lest these sacred passengers receive an accidental wound. Of course the rebellion will never be suppressed in Louisiana if the professed Union men there will neither help to do it nor permit the Government to do it without their help. Now, I think the true remedy is very different from what is suggested by Mr. Durant. It does not lie in rounding the rough angles of the war, but in removing the necessity for the war. . . . If they will not do this, if they prefer to hazard all for the sake of destroying the Government, it is for them to consider whether it is probable I will surrender the Government to save them from losing all. If they decline what I suggest, you scarcely need to ask what I will do. What would you do in my position? Would you drop the war where it is? Or would you prosecute it in future with elder-stalk squirts charged with rose water? Would you deal lighter blows rather than heavier ones? Would you give up the contest, leaving any available means unapplied? I am in no boastful mood. I shall not do more than I can, and I shall do all I can to save the Government, which is my sworn duty as well as my personal inclination. I shall do nothing in malice. What I deal with is too vast for malicious dealing.[1]

In these two letters the President's reproof was addressed to conservatives to correct ill-timed complaints that the interests of slaveholders were allowed to suffer in the rude necessities of military operations and administration. But complaints equally unreasonable were assailing him from the other side. Mr. Greeley of the "New York Tribune" was criticising the President for exactly the alleged fault of not doing more of that which had brought these complaints from Louisiana. In his paper of August 20 he addressed a long open letter to Mr. Lincoln, accusing him of failure to execute the Confiscation Act "from mistaken deference to rebel slavery," and alleging that he was "unduly influenced by the counsels, the representations, the menaces of certain fossil politicians hailing from the border slave-States." "We complain," he continued, "that a large proportion of our regular army officers, with many of the volunteers, evince far more solicitude to uphold slavery than to put down the rebellion." These phrases are samples of two columns or more of equally unjust censure. Mr. Lincoln always sought, and generally with success, to turn a dilemma into an advantage; and shrewdly seizing the opportunity which Mr. Greeley had created, he in turn addressed him the following open letter through the newspapers in reply, by which he not merely warded off his present personal accusation, but skillfully laid the foundation in public sentiment for the very radical step he was about to take on the slavery question.

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON, August 22, 1862.

HON. HORACE GREELEY.

DEAR SIR: I have just read yours of the 19th, addressed to myself through the "New York Tribune." If there be in it any statements, or assumptions of fact, which I may know to be erroneous, I do not, now and here, controvert them. If there be in it any inferences which I may believe to be falsely drawn, I do not, now and here, argue against them. If there be perceptible in it an impatient and dictatorial tone, I waive it in deference to an old friend, whose heart I have always supposed to be right. As to the policy I "seem to be pursuing," as you say, I have not meant to leave any one in doubt. I would save the Union. I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored, the nearer the Union will be—"the Union as it was."[2] 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 there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do about slavery, and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do more whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors,

[1] Lincoln to Bullitt, July 28, 1862. MS.; also incorrectly printed in several works.

[2] This letter was first printed in the "National Intelligencer" of August 23, 1862. As originally written it contained after the words, "the Union as it was," the phrase, "Broken eggs can never be mended, and the longer the breaking proceeds the more will be broken," which "was erased, with some reluctance, by the President, on the representation, made to him by the editors, that it seemed somewhat exceptionable, on rhetorical grounds, in a paper of such dignity." [Welling in "North American Review," February, 1880, p. 168.]

and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views. I have here stated my purpose according to my view of official duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free.

Yours, A. LINCOLN.

When Mr. Lincoln wrote the foregoing letter the defeat of General Pope at the second battle of Bull Run had not yet taken place; on the contrary, every probability pointed to an easy victory for the Union troops in the battle which was plainly seen to be impending. We may therefore infer that he hoped soon to be able to supplement the above declarations by issuing his postponed proclamation, which would give the country knowledge of his final designs respecting the slavery question. But instead of the expected victory came a sad and demoralizing defeat, which prolonged, instead of shortening, the anxiety and uncertainty hanging over the intentions of the Administration. Under this enforced necessity for further postponement of his fixed purpose, in addition to his many other perplexities, the President grew sensitive and even irritable upon this point. He was by nature so frank and direct, he was so conscientious in all his official responsibilities, that he made the complaints and implied reproaches of even his humblest petitioner his own. The severe impartiality of his self-judgment sometimes became almost a feeling of self-accusation, from which he relieved himself only by a most searching analysis and review of his own motives in self-justification. In the period under review this state of feeling was several times manifested. Individuals and delegations came to him to urge one side or the other of a decision, which, though already made in his own mind, forced upon him a re-examination of its justness and its possibilities for good or evil. Imperceptibly these mental processes became a species of self-torment, and well-meaning inquirers or advisers affected his overstrung nerves like so many persecuting inquisitors. A phlegmatic nature would have turned them away in sullen silence, or at most with an evasive commonplace. But Lincoln felt himself under compulsion, which he could not resist, to state somewhat precisely the difficulties and perplexities under which he was acting, or, rather, apparently refusing to act; and in such statements his public argument, upon hypothesis assumed for illustration, was liable to outrun his private conclusions upon facts which had controlled his judgment.

It is in the light of this mental condition that we must judge the well-known reply made by him on the 13th of September to a deputation from the religious denominations of Chicago requesting him to issue at once a proclamation of universal emancipation. He said:

The subject presented in the memorial is one upon which I have thought much for weeks past, and I may even say for months. I am approached with the most opposite opinions and advice, and that by religious men, who are equally certain that they represent the Divine will. I am sure that either the one or the other class is mistaken in that belief, and perhaps in some respects both. I hope it will not be irreverent for me to say that if it is probable that God would reveal his will to others, on a point so connected with my duty, it might be supposed he would reveal it directly to me; for, unless I am more deceived in myself than I often am, it is my earnest desire to know the will of Providence in this matter. And if I can learn what it is, I will do it. These are not, however, the days of miracles, and I suppose it will be granted that I am not to expect a direct revelation. I must study the plain physical facts of the case, ascertain what is possible, and learn what appears to be wise and right. . . . What good would a proclamation of emancipation from me do, especially as we are now situated? I do not want to issue a document that the whole world will see must necessarily be inoperative, like the Pope's bull against the comet. Would my word free the slaves, when I cannot even enforce the Constitution in the rebel States? Is there a single court, or magistrate, or individual that would be influenced by it there? And what reason is there to think it would have any greater effect upon the slaves than the late law of Congress, which I approved, and which offers protection and freedom to the slaves of rebel masters who come within our lines? Yet I cannot learn that that law has caused a single slave to come over to us. . . . Now, then, tell me, if you please, what possible result of good would follow the issuing of such a proclamation as you desire? Understand, I raise no objections against it on legal or constitutional grounds, for, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, in time of war I suppose I have a right to take any measure which may best subdue the enemy; nor do I urge objections of a moral nature, in view of possible consequences of insurrection and massacre at the South. I view this matter as a practical war measure, to be decided on according to the advantages or disadvantages it may offer to the suppression of the rebellion. . . . Do not misunderstand me because I have mentioned these objections. They indicate the difficulties that have thus far prevented my action in some such way as you desire. I have not decided against a proclamation of liberty to the slaves, but hold the matter under advisement. And I can assure you that the subject is on my mind, by day and night, more than any other. Whatever shall appear to be God's will, I will do. I trust that in the freedom with which I have canvassed your views I have not in any respect injured your feelings.

This interview of the Chicago delegation with the President lasted more than an hour, during which a long memorial was read, interspersed with much discursive conversation and interchange of questions and replies. The report of his remarks, which was written out and published by the delegation after their return home, is not a verbatim reproduction, but merely a

condensed abstract of what was said on the occasion.[1] Much adverse criticism has been indulged in because of his assumed declaration that an emancipation proclamation would be as inoperative as "the Pope's bull against the comet," and that he nevertheless issued so preposterous a document within two weeks after the interview. The error lies in the assumption that his words were literally reported. To measure rightly his utterance as a whole, the conditions under which the interview occurred must continually be kept in mind. The Administration and the country were still in the shadow of the great disasters of the Peninsula and of the second Bull Run. With corresponding elation the rebels had taken the aggressive and crossed the Potomac to invade Maryland. A new campaign was opening, and a new battle-cloud was gathering. Whether victory or fresh defeat was enfolded in its gloom was a question of uncertainty and of fearful anxiety to the President, straining his thought and imagination to an abnormal and almost unendurable tension. It was at such a moment that the Chicago delegation had appeared with a repetition of a request which seemed to him inopportune. Habitually open and patient to every appeal, he was nevertheless becoming restive under the unremitting and unreasoning pressure regarding this single point. Could no one exercise patience but himself? Could antislavery people not realize and rest content with the undreamed-of progress their cause had already made — slavery abolished in the District of Columbia, the Territories restored to freedom, almost wholesale emancipation provided through the Confiscation Act? Had he not aided these measures, signed these laws, ordered their enforcement, and was he not, day and night, laboring to secure compensated emancipation in the border States? Had he not the very proclamation they sought lying written in his desk, waiting only the favorable moment when he might announce it? Why must they push him to the wall, and compel him to an avowal which might blight the ripening public sentiment and imperil the desired consummation? We may infer that with some such feelings he listened to the dogmatic memorial of the delegation; for his whole answer is in the nature of a friendly protest and polite rebuke against their impolitic urgency, and the impressive rhetorical figure he employs was not intended to foreshadow his decision, but to illustrate the absurdity of attempting to pluck the fruit before it was ripe. The great pith and point of the interview is his strong and unqualified declaration that he held the subject under advisement, and that he regarded his military authority clear and ample. He said:

> Understand, I raise no objections against it on legal or constitutional grounds, for, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, in time of war I suppose I have a right to take any measure which may best subdue the enemy.

Three days after this interview the great battle of Antietam was begun, which resulted in a victory for the Union forces. The events of war had abruptly changed political conditions, and the President seized the earliest possible opportunity to announce the policy which he had decided upon exactly two months before. His manner and language on this momentous occasion have been minutely recorded in the diaries of two members of the Cabinet, and liberal quotations from both will form the most valuable historical presentation of the event that can be made. The diary of Secretary Chase reads as follows:

> MONDAY, Sept. 22, 1862.
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> To Department about 9. State Department messenger came with notice to heads of Departments to meet at 12. Received sundry callers. Went to the White House. All the members of the Cabinet were in attendance. There was some general talk, and the President mentioned that Artemus Ward had sent him his book. Proposed to read a chapter which he thought very funny. Read it, and seemed to enjoy it very much; the heads also (except Stanton), of course. The chapter was "High-handed Outrage at Utica." The President then took a graver tone, and said, "Gentlemen, I have, as you are aware, thought a great deal about the relation of this war to slavery; and you all remember that, several weeks ago, I read to you an order I had prepared on this subject, which, on account of objections made by some of you, was not issued. Ever since then my mind has been much occupied with this subject, and I have thought, all along, that the time for acting on it might probably come. I think the time has come now. I wish it was a better time. I wish that we were in a better condition. The action of the army against the rebels has not been quite what I should have best liked. But they have been driven out of Maryland, and Pennsylvania is no longer in danger of invasion. When the rebel army was at Frederick, I determined, as soon as it should be driven out of Maryland, to issue a proclamation of emancipation, such as I thought most likely to be useful. I said nothing to any one; but I made the promise to myself, and [hesitating a little] to my Maker. The rebel army is now driven out, and I am going to fulfill that promise. I have got you together to hear what I have written down. I do not wish your advice about the main matter, for that I have determined for myself. This I say without intending anything but respect for any one of you. But I already know the views of each on this question. They have been heretofore expressed, and I have considered them as thoroughly and carefully as I can. What I have written is that which my reflections have determined me to say. If there is anything in

[1] "Chicago Tribune," Sept. 23, 1862, and "National Intelligencer," Sept. 26, 1862.

the expressions I use, or in any minor matter, which any one of you thinks had best be changed, I shall be glad to receive the suggestions. One other observation I will make. I know very well that many others might, in this matter as in others, do better than I can; and if I was satisfied that the public confidence was more fully possessed by any one of them than by me, and knew of any constitutional way in which he could be put in my place, he should have it. I would gladly yield it to him. But, though I believe that I have not so much of the confidence of the people as I had some time since, I do not know that, all things considered, any other person has more; and, however this may be, there is no way in which I can have any other man put where I am. I am here. I must do the best I can, and bear the responsibility of taking the course which I feel I ought to take."[1]

The foregoing account written by Mr. Chase is fully corroborated by the following extract from the diary of Secretary Welles, in which the same event is described:

SEPTEMBER 22.

A special Cabinet meeting. The subject was the proclamation for emancipating the slaves, after a certain date, in States that shall then be in rebellion. For several weeks the subject has been suspended, but the President says never lost sight of. When it was submitted, and now in taking up the proclamation, the President stated that the question was finally decided,— the act and the consequences were his,— but that he felt it due to us to make us acquainted with the fact and to invite criticisms on the paper which he had prepared. There were, he had found, not unexpectedly, some differences in the Cabinet; but he had, after ascertaining in his own way the views of each and all, individually and collectively, formed his own conclusions and made his own decisions. In the course of the discussion on this paper, which was long, earnest, and, on the general principle involved, harmonious, he remarked that he had made a vow — a covenant — that if God gave us the victory in the approaching battle he would consider it an indication of Divine will, and that it was duty to move forward in the cause of emancipation. It might be thought strange, he said, that he had in this way submitted the disposal of matters when the way was not clear to his mind what he should do. God had decided this question in favor of the slaves. He was satisfied it was right — was confirmed and strengthened in his action by the vow and results. His mind was fixed, his decision made, but he wished his paper announcing his course as correct in terms as it could be made without any change in his determination.[2]

In addition to its record of the President's language, the diary of Secretary Chase proceeds with the following account of what was said by several members of the Cabinet:

The President then proceeded to read his Emancipation Proclamation, making remarks on the several parts as he went on, and showing that he had fully considered the whole subject, in all the lights under which it had been presented to him. After he had closed, Governor Seward said: "The general question having been decided, nothing can be said farther about that. Would it not, however, make the proclamation more clear and decided to leave out all reference to the act being sustained during the incumbency of the present President; and not merely say that the Government 'recognizes,' but that it will maintain, the freedom it proclaims?" I followed, saying: "What you have said, Mr. President, fully satisfies me that you have given to every proposition which has been made a kind and candid consideration. And you have now expressed the conclusion to which you have arrived clearly and distinctly. This it was your right, and, under your oath of office, your duty, to do. The proclamation does not, indeed, mark out exactly the course I would myself prefer. But I am ready to take it just as it is written, and to stand by it with all my heart. I think, however, the suggestions of Governor Seward very judicious, and shall be glad to have them adopted." The President then asked us severally our opinions as to the modification proposed, saying that he did not care much about the phrases he had used. Every one favored the modification, and it was adopted. Governor Seward then proposed that in the passage relating to colonization some language should be introduced to show that the colonization proposed was to be only with the consent of the colonists and the consent of the States in which colonies might be attempted. This, too, was agreed to, and no other modification was proposed. Mr. Blair then said that, the question having been decided, he would make no objection to issuing the proclamation; but he would ask to have his paper, presented some days since, against the policy, filed with the proclamation.[3] The President consented to this readily. And then Mr. Blair went on to say that he was afraid of the influence of the proclamation on the border States and on the army, and stated, at some length, the grounds of his apprehensions. He disclaimed most expressly, however, all objection to emancipation *per se*, saying he had always been personally in favor of it — always ready for immediate emancipation in the midst of slave States, rather than submit to the perpetuation of the system.[4]

The statement of Mr. Welles which relates the Cabinet proceedings is as follows:

All listened with profound attention to the reading, and it was, I believe, assented to by every member. Mr. Bates repeated the opinions he had previously expressed in regard to the deportation of the colored race. Mr. Seward proposed two slight verbal alterations, which were adopted. A general discussion then took place, covering the whole ground — the constitutional question, the war

1 Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," pp. 481, 482.

2 Welles, Diary. Unpublished MS.

3 Hay's Diary (MS.) contains the following record: "September 23, 1862. The President rewrote the proclamation on Sunday morning carefully. He called the Cabinet together on Monday, made a little talk to them, and read the momentous document. Mr. Blair and Mr. Bates made slight objections; otherwise the Cabinet was unanimous. The next day Mr. Blair, who had promised to file his objections, sent a note stating that as they referred only to the time of the act, he would not file them, lest they should be subject to misconstruction."

4 Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 482.

power, the expediency and the effect of the movement. After the matter had been very fully debated, Mr. Stanton made a very emphatic speech sustaining the measure, and in closing said the act was so important, and involved consequences so vast, that he hoped each member would give distinctly and unequivocally his own individual opinion, whatever that opinion might be. Two gentlemen, he thought, had not been sufficiently explicit, although they had discussed the question freely, and it was understood that they concurred in the measure. He referred, he said, to the Secretary of the Treasury and (hesitating a moment) the Secretary of the Navy. It was understood, I believe, by all present that he had allusion to another member, with whom he was not in full accord. Mr. Chase admitted that the subject had come upon him unexpectedly and with some surprise. It was going a step further than he had ever proposed, but he was prepared to accept and support it. He was glad the President had made this advance, which he should sustain from his heart, and he proceeded to make an able impromptu argument in its favor. I stated that the President did not misunderstand my position, nor any other member; that I assented most unequivocally to the measure as a war necessity, and had acted upon it. Mr. Blair took occasion to say that he was an emancipationist from principle; that he had for years, here and in Missouri, where he formerly resided, openly advocated it; but he had doubts of the expediency of this executive action at this particular juncture. We ought not, he thought, to put in jeopardy the patriotic element in the border States, already severely tried. This proclamation would, as soon as it reached them, be likely to carry over those States to the secessionists. There were also party men in the free States who were striving to revive old party lines and distinctions, into whose hand we were putting a club to be used against us. The measure he approved, but the time was inopportune. He should wish, therefore, to file his objections. This, the President said, Mr. Blair could do. He had, however, considered the danger to be apprehended from the first objection mentioned, which was undoubtedly serious, but the difficulty was as great not to act as to act. There were two sides to that question. For months he had labored to get those States to move in this matter, convinced in his own mind that it was their true interest to do so, but his labors were vain. We must make the forward movement. They would acquiesce, if not immediately, soon; for they must be satisfied that slavery had received its death-blow from slave-owners — it could not survive the rebellion. As regarded the other objection, it had not much weight with him; their clubs would be used against us take what course we might.[1]

The Cabinet discussion of the proclamation being completed, Mr. Seward carried the document with him to the State Department, where the formal phraseology of attestation and the great seal were added. The President signed it the same afternoon, and it was published in full by the leading newspapers of the country on the morning of September 23d. As elsewhere, the reading of the official announcement created a profound interest in Washington, and a serenade was organized the next evening, which came to the Executive Mansion and called on the President for a speech. His reference to the great event was very brief. He said:

> I appear before you to do little more than acknowledge the courtesy you pay me, and to thank you for it. I have not been distinctly informed why it is that on this occasion you appear to do me this honor, though I suppose it is because of the proclamation. What I did, I did after a very full deliberation, and under a very heavy and solemn sense of responsibility. I can only trust in God I have made no mistake. I shall make no attempt on this occasion to sustain what I have done or said by any comment. It is now for the country and the world to pass judgment, and maybe take action upon it.

Two days after the proclamation was issued a number of the governors of loyal States met for conference at Altoona, Pennsylvania; and it was charged at the time that this occurrence had some occult relation to the President's action. There was no truth whatever in the allegation. It was directly contradicted by the President himself. He said to the Hon. George S. Boutwell, who mentioned the rumor to him a few weeks after the occurrence:

> I never thought of the meeting of the governors. The truth is just this: When Lee came over the river, I made a resolution that if McClellan drove him back I would send the proclamation after him. The battle of Antietam was fought Wednesday, and until Saturday I could not find out whether we had gained a victory or lost a battle. It was then too late to issue the proclamation that day; and the fact is I fixed it up a little Sunday, and Monday I let them have it.[2]

The collateral evidence is also conclusive on this point. The Altoona meeting originated with Governor Curtin of Pennsylvania, who, warned that Lee's army was about to cross the Potomac, was with all diligence preparing his State to resist the expected invasion. On the 6th of September he telegraphed to the governor of Massachusetts and others:

> In the present emergency would it not be well that the loyal governors should meet at some point in the border States to take measures for the more active support of the Government?

Receiving favorable replies, the governors of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia united in a joint invitation, under date of September 14, for such a meeting to be held at Altoona on the 24th. The object was simply to consult on the best means of common

[1] Welles in "Galaxy," December, 1862, pp. 846, 847.

[2] Boutwell, "The Lawyer, the Statesman, and the Soldier," pp. 116, 117.

defense and the vigorous prosecution of the war. There was no design to organize any pressure upon the President, either about the question of slavery or about the removal of McClellan from command, and the President neither anticipated nor feared any interference of this character. Several members of the body, differing in political sentiment, indignantly denied the accusation of a political plot, which, indeed, would have been impossible in a gathering of men of such strong individual traits, holding diverse views, and clothed with greatly varying interests and responsibilities.

The Proclamation of Emancipation was as great a surprise to them as to the general public, gratifying some and displeasing others. It was not strange that it should immediately engage their eager interest and call out some sort of joint response. The proclamation had been printed on the 23d; the Altoona gathering was called on the 14th and held on the 24th. Between the date of the call and the day of the meeting the military situation was altogether changed. The battle of Antietam had driven Lee's army in retreat back across the Potomac. Instead of emergency measures for defense, the assembled governors could now quietly discuss points of general and mutual interest, relating to the recruiting, organization, equipment, and transportation of troops, the granting of furloughs, and the care and removal of the sick and wounded. Their conference passed in entire harmony; and a day or two later they nearly all proceeded to Washington for a personal interview with the President and the Secretary of War. They presented a written address to the President, signed then and within a few days afterward by the governors of sixteen of the free States and the governor of West Virginia, reiterating devotion to the Union, loyalty to the Constitution and laws, and earnest support to the President in suppressing rebellion; and embracing only the single specific recommendation that a reserve army of 100,000 men ought constantly to be kept on foot, to be raised, armed, equipped, and trained at home, ready for emergencies. The written address also contained a hearty indorsement of the new emancipation policy announced in the President's proclamation. This declaration, as was to have been expected, developed the only antagonism of views which grew out of the whole transaction. The address was written at Washington, and was therefore not discussed at Altoona. Properly speaking, it was the supplementary action of only a portion of the assembled delegates. It was, however, transmitted for signature to all the loyal executives; but the governors of the States of New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri replied, that while concurring in the other declarations of the address, they declined signing it, because they dissented from that portion of it which indorsed the Proclamation of Emancipation.

Coming as it did immediately after the announcement of his new policy, President Lincoln could not but be gratified at the public declarations emanating from the Altoona meeting. On his military policy it assured him of the continuation of an individual official support. On his emancipation policy it gave him a public approval from the present official power of seventeen States, as against the dissent of only five States of the border, where indeed he had no right to expect, for the present at least, any more favorable official sentiment. Nevertheless, it did not free the experiment from uncertainty and danger. It was precisely this balance of power, political and military, wielded by these hesitating border States, which was essential to the success of the Union cause; but he had measured the probability with an acuteness of judgment and timed his proceeding with a prudence of action that merited success, and in due time triumphantly justified his faith.

Every thoughtful reader will have more than a passing curiosity to examine the exact phraseology of a document which ushered in the great political regeneration of the American people. It reads as follows:

I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America, and Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy thereof, do hereby proclaim and declare that hereafter, as heretofore, the war will be prosecuted for the object of practically restoring the constitutional relations between the United States and each of the States and the people thereof, in which States that relation is or may be suspended or disturbed. That it is my purpose, upon the next meeting of Congress, to again recommend the adoption of a practical measure, tendering pecuniary aid to the free acceptance or rejection of all the slave States, so-called, the people whereof may not then be in rebellion against the United States, and which States may then have voluntarily adopted, or thereafter may voluntarily adopt, the immediate or gradual abolishment of slavery within their respective limits; and that the effort to colonize persons of African descent, with their consent, upon this continent or elsewhere, with the previously obtained consent of the governments existing there, will be continued. That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State, or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their

actual freedom. That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States, or parts of States if any, in which the people thereof, respectively, shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall, on that day, be in good faith represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections, wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State, and the people thereof, are not then in rebellion against the United States.

Then, after reciting the language of "An act to make an additional article of war," approved March 13, 1862, and also sections 9 and 10 of the Confiscation Act, approved July 17, 1862, and enjoining their enforcement upon all persons in the military and naval service, the proclamation concludes:

And I do hereby enjoin upon and order all persons engaged in the military and naval service of the United States to observe, obey, and enforce, within their respective spheres of service, the acts and sections above recited. And the Executive will, in due time, recommend that all citizens of the United States, who shall have remained loyal thereto throughout the rebellion, shall, upon the restoration of the constitutional relations between the United States and the people, if that relation shall have been suspended or disturbed, be compensated for all losses by acts of the United States, including the loss of slaves.

A careful reading and analysis of the document shows it to have contained four leading propositions: (1.) A renewal of the plan of compensated abolishment. (2.) A continuance of the effort at voluntary colonization. (3.) The announcement of peremptory military emancipation of all slaves in States in rebellion at the expiration of the warning notice. (4.) A promise to recommend ultimate compensation to loyal owners.

The political test of the experiment of military emancipation thus announced by the President came almost immediately in the autumn elections for State officers and State legislatures, and especially for representatives to the thirty-eighth Congress. The decided failure of McClellan's Richmond campaign and the inaction of the Western army had already produced much popular discontent, which was only partly relieved by the victory of Antietam. The canvass had been inaugurated by the Democratic party with violent protests against the antislavery legislation of Congress, and it now added the loud outcry that the Administration had changed the war for the Union to a war for abolition. The party conflict became active and bitter, and the Democrats, having all the advantage of an aggressive issue, made great popular gains, not only throughout the middle belt of States, but in New York, where they elected their governor, thus gaining control of the executive machinery, which greatly embarrassed the Administration in its later measures to maintain the army. The number of Democrats in the House of Representatives was increased from forty-four to seventy-five, and the reaction threatened for a time to deprive Mr. Lincoln of the support of the House.

