

## CHAPTER XXXI.

## D A W N .

FROM Smithfield, on the 12th of April, Sherman wrote to General Grant :—

“I have this moment received your telegram announcing the surrender of Lee’s army. I hardly know how to express my feelings; but you can imagine them. The terms you have given Lee are magnanimous and liberal. Should Johnston follow Lee’s example, of course I will grant the same. He is retreating before me on Raleigh, and I shall be there to-morrow. Roads are heavy and bad; but under the inspiration of the news from you we can march twenty-five miles a day. I am twenty-eight miles from Raleigh, but a part of my army is eight miles behind. If Johnston retreats south I will follow him; but I take it he will surrender at Raleigh. I shall expect to hear from General Sheridan in case Johnston does not surrender, for in such case I will need a little more cavalry. I would make sure to capture the whole army.”

When Sherman entered Raleigh, on the 13th, he found that the inhabitants had not heard of Lee’s surrender, and could hardly credit the report. Johnston had retreated westward, and Sherman dispatched to Grant that he would move at once to Ashboro’, Saulsbery, or Charlotte, according to circumstances.

Kilpatrick, with most of the cavalry, had been left ten miles to the south and west of Smithfield, busy after the enemy’s locomotives and railway trains, and had reported some captures. He was now ordered to “keep pushing the enemy.”

“To-night,” writes Assistant Adjutant-General Dayton, “the general will inform you of the coming move. The columns are closing up here now.”

Late on the same day, General Sherman wrote to Kilpatrick :—

“I have been out and am just back, and hasten to answer yours of to-day. I will send a locomotive to bring up the cars you have captured. Send pickets along the road to advise the conductor where to stop. It will take all day tomorrow to close up our trains, and to draw out on the new line of operations. Rest your animals, and confine your operations to mere feints, and get ready for work by day after tomorrow.”

On the 14th, Sherman had information that Johnston was about Greensboro' and Saulsbury, and had his troops ready to move in that direction. And again he writes to Kilpatrick :—

“I sent you orders to-day, by which you will see I am to put my army where, if Johnston tries to pass out by Charlotte, I can strike him in flank, or, if he remains at Greensboro', I can capture the whole. All I expect of you is to keep up the delusion that we are following him *via* the University and Hillsboro' until I get my infantry heads of column across the Haw River, when I want you to cross also, and feel out towards Greensboro' till I get to Ashboro', where, if he remains at Greensboro', I can approach him from the south, and force him to battle, to surrender, or disperse. You will perceive we will save a couple of days by cutting across the bend in the direction of Saulsbury. I am anxious to prevent his escape towards Georgia.”

In the same letter General Sherman informed his chief of cavalry that on the following day General Howard would have one corps at Jones' Station, and another corps at Morrison's, and that on the day after all would move by separate roads



for Ashboro'; and added: "The people here manifest more signs of subjugation than I have yet seen; but Jeff. Davis has more lives than a cat, and we must not trust him. If you reach the university do not burn its library, buildings, or specific property."

On the 14th of April, after all the dispositions for the advance on Raleigh had been completed, General Sherman received a communication from General Johnston, by a flag of truce, requesting an armistice, and a statement of the best terms on which he could be permitted to surrender the army under his command. General Sherman instantly dispatched his answer, and sent it through General Kilpatrick with a note of instruction, as follows: "The letter by flag of truce was from General Johnston, which is the beginning of the end. Herewith is my answer; send it at once, and do not advance your cavalry beyond the university, or to a point abreast of it on the railway. I will be at Morrisville to-morrow."

"I am fully empowered to arrange with you," he wrote to General Johnston, "any terms for the suspension of hostilities as between the armies commanded by you and those commanded by myself, and am willing to confer with you to that end."

"That a basis of action may be had, I undertake to abide by the same terms and conditions entered into by Generals Grant and Lee at Appomattox Courthouse, Virginia, on the 9th instant."

On the evening of the same day, the three army commanders were informed of the communication just received from the enemy, and that under existing circumstances it was probable the long march contemplated, and for which such careful preparation had been made, might become unnecessary. General Schofield was nevertheless ordered to place one corps of the Army of the Ohio at Holly Springs, and the other just outside of Raleigh, in the direction of the proposed route, and there await further instructions.

General Howard was directed to put one corps of the Army of the Tennessee at Morrisville, and the other at Jones' Station,

and then expect the arrival of the commander-in-chief at Morrisville ; and General Slocum was ordered to remain as he then was until further orders.

General Sherman then immediately prepared copies of his correspondence with General Johnston, and wrote to General Grant on the same day, as follows :—

“I send copies of a correspondence begun with General Johnston, which I think will be followed by terms of capitulation. I will accept the same terms as General Grant gave General Lee, and be careful not to complicate any points of civil policy. If any cavalry has started towards me, caution them that they must be prepared to find our work done. It is now raining in torrents, and I shall await General Johnston's reply here, and will propose to meet him in person at Chapel Hill. I have invited Governor Vance to return to Raleigh with the civil officers of his State. I have met ex-Governor Graham, Mr. Badger, Moore, Holden, and others, all of whom agree that the war is over, and that the States of the South must reassume their allegiance, subject to the constitution and laws of Congress, and that the military power of the South must submit to the national arms. This great fact once admitted, all the details are easy of arrangement.”

Meanwhile, Major McCoy, of General Sherman's staff, then at Durham's Station, was directed by General Sherman to remain with Kilpatrick until Johnston's second communication should be brought within the lines ; so that, in case of necessity, the contents of the message could be sent over the telegraphic wires, and an answer returned forthwith. But no message came from Johnston on that day. On the 16th, Sherman wrote to Brevet Brigadier-General Easton, assistant quartermaster-general at Newbern :—“I expect every hour an answer from Johnston, and unless he makes clear and satisfactory terms to-day, I will start to-morrow towards Ashboro'. Hold yourself in readiness to give us forage here (at Raleigh) when the railway is done.” On the same day, General Kil-



patrick having telegraphed to General Sherman that he suspected bad faith on the part of Johnston, and suggested possible surprise, and having described certain movements of the enemy, not consonant with the maintenance of the condition of things existing at the time of the commencement of the armistice, Sherman replied:—"I have faith in General Johnston's personal sincerity, and do not believe he would resort to a subterfuge to cover his movements. He could not well stop the movement of his troops until he got my letter, which I now hear was delayed all day yesterday. . . . in sending it forward. But if Johnston does gain time on us by such we will make up for it at the expense of North Carolina. We will be all ready to move to-morrow if necessary."

Later on the same day, the message from General Johnston was received by General Sherman, and the result made known to Generals Slocum, Howard, and Schofield, viz., that General Johnston desired an interview with General Sherman, near Durham's Station, with a view to arrange terms of capitulation. Sherman fixed the time at twelve o'clock on the next day, the 17th.

The meeting was had according to appointment. Sherman frankly tendered the same terms accorded by General Grant to General Lee. Johnston acknowledged the terms to be both fair and liberal, but asked the consideration of additional facts. He suggested the treaty between Generals Grant and Lee had reference to a part only of the Confederate forces, whereas he proposed the present agreement should include all the remaining armies of the Confederacy, and thus the war should be at an end. He admitted, frankly and candidly, there was no longer any ground for hope of success on the part of the Confederacy, "that the cause was lost," and that this admission included slavery, State rights, and every other claim for which the war had been inaugurated. And now he desired the fragments of the Confederate armies to preserve their company and regimental organizations, that they be marched to the States where they belonged in such order that they might not be broken up into predatory bands, to overrun

the country and vex the inhabitants ; and urged that that was the favorable occasion to inaugurate the beginning of a period of peace and good-will between all the people destined to live under the same Government.

Sherman declared that while he honored the motives of Johnston, and would be most happy to promote the results suggested, he had grave doubts whether he, Johnston, had the power to make a binding treaty beyond the usual capitulation entered into by and between commanders of armies when one surrenders, on terms, to the other. And if the needed authority did exist, so far as Johnston was concerned, he, Sherman, did not deem himself in possession of the necessary power to bind the Government of the United States to such terms.

As to the first objection, the lack of power on his part, General Johnston replied that he felt sure he could satisfy General Sherman he had all necessary power in the premises, and suggested that the conference might be adjourned over until the next day, to enable him to confer with General Breckinridge, the Confederate secretary of war. And as to the second objection, he urged the repeated declarations of President Lincoln, that he was willing, at all times, to negotiate a peace with any person or persons who could control the Confederate armies. Finally, the convention was adjourned until the next day at twelve o'clock at the same place. On the same day General Sherman wrote a letter to Colonel Webster at Newbern, to be telegraphed to General Grant, as follows :—

“ I have returned from a point twenty-seven miles up the railroad, where I had a long interview with General Johnston, with a full and frank interchange of opinions.

“ He evidently seeks to make terms for Jeff. Davis and his cabinet.

“ He wanted to consult again with Mr. Breckinridge at Greensboro', and I have agreed to meet him at noon to-morrow at the same place.



"We lose nothing in time, as, by agreement, both armies stand still; and the roads are drying up, so that if I am forced to pursue, will be able to make better speed.

"There is great danger that the Confederate armies will dissolve, and fill the whole land with robbers and assassins, and I think this is one of the difficulties that Johnston labors under.

"The assassination of Mr. Lincoln shows one of the elements in the rebel army which will be almost as difficult to deal with as the main armies. Communicate substance of this to General Grant; and also, that if General Sheridan is marching down this way, to feel for me before striking the enemy.

"I don't want Johnston's army to break up into fragments."

It will be remembered that during his hurried visit to City Point to confer with General Grant, General Sherman also had the good fortune to meet President Lincoln, and freely interchange views with him. Any one who knows any thing of the personal opinions and desires of Mr. Lincoln, knows that, above all things, he desired an end of the war on any terms that proposed a permanent peace. He was now, more than ever, impressed by the sacrifices and sufferings of the people on both sides of the contest. Here, in the neighborhood of Petersburg, he had seen war for the first time, and it harrowed his generous soul to the very bottom. He walked over ground covered with the bodies of the slain, more numerous than he could count or cared to count; he saw living men with broken heads and mangled forms, and heard the hopeless groans and piteous wails of the dying, whom no human hand could save; he witnessed the bloody work of the surgeons—those carpenters and joiners of human frames—and saw amputated legs and arms piled up in heaps to be carted away like the offal of a slaughter-house; and he turned from the horrid sight, exclaiming: "*And this is war—horrid war—the trade of barbarians!*" And, appealing to his principal officers, he inquired: "Gentlemen, is there no way by which we can put a stop to this fighting?"

The President was in this frame of mind when General Sherman reported to him at City Point. He had infused the same feeling among all the officers who were near him. He was willing to recognize the existence of State governments, to convene rebel State legislatures, to confer with rebel State civil officers, and to exercise the pardoning power to the utmost extent; in fact, to concede any thing that he could safely concede, and to do any thing that he could safely do, to end the war and restore the supremacy of the Government of the United States.

Deeply impressed with these views, General Sherman returned to his command in North Carolina.

On the 17th of April, the army was shocked by the appalling intelligence of President Lincoln's assassination on the evening of the 14th. The deep gloom which settled upon the hearts of men overshadowed a terrible determination. If there were those in the South who did not thoroughly detest this infamous and cowardly act, for them there need be no appeal for mercy.

Sherman at once announced the melancholy news to the army in the following general orders:—

“HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI,  
In the Field, Raleigh, April 17, 1865.

SPECIAL FIELD ORDERS, NO. 50.

“The general commanding announces with pain and sorrow that, on the evening of the 14th instant, at the theatre in Washington City, his Excellency, the President of the United States, Mr. Lincoln, was assassinated by one who uttered the State motto of Virginia. At the same time the secretary of state, Mr. Seward, whilst suffering from a broken arm, was also stabbed by another murderer in his own house, but still survives, and his son was wounded, supposed fatally.

“It is believed by persons capable of judging, that other high officers were designed to share the same fate. Thus it seems that our enemy, despairing of meeting us in manly warfare, begin to resort to the assassin's tools. Your general does not wish you to infer that this is universal, for he knows



that the great mass of the Confederate army would scorn to sanction such acts, but he believes it the legitimate consequence of rebellion against rightful authority. We have met every phase which this war has assumed, and must now be prepared for it in its last and worst shape, that of assassins and guerrillas; but woe unto the people who seek to expend their wild passions in such a manner, for there is but one dread result.

“By order of MAJOR-GENERAL W. T. SHERMAN.

“L. M. DATTON, Major and Asst. Adjt.-Gen.”

On the 18th of April negotiations were resumed. After the first meeting General Sherman conferred with his principal officers, all of whom favored a treaty on the basis proposed by Johnston. The course pursued at Richmond, the general tone and spirit of the newspaper press, private letters from home, all indicated a general spirit of amnesty and forgiveness. It is a singular fact that soldiers who suffer privation, wounds, and death in the cause of their country, are much more forgiving, generous, and considerate towards their enemies than their friends at home, who live in comfort and read their patriotic sentiments reflected in the morning papers. Finally, the following memorandum, or basis of agreement, was drawn up by General Sherman himself, which, for the time being, was satisfactory to all present as a proposition to be submitted to the President of the United States for ratification or rejection:—

“Memorandum, or basis of agreement, made this, the 18th day of April, A. D. 1865, near Durham's Station, in the State of North Carolina, by and between General Joseph E. Johnston, commanding the Confederate army, and Major-General W. T. Sherman, commanding the Army of the United States, both present.

“I. The contending armies now in the field to maintain the *status quo* until notice is given by the commanding general of any one to his opponent, and reasonable time, say forty-eight hours, allowed.