But against this temporary adverse political current the leaders and the bulk of the Republican party followed Mr. Lincoln with loyal adhesion, accepting and defending his emancipation policy with earnestness and enthusiasm. In his annual message of December 1, 1862, the President did not discuss his Emancipation Proclamation, but renewed and made an elaborate argument to recommend his plan of compensated abolishment, "not in exclusion of, but additional to, all others for restoring and preserving the national authority throughout the Union." Meanwhile the Democratic minority in the House, joined by the pro-slavery conservatives from the border slave-States, lost no opportunity to oppose emancipation in every form. On the 11th of December Mr. Yeaman of Kentucky offered resolutions declaring the President's proclamation unwarranted by the Constitution and a useless and dangerous war measure. But these propositions were only supported by a vote of forty-seven, while they were promptly laid on the table by a vote of ninety-five members. The Republicans were unwilling to remain in this attitude of giving emancipation a merely negative support. A few days later (December 15), Mr. S. C. Fessenden of Maine put the identical phraseology in an affirmative form, and by a test vote of seventy-eight to fifty-two the House resolved:

That the proclamation of the President of the United States, of the date of 22d September, 1862, is warranted by the Constitution, and that the policy of emancipation, as indicated in that proclamation, is well adapted to hasten the restoration of peace, was well chosen as a war measure, and is an exercise of power with proper regard for the rights of the States and the perpetuity of free government.

With the proclamation thus heartily indorsed by nearly every free State governor and nearly two-thirds of the loyal representatives, Mr. Lincoln, who had accurately foreseen the dangers as well as the benefits of the critical step he had taken, could well afford to wait for the full tide of approval, for which he looked with confidence and which came to him from that time onward with steadiness and ever-growing volume, both from the armies in the field and the people in their homes throughout the loyal North.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A HISTORY.[1]

THE REMOVAL OF McCLELLAN.—FINANCIAL MEASURES.—SEWARD AND CHASE.

BY JOHN G. NICOLAY AND JOHN HAY, PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO THE PRESIDENT.

THE latter part of September wore away in resting the exhausted Army of the Potomac, and beginning anew the endless work of equipment and supply—work which from the nature of the case can never be finished in an army of 200,000 men, any more than in a city of the same size. But this was a lesson which McClellan appeared never able to learn. So long as a single brigade commander complained that some of his men needed new shoes it seemed impossible for McClellan to undertake active operations until that special want was supplied. When that was done some company of cavalry was short a few horses, and the vicious circle of importunate demand and slow supply continued. On the 23d of September, General McClellan discovered signs of heavy reënforcements moving towards the enemy from Winchester and Charlestown. The fact of the enemy's remaining so long in his front, instead of appearing to him as a renewed opportunity, only excited in him the apprehension that he would be again attacked. He therefore set up a new clamor for reënforcements. "A defeat at this juncture would be ruinous to our cause. . . General Sumner with his corps and Williams's (Banks's) occupy Harper's Ferry and the surrounding heights. I think," is the doleful plaint with which the dispatch closes, "he will be able to hold his position till reënforcements arrive." Four days afterwards he writes again in the same strain:

> This army is not now in condition to undertake another campaign. . . My present purpose is to hold the army about as it is now, rendering Harper's Ferry secure and watching the river closely, intending to attack the enemy should he attempt to cross to this side.

He is full of apprehension in regard to an attack upon Maryland, and prays that the river may rise so that the enemy may not cross.

The President, sick at heart at this exasperating delay, resolved at the end of the month to make a visit to McClellan's camp to see if in a personal interview he could not inspire him with some sense of the necessity for action. The morning report of the 30th of September showed the enormous aggregate of the Army of the Potomac, present and absent, including Banks's command in Washington, as 303,959. Of this number over 100,000 were absent, 28,000 on special duty, and 73,000 present for duty in Banks's command, leaving 100,000 present for duty under McClellan's immediate command. This vast multitude in arms was visited by the President in the first days of October. So far as he could see, it was a great army ready for any work that could be asked of it. During all his visit he urged with as much energy as was consistent with his habitual courtesy the necessity for an immediate employment of this force.[2] McClellan met all his suggestions and entreaties with an amiable inertia, which deeply discouraged the President. After a day and a night spent in such an interchange of views the President left his tent early in the morning and walked with a friend[3] to an eminence which commanded a view of a great part of the camp. For miles beneath them, glistening in the rising sun, spread the white tents of the mighty hosts. The President gazed for a while in silence upon the scene, then turned to his friend and said: "Do you know what that is?" He answered in some astonishment, "It is the Army of the Potomac." "So it is called," responded the President; "but that is a mistake: it is only McClellan's body-guard." He went back to Washington taking little comfort from his visit; and after a few days of painful deliberation, getting no news of any movement, he sent McClellan the following positive instructions:

> WASHINGTON, D. C., October 6, 1862.
>
> MAJOR-GENERAL McCLELLAN: I am instructed to telegraph you as follows: The President directs that you cross the Potomac and give battle to the enemy

[2] In his memoirs McClellan tries to create the impression that the President was satisfied with his delay at this time; but his private letters printed in the same volume leave no doubt of the contrary. He says, referring to the President's visit, October 2, "His ostensible purpose is to see the troops and the battle-field; I incline to think that the real purpose of his visit is to push me into a premature advance into Virginia."

[3] Hon. O. M. Hatch of Illinois, from whom we have this story.

or drive him South. Your army must move now while the roads are good. If you cross the river between the enemy and Washington and cover the latter by your operations, you can be reënforced by 30,000 men. If you move up the valley of the Shenandoah, not more than 12,000 or 15,000 can be sent to you. The President advises the interior line, between Washington and the enemy, but does not order it. He is very desirous that your army move as soon as possible. You will immediately report what line you adopt and when you intend to cross the river; also to what point the reënforcements are to be sent. It is necessary that the plan of your operations be positively determined on before orders are given for building bridges and repairing railroads. I am directed to add that the Secretary of War and the General-in-Chief fully concur with the President in these instructions.

H. W. HALLECK, *General-in-Chief.*

These orders were emphasized a few days later by a repetition of the same stinging insult which Lee had once before inflicted upon McClellan on the Peninsula. Stuart's cavalry crossed the Potomac, rode entirely around the Union army, recrossed the river lower down, and joined Lee again without damage. McClellan seems to have felt no mortification from this disgraceful occurrence, which he used merely as a pretext for new complaints against the Government. He seemed to think that he had presented a satisfactory excuse for his inefficiency when he reported to Halleck that his cavalry had "marched 78 miles in 24 hours while Stuart's was marching 90." He pretended that he had at the time only a thousand cavalry. This led to a remarkable correspondence[1] between him and the Government, which shows the waste and destruction of military material under McClellan. By the reports from the Quartermaster-General's office, there were sent to the Army of the Potomac, during the six weeks ending the 14th of October, 10,254 horses and a very large number of mules. "The cost of the horses issued within the last six weeks to the Army of the Potomac," says General Meigs, "is probably not less than $1,200,000." We may well ask in the words used by the Quartermaster-General in another place: Is there an instance on record of such a drain and destruction of horses "in a country not a desert"? Day after day the tedious controversy went on. This frightful waste of horses was turned by McClellan, as he turned everything, into a subject of reproach against the Government. To one of his complaining dispatches the President sent this sharp rejoinder: "Will you pardon me for asking what the horses of your army have done since the battle of Antietam that fatigues anything?" And again: "Stuart's cavalry outmarched ours, having certainly done more marked service on the Peninsula and everywhere since." These dispatches elicited only new complaints, vindications, and explanations.

It was not alone the pretended lack of horses which kept him idle. In his dispatches to Washington he continually complained — and the complaint was echoed in the correspondence of his satellites and by his adherents in the press — that the army was unable to improve the fine weather on account of the deficiency of all manner of supplies.[2] The Secretary of War, thinking it necessary at last to take notice of this widespread rumor, addressed[1] a letter to the General-in-Chief demanding a report upon the subject. General Halleck reported that on several occasions where General McClellan had telegraphed that his army was deficient in certain supplies it was ascertained that in every instance the requisition had been immediately filled, except in one, where the Quartermaster-General was forced to send to Philadelphia for the articles needed. He reported that there had been no neglect or delay in issuing all the supplies asked for, and added his belief "that no armies in the world, while in campaign, have been more promptly or better supplied than ours." The General-in-Chief further reported that there had been no such want of supplies as to prevent General McClellan's compliance with the orders, issued four weeks before, to advance against the enemy; that "had he moved to the south side of the Potomac he could have received his supplies almost as readily as by remaining inactive on the north side." He then goes at some length into a detailed and categorical contradiction of General McClellan's complaining dispatches. But we need not go outside of the General's own staff for a direct denial of his accusations. General Ingalls, the Chief Quartermaster of the Army of the Potomac, makes this just and sensible statement in a letter to the Quartermaster-General dated the 26th of October:

> I have seen no real suffering for want of clothing, and do not believe there has been any only where it can be laid directly to the charge of regimental and brigade commanders and their quartermasters, and I have labored, I hope with some effect, in trying to instruct them. I have frequently remarked that an army will never move if it waits until all the different commanders report that they are ready and want no more supplies. It has been my pride

[1] War Records.

[2] This mania of General McClellan's for providing camp material sometimes assumed an almost ludicrous form. It suddenly occurred to him on the 7th of October to telegraph to the Quartermaster-General asking how long it would take to give him three or four thousand hospital tents. Meigs answered that a sufficient supply had already been sent him, and that to provide the additional number he spoke of would take a long time and half a million of dollars.

to know the fact that no army was ever more perfectly supplied than this has been, as a general rule.

The President, weary of the controversy, at last replies:

Most certainly I intend no injustice to any, and if I have done any I deeply regret it. To be told, after more than five weeks' total inaction of the army, and during which period we have sent to the army every fresh horse we possibly could, amounting in the whole to 7,918,[1] that the cavalry horses were too much fatigued to move, presents a very cheerless, almost hopeless, prospect for the future, and it may have forced something of impatience in my dispatch. If not recruited and rested then, when could they ever be?

General Halleck, in a letter on the 7th of October, had urged McClellan to follow and seek to punish the enemy. He says:

There is a decided want of legs in our troops. They have too much immobility, and we must try to remedy the defect. A reduction of baggage and baggage trains will effect something, but the real difficulty is, they are not sufficiently exercised in marching; they lie still in camp too long. After a hard march one day is time enough to rest. Lying still beyond that time does not rest the men.[2]

The President's proclamation of emancipation had been promulgated to the army in general orders on the 24th of September. It will be remembered that General McClellan, in his manifesto from Harrison's Landing, had admonished the President against any such action. His subsequent negotiations with the Democratic politicians in the North had not tended to make him any more favorably disposed towards such radical action. His first impulse was to range himself openly against the proclamation. We are informed by General W. F. Smith that McClellan prepared a protest against it, which he read to some of his intimate friends in the army. The advice of Smith, and perhaps of others, induced him not to commit so fatal a breach of discipline. For a moment he thought of throwing up his commission. In a private letter of September 25 he said:

The President's late proclamation, the continuation of Stanton and Halleck in office, render it almost impossible for me to retain my commission and self-respect at the same time.[3]

He could not, however, pass over with entire silence an order of such momentous importance; and so after two weeks of meditation, having heard from his friends in New York,[4] he issued on the 7th of October a singular document calling the attention of the officers and soldiers of his army to the President's proclamation. He made absolutely no reference to the proclamation itself. He used it, as he says, simply as an opportunity for "defining the relations borne by all persons in the military service towards the civil authorities," a relation which most of his army understood already at least as well as himself. In a few commonplace phrases he restates the political axiom that the civil authority is paramount in our government and that the military is subordinate to it. He therefore deprecated any intemperate discussion of "public measures determined upon and declared by the Government" "as tending to impair and destroy the efficiency of troops"; and significantly adds, "The remedy for political errors, if any are committed, is to be found only in the action of the people at the polls." There is no reason to believe that this order of General McClellan's was issued with any but the best intentions. He believed, and he thought the army believed, that the President's antislavery policy was ill-advised and might prove disastrous. He therefore issued this order commanding his soldiers to be moderate in their criticisms and condemnations of the President, and to leave to the people at the polls the work of correcting or punishing him. When the troops of the Army of the Potomac had an opportunity of expressing at the polls their sense of the political question at issue between Lincoln and McClellan, the latter had occasion to discover that there was a difference between the sentiment of staff headquarters and the sentiment of the rank and file.

The President's peremptory order to move, which we have mentioned as having been issued on the 6th of October, having produced no effect, he wrote to General McClellan on the 13th of the month a letter so important in its substance and in its relations to subsequent events that it must be printed entire. Having already given the general his orders and told him what to do, he now not only tells him how to do it, but furnishes him unanswerable reasons why it should be done.

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON, D. C., October 13, 1862.

MAJOR-GENERAL MCCLELLAN.

MY DEAR SIR: You remember my speaking to you of what I called your over-cautiousness. Are you not over-cautious when you assume that you cannot do what the enemy is constantly doing? Should you not claim to be at least his equal in prowess, and act upon the claim? As I understand, you telegraphed General Halleck that you cannot subsist your army at Winchester unless the railroad from Harper's Ferry to that point be put in

1 It was really many more than this.
2 War Records.
3 "McClellan's Own Story," p. 615.
4 He wrote, October 5: "Mr. Aspinwall [then at McClellan's camp] is decidedly of the opinion that it is my duty to submit to the President's proclamation." ["McClellan's Own Story," p. 655.]

working order. But the enemy does now subsist his army at Winchester, at a distance nearly twice as great from railroad transportation as you would have to do, without the railroad last named. He now wagons from Culpeper Court House, which is just about twice as far as you would have to do from Harper's Ferry. He is certainly not more than half as well provided with wagons as you are. I certainly should be pleased for you to have the advantage of the railroad from Harper's Ferry to Winchester, but it wastes all the remainder of autumn to give it to you, and in fact ignores the question of time, which can not and must not be ignored. Again, one of the standard maxims of war, as you know, is to "operate upon the enemy's communications as much as possible without exposing your own." You seem to act as if this applies against you, but cannot apply in your favor. Change positions with the enemy, and think you not he would break your communication with Richmond within the next twenty-four hours? You dread his going into Pennsylvania, but if he does so in full force, he gives up his communications to you absolutely, and you have nothing to do but to follow and ruin him. If he does so with less than full force, fall upon and beat what is left behind all the easier. Exclusive of the water line, you are now nearer Richmond than the enemy is by the route that you can and he must take. Why can you not reach there before him, unless you admit that he is more than your equal on a march? His route is the arc of a circle, while yours is the chord. The roads are as good on yours as on his. You know I desired, but did not order, you to cross the Potomac below instead of above the Shenandoah and Blue Ridge. My idea was that this would at once menace the enemy's communications, which I would seize if he would permit.

If he should move northward I would follow him closely, holding his communications. If he should prevent our seizing his communications and move toward Richmond, I would press closely to him, fight him, if a favorable opportunity should present; and at least try to beat him to Richmond on the inside track. I say "try"; if we never try, we shall never succeed. If he makes a stand at Winchester, moving neither north nor south, I would fight him there, on the idea that if we cannot beat him when he bears the wastage of coming to us, we never can when we bear the wastage of going to him. This proposition is a simple truth, and is too important to be lost sight of for a moment. In coming to us he tenders us an advantage which we should not waive. We should not so operate as to merely drive him away. As we must beat him somewhere or fail finally, we can do it, if at all, easier near to us than far away. If we cannot beat the enemy where he now is, we never can, he again being within the intrenchments of Richmond.

Recurring to the idea of going to Richmond on the inside track, the facility of supplying from the side away from the enemy is remarkable—as it were, by the different spokes of a wheel extending from the hub toward the rim, and this, whether you move directly by the chord or on the inside arc, hugging the Blue Ridge more closely. The chord-line, as you see, carries you by Aldie, Hay Market, and Fredericksburg; and you see how turnpikes, railroads, and finally the Potomac, by Aquia Creek, meet you at all points from Washington; the same, only the lines lengthened a little, if you press closer to the Blue Ridge part of the way.

The gaps through the Blue Ridge I understand to be about the following distances from Harper's Ferry, to wit: Vestal's, 5 miles; Gregory's, 13; Snicker's, 18; Ashby's, 28; Manassas, 38; Chester, 45; and Thornton's, 53. I should think it preferable to take the route nearest the enemy, disabling him to make an important move without your knowledge, and compelling him to keep his forces together for dread of you. The gaps would enable you to attack, if you should wish. For a great part of the way you would be practically between the enemy and both Washington and Richmond, enabling us to spare you the greatest number of troops from here. When at length running for Richmond ahead of him enables him to move this way, if he does so, turn and attack him in the rear. But I think he should be engaged long before such point is reached. It is all easy if our troops march as well as the enemy, and it is unmanly to say they cannot do it. This letter is in no sense an order.

Yours truly, A. LINCOLN.

In the absence of any definite plan or purpose of his own, General McClellan accepted this plan of the President's, giving in his report a characteristic reason, that "it would secure him the largest accession of force." But even after he adopted this decision the usual delays supervened; and on the 21st, after describing the wretched condition of his cavalry, he asked whether the President desired him "to march on the enemy at once or to await the reception of new horses," to which, on the same day, the President directed the General-in-Chief to send the following reply:

Your telegram of 12 M. has been submitted to the President. He directs me to say that he has no change to make in his order of the 6th instant. If you have not been and are not now in condition to obey it, you will be able to show such want of ability. The President does not expect impossibilities, but he is very anxious that all this good weather should not be wasted in inactivity. Telegraph when you will move and on what lines you propose to march.

With the exercise of a very little sagacity General McClellan should have discovered from the tone of this dispatch that the President's mood was taking on a certain tinge of austerity. Nevertheless he continued his preparations at perfect leisure, and four days afterwards he sent a long letter asking for definite instructions in regard to the details of guards to be left on the upper Potomac; to which he received a reply saying that "the Government had intrusted him with defeating and driving back the rebel army in his front," and directing him to use his own discretion as to the matters in question. As General McClellan in his dispatch had referred with some apprehension to the probable march of Bragg's army

eastward, General Halleck concluded his answer with this significant intimation: "You are within twenty miles of Lee, while Bragg is distant about four hundred miles."

He finally got his army across the Potomac on the 1st of November. It had begun crossing on the 26th of October, and as the several detachments arrived in Virginia, they were slowly distributed on the eastern slope of the Blue Ridge under the vigilant and now distrustful eye of the President.

There is no doubt that the President's regard and confidence, which had withstood so much from General McClellan, was now giving way. The President had resisted in his behalf, for more than a year, the earnest and bitter opposition of the most powerful and trusted friends of the Administration. McClellan had hardly a supporter left among the Republican senators, and few among the most prominent members of the majority in the House of Representatives. In the Cabinet there was the same unanimous hostility to the young general. In the meeting of the 2d of September, when the President announced that he had placed McClellan in command of the forces in Washington, he was met by an outbreak of protest and criticism from the leading members of the Government which might well have shaken the nerves of any ruler. But the President stood manfully by his action.[1] He admitted the infirmities of McClellan, his lack of energy and initiative; but for this exigency he considered him the best man in the service, and the country must have the benefit of his talents, although he had behaved badly. We need not refer again to the magnanimity with which the President had overlooked the insolent dispatches of General McClellan from Savage's Station and Harrison's Landing. He closed his ears persistently during all the months of the winter and spring to the stories which came to him from every quarter in regard to the tone of factious hostility to himself which prevailed at McClellan's headquarters. But these stories increased to such an extent during the summer and autumn that even in his mind, so slow to believe evil, they occasioned some trouble. Soon after the battle of Antietam an incident came to his hearing of which he felt himself obliged to take notice. Major John J. Key, brother to Colonel Thomas M. Key, of McClellan's staff, was reported to have said, in reply to the question, put by a brother officer, "Why was not the rebel army bagged immediately after the battle near Sharpsburg?" "That is not the game. The object is that neither army shall get much advantage of the other; that both shall be kept in the field till they are exhausted, when we will make a compromise and save slavery." The President sent an aide-de-camp to Major Key to inform him of this grave charge, and to invite him to disprove it within twenty-four hours. A few minutes after this notice was sent, the Major appeared at the Executive Mansion in company with Major Turner, the officer to whom the remark had been made. A trial, as prompt as those of St. Louis dispensing justice under the oak at Vincennes, then took place. The President was judge and jury, attorney for the prosecution and for the defense, and he added to these functions that of clerk of the court, and made a record of the proceedings with his own hand, which we copy from his manuscript:

> At about 11 o'clock A. M., September 27, 1862, Major Key and Major Turner appear before me. Major Turner says: "As I remember it, the conversation was, I asked the question why we did not bag them after the battle at Sharpsburg. Major Key's reply was, 'That was not the game: we should tire the rebels out and ourselves; that that was the only way the Union could be preserved, we come together fraternally, and slavery be saved.'" On cross-examination Major Turner says he has frequently heard Major Key converse in regard to the present trouble, and never heard him utter a sentiment unfavorable to the maintenance of the Union. He has never uttered anything which he, Major T., would call disloyalty. The particular conversation detailed was a private one.

Upon the reverse of this record the President made the following indorsement:

> In my view it is wholly inadmissible for any gentleman holding a military commission from the United States to utter such sentiments as Major Key is within proved to have done. Therefore let Major John J. Key be forthwith dismissed from the military service of the United States.

The President's memorandum continues:

> At the interview of Major Key and Major Turner with the President, Major Key did not attempt to controvert the statement of Major Turner, but simply insisted and tried to prove that he was true to the Union. The substance of the President's reply was that if there was a game even among Union men to have our army not take any advantage of the enemy when it could, it was his object to break up that game.

Speaking of the matter afterwards the President said, "I dismissed Major Key because I thought his silly, treasonable expressions were 'staff talk,' and I wished to make an example."[2]

He was still not ready to condemn General McClellan. He determined to give him one more chance. If McClellan, after Antietam, had destroyed the army of Lee, his official position would have been impregnable. If, after Lee had recrossed the Potomac, McClellan

[1] Welles, "Lincoln and Seward," pp. 195, 196.

[2] J. H., Diary.

had followed and delivered a successful battle in Virginia, nothing could afterwards have prevented his standing as the foremost man of his time. The President, in his intense anxiety for the success of the national arms, would have welcomed McClellan as his own presumptive successor if he could have won that position by successful battle. But the general's inexplicable slowness had at last excited the President's distrust. He began to think, before the end of October, that McClellan had no real desire to beat the enemy. He set in his own mind the limit of his own forbearance. He adopted for his own guidance a test which he communicated to no one until long afterwards, on which he determined to base his final judgment of McClellan. If he should permit Lee to cross the Blue Ridge and place himself between Richmond and the Army of the Potomac, he would remove him from command.[1]

When it was reported in Washington that Lee and Longstreet were at Culpeper Court House, the President sent an order, dated the 5th of November, to General McClellan, which reached him at Rectortown on the 7th, directing him to report for further orders at Trenton, New Jersey, and to turn the command of the Army of the Potomac over to General Burnside. General Buckingham delivered his message first to Burnside and then came with him to McClellan's tent. McClellan says in his memoirs that with the eyes of the two generals upon him he "read the papers with a smile"; but when they were gone, he turned to finish a letter he had been writing, and broke out in the heartfelt ejaculation, "Alas for my poor country!"[2] He took credit to himself in after years for not heading a mutiny of the troops. He said, "Many were in favor of my refusing to obey the order, and of marching upon Washington to take possession of the Government."[3]

Thus ended the military career of George Brinton McClellan. Now that the fierce passions of the war, its suspicions and its animosities, have passed away, we are able to judge him more accurately and more justly than was possible amid that moral and material tumult and confusion. He was as far from being the traitor and craven that many thought him as from being the martyr and hero that others would like to have him appear. It would be unfair to deny that he rendered, to the full measure of his capacity, sincere and honest service to the Republic. His technical knowledge was extensive, his industry untiring; his private character was pure and upright, his integrity without stain. In the private life to which he retired he carried with him the general respect and esteem and the affection of a troop of friends; and when by their partiality he was afterwards called to the exercise of important official functions, every office he held he adorned with the highest civic virtues and accomplishments. No one now can doubt his patriotism or his honor, and the fact that it was once doubted illustrates merely the part which the blackest suspicions play in a great civil war, and the stress to which the public mind was driven in the effort to account for the lack of results he gave the country in return for the vast resources which were so lavishly placed in his hands.

It was in this native inability to use great means to great ends that his failure as a general lies. It was in his temperament to exaggerate the obstacles in front of him, and this, added to his constitutional aversion to prompt decisions, caused those endless delays which wasted the army, exasperated the country, and gave the enemy unbroken leisure for maturing his plans and constant opportunity for executing them. His lethargy of six months in front of Washington, to the wonder and scorn of the Southern generals; his standing at gaze at Yorktown, halted with his vast army by Magruder's men in buckram; his innocent astonishment at Williamsburg at finding that the rebels would not give up Richmond without a fight; his station astride the Chickahominy, waiting for the enemy to grow strong enough to attack him, while his brave soldiers were fading to specters with the marsh fevers; his refusal to assume the offensive after the Confederate repulse at Seven Pines; his second refusal of the favors of the fortune of war when Lee took his army north of the Chickahominy and Porter fought him all day with little more than one corps, but with splendid courage; his starting for the James, in this crisis of his fate, when he should have marched upon the scantily guarded city of Richmond; his final retreat from Malvern Hill to Harrison's Landing, breaking the hearts of the soldiers who had won on that field a victory so complete and so glorious — all these mistakes proved how utterly incapable he was of leading a great army in a grand war. No general had ever been offered such wonderful opportunities, and they continued to be offered to him to the end. When Pope had drawn away the enemy from Richmond, and given him an unmolested embarkation, and had fought with undaunted valor against Lee's army, before which at last he was forced to give way for the want of relief which he had the right to expect from McClellan, the President, magnanimously ignoring all his own causes of quarrel, gave to McClellan

1 These are the President's own words, taken down at the time they were uttered.

2 "McClellan's Own Story," p. 660.

3 Ibid., p. 652.

once more his old army, reënforced by Pope's, and sent him against an enemy who, in a contempt for his antagonist acquired in the Peninsula, had crossed the Potomac and then divided his army in half. As a crowning favor of chance this was made known to McClellan, and even this incalculable advantage he frittered away, and gave Lee forty-eight hours in which to call in his scattered battalions. After Antietam, for six long weeks of beautiful autumn weather he lingered on the north bank of the Potomac, under the constant pressure of the President's persuasions, and afterwards under the lash of his orders and reproaches, unable to make up his mind to pursue the enemy so long as he could find excuse for delay in a missing shoelace or a broken limber.

The devoted affection which he received from his army was strange when we consider how lacking he was in those qualities which generally excite the admiration of soldiers. When Sumner, swinging his hat, charged in front of his lines at Savage's Station, his white hair blowing in the wind; when Phil. Kearney, who had lost his bridle arm in Mexico, rode in the storm of bullets with his reins in his teeth, his sword in his right hand, there was something which struck the imagination of their troopers more than far more serious merits would have done. But no one ever saw General McClellan rejoicing in battle. At Williamsburg, the first Peninsula fight, while Hooker and Kearney and Hancock were in the thick of the conflict, he was at the wharf at Yorktown, very busy, doing an assistant quartermaster's duty; the day of Fair Oaks he spent on the north side of the river; when at Beaver Dam Creek and Gaines's Mill the current of war rolled to the north side, he staid on the south bank; during the retreat to the James he was far in advance, selecting with his intelligent engineer's eye the spots where Sumner, Franklin, and the rest were to fight their daily battles; and even in the fury and thunder of Malvern Hill — the most splendid feat of arms ever performed by the Army of the Potomac, a sight which a man with the true soldier blood in his veins might give his life to see — he spent the greater part of those glorious hours, the diapason of his greatest victory booming in his ears, in his camp at Haxall's or on board the gun-boats, coldly and calmly making his arrangements for the morrow's retreat and for the coöperation of the navy; and at Antietam, the only battle where he really saw his own troops attacking the enemy, he enjoyed that wonderful sight "all day," says General Palfrey, "till towards the middle of the afternoon, when all the fighting was over, on the high ground near Fry's house, where he had some glasses strapped to the fence, so that he could look in different directions." We make no imputation on his courage: he was a brave man; but he was too much cumbered with other things to take part in his own battles.

With such limitations as these it is not likely that posterity will rank him among the leading generals of our war. The most his apologists ask for him is a place among the respectable, painstaking officers of the second order of talent, the "middle category of meritorious commanders";[1] but when we see such ardent friends and admirers of his person as General Webb and General Palfrey brought by a conscientious and careful study of his career to such a conviction of his continuous mistakes as they have expressed, we may well conclude that the candid historian of the future will have no sentiment but wonder when he comes to tell the story of McClellan's long mismanagement of a great, brave, and devoted army, backed by a government which strained every nerve to support him, and by a people whose fiery zeal would have made him the idol of the nation if he had given them the successes which their sacrifices deserved, and which were a dozen times within his grasp.

We have evidence from a candid and intelligent, if not altogether impartial, witness of the impression made upon the peace party of the North by the dismissal of General McClellan from command. On the 8th of November, 1862, Lord Lyons, the British minister at Washington, arrived in New York from a visit to England. The Democrats, or the Conservatives, as he called them, had carried the State and elected Mr. Seymour governor. He found them in great exultation over their victory. They imagined that the Government would at once desist from the measures which they had denounced as arbitrary or illegal; or, if not at once, they were certain that after the 1st of January, when Mr. Seymour would be inaugurated, the Government would not dare to exercise its war powers within the limits of the State of New York. They confided to the urbane and genial representative of the British Government much more specious hopes than these — hopes which they were not yet ready to avow to their own countrymen:[2] that the President would "seek to terminate the war, not to push it to extremity; that he would endeavor to effect a reconciliation with the people of the South and renounce the idea

1 Swinton, "Army of the Potomac," p. 229.

2 I listened with attention to the accounts given me of the plans and hopes of the Conservative party. At the bottom I thought I perceived a desire to put an end to the war even at the risk of losing the Southern States altogether; but it was plain it was not thought prudent to avow the desire. [Letter of Lord Lyons to Earl Russell, Nov. 17, 1862.]

of subjugating or exterminating them."[1] But these rising hopes, Lord Lyons says, "were dashed by the next day's news." The dismissal of General McClellan caused "an irritation not unmixed with consternation and despondency. The general had been regarded as the representative of Conservative principles in the army. Support of him had been made one of the articles of the Conservative electoral programme. His dismissal was taken as a sign that the President had thrown himself entirely into the arms of the extreme Radical party, and an attempt to carry out the policy of that party would be persisted in." The "party" and the "policy" referred to were, of course, the Republican party of the nation and the policy of carrying the war through to the end, and saving the Union intact by all the means within the power of the Government; and in this forecast the Conservative gentlemen of New York, who sought the accomplished envoy of Great Britain to unbosom to him their joys and their griefs, showed that however they may have been lacking in patriotism or self-respect, they were not deficient in either logic or sagacity.

FINANCIAL MEASURES.

THE wisdom displayed by Mr. Lincoln in choosing his Cabinet, not from among his personal adherents, but from among the most eminent representatives of the Republicans of the country, shone out more and more clearly as the war went on, and its enormous exigencies tested the utmost powers of each member of the Government. A great orator and statesman has said that in this respect Mr. Lincoln showed at the outset that nature had fitted him for a ruler, and accident only had hid his earlier life in obscurity.

> I cannot hesitate [says Mr. Evarts] to think that the presence of Mr. Seward and Mr. Chase in the great offices of State and Treasury, and their faithful concurrence in the public service, and the public repute of the President's conduct of the Government, gave to the people all the benefits which might have justly been expected from the election of either to be himself the head of the Government, and much else besides. I know of no warrant in the qualities of human nature to have hoped that either of these great political leaders would have made as good a minister under the administration of the other, as President, as both of them did under the administration of Mr. Lincoln. I see nothing in Mr. Lincoln's great qualities and great authority with this people which could have commensurately served our need in any place, in the conduct of affairs, except at their head.[2]

We do not question that posterity will confirm this sober and impartial judgment of one of the most intelligent of contemporary observers. Lincoln, Chase, and Seward were, by a long interval, the first three Republicans of their time, and each, by what would almost appear a special favor of Providence, was placed in a position where he could be of most unquestioned service to the country. Had either of the three, except Lincoln, been President, the nation must have lost the inestimable services of the other two. We have already dwelt at some length upon the responsibility which devolved during these years upon the Secretary of State, and upon the unfailing courage, sagacity, and industry with which he met it. Before recounting an incident which threatened for a time to deprive the President of the powerful assistance of his two great subordinates, it will be necessary to review, in a manner however brief and inadequate, some of the main points in the administration of the finances during the war.

The Republican party came to power at a time when its adversaries had reduced the credit of the country to a point which now appears difficult to believe. Even before the election of Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Cobb, the Secretary of the Treasury, was compelled to pay twelve per cent. for the use of the small sums necessary to meet the ordinary expenses of the Government, and early in the session of Congress which began in December, 1860, after the election of Mr. Lincoln, amid the gathering gloom of imminent civil war, Congress authorized the issue of ten millions of Treasury notes, payable in one year, to be issued at the best rate obtainable by the Secretary of the Treasury. That officer having advertised for bids for half the amount authorized, only a small sum was offered, the rates ranging from twelve to thirty-six per cent. The Secretary accepted the offers at twelve, obtaining, even at that exorbitant rate, the meager sum of half a million dollars. Afterwards a syndicate of bankers, upon hard conditions proposed by themselves, took the remaining four and a half millions at twelve per cent. A month after, when Mr. Cobb had retired and Mr. Dix had assumed the charge of the Treasury, the slight increase of public confidence derived from the character of the new Secretary enabled him to dispose of the other five millions at an average of ten and five-eighths per cent. In February, Congress having authorized a further loan of twenty-five millions at six per cent., Mr. Dix was able to obtain eight millions at a discount of ten per cent. It was in this depressed and discouraging state of the public finances that Mr. Chase took charge of the Treasury. Without any special previous experience, without any other

[1] Letter of Lord Lyons to Earl Russell, Nov. 17, 1862.

[2] W. M. Evarts, Eulogy on Chase delivered at Dartmouth College.

preparation for his exacting task than great natural abilities, unswerving integrity and fidelity, and unwearying industry, he grappled with the difficulties of the situation in a manner which won him the plaudits of the civilized world and will forever enshrine his name in the memory of his fellow-citizens. To quote Mr. Evarts again:

> The exactions of the place knew no limits. A people wholly unaccustomed to the pressure of taxation, and with an absolute horror of a national debt, was to be rapidly subjected to the first without stint, and to be buried under a mountain of the last. Taxes which should support military operations on the largest scale, and yet not break the back of industry, which alone could pay them; loans, in every form that financial skill could devise, and to the farthest verge of the public credit; and finally, the extreme resort of governments under the last stress and necessity, of the subversion of the legal tender, by the substitution of what has been aptly and accurately called the coined credit of the Government for its coined money — all these exigencies and all these expedients made up the daily problems of the Secretary's life. . . . Whether the genius of Hamilton, dealing with great difficulties, transcended that of Chase, meeting the largest exigencies with greater resources, is an unprofitable speculation. They stand together, in the judgment of their countrymen, the great financiers of our history.

Immediately upon assuming office Mr. Chase addressed himself to the difficult work before him. The only provisions which had been made by law for the support of the Government were the fragments of the loan, authorized but unsold, of his predecessor. Satisfied that the rates at which money had been borrowed both by Cobb and by Dix were unnecessarily degrading to the national credit, he firmly refused terms similar to those which they had accepted, and succeeded in borrowing $8,000,000, none of it at a lower rate than ninety-four, and a few days later he borrowed $5,000,000 more at par. Even in May, after the outbreak of the war, he was able to place some $9,000,000 of Government loans at a rate only a little below their face value. These were of course but temporary make-shifts, based upon previous legislation; but when Congress met on the Fourth of July, in that first special session called by President Lincoln, an entirely new system of finance had to be instituted. The national debt on the 1st of July was $90,000,000, and there was a balance in the Treasury of only $2,000,000.

There was something appalling in the sudden and monstrous increase of the expenses of the Government as a consequence of the war. The appropriations for the fiscal year 1860–61 were but $79,000,000, and the estimates for the year following, notwithstanding the threatening outlook, were only for $75,000,000. Nobody foresaw the coming exigencies, no provision was made to meet them. Mr. Chase's estimates for the first fiscal year of his administration reached the astounding aggregate of $318,500,000, but before the short session of Congress adjourned even this enormous sum was found inadequate. To meet these immense demands he proposed to raise $80,000,000 by taxes and $240,000,000 by loans. By increasing the taxes upon imports he expected to add $27,000,000 to the $30,000,000 already derived from the tariff, and $3,000,000 from miscellaneous sources made up $60,000,000, leaving $20,000,000 to be derived from direct taxes and the excise.[1] Congress responded with the greatest decision and patriotism to the proposition of the Secretary. They authorized, on the 17th of July, a loan of $250,000,000, and passed laws increasing duties on a great number of articles; they apportioned a direct tax of $20,000,000 among the States, which was cheerfully paid by the loyal States, and an unsuccessful attempt was made to enforce it by commissioners for the States in rebellion. The estimates voted for the army were $207,000,000; for the navy, $56,000,000; and only $1,300,000 for civil and miscellaneous purposes. Every day during the summer and autumn the expenses of the war increased; for the last quarter of the year they averaged nearly $50,000,000 a month.

One of the first measures of relief adopted by the Secretary under the authority of Congress was the issue of the so-called "demand notes," payable in coin, for the payment of salaries or other debts of the United States, and by a later act made receivable for public dues. There was, at first, a great distrust of this form of paper money, and the Secretary of the Treasury and other public officers, in order to create confidence, joined in an agreement to receive them in payment of their salaries. General Scott issued a circular to the army announcing the issue of paper money and advising its acceptance. Several corporations declined to accept them in payment of freight. There is an instance recorded where a bank in New York refused to accept a large amount of them except as a special deposit, which deposit was afterwards withdrawn, the value of the notes having increased with the rise of gold, in which they were payable, to fifty per cent. premium in other paper money. But this and other like expedients gave only temporary relief. For the permanent and wholesome administration of financial affairs a great national loan was necessary, and Mr. Chase held, in the city of New York, on the 19th of August, 1861, a conference with the representatives of the principal bankers of the United States. He laid before them, with

[1] Round numbers are used in this chapter.

equal eloquence and judgment, not only the needs of the Government, but the safety and value of its securities; and after a long and earnest discussion, during the course of which it seemed at one time possible that his mission would result in failure, he formed a syndicate of banks which advanced the Government $50,000,000, and after this loan was successfully placed $50,000,000 more were derived from the same source, the Government paying seven and three-tenths per cent. for the money, and later he used the authority conferred upon him by the act of July 17, 1861, to issue $50,000,000 more of six per cent. bonds at a rate making them equivalent to seven per cents.

When Congress met in December and the Secretary in his first annual report gave an account of his stewardship, he reported an aggregate of $197,000,000 realized from loans in all forms. The receipts from customs were less than had been expected, and on the other hand the expenditures had grown to a sum much larger than in June had been imagined possible. The estimates of the summer session were based upon an army of 300,000 men; double that number were now under arms. The pay and the rations of soldiers and sailors had also been augmented, and the Secretary found himself under the necessity of asking increased appropriations to the amount of $200,000,000. To meet this needed sum he proposed to increase the tariff and the direct tax, to impose duties on liquors and tobacco, on notes and deeds, and to modify the income tax to the advantage of the Government. In the presence of the vast obligations devolving upon the Administration he did not hesitate to face the facts, and with a courage unusual in history, and a sagacity as surprising as his courage, he announced to Congress that the public debt, which on the 1st of July, 1860, was but $64,000,000, and on the 1st of July, 1861, was $90,000,000, would probably amount on the 1st of July, 1862, to $517,000,000.[1]

It was apparent that the volume of currency in the country was not sufficient for the enormous requirements of the public expenditure. The banks could neither pay coin to the Government for bonds, nor dispose of them to their customers for specie. The weaker institutions were already tottering, and the stronger ones feared a crisis which would result in universal disaster. They met in convention on the 27th of December and agreed upon a suspension of specie payments, which took place the following day. The Government necessarily followed the example of the banks, and the new year began with the melancholy spectacle of all the public and private institutions of the country redeeming their broken promises with new ones.

The public debt had risen to $300,000,000; the treasury was almost empty; the daily expenditures amounted to nearly $2,000,000. It was estimated that $350,000,000 were needed to pay the expenses of the Government to the close of the fiscal year, and the treasury had means for meeting the drafts of the Government for less than two months. In the world of finance, as well as in the world of politics, it was generally agreed that the only resort of the Government was paper money. Leading bankers throughout the United States urged this upon the Secretary of the Treasury as the only practicable expedient. The leading statesmen in both houses of Congress were brought with extreme reluctance to the same conclusion. To no one was this decision more painful than to the Secretary of the Treasury. He agreed with the greatest of his predecessors, in that famous report which has become a classic in our politics and our finances, that—

> The emitting of paper money by the authority of the Government is wisely prohibited to the individual States by the Constitution, and the spirit of that prohibition ought not to be disregarded by the Government of the United States. . . . The wisdom of the Government will be shown in never trusting itself with the use of so seducing and dangerous an expedient. . . . The stamping of paper is an operation so much easier than the laying of taxes, that a government in the practice of paper emissions would rarely fail in any such emergency to indulge itself too far in that resource to avoid as much as possible one less auspicious to present popularity. If it should not even be carried so far as to be rendered an absolute bubble, it would at least be likely to be extended to a degree which would occasion an inflated and artificial state of things incompatible with the regular and prosperous course of the political economy.

But in spite of all this reluctance Mr. Chase felt that an emergency was upon the Government from which this was the only issue. He saw that the corporate institutions of the country would not receive the notes of the Government unless they were made a legal tender by act of Congress.

"This state of things," he wrote, "was the high road to ruin, and I did not hesitate as to the remedy." He threw the entire weight of his influence upon his friends in Congress and urged them to prompt and thorough action. In a letter to Mr. Stevens, of the Committee of Ways and Means, he said:

> The provision making the United States notes a legal tender has doubtless been well considered by

[1] It actually was $524,000,000 on the 1st of July, 1862, and on the 1st of July following it was $1,100,000,000; Mr. Chase having estimated it in his report of December at $1,000,000,000.

the committee, and their conclusion needs no support from any observation of mine. I think it my duty to say, however, that in respect to this provision my reflections have conducted me to the same conclusion they have reached. It is not unknown to them that I have felt, nor do I wish to conceal that I now feel, a great aversion to making anything but legal coin a payment of debts. It has been my anxious wish to avoid the necessity of such legislation. It is at present impossible, however, in consequence of the large expenditures entailed by the war and the suspension of the banks, to procure sufficient coin for current disbursements. It has therefore become indispensably necessary that we should resort to the issue of United States notes. The making them a legal tender might still be avoided if the willingness manifested by the people generally, by railroad companies, and by many of the banking institutions, to receive and pay them as money in all transactions were absolutely, or practically, universal; but, unfortunately, there are some persons and some institutions which refuse to receive and pay them, and whose action tends not merely to the unnecessary depreciation of the notes, but to establish discriminations in business against those who in this matter give a cordial support to the Government and in favor of those who do not. Such discriminations should, if possible, be prevented, and the provision making notes a legal tender in a great measure at least prevents it by putting all citizens in this respect upon the same level both in respect to rights and duties.[1]

And several days later, on hearing some intimation that the committee thought he was not specially earnest in desiring the passage of the bill, he wrote to Mr. Spaulding:

It is true that I came with reluctance to the conclusion that the legal-tender clause is a necessity, but I came to it decidedly and I support it earnestly. . . . Immediate action is of great importance; the treasury is nearly empty. I have been obliged to draw for the last installment of the November loan. As soon as it is paid I fear the banks generally will refuse to receive United States notes. You will see the necessity of urging the bill through without more delay.

In both houses of Congress the measure received the most violent denunciation on the part of those opposed to it, and even those who voted in favor of it explained their votes in speeches filled with deprecation of the necessity which demanded it. Mr. Sumner, after reciting in an eloquent and impassioned speech the evil which he thought would result from such a measure, concluded by saying:

If I mention these things it is because of the unfeigned solicitude I feel with regard to this measure, and not with the view of arguing against the exercise of a constitutional power, when in the opinion of the Government in which I place trust the necessity for its exercise has arrived.

1 Schuckers, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 244.

Mr. Fessenden and Mr. Morrill spoke in the same strain of sorrowful apprehension, but the bill became a law on the 25th of February, 1862.

This important law, which Mr. Chase, as Secretary of the Treasury, urged upon Congress, and which Mr. Chase, as Chief-Justice of the United States, afterwards decided to be unconstitutional, authorized the issue of $150,000,000 of United States notes not bearing interest, payable at the Treasury of the United States, in denominations of not less than five dollars. These notes were to be received in payment of all debts and demands of every kind due to the United States, except duties on imports, which were payable in coin; and they were to be paid by the United States in satisfaction of all claims against the Government, except for interest upon the public debt, which also was to be paid in coin, the receipts from customs being devoted to this purpose; and these notes were to be lawful money and legal tender in payment of all debts, public and private, within the United States, with the exceptions above mentioned, and they were to be received at par in exchange for Government bonds. By a later act the demand notes were also made a legal tender, as some of the banks had refused to receive them without such provision. It was thought in February that $150,000,000 of this currency would be enough, but in June it was evident that this would not be the case; $150,000,000 more were demanded by the Secretary and at once authorized by Congress. $35,000,000 of this last issue were to be in denominations less than five dollars.

Even this vast volume of currency did not satisfy the insatiable demands of the time, and the rapidly increasing popularity of the United States notes, or greenbacks, as they were called, induced the Government to ask, and Congress to grant, a wide extension of the authority to issue them, so that before the war ended $1,250,000,000 of legal tender had been authorized by Congress. Of this $450,000,000 were in legal-tender United States notes; $400,000,000 in Treasury notes payable not more than three years from date, and bearing interest not exceeding six per cent.; $400,000,000 in Treasury notes redeemable after three years, bearing a currency interest not exceeding seven and three-tenths per cent. This full authority was not availed of by the Secretary of the Treasury. The legal tenders outstanding on the 30th of June, 1864, amounted to $600,000,000, and a year later, under the administration of Mr. Fessenden, they amounted to $669,000,000. The public debt at the close of the fiscal year 1864 was $1,740,000,000, and the next year $2,682,000,000, which was increased some

$200,000,000 by the necessary expenses that followed as a sequel of the war.[1]

This is not the place to reopen the controversy which outlasted the war and for years afterwards was an element of disorganization in politics and of a bitter and somewhat demoralizing dispute in both houses of the Congress of the United States. It will probably be the verdict of posterity, as it was the opinion of the ablest statesmen of the time, that a legal-tender act was a necessary exercise of the powers of the Government in a time of supreme emergency; that the result of that act was all that its advocates hoped for in sustaining the Government in a period of vast and compulsory expenditure; and that the evils which grew out of it, great as they unquestionably were, were not so disastrous as the fears of intelligent economists at the time apprehended.

Gold, having been driven from circulation by the legal-tender notes, became at once the favorite stock for speculation in Wall street, and while the premium upon it rose to a certain extent in proportion to the increase of volume of paper money, and was subject to violent fluctuations in consequence of military successes or disasters, there was no such method in the course of its quotations as to render them explicable by either of these influences. It had become, so to speak, a fancy stock, and there was no more reason for its wilder fluctuations than for those of other securities which rise and fall in obedience to the currents of Wall street and without reference to intrinsic values. Just before the passage of the legal-tender bill the premium upon gold was 4⅜ per cent., and shortly after it became a law the premium fell to 1½; but it gradually rose until in the middle of July it was 17, in the middle of October, 32½, and at the end of the year, 34. On the 25th of February, 1863, after the legal-tender law had been in operation for a year, the premium on gold had risen to 72½; the brilliant successes of the National cause at Gettysburg and Vicksburg reduced it to 23½; it rose again in October to 56⅜, and rose no higher than that until the following spring, when on the 14th of April, 1864, it was quoted at 88, and on the 22d of June, as the consequence of an ill-advised bill passed by Congress to prevent speculation in gold, the premium climbed at once to the frightful altitude of 130, falling the day afterwards to 115. On the 1st of July it jumped to 185, on the 2d it fell back to 130, and on the 6th the unfortunate law, born of a short-sighted patriotism, was repealed. The mischief, however, was not yet over, for five days later there was a rise to 185,—the highest figure attained during the war,—followed by a sharp fall, which continued until gold was quoted on the 26th of September at 87, thus falling nearly 100 per cent. in less than three months. There was no warrant in the financial or the military condition of the country for these wild fluctuations. They were the offspring of the desperate efforts of cupidity and enterprise which found their predestined prey in the fears and apprehensions of more timid speculators. The Secretary of the Treasury was authorized in March, 1864, to sell surplus gold for the purpose of checking this speculation; and in April, the premium having risen to 75, Mr. Chase went in person to New York to try the effect of the sale of "cash gold" upon the trade in phantom gold.[2] The day he arrived the speculators defied him by running the premium to 88. He sold in a few days about $11,000,000, reducing the premium to 65, with convulsive fluctuations; but the moment the pressure of the Treasury was removed the price of gold mounted as before. The same experiment was frequently tried afterwards, with more or less success.

The troubles of the time, which had reduced the treasury of the United States to a condition of impoverishment, had exercised, as was natural, exactly the contrary effect upon the banks of New York. The timidity of capital had accumulated a great surplus of money in these institutions, with a far smaller number of loans and discounts than usual. The deposits amounted at the end of 1861 to $146,000,000. At the suggestion of Mr. Cisco, the Assistant Treasurer in New York, the Secretary of the Treasury adopted a system of temporary loans which was sanctioned by Congress in a clause of the legal-tender law, and the authority thus given was increased by successive acts until the limit was fixed at $150,000,000. These loans were not only of great advantage to the Government as well as to the lenders, but they also served as a useful balance to the money market. In times of severe pressure the reimbursement of large sums was often the means of temporary relief. Another expedient authorized by Congress, on the 1st of March, 1862, was the issuing of certificates of indebtedness to such creditors of the United States as chose to receive them in payment of audited accounts. They were payable one year from date, with interest at six per cent. The power to issue them was unlimited, and their extensive issue

[1] The cost of conducting the war, after it was fully inaugurated, was scarcely at any time less than $30,000,000 a month. At many times it far exceeded that amount. Sometimes it was not less than $90,000,000 a month; and the average expenses of the war, from its inception to its conclusion, may be said to have been about $2,000,000 each day. The public debt reached its maximum on August 31, 1865, on which day it amounted to $2,845,907,626.56. [J. J. Knox, "United States Notes."]

[2] Schuckers, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 358.

led at last to their serious depreciation. Another important clause of the legal-tender act, in addition to those we have mentioned, was that which authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to issue coupon or registered bonds to an amount not exceeding $500,000,000, redeemable at the pleasure of the United States after five years and payable twenty years from date, and bearing interest at the rate of six per cent. per annum, payable semi-annually. They were to be exempt from taxation by State authority, and the coin from duties on imports was to be set aside as a special fund for the payment of interest on the bonds and notes of the United States and for other specified purposes. These were the famous "five twenty" bonds, which, issued at first at a slight discount below par in paper, justified the faith and the sagacity of their earliest purchasers by a steady rise during all the years of their existence and were all paid in gold, or converted into other securities, long before the time fixed for their redemption. "All these measures," the Secretary said in his annual report of December, 1862, "worked well." If Congress had passed at the previous session the national banking law which he urged upon it, he thought that no financial necessity would at that time have demanded additional legislation. But the bill which had been introduced for that purpose the year before had found few supporters. Its only prominent advocate in the House of Representatives was Mr. Samuel Hooper of Massachusetts, a gentleman whose sound judgment and whose large knowledge of financial subjects gave great and deserved weight to his opinions. He could do nothing more at the moment than to obtain leave to bring in a bill for that purpose; but in the course of the year that followed, the absolute necessity for some such measure became every day more apparent. The coin in the country, variously estimated at from $150,000,000 to $210,000,000, was absolutely inadequate to the demands of the time. The system of State banks in existence at the beginning of the war was not only incommensurate to the needs of the country, but radically vicious in itself. There was no uniformity of credit, no guaranty whatever of authenticity in circulation. Out of 1500 banks there were said to be fewer than 300 whose notes were not counterfeited. There was but a comparatively small number whose notes were not subject to discount outside of the State in which they were issued, and a citizen traveling from the Mississippi to the Hudson found the contents of his wallet changing in value whenever he crossed a State line. Of course with the immense demand for currency created by the war all these evils were greatly increased and aggravated, and when Congress met again in December, 1862, the Secretary urged anew, with the added weight of authority which came from a more fully matured plan and an enlarged experience, the scheme, which had been treated with neglect the year before, for establishing a safe and uniform currency throughout the nation.

The National Bank Act was prepared in accordance with the views of Mr. Chase by E. G. Spaulding of New York and Samuel Hooper of Massachusetts, who were members of the Committee of Ways and Means, and during the month of December, 1861, it was printed for the use of that committee. The bill encountered most earnest opposition in the committee, which was busily engaged on the loan and internal-revenue bills and other important work, and it was finally laid aside. In his report for 1862, Mr. Chase again, notwithstanding the suspension of specie payments, earnestly advocated the measure. He said that among the advantages which would arise from its passage would be "that the United States bonds would be required for banking purposes, a steady market would be established, and their negotiation greatly facilitated. . . . It is not easy to appreciate the full benefits of such conditions to a Government obliged to borrow"; it will "reconcile as far as practicable the interests of existing institutions with those of the whole people," and will supply "a firm anchorage to the union of the States."