"II. The Confederate armies now in existence to be disbanded and conducted to their several State capitals, there to deposit their arms and public property in the State arsenal ; and each officer and man to execute and file an agreement to cease from acts of war, and to abide the action of both State and Federal authorities. The number of arms and munitions of war to be reported to the chief of ordnance at Washington City, subject to the future action of the Congress of the United States, and in the mean time to be used solely to maintain peace and order within the borders of the States respectively.

"III. The recognition by the executive of the United States of the several State governments, on their officers and legislatures taking the oath prescribed by the constitution of the United States ; and where conflicting State governments have resulted from the war, the legitimacy of all shall be submitted to the Supreme Court of the United States.

"IV. The re-establishment of all Federal courts in the several States, with powers as defined by the constitution and laws of Congress.

"V. The people and inhabitants of all States to be guaranteed, so far as the Executive can, their political rights and franchise, as well as their rights of person and property, as defined by the constitution of the United States and of the States respectively.

"VI. The executive authority or Government of the United States not to disturb any of the people by reason of the late war, so long as they live in peace and quiet, and abstain from acts of armed hostility, and obey the laws in existence at the place of their residence.

"VII. In general terms, it is announced that the war is to cease ; a general amnesty, so far as the Executive of the United States can command, on condition of the disbandment of the Confederate armies, the distribution of arms, and the resumption of peaceful pursuits by officers and men hitherto composing said armies.

."Not being fully empowered by our respective principals to fulfil these terms, we individually and officially pledge ourselves



to promptly obtain authority, and will endeavor to carry out the above programme."

Immediately General Sherman made his arrangements to send the agreement to Washington with all possible haste, and wrote the following private letter of advice and explanation, directed to both General Grant and General Halleck :—

"I inclose herewith a copy of an agreement made this day between General Joseph E. Johnston and myself, which, if approved by the United States, will produce peace from the Potomac to the Rio Grande. Mr. Breckinridge was present at our conference, in his capacity as major-general, and satisfied me of the ability of General Johnston to carry out to the full extent the terms of the agreement ; and if you will get the President to simply indorse the copy, and commission me to carry out the terms, I will follow them to the conclusion.

"You will observe that it is an absolute submission of the enemy to the lawful authority of the United States, and disperses his armies absolutely ; and the point to which I attach most importance is, that the dispersion and disbandment of these armies is done in such a manner as to prevent their breaking up into guerrilla bands.

"On the other hand, we can retain just as much of our army as we please. I agreed to the mode and manner of the surrender of arms set forth, as it gives the States the means of repressing guerrillas, which we could not expect them to do if we stripped them of all arms.

"Both Generals Johnston and Breckinridge admitted that slavery was dead, and I could not insist on embracing it in such a paper, because it can be made with the States in detail. I know that all the men of substance South sincerely want peace, and I do not believe they will resort to war again during this century. I have no doubt but that they will in the future be perfectly subordinate to the laws of the United States.

"The moment my action in this matter is approved, I can spare five corps, and will ask for orders to leave General Scho-

field here with the Tenth Corps, and to march myself with the Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Seventeenth, Twentieth, and Twenty-third corps *via* Burkesville and Gordonsville to Frederick or Hagerstown, there to be paid and mustered out.

"The question of finance is now the chief one, and every soldier and officer not needed should be got home at work. I would like to be able to begin the march north by May 1st. I urge on the part of the President speedy action, as it is important to get the Confederate armies to their homes as well as our own."

On the same day General Sherman wrote the following private note to General Halleck in regard to the assassination of Mr. Lincoln, and the man Clark, supposed to have been detailed to murder himself:—

"GENERAL—I received your dispatch describing the man Clark detailed to assassinate me. He had better be in a hurry, or he will be too late.

"The news of Mr. Lincoln's death produced a most intense effect on our troops. At first I feared it would lead to excesses, but now it has softened down, and can easily be guided.

"None evinced more feeling than General Johnston, who admitted that the act was calculated to stain his cause with a dark hue. And he contended that the loss was most serious to the people of the South, who had begun to realize that Mr. Lincoln was the best friend the South had.

"I cannot believe that even Mr. Davis was privy to the diabolical plot; but think it the emanation of a set of young men at the South, who are very devils. I want to throw upon the South the care of this class of men, who will soon be as obnoxious to their industrial classes as to us.

"Had I pushed Johnston's army to an extremity, these would have dispersed, and would have done infinite mischief."

All things being now ready, Major Hitchcock, a staff-officer,



was sent forward with directions to keep his own counsel ; to proceed as fast as possible direct to Washington, and deliver his charge to the new President, await his pleasure, and return with his answer. The messenger arrived at Washington at a moment ill suited to the favorable consideration of liberal terms of peace. Mr. Lincoln had been cruelly murdered by a dastardly wretch in the supposed employ of the rebel government ; another conspirator had stealthily entered the domicile of Mr. Seward, who was then ill and helpless in his bed, and, after hewing his way over the prostrate forms of the attendants of the sick-chamber and of the members of the family present, to the bedside of the helpless minister, pounced upon him with all the ferocity of a fiend with a purpose to destroy his life. It had been discovered that the conspiracy not only compassed the life of Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Seward, but that of other high officials of the Government, and in the army as well. Such indignation was never felt in this country before ; and the sorrow experienced by reason of the death of the great and good Mr. Lincoln, as all were wont now to call him, was spontaneous, deep, and universal. Every head was bowed down, every heart was sad, and every mind was occupied with thoughts of the awful crime.

It was under such circumstances that the newly inaugurated President and the panic-stricken members of the old cabinet met to break the package sent by General Sherman, and to deliberate on terms of peace !

The document was read, but a funeral sermon would have sounded better. Every paragraph, every line, and every word of the unfortunate document, when read by the light of surrounding circumstances, and listened to by men in such frame of mind, appeared like an amnesty for unpardonable sins, and a pardon in advance for the assassins. Nay more, the liberal spirit of the soldier which pervaded the entire document, so discordant with the sentiment of the hour, was suggestive of complicity with treason itself. Under the circumstances, any terms short of utter annihilation of all rebels and rebel sym-

pathizers, were not to be considered for a moment. Peace itself was treason, and only vengeance loyalty.

It was the desire of the secretary of war, Mr. Stanton, to relieve General Sherman from command at once, but General Grant, who was present at the cabinet meeting, himself volunteered to take the answer of the President to General Sherman; and to him was accordingly confided full control and discretion in the matter.

General Grant proceeded at once to North Carolina, and on the evening of the 23d arrived at Morehead City, whence he sent word to General Sherman that the truce with Johnston had been disapproved, and notified him of the contents of the following letter of instructions from the secretary of war:—

“WAR DEPARTMENT,  
“Washington City, April 21, 1865.

“GENERAL—The memorandum or basis agreed upon between General Sherman and General Johnston having been submitted to the President, they are disapproved. You will give notice of the disapproval to General Sherman, and direct him to resume hostilities at the earliest moment.

“The instructions given to you by the late President, Abraham Lincoln, on the 3d of March, by my telegram of that date addressed to you, express substantially the views of President Andrew Johnson, and will be observed by General Sherman. A copy is herewith appended.

“The President desires that you proceed immediately to the headquarters of General Sherman, and direct operations against the enemy.

“Yours truly,

“EDWIN M. STANTON,  
“Secretary of War.

“To LIEUTENANT-GENERAL GRANT.”

This dispatch was received on the morning of the 24th. General Sherman instantly gave notice to General Johnston as follows:—



“You will take notice that the truce or suspension of hostilities agreed to between us on the 18th instant will close in forty-eight hours after this is received at your lines.”

At the same time he wrote :—

“I have replies from Washington to my communications of the 18th. I am instructed to limit my operations to your immediate command, and not attempt civil negotiations. I therefore demand the surrender of your army on the same terms as were given to General Lee at Appomattox, Va., on the 9th April, instant, purely and simply.”

Within an hour after the reception of General Grant's dispatch, a courier was riding with all haste towards Durham's Station with this notice and demand for General Johnston. Immediately on the return of the messenger, General Sherman issued orders to his troops terminating the truce on the 26th, at twelve o'clock M., and ordered all to be in readiness to march at that time, on routes previously prescribed in the special field-orders of April 14th, from positions held April 18th. These dispositions were already made when General Grant arrived at Raleigh. He then informed General Sherman that he had orders from the President to direct all military movements, and General Sherman explained to him the exact position of the troops. General Grant was so well satisfied with the situation, that he concluded not to interfere with the arrangements already made, and to leave their execution in the hands of General Sherman.

As for General Johnston, he was powerless ; he could neither fight nor retreat. He must either disperse his army or surrender it on the terms proposed. On the 25th he invited General Sherman to another conference, with a view to surrender. It was now the province of General Grant to take the lead in the negotiations, but he preferred that the entire business should be consummated by General Sherman. Nevertheless, he recommended and even urged General Sherman

to afford General Johnston another interview, which was finally appointed to take place at the hour designated for the termination of the truce.

At this conference final terms were soon concluded, and the second grand army of the Confederacy was surrendered to the power of the United States upon the following terms :—

“Terms of a military convention entered into this twenty-sixth (26th) day of April, 1865, at Bennett's house, near Durham's Station, North Carolina, between General Joseph E. Johnston, commanding the Confederate Army, and Major-General W. T. Sherman, commanding the United States Army in North Carolina.

“All acts of war on the part of the troops under General Johnston's command to cease from this date. All arms and public property to be deposited at Greensboro', and delivered to an ordnance officer of the United States Army. Rolls of all officers and men to be made in duplicate, one copy to be retained by the commander of the troops, and the other to be given to an officer to be designated by General Sherman. Each officer and man to give his individual obligation in writing not to take up arms against the Government of the United States until properly released from this obligation, The side-arms of officers, and their private horses and baggage, to be retained by them.

“This being done, all the officers and men will be permitted to return to their homes, not to be disturbed by the United States authorities so long as they observe their obligations and the laws in force where they may reside.

“W. T. SHERMAN, Major-General,  
“Commanding the Army of the United States in  
North Carolina.

“J. E. JOHNSTON, General,  
“Commanding Confederate States Army  
in North Carolina.

“Approved: U. S. GRANT, Lieutenant-General.

“RALEIGH, N. C., April 26, 1865.”



General Sherman says, in his report :—

“ And although undue importance has been given to the so-called negotiations which preceded it, and a rebuke and public disfavor cast on me wholly unwarranted by the facts, I rejoice in saying it was accomplished without further ruin and devastation to the country ; without the loss of a single life of those gallant men who had followed me from the Mississippi to the Atlantic ; and without subjecting brave men to the ungracious task of pursuing a fleeing foe that did not wish to fight. And I challenge the instance, during the last four years, when an armed and defiant foe stood before me, that I did not go in for a fight ; and I would blush for shame if I had ever struck or insulted a fallen foe.”

It will now become necessary to recur to events transpiring at Washington and Richmond during the absence of the lieutenant-general.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

## CORRESPONDENCE DURING THE TRUCE.

IN order to a more perfect understanding of the intentions of the framers of the original memorandum of agreement, in proposing and consenting to the terms of the armistice, it is now necessary to refer to the correspondence that took place during the period that intervened between the signature of the agreement by General Sherman and General Johnston on the 18th of April, 1865, and the night of the 23d of the same month, when General Sherman received the first notification that the Government had refused to ratify his action.

Immediately on signing the truce, Sherman dispatched the following order, by a flag of truce, through the lines of the Confederate army to General Stoneman, commanding the cavalry in Johnston's rear :—

“GENERAL—General Johnston and I have agreed to maintain a truce in the nature of *statu quo*, by which each agrees to stand fast till certain propositions looking to a general peace are referred to our respective principals. You may, therefore, cease hostilities, but supplies may come to me near Raleigh.

“Keep your command well in hand, and approach Durham's Station or Chapel Hill, and I will supply you by our railroad. As soon as you reach the outer pickets report to me in person or by telegraph.”

This was indorsed by General Johnston for the guidance of his troops, as follows :—



"The above order is given by agreement between Major-General Sherman and myself. The march of Major-General Stoneman's command under it is not to be interfered with by Confederate troops.

"J. E. JOHNSTON,  
"General."

At the same time the following communication was dispatched, through the same channels, addressed to the commanding general of the armies of the United States in Virginia :—

"GENERAL—I have agreed with General Joseph E. Johnston for a temporary cessation of active hostilities, to enable me to lay before our Government at Washington the agreement made between us, with the full sanction of Mr. Davis, and in the presence of Mr. Breckinridge, for the disbandment of all the armies of the Confederacy from here to the Rio Grande.

"If any of your forces are moving towards Johnston, I beg you to check them where they are, or at the extremity of any railroad where they may be supplied, until you receive orders from General Grant, or until I notify you that the agreement is at an end and hostilities resumed."

On the 19th, orders were sent to General Gillmore to cease active operations in South Carolina.

"You may now recall General Hatch to the Santee," Sherman wrote to General Gillmore. "Keep pickets about Branchville and the Santee Bridge, and await the further developments. I have no doubt that a general surrender of all the Confederate armies is arranged, and only awaits a confirmation from Washington. All is well with us and everywhere."

Thus far, however, no measures had been taken to check the devastation caused by the bold Wilson's unembarrassed raid through Georgia and Alabama. General Johnston, therefore, wrote to General Sherman as follows :—

"GREENSBORO', April 19, 1865.

"GENERAL—As your troops are moving from the coast towards the interior of South Carolina, and from Columbus towards Macon, Georgia, I respectfully suggest that you send copies of your orders announcing the suspension of hostilities for transmittal to them, supposing the interior route to be the shortest.