The bill is understood to have had the sanction of every member of the Administration, and President Lincoln earnestly advocated its passage in his annual message in 1862; and in 1863 he said, "The enactment by Congress of a national banking law has proved a valuable support of the public credit, and the general legislation in relation to loans has fully answered the expectations of its favorers. Some amendments may be required to perfect existing laws, but no change in their principles or general scope is believed to be needed." Again, in 1864, he favored the taxation of the issues of State banks and the substitution of national-bank notes therefor. About fourteen months thereafter the same bill which had been printed for the use of the Committee of Ways and Means was introduced by Mr. Sherman and referred to the Finance Committee of the Senate, from which it was reported by him on February 2, 1863, with amendments. Ten days later it passed that body by a vote of 23 to 21; and on the 20th, same month, it also passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 78 to 64.[1]

It was warmly advocated by those who appreciated its advantages, and as earnestly opposed by those who thought they foresaw the growth of a powerful monetary system dangerous to the popular liberties. Its chief opponent in the Senate was Mr. Collamer, who ably represented the traditions of the past; it was most efficiently advocated by Mr. John Sherman of Ohio, to whom was reserved a part of great

[1] Address of Comptroller Knox before the Merchants' Association of Boston, Nov. 27, 1880. "Bankers' Magazine," Vol. XV., p. 545.

honor and usefulness in bringing to a close the financial history of the war.

> The bill was thoroughly revised, discussed, and repassed a little more than one year afterwards (June 3, 1864). . . . The vote in the Senate was 30 in favor and 9 against the bill, and in the House the vote was 78 to 63.[1]

The principal features of this comprehensive scheme were to open to private capital the business of national banking so freely that there could be no reasonable accusation of privilege or monopoly; to give to the whole system of banks a homogeneous circulation of notes, having a common impression, authenticated by a common authority, made safe by an adequate provision of specie, and secured for redemption by the pledge of United States bonds deposited in Washington; and finally by the Act of March 3, 1865, to tax out of existence the circulation of the banks organized under State laws. The whole system being thus based upon Government bonds, several hundreds of millions of United States notes were funded in bonds. It was the Secretary's belief, afterwards fully justified under the wise and masterly administration of Mr. Sherman, that this system of national banks would be of invaluable assistance in the resumption of specie payments by the Government. He said:

> If temporarily these associations redeem their issues with United States notes, resumption of specie payment will not thereby be delayed or endangered, but hastened and secured; for, just as soon as victory shall restore peace, the ample revenue already secured by wise legislation will enable the Government through advantageous purchases of specie to replace at once large amounts, and at no distant day the whole of this circulation, by coin, without detriment to any interest, but, on the contrary, with great and manifest benefit to all interests.

The bill was constantly amended and improved, and, although it might be too much to say that it was ever rendered entirely perfect, it is perhaps now unquestioned that few more wise and beneficent measures have ever been devised by American statesmanship.

No financial operations so prodigious as those which we have thus briefly sketched had ever before been known. The largest loans ever made by England were those which she negotiated in the terrible years of 1812–13 when she was fighting at the same time Napoleon and the United States. The British Government borrowed in those years $534,000,000, only a little more than Mr. Chase borrowed in nine months. The estimated wealth of the United Kingdom at that time, and of the loyal States in 1860, was almost exactly the same, in each case something over $100,000,000,000. Nowhere, we believe, do the annals of the world record such an appreciation of the public credit as that which is seen from the time of Mr. Lincoln's accession to the presidency until the period of the resumption of specie payment after the close of the war. It was hard for Mr. Buchanan's Secretaries of the Treasury to borrow money to pay the ordinary expenses of the Government at twelve per cent. Mr. Chase, as soon as Congress had given him command of the machinery required, in the legal-tender currency, the popular loan, and the national banking law, found no great difficulty in supplying at six per cent. the ravenous wants of a most costly war; and under the operation of the laws provided for him and similar legislation called for by his successors the Government credit gradually rose until its four per cents. sold at 130, and its three per cents. commanded a premium. At the beginning the Secretary was forced to rely more upon individual patriotism than upon public confidence; but long before the war ended he had hundreds of millions at his command.

In all these important labors Mr. Chase had the constant support of the President. Mr. Lincoln exercised less control and a less constant supervision over the work of the Treasury than over some other departments. But he rated at their true value the industry and the ability of the Secretary and the immense responsibility devolved upon his department, and contributed to its success in every way in his power. He sometimes made suggestions of financial measures,[2] but did not insist on their being adopted, and when the Secretary needed his powerful assistance with Congress he always gave it ungrudgingly. In regular and special messages he urged upon Congress the measures which the Secretary thought important,[3] and in frequent and informal conferences at the Executive Mansion with the leading members of both houses he exerted all his powers of influence and persuasion to assist the Secretary in obtaining what legislation was needed.

SEWARD AND CHASE.

Mr. Seward and Mr. Chase became at an early day, and continued to be, respectively, the representatives in the Cabinet of the more conservative and the more radical elements of the Republican party. Each exerted himself with equal zeal and equal energy in the branch of the public service committed to his charge; but their relative attitudes towards the President soon became entirely different. Mr. Seward, while doing everything possible to

1 Address of Comptroller Knox.

2 Lincoln to Chase, May 18, 1864.

3 Especially the message of January 19, 1863, in favor of the funding bill and the bill to provide a national currency.

serve the national cause, and thus unconsciously building for himself an enduring monument in the respect and regard of the country, was, so far as can be discerned, absolutely free from any ambition or afterthought personal to himself. He was, during the early part of the war, so intent upon the work immediately in hand that he had no leisure for political combinations; and later, when the subject of the next Presidential nomination began to be considered and discussed, he recognized the fact that Mr. Lincoln was best qualified by his abilities, his experience, and his standing in the country to be his own successor.

The attitude of Mr. Chase was altogether unlike this. As we have seen, he did all that man could do to grapple with the problem of supplying the ways and means of the gigantic war. With untiring zeal and perfect integrity he devoted his extraordinary ability to the work of raising the thousands of millions expended in the great struggle which was crowned with a colossal success. But his attitude towards the President, it is hardly too much to say, was one which varied between the limits of active hostility and benevolent contempt. He apparently never changed his opinion that a great mistake had been committed at Chicago, and the predominant thought which was present to him through three years of his administration was that it was his duty to counteract, as far as possible, the evil results of that mistake. He felt himself alone in the Cabinet. He looked upon the President and all his colleagues as his inferiors in capacity, in zeal, in devotion to liberty and the general welfare. He sincerely persuaded himself that every disaster which happened to the country happened because his advice was not followed, and that every piece of good fortune was due to his having been able, from time to time, to rescue the President and the rest of the Cabinet from the consequences of their own errors. He kept up a voluminous correspondence with friends in all sections of the country, to which we should hesitate to refer had it not been that he retained copies of his letters, and many years afterwards gave them into the hands of a biographer for publication. These letters are pervaded by a constant tone of slight and criticism towards his chief and his colleagues. He continually disavows all responsibility for the conduct of the war. "My recommendations," he says, "before [Halleck] came in were generally disregarded, and since have been seldom ventured. . . . Those who reject my counsels ought to know better than I do."[1] "I do not wonder that dissatisfaction prevails. . . . It is sad to think of the delay and inaction which have marked the past."[2] To Senator Sherman he wrote:

> The future does not look promising to me. . . . We, who are called members of the Cabinet, but are in reality only separate heads of departments, meeting now and then for talk on whatever happens to come uppermost, not for grave consultation on matters concerning the salvation of the country — we have as little to do with it as if we were the heads of factories supplying shoes or clothing. . . . It is painful to hear complaints of remissness, delays, discords, and dangers, and feel that there must be ground for such complaints, and know, at the same time, that one has no power to remedy the evils complained of, and yet be thought to have.[3]

To another he said:

> Some consolation, in the review of the disasters we have experienced, may perhaps be found in the supposition that they were necessary to convince the President and the country that a decided measure in relation to slavery was absolutely necessary. . . . Though charged with the responsibility of providing means for the vast expenditures of the war, I have little more voice in its conduct than a stranger to the Administration.[4]

He says if his judgment had more weight the war would be prosecuted with more vigor and success. The letters in this strain are innumerable. In all of them he labors to keep himself distinct and separate from the rest of the Government, protesting against its faults and errors, and taking credit for the good advice he wastes upon them. He says:

> We have fallen on very evil days. . . . The President has hitherto refused to sanction any adequate measures for the liberation of the loyal population of the South from slavery to the rebels. . . . Then we have placed and continued in command generals who have never manifested the slightest sympathy with our cause as related to the controlling question of slavery. . . . All these causes tend to demoralization, and we are demoralized. . . . It is some consolation to me that my voice, and, so far as opportunity has allowed, my example, has been steadily opposed to all this. I have urged my ideas on the President and my associates till I begin to feel that they are irksome to the first and to one or two at least of the second.[5]

All this time, with the most facile self-deception, he believed in his own loyalty and friendship for the President, and nightly recorded in his diary his sorrow for Mr. Lincoln's fatal course. September 12 he writes:

> The Secretary of War informed me that he had heard from General Halleck that the President is going out to see General McClellan, and commented with some severity on his humiliating submissive-

[1] Schuckers, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 443.
[2] Ibid., p. 458.
[3] Ibid., 379.
[4] Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 491.
[5] Ibid., pp. 453, 454.

ness to that officer. It is indeed humiliating, but prompted, I believe, by a sincere desire to serve the country. . . . I think that the President, with the most honest intentions in the world, and a naturally clear judgment and a true, unselfish patriotism, has yielded so much to border State and negrophobic counsels that he now finds it difficult to arrest his own descent towards the most fatal concessions. He has already separated himself from the great body of the party which elected him; distrusts most those who represent its spirit, and waits — for what?[1]

He says in another place:

September 11th. How singularly all our worst defeats have followed administrative cr— no, blunders. McDowell defeated at Bull Run, because the Administration would not supersede Patterson by a general of more capacity, vigor, and devotion to the cause; McClellan defeated at Richmond, because the Administration recalled Shields and forced Frémont to retire from the pursuit of Jackson; . . . Pope defeated at Bull Run, because the Administration persisted in keeping McClellan in command of the Army of the Potomac.[2]

He never lost an opportunity for ingratiating himself with the general in favor, or the general in disgrace. He paid equally assiduous homage to the rising and the setting sun. In the dawn of McClellan's first successes in the West he made haste to write to him:

The country was indebted to me . . . in some considerable degree for the change of your commission from Ohio into a commission of major-general of the army of the Union, and your assignment to the command of the Department of the Ohio. I drew with my own hand the order extending it into Virginia. . . . It was my wish that you should remain in command of the Mississippi, but in this I was overruled.[3]

His present command, however, he says, is a more important one, and he wishes Kentucky and Tennessee to be included in it, and thinks both will be done. When McClellan was appointed General-in-Chief, the Secretary, eager to be the first to tell the good news, immediately wrote a note to Colonel Key, McClellan's judge-advocate: "McClellan is Commander-in-Chief. Let us thank God and take courage."[4] To newly appointed and promoted generals he wrote in the same strain.[5] Even when he had become estranged from a prominent officer the slightest appeal to his *amour propre* was sufficient to bring about a reconciliation. After he had lost all confidence in McClellan and almost given up the President for not dismissing him, General John Cochran came to him and said McClellan would like to retire from active command if he could do so without disgrace — which could be accomplished, and a more active general secured, by restoring him to the chief command, "where he could act in unison with myself," says the Secretary.[6] He entered at once into *pour-parlers*, saying how much he had once admired and confided in McClellan; how the general came to lose his confidence; how heartily he had supported him with supplies and reënforcements, notwithstanding his mistrust; his entire willingness to receive any correction which facts would warrant; his absolute freedom from personal ill-will. When the amiable ambassador told him that Colonel Key had often expressed his regret that McClellan had not conferred and acted in concert with the Secretary, he replied, "I think if he had, that the rebellion would be ended now."[7] Further letters followed between them which are faithfully recorded in his diary; but during these platonic negotiations McClellan was finally removed from command.

Mr. Chase cultivated, however, the closest relations with those generals who imagined they had a grievance against the Administration. He took General Shields to his arms when he returned from the Shenandoah after his disastrous experience with Jackson. Shields's account of how he would have destroyed Stonewall Jackson if the President had permitted him did not apparently touch the Secretary's sense of humor. He received it all in good faith; assured Shields that if he had had his way he should have been supported, and wrote in his diary: "Sad! sad! yet nobody seems to heed. General Shields and I talked all this over, deploring the strange fatality which seemed to preside over the whole transaction. He dined with us and after dinner rode out." To Hooker, after the failure of the Chickahominy campaign, he said, "General, if my advice had been followed, you would have commanded the army after the retreat to the James River, if not before";[8] to which Fighting Joe of course responded, "If I had commanded, Richmond would have been ours." He warmly sympathized with General Hunter after the revocation of his emancipation order in South Carolina, and allowed his preference for military emancipation to carry him, in one instance, to the point of absolute disloyalty to the President. On the 31st of July, 1862, he wrote a long letter to General Butler in New Orleans striving to controvert the views of the President in relation to slavery in the Gulf States, and urging in place of them his own opinions, "to which,"

1 Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 470.
2 Ibid., p. 469.
3 Shuckers, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 427.
4 Ibid., p. 445.
5 Ibid., p. 457.
6 Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 499.
7 Ibid., p. 500.
8 Ibid., p. 487.

he said, "I am just as sure the masses will and the politicians must come, as I am sure that both politicians and masses have come to opinions expressed by me when they found few concurrents"; and he concluded his letter with this rash and mischievous advice:

> Of course, if some prudential consideration did not forbid, I should at once, if I were in your place, notify the slaveholders of Louisiana that henceforth they must be content to pay their laborers wages. . . . It is quite true that such an order could not be enforced by military power beyond military lines, but it would enforce itself by degrees a good way beyond them, and would make the extension of military lines comparatively quite easy.[1]

Here the obvious objection presented itself, that such a course would be in direct contravention to the President's known policy, and would be immediately repudiated and revoked by him. The Secretary foresaw this, and added a prediction so reckless, and so disloyal to his constitutional chief, that if it were not printed by his authority it would be difficult to believe he had written it: "It may be said that such an order would be annulled. I think not. It is plain enough that the annulling of Hunter's order was a mistake. It will not be repeated." A volume could not more clearly show the Secretary's opinion of the President.

The surest way to his confidence and regard was to approach him with conversation derogatory to Mr. Lincoln. He records in his diary an after-dinner conversation with an officer whom he seems to have met for the first time: "I asked him what he thought of the President."[2] He apparently had no perception of the gross impropriety of such a question coming from him. The officer evidently knew what sort of reply was expected. He said:

> A man irresolute, but of honest intentions; born a poor white, in a slave State, and of course among aristocrats; kind in spirit and not envious, but anxious for approval, especially of those to whom he has been accustomed to look up — hence solicitous of support of the slaveholders in the border States, and unwilling to offend them; without the large mind necessary to grasp great questions, uncertain of himself, and in many things ready to lean too much on others.[3]

Of course, after a dictum so thoroughly in harmony with his own opinions, the Secretary naïvely records that he "found this gentleman well read and extremely intelligent." In reply to a correspondent, whose letters were filled with the most violent abuse of the President and other officers of the Government, he had no word of rebuke. He simply replied:

> I am not responsible for the management of the war and have no voice in it, except that I am not forbidden to make suggestions; and do so now and then when I can't help it.[4]

He had no defense for his colleagues against the attacks of his correspondent, except to say:

> Nor should you forget that a war managed by a President, a commanding general, and a secretary, cannot, especially when the great differences of temperament, wishes, and intellectual characteristics of these three are taken into account, reasonably be expected to be conducted in the best possible manner. This condition can only be remedied by the President, and, as yet, he fears the remedy most.

The President was not unaware of this disposition of his minister of finance towards him. Presidents in even a greater degree than kings are kept informed of all currents of favor and hostility about them; for besides being to an equal degree the source of favors and of power, they are not surrounded by any of that divinity which hedges the hereditary ruler, and they are compelled to listen to the crude truth from the hundreds of statesmen and politicians who surround them. And, besides this, the Secretary of the Treasury was a man too direct and too straightforward to work in the darkness. He records in his diary a singular conversation which he held with Mr. Thurlow Weed, an intimate and trusted counselor of the President and the bosom friend of the Secretary of State:

> Weed called, and we had a long talk. . . . I told him I did not doubt Mr. Seward's fidelity to his ideas of progress, amelioration, and freedom, but that I thought he adhered too tenaciously to men who proved themselves unworthy and dangerous, such as McClellan; that he resisted too persistently decided measures; that his influence encouraged the irresolution and inaction of the President in respect to men and measures, although personally he was as decided as anybody in favor of vigorous prosecution of the war, and as active as anybody in concerting plans of action against the rebels.[5]

It is altogether probable that Mr. Weed would consider it his duty to communicate to his friends this disparaging view entertained of them by the Secretary of the Treasury; and when we consider that Mr. Chase talked and wrote in this strain to hundreds of people in regard to his associates, it is likely that they were as thoroughly aware of his opinions and utterances as if he had made them in Cabinet meeting. But Seward was, as the President once said of him, "a man without gall"; and it was the lifelong habit of Mr. Lincoln to disregard slights that were personal to himself.

1 Shuckers, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 377.
2 Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 505.
3 It is doubtless by a slip of the pen that the Secretary attributed this conversation to General Hunter. It was evidently General Halpine, who called with General Hunter, that gave him this highly satisfactory view of the President's character.
4 Warden, p. 549.
5 Ibid., p. 475.

He had the greatest respect and admiration for Mr. Chase's capacity; he believed thoroughly in his devotion to the national cause; and seeing every day the proof of his pure and able management of the finances of the Government, he steadily refused to consider the question of the Secretary's feelings towards himself.

It was near the end of the year 1862 that an incident occurred which threatened for a time to deprive the Government of the services of the Secretaries both of State and of the Treasury. A strong feeling of discontent, gradually ripening into one of hostility, had grown up in the Senate against Mr. Seward. It was founded principally upon the ground formulated by Mr. Chase in his interview with Weed that he "adhered too tenaciously to men who proved themselves unworthy and dangerous, such as McClellan; that he resisted too persistently decided measures; that his influence encouraged the irresolution and inaction of the President in respect to men and measures"; and Mr. Sumner, who had up to this time been friendly rather than otherwise to Mr. Seward, was suddenly brought into sympathy with his opponents by discovering in the diplomatic correspondence a phrase bracketing together the secessionists and the extreme antislavery men for equal condemnation and criticism.[1]

The feeling against the Secretary of State at last attained such a height in the Senate that a caucus was called to consider the matter, which resulted in a vote being taken demanding of the President the dismissal of Mr. Seward from his Cabinet. As a matter of taste and expediency this resolution later in the evening was withdrawn and another adopted in its place requesting the President to reconstruct the Cabinet, in which, although Mr. Seward's name was not mentioned, the intention of the Republican senators remained equally clear. A committee was appointed to present the sense of the caucus to the President; but before this was carried into effect, Senator King of New York, meeting the Secretary of State, acquainted him with these proceedings, and he, with his son, the Assistant-Secretary of State, at once presented their resignations to the President.

On the morning of the 19th of December a committee of nine waited upon the President and presented him the resolutions adopted the day before. A long and earnest conference took place between the President and the committee, which was marked on both sides by unusual candor and moderation. They attacked, one by one, the Secretary of State, not for any specific wrong-doing, but for a supposed lukewarmness in the conduct of affairs, and especially for a lack of interest in the antislavery measures of the Administration, which they considered essential to a successful prosecution of the war. When the President reported this conference to his Cabinet afterwards he said, in his own peculiar imagery:

> While they seemed to believe in my honesty, they also appeared to think that when I had in me any good purpose or intention Seward contrived to suck it out of me unperceived.

The conference ended without other result than an appointment for the committee to call again in the evening. Lincoln at once called the Cabinet together and laid the entire matter before them. He gave them distinctly to understand that in this proceeding he was not inviting or intimating that he desired the resignation of any of them. He said he could not afford to lose any of them; that he did not see how he could get on with a Cabinet composed of new material; and he dismissed the council with the request that they also should meet him that evening. The committee and the Cabinet — Seward of course being absent — came together in accordance with the President's instruction, and each party was greatly surprised to find the other there. Mr. Lincoln was determined, however, to have a thorough and frank discussion, so that hereafter neither in his government nor in the Senate should it be possible to say that there were any points between them concealed or unexplained. The President stated the case and read the resolutions of the senators, commenting upon parts of it with some gentle severity. A general discussion then took place, marked with singular frankness, both in the attack and the defense, Collamer and Fessenden speaking with more mildness than the others, but Grimes, Sumner,

[1] Mr. Seward, writing to Mr. Adams on the 5th of July, 1862, had used this phrase: "It seems as if the extreme advocates of African slavery and its most vehement opponents were acting in concert together to precipitate a servile war — the former by making the most desperate attempts to overthrow the Federal Union, the latter by demanding an edict of universal emancipation as a lawful and necessary, if not, as they say, the only legitimate way of saving the Union." When we reflect that only eight days after these words were written the President informed Mr. Seward of his intention to issue his emancipating edict, we may imagine how far the Secretary was from penetrating the mind of his chief — a fault for which he ought not perhaps to be blamed, considering the extreme reticence which the President observed at that time in regard to his intentions. Still, the dispatch was unnecessary, and the critics of the Secretary contended, not without reason, that it should not have been sent before being submitted to the President's approval. He had also said, writing to Mr. Dayton on the 22d of April, that "the rights of the States and the condition of every human being in them will remain subject to exactly the same laws and forms of administration, whether the revolution shall succeed or whether it shall fail." This also had given great offense to the radical antislavery men.

and Trumbull attacking the Cabinet generally, and Mr. Seward particularly, with considerable sharpness. The Cabinet defended themselves in general and their absent colleague with equal energy but with unruffled temper. Mr. Chase alone seemed to feel himself in a false position. As we have seen in his interview with Weed, he was in the habit of using precisely the same expressions in regard to the Secretary of State as those employed by the senators. Brought to bay thus unexpectedly and summoned to speak before both parties to the controversy, he naturally felt the embarrassment of the situation. He could not join the Senate in their attack upon the Administration and he could not effectively defend his colleagues in the presence of eight senators, to all of whom he had probably spoken in derogation of the President and the Secretary of State. He protested with some heat against the attitude in which he was placed, and said he would not have come if he had expected to be arraigned. When the fire of the discussion had burned itself out, Mr. Lincoln then took a formal vote. "Do you, gentlemen," he said, "still think Seward ought to be excused?" Grimes, Trumbull, Sumner, and Pomeroy said "Yes." Collamer, Fessenden, and Howard declined to commit themselves. Harris was opposed to it and Wade was absent. The meeting broke up late at night, says Secretary Welles, "in a milder spirit than it met." The free talk had cleared the air somewhat, and both parties to the controversy respected each other more than before. As the senators were retiring, Mr. Trumbull paused for a moment at the door, then, turning, walked rapidly back to the President and said to him privately, but with great vehemence, that the Secretary of the Treasury had held a very different tone the last time he had spoken with him.

The news of this stormy meeting quickly transpired, and the next morning there was great discussion and excitement in the town. The resignation of Seward was regarded as irrevocable, and all the amateur Cabinet-makers were busy in the preparation of a new Administration. The hopes of all the enemies of the Government were greatly stimulated by this indication of divided counsels, and the partisans of General McClellan in particular thought they saw in this conjuncture the occasion for his return to power. In fact, they felt so sure of his speedy restoration to command that they began to stipulate as the price of their adhesion to him that he should dictate his own terms on his return; that he must insist upon the disposal of all the important commands in the army.[1] They imagined that the President would be so helpless that the friends of McClellan might demand any terms they thought good.

[1] Welles, Diary.

The President, though deeply distressed at the turn which affairs had taken, preserved his coolness and kept his own counsel. On the morning of the 20th, in the presence of several other members of the Cabinet who had called for further discussion of the crisis, the Secretary of the Treasury tendered his resignation. He held the written paper in his hand, but did not advance to deliver it. The President stepped forward and took it with an alacrity that surprised and, it must be said, disappointed Mr. Chase. He then at once dismissed the meeting. From the moment when he saw Mr. Chase holding his resignation in his hand, his way was clear before him. He at once sent an identical note to the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of State, saying:

> You have respectively tendered me your resignations as Secretary of State and Secretary of the Treasury of the United States. I am apprised of the circumstances which may render this course personally desirable to each of you; but after most anxious consideration my deliberate judgment is that the public interest does not admit of it. I therefore have to request that you will resume the duties of your Departments respectively.
>
> Your obedient servant,
>
> A. LINCOLN.

The next morning Mr. Seward addressed a brief note to the President, dated at the Department of State, and saying: "I have cheerfully resumed the functions of this Department, in obedience to your command"; and inclosed a copy of this note to the Secretary of the Treasury. Mr. Chase found his position not quite so simple as that of the Secretary of State. He did not follow Mr. Seward's example in returning to the Cabinet as promptly as he did in leaving it. He wrote him a brief letter, saying:

> I have received your note and also a call from Mr. Nicolay, to whom I have promised an answer to the President to-morrow morning. My reflections strengthen my conviction that being once honorably out of the Cabinet no important public interest now requires my return to it. If I yield this judgment, it will be in deference to apprehensions which really seem to me unfounded. I will sleep on it.

He had seen in the face of the President the gratification which the tender of his resignation had imparted, and returning to his house, while not entirely comprehending what had happened, he seemed conscious that he had made a misstep. He wrote a letter to the President, from which we take a few paragraphs:

> Will you allow me to say that something you said or looked when I handed you my resignation this morning made on my mind the impression

that having received the resignations both of Governor Seward and myself you felt that you could relieve yourself from trouble by declining to accept either, and that this feeling was one of gratification.

He then went on to say that he was glad of any opportunity to promote the comfort of the President, but that he did not desire him to decline accepting his resignation. He said:

> Recent events have too rudely jostled the unity of your Cabinet and disclosed an opinion too deeply seated, and too generally received in Congress and in the country, to be safely disregarded, that the concord in judgment and action essential to successful administration does not prevail among its members. By some the embarrassment of Administration is attributed to me; by others, to Mr. Seward; by others still, to other heads of Departments. Now neither Mr. Seward nor myself is essential to you or to the country. We both earnestly wish to be relieved from the oppressive charge of our respective Departments, and we have both placed our resignations in your hands.