"Most respectfully, your obedient servant,

"J. E. JOHNSTON,

"General C. S. A."

To this General Sherman replied on the 20th :—

"GENERAL—At your request I send you, by Major Saunders, several written and printed copies of an order I have made to this army, which announces the cessation of hostilities, etc. I dispatched a steamer from Morehead City yesterday, for Charleston, with orders to General Gillmore to cease all acts of destruction, public or private, and to draw Generals Hatch and Potter back of the frontier. Also, by half-past eleven A. M. yesterday, Major Hitchcock was on a fleet steamer at Morehead City, carrying a request to General Meade to check the movement of his army on Danville and Weldon; so that I hope your people will be spared in the Carolinas. But I am apprehensive of Wilson, who is impetuous and rapid. If you will send by telegraph and courier a single word, he will stop, and then the inclosed order will place his command at a point convenient to our supplies.

"I send you a late paper, showing that in Virginia the State authorities are acknowledged and invited to resume their lawful functions."

On the 20th, while this dispatch was on the way, Wilson appeared before Macon and demanded the surrender of the city. Being informed by the commanding officer of the existence of the armistice, he sent the following dispatch, under flag of truce, to be telegraphed to Sherman :—



“TO MAJOR-GENERAL W. T. SHERMAN,

*Through headquarters of GENERAL BEAUREGARD :*

“My advance received the surrender of this city with its garrison this evening. General Cobb had previously sent me, under a flag of truce, a copy of the telegram from General Beauregard, declaring the existence of an armistice between all the troops under your command and those of General Johnston. Without questioning the authority of this dispatch, or its application to my command, I could not communicate orders in time to prevent the capture. I shall therefore hold the garrison, including Major-Generals Cobb and G. W. Smith and Brigadier-General McCall, prisoners of war.

“Please send me orders. I shall remain here a reasonable length of time to hear from you.

“J. H. WILSON,

“Brevet Major-General U. S. A.”

This dispatch was transmitted by telegraph by General Beauregard to General Johnston, and by the latter forwarded through General Wade Hampton, by flag of truce, to its destination, accompanied by the following letter from General Johnston :—

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE TENNESSEE,  
April 21, 1865—9.30 A. M.

“MAJOR-GENERAL W. T. SHERMAN,

*Care* LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HAMPTON, *via Hillsboro :*

“I transmit a dispatch, just received by telegraph from Major-General Wilson, United States Army. Should you desire to give the orders asked for in the same manner, I beg you to send them to me through Lieutenant-General Hampton's office.

“I hope that, for the sake of expedition, you are willing to take this course. I also send, for your information, a copy of a dispatch received from Major-General Cobb.

“J. E. JOHNSTON.”

With this letter General Johnston also transmitted a copy

of the following telegram from Major-General Howell Cobb, commanding the Confederate troops at Macon :—

“To GENERAL G. T. BEAUREGARD :

“On receipt of your dispatch at eleven o'clock to-day, I sent a flag of truce to General Wilson, with copy of the same, and informing him that I had issued orders to carry out armistice, desisting from military operations. The flag met the advance fourteen miles from the city. Before hearing from it the advance moved on the city, and having moved my picket, were in the city before I was aware of their approach.

“An unconditional surrender was demanded, to which I was forced to submit, under protest. General Wilson has since arrived, and holds the city and garrison as captured, notwithstanding my protest. He informs me he will remain in his present position a reasonable length of time to hear from his dispatch to General Sherman, sent to your care.

“HOWELL COBB,

“Major-General.”

Sherman immediately issued the following orders to General Wilson, and caused them to be transmitted through the same channels by which he had received the report of that officer :—

“HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI,  
In the Field, Raleigh, N. C., April 21, 1865.

“GENERAL JAMES H. WILSON,

*Commanding Cavalry Division Mississippi, Macon, Ga. :*

“GENERAL—A suspension of hostilities was agreed on between General Johnston and myself, on Tuesday, April 18, at twelve noon. I want that agreement religiously observed, and you may release the generals captured at Macon. Occupy ground convenient, and contract for supplies for your command, and forbear any act of hostility until you hear or have reason to believe hostilities are resumed. In the mean time, it is also agreed the position of the enemy must not be altered to our prejudice.



“You know by this time that General Lee has surrendered to General Grant the rebel Army of Northern Virginia, and that I only await the sanction of the President to conclude terms of peace coextensive with the boundaries of the United States. You will shape your conduct on this knowledge, unless you have overwhelming proof to the contrary.”

At the same time Sherman wrote to General Johnston:—

“GENERAL—I send you a letter for General Wilson, which, if sent by telegraph and courier, will check his career. He may distrust the telegraph, therefore better send the original, for he cannot mistake my handwriting, with which he is familiar. He seems to have his blood up, and will be hard to hold. If he can buy corn, fodder, and rations down about Fort Valley, it will obviate the necessity of his going up to Rome or Dalton.

“It is reported to me from Cairo that Mobile is in our possession, but it is not minute or official.

“General Baker sent in to me, wanting to surrender his command, on the theory that the whole Confederate army was surrendered. I explained to him, or his staff-officer, the exact truth, and left him to act as he thought proper. He seems to have disbanded his men, deposited a few arms about twenty miles from here, and himself awaits your action. I will not hold him, his men, or arms subject to any condition other than the final one we may agree on.

“I shall look for Major Hitchcock back from Washington on Wednesday, and shall promptly notify you of the result. By the action of General Weitzel in relation to the Virginia Legislature, I feel certain we will have no trouble on the score of recognizing existing State governments. It may be the lawyers will want us to define more minutely what is meant by the guarantee of rights of person and property. It may be construed into a compact for us to undo the past as to the rights of slaves and ‘leases of plantations’ on the Mississippi,

of 'vacant and abandoned' plantations. I wish you would talk to the best men you have on these points; and, if possible, let us in our final convention make these points so clear as to leave no room for angry controversy.

"I believe if the South would simply and publicly declare what we all feel, that slavery is dead, that you would inaugurate an era of peace and prosperity that would soon efface the ravages of the past four years of war. Negroes would remain in the South, and afford you abundance of cheap labor, which otherwise will be driven away; and it will save the country the senseless discussions which have kept us all in hot water for fifty years.

"Although, strictly speaking, this is no subject for a military convention, yet I am honestly convinced that our simple declaration of a result will be accepted as good law everywhere. Of course, I have not a single word from Washington on this or any other point of our agreement, but I know the effect of such a step by us will be universally accepted."

Johnston immediately replied, suggesting a modification of Sherman's orders to Wilson:—

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE TENNESSEE,

"April 22, 1865—2.30 P. M.

"MAJOR-GENERAL W. T. SHERMAN,

*Commanding U. S. Forces, Raleigh, N. C. :*

"Your telegram to brevet Major-General Wilson is just received. I respectfully suggest that the sentence, 'In the mean time it is also agreed that the position of the enemy's forces must not be altered to our prejudice,' be so modified as to read, 'In the mean time it is also agreed that the position of the forces of neither belligerent shall be altered to the prejudice of the other;' and on this principle you direct Major-General Wilson to withdraw from Macon and release its garrison.

"J. E. JOHNSTON,  
General."



To this General Sherman felt impelled to decline acceding, and accordingly answered on the 23d :—

“GENERAL—Your communication of twenty minutes past two P. M. of yesterday is received. My line of communication with General Wilson is not secure enough for me to confuse him by a change in mere words. Of course the *status quo* is mutual, but I leave him to apply it to his case according to his surroundings. I would not instruct him to undo all done by him between the actual date of our agreement and the time the knowledge of it reached him. I beg, therefore, to leave him free to apply the rule to his own case. Indeed, I have almost exceeded the bounds of prudence in checking him without the means of direct communication, and only did so on my absolute faith in your personal character.

“I inclose a dispatch for General Wilson, in cipher, which, translated, simply advises him to keep his command well together, and to act according to the best of his ability, doing as little harm to the country as possible, until he knows hostilities are resumed.”

Meanwhile, General Sherman had received, through General Johnston, a dispatch written in the cipher of the War Department, and on causing it to be translated, read as follows :—

“HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY CORPS, MILITARY DIVISION  
OF THE MISSISSIPPI, Macon, Ga., April 21, 1865.

“MAJOR-GENERAL W. T. SHERMAN,

*Through* GENERAL JOHNSTON :

“Your dispatch of yesterday is received. I shall at once proceed to carry out your instructions. If proper arrangements can be made to have sugar, coffee, and clothing sent from Savannah to Augusta, they can be brought thither by the way of Atlanta by railroad, or they can be sent by boat directly to this place from Darien. I shall be able to get forage, bread, and meat from Southeastern Georgia. The rail-

road from Atlanta to Dalton or Cleveland cannot be repaired in three months. I have arranged to send an officer at once, *via* Eufala, to General Canby, with a copy of your dispatch. General Cobb will also notify General Taylor of the armistice. I have about three thousand prisoners of war, including Generals Cobb, Smith, McCall, Mercer, and Robertson. Can you arrange with General Johnston for their immediate release? Please answer at once. I shall start a staff-officer to you to-morrow.

“J. H. WILSON,  
“Brevet Major-General commanding.”

He immediately replied as follows, on the 23d :—

“Cipher dispatch received. There is a general suspension of hostilities, awaiting the assent of our new President to certain civil points before making a final military convention of peace. Act according to your own good sense until you are certain the war is over. Keep possession of some key-point that will secure your present advantages, rest your men and horses, and in a few days you will receive either positive information of peace, or may infer the contrary. My messenger should be back from Washington to-morrow.”

On the 22d, Sherman reported his action as follows to Lieutenant-General Grant, sending the dispatch by telegraph to Morehead City to be forwarded by a fleet steamer to Fort Monroe, and thence telegraphed to Washington :—

“General Wilson held Macon on the 20th, with Howell Cobb, G. W. Smith, and others as prisoners; but they claimed the benefit of my armistice, and he has telegraphed to me through the rebel lines for orders. I have answered him that he may draw out of Macon, and hold his command for further orders, unless he has reason to believe that the rebels are changing the status to our prejudice. A brigade of rebels offered to surrender to me yesterday; but I prefer to make one grand finale,



which I believe to be perfectly practicable. There will be no trouble in adjusting matters in North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama, and I think South Carolina ought to be satisfied, with Charleston and Columbia in ruins. All we await is an answer from you and the President. Weather fine; roads good. Troops ready for fight or home."

On the 23d, he wrote to Generals Johnston and Hardee:—

"I send a bundle of papers for you jointly. These are the latest. Telegraph dispatches are here to 19th. Young Fred. Seward is alive, having been subjected to the trepan, and may possibly recover.

"There appears no doubt the murder of Mr. Lincoln was done by Booth, and the attempt on Mr. Seward by Surratt, who is in custody. All will sooner or later be caught. The feeling North on this subject is more intense than any thing that ever occurred before. General Ord, at Richmond, has recalled the permission given for the Virginia Legislature, and I fear much the assassination of the President will give a bias to the popular mind which, in connection with the desire of our politicians, may thwart our purpose of recognizing 'existing local governments.' But it does seem to me there must be good sense enough left on this continent to give order and shape to the now disjointed elements of government. I believe this assassination of Mr. Lincoln will do the cause of the South more harm than any event of the war, both at home and abroad, and I doubt if the Confederate *military* authorities had any more complicity with it than I had. I am thus frank with you, and have asserted as much to the War Department. But I dare not say as much for Mr. Davis or some of the civil functionaries, for it seems the plot was fixed for March 4th, but delayed, awaiting some instructions from '*Richmond*.' You will find in the newspapers I send you, all the information I have on this point.

"Major Hitchcock should be back to-morrow, and if any delay occurs it will result from the changed feeling about

Washington, arising from this new and unforeseen complication."

On the night of the 23d, Major Hitchcock returned from Washington with the dispatches which we read in the preceding chapter, and Lieutenant-General Grant arrived in person to direct operations.

On the 25th General Sherman wrote to Admiral Dahlgren :—

"I expect Johnston will surrender his army to-morrow. We have had much negotiation, and things are settling down to the terms of General Lee's army.

"Jeff. Davis and cabinet, with considerable specie, are making their way towards Cuba. He passed Charlotte going south on the 23d, and I think he will try to reach Florida coast, either Cedar Keys or lower down. Catch him if you can. Can't you watch the east coast and send word round to the west coast?

"Copy for General Gillmore, who has the cipher."

And on May 2d he wrote to General Thomas :—

"Captain Hasea is here *en route* for Nashville, from General Nelson, now at Macon. He got possession of that place just as he learned of the suspension of hostilities that preceded the final surrender of Johnston's army at Greensboro'. I have sent word to General Nelson to parole his prisoners there on the same terms as prescribed to Johnston and Lee, and to return to the neighborhood of Decatur, Alabama, and then report to you or me. I came to Savannah from Raleigh to send stores up to Augusta by boat for Nelson, and to take steps to occupy Augusta.

"I will have much to tell you, at some future time, of the details of my negotiations with Johnston, which have been misconstrued by the people at the North ; but I can afford to let them settle down before telling all the truth. At my first interview with Johnston he admitted the Confederate cause



was lost, and that it would be murder for him to allow any more conflicts; but he asked me to help him all I could to prevent his army and people breaking up into guerrilla bands. I deemed that so desirable, that I did make terms, subject to the approval of the President, which may be deemed too liberal. But the more I reflect, the more satisfied I am that by dealing with the people of the South magnanimously we will restore four-fifths of them at once to the condition of good citizens, leaving us only to deal with the remainder. But my terms were not approved, and Johnston's present surrender only applies to the troops in his present command, viz., east of Chattahoochee.