He concluded by saying he thought both himself and Mr. Seward could better serve the country at that time as private citizens than in the Cabinet. He did not immediately transmit this letter to the President, and after hearing from Mr. Seward that he had gone back to the Cabinet his suggestion that both would better retire was no longer practicable. After a Sunday passed in very serious consideration, he resolved to withdraw his resignation. He was unable, even then, to imitate the brevity of Mr. Seward's note. He sent to the President his note of the 20th inclosed in another, in which he said that reflection had not much, if at all, changed his original impression, but that it had led him to the conclusion that he had in this matter to conform his action to the President's judgment. He would therefore resume his post as Secretary of the Treasury, ready, however, to retire at any moment if, in the President's judgment, the success of the Administration might be in the slightest degree promoted thereby.

The untrained diplomatist of Illinois had thus met and conjured away, with unsurpassed courage and skill, one of the severest crises that ever threatened the integrity of his Administration. He had to meet it absolutely unaided: from the nature of the case he could take no advice from those who were nearest him in the Government. By his bold and original expedient of confronting the senators with the Cabinet, and having them discuss their mutual misunderstandings under his own eye, he cleared up many dangerous misconceptions, and, as usually happens when both parties are men of intelligence and good-will, brought about a friendlier and more considerate feeling between his government and the Republican leaders than had ever before existed. By placing Mr. Chase in such an attitude that his resignation became necessary to his own sense of dignity he made himself absolute master of the situation; by treating the resignations and the return to the Cabinet of both ministers as one and the same transaction he saved for the nation the invaluable services of both, and preserved his own position of entire impartiality between the two wings of the Union party. The results of this achievement were not merely temporary. From that hour there was a certain loosening of the hitherto close alliance between Mr. Chase and the Republican opposition to the President, while a kind of comradeship, born of their joint sortie and reëntrance into the Government, gave thereafter a greater semblance of cordiality to the relations between the Secretaries of State and of the Treasury. But above all, the incident left the President seated more firmly than ever in the saddle. When the Cabinet had retired, and left the President with the resignation of Mr. Chase in his hands, he said to a friend who entered soon after, in one of those graphic metaphors so often suggested to him by the memories of his pioneer childhood, and which revealed his careless greatness perhaps more clearly than his most labored official utterances, "Now I can ride; I have got a pumpkin in each end of my bag."[1]

Nearly a year later he said in a conversation relating to this matter:

> I do not see how it could have been done better. I am sure it was right. If I had yielded to that storm and dismissed Seward the thing would all have slumped over one way, and we should have been left with a scanty handful of supporters. When Chase gave in his resignation I saw that the game was in my hands, and I put it through.

Though the opposition to Mr. Seward did not immediately come to an end,[2] it never exhibited such vitality again, and its later manifestations were treated far more cavalierly by Mr. Lincoln. He had even before this dismissed one very respectable committee from New York who had called to express an unfavorable opinion of the premier, by saying with unwonted harshness, "You would be willing to see the country ruined if you could turn out Seward"; [3] and after this incident he never again allowed the Secretary of State to be attacked in his presence.

[1] J. H., Diary.

[2] There was a long and heated discussion between Mr. Greeley and Mr. Raymond, in the columns of the "Tribune" and "Times," in regard to the culpability of the Secretary of State in the matter of his dispatches.

[3] Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 468.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A HISTORY.[1]

THE EDICT OF FREEDOM.

BY JOHN G. NICOLAY AND JOHN HAY, PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO THE PRESIDENT.

IN his preliminary proclamation of September 22 President Lincoln had announced his intention to urge once more upon Congress his policy of compensated abolishment. Accordingly his annual message of December 1, 1862, was in great part devoted to a discussion of this question. "Without slavery," he premised, "the rebellion could never have existed; without slavery it could not continue." His argument presented anew, with broad prophetic forecast, the folly of disunion, the brilliant destiny of the Republic as a single nation, the safety of building with wise statesmanship upon its coming population and wealth. He stated that by the law of increase shown in the census tables the country might expect to number over two hundred millions of people in less than a century.

> And we will reach this too [he continued] if we do not ourselves relinquish the chance, by the folly and evils of disunion, or by long and exhausting war springing from the only great element of national discord among us. While it cannot be foreseen exactly how much one huge example of secession, breeding lesser ones indefinitely, would retard population, civilization, and prosperity, no one can doubt that the extent of it would be very great and injurious. The proposed emancipation would shorten the war, perpetuate peace, insure this increase of population, and proportionately the wealth of the country. With these we should pay all the emancipation would cost, together with our other debt, easier than we should pay our other debt without it.

He therefore recommended that Congress should propose to the legislatures of the several States a constitutional amendment, consisting of three articles, namely: one providing compensation in bonds for every State which should abolish slavery before the year 1900; another securing freedom to all slaves who during the rebellion had enjoyed actual freedom by the chances of war—also providing compensation to loyal owners; the third authorizing Congress to provide for colonization.

> The plan [continued the message] consisting of these articles is recommended, not but that a restoration of the national authority would be accepted without its adoption. Nor will the war, nor proceedings under the proclamation of September 22, 1862, be stayed because of the recommendation of this plan. Its timely adoption, I doubt not, would bring restoration, and thereby stay both. And, notwithstanding this plan, the recommendation that Congress provide by law for compensating any State which may adopt emancipation before this plan shall have been acted upon is hereby earnestly renewed. Such would be only an advance part of the plan, and the same arguments apply to both. This plan is recommended as a means, not in exclusion of, but additional to, all others for restoring and preserving the national authority throughout the Union. . . . The plan is proposed as permanent constitutional law. It cannot become such without the concurrence of, first, two-thirds of Congress, and, afterwards, three-fourths of the States. The requisite three-fourths of the States will necessarily include seven of the slave States. Their concurrence, if obtained, will give assurance of their severally adopting emancipation at no very distant day upon the new constitutional terms. This assurance would end the struggle now and save the Union forever. . . . We can succeed only by concert. It is not, "Can any of us imagine better?" but, "Can we all do better?" Object whatsoever is possible, still the question recurs, "Can we do better?" The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew, and act anew. We must disenthral ourselves, and then we shall save our country.
>
> Fellow-citizens, we cannot escape history. We, of this Congress and this Administration, will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance, or insignificance, can spare one or another of us. The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down, in honor or dishonor, to the latest generation. We say we are for the Union. The world will not forget that we say this. We know how to save the Union. The world knows we do know how to save it. We—even we here—hold the power, and bear the responsibility. In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free—honorable alike in what we give and what we preserve. We shall nobly save, or meanly lose, the last, best hope of earth. Other means may succeed, this could not fail. The way is plain, peaceful, generous, just—a way which, if followed, the world will forever applaud, and God must forever bless.[2]

No immediate action followed this patriotic appeal. No indications of reviving unionism were manifested in the distinctively rebel States. No popular expression of a willingness to abandon slavery and accept compensation came from the loyal border-slave States, ex-

[2] Annual Message, December 1, 1862.

FAC-SIMILE (FROM THE ORIGINAL MS. IN POSSESSION OF THE AUTHORS) OF THE FIRST DRAFT OF THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION, SHOWN TO THE CABINET IN JULY, 1862. (SEE "THE CENTURY" FOR DECEMBER, 1888, P. 292.)

In pursuance of the sixth section of the act of Congress entitled "An act to suppress insurrection and to punish treason and rebellion, to seize and confiscate property of rebels, and for other purposes" Approved July 17. 1862, and which act, and the joint Resolution explanatory thereof, are hereunto published, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do hereby proclaim to, and warn all persons within the contemplation of said sixth section to cease participating in, aiding, countenancing, or abetting the existing rebellion, or any rebellion against the government of the United States, and to return to their proper allegiance to the United States, on pain of the forfeitures and seizures, as within and by said sixth section provided.

And I hereby make known that it is my purpose, upon the next meeting of Congress, to again recommend the adoption of a practical measure for tendering pecuniary aid to the free choice or rejection, of any and all States which may then be recognizing and practically sustaining the authority of the United States, and which may then have voluntarily adopted, or thereafter may voluntarily adopt, gradual ~~adoption~~ abolishment of slavery within such State or States— that the object is to practically restore, thenceforward to maintain, the constitutional relation between the general government, and each, and all the States, wherein that relation

is now suspended, or disturbed; and that, for this object, the war, as it has been, will be prosecuted. And, as a fit and necessary military measure for effecting this object, I, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, do order and declare that on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand, eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or states, wherein the constitutional authority of the United States shall not then be practically recognized, submitted to, and maintained, shall then, thenceforward, and forever, be free.

Emancipation Proclamation as first sketched and shown to the Cabinet on July 1862.

INDORSEMENT ON THE DOCUMENT GIVEN ABOVE.

cept, perhaps, in a qualified way from Missouri, where the emancipation sentiment was steadily progressing, though with somewhat convulsive action owing to the quarrel which divided the unionists of that State. Thus the month of December wore away and the day approached when it became necessary for the President to execute the announcement of emancipation made in his preliminary proclamation of September 22. That he was ready at the appointed time is shown by an entry in the diary of Secretary Welles:

At the meeting to-day [December 30, 1862], the President read the draft of his Emancipation Proclamation, invited criticism, and finally directed that copies should be furnished to each. It is a good and well prepared paper, but I suggested that a part of the sentence marked in pencil be omitted. Chase advised that fractional parts of States ought not to be exempted. In this I think he is right, and so stated. Practically there would be difficulty in freeing parts of States and not freeing others—a clashing between central and local authorities.[1]

[1] Unpublished MS.

It will be remembered that when the President proposed emancipation on the 22d of July and again when he announced emancipation on the 22d of September he informed his Cabinet that he had decided the main matter for himself and that he asked their advice only upon subordinate points. In now taking up the subject for the third and final review there was neither doubt nor hesitation in regard to the central policy and act about to be consummated. But there were several important minor questions upon which, as before, he wished the advice of his Cabinet, and it was to present these in concise form for discussion that he wrote his draft and furnished each of them a copy on the 30th of December, as Mr. Welles relates. This draft, omitting its mere routine phraseology and quotations from the former proclamation, continued as follows:

Now therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and Government of the United States, and as a proper and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my intention so to do, publicly proclaimed for one hundred days as aforesaid, order and designate as the States and parts of States in which the people thereof respectively are this day in rebellion against the United States the follow-

By the President of the
United States of America
A Proclamation.

I Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America, and Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy thereof, do hereby proclaim and declare that hereafter, as heretofore, the war will be prosecuted for the object of practically restoring the constitutional relation between the United States, and each of the states, and the people thereof, in which states that relation is, or may be suspended, or disturbed.

That it is my purpose, upon the next meeting of Congress to again recommend the adoption of a practical measure tendering pecuniary aid to the free acceptance or rejection of all Slave-states, so called, the people whereof may not then be in rebellion against the United States, and which states, may then have voluntarily adopted, or thereafter may voluntarily adopt, immediate, or gradual abolishment of slavery within their respective limits; and that the effort to colonize persons of African descent with their consent upon this continent, or elsewhere, with the previously obtained consent of the Government will be continued.

the Existing(?)

That on the first day of January in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any state, or designated part of a state, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the executive govern-
ment of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will, ~~during the con-~~
~~tinuance in office of the present incumbent~~, re-
cognize, and maintain the freedom of such persons, ~~and do not repress~~, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

That the executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States, and parts of states, if any, in which the people thereof respectively, shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any state, or the people thereof shall, on that day be, in good faith represented in the Congress of the United States, by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the

qualified voters of such state shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such state and the people thereof, are not then in rebellion against the United States.

That attention is hereby called to an Act of Congress entitled "An Act to make an additional Article of War" approved March 13. 1862, and which act is in the words and figure following.

> *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That hereafter the following shall be promulgated as an additional article of war for the government of the army of the United States and shall be obeyed and observed as such:
>
> Article —. All officers or persons in the military or naval service of the United States are prohibited from employing any of the forces under their respective commands for the purpose of returning fugitives from service or labor, who may have escaped from any persons to whom such service or labor is claimed to be due, and any officer who shall be found guilty by a court-martial of violating this article shall be dismissed from the service.
>
> SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That this act shall take effect from and after its passage.

Also to the ninth and tenth sections of an act entitled An Act to suppress Insurrection, to punish Treason and Rebellion, to seize and confiscate property of rebels, and for other purposes," approved July 17. 1862, and which sections are in the words and figures following.

> SEC. 9. *And be it further enacted*, That all slaves of persons who shall hereafter be engaged in rebellion against the government of the United States or who shall in any way give aid or comfort thereto escaping from such persons and taking refuge within the lines of the army; and all slaves captured from such persons or deserted by them and coming under the control of the government of the United States; and all slaves of such persons found on [or] being within any place occupied by rebel forces and afterwards occupied by the forces of the United States shall be deemed captives of war, and shall be forever free of their servitude and not again held as slaves.
>
> SEC. 10. *And be it further enacted*, That no slave escaping into any State, Territory, or the District of Columbia, from any other State, shall be delivered up, or in any way impeded or hindered of his liberty, except for crime, or some offence against the laws, unless the person claiming said fugitive shall first make oath that the person to whom the labor or service of such fugitive is alleged to be due is his lawful owner, and has not borne arms against the United States in the present rebellion nor in any way given aid and comfort therein: and no person engaged in the military or naval service of the United States shall, under any pretence whatever, assume to decide on the validity of the claim of any person to the service or labor of any other person, or surrender up any such person to the claimant, on pain of being dismissed from the service.

And I do hereby enjoin upon and orders all persons engaged in the Military and Naval service of the United States to observe, obey, and enforce, within their respective spheres of service, the act, and sections above recited.

And the executive will, in due time ~~at the next Session of Congress~~, recommend that all citizens of the United States who shall have remained loyal thereto throughout the rebellion, shall (upon the restoration of the Constitutional relation between the United States, and their respective states, and people, if that relation shall have been suspended or disturbed) be compensated for all losses by acts of the United States including the loss of slaves.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

L. S.

Done at the City of Washington, this twenty second day of September, in the year of our Lord, one thousand, eight hundred and sixty two, and of the Independence of the United States, the eighty seventh.

Abraham Lincoln.

By the President

William H. Seward,

Secretary of State

INDORSEMENT.

WASHINGTON, JANUARY 4, 1864. MY DEAR MRS. BARNES: I have the pleasure of sending you, with the President's permission, the original draft of his September proclamation. The body of it is in his own handwriting, the pencilled additions in the hand of the Secretary of State, and the final beginning and ending in the hand of the chief clerk. Yours very sincerely, F. W. SEWARD.

MRS. EMILY W. BARNES, ALBANY, N. Y.

By the President of the United States of America:

A Proclamation.

Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to-wit:

"That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

"That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof, respectively, shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be, in good faith, represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State, and the people thereof, are not then in rebellion against the United States."

Now, therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief, of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion against authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do, publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days, from the day first above mentioned, order and designate

as the States and parts of States wherein the peoples thereof, respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following, to wit:

Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, (except the Parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James Ascension, Assumption, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the city of New Orleans) Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South-Carolina, North-Carolina, and Virginia, (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth-city, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk & Portsmouth); and which excepted parts are, for the present, left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and hencefoward shall be free; and that the Executive government of the United States, including the Military and Naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

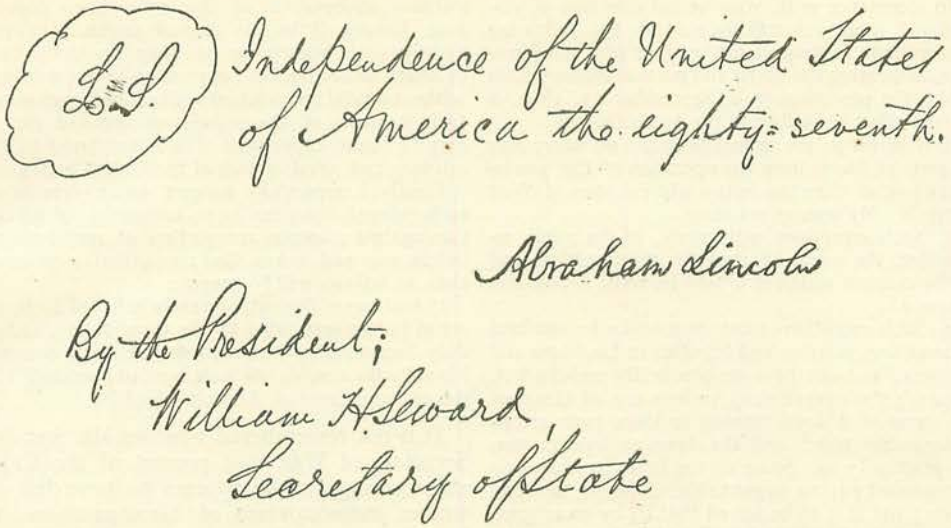
And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known, that such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, and of the



Independence of the United States of America the eighty-seventh.

Abraham Lincoln

By the President;
William H. Seward,
Secretary of State

ing, to wit: Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, except the Parishes of

Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia, except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of

And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order, and declare, that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward forever shall be, free; and that the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons, and will do no act, or acts, to repress said persons, or any of them, in any suitable efforts they may make for their actual freedom. And I hereby appeal to the people so declared to be free to abstain from all disorder, tumult, and violence, unless in necessary self-defense; and in all cases, when allowed, to labor faithfully for wages.

And I further declare, and make known, that such persons of suitable condition will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison and defend forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.[1]

It will be seen that this draft presented for discussion, in addition to mere verbal criticism, the question of defining the fractional portions of Virginia and Louisiana under Federal control and the yet more important policy, now for the first time announced by the President, of his intention to incorporate a portion of the newly liberated slaves into the armies of the Union.

Mr. Welles's diary for Wednesday, December 31, 1862, thus continues:

We had an early and special Cabinet meeting—convened at 10 A. M. The subject was the proclamation of to-morrow to emancipate the slaves in the rebel States. Seward proposed two amendments. One included mine, and one enjoining upon, instead of appealing to, those emancipated to forbear from tumult. Blair had, like Seward and myself, proposed the omission of a part of a sentence and made other suggestions which I thought improvements. Chase made some good criticisms and proposed a felicitous closing sentence. The President took the suggestions, written in order, and said he would complete the document.[1]

From the manuscript letters and memoranda we glean more fully the modifications of the amendments proposed by the several members of the Cabinet. The changes suggested in Mr. Seward's note were all verbal, and were three in number. *First:* Following the declaration that "the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons," he proposed to omit the further words which had been used in the September proclamation, "and will do no act, or acts, to repress said persons, or any of them, in any suitable efforts they may make for their actual freedom." Mr. Welles had suggested the same change. *Secondly:* The next sentence, which read, "And I hereby appeal to the people so declared to be free to abstain from all disorder," etc., Mr. Seward proposed should read, "And I hereby command and require the people so declared to be free to abstain from all disorder," etc. *Thirdly:* The phrase, "and in all cases, when allowed, to labor faithfully for wages," he proposed should read, "and I do recommend to them in all cases, when allowed, to labor faithfully for just and reasonable wages."[1]

The criticisms submitted by Mr. Chase were quite long and full, and since they suggested the most distinctive divergence from the President's plan, namely, that of making no exceptions of fractional portions of States, except the forty-eight counties of West Virginia, his letter needs to be quoted in full:

[1] Unpublished MS.

In accordance with your verbal direction of yesterday I most respectfully submit the following observations in respect to the draft of a proclamation designating the States and parts of States within which the proclamation of September 22, 1862, is to take effect according to the terms thereof.

I. It seems to me wisest to make no exceptions of parts of States from the operation of the proclamation other than the forty-eight counties of West Virginia. My reasons are these:

1. Such exceptions will impair, in the public estimation, the moral effect of the proclamation, and invite censure which it would be well, if possible, to avoid.

2. Such exceptions must necessarily be confined to some few parishes and counties in Louisiana and Virginia, and can have no practically useful effect. Through the operation of various acts of Congress the slaves of disloyal masters in those parts are already enfranchised, and the slaves of loyal masters are practically so. Some of the latter have already commenced paying wages to their laborers, formerly slaves; and it is to be feared that if, by exceptions, slavery is practically reëstablished in favor of some masters, while abolished by law and by the necessary effect of military occupation as to others, very serious inconveniences may arise.

3. No intimation of exceptions of this kind is given in the September proclamation, nor does it appear that any intimations otherwise given have been taken into account by those who have participated in recent elections, or that any exceptions of their particular localities are desired by them.

II. I think it would be expedient to omit from the proposed proclamation the declaration that the Executive Government of the United States will do no act to repress the enfranchised in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom. This clause in the September proclamation has been widely quoted as an incitement to servile insurrection. In lieu of it, and for the purpose of shaming these misrepresentations, I think it would be well to insert some such clause as this: "not encouraging or countenancing, however, any disorderly or licentious conduct." If this alteration is made, the appeal to the enslaved may, properly enough, be omitted. It does not appear to be necessary, and may furnish a topic to the evil-disposed for censure and ridicule.

III. I think it absolutely certain that the rebellion can in no way be so certainly, speedily, and economically suppressed as by the organized military force of the loyal population of the insurgent regions, of whatever complexion. In no way can irregular violence and servile insurrection be so surely prevented as by the regular organization and regular military employment of those who might otherwise probably resort to such courses. Such organization is now in successful progress, and the concurrent testimony of all connected with the colored regiments in Louisiana and South Carolina is that they are brave, orderly, and efficient. General Butler declares that without his colored regiments he could not have attempted his recent important movements in the Lafourche region; and General Saxton bears equally explicit testimony to the good credit and efficiency of the colored troops recently sent on an expedition along the coast of Georgia. Considering these facts, it seems to me that it would be best to omit from the proclamation all reference to military employment of the enfranchised population, leaving it to the natural course of things already well begun; or to state distinctly that, in order to secure the suppression of the rebellion without servile insurrection or licentious marauding, such numbers of the population declared free as may be found convenient will be employed in the military and naval service of the United States.

Finally, I respectfully suggest, on an occasion of such interest, there can be no imputation of affectation against a solemn recognition of responsibility before men and before God; and that some such close as follows will be proper:

"And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice warranted by the Constitution, and of duty demanded by the circumstances of the country, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God."[1]

It is not remembered whether Mr. Stanton, Secretary of War, was present at the Cabinet meeting, but he appears to have left no written memorandum of his suggestions, if he offered any. Stanton was preëminently a man of action, and the probability is that he agreed to the President's draft without amendment. The Cabinet also lacked one member of being complete. Mr. Caleb B. Smith, Secretary of the Interior, had lately been transferred to the vacant bench of the United States District Court of Indiana, and his successor, Mr. Usher, was not appointed until about a week after the date of which we write.

The unpublished memorandum of Mr. Blair, Postmaster-General, proposed a condensation of several of the paragraphs in the President's draft as follows:

I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States and parts of States shall be free; and that the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons. And, in order that they may render all the aid they are willing to give to this object and to the support of the Government, authority will be given to receive them into the service whenever they can be usefully employed, and they may be armed to garrison forts, to defend positions and stations, and to man vessels. And I appeal to them to show themselves worthy of freedom by fidelity and diligence in the employments which may be given to them, by the observance of order, and by abstaining from all violence not required by duty or for self-defense. It is due to them to say that the conduct of large numbers of these people since the war began justifies confidence in their fidelity and humanity generally.[1]

The unpublished memorandum of Attorney-General Bates is also quite full, and combats the recommendation of Secretary Chase concerning fractions of States.

I respectfully suggest [he wrote] that: 1. The President issue the proclamation "by virtue of the power in him vested as Commander-in-Chief of

[1] MS.

the army and navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion," etc., "and as a proper and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion."—Date, January, 1863. 2. It is done in accordance with the first proclamation of September 22, 1862. 3. It distinguishes between States and parts of States, and designates those States and parts of States "in which the people thereof, respectively, are this day (January 1, 1863) in rebellion against the United States."

These three propositions being true, I think they ought to be followed out, without excess or diminution, by action, not by the declaration of a principle nor the establishment of a law for the future guidance of others. It is a war measure by the President, —a matter of fact,—not a law by the legislature. And as to what is proposed to be done in the future the least said the better. Better leave yourself free to act in the emergencies as they arise, with as few embarrassing committals as possible. Whether a particular State or part of a State is or is not in actual rebellion on the 1st of January, 1863, is a simple matter of fact which the President in the first proclamation has promised to declare in the record. Of course it must be truly declared. It is no longer open to be determined as a matter of policy or prudence independently of the fact. And this applies with particular force to Virginia. The eastern shore of Virginia and the region round about Norfolk are now (December 31, 1862) more free from actual rebellion than are several of the forty-eight counties spoken of as West Virginia. If the latter be exempt from the proclamation, so also ought the former. And so in all the States that are considered in parts. The last paragraph of the draft I consider wholly useless, and probably injurious—being a needless pledge of future action, which may be quite as well done without as with the pledge.

In rewriting the proclamation for signature Mr. Lincoln in substance followed the suggestions made by the several members of the Cabinet as to mere verbal improvements; but in regard to the two important changes which had been proposed he adhered rigidly to his own draft. He could not consent to the view urged by Secretary Chase, that to omit the exemption of fractional parts of States would have no practical bearing. In his view this would touch the whole underlying theory and legal validity of his act and change its essential character. The second proposition favored by several members of the Cabinet, to omit any declaration of intention to enlist the freedmen in military service, while it was not so vital, yet partook of the same general effect as tending to weaken and discredit his main central act of authority.

Mr. Lincoln took the various manuscript notes and memoranda which his Cabinet advisers brought him on the 31st of December, and during that afternoon and the following morning with his own hand carefully rewrote the entire body of the draft of the proclamation. The blanks left to designate fractional parts of States he filled according to latest official advices of military limits;[1] and in the closing paragraph suggested by Chase he added, after the words "warranted by the Constitution," his own important qualifying correction, "upon military necessity."

It is a custom in the Executive Mansion to hold on New Year's Day an official and public reception, beginning at 11 o'clock in the morning, which keeps the President at his post in the Blue Room until 2 in the afternoon. The hour for this reception came before Mr. Lincoln had entirely finished revising the engrossed copy of the proclamation, and he was compelled to hurry away from his office to friendly handshaking and festal greeting with the rapidly arriving official and diplomatic guests. The rigid laws of etiquette held him to this duty for the space of three hours. Had actual necessity required it he could of course have left such mere social occupation at any moment; but the President saw no occasion for precipitancy. On the other hand, he probably deemed it wise that the completion of this momentous executive act should be attended by every circumstance of deliberation. Vast as were its consequences, the act itself was only the simplest and briefest formality. It could in no wise be made sensational or dramatic. Those characteristics attached, if at all, only to the long past decisions and announcements of July 22 and September 22 of the previous year. Those dates had witnessed the mental conflict and the moral victory. No ceremony was attempted or made of this final official signing. The afternoon was well advanced when Mr. Lincoln went back from his New Year's greetings, with his right hand so fatigued that it was an effort to hold the pen. There was no special convocation of the Cabinet or of prominent officials. Those who were in the house came to the executive office merely from the personal impulse of curiosity joined to momentary convenience. His signature was attached to one of the greatest and most beneficent military decrees of history in the presence of less than a dozen persons; after which it was carried to the Department of State to be attested by the great seal and deposited among the official archives.