"The boat is in motion, and I write with great difficulty, and will wait a more convenient season to give you fuller details."

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## THE REJECTED AGREEMENT.

ON the 22d day of April the secretary of war, Mr. Stanton, caused to be prepared and published in the daily newspapers of the city of New York the following bulletin :—

“ MAJOR-GENERAL DIX, *New York* :

“ Yesterday evening a bearer of dispatches arrived here from General Sherman. An agreement for a suspension of hostilities, and a memorandum of what is called ‘ a basis of peace,’ had been entered into on the 18th instant, by General Sherman with the rebel General Johnston, the rebel General Breckinridge being present at the conference.

“ A cabinet meeting was held at eight o’clock in the evening, at which the action of General Sherman was disapproved by the President, by the secretary of war, by General Grant, and by every member of the cabinet. General Sherman was ordered to resume hostilities immediately, and he was directed that the instructions given by the late President, in the following telegram, which was penned by Mr. Lincoln himself, at the Capitol, on the night of the 3d of March, were approved by President Andrew Johnson, and were reiterated to govern the action of military commanders.

“ On the night of the 3d of March, while President Lincoln and his cabinet were at the Capitol, a telegram from General Grant was brought to the secretary of war, informing him that General Lee had asked for a conference to make arrangements for terms of peace. The letter of General Lee was published in a message of Davis to the rebel Congress. General



Grant's telegram was submitted to Mr. Lincoln, who, after pondering a few minutes, took up his pen, and wrote with his own hand the following reply, which he submitted to the secretary of state and the secretary of war. It was then dated, addressed, and signed by the secretary of war, and telegraphed to General Grant.

“ WASHINGTON, March 3, 1865—12.30 P. M.

“ LIEUTENANT-GENERAL GRANT :

“ The President directs me to say to you that he wishes you to have no conference with General Lee, unless it be for the capitulation of General Lee's army, or some minor and purely military matters. He instructs me to say you are not to decide or confer upon any political questions. Such questions the President holds in his own hands, and will submit them to no military conference or conditions. Meantime you are to press to the utmost your military advantages.

“ EDWIN M. STANTON,  
“ Secretary of War.’

“ The orders of General Sherman to General Stoneman to withdraw from Salisbury and join him, will probably open the way for Davis to escape to Mexico, or Europe, with his plunder, which is reported to be very large, including not only the plunder of the Richmond banks, but previous accumulations. A dispatch received by this department from Richmond says :

“ It is stated here by respectable parties, that the amount of specie taken south by Jefferson Davis and his partisans is very large, including not only the plunder of the Richmond banks, but previous accumulations. They hope, it is said, to make terms with Sherman, or some other Southern commander, by which they will be permitted, with their effects, including the gold plunder, to go to Mexico or Europe. Johnston's negotiations look to this end.’

“ After the cabinet meeting last night, General Grant started for North Carolina, to direct future operations against Johnston's army.

“ EDWIN M. STANTON,  
“ Secretary of War.’

To this dispatch was appended in the newspapers the following remarks :—

“It is reported that this proceeding of General Sherman was disapproved for the following, among other reasons:—

“First.—It was an exercise of authority not vested in General Sherman, and on its face shows that both he and Johnston knew that General Sherman had no authority to enter into any such arrangement.

“Second.—It was an acknowledgment of the rebel government.

“Third.—It is understood to re-establish rebel State governments that had been overthrown at the sacrifice of many thousands of loyal lives and immense treasure, and placed arms and munitions of war in the hands of rebels, at their respective capitals, which might be used as soon as the armies of the United States were disbanded, and used to conquer and subdue loyal States.

“Fourth.—By the restoration of the rebel authority in their respective States, they would be enabled to re-establish slavery.

“Fifth.—It might furnish a ground of responsibility, by the Federal Government, to pay the rebel debt, and certainly subjects loyal citizens of the rebel States to debts contracted by rebels in the name of the States.

“Sixth.—It put in dispute the existence of loyal State governments, and the new State of Western Virginia, which had been recognized by every department of the United States Government.

“Seventh.—It practically abolished the confiscation laws, and relieved rebels of every degree who had slaughtered our people from all pains and penalties for their crimes.

“Eighth.—It gave terms that had been deliberately, repeatedly, and solemnly rejected by President Lincoln, and better terms than the rebels had ever asked in their most prosperous condition.

“Ninth.—It formed no basis of true and lasting peace, but relieved the rebels from the pressure of our victories, and left them in condition to renew their effort to overthrow the United States Government, and subdue the loyal States, whenever



their strength was recruited, and any opportunity should offer."

The agreement between General Sherman and General Johnston was in perfect accord with President Lincoln's policy at that time, so far as it was known to his generals or the public. The telegram dated 3d of March, and sent by Mr. Stanton to General Grant, was a special instruction intended to govern the conduct of General Grant alone at that particular time and in that particular case. It was not communicated to General Sherman for his guidance, and was wholly unknown to him. Whatever may have been the reasons for that instruction, it was entirely ignored a month afterwards by Mr. Lincoln himself. After Lee's surrender, Mr. Lincoln concluded to recognize the existing Legislature of Virginia, and authorized the then military commandant at Richmond to permit it to assemble. On the 6th day of April, while at City Point, he made this memorandum and handed it to Senator Wilkinson, who delivered it to General Weitzel on the 7th :—

" MAJOR-GENERAL WEITZEL, *Richmond, Virginia* :

" It has been intimated to me that the gentlemen who have acted as the Legislature of Virginia, in support of the rebellion, may now desire to assemble at Richmond and take measures to withdraw the Virginia troops and other support from resistance to the General Government. If they attempt it, give them permission and protection, until, if at all, they attempt some action hostile to the United States, in which case you will notify them, give them reasonable time to leave, and at the end of which time arrest any who remain. Allow Judge Campbell to see this, but do not make it public.

" Yours, etc.,

" A. LINCOLN."

General Weitzel, so authorized, approved a call for the meeting of the Legislature at Richmond on the 11th. The call was in these words :—

“The undersigned, members of the Legislature of the State of Virginia, in connection with a number of citizens of the State, whose names are attached to this paper, in view of the evacuation of the city of Richmond by the Confederate government and its occupation by the military authorities of the United States, the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, and the suspension of the jurisdiction of the civil power of the State, are of the opinion that an immediate meeting of the General Assembly of the State is called for by the exigencies of the situation. The consent of the military authorities of the United States to a session of the Legislature in Richmond, in connection with the governor and lieutenant-governor, to their free deliberation upon the public affairs, and to the ingress and departure of all its members under safe conduct, has been obtained.

“The United States authorities will afford transportation from any point under their control to any of the persons before mentioned.

“The matters to be submitted to the Legislature are the restoration of peace to the State of Virginia, and the adjustment of the questions, involving life, liberty, and property, that have arisen in the State as a consequence of war.

“We, therefore, earnestly request the governor, lieutenant-governor, and members of the Legislature to repair to this city by the 25th of April, instant.

“We understand that full protection to persons and property will be afforded in the State, and we recommend to peaceful citizens to remain at their homes and pursue their usual avocations with confidence that they will not be interrupted.

“We earnestly solicit the attendance in Richmond, on or before the 25th of April, instant, of the following persons, citizens of Virginia, to confer with us as to the best means of restoring peace to the State of Virginia. We have secured safe conduct from the military authorities of the United States for them to enter the city and depart without molestation.”



The foregoing was published in the Richmond papers on the 12th, and announced in hand-bills, posted in all conspicuous places. On the same day the Richmond Whig contained the following editorial article, congratulating the country on this pleasing state of things :—

“It is understood that this invitation has been put forth in pursuance of the plan of proceeding assented to by President Lincoln. At all events, it will be hailed by the great body of the people of Virginia as the *first step towards the reinstatement of the Old Dominion in the Union*. It is probable that some of the members of the Legislature may decline to come. In every such case the people of the county or senatorial district should select some influential and intelligent citizen, who is willing to take part in this business, and commission him, as far as they can, to represent them at the conference.

“The views and purposes of the members of the Legislature should be ascertained at once. Every one can foresee difficulties in the way of formal action : in the beginning several complex questions are to be met at the threshold ; but “where there is a will there is a way,” and whatever the difficulties presented, the important business must be undertaken.

“In this connection we may say that the recent interview between the President and Judge Campbell related to the restoration of peace in all the States, and not to Virginia alone, as might be inferred from the brief notice of the ‘consultation of citizens’ published in the Whig of Saturday. Whilst every one will rejoice at the restoration of peace and prosperity in all the States, we cannot refrain from the expression of the hope that the public men who are to take part in the reinstatement of Virginia to her ancient position in the sisterhood of States, will address themselves to that business without unnecessary delay. Virginia was not consulted nor waited for when secession became the determined policy of the ‘cotton States,’ and there is no sound reason why ‘co-operation’ with them, in accepting the President’s terms of peace, should be the rule of proceeding now. Let Virginia lead the way

back to the Union, and present an example of prompt action to the other States of the late 'Confederacy.' ”

These publications were made in Richmond six days before the agreement between Sherman and Johnston was concluded, and the facts were well known in both armies, were freely commented upon, and the movement highly approved by the commanding officers, who generally regarded the policy thereby indicated as wise and of universal application. This call and the Richmond comments were reproduced by the leading newspapers of the United States, with approving comments, on the 14th of April, the very day of the assassination, and four days anterior to the agreement. The New York Herald of that date contained a leading article vindicating the policy indicated, and claiming for Mr. Lincoln great credit for inaugurating it. Other leading journals, such as the New York Tribune, Post, and World, all concurred in the most liberal terms of peace. The Herald article says :—

“The rebellion is indeed demolished. Read the call which we publish to-day from congressmen, assemblymen, editors, judges, lawyers, planters, etc.—a powerful body of the most conspicuous rebels of old Virginia—inviting the rebel governor, lieutenant-governor, and Legislature of that State to meet in Richmond, under the protection of the ‘old flag,’ to consider their present situation. Old Virginia, the head and front of the rebellion, surrenders, and, broken up, disorganized and exhausted, all her confederates in the service of Jefferson Davis, under the same protection, will speedily follow her good example.

“This is a shrewd and sagacious movement on the part of President Lincoln. He not only pardons the leading rebels of Virginia, from the governor down, but invites him and them, and their late rebel Legislature, to meet in council at Richmond, to deliberate upon the ways and means for the restoration of the State to the blessings of the Union, under the new condition of things produced by this tremendous war. The



assemblage thus convened cannot fail to be influenced by the generous spirit of President Lincoln. It will realize the fact that Virginia having been, like a brand from the flames, rescued from the Moloch of her Southern Confederacy, vengeance is at an end, charity prevails, and that the 'Old Dominion' must prepare for a new State charter, upon new ideas, and for the new life of regeneration and prosperity that lies before her. At the same time, while the moral influence of this great and wise concession in behalf of reconstruction in Virginia will have a powerful effect upon the leading spirits of all the other rebellious States, we may expect from the debates of the meeting thus assembled, that the administration will derive much valuable information, and will be greatly assisted in the solution of the difficult details of reconstruction in all the reconquered States.

"We are inclined to suspect that Mr. Lincoln, in this exhibition of the spirit of conciliation, did not forget a certain anecdote in the life of Herod the Great, of Judea, as the king of that country under the supreme authority of Rome. In the war of the Roman factions which followed the death of Julius Cæsar, Herod took the side of the unfortunate Brutus and Cassius. Marc Antony, then falling into the possession of Judea, called Herod to an account, and asked him what he had to say in his defence. Herod replied: 'Only this: if I have been troublesome as your enemy, may I not be useful as your friend?' Marc Antony took the hint, and Herod continued useful as a servant of Rome to the day of his death. The same idea, we infer, influenced the President in those recent consultations at Richmond, to which we may trace the experiment of this extraordinary call for the meeting of the rebel Legislature of Virginia. He wants to make those men useful as friends of the Union who have been so energetic and troublesome as its enemies."

Such was the published policy of Mr. Lincoln, as it came under the notice of General Sherman, and such the arguments by which it was sustained. With his opportunities for correct

information, Sherman approved of both. He had the most satisfactory evidence of the complete overthrow of the power of the Confederacy and the subjugation of the spirit of the rebellion. For four long years he had been constantly employed in destroying the armies of the Confederacy and wasting its power of resistance. He had just marched his grand army from the mountains, in Georgia, to the sea, and from the sea back to the mountains, in North Carolina; he had overcome every foe, laid waste every field, destroyed every article of subsistence, every instrument of war, and every means of transportation, in his desolate track; and now, with his grand army well in hand, he stood amid a wilderness of ruin, with no resolute foe willing to accept the gage of battle. He knew the power of the enemy was broken, and every particle of the spirit of war taken out of the Southern people.

General Sherman is no petty dealer of small wares; he fights an enemy with all his might, and having conquered, he forgives with all his heart; and in the spirit of Mr. Lincoln, whose teachings he followed, he was willing to say to General Johnston: "Take your army home in good order, turn over your arms at the State capitals, there to remain subject to the disposition of the Congress of the United States; let your men go to work to repair your desolate country, under the ample folds of the flag of the Union;—go and sin no more, and may God bless you!"