Since several eminent lawyers have publicly questioned the legal validity of Mr. Lincoln's

[1] The fractional parts of States excepted in the proclamation were as follows: In Louisiana, the parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James, Ascension, Assumption, Terre Bonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the city of New Orleans; in Virginia, the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkeley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Anne, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth.

Edict of Freedom,—as his final Emancipation Proclamation may be properly styled,—it is worth while to gather, if possible, Mr. Lincoln's own conception and explanation of the constitutional and legal bearings of his act. There is little difficulty in arriving at this. His language, embodied in a number of letters and documents, contains such a distinct and logical exposition of the whole process of his thought and action, from the somewhat extreme conservatism of his first inaugural to his great edict of January 1, 1863, and the subsequent policy of its practical enforcement, that we need but arrange them in their obvious sequence.

The proper beginning is to be found in his letter of April 4, 1864, to A. G. Hodges, Esq., of Frankfort, Kentucky. In this he says:

> I am naturally antislavery. If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong. I cannot remember when I did not so think and feel, and yet I have never understood that the Presidency conferred upon me an unrestricted right to act officially upon this judgment and feeling. It was in the oath I took that I would, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States. I could not take the office without taking the oath. Nor was it my view that I might take an oath to get power, and break the oath in using the power. I understood, too, that in ordinary civil administration this oath even forbade me to practically indulge my primary abstract judgment on the moral question of slavery. I had publicly declared this many times, and in many ways. And I aver that, to this day, I have done no official act in mere deference to my abstract judgment and feeling on slavery. I did understand, however, that my oath to preserve the Constitution to the best of my ability imposed upon me the duty of preserving, by every indispensable means, that government—that nation, of which that Constitution was the organic law. Was it possible to lose the nation and yet preserve the Constitution? By general law, life and limb must be protected, yet often a limb must be amputated to save a life; but a life is never wisely given to save a limb. I felt that measures otherwise unconstitutional might become lawful by becoming indispensable to the preservation of the Constitution through the preservation of the nation. Right or wrong, I assumed this ground, and now avow it. I could not feel that, to the best of my ability, I had even tried to preserve the Constitution, if, to save slavery or any minor matter, I should permit the wreck of government, country, and Constitution together. When, early in the war, General Frémont attempted military emancipation, I forbade it, because I did not then think it an indispensable necessity. When, a little later, General Cameron, then Secretary of War, suggested the arming of the blacks, I objected, because I did not yet think it an indispensable necessity. When, still later, General Hunter attempted military emancipation, I again forbade it, because I did not yet think the indispensable necessity had come. When in March and May and July, 1862, I made earnest and successive appeals to the border States to favor compensated emancipation, I believed the indispensable necessity for military emancipation and arming the blacks would come unless averted by that measure. They declined the proposition, and I was, in my best judgment, driven to the alternative of either surrendering the Union, and with it the Constitution, or of laying strong hand upon the colored element. I chose the latter.

The question of legal and constitutional validity he discusses briefly, but conclusively, in his letter of August 26, 1863, to James C. Conkling, of Springfield, Illinois. In this, addressing himself to his critics, he says:

> You say it is unconstitutional. I think differently. I think the Constitution invests its Commander-in-Chief with the law of war in time of war. The most that can be said, if so much, is, that slaves are property. Is there, has there ever been, any question that, by the law of war, property, both of enemies and friends, may be taken when needed? And is it not needed whenever taking it helps us or hurts the enemy? Armies the world over destroy enemies' property when they cannot use it; and even destroy their own to keep it from the enemy. Civilized belligerents do all in their power to help themselves or hurt the enemy.

Admitting the general principle of international law, of the right of a belligerent to appropriate or destroy enemies' property, there came next the question of how his military decree of enfranchisement was practically to be applied.

This point, though not fully discussed, is sufficiently indicated in several extracts. In the draft of a letter to Charles D. Robinson he wrote, August 17, 1864:

> The way these measures were to help the cause was not by magic or miracles, but by inducing the colored people to come bodily over from the rebel side to ours.[1]

And in his letter to James C. Conkling of August 26, 1863, he says:

> But negroes, like other people, act upon motives. Why should they do anything for us if we will do nothing for them? If they stake their lives for us, they must be prompted by the strongest motive, even the promise of freedom. And the promise, being made, must be kept.

The actual tangible military result which he declares was his constitutional and legal warrant for his edict of military emancipation is set forth in the following extracts. Whether we judge it by the narrow technical rules of applied jurisprudence, or by the broader principles of the legal philosophy of Christian nations, it forms equally his complete vindication. In the draft of a letter to Isaac M. Schermerhorn he wrote, September 12, 1864:

> Any different policy in regard to the colored man deprives us of his help, and this is more than we can bear. We cannot spare the hundred and forty

[1] Unpublished MS.

or fifty thousand now serving us as soldiers, seamen, and laborers. This is not a question of sentiment or taste, but one of physical force, which may be measured and estimated as horse-power and steam-power are measured and estimated. Keep it, and you can save the Union. Throw it away, and the Union goes with it.[1]

And in the one already quoted, to Robinson, August 17, 1864:

Drive back to the support of the rebellion the physical force which the colored people now give and promise us, and neither the present nor any coming Administration can save the Union. Take from us and give to the enemy the hundred and thirty, forty, or fifty thousand colored persons now serving as soldiers, seamen, and laborers and we cannot longer maintain the contest.

So also in an interview with John T. Mills he said:

But no human power can subdue this rebellion without the use of the emancipation policy and every other policy calculated to weaken the moral and physical forces of the rebellion. Freedom has given 200,000 men, raised on Southern soil. It will give us more yet. Just so much it has subtracted from the enemy. . . . Let my enemies prove to the contrary that the destruction of slavery is not necessary to a restoration of the Union. I will abide the issue.

We might stop here and assume that President Lincoln's argument is complete. But he was by nature so singularly frank and conscientious, and by mental constitution so unavoidably logical, that he could not, if he had desired, do things or even seem to do them by indirection or subterfuge. This, the most weighty of his responsibilities and the most difficult of his trials, he could not permit to rest upon doubt or misconstruction. In addition to what we have already quoted he has left us a naked and final restatement of the main question, with the unequivocal answer of his motive and conviction. It has been shown above how Mr. Chase, in the discussions of the final phraseology of the January proclamation, urged him to omit his former exemptions of certain fractional parts of insurrectionary States. Despite the President's adverse decision, Mr. Chase continued from time to time to urge this measure during the year 1863. To these requests the President finally replied as follows on the 2d of September:

Knowing your great anxiety that the Emancipation Proclamation shall now be applied to certain parts of Virginia and Louisiana which were exempted from it last January, I state briefly what appear to me to be difficulties in the way of such a step. The original proclamation has no constitutional or legal justification, except as a military measure. The exemptions were made because the military necessity did not apply to the exempted localities. Nor does that necessity apply to them now any more than it did then. If I take the step must I not do so without the argument of military necessity, and so without any argument except the one that I think the measure politically expedient and morally right? Would I not thus give up all footing upon Constitution or law? Would I not thus be in the boundless field of absolutism? Could this pass unnoticed or unresisted? Could it fail to be perceived, that without any further stretch I might do the same in Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri, and even change any law in any State?[1]

[1] Unpublished MS.

In these extracts we have the President's outline explanation of the legal validity of the proclamation. Like all his reasoning, it is simple and strong, resting its authority on the powers of war and its justification upon military necessity. As to the minor subtleties of interpretation or comment which it might provoke from lawyers or judges after the war should be ended, we may infer that he had his opinions, but that they did not enter into his motives of action. On subsequent occasions, while continuing to declare his belief that the proclamation was valid in law, he nevertheless frankly admitted that what the courts might ultimately decide was beyond his knowledge as well as beyond his control.

For the moment he was dealing with two mighty forces of national destiny, civil war and public opinion; forces which paid little heed to theories of public, constitutional, or international law where they contravened their will and power. In fact it was the impotence of legislative machinery, and the insufficiency of legal dicta to govern or terminate the conflicts of public opinion on this identical question of slavery, which brought on civil strife. In the South slavery had taken up arms to assert its nationality and perpetuity; in the North freedom had risen first in mere defensive resistance, then the varying fortunes of war had rendered the combat implacable and mortal. It was not from the moldering volumes of ancient precedents, but from the issues of the present wager of battle, that future judges of courts would draw their doctrines to interpret to posterity whether the Edict of Freedom was void or valid.

When in the preceding July the crisis of the McClellan campaign had come upon the President he had written his well-considered resolve: "I expect to maintain this contest until successful, or till I die, or am conquered, or my term expires, or Congress or the country forsake me." Grand as was the historical act of signing his decree of liberation, it was but an incident in the grander contest he was commissioned and resolved to maintain. That was an issue, not alone of the bondage of a race, but of the life of a nation, a principle of government, a question of primary human right.

Was this act, this step, this incident in the

contest, wise or unwise? Would it bring success or failure? Would it fill the army, weaken the enemy, inspirit the country, unite public opinion? These, we may assume, and not a lawyer's criticisms of phrase or text, dictum or precedent, were the queries which filled his mind when he wrote his name at the bottom of the famous document. If the rebellion should triumph, establishing a government founded on slavery as its corner-stone, manifestly his proclamation would be but waste paper, though every court in Christendom outside the Confederate States should assert its official authority. If, on the other hand, the Union arms were victorious, every step of that victory would become clothed with the mantle of law. But if, in addition, it should turn out that the Union arms had been rendered victorious through the help of the negro soldiers, called to the field by the promise of freedom contained in the proclamation, then the decree and its promise might rest secure in the certainty of legal execution and fulfillment. To restore the Union by the help of black soldiers under pledge of liberty, and then, for the Union, under whatever legal doctrine or construction, to attempt to reënslave them, would be a wrong at which morality would revolt. "You cannot," said Mr. Lincoln in one of his early speeches, "repeal human nature."

The problem of statesmanship therefore was not one of theory, but of practice. Fame is due Mr. Lincoln, not alone because he decreed emancipation, but because events so shaped themselves under his guidance as to render the conception practical and the decree successful. Among the agencies he employed none proved more admirable or more powerful than this two-edged sword of the final proclamation, blending sentiment with force, leaguing liberty with Union, filling the voting armies at home and the fighting armies in the field. In the light of history we can see that by this edict Mr. Lincoln gave slavery its vital thrust, its mortal wound. It was the word of decision, the judgment without appeal, the sentence of doom.

But for the execution of the sentence, for the accomplishment of this result, he had yet many weary months to hope and to wait. Of its slow and tantalizing fruition, of the gradual dawning of that full day of promise, we cannot get a better description than that in his own words in his annual message to Congress nearly a year after the proclamation was signed:

> When Congress assembled a year ago the war had already lasted nearly twenty months, and there had been many conflicts on both land and sea, with varying results. The rebellion had been pressed back into reduced limits; yet the tone of public feeling and opinion, at home and abroad, was not satisfactory. With other signs, the popular elections, then just past, indicated uneasiness among ourselves; while amid much that was cold and menacing the kindest words coming from Europe were uttered in accents of pity that we were too blind to surrender a hopeless cause. Our commerce was suffering greatly by a few armed vessels built upon and furnished from foreign shores, and we were threatened with such additions from the same quarter as would sweep our trade from the sea and raise our blockade. We had failed to elicit from European governments anything hopeful upon this subject. The preliminary emancipation proclamation, issued in September, was running its assigned period to the beginning of the new year. A month later the final proclamation came, including the announcement that colored men of suitable condition would be received into the war service. The policy of emancipation and of employing black soldiers gave to the future a new aspect, about which hope and fear and doubt contended in uncertain conflict. According to our political system, as a matter of civil administration the General Government had no lawful power to effect emancipation in any State, and for a long time it had been hoped that the rebellion could be suppressed without resorting to it as a military measure. It was all the while deemed possible that the necessity for it might come, and that if it should the crisis of the contest would then be presented. It came, and, as was anticipated, it was followed by dark and doubtful days. Eleven months having now passed we are permitted to take another review. The rebel borders are pressed still further back, and by the complete opening of the Mississippi the country dominated by the rebellion is divided into distinct parts, with no practical communication between them. Tennessee and Arkansas have been substantially cleared of insurgent control, and influential citizens in each, owners of slaves and advocates of slavery at the beginning of the rebellion, now declare openly for emancipation in their respective States. Of those States not included in the Emancipation Proclamation, Maryland and Missouri, neither of which three years ago would tolerate any restraint upon the extension of slavery into new Territories, only dispute now as to the best mode of removing it within their own limits.
>
> Of those who were slaves at the beginning of the rebellion, full one hundred thousand are now in the United States military service, about one-half of which number actually bear arms in the ranks; thus giving the double advantage of taking so much labor from the insurgent cause and supplying the places which otherwise must be filled with so many white men. So far as tested it is difficult to say they are not as good soldiers as any. No servile insurrection or tendency to violence or cruelty has marked the measures of emancipation and arming the blacks. These measures have been much discussed in foreign countries, and contemporary with such discussion the tone of public sentiment there is much improved. At home the same measures have been fully discussed, supported, criticised, and denounced, and the annual elections following are highly encouraging to those whose official duty it is to bear the country through this great trial. Thus we have the new reckoning. The crisis which threatened to divide the friends of the Union is past.[1]

[1] Annual Message, Dec. 8, 1863.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A HISTORY.[1]

RETALIATION.—THE ENROLLMENT AND THE DRAFT.

BY JOHN G. NICOLAY AND JOHN HAY, PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO THE PRESIDENT.

RETALIATION.

THE policy of arming the blacks having been officially announced in the final Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863, steps were taken as rapidly as the nature of the case permitted to put the plan into practical execution. Mr. Lincoln not only watched these efforts with great interest, but from time to time personally wrote letters to several of his commanders urging them to active efforts in organizing negro regiments. If a single argument were needed to point out his great practical wisdom in the management of this difficult question, that argument is found in the mere summing up of its tangible military results.

We have seen that at the beginning of December, 1863, less than a year after the President first proclaimed the policy, he was able to announce in his annual message that about fifty thousand men formerly slaves were then actually bearing arms in the ranks of the Union forces. A report made by the Secretary of War on April 2, 1864, shows that the number of negro troops then mustered into the service of the United States as soldiers had increased to 71,976,[2] and we learn further from the report of the Provost-Marshal General that at the close of the war there were in the service of the United States, of colored troops, 120 regiments of infantry, 12 regiments of heavy artillery, 10 companies of light artillery, and 7 regiments of cavalry, making a grand aggregate of 123,156 men. This was the largest number in service at any one time, but it does not represent all of them. The entire number commissioned and enlisted in this branch of the service during the war, or, more properly speaking, during the last two years of the war, was 186,017 men.[3]

This magnificent exhibit is a testimony to Mr. Lincoln's statesmanship which can hardly be overvalued. If he had adopted the policy when it was first urged upon him by impulsive enthusiasts it would have brought his administration to political wreck, as was clearly indicated by the serious election reverses of 1862; but disregarding the impatience and the bad judgment of his advisers, and using that policy at the opportune moment, he made it not only a powerful lever to effect emancipation, but a military overweight, aiding effectually to crush the remaining rebel armies and bring the rebellion as a whole to a speedy and sudden collapse.

One point of doubt about employing negroes as soldiers was happily removed almost imperceptibly by the actual experiment. It had been a serious question with many thoughtful men whether the negro would fight. It was apprehended that his comparatively recent transition from barbarism to civilization and the inherited habits of subjection and dependence imposed upon him by two centuries of enslavement had left his manhood so dwarfed and deadened as to render him incapable of the steady and sustained physical and moral courage needful to armies in modern warfare. Practical trial in skirmish and battle gave an immediate and successful refutation to this fear, and proved the gallantry and trustworthiness of the black soldier in the severest trials of devotion and heroism. Within half a year after Lincoln's order of enlistment the black regiments had furnished such examples of bravery on many fields that commanders gave them unstinted praise, and white officers and soldiers heartily accepted them as worthy companions-in-arms.

The rebel authorities watched the experiment of arming the blacks with the keenest apprehension and hostility. In Mr. Lincoln's order of July 22, 1862, directing military commanders to seize and use property, real or personal, for military purposes, and to employ "persons of African descent as laborers," Jefferson Davis professed already to discover a wicked violation of the laws of war, apparently forgetting that his own generals were everywhere using such persons in military labor. When it was learned that Hunter and Phelps were endeavoring to organize negro regiments, the language employed to express Southern affectation of surprise and protest borders on the ludicrous. "The best authenticated news-

[2] *Stanton's* Report, April 2, 1864, unpublished MS.

[3] Report of the Provost-Marshal General.

papers received from the United States," writes General Lee, "announce as a fact that Major-General Hunter has armed slaves for the murder of their masters, and has thus done all in his power to inaugurate a servile war, which is worse than that of the savage, inasmuch as it superadds other horrors to the indiscriminate slaughter of ages, sexes, and conditions"; and Phelps is charged with imitating the bad example.[1] Halleck very properly returned this and another letter, as insulting to the Government of the United States. A little later the Confederate War Department issued a formal order:

That Major-General Hunter and Brigadier-General Phelps be no longer held and treated as public enemies of the Confederate States, but as outlaws; and that in the event of the capture of either of them, or that of any other commissioned officer employed in drilling, organizing, or instructing slaves, with a view to their armed service in this war, he shall not be regarded as a prisoner of war, but held in close confinement for execution as a felon at such time and place as the President shall order.[2]

Mr. Davis seems to have cultivated a sort of literary pride in these formulas of invective, for in his sensational proclamation of outlawry against General Butler and all commissioned officers in his command he repeats: "African slaves have not only been incited to insurrection by every license and encouragement, but numbers of them have actually been armed for a servile war — a war in its nature far exceeding the horrors and most merciless atrocities of savages." In this it was ordered that "negro slaves captured in arms be at once delivered over to the executive authorities of the respective States to which they belong, to be dealt with according to the laws of said States"; and that Butler and his commissioned officers, "robbers and criminals deserving death, be whenever captured reserved for execution."[3]

President Lincoln's two proclamations of emancipation excited similar threats. About a week after the first was issued it was made a subject of discussion in the Confederate senate at Richmond, and a Confederate writer recorded in his diary the next day: "Some of the gravest of our senators favor the raising of the black flag, asking and giving no quarter hereafter."[4] When the final proclamation reached Richmond, Jefferson Davis was writing his annual message to the rebel Congress, and he ransacked his dictionary for terms to stigmatize it. "Our detestation of those who have attempted the most execrable measure recorded in the history of guilty man is tempered by profound contempt for the impotent rage which it discloses."[5] This new provocation also broadened his field of retaliation. He now declared that he would deliver "such criminals as may attempt its execution"— all commissioned officers of the United States captured in States embraced in the proclamation — to the executives of such States, to be punished for exciting servile insurrection.

The Confederate Congress, while responding to the full degree of the proposed retaliation, nevertheless preferred to keep the power of such punishment in the hands of the central military authorities, apparently as promising a more certain and summary execution. That body passed a joint resolution, approved by Davis May 1, 1863, which prescribed that white officers of negro Union soldiers "shall, if captured, be put to death or be otherwise punished at the discretion of the court," the trial to take place "before the military court attached to the army or corps" making the capture, or such other military court as the Confederate President should designate.[6]

When the Confederate threats regarding negro soldiers were first launched the experiment had not yet been formally authorized by the Government; and as there was no probability that any early capture of such persons would be made by the enemy, no attention was paid to rebel orders and proclamations on the subject. A year later, however, when negro regiments were springing into full organization simultaneously in many places, the matter became one of grave import. As a rule, the black regiments were commanded by white officers, often selected, as was specially the case with the 54th Massachusetts, from the very best material, whose bravery in incurring this additional risk deserved the extra watchfulness and protection of the Government. The most elementary justice required that if it called the black man to do a soldier's duty it must cover him with a soldier's right, and Northern sentiment was prompt in urging the claim. Frederick Douglass has related how he pressed the point upon Mr. Lincoln, and the President's reply:

As to the exchange and general treatment of colored soldiers when taken prisoners of war, he should insist on their being entitled to all privileges of such prisoners. Mr. Lincoln admitted the justice of my demand for the promotion of colored soldiers for good conduct in the field, but on the matter

[1] Lee to Halleck, August 2, 1862. "Rebellion Record," Vol. IX., p. 246.

[2] General Orders, Aug. 21, 1862.

[3] Davis, Proclamation, December 23, 1862. "American Annual Cyclopædia," 1862, p. 738.

[4] Jones, "A Rebel War Clerk's Diary," Vol. I., p. 159.

[5] Davis, Annual Message, January 12, 1863. "American Annual Cyclopædia," 1863, p. 786.

[6] C. S. Statutes-at-Large for 1863, p. 167.

of retaliation he differed from me entirely. I shall never forget the benignant expression of his face, the tearful look of his eye, and the quiver in his voice when he deprecated a resort to retaliatory measures. "Once begun," said he, "I do not know where such a measure would stop." He said he could not take men out and kill them in cold blood for what was done by others. If he could get hold of the persons who were guilty of killing the colored prisoners in cold blood, the case would be different, but he could not kill the innocent for the guilty.[1]

Nevertheless, in view of the great success which attended the enlistment of black recruits, it became necessary for the Government to adopt a settled policy on the question, and on July 30, 1863, the President issued the following comprehensive order:

It is the duty of every government to give protection to its citizens of whatever class, color, or condition, and especially to those who are duly organized as soldiers in the public service. The law of nations, and the usages and customs of war, as carried on by civilized powers, permit no distinction as to color in the treatment of prisoners of war as public enemies. To sell or enslave any captured person on account of his color, and for no offense against the laws of war, is a relapse into barbarism and a crime against the civilization of the age.

The Government of the United States will give the same protection to all its soldiers, and if the enemy shall sell or enslave any one because of his color the offense shall be punished by retaliation upon the enemy's prisoners in our possession.

It is therefore ordered that for every soldier of the United States killed in violation of the laws of war a rebel soldier shall be executed; and for every one enslaved by the enemy, or sold into slavery, a rebel soldier shall be placed at hard labor on the public works, and continued at such labor until the other shall be released and receive the treatment due to a prisoner of war.[2]

It is a gratification to record that the rebel Government did not persist in the barbarous conduct it had officially announced, and that sanguinary retaliation did not become necessary. There were indeed some unimportant instances of imprisonment of captured blacks, as hostages for which, a few rebel soldiers were ordered into confinement by General Halleck, but the cases were not pushed to extremity under executive sanction on either side. Much more serious excesses, however, occurred under the responsibility and conduct of individual officers growing out of mistaken zeal or uncurbed passion; it is probable that most of them went unrecorded. In October, 1862, when the guerrilla outrages in Missouri were in one of their moments of fiercest activity, a Union citizen of Palmyra was abducted and murdered under circumstances which clearly marked it as an instance of concerted and deliberate partisan revenge. In retaliation for this, Colonel John McNeil, the Union officer in local command, having demanded the perpetrators, which demand was not complied with, ordered the execution of ten rebel guerrillas of the same neighborhood, and carried out the order with military publicity and formality.[3] Even admitting the strong provocation, modern sentiment cannot justify a punishment tenfold as severe as that demanded by the Mosaic law. Less than a month later there was brief mention in a letter of the rebel Major-General Holmes to the Confederate War Department of an analogous occurrence in northern Texas. "A secret organization," he wrote, "to resist the [Confederate] conscript act in northern Texas, has resulted in the citizens organizing a jury of investigation, and I am informed they have tried and executed forty of those convicted, and thus this summary procedure has probably crushed the incipient rebellion."[4] Even without details the incident is a convincing explanation of the seeming unanimity for rebellion in that region.

The most shocking occurrence of this character, however, followed the employment of negro soldiers. We cannot in our day adequately picture the vindictive rage of many rebel masters at seeing recent slaves uniformed and armed in defense of a government which had set them free. Under the barbarous institution, to perpetuate which they committed treason and were ready to die, they had punished their human chattels with the unchecked lash, sold them on the auction-block, hunted them with bloodhounds; and it is hardly to be wondered at that amid the license of war individuals among them now and then thought to restore their domination by the aid of military slaughter. As an evidence that such thoughts existed here and there we need only cite the language of Major-General John C. Breckinridge, late Vice-President of the United States. Writing under date of August 14, 1862, to the Union commander at Baton Rouge, he recites in a list of alleged "outrages" that "information has reached these headquarters that negro slaves are being organized and armed to be employed against us"; and adds, "I am

1 Frederick Douglass, Reminiscences, "New York Tribune," July 5, 1885.

2 Report Provost-Marshal General, March 17, 1866. Mess. and Doc., 1865-66, Part III., p. 63.

3 It is proper to mention that this retaliatory action was under the authority of the State of Missouri. General Curtis, commanding the Department of the Missouri at that time, wrote under date of December 24, 1862: "General McNeil is a State general, and his column was mainly State troops: the matter has therefore never come to my official notice. . . . When persons are condemned to be shot by Federal authority, the proceedings have to be approved by the President, but no case of this sort has arisen under my command."—War Records, Vol. XXII. Part I., pp. 860-1.

4 War Records, Vol. XIII., p. 908.

authorized by Major-General Van Dorn, commanding this department, to inform you that the above acts are regarded as in violation of the usage of civilized warfare, and that in future, upon any departure from these usages, he will raise the black flag and neither give nor ask quarter." [1]

Mere official bravado, from however conspicuous a personage, only deserves mention when, as in this instance, it illustrates a type of feeling which in one case at least manifested itself in an incident of shocking barbarity.