To denounce Sherman's truce, therefore, is to denounce the policy of Mr. Lincoln; and to condemn Sherman, is to defame the memory of the man the nation mourns. If Sherman was slow in mastering radical ideas, so was Mr. Lincoln. Indeed, Sherman moved faster than Lincoln; for while Lincoln was contemplating the effect of his emancipation proclamation, and comparing it to the "pope's bull against the comet," Sherman declared that the subject-matter of the proclamation was within the war-power of the President, and that nothing remained to make it effective but the triumph of our arms; and this reduced the question to one of material power. If the rebellion triumphed, the nation was conquered and slavery



survived ; if the nation conquered, slavery died as an incident of the war, by force of a lawful proclamation, issued by proper authority during the war. If Sherman had been a politician and not a soldier, his political ideas might have developed and improved more rapidly : but if his political progress was slow, his army moved fast, and brought home peace ; and if he erred, it was on the side of magnanimity, and the attributes of Deity prescribe no penalty for such sins.

It is important to remember that General Sherman concluded his agreement with General Johnston while filled with the spirit of President Lincoln's policy with respect to the Virginia Legislature, and that no notice of the change of that policy or the revocation of the order to General Weitzel, of April 6th, reached him until the agreement had been already disapproved.

Mr. Stanton deemed that General Sherman had transcended his authority. The surrender of all rebels in arms, as proposed to Johnston by him, was, however, a purely military question, and he treated it as a soldier ; but when the terms proposed by Johnston were found to embrace political subjects, he neither finally accepted nor decidedly rejected them, but promptly referred them to his superior, the President. If he had been invested with the requisite authority to conclude a treaty on purely civil matters, he would not have referred the stipulations to the President for his approval, but would have closed the matter at once. Sherman declared to Johnston he had no authority, and Johnston knew he had no authority, to make a final agreement without the approval of the President, and it was so stated in the instrument itself as a reason for sending it to Washington for the consideration and action of the President.

Furthermore, it was objected that it was a "practical acknowledgment of the rebel government." It has ever been an unpleasant thing to do, to acknowledge even the actual existence of the rebel government ; nevertheless we had previously done so in many ways : by declaring the ports of the Southern States blockaded, by sending flags of truce to rebel com-

manders to obtain leave to carry off our wounded and bury our dead, by appointing commissioners to arrange a cartel for the exchange of prisoners, and by fighting its armies on a hundred battle-fields at an expense of hundreds of millions of treasure and hundreds of thousands of lives. But the agreement did not in any way recognize the rightful existence of the rebel government, and never since the war began was it proposed to recognize its actual existence under such agreeable circumstances. Its condition was utterly hopeless. General Johnston, at the head of the only formidable military force belonging to it, presented himself to General Sherman and made this proposition: "I propose to stop the war and surrender all the armies of the Confederacy, on condition that the Southern people shall be allowed to live like other respectable people under the free and enlightened Government of the United States." All he asked besides was a receipt. Sherman promptly wrote out a voucher, and sent it to Washington for approval. It was not the acknowledgment of the existence of the rebel government so much as a receipt for the rebel government itself, soul and body, which Johnston was to deliver into the hands of Sherman. And it could make no difference in whose name the voucher was given, since the rebel government was to perish the instant it was delivered.

Again: "By the restoration of the rebel authority in their respective States, they would be enabled to re-establish slavery."

This objection is well founded, and, indeed, as we shall presently perceive, occurred to General Sherman himself on further reflection. It would have constituted a valid reason for requiring the amendment of the agreement by the insertion of a distinct declaration on this subject, if it had not been already decided by the administration not to permit any terms except those necessarily involved in the surrender of the Confederate armies. But the ruling conviction of General Sherman's mind, that slavery had received its death-blow beyond the power of resurrection, caused him to lose sight of the



necessity for a formal recognition of a fact, as he thought, already patent to all. Johnston so admitted at his conference with Sherman, and Sherman so believed. Sherman was of opinion that slavery was abolished by act of war, and that it was wiped out of existence by the President's proclamation. As far back as the 1st of January, 1864, he wrote, for the information of the people of Alabama : " Three years ago, by a little reflection and patience, you could have had a hundred years of peace and prosperity, but you preferred war. Very well. Last year you could have saved your slaves, but now it is too late : *all the powers of earth cannot restore your slaves any more than your dead grandfathers.*"

On his march from Atlanta, in Georgia, to Goldsboro', in North Carolina, the negroes came in crowds to see him, and to inquire if it was true " Massa Lincoln," as they designated the President, had really made them free ; when General Sherman gave them every assurance that they had been made free, they and their children forever, but advised them to remain at home and work, and do their best to make a living for themselves, until President Lincoln should send them word what else to do.

It appears, however, that after the messenger left for Washington with the agreement, General Sherman reflected that an article declaring slavery abolished should properly have been inserted ; when he immediately addressed a letter to General Johnston, with the view to framing such a clause, to be added when the agreement should be returned. This letter, dated on the 21st of April, and given in full on page 407, proceeds :—

" The action of General Weitzel in relation to the Legislature of Virginia, indicates that existing State governments will be recognized by the General Government. It may be, however, the lawyers will want us to define more minutely what is meant by the *guarantee of the rights of persons and property*. It may be construed into a compact for us to undo the past as to the rights of slaves, and leases of plantations on the Mississippi, of vacant and abandoned plantations, etc.

“I wish you would talk to the best men you have on these points, and, if possible, let us, in the final convention, make them so clear as to leave no room for angry controversy. I believe, if you would simply and publicly declare what we all feel and know, *that slavery is dead*, that you would inaugurate an era of peace and prosperity that would soon efface the ravages of the past four years of war. Negroes would remain in the South, and afford you an abundance of cheap labor, which otherwise will be driven away; and it will save the country the unhappy discussions which have kept us all in hot water for fifty years. Although, strictly speaking, this is no subject of a military convention, yet I am honestly convinced that our simple declaration of a result will be accepted as good law everywhere.”

This letter was written under the full belief that his agreement with Johnston would be approved, for nothing had occurred as yet to cast a shadow of doubt upon the matter. There was no question in his own mind that slavery was a dead institution, and there seemed to be no question on the subject in the minds of Johnston and Breckinridge. Johnston admitted it frankly, and declared Davis himself had settled that matter when he called upon the negro for help; and Breckinridge said, at the interview on the 18th: “The discussion of the slavery question is at an end. The constitutional amendment forever forbidding slavery is perfectly fair, and will be accepted in that spirit by the people of the South.” Hence Sherman had no doubt the additional article would be conceded, and he thought it might do good. But the utter rejection of the agreement by the President and cabinet, put an end to all further efforts in that direction. If the administration at Washington had accepted the stipulations as an initiatory proceeding, to be altered and amended to suit all the exigencies of the new peace, and had sent them back with amendments and instructions, an opportunity seemed presented for at once establishing a peace on an enduring basis. It is to be regretted that Sherman’s after-thought, on the



slavery subject, had not been his fore-thought. It was fit and proper that the question of slavery, the substantial cause of the war, should be then and there settled by an express stipulation, declared in the presence of the two armies by their commanders. This would have settled the matter forever; an amendment of the constitution forbidding slavery would then have been unnecessary, except for the benefit of the border States not in rebellion, and to prevent any of the States from reviving the institution at some future day, and the new era would immediately have been inaugurated.

It was our misfortune during the war, from first to last, that we had no leading head that could rightly comprehend the situation, and at the same time grasp and organize the power and resources of the country, so as to put down the rebellion by a short, sharp, and vigorous conflict. At first our rulers undertook to do it by three months' militia—by a mere show of power and by moral suasion; but the people saw, in advance of the Government, it required a great effort, and, under the inspiration of the hour, two hundred thousand volunteers tendered their services for the war. A few of these were accepted, and many rejected, and the golden moment was past. Afterwards, when they were called for, they could not be had. The first two years of the war were literally frittered away. Then the Government offered and paid large bounties, and obtained raw recruits, and also many mercenaries who deserted,—all costing the Government more money for actual services rendered than would have been necessary to pay the same number of men from the beginning; and the war was prolonged. Then came a law for a draft, with a commutation clause attached which rendered it inoperative, so far as raising men for the army was concerned. Then came a little trick of a policy for raising negro troops in Maryland; and then more negro troops; and then another draft. As to the treatment of the inhabitants of conquered territory, and as to trade in cotton, there was no policy. No one knew, and none could tell whether the rebel States were to be considered in the Union or out of the Union. If any thing like a policy for the army

was ever thought of, it was first urged upon the Government by officers in the field, or committees or individuals of the people at home: if by the former, it was usually rejected, and the authors rebuked; if by the latter, it was ventilated first in newspapers, and if found sufficiently popular, it was accepted, to be in its turn thrown aside, like the old iron of a machine-shop.

The Government, in fact, felt itself unprepared to make an ultimate decision on the complex question of a final peace, and preferred, by a temporizing policy, to gain time for a more mature consideration of its perplexing problems. Grant's terms to Lee were liberal, but, in some respects, indefinite. Lee's men were to lay down their arms and go home, where they should be protected in their persons and property so long as they remained there and obeyed the laws. But whether the word *property* meant slave property, or the word *laws* meant the laws passed by the rebel State of Virginia, does not appear by the treaty, and must be left to judicial construction, or to the arbitrary decision of the Government. But that was a partial arrangement, and related to the submission of one of the armies of the Confederacy only; whereas General Johnston offered to act on behalf of eight millions of people, whose military head he practically was, and proposed, nay, insisted, as far as it was in his power to insist, that terms of peace should then and there be agreed upon and forever settled. Here was an opportunity for statesmanship. The armies of the United States had fought the armies of the Confederacy as long as the latter were willing to fight—they could do no more; it remained now for diplomacy to do the rest, and Sherman held up the opportunity.

The administration, however, desired no compact, demanded simply the absolute surrender or destruction of the military power of the rebellion, and reserved to itself the control of the entire subject of reorganization in all its parts. Both methods had and still have many zealous partisans. Time alone can decide between them.

That Mr. Stanton and General Sherman should differ in



opinion is not strange. Two men beholding the same object from different points of observation are apt to describe it diversely ; and yet neither may see it aright : and it is to be regretted that, at such a crisis, the administration should momentarily have lost sight of the consideration manifestly due to Sherman's great and patriotic services, and should have permitted that disapproval of his action to be presented to the people in such a manner as naturally to arouse their indignation and distrust against him. The excitement of that moment may indeed excuse what nothing can fully justify. General Sherman had given most noble testimony in favor of the Union cause ; every thought of his mind and every aspiration of his heart were given to the best interests of his country. He never failed us in the hour of need ; and on the very date of this bulletin, April 21st, he wrote a letter to an old personal friend in North Carolina, which is here reproduced, and which has the same ring of intense patriotism which characterized every act and every thought of his eventful career, and shows how foreign from his mind all unworthy motives were at that time.

“ I have before me your letter addressed to General Hawley, inclosing a paper signed by John Dawson, Edward Kiddon, and others, testifying to your feelings of loyalty and attachment to the Government of the United States. Of course, I am gratified to know the truth as to one for whom I entertained friendship, dated far back in other and better days. I will be frank and honest with you. Simple passive submission to events, by a man in the prime of life, is not all that is due to society in times of revolution. Had the Northern men residing at the South spoken out manfully and truly at the outset, the active secessionists could not have carried the masses of men as they did.

“ It may not be that the war could have been avoided, but the rebellion would not have assumed the mammoth proportions it did. The idea of war to perpetuate slavery in 1861 was an insult to the intelligence of the age. As long as the

South abided by the conditions of our fundamental compact of government, the constitution, all law-abiding citizens were bound to respect the property in slaves, whether they approved or not; but when the South violated that compact openly, publicly, and violently, it was absurd to suppose we were bound to respect that kind of property, or in fact any kind of property.

“I have a feeling allied to abhorrence towards Northern men resident South, for their silence or acquiescence was one of the causes of the war assuming the magnitude it did; and, in consequence, we mourn the loss of such men as John F. Reynolds, McPherson, and thousands of noble gentlemen, any one of whom was worth all the slaves of the South, and half the white population thrown in.

“The result is nearly accomplished, and is what you might have foreseen, and in a measure prevented—desolation from the Ohio to the Gulf, and mourning in every household.”

Of General Sherman's military ability, vigor, enterprise, patriotism, and zeal for the public good, no generous or just mind can entertain a doubt. Of the general soundness of his judgment, he has also given conspicuous proofs. His policy in regard to trade in cotton, and in regard to the proper treatment of the inhabitants of conquered territory during the existence of war, was much in advance of the President and cabinet; and his personal knowledge of the condition, temper, and spirit of the Southern people entitled his opinions to greater weight than those of any other general officer in the field. Nevertheless, conditions of peace which may appear fair to a soldier, may, in the view of a statesman, appear inadmissible; but the fact that an able and experienced soldier entertains them, ought to shield them from that sort of condemnation which belongs to voluntary complicity with treason.

Nor did this unfortunate affair begin and end with Mr. Stanton alone. On the 26th of April, General Halleck, then at Richmond, in command of the Military Division of the James, dispatched a telegram to the War Department at



Washington, amongst other things, advising that instructions be given to General Sherman's subordinate officers to obey no orders given by him. This telegram was immediately communicated by the secretary of war to General Dix, and made public through the daily newspapers. Meeting Sherman's notice a fortnight later, it excited his indignation to the highest pitch. In his anger, he would listen to no excuse for what he deemed the treachery of his former friend. He considered the action of General Halleck as uncalled for and unpardonable; and when the fact became known to him, on the 10th of May, wrote to General Halleck: "After your dispatch to Mr. Stanton, of April 26th, I cannot have any friendly intercourse with you. I will come to City Point to-morrow, and march with my troops, and I prefer we should not meet." Further correspondence ensued between the same officers, but General Sherman seems to have felt that his honor had been assailed through design or indifference, and that in either case the act was too gross for pardon. He curtly declined a complimentary review tendered his troops by General Halleck, and caused his troops to march through the city without taking any notice whatever of that officer.