In the spring of the year 1864 President Lincoln went to Baltimore to attend the opening of a large fair for the benefit of the Sanitary Commission. In concluding the address which he was called upon to make on that occasion he said:

A painful rumor, true, I fear, has reached us of the massacre, by the rebel forces at Fort Pillow, in the west end of Tennessee, on the Mississippi River, of some three hundred colored soldiers and white officers, who had just been overpowered by their assailants. There seems to be some anxiety in the public mind whether the Government is doing its duty to the colored soldier, and to the service, at this point. At the beginning of the war, and for some time, the use of colored troops was not contemplated; and how the change of purpose was wrought I will not now take time to explain. Upon a clear conviction of duty, I resolved to turn that element of strength to account; and I am responsible for it to the American people, to the Christian world, to history, and on my final account to God. Having determined to use the negro as a soldier, there is no way but to give him all the protection given to any other soldier. The difficulty is not in stating the principle, but in practically applying it. It is a mistake to suppose the Government is indifferent to this matter, or is not doing the best it can in regard to it. We do not to-day *know* that a colored soldier, or white officer commanding colored soldiers, has been massacred by the rebels when made a prisoner. We fear it, believe it, I may say, but we do not *know* it. To take the life of one of their prisoners on the assumption that they murder ours, when it is short of certainty that they do murder ours, might be too serious, too cruel, a mistake. We are having the Fort Pillow affair thoroughly investigated; and such investigation will probably show conclusively how the truth is. If after all that has been said it shall turn out that there has been no massacre at Fort Pillow it will be almost safe to say there has been none, and will be none, elsewhere. If there has been the massacre of three hundred there, or even the tenth part of three hundred, it will be conclusively proven; and, being so proven, the retribution shall as surely come. It will be matter of grave consideration in what exact course to apply the retribution; but in the supposed case it must come.[2]

The investigation referred to by the President was made by the Committee on the Conduct of the War, and included the sworn testimony of about eighty witnesses, mostly actual participants in the occurrence. The committee found that Fort Pillow, Tennessee, situated on the Mississippi River, and garrisoned by about 557 Union troops, of whom 262 were colored, was captured by assault, by an overwhelming force of Confederates under General Forrest, on April 12, 1864, and that "of the men from 300 to 400 are known to have been killed at Fort Pillow, of whom at least 300 were murdered in cold blood after the post was in possession of the rebels and our men had thrown down their arms and ceased to offer resistance."

It further appears that this inhumanity was directed principally against the colored soldiers. The rebel general and his subordinates stoutly denied the accusation of vindictiveness, but their explanations and later evidence failed to shake the general substance of the committee's allegation and proof. Indeed it would be difficult to refute the conclusiveness of the first report of General Forrest himself. On the third day after his exploit he telegraphed to General Polk:

I attacked Fort Pillow on the morning of the 12th instant with a part of Bell's and McCulloch's brigades, numbering ———, under Brigadier-General J. R. Chalmers. After a short fight we drove the enemy, seven hundred strong, into the fort under cover of their gun-boats, and demanded a surrender, which was declined by Major L. W. Booth, commanding United States forces. I stormed the fort, and after a contest of thirty minutes captured the entire garrison, killing five hundred and taking one hundred prisoners, and a large amount of quartermaster's stores. The officers in the fort were killed, including Major Booth. I sustained a loss of twenty killed and sixty wounded. The Confederate flag now floats over the fort.[3]

The astonishing result is further explained by the contemporaneous threats made officially by these Confederate officers. On the 25th of March preceding, in demanding the surrender of Paducah, Kentucky, General Forrest wrote: "If you surrender, you shall be treated as prisoners of war; but if I have to storm your works, you may expect no quarter." [4]

And on the day following the Fort Pillow massacre, General A. Buford, one of Forrest's brigadiers, said in his demand for the surrender of Columbus, Kentucky:

Should you surrender, the negroes now in arms will be returned to their masters. Should I, however, be compelled to take the place, no quarter will be shown to the negro troops whatever; the white troops will be treated as prisoners of war.

And in a subsequent correspondence Forrest wrote, under date of June 20, to the Union general, C. C. Washburn: "I regard captured

1 W. R., Vol. XV., pp. 550 and 551.
2 Raymond, "Life of Abraham Lincoln," pp. 502–3.
3 "A Rebel War Clerk's Diary," Vol. II., p. 189.
4 "Rebellion Record," Vol. VIII., p. 73.

negroes as I do other captured property, and not as captured soldiers."[1] The language of these officers at Paducah and Columbus is a sufficient commentary on their achievement at Fort Pillow.

President Lincoln formally took up the consideration of the subject on the 3d of May by writing to the several members of his Cabinet:

> It is now quite certain that a large number of our colored soldiers, with their white officers, were, by the rebel force, massacred after they had surrendered at the recent capture of Fort Pillow. So much is known, though the evidence is not yet quite ready to be laid before me. Meanwhile I will thank you to prepare, and give me in writing, your opinion as to what course the Government should take in the case.[2]

The answers of his advisers differed widely. Mr. Seward affirmed the duty of the Government to vindicate the right of all its soldiers to be regarded and treated as prisoners of war; nevertheless he urged great caution in any proceedings looking to retaliation, and advised for the present only the setting apart and rigorous confinement of an equal number of Confederate prisoners as hostages until the rebel Government could be called upon to explain or disavow the cruelties and give pledges that they should not be repeated. Mr. Chase held the same view, except that he advised that the hostages should be selected from rebel prisoners of highest rank, in number equivalent, according to the rules of exchange, to the officers and men murdered at Fort Pillow. Mr. Stanton also advised that the hostages be selected from rebel officers; that Forrest, Chalmers, and all officers and men concerned in the Fort Pillow massacre be excluded from the benefit of the President's proclamation of amnesty and from the privilege of exchange, and their delivery for punishment be demanded from the Richmond authorities, in default of which delivery the President should take such measures against the hostages as the state of things then existing might make necessary. The advice of Mr. Welles was essentially the same as that of Mr. Stanton. Mr. Blair, on the contrary, took different ground.

> There are two reasons [he wrote] which would prevent me from ordering the execution of prisoners, man for man, in retaliation for the massacre at Fort Pillow. *First*. That I do not think the measure would be justified by the rules of civilized warfare, even in a contest between alien enemies. *Second*. Because even if allowable in such a contest it would not be just in itself or expedient in the present contest. . . . And the inclination of my mind is, to pursue the actual offenders alone in such cases as the present; to order the most energetic measures for their capture, and the most summary punishment when captured. . . . A proclamation or order that the guilty individuals are to be hunted down will have far greater terror and be far more effectual to prevent the repetition of the crime than the punishment of parties not concerned in that crime.

Mr. Bates agreed in opinion with Mr. Blair. He would demand of the enemy a disavowal or avowal of the act. If he disavow it, then demand the surrender of the generals guilty of the Fort Pillow massacre to be dealt with at your discretion. If he avow and justify the act, then instruct your commanders to cause instant execution upon any and all participants in the massacre, whether officers or privates, who should fall into their power. He added:

> I would have no compact with the enemy for mutual slaughter; no cartel of blood and murder; no stipulation to the effect that if you murder one of my men I will murder one of yours! Retaliation is not mere justice. It is avowedly revenge; and it is wholly unjustifiable, in law and conscience, unless adopted for the sole purpose of punishing past crime and of giving a salutary and blood-saving warning against its repetition.

Mr. Usher also joined in the opinion that punishment should not be visited upon innocent persons, but he urged

> that the Government should set apart for execution an equal number of prisoners who since the massacre have been, or may hereafter from time to time be, captured from Forrest's command.

He also urged another reason:

> We are upon the eve of an impending battle. Until the result shall have been known it seems to me to be inexpedient to take any extreme action in the premises. If favorable to our arms, we may retaliate as far as the laws of war and humanity will permit. If disastrous and extreme measures should have been adopted, we may be placed in a position of great embarrassment, and forced to forego our threatened purpose in order to avoid a worse calamity.

It is probable that this view took a deep hold upon the Cabinet. Grant was about entering upon his Wilderness campaign, and its rapid succession of bloody conflicts crowded out of view and consideration a topic so difficult and so hazardous as wholesale retaliation for the Fort Pillow barbarity, which, on one hand, strict justice demanded, and which, on the other, enlightened humanity forbade. In these opposing duties there could be little doubt as to which the kind heart of the President would incline. He had long since laid down for himself a rule of conduct applicable to

[1] "Rebellion Record," Vol. X., p. 724.
[2] Lincoln to the Cabinet, May 3, 1864. Unpublished MS.

this class of cases. In his annual message of December 3, 1861, he had declared:

> In considering the policy to be adopted for suppressing the insurrection, I have been anxious and careful that the inevitable conflict for this purpose shall not degenerate into a violent and remorseless revolutionary struggle.

It does not appear that the Fort Pillow question was ever seriously renewed in the Cabinet or definitely concluded by the President.

The proceedings relating to retaliation which we have thus far sketched bring us back to another and by no means the least interesting phase of the general subject of negro soldiers. We may here anticipate the course of events so far as to say that in the autumn and winter of 1864 the cause of the South was already lost and the collapse of the Confederate Government plainly foreshadowed to all except the leaders, whose infatuation and wounded vanity made them unwilling to acknowledge and accept defeat. Yet this effort to avoid confession of error in one direction compelled them to admit it in another. They had seceded for slavery, had made it the corner-stone of their government, had anathematized President Lincoln for his decrees of emancipation, had pronounced the ban of outlawry and had prescribed the sentence of death against every white officer who might dare to command negro troops; but now in their extremity some of them proposed to throw consistency to the winds and themselves commit the acts upon which they had invoked the reprobation of mankind and for which they had ordained extreme punishment.

It would be difficult to estimate the benefit they had derived from the direct military labor of the slave, especially in building fortifications. They now proposed not only to put arms in his hands and make him a soldier to fight in the ranks, but also, as a final step, to emancipate him for the service. Even the flexible political conscience of Jefferson Davis, however, winced a little at the bold abandonment of principle which this policy involved, and in his message of November 7, 1864, to the Confederate Congress he argues the question with the reluctance of a man preparing to walk over live coals. We have not space to abridge his hair-splitting arguments to justify the South in what they had so vociferously denounced when done by the North. The sum of his recommendation is that the 20,000 slaves then employed in various labors in the Confederate army should be increased to 40,000, be drilled in "encamping, marching, and parking trains," and "employed as a pioneer and engineer laborer." He says:

> I must dissent from those who advise a general levy and arming of the slaves for the duty of soldiers. Until our white population shall prove insufficient for the armies we require and can afford to keep in the field, to employ as a soldier the negro, who has merely been trained to labor, and as a laborer,—the white man accustomed from his youth to the use of firearms,—would scarcely be deemed wise or advantageous by any; and this is the question now before us. But should the alternative ever be presented of subjugation or of the employment of the slave as a soldier, there seems no reason to doubt what should then be our decision.[1]

While he dwells on the "improbable contingency of our need of resorting to this element of resistance," he nevertheless points out that the Confederate Government might buy the slave from his master and engage to liberate him as a reward for faithful military service.

Mr. Davis's hesitating and tentative recommendation was seed sown on barren ground. If the dose was unpalatable to him it appears to have been yet more bitter to the members of the Confederate Congress, who doubtless felt, as has been pithily expressed by a Confederate writer, that it was an admission of the inherent injustice of slavery; that "if the negro was fit to be a soldier he was not fit to be a slave"; that the proposition "cut under the traditions and theories of three generations in the South"; and that "by a few strokes of the pen the Confederate Government had subscribed to the main tenet of the abolition party in the North and all its consequences, standing exposed and stultified before the world."[2] They debated the unwelcome subject with qualms and grimaces through November, December, January, and most of February. On the 11th of January and again on the 18th of February the proposal received a notable championship in letters from General Lee, in which he declared the measure of employing negro soldiers "not only expedient but necessary," and recommended that the Confederate President be empowered "to call upon individuals or States for such as they are willing to contribute, with the condition of emancipation to all enrolled."[3] Even under this pressure, however, the rebel lawmakers could not wholly conquer their repugnance. Nearly six weeks more elapsed, and the fall of Richmond was already imminent, when on the 30th of March, 1865,[4] the Confederate Congress passed an act upon the subject. The writer already quoted sums up the result as follows:

1 "American Annual Cyclopædia," 1864, p. 697.
2 Pollard, "Life of Jefferson Davis," pp. 453-4.
3 Lee to Hunter, Jan. 11, 1865. (THE CENTURY, August, 1888), and Lee to Barksdale, Feb. 18, 1865 (McCabe, "Life of Lee," p. 574).
4 Report of Provost-Marshal General Fry.

The law, as finally enacted, was merely to authorize the President to receive into the military service such able-bodied slaves as might be patriotically tendered by their masters, to be employed in whatever capacity he might direct; no change to be made in the relation of owners of slaves, at least so far as it appeared in the bill. The fruits of this emasculated measure were two companies of blacks, organized from some negro vagabonds in Richmond, which were allowed to give balls at the Libby Prison and were exhibited in fine fresh uniforms on Capitol Square as decoys to obtain sable recruits. But the mass of their colored brethren looked on the parade with unenvious eyes, and little boys exhibited the early prejudices of race by pelting the fine uniforms with mud.[1]

THE ENROLLMENT AND THE DRAFT.

THE successive steps by which the army of the United States, numbering some seventeen thousand men when Mr. Lincoln was inaugurated, grew to the vast aggregate of a million soldiers deserve a word of notice. We can do no more than to summarize briefly the process, referring those of our readers who may wish to study the matter more in detail to the admirable historical statement of General Fry appended to the report of the Secretary of War to the Thirty-ninth Congress. The first troops mustered into the service were the militia of the District of Columbia; thirty-eight companies were thus obtained. On the 15th of April was issued, under the law of 1803, the President's proclamation calling for 75,000 troops for ninety days. Their work was the protection of the capital; their service mainly ended with the battle of Bull Run. On the 3d of May the President issued a call for 42,000 volunteers to serve three years, unless sooner discharged; he increased at the same time the regular army by eight regiments, and directed the enlistment of 18,000 seamen. This was done without authority from Congress, but the act was legalized when that body came together. The volunteers called for were immediately raised and many more were offered; but the recruits for the regular army came in slowly, and the new regiments were in fact never fully organized until the close of the war. After the disastrous battle of Bull Run the patriotism of Congress promptly rose to the emergency, and within a few days successive acts were passed giving the President authority to raise an army of a million men.

So enthusiastic was the response of the people in those early days that the chief embarrassment of the Government was at first to check and repress the offers of volunteers. Some regions were more liberal in their tenders of troops than others; individuals and companies rejected from one State whose quota was full enlisted from another; pious frauds were practiced to get a place under the colors. Much confusion and annoyance afterwards resulted from these causes. Under authority of the acts of Congress referred to, a force of 637,126 men was in the service in the spring of 1862. This, it was thought, would be adequate for the work of suppressing the insurrection: the expenses of the military establishment had risen to appalling proportions, and the ill-advised resolution was taken of putting a stop to volunteer recruiting on the 3d of April. As the waste of the armies went on without corresponding successes, the error which had been committed was recognized, and recruiting was resumed in June; but before much progress was made, the ill fortune of McClellan[2] in the Peninsula, and its unfavorable effect on the public mind, chilled and discouraged recruitment. The necessity for more troops was as evident to the country as to the Government.

While General McClellan was on his retreat to the James, the governors of the loyal States signed a letter to the President requesting him to issue a call for additional troops, and it was in response to this that Mr. Lincoln issued his call, on the 2d of July, 1862, for 300,000 volunteers. The need of troops continuing and becoming more and more pressing, the call for 300,000 nine months' militia was issued on the 4th of August, and in some of the States a draft from the militia was ordered, the results of which were not especially satisfactory. Only about 87,000 of the 300,000 required were reported as obtained in this way, and this number was greatly reduced by desertion before the men could be got out of their respective States.

In Pennsylvania a somewhat serious organization was formed in several counties for resisting the draft. Governor Curtin reported several thousand recusants in arms. They would not permit the drafted men who were willing to go to their duty to leave their homes, and even forced them to get out of the railway trains after they had embarked. By the prompt and energetic action of the State and National Governments, working in harmony, this disorder was soon suppressed. But there, as elsewhere, the enrollment was inefficient and the results entirely inadequate.

Early in the year 1863 it became evident that the armies necessary for an effective prosecution of the war could not be filled by volunteering, nor by State action alone, and a bill for enrolling and calling out the national forces was introduced in the Senate in the beginning of February, and at once gave rise in that body to a hot discussion. It was attacked by the Democratic senators, who were mostly from the border States, with the greatest en-

[1] Pollard, "Life of Jefferson Davis," p. 456.

[2] Report of Provost-Marshal General, Part I., p. 9.

ergy and feeling. They contended that it was in direct violation of the Constitution, and, if passed, would be subversive of the liberties of the country. They were joined by Mr. Richardson, who had succeeded Mr. Douglas as senator from Illinois, and who warned his colleagues that they were plunging the country into civil war.[1] The bill was principally defended by Mr. Wilson of Massachusetts and Mr. Collamer of Vermont, the former laying most stress upon the necessities of the country, and the latter characteristically advocating the measure on legal and constitutional grounds. The bill passed the Senate, and came up in the House on the 23d of February. Mr. Olin, who had charge of it, announced at the beginning, with a somewhat crude candor, that he proposed to permit discussion of the merits of the bill for a reasonable time and then to demand a vote upon it. He was not willing to hazard the loss of a bill he deemed so important by opening it to propositions for amendment. But in spite of this warning, perhaps by reason of it, an animated discussion at once sprung up and many amendments were offered, some in good faith, and some with the purpose of nullifying the bill. The measure was attacked with great violence. The object and purpose of the President was proclaimed by Democratic members to be the establishment of an irresponsible despotism, and the destruction of constitutional liberty was prophesied as certain in case the bill should pass. There was a great difference of tone between the opponents and the supporters of the Administration; the latter, confident in their strength, were far more moderate in their expressions than the former, but there were reproaches and recriminations on both sides. Democrats, like Mr. Cox of Ohio, Mr. Biddle of Pennsylvania, and Messrs. Mallory and Wickliffe of Kentucky, claimed that the antislavery measures of the Administration were the sole cause of military failure, and that if the President would return to constitutional ways the armies would soon be filled by volunteering; to which the Republicans answered that the cessation of volunteering was due to the treasonable speech and conduct of the opposition. Some unimportant amendments were attached to the bill, which was sent back to the Senate for concurrence, and after another debate, scarcely less passionate than the first, the amendments of the House were adopted, and the measure became a law by the approval of the President, on the 3d of March, 1863. It was the first law enacted by Congress by which the Government of the United States, without the intervention of the authorities of the several States, appealed directly to the nation to create large armies. The act declared that, with certain exceptions especially set forth, all able-bodied male citizens, and persons of foreign birth who had declared their intention to become citizens, between the ages of 20 and 45, should constitute the national forces, and empowered the President to call them forth by draft. All were to be called out if necessary: the first call was actually for one-fifth, but that was a measure of expediency. The act provided for the appointment or detail, by the President, of a Provost-Marshal General, who was to be the head of a bureau in the War Department, and for dividing the States into districts coinciding with those for the election of congressmen. The District of Columbia and the Territories formed additional districts. A provost-marshal was authorized for each of these districts, with whom were associated a commissioner and a surgeon. The board thus formed was required to divide its district into as many subdistricts as might be found necessary, to appoint an enrolling officer for each, and to make an enrollment immediately. Colonel James B. Fry, an assistant adjutant-general of the army, who had formerly been chief-of-staff to General Buell, and who was not only an accomplished soldier but an executive officer of extraordinary tact, ability, and industry, was made Provost-Marshal General. Officers of the army, selected for their administrative capacity, were appointed provost-marshals for the several States. The enrollment began the latter part of May, and was pushed forward with great energy, except in the border States, where some difficulty was found in selecting the proper boards of enrollment. While there was more or less opposition, General Fry says:

> It could not be said to be serious. Some of the officers were maltreated, and one or two assassinated, but prompt action on the part of the civil authorities, aided when necessary by military patrols, secured the arrest of guilty parties and checked these outrages.

Those who attempted to obstruct enrollment officers were promptly punished, and orders from the War Department gave a clear definition of what constituted impediments to the drafts. Not only the assaulting or obstructing of officers was cause for punishment, but even standing mute and the giving of false names subjected the offender to summary arrest.

In addition to the duties of enrolling all citizens capable of bearing arms, of drafting from these the numbers required for military service, and of arresting deserters and returning them to the army, the Provost-Marshal General was also charged with the entire work of recruiting volunteers. This insured harmony and systematic action in the two methods of raising troops, and the work was carried on

[1] "Congressional Globe," Feb. 4, 1863, p. 709.

with constantly increasing efficiency and success. A comparatively small number of men was obtained strictly by the draft, but the draft powerfully stimulated enlistments, and the money obtained by commutation furnished an ample fund for all the expenses of the bureaus of recruitment. Improvements in the law and the modes of executing it were constantly made, until at the close of the war the system was probably as perfect as human ingenuity could make it under the peculiar conditions of American life. The result proved the vast military resources of the nation. In April, 1865, with a million soldiers in the field, the enrollment showed that the national forces not called out consisted of 2,245,000 more. We need not cumber these pages with the figures of the successive calls and their results; we quote the aggregates from General Fry's final report (p. 46). The quotas charged against the States, under all calls made by the President during the four years from the 15th of April, 1861, when his first proclamation echoed the guns at Sumter, to the 14th of April, 1865, when Lincoln died and recruiting ceased, amounted to 2,759,049, the terms of service varying from three months to three years. The aggregate number of men credited on the several calls, and put into service in the army, navy, and marines, was 2,690,401. This left a deficiency of 68,648, which would have been readily filled if the war had not closed. In addition to these some 70,000 "emergency men" were from first to last called into service.[1]

During the progress of the work an infinite variety of questions arose as to the quotas and the credits of the several States, and the President was overwhelmed by complaints and reclamations from various governors in the North. Even the most loyal supporters of the Administration exerted themselves to the utmost to have the demands upon them reduced and their credits for troops furnished raised to the highest possible figure; while in those States which were politically under the control of the opposition these natural importunities were aggravated by what seemed a deliberate intention to frustrate so far as possible the efforts of the Government to fill its depleted armies.[2] The most serious controversy that arose during the progress of the enrollment was that begun and carried on by Governor Seymour of New York.

So long as the administration of Governor E. D. Morgan lasted, the Government received most zealous and efficient support from the State of New York. It is true that at the close of Governor Morgan's term, the last day of 1862, the Adjutant-General reported the State deficient some 28,000 men in volunteers under the various calls of the Government, 18,000 of which deficiency belonged to the city of New York. But in spite of this deficiency there had never been any lack of cordial coöperation on the part of the State government with that of the nation. In the autumn of that year, however, in the period of doubt and discouragement which generally prevailed throughout the Union, General Wadsworth, the Republican candidate for governor, had been defeated after a most acrimonious contest by Horatio Seymour, then, and until his death, the most honored and prominent Democratic politician of the State. He came into power upon a platform denouncing almost every measure which the Government had found it necessary to adopt for the suppression of the rebellion; and upon his inauguration, on the first day of 1863, he clearly intimated that his principal duty would be "to maintain and defend the sovereignty and jurisdiction of his State."

The President, anxious to work in harmony

1 The following details of the several calls and their results are taken from the report made to Congress by the Secretary of War in the session of 1865–66:

	Number of Men.	*Term of Service.*
Call of April 15, 1861, for 75,000 men, produced	98,235	3 months
Calls of May 3, July 22 and 25, 1861, for 500,000	2,715	6 months
	9,056	1 year
	30,952	2 years
	657,863	3 years
Call of July 2, 1862, for 500,000	419,627	3 years
Call of August 4, 1862, for 300,000	86,960	9 months
Proclamation of June 15, 1863, for militia (100,000)	16,361	6 months
Calls of October 15, 1863, and February 1, 1864, for 500,000	374,807	3 years
Call of March 14, 1864, for 200,000	284,021	3 years
Militia mustered in the spring of 1864	83,612	100 days
Call of July 18, 1864, for 500,000	149,356	1 & 2 yrs.
	234,798	3 years
	728	4 years
Call of December 19, 1864, for 300,000	151,105	1 year
	5,076	2 years
	48,065	3 years
	312	4 years

The aggregate shows a great many more soldiers than ever served, as a large number enlisted more than once. Veteran volunteers to the number of 150,000 reënlisted in 1863–64. Deserters and bounty-jumpers must also be deducted.

2 Though the President knew that fairness and accuracy prevailed in the demands made upon the different localities for their proportion of troops, he was so much embarrassed by complaints that he found it necessary at last to constitute a board, consisting of Attorney-General Speed, General Delafield, Chief of Engineers, and Colonel Foster, Assistant Adjutant-General, to examine into the proper quotas and credits, and to report errors if they found any therein, and he announced in the order constituting the board that its determination should be final and conclusive. The board went carefully over the whole subject, explained the mode of proceeding adopted by the Provost-Marshal General, and said, "The rule is in conformity to the requirements of the laws of Congress and is just and equitable; we have carefully examined and proved the work done under this rule by the Provost-Marshal General and find it has been done with fairness." This report was formally approved by the President.

with the governors of all the loyal States, and especially desirous on public grounds to secure the cordial coöperation in war matters of the State administration in New York, had written to Mr. Seymour soon after his inauguration as governor, inviting his confidence and friendship.

You and I [he said] are substantially strangers, and I write this chiefly that we may become better acquainted. I, for the time being, am at the head of a nation which is in great peril, and you are at the head of the greatest State of that nation. As to maintaining the nation's life and integrity, I assume and believe there cannot be a difference of purpose between you and me. If we should differ as to the means it is important that such difference should be as small as possible; that it should not be enhanced by unjust suspicions on one side or the other. In the performance of my duty the coöperation of your State, as that of others, is needed — in fact, is indispensable. This alone is sufficient reason why I should wish to be at a good understanding with you. Please write me at least as long a letter as this, of course saying in it just what you think fit.[1]

The governor waited three weeks and then made a cold and guarded reply, retaining in this private communication the attitude of reserve and distrust he had publicly assumed.

I have delayed [he said] answering your letter for some days with a view of preparing a paper in which I wished to state clearly the aspect of public affairs from the standpoint I occupy. I do not claim any superior wisdom, but I am confident the opinions I hold are entertained by one-half of the population of the Northern States. I have been prevented from giving my views in the manner I intended by a pressure of official duties, which at the present stage of the legislative session of this State confines me to the executive chamber until each midnight.