Neither Grant or Sherman knew of Mr. Stanton's bulletin until several days after its publication. Indeed, General Sherman was profoundly ignorant of it, and of the storm of indignation it had raised at home against him, until on his way home from Savannah, whither he had gone to make sundry dispositions for the government of his subordinate commanders, while his army was on the march to Richmond, and not knowing of the instructions issued from the War Office to disregard his orders, and at a moment when, unconscious of having done wrong, happy that the war was over, justly proud of the honorable part he had acted in it, and delighted with the prospect of soon meeting his family and friends from whom he had been long separated, he was on his way home to rest from his hard labors. Instead of commendation for having done his country some service, it seemed to his sensitive mind that he could read of nothing and hear of nothing

but abuse or suspicion. Instead of coming home filled with a soldier's pride and happiness, he felt he was returning like a culprit to defend himself against the unjust suspicions of a Government and people he had so faithfully served. Smarting under the rebuke of the Government and the comments of the press, he attributed both to personal hostility and a settled prearranged design of undermining his influence and destroying his popularity, and resented both on all occasions, public and private. The most offensive part of the entire matter to him was that General Halleck should have recommended and Mr. Stanton published, that subordinate officers should be instructed in the same manner and to the same effect of General Washington's orders after the defection of Benedict Arnold!



## CHAPTER XXXIV.

## HOMEWARD.

THE historian who shall hereafter chronicle, in full, the events of the civil war in America, and sketch the men who therein figured most prominently, will find the path by which General Sherman ascended as straight as it was difficult of ascent. His patriotism was not of that doubtful character which seeks reward through the forms of Government contracts. He was born with the instincts of a soldier, was educated for a soldier, and was ambitious to do the work of a soldier. He loved the Union, and ever set himself against the dangerous heresy that would admit of its peaceful dissolution. A resident of the South before the war, as soon as he divined the purposes of the secessionists, he broke away and arranged himself with the friends of the Union. While Mr. Stanton was yet a member of Mr. Buchanan's cabinet, and while such men as Jefferson Davis, Judah P. Benjamin, and Jacob Thompson were yet in office under the Government of the United States, and all-powerful in their influence over President Buchanan, Sherman had already determined to resign an honorable position in the State of Louisiana and offer his services to sustain the cause of the Union. On the 18th of January, 1861, as we have already seen, he wrote to Governor Moore: "If Louisiana withdraws from the Federal Union, I prefer to maintain my allegiance to the old constitution as long as a fragment of it remains, and my longer stay here would be wrong in every sense of the word." He saw the war coming, and gave the alarm, whilst others cried, "Peace! be still!"

As soon as Mr. Lincoln was inaugurated, he visited him, and warned him that the South was organizing a formidable rebellion, that the Southern people were united and in earnest, and that they would take us all unprepared. He declared to his countrymen they were sleeping on a volcano, all unconscious of the danger. He scouted the idea of putting down the rebellion with three months' militia. The disastrous result of the battle of Bull Run confirmed him in his views of the utter inutility of the temporary expedients of the Government, and he so declared. Sent to the West, he called for an army of two hundred thousand men, to operate from Kentucky as a base, and reclaim the navigation of the Mississippi River. As early as 1862, he declared cotton prize of war, long in advance of the Government; and in 1863 he established trade regulations for Memphis and other places within his department; and finally, after aiding in that series of brilliant military operations which opened the Father of Waters "to go unvexed to the sea," he assisted Lieutenant-General Grant in planning the two conclusive campaigns of the war—the one towards Richmond, and the other towards Atlanta—so eventful of result; and in executing his part of the programme, fought Joe Johnston one hundred and twenty-five days successively, and at length captured Atlanta, at a moment when our natural resources were well-nigh exhausted, and the national heart sick with long watching and waiting for success. Striking out boldly from Atlanta to the sea, guided solely by his own judgment, against the advice of General Halleck, and with the approbation of General Grant alone, he cut loose from his base, descended into Georgia, struck terror into the heart of the rebellion, captured Savannah, and planted our victorious standards on the shore of the Atlantic. Striking out again, he captured Pocotaligo and Columbia, compelled the evacuation of Charleston, laid waste the State of South Carolina, again met and whipped Joe Johnston, and after marching and fighting for twelve months, without rest, he halted his victorious army at the capital of North Carolina, in time to witness the funeral ceremonies of the Confederacy



and the complete triumph of our cause. And for what?—to be the subject of such utterly unfounded suspicions, as to be by some even suspected for a traitor! History furnishes no example of such cruel ingratitude and injustice.

Immediately on the conclusion of the definitive cartel of surrender, General Sherman issued the following orders, for the future movement of his army. Its work was done, and nothing remained for the greater portion of it, not required to garrison the conquered territory, but to return home and disband.

“HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI,  
“ In the Field, Raleigh, N. C., April 27, 1865.

“SPECIAL FIELD ORDERS, No. 66.”

“Hostilities having ceased, the following changes and dispositions of the troops in the field will be made with as little delay as practicable:—

“I. The Tenth and Twenty-third corps will remain in the Department of North Carolina, and Major-General J. M. Schofield will transfer back to Major-General Gillmore, commanding Department of the South, the two brigades formerly belonging to the division of brevet Major-General Grover, at Savannah. The Third division, cavalry corps, brevet Major-General J. Kilpatrick commanding, is hereby transferred to the Department of North Carolina, and General Kilpatrick will report in person to Major-General Schofield for orders.

“II. The cavalry command of Major-General George Stoneman will return to East Tennessee, and that of brevet Major-General J. H. Wilson will be conducted back to the Tennessee River, in the neighborhood of Decatur, Alabama.

“III. Major-General Howard will conduct the Army of the Tennessee to Richmond, Virginia, following roads substantially by Lewisburg, Warrenton, Lawrenceville, and Petersburg, or to the right of that line. Major-General Slocum will conduct the Army of Georgia to Richmond by roads to the left of the one indicated for General Howard, viz., by Oxford, Boydton, and Nottoway Courthouse. These armies will turn

in at this point the contents of their ordnance trains, and use the wagons for extra forage and provisions. These columns will be conducted slowly and in the best of order, and aim to be at Richmond, ready to resume the march, by the middle of May.

“IV. The chief-quartermaster and commissary of the military division, Generals Easton and Beckwith, after making proper dispositions of their departments here, will proceed to Richmond and make suitable preparations to receive those columns, and to provide them for the further journey.”

On the 10th of March, Sherman himself set out for Alexandria, Virginia, whither he arrived on the 19th. During those nine days of dreary march along the war-paths and across the battle-fields of the Army of the Potomac, he had ample opportunity for reflection on the vanity of all human glory. He thought much and anxiously upon his own peculiar situation, reviewed carefully all his former relations with Mr. Stanton, to discover, if possible, what motive he had for turning upon him; and looked into the newspapers hoping to find some disavowal or note of explanation, on the part of Mr. Stanton, that would disabuse the public mind of the false impressions he had himself created; but all in vain. The public mind had settled down into the opinion that General Sherman was not quite as bad as had been supposed; but still there was something, it was believed, in regard to his case, very inexplicable. Under such circumstances it was some relief to his sense of injury, to write and forward to a personal friend the following letter, dated at Camp Alexandria,—the first word to the public from him in regard to the matter:—

“I am just arrived. All my army will be in to-day. I have been lost to the world in the woods for some time, yet, on arriving at the ‘settlements,’ find I have made quite a stir among the people at home, and that the most sinister motives have been ascribed to me. I have been too long fighting with real rebels with muskets in their hands to be scared by mere



non-combatants, no matter how high their civil rank or station. It is amusing to observe how brave and firm some men become when all danger is past. I have noticed on field of battle brave men never insult the captured or mutilate the dead ; but cowards and laggards always do. I cannot now recall the act, but Shakspeare records how poor Falstaff, the prince of cowards and wits, rising from a feigned death, stabbed again the dead Percy, and carried his carcass aloft in triumph to prove his valor.

“ Now that the rebellion in our land is *dead*, how many Falstaffs appear to brandish the evidence of their valor, and seek to appropriate honors and the public applause for deeds that never were done !

“ As to myself, I ask no reward, no popularity ; but I submit to the candid judgment of the world, after all the facts shall be known and understood.

“ I do want peace and security, and the return to law and justice from Maine to the Rio Grande ; and if it does not exist *now*, substantially, it is for State reasons beyond my comprehension. It may be counted strange that one who has no fame but as a soldier should have been so careful to try and restore the civil power of the Government, and the peaceful jurisdictions of the federal courts ; but it is difficult to discover in that fact any just cause of offence to a free and enlightened people. But when men choose to slander and injure, they can easily invent the necessary facts for the purpose when the proposed victim is far away engaged in public service of their own bidding. But there is consolation in knowing that though truth lies in the bottom of a well, the Yankees have perseverance enough to get to that bottom.”

General Sherman now determined not to visit Washington, but to remain in camp with his army until he should receive further orders from General Grant. Afterwards, on being invited by General Grant, he visited him at his headquarters in Washington ; and, on being informed by him that the President had expressed a desire to see him, he called immediately on

the President, and then learned, for the first time, that the telegram published by Mr. Stanton on the 22d of April, and the "nine reasons" given as those of the President and cabinet were the work of Mr. Stanton alone. This fact settled, there was now no ill-feeling between General Sherman and the officers of the Government, and the matter thus became a personal affair between him and Mr. Stanton alone. General Sherman did not complain that his agreement with Johnston was disapproved. The merits and demerits of that agreement were matters of opinion and judgment, and the President had the right, and it was his duty, to exercise his best judgment, and his action in the premises could be no just ground of complaint. It was the publication that constituted the *gravamen* of the offence; its tone and style, the insinuations it contained, the false inferences it occasioned, and the offensive orders to the subordinate officers of General Sherman, which succeeded the publication—these were the causes of the trouble, and for these Mr. Stanton was alone responsible.

On the 20th of May, both the grand armies of the Union were encamped in the vicinity of the national capital. The war was over, and our noble volunteers were about to be disbanded. Before these grand armies should be dispersed, however, the lieutenant-general proposed to give them a handsome review. The wide streets of Washington were admirably adapted for such purpose. The review of the Army of the Potomac was ordered for the 23d, and that known as Sherman's army, for the 24th. Thousands of people, from all parts of the country, flocked to Washington to witness the grand pageant, and to express their admiration for the noble men who had brought home peace. The most ample preparations had been made for the occasion. The President was seated on an elevated stand, surrounded by his cabinet officers, foreign ministers, distinguished strangers, their wives and daughters and personal friends; Pennsylvania Avenue was lined on both sides, and from end to end, with admiring people; every window presented its tableau of fair spectators; and the occasion was such as never before was witnessed on the



American continent. Those great armies now passing in review within sight of that vast assemblage were, surely, calculated to impress all beholders with a profound sense of the greatness and power of the United States; and were it not for those tattered banners, which tell us of the distant battle-fields on which these regiments contended for the mastery, of the hand to hand conflict, and of comrades slain, we might rejoice without a feeling of sorrow. Nevertheless we may rejoice, for those brave men by their marching and fighting brought home to their distracted land the blessing of peace, and we can now look up to heaven and bless God that it is so! From end to end, from side to side, along the shore, amid the valley and on the mountain-top—all are at peace!

As before mentioned, the review of General Sherman's army was on the 24th of May. The day was exceedingly beautiful. The army was uniformed and equipped as on the march; there was no attempt at mere military display. Commanders appeared to take pride in presenting their respective commands as they served on the march and in the field. The foragers were out in force, with their pack-trains loaded with forage and provisions; the pioneer corps, composed of black men, carried their axes, spades, and shovels; while the cavalry, infantry, and artillery made an imposing display of the three arms of the service. General Sherman rode at the head of the column, and as he moved slowly along the avenue, he was greeted with cheers on every side; the ladies in the exuberance of their joy waved their congratulations, covered him with bouquets of flowers, and bedecked his horse with evergreens. None were so much surprised at these manifestations of respect as himself. Arriving opposite the headquarters of Major-General Augur, the chief was observed to turn aside, halt, and lift his hat, in token of the most profound respect. This was an act of courtesy from the soldier to the statesman. Mr. Seward, too ill to take his place beside the President, had been brought to General Augur's headquarters, and wrapped in the robes of the sick-chamber, stood for a moment at the

window to exchange salutations with the great military chief. It was a touching sight.

The President's stand was erected in front of the White House ; from it wings had been extended to the right and left, so that the grounds of the White House, fronting on Pennsylvania Avenue, were nearly covered. These were all soon passed by the head of the column, when the general wheeled out, dismounted, and ascended the stairs, to take his place near the lieutenant-general. On making his appearance on the stand, he was cordially met by the President, Lieutenant-General Grant, and Messrs. Dennison, Speed, and Harlin of the cabinet, and received their hearty congratulations while his veteran army moved on in their triumphal march. Mr. Stanton rose also and offered his hand, as if pleased to congratulate General Sherman ; *but the latter affected not to see him !*

There are those who, lightly estimating injuries to character and reputation, especially when their own are not involved, who regretted General Sherman should have taken that occasion to resent what he deemed a personal insult ; and will still more regret to find the memory of the event herein perpetuated ; yet there is some consideration due to the sensitiveness of a soldier who felt his honor had been questioned : and since, under the circumstances, he could not, without hypocrisy, receive Mr. Stanton's congratulations, it was well he did not observe their tender.

General Sherman now prepared to take leave of his army. There is something exceedingly touching in the exhibition of that ardent attachment which always exists between the officers and men of a well-ordered and properly disciplined army. All General Sherman's dispatches show his high estimate of the valor of his troops ; and on the other hand, his officers and men were equally proud of their chief. In truth, the material of that army was never surpassed in any age or country. Lord Melville once declared in parliament, that "bad men made the best soldiers," and we are told the unworthy sentiment had many admirers in England. But not so in this country. The men who fought the battles of the



Union were among the best in the land, and in the general, were improved by their patriotic experience. They now understand better the unspeakable blessings of peace; they know better the value of friendships; they can better submit to hardships; they are better qualified to preserve order and obey the laws, and are better Christians than when they first entered the military service. Bad men are made worse by military service, but good men are made better. And it is confidently believed that "Sherman's men," as they are familiarly called, and as they are proud to call themselves, will prove to be as distinguished in the pursuits of peace as they were renowned in the feats of war.

We conclude this chapter with General Sherman's farewell order to his troops. To be the author of such an order, with such good cause to write it, is a happiness but few soldiers ever enjoyed.

"HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI,  
In the field, Washington, D. C., May 30, 1865.

"SPECIAL FIELD ORDERS, No. 76.

"The general commanding announces to the Armies of the Tennessee and Georgia, that the time has come for us to part. Our work is done, and armed enemies no longer defy us. Some of you will be retained in service until further orders. And now that we are about to separate, to mingle with the civil world, it becomes a pleasing duty to recall to mind the situation of national affairs when, but little more than a year ago, we were gathered about the twining cliffs of Lookout Mountain, and all the future was wrapped in doubt and uncertainty. Three armies had come together from distant fields, with separate histories, yet bound by one common cause—the union of our country and the perpetuation of the Government of our inheritance. There is no need to recall to your memories Tunnell Hill, with its Rocky Face Mountain, and Buzzard Roost Gap, with the ugly forts of Dalton behind. We were in earnest, and paused not for danger and difficulty, but dashed through Snake Creek Gap, and fell on Resaca, then

on to the Etowah, to Dallas, Kenesaw ; and the heats of summer found us on the banks of the Chattahoochee, far from home and dependent on a single road for supplies. Again we were not to be held back by any obstacle, and crossed over and fought four heavy battles for the possession of the citadel of Atlanta. That was the crisis of our history. A doubt still clouded our future ; but we solved the problem, and destroyed Atlanta, struck boldly across the State of Georgia, secured all the main arteries of life to our enemy, and Christmas found us at Savannah. Waiting there only long enough to fill our wagons, we again began a march, which for peril, labor, and results will compare with any ever made by an organized army. The floods of the Savannah, the swamps of the Combahee and Edisto, the high hills and rocks of the Santee, the flat quagmires of the Pedee and Cape Fear rivers, were all passed in midwinter, with its floods and rains, in the face of an accumulating enemy ; and after the battles of Averysboro' and Bentonville, we once more came out of the wilderness to meet our friends at Goldsboro'. Even then we paused only long enough to get new clothing, to reload our wagons, and again pushed on to Raleigh, and beyond, until we met our enemy, suing for peace instead of war, and offering to submit to the injured laws of his and our country. As long as that enemy was defiant, nor mountains, nor rivers, nor swamps, nor hunger, nor cold had checked us ; but when he who had fought us hard and persistently, offered submission, your general thought it wrong to pursue him further, and negotiations followed which resulted, as you all know, in his surrender. How far the operations of the army have contributed to the overthrow of the Confederacy, of the peace which now dawns on us, must be judged by others, not by us. But that you have done all that men could do has been admitted by those in authority ; and we have a right to join in the universal joy that fills our land because the war is over, and our Government stands vindicated before the world by the joint action of the volunteer armies of the United States.

“To such as remain in the military service, your general



need only remind you that successes in the past are due to hard work and discipline, and that the same work and discipline are equally important in the future. To such as go home, he will only say, that our favored country is so grand, so extensive, so diversified in climate, soil, and productions, that every man may surely find a home and occupation suited to his tastes ; and none should yield to the natural impotence sure to result from our past life of excitement and adventure. You will be invited to seek new adventure abroad ; but do not yield to the temptation, for it will lead only to death and disappointment.

“Your general now bids you all farewell, with the full belief that, as in war you have been good soldiers, so in peace you will make good citizens ; and if, unfortunately, new war should arise in our country, Sherman’s army will be the first to buckle on the old armor and come forth to defend and maintain the Government of our inheritance and choice.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

## DIGRESSIVE.

IN preparing the foregoing pages, in order to avoid those digressions which often mar the continuity of a narrative, we have omitted several letters of interest which will be given in this chapter.

During the first year of the war, the newspaper press unwittingly occasioned great embarrassment to the army. Such was the public greed for news, that publishers had their correspondents in every camp, who did not hesitate to give publicity to any and all operations of the army; so that, while the people were merely gratified, the enemy was advised and greatly benefited. General Sherman was among the first to perceive and attempt to reform this evil. It required a bold man to run counter to the wishes of the newspaper press. Nevertheless he did not hesitate to do so, when he judged that the best interests of the country required it. In 1861, while in command in Kentucky, he was not only embarrassed but alarmed, in finding all his operations telegraphed and published in the daily papers, even his plans foreshadowed, and the number and strength of his forces given. At that time, the allegiance of Kentucky was hollow and compulsory. In fact, many of her young men had gone into the armies of the Confederacy, leaving their relatives and friends behind to act the part of spies and informers. Kentucky was then our point of support for the operations of the Valley of the Mississippi, and we were obliged to draw our lines through counties and districts whose people were only bound to us by a fear that was taciturn,



supple, and treacherous, and which, like the ashes of volcanoes, concealed terrific flames, the eruption of which might be induced or provoked by the slightest cause. General Sherman, conscious of his weakness, and of the dangers by which he was surrounded, banished every newspaper correspondent from his lines, and declared summary punishment for all who should in future give information of his strength, position, or movements. A proceeding so unusual was ill-appreciated by the press, and the result was a lively fire in the rear, which was somewhat annoying to him. Nevertheless he persisted in this policy throughout the war; and the further our lines were advanced into the enemy's country, the more valuable became the rule. The following letter was written, early in 1863, in vindication of his policy:—

“When John C. Calhoun announced to President Jackson the doctrine of secession, he did not bow to the opinion of that respectable source, and to the vast array of people of whom Mr. Calhoun was the representative. He saw the wisdom of preventing a threatened evil by timely action. He answered instantly: ‘Secession is treason, and the penalty for treason is death.’ Had Jackson yielded an inch, the storm would then have swept over this country.

“Had Mr. Buchanan met the seizure of our mints and arsenals in the same spirit, he would have kept this war within the limits of actual traitors, but by temporizing he gave the time and opportunity for the organization of a rebellion of half the nation.

“So in this case. Once establish the principle asserted by you, that the press has a right to keep paid agents in our camps, independent of the properly accredited commanders, and you would be able soon to destroy any army; we would then have not only rebellion on our hands, but dissensions and discord in our armies, mutiny in our camps, and disaster to our arms. In regard to this matter I may be mistaken, but for the time being I must be the judge.

“I am no enemy to freedom of thought, freedom of speech

have the one without the other, will prove himself a great benefactor of his race. But this is impossible. Honest truth is too slow for enterprising error; truth stays at home, and waits to entertain such friends as come to seek her counsels, while error, with her specious promises and plausible theories, advertises in the newspapers, and careers through the world. The reason why the press is not an unmixed good, is because all editors, publishers, and correspondents are not cultivated, high-toned, honest, and honorable men. But if they were so, and if they earnestly and faithfully set themselves to work to teach the people virtue, and to publish nothing but unvarnished truth, such is the character of mankind, they would have but few pupils. The stream can rise no higher than its fountain, and a people are no better than the newspapers they read.

The calling of the editor, in this country, is as high and honorable as that of any of the learned professions. If his errors and follies are more apparent than those of the lawyer, it is because they are more exposed to observation. The editor speaks every day to the public—the lawyer speaks but seldom, and then carefully before the judges. The man who talks much, is apt sometimes to talk unwisely. But the standard of each is elevated or lowered according to the public demand. During the early part of the war, the public demand was for the sensational, and army correspondents were, for the most part, as deficient in good sense and judgment as in good manners. Subsequently, the public demand was for truth and fact, and only such as might be consistent with the public interests; and then, the letters from army correspondents became valuable contributions to authentic history. But the following letter to Mr. Knox in reply to the one just cited, bears on the former period, and the action in this case ended all controversy between General Sherman and army correspondents.

“Yours of April 6th, inclosing a copy of the President’s action in your case, and General Grant’s letter to you, is received.



I am surprised to learn that the officers named in the President's letter have certified to him that the offence, for which you were tried and convicted, was merely technical—viz., disobedience of orders emanating from the highest military authority, and the publication of wilful and malicious slanders and libels against their brother officers. I cannot so regard the matter.

“Aside from the judgment of a court, and upon your own theory of your duties and obligations alone, you must be adjudged unfit to be here. After having enumerated to me the fact that newspaper correspondents were a fraternity, bound together by a common interest, that must write down all who stand in their way, and bound to supply the public demand for news, even at the expense of truth and fact, if necessary, I cannot consent to the tacit acknowledgment of such a principle by tolerating such a correspondent. Come with a musket or sword in your hand, prepared to share with us our fate in sunshine and in storm, in success and in defeat, in plenty and in scarcity, and I will welcome you as a brother and associate. But come as you now do, expecting me to ally the honor and reputation of my country and my fellow-soldiers with you as a representative of the press,—you who, according to your own theory, will not carefully distinguish between truth and falsehood,—and my answer is, never!”

The military student of this day will find a new element in his calculations, of which the campaigns of Napoleon will furnish no illustrations—namely, the value of the railway. It was the fortune of General Sherman, in his Atlanta campaign, to furnish an illustrious example of this interesting problem.

Previous to that campaign, a single track, with suitable switches and turnouts, was estimated as being capable of transporting supplies and ammunition sufficient for an army, duly proportioned, one hundred thousand strong, one hundred miles from its base. Sherman's problem was to make it do the work for such an army at a distance of five hundred miles from its base. He started with three thousand and five hun-

dred wagons, ambulances included. He had thirty-five thousand horses besides the cavalry. The line of march was across a mountainous region, furnishing no supplies of provisions or forage. It was estimated the cavalry could gather sufficient forage for its own use, but forage for all other animals had to be transported. All the beef was to be carried on the hoof. Baggage was economized to the last pound. Non-combatants of every character and description, except such as pertained to the medical department, were denied transportation. Even the agents of the Christian Commission, whose mission it was to administer to the bodily and spiritual wants of the dying soldier, were left in the rear, because they could not march on foot and carry their own supplies. But the problem was one of logistics and not of benevolence. It was a strictly mathematical calculation of food for a hundred thousand men, whose business it was to march and fight, and of ammunition with which to fight, and of forage for animals necessary and in constant use, with no margin for accidents or unusual misfortunes; it was a problem of pure war, to which all other matters must yield. And in nothing did General Sherman display the high qualities of a great commander more conspicuously, than in the firmness with which he adhered to the logic of his own calculations. When the agents of the Christian Commission presented a petition for transportation of themselves and supplies, he indorsed on it:—"Certainly not—oats and gunpowder are more indispensable at the front than benevolent agents. The weight of every non-combatant transported deprives me of so many pounds of bread that I must have. Each regiment has its chaplain, and these must do the work desired."

In 1863-4, our Government adopted the humane and liberal policy of issuing rations to the non-combatants of Eastern and Middle Tennessee, impoverished by the war, a policy which gave some embarrassment to military commanders in that region. General Sherman found it so prejudicial to the military service that he discontinued it; whereupon President Lincoln,



at the request of influential citizens of that State, expressed a desire the policy should be resumed. The Atlanta campaign had been planned without reference to the business of feeding the inhabitants of Tennessee, and it was evident, if the means of transportation were to be used for this purpose, the campaign must stop. General Sherman received the President's dispatch on the 5th of May, the day before his troops were put in motion, and dispatched the following answer:—

“ We have worked hard with the best talent of the country, and it is demonstrated the railroad cannot supply the army and the people both. One or the other must quit eating rations, and the army must be the last to quit, and don't intend to quit unless Joe Johnston makes us quit. The issue to citizens has been enormous, and the same weight in corn or oats would have saved thousands of mules whose carcasses now corduroy the roads in Tennessee, and which we need so much. We have paid Tennessee ten for one of provisions taken in war. I am now about to move, and cannot change the order. Let the petitioners hurry into Kentucky and make up a caravan of cattle and wagons, and come over the mountains by Cumberland Gap and Somerset to relieve their suffering friends, as they used to do before a railroad was built. I am willing to relieve all actual cases of suffering within our reach by appropriating the savings from soldiers' rations, which are considerable. A people long assisted by a generous Government are apt to rely more on the Government than on their own exertions.”

The earnestness which characterized all of General Sherman's dispatches about this time, and the tenacity with which he adhered to military rules, show he felt he had work to do, and that he had resolved to do it. He thought of nothing but his army; all others must take care of themselves.

In all wars of long duration there are periods of reaction and irresolution among the people at home, whose duty it is to sustain the war. Our great civil war turned out to be a

greater affair than was at first supposed. The exhibitions of confidence and enthusiasm with which our early volunteers were greeted on their way to the field will not soon be forgotten. How the people cheered! how the bells pealed out! how the flags waved! Even the little boys and girls waved their tiny bunting in token of patriotic zeal. But when the tug of war came, and the contending armies, wrestling like giants for the mastery, after years of terrible struggling, marching, and fighting without success, needed re-enforcements in order to secure eventual triumph, and none seemed willing to help, our troops in the field were not a little disheartened, and some deserted. Nor was this all. There were those at home who tried to arrest the war, and tried to discourage recruiting, and tried to promote desertions; and, availing themselves of a free press, spread their vicious sentiments through the army itself. It was to prevent such results that General Milroy applied to General Sherman for a remedy, which application called forth the following response, addressed to Major-General Thomas:—

“ IN THE FIELD, NEAR ATLANTA, August 5, 1864.