After the adjournment, which will soon take place, I will give you without reserve my opinion and purpose with regard to the condition of our unhappy country. In the meanwhile I assure you that no political resentments or no personal objects will turn me aside from the pathway I have marked out for myself. I intend to show to those charged with the administration of public affairs a due deference and respect, and to yield them a just and generous support in all measures they may adopt within the scope of their constitutional powers. For the preservation of this Union I am ready to make any sacrifice of interest, passion, or prejudice.[2]

This closed the personal correspondence between them. The governor never wrote the promised letter; he did not desire to commit himself to any friendly relations with the President. With the narrowness of a bitterly prejudiced mind he had given an interpretation to the President's cordial overture as false as it was unfavorable. In an article,[3] published with his sanction many years afterwards, he is represented as expressing his conviction that at the time of this correspondence there was a conspiracy of prominent Republicans to force Lincoln out of the White House; that the President was aware of it, and that this was "the cause of the anxiety which he displayed to be on intimate friendly terms with Mr. Seymour." There could be no intimate understanding between two such men. Mr. Lincoln could no more comprehend the partisan bitterness and suspicion which lay at the basis of Mr. Seymour's character than the latter could appreciate the motives which induced Lincoln to seek his cordial coöperation in public work for the general welfare. He gave the same base interpretation to a complimentary message which Stanton sent him in June, 1863, thanking him for the energy with which he had sent forward troops for the defense of Pennsylvania, and when, a year later, Stanton invited him to Washington for a consultation,[3] he refused either to go or to reply to the invitation.

Mr. Thurlow Weed is quoted as saying in his later years that Mr. Lincoln, after Seymour's election and before his inauguration, authorized Mr. Weed to say to him that holding his position he could wheel the Democratic party into line and put down the rebellion; and that if he would render this great service to the country Mr. Lincoln would cheerfully make way for him as his successor.[4] Mr. Weed says he made this suggestion to Seymour; but that he preferred to administer his office as an irreconcilable and conscientious partisan. It is probable that Mr. Weed, as is customary with elderly men, exaggerated the definiteness of the proposition; but these letters show how anxious Lincoln was that Seymour should give a loyal support to the Government, and in how friendly and self-effacing a spirit he would have met him.

In what must be said in regard to the controversy in which Governor Seymour soon found himself engaged with the National Government there is no question of his personal integrity or his patriotism. He doubtless considered that he was only doing his duty to his State and his party in opposing almost every specific act of the National Government. The key to all his actions in respect to the draft is to be found in his own words: "It is believed," he said, "by at least one-half of the people of the loyal States that the conscription act is in itself a violation of the supreme constitutional

1 Lincoln to Seymour, March 23, 1863. MS.
2 Seymour to Lincoln, April 14, 1863. MS.
3 "New York Times," Aug. 18, 1879.
4 Memoir by T. W. Barnes, p. 428.

law."[1] This belief he heartily shared, and no moral blame attaches to him for trying to give it effect in his official action. His conduct led to disastrous results; his views of government were shown to be mistaken and unsound. The nation went on its triumphant way over all the obstacles interposed by him and those who believed with him, and during the quarter of a century which elapsed before his death his chief concern was to throw upon the Government the blame of his own factious proceedings. He constantly accused the Administration of Mr. Lincoln of an unfair and partisan execution of the law, which he regarded in itself as unconstitutional. He assumed that because the enrollment of the arms-bearing population of New York City, which had given a majority for him, showed an excess over the enrollment in the rural districts, which had given a large majority for Wadsworth, the city was to be punished for being Democratic and the country rewarded for being Republican; to which the most natural reply was that the volunteering had been far more active in the Republican districts than it had been in the Democratic. He attacked all the proceedings of the provost-marshals. He accused them of neglect and contumacy towards himself. All these accusations were wholly unfounded. General Fry was a man as nearly without politics as a patriotic American can be. He came of a distinguished Democratic family, and during a life passed in the military service his only preoccupation had been the punctual fulfillment of every duty confided to him. The district provost-marshals for the city of New York were selected with especial care from those recommended by citizens of the highest character in the place. Three provost-marshal generals were appointed for New York, and great pains were taken to choose "those who would be likely to secure the favor and coöperation of the authorities and the people of New York."[2] They were Major Townsend, Colonel Nugent, and Major Diven. Nugent and Diven were war Democrats, and the last "an intimate acquaintance and personal friend of Governor Seymour." Townsend was a well-known resident of Albany. They were specially charged to put themselves in communication with the Governor, to acquaint themselves with his views and wishes, and to give them due weight in determining the best interests of the Government; and to endeavor, by all means in their power, to secure for the execution of the enrollment act the aid and hearty coöperation of the Governor, the State officers, and the people. A letter was at the same time written to the Governor by the Provost-Marshal General commending these officers to him and asking for them his coöperation. A similar letter was sent to the mayor of New York City. The Government exhausted all its powers in endeavoring to commend the enrollment to the favorable consideration of the civil officers of the State. "But Governor Seymour," says General Fry, "gave no assistance; in fact, so far as the Government officers engaged in the enrollment could learn, he gave the subject no attention." Without the aid or countenance of the Governor, in face of his quiet hostility, the enrollment was carried forward as rapidly as possible. The work was impeded by numerous and important obstacles; the large floating population of the city threw great difficulties in the way of the enrollment; opposition was encountered in almost every house that the enrolling officers entered. Where artifice did not succeed violence was sometimes attempted. In some places organized bodies of men opposed the enrollment, in others secret societies waged a furtive warfare against the officers. But in spite of all these drawbacks the enrollment was made with remarkable fairness and substantial success. It was no more imperfect than was inevitable, and the draft which followed it was conducted in such a manner as to neutralize to a great extent the irregularities and hardship that might have resulted from the errors it contained.[3] The enrollment having been completed, orders for the draft in the State of New York were issued on the 1st of July. At that date drafting had been going on for some time in New England. Colonel Nugent was left at liberty, if thought expedient, to execute the draft in New York City by districts, and in one or more at a given time, rather than all at once, throughout the city. Governor Seymour was notified in almost daily letters, from the 1st to the 13th of July, of the drafts which had been

1 The attacks upon the constitutionality of the enrollment act were mainly political. Several attempts were made to have it declared invalid by the courts, but these were generally unsuccessful. In the United States circuit courts of Pennsylvania and Illinois two important decisions were rendered, the one by Judge Cadwalader and the other by Judge Treat (Judge Davis concurring), affirming the constitutionality of the law. Only one important decision in the contrary sense was obtained, and that was in the supreme court of Pennsylvania, Chief-Justice Lowrie and Justices Woodward and Thompson concurring in the decision that the law was unconstitutional, Justices Strong and Read dissenting. This decision was afterwards reversed. Chief-Justice Lowrie was a candidate for reëlection and Justice Woodward ran for governor the next year. The main issue in the canvass was this decision. They were both defeated by large majorities, A. G. Curtin being reëlected governor, and Daniel Agnew taking the place of Lowrie on the bench. The court, thus reconstituted, reversed the former decision, Woodward and Thompson dissenting.

2 General J. B. Fry, "New York and the Conscription of 1863."

3 Official Report of Provost-Marshal General.

ordered in the several districts. The Provost-Marshal General begged him to do all in his power to enable the officers to complete the drafts promptly, effectually, fairly, and successfully.[1] He paid no attention to these requests further than to send his adjutant-general to Washington on the 11th of July for the purpose of urging the suspension of the draft. But while this officer was away upon his mission the evil passions excited in the breasts of the lowest class of Democrats in New York City by the denunciations of the enrollment act and of the legally constituted authorities who were endeavoring to enforce it, broke out in the most terrible riot which this Western Continent has ever witnessed.

The state of popular distrust and excitement which naturally arose from the discussion of the enrollment was greatly increased by the vehement utterances of the more violent Democratic politicians and newspapers. Governor Seymour, in a speech delivered on the Fourth of July, which was filled with denunciations of the party in power, said:

> The Democratic organization look upon this Administration as hostile to their rights and liberties; they look upon their opponents as men who would do them wrong in regard to their most sacred franchises.

The "Journal of Commerce" accused the Administration of prolonging the war for its own purposes, and added, "Such men are neither more nor less than murderers." "The World," denouncing "the weak and reckless men who temporarily administer the Federal Government," attacked especially the enrollment bill as an illegal and despotic measure. The "Daily News," which reached a larger number of the masses of New York than any other journal, quoted Governor Seymour as saying that neither the President nor Congress, without the consent of the State authorities, had the right to force a single individual against his will "to take part in the ungodly conflict which is distracting the land." It condemned the manner in which the draft was being executed as "an outrage on all decency and fairness," the object of it being to "kill off Democrats and stuff the ballot-boxes with bogus soldier votes." Incendiary hand-bills in the same sense were distributed through the northern districts of the city, thickly populated with laboring men of foreign birth.

Although there had been for several days mutterings of discontent in the streets and even threats uttered against the enrolling officers, these demonstrations had been mostly confined to the drinking-saloons, and no apprehensions of popular tumult were entertained. Even on Saturday morning, the 11th of July, when the draft was to begin at the corner of Forty-third street and Third Avenue, there was no symptom of disturbance. The day passed pleasantly away, the draft was carried on regularly and good-humoredly, and at night the superintendent of police, as he left the office, said "the Rubicon was passed and all would go well."[2] But the next day, being Sunday, afforded leisure for the ferment of suspicion and anger. Every foreigner who was drafted became a center of sympathy and excitement. There were secret meetings in many places on Sunday night, and on the next morning parties of men went from shop to shop compelling workmen to join them and swell the processions which were moving to the offices of the enrollment board. The commissioner proceeded quietly with his work, the wheel was beginning to turn, a few names were called and recorded, when suddenly a large paving-stone came crashing through the window and landed upon the reporters' table, shivering the inkstands and knocking over one or two bystanders; and with hardly a moment's interval a volley of stones flew through the windows, putting a stop to the proceedings. The crowd, kindled into fury by its own act, speedily became a howling mob; the rioters burst through the doors and windows, smashed the furniture of the office into splinters, sprinkled camphene upon the floor, and set the building on fire. When the fire department arrived they found the mob in possession of the hydrants, and the building was soon reduced to ashes. This furious outburst took the authorities completely by surprise.[3] The most trustworthy portion of the organized militia had been ordered to Pennsylvania to resist the invasion of General Lee. There was only a handful of troops in the harbor, and the mob, having possession of the street railways, prevented for a time the rapid concentration of these, while the police, who were admirable in organization and efficiency, being at the time under Repub-

[1] General J. B. Fry, "New York and the Conscription of 1863."

[2] "American Annual Cyclopædia," 1863, p. 811.

[3] General Fry, in his valuable treatise, "New York and the Conscription of 1863," gives the following as reasons why no large military force was assembled to preserve the public peace in New York: "On the occasion of the first draft these questions were carefully weighed by the President and the War Department. The conclusions were that no exception in the application of the law should be made in New York, that no presumption that the State or city authorities would fail to coöperate with the Government should be admitted, that a Federal military force ought not to be assembled in New York City on the mere assumption that a law of the United States would be violently and extensively resisted, and that if it were thought best to assemble such a force there was none to be had without losing campaigns then going on or battles then impending."

lican control,[1] were of course inadequate, during the first hours of the outbreak, to deal with an army of excited and ignorant men, recruited in an instant from hundreds of workshops and excited by drink and passionate declamation. The agitation and disorder spread so rapidly that the upper part of the city was in a few hours in full possession of the maddened crowd, the majority of them filled with that aimless thirst for destruction which rises so naturally in a mob when the restraints of order are withdrawn. They were led by wild zealots, excited by political hates and fears, or by common thieves, who found in the tumult their opportunity for plunder. By 3 o'clock in the afternoon the body of rioters in the upper part of the city numbered several thousand. Their first fury was naturally directed against the enrolling offices. After the destruction of the building in the Ninth District they attacked the block of stores in which the enrolling office of the Eighth District stood.[2] The adjoining shops were filled with jewelry and other costly goods, and were speedily swept clean by the thievish hands of the rioters, and then set on fire; here, as before, the firemen were not permitted to play on the flames. But the political animus of the mob was shown most clearly by the brutal and cowardly outrages inflicted upon negroes. They dashed with the merriment of fiends at every colored face they saw, taking special delight in the maiming and murdering of women and children. Late in the afternoon of the 13th the mob made a rush for the fine building of the Colored Orphan Asylum.[3] This estimable charity was founded and carried on by a society of kind-hearted ladies; it gave not only shelter but instruction and Christian training to several hundred colored orphans. A force of policemen was hastily gathered together, but could defend the asylum for a few minutes only, giving time for most of the inmates to escape. The policemen were then disabled by the brutal mob, who rushed into the building, stealing everything which was portable, and setting the house on fire. They burned the residences of several Government officers, and a large hotel which refused them liquor.

For three days these horrible scenes of unchained fury and hatred lasted. An attack upon the "New York Tribune" office was a further evidence of the political passion of the mob,[4] headed at this point by a lame secessionist barber who had just before been heard to express the hope that he "might soon shave Jeff. Davis in New York," and who led on the rioters with loud cheers for General McClellan; but after dismantling the counting-room they were attacked and driven away by the police. From beginning to end they showed little courage; they were composed, in great number, of the most degraded class of foreigners, and as a rule they made no stand when attacked in any number by either the police or the military. The only exception to this rule was in the case of a squad of marines who foolishly fired into the air when confronting the rioters. Colonel O'Brien, having sprained his ankle while gallantly resisting the mob, stepped into a drug store for assistance while his detachment passed on. The druggist, fearing the rioters, begged O'Brien to leave his shop, and the brave soldier went out among the howling mob. In a moment they were upon him and beat and trampled him into unconsciousness. For several hours the savages dragged the still breathing body of their own countryman up and down the streets, inflicting every indignity upon his helpless form, and then, shouting and yelling, conveyed him to his own door. There a courageous priest sought to subdue their savagery by reading the last offices for the dying over the unfortunate officer; then the climax of horror was reached by the brutal ruffians jostling the priest aside and closing the ceremonies by dancing upon the corpse. But a squad of fifty regulars was able to work its will against thousands of them. The city government, the trusty and courageous police force, and the troops in the harbor at last came into harmonious action and gradually established order throughout the city.

The State government was of little avail from beginning to end of the disturbance. Governor Seymour, having done all he could to embarrass the Government and rouse the people against it, had left the city on the 11th and gone to Long Branch in New Jersey. On the receipt of the frightful news of the 13th he returned to the city a prey to the most terrible agitation. He was hurried by his friends to the City Hall, where a great crowd soon gathered, and there, in sight of the besieged "Tribune" office, he made the memorable address the discredit of which justly clung to him all his days. His terror and his sympathy with the mob, in conflict with his convictions of public duty, completely unmanned him. He addressed the rioters in affectionate tones as his "friends," and assured them that he had "come to show them a test of his friendship." He informed them that he had sent his adjutant to Washington to confer with the authorities

[1] Several years afterwards Governor Seymour said: "The draft riots of 1863 were put down mainly by the energy, boldness, and skill of the police department. In saying this I am certainly not influenced by prejudice, for the force was politically and in some degree personally unfriendly to myself."

[2] Broadway, near Twenty-eighth street.

[3] Fifth Avenue and Forty-fourth street.

[4] Trial of J. H. Whittier, Aug. 12, 1863.

there and to have the draft suspended. This assurance was received with the most vociferous cheers. He urged them to act as good citizens, leaving their interests to him. "Wait until my adjutant returns from Washington," he said, "and you shall be satisfied." The words in this extraordinary speech for which the governor was most blamed were those in which he addressed the mob as his friends; but this was a venial fault, pardonable in view of his extreme agitation. The serious matter was his intimation that the draft justified the riot, and that if the rioters would cease from their violence the draft would be stopped.[1] He issued two proclamations on the 14th, the one mildly condemning the riot and calling upon the persons engaged in it to retire to their homes and employments, and the other, somewhat sterner in tone, declaring the city and county of New York to be in a state of insurrection, and warning all who might resist the State authorities of their liability to the penalties prescribed by law. It is questionable if the rioters ever heard of the proclamations, and if they did the effect of these official utterances was entirely nullified by the governor's sympathetic speeches. The riots came to a bloody close on the night of Thursday, the fourth day. A small detachment of soldiers[2] met the principal body of rioters at Third Avenue and Twenty-first street, killed thirteen and wounded eighteen more, taking some dozens of prisoners. The fire of passion had burned itself out by this time, and the tired mob, now thoroughly dominated, slunk away to its hiding-places. During that night and the next day the militia were returning from Pennsylvania, several regiments of veterans arrived from the Army of the Potomac, and the peace of the city was once more secured. The rioters had kept the city in terror for four days and had destroyed two millions of property. For several days afterwards arrests went on, and many of the wounded law-breakers died in their retreats, afraid to call for assistance.

There were unimportant disturbances in other places which were speedily put down by the local authorities, but, as Mr. Greeley says: "in no single instance was there a riot incited by drafting wherein Americans by birth bore any considerable part, nor in which the great body of the actors were not born Europeans, and generally of recent importation." The part taken by Archbishop Hughes in this occurrence gave rise to various comments. He placarded about the city on the 16th of July an address "to the men of New York who are now called in many papers rioters," inviting them to come to his house and let him talk to them, assuring them of immunity from the police in going and coming. "You who are Catholics," the address concluded, "or as many of you as are, have a right to visit your bishop without molestation." On the 17th, at 2 o'clock, a crowd of four or five thousand persons assembled in front of the Archbishop's residence,[3] and the venerable prelate, clad in his purple robes and full canonical attire, appeared at the window and made a strange speech to the mob, half jocular and half earnest, alternately pleading, cajoling, and warning them. He told them that he "did not see a riotous face among them." He did not accuse them of having done anything wrong. He said that every man had the right to defend his house or his shanty at the risk of his life; that they had no cause to complain, "as Irishmen and Catholics," against the Government; and affectionately suggested whether it might not be better for them to retire to their homes and keep out of danger. He begged them to be quiet in the name of Ireland—"Ireland, that never committed a single act of cruelty until she was oppressed; Ireland, that has been the mother of heroes and of poets, but never the mother of cowards." The crowd greeted his speech with uproarious applause and quietly dispersed.

The number of those who lost their lives during the riots has never been ascertained. The mortality statistics for that week and the week succeeding show an increase of five or six hundred over the average. Governor Seymour estimated the number of killed and wounded at one thousand.

Naturally, in such days of terror and anger, there were not wanting those who asserted that the riots were the result and the manifestation of a widespread treasonable conspiracy involving leading Democrats at the North. The President received many letters to this effect, one relating the alleged confession of a well-known politician, who, overcome with agitation and remorse, had in the presence of the editors of the "Tribune" divulged the complicity of Seymour and others in the preparation of the émeute.[4] But he placed no reliance upon the story, and there was in fact no foundation for it. With all his desire to injure the Administration, Governor Seymour had not the material of an insurrectionist in his composi-

[1] While the riot was going on, Governor Seymour had an interview with Colonel Nugent, the acting Provost-Marshal General of New York City, and insisted on the colonel's announcing a suspension of the draft. The draft had already been stopped by violence. The announcement was urged by the governor no doubt because he thought it would allay the excitement; but this was, under the circumstances, making a concession to the mob, and endangering the successful enforcement of the law of the land. [General J. B. Fry, "New York and the Conscription of 1863."]

[2] Of the 12th Regulars, under Captain Putman.

[3] Corner of Madison Avenue and Thirty-sixth street.

[4] J. R. Gilmore to Lincoln, July 17, 1863. MS.

tion, and when the riot came his excitement and horror was the best proof that he had not expected it.

The scenes of violence in New York were not repeated anywhere else, if we except a slight disturbance in Boston, but the ferment of opposition was so general as to give great disquietude to many friends of the Government throughout the country. Leading Unionists in Philadelphia, fearing a riot there, besought the President by mail and telegraph to stop the draft. In Chicago a similar appeal was made, and by recruitment and volunteering the necessity for a draft was avoided in Illinois until the next year.

No provision of the enrollment law excited such ardent opposition as that which was introduced for the purpose of mitigating its rigors — the provision exempting drafted men from service upon payment of three hundred dollars. "The rich man's money against the poor man's blood" was a cry from which no demagogue could refrain, and it was this which contributed most powerfully to rouse the unthinking masses against the draft. The money paid for exemptions was used, under the direction of the Provost-Marshal General, for the raising of recruits and the payment of the expenses of the draft. It amounted to a very large sum — twenty-six millions of dollars. After all expenses were paid there was a balance of nine millions left to the credit of the Bureau in the Treasury of the United States. The exemption fund was swelled by the action of county and municipal authorities, especially by those of New York, who in the flurry succeeding the riots passed in great haste an ordinance to pay the commutation for drafted men of the poorer class. A certain impetus was given to volunteering also, but the money came in faster than the men; and in June, 1864, the Provost-Marshal General reported that out of some 14,000 drafted men 7000 were exempted for various reasons and 5000 paid money commutation. This statement was sent to Congress by the President with the recommendation that the commutation clause be repealed. This was done[1] after a hot discussion which exhibited a curious change of front on the question, Messrs. Saulsbury, Richardson, and other Democrats energetically opposing the repeal, and making it the occasion for as bitter attacks on the Administration as those which had been for a year directed against the law.[2]

It may not be without interest to look for a moment at the measures pursued by the Confederate authorities to raise and maintain their army. There is a striking contrast between methods and results on either side of the line. The methods of the Confederates were far more prompt and more rigorous than those of the National Government, while the results attained were so much less satisfactory that their failure in this respect brought about the final catastrophe of their enterprise. They began the war with forces greatly superior in numbers to those of the Nation. Before the attack on Fort Sumter their Congress had authorized the raising of an army of 100,000 men and Mr. Davis had called into service 36,900 men, more than twice the army of the United States; and immediately after beginning hostilities he called for 32,000 more. On the 8th of May the Confederate Congress gave Mr. Davis almost unlimited power to accept the services of volunteers without regard to place of enlistment, and a few days later he was relieved by statute of the delays and limitations of formal calls, and all power of appointments to commissions was placed in his hands. So that, while from the beginning to the end the most punctilious respect was paid by the National executive and legislature to the rights of the loyal States in the matter of recruitment, the States which had seceded, on the pretext of preserving their autonomy, speedily gave themselves into the hands of a military dictator. In December, 1861, the term of enlistment was changed from one to three years, the pitiful bounty of fifty dollars being given as compensation. During all that winter recruiting languished, and several statutes continually increasing in severity were passed with little effect; and on the 16th of April, 1862, the Confederate Congress passed a sweeping measure of universal conscription, authorizing the President to call and place in the military service for three years, unless the war should end sooner, "all white men who are residents of the Confederate States, between the ages of 18 and 35 years," not legally exempt from service; and arbitrarily lengthening to three years the terms of those already enlisted. A law so stringent was of course impossible of perfect execution. Under the clamor and panic of their constituencies the Confederate Congress passed, repealed, and modified various schemes of exemption intended to permit the ordinary routine of civil life to pursue its course, but great confusion and heart-burnings arose from every effort which was made to ease the workings of the inexorable machine. The question of overseers of plantations was one especially difficult to treat. The law of the 11th of October, 1862, exempted one man for every plantation of twenty negroes. This system was further extended from time to time, but owners of slaves were obliged to pay five hundred dollars a year for each exemption. By one statute it was provided that on plantations where these exemptions were granted the exempt should pay two

[1] Law approved July 4, 1864.

[2] "Congressional Globe," June 23, 1864.

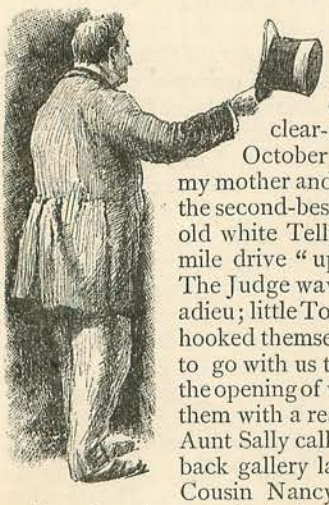
hundred pounds of meat for every able-bodied slave on the plantation. Gradually all exemptions as of right were legislated away and the whole subject left to the discretion of the executive, which vastly increased his power and his unpopularity. It finally rested upon him to say how many editors, ministers, railroad engineers, and expressmen were absolutely required to keep up the current of life in the business of the country.

The limit of age was constantly extended. In September, 1862, an act of the Confederate Congress authorized the President to call into service all white men resident in the Confederate States, between the ages of 18 and 45; and in February, 1864, another law included all between 17 and 50, which gave occasion to Grant for his celebrated *mot*—afterwards credited by him to General Butler—that the Confederates were robbing the cradle and the grave to fill their armies.

Severe and drastic as were these laws, and unrelenting as was the insurrectionary Government in their execution, they were not carried out with anything like the system and thoroughness which characterized the action of the National authorities. The Confederate generals were constantly complaining that they got no recruits, or not enough to supply the waste of campaigns. On the 30th of April, 1864, the chief of the Bureau of Conscription at Richmond made a report to the Secretary of War, painting in the darkest colors the difficulties encountered by him in getting soldiers into the ranks, though he had all the laws and regulations he needed and there were men enough in the country. He said, and in these words confessed that the system had failed and that the defeat of the revolt was now but a question of time:

> The results indicate this grave consideration for the Government, that fresh material for the armies can no longer be estimated as an element of future calculation for their increase, and that necessity demands the invention of devices for keeping in the ranks the men now borne on the rolls. The stern revocation of all details, an appeal to the patriotism of the State claiming large bodies of able-bodied men, and the accretions by age are now almost the only unexhausted sources of supply. For conscription from the general population the functions of this bureau may cease with the termination of the year 1864.

A JEST OF FATE.



IT was eight o'clock on a clean-washed, clear-cut, sun-bathed October morning when my mother and I climbed into the second-best buggy behind old white Telly for a twenty-mile drive "up the country." The Judge waved us a courtly adieu; little Tom and his sister hooked themselves on behind to go with us to the big gate, the opening of which furnished them with a reason for being; Aunt Sally called out from the back gallery last messages to Cousin Nancy; the negroes collected at doors and windows to see us off, and we rolled gently away into the fairyland of unfamiliar roads.

Our route wound here and there past fodder-stacked corn-fields, brier-grown old pastures, irregular old farm-houses sleeping in the sunshine, populous negro cabins, and, last and best, through vine-tangled, enchanting, enchanted woods. The country we traversed had for our æsthetic interests the advantage of being poor and sparsely settled; as we went on it became still rougher and lonelier. When the sun set behind us we were at a fork in the road, in the fullest uncertainty as to our proper route, and with the last house three miles behind us.

Our last instruction had been to "Jes keep the plain, big road right on to Squire Claymore's."

One road, so far as we could see, was as big as the other. One led down into a swampy wood that looked in the failing light as if it might be all too fruitful of adventure. The other took its way over a high, open country and seemed safer and pleasanter, and on this ground we logically chose it. Soon the open country ended and we found ourselves in something worth calling a forest; it grew denser and darker as we advanced; the night was settling down upon us.

"There are immense tracts like this up here in the barrens," said my mother in a voice that assumed the tone of a philosophical statement, but which rebelliously vibrated with a growing uneasiness. "I thought back there when we first got into the woods that the road looked