“General Milroy’s letter of July 26, with your indorsement, is now before me. He asks to suppress the sale and circulation, in his district, of certain mischievous and treasonable newspapers, and transmits to me certain slips as proofs of the mischievous character of such papers. I would willingly suppress them were it possible to do so, but in human nature there is so much of the mule left, that prohibition of a newspaper only increases its circulation. The press is a power in the land. For a quarter of a century past it had been sowing the whirlwind, and now we reap the storm. It is my opinion that the freedom of the press to publish mischievous matter, like personal slander, libel, false statements of facts, or other matter calculated to promote desertions in the army, or designed to give information to the enemy, should be regulated by statute law. At present we are going through the expensive but natural process which may result in a resort to the knife and pistol for the defence of reputation. It is already demon-



strated, we must use the military power to put down the circulation of newspapers hurtful to the public service.

"The suppression of the few papers mentioned by General Milroy would be something like undertaking to dam up the tributaries of the Ohio to stop the flood of the Mississippi. If General Milroy finds anybody selling mischievous publications within the sphere of his authority, he might give him a good thrashing, or put him in the stocks; but he cannot reach the editors and publishers, who are making money by the publication in New York, Chicago, or Louisville.

"Each military commander, subject to me, may suppress all disorders and immoralities in the sphere of his command as best he can: but my belief is, the proper remedy is to punish the men who publish the objectionable matter, if residing in his jurisdiction; or if absent, then the party who circulates the papers. Give a good horsewhipping to any man who would dare advise a soldier to desert. This is all the notice I would take of such things at this epoch of the war."

In May, 1863, the Union Club at Memphis, Tennessee, passed some resolutions commemorative of the restoration of law and order in that city, which were transmitted to General Sherman by a gentleman of that place, to which he responded as follows:—

"WALNUT HILLS, MISSISSIPPI, May 25, 1863.

"Yours of 18th instant is received. I thank you for the kind sentiments expressed, and desire you to express to the Union Club the assurance of my continued regard and interest.

"In union are strength, power to do good, power to repress evil—honor, fame, and glory to our beloved country. In disunion are weakness, discord, suspicion, ruin, and misery. How any well-balanced mind can hesitate in a choice between these passes my comprehension. Therefore, on all proper occasions, do honor to that day which saw our national emblem restored to its proper place in Memphis. Rejoice, and let your children rejoice, at each anniversary of the day which

beheld the downfall, in your city, of that powerful faction which had for a long period usurped all the functions of government, and made patriots tremble for their personal safety in the very centre of the republic. Now all is changed; rightful government once more prevails. The great Valley of the Mississippi comprises the principal interests of this country; and Memphis is in the centre, and, like the heart, must regulate the pulsation of life throughout the more remote arteries and veins. Let me exhort you to be calm, magnanimous, and patient. Boast not over your fallen neighbors, but convince them of their delusion, and that the Union men are above petty malice, and will even respect their prejudices, if not incurable.

“I deplore the devastation and misery that attend the progress of the war; but all history teaches that war, pestilence, and famine are the usual means by which the Almighty arrests the progress of error, and allays the storm of human passion.”

The long duration of the war, and the necessity of more troops to re-enforce our wasting armies, compelled Congress to pass a conscript law. The idea of a universal draft was especially unwelcome to the people of New England. Their representatives were on the sharp lookout for expedients to save their people from the sweeping operations of a general draft. To satisfy them, it was provided in the law that any State might raise volunteers in rebel States, to be credited to the quota of the States raising them, respectively; and as the negroes were the only loyal people available in the rebel States, of course the only prospect of obtaining volunteers was in that direction. Recruiting agents soon presented themselves to commanders of armies, duly certified from their respective States, full of confidence and zeal, and well assured that for every negro sent to the war, one white man would be left at home. General Sherman, like many others, did not like that provision of the law. There was something about it unmanly; it showed a disposition to shirk the duties of the citizen in a time of danger; it showed that the desire of ease and the love



of gain were beginning to prevail against the suggestions of patriotism and honor ; and the idea of shifting on the shoulders of the poor negroes the sacred duty of fighting the battles of the country, to the extent suggested, was offensive to our brave white men, who had been fighting hard and long to sustain our common Government, leaving all others home to profit by the war ; and they felt that those they left at home should now bear a hand. Besides this, the thing was wholly impracticable. General Sherman submitted his objections, and the impracticable features of the measure, to the President, who, in answer, sent the following dispatch :—

“ EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, July 18, 1864.

“I have seen your dispatch, and objections to agents of Northern States opening recruiting near your camps. An act of Congress authorizes this, giving the appointment of agents to the States, and not to the executive government. It is not for the War Department or myself to restrain or modify the law in its execution, further than actual necessity may require. To be candid, I was for the passage of the law, not apprehending at the time it would produce such inconvenience to armies in the field as you now cause me to fear. Many of the States were very anxious for it. I hoped that, with State bounties and active exertions, they would get out substantial additions to our colored forces, which, unlike white troops, help us where they come from as well as where they go to. I still hope for advantage from the law, and being a law, it must be treated as such by all. We here will do all we can to save you from difficulties arising from it. May I ask, therefore, that you will give it your hearty co-operation?”

This letter of the President's was sufficient. There was the law, and there the expression of Mr. Lincoln's desire to see it carried out. It could make no difference that the law was not practicable of execution—it must be obeyed, and Sherman proceeded to give directions to carry it out.

General Sherman did not always write in the vehement style.

Some of his letters have a spice of humor in them quite refreshing, as the following specimen will show. The gentleman to whom it was addressed was a chaplain in the rebel army, who had been captured at Chattanooga, and relieved from capture, and, as it would seem, was relieved of his horse at the same time, which latter fact he felt to be a great hardship; and when Sherman arrived at Atlanta the chaplain applied by letter, sent through our lines, for an order to compel the fellow who deprived him of his horse to restore him, or the general to send him another one in his stead. This was the general's decision, dated at Atlanta, on the 16th of September, 1864:—

“DEAR SIR—Your letter of September 14th is received. I approach a question involving a title to a ‘horse’ with deference for the laws of war. That mysterious code, of which we talk so much but know so little, is remarkably silent on the ‘horse.’ He is a beast so tempting to the soldier,—to him of the wild cavalry, the fancy artillery, or the patient infantry,—that I find more difficulty in recovering a worthless, spavined beast than in paying a million of ‘greenbacks;’ so that I fear I must reduce your claim to one of finance, and refer you to the great Board of Claims in Washington, that may reach your case by the time your grandchild becomes a great-grandfather.

“Privately, I think it was a shabby thing in the scamp of the Thirty-first Missouri who took your horse, and the colonel or his brigadier should have restored him. But I cannot undertake to make good the sins of omission of my own colonels or brigadiers, much less those of a former generation. ‘When this cruel war is over,’ and peace once more gives you a parish, I will promise, if near you, to procure, out of one of Uncle Sam’s corrals, a beast that will replace the one taken from you so wrongfully; but now it is impossible. We have a big journey before us, and need all we have, and, I fear, more too; so look out when the Yanks are about and hide your beasts, for my experience is that all soldiers are very careless in a search



for title. I know that General Hardee will confirm this my advice."

It will be recollected that Chief-Justice Chase, in the spring of 1865, doffed his official robes, and, like a true American, made a journey South in search of a cure for the national distemper. The civil war had come to a pause. The leaders of the rebellion had been overthrown, and were now, like a community of pirates, cast upon a desolate island in mid ocean, cursing each other, and dividing their ill-gotten gains amid thunder, and lightning, and storm. Abstract justice was on a tour of observation and inquiry; and the presiding officer of the highest civil tribunal in the land met a leader of armies, when the two friends talked together. The topic of discussion was, the healing of the nation. The following letter indicates the convictions of the soldier.

"STEAMER PRUSSIA, BEAUFORT HARBOR,  
May 6, 1865—6 A. M.

"On reaching this ship late last night, I found your valued letter, with the printed sheet, which I have also read.

"I am not yet prepared to receive the negro on terms of political equality, for the reason it will raise passions and prejudices at the North, which, superadded to the causes yet dormant at the South, might rekindle the war, whose fires are now dying out, and which by skilful management might be kept down. As you must observe, I prefer to work with known facts, rather than to reason ahead to remote conclusions. By way of illustration, we are now weather-bound. Is it not best to lay quiet at anchor till those white-cap breakers look less angry, and the southwest winds shift? I think all old sailors will answer yes; whilst we, impatient to reach our goal, are tempted to dash through at risk of life and property. I am willing to admit that the conclusions you reach by pure mental process may be all correct; but don't you think it better first to get the ship of State in some order, that it may be handled and guided? Now, all at the South is *pure anarchy*.

The military power of the United States cannot reach the people who are spread over a vast surface of country.

"We can control the local State capitals, and, it may be, slowly shape political thoughts, but we cannot combat existing ideas with force. I say honestly, that the assertion openly of your ideas of universal negro suffrage, as a fixed policy of our General Government, to be backed by physical power, will produce new war, sooner or later, and one which, from its desultory character, will be more bloody and destructive than the last.

"I am rejoiced that you, upon whom devolves so much, are aiming to see facts and persons with your own eye.

"I think the changes necessary in the future can be made faster and more certain, by means of our constitution, than by any plan outside of it. If now we go outside of the constitution for a means of change, we rather justify the rebels in their late attempt. Whereas now, as General Schofield tells us, the people of the South are ready and willing to make the necessary changes without shock or violence. I have felt the past war as bitterly and keenly as any man could, and I frankly confess myself 'afraid' of a new war; and a new war is bound to result from the action you suggest, of giving to the enfranchised negroes so large a share in the delicate task of putting the Southern States in practical working relations with the General Government. The enfranchisement of the negro should be exceptional and not general, founded upon a standard of intelligence, or by reason of valuable military service during the war or hereafter."

At the close of the war General Howard was made chief of the Freedmen's Bureau, headquarters at Washington. His duties were, "to correct that in which the law, by reason of its universality, was deficient." He was placed at the head of a species of Poor Law Board, with vague powers to define justice, and execute loving-kindness between four millions of emancipated slaves and all the rest of mankind. He was to be not exactly a military commander, nor yet a judge of a



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Court of Chancery, but a sort of combination of the religious missionary and school commissioner, with power to feed and instruct, and this for an empire half as large as Europe. But few officers of the army would have had the moral courage to accept such appointment, and fewer still were as well fitted to fill it, and discharge one-half its complicated and multifarious duties. As soon as General Howard concluded to accept his new appointment, he apprized his old commander of the fact by a friendly letter, and received the following in answer :—

“IN THE FIELD, DUMFRIES, Va., May 17th, 1865—9 P. M.

“Your letter of May 12, inclosing General Orders, War Department, No. 91, of May 12, reached me here, on arrival at camp, about dark.

“Colonel Strong is camped just behind me, General Logan about two miles back, and the Fifteenth Corps at Acquia Creek, eight miles back. Copies of orders No. 91 are being made, and will be sent back to them. I hardly know whether to congratulate you or not, but of one thing you may rest assured, that you possess my entire confidence, and I cannot imagine that matters that may involve the future of four millions of souls could be put in more charitable and more conscientious hands. So far as man can do, I believe you will, but I fear you have Hercules' task. God has limited the power of man, and though, in the kindness of your heart, you would alleviate all the ills of humanity, it is not in your power; nor is it in your power to fulfil one-tenth part of the expectations of those who framed the bureau for the freedmen, refugees, and abandoned estates. It is simply impracticable. Yet you can and will do all the good one man may, and that is all you are called on as a man and Christian to do; and to that extent count on me as a friend and fellow-soldier for counsel and assistance. I believe the negro is free by act of master and by the laws of war, now ratified by actual consent and power. The demand for his labor, and his ability to acquire and work land, will enable the negro to work out that amount of freedom and political consequence to which he is or may be en-

titled by natural right and the acquiescence of his fellow-men.

“There is a strong prejudice of race, which over our whole country exists. The negro is denied a vote in all the Northern States, save two or three, and then qualified by conditions not attached to the white race; and by the constitution of the United States, to States is left the right to fix the qualification of voters. The United States cannot make negroes vote in the South, any more than they can in the North, without revolution; and as we have just emerged from one attempted revolution, it would be wrong to begin another. I notice in our country, one class of people make war and leave others to fight it out.

“I do believe the people of the South realize the fact that their former slaves are free, and if allowed reasonable time, and are not harassed by confiscation and political complications, will very soon adapt their condition and interests to their new state of facts.

“Many of them will sell, or lease on easy terms, parts of their land to their former slaves, and gradually the same political state of things will result as now exists in Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri. The people cannot afford to pay the necessary taxes to maintain separate colonies of negroes, or the armies needed to enforce the rights of negroes dwelling in the Southern States, in a condition antagonistic to the feelings and prejudice of the people, the result of which will be internal war, and the final extermination of the negro race. But I am not familiar with the laws of Congress which originated your bureau, but repeat my entire confidence in your pure and exalted character, and your ability to do in the premises all that any one man can do.”



## CHAPTER XXXVI.

## AT HOME.

RELIEVED from the cares and responsibilities of his command, and while awaiting the further orders of the Government, Sherman sought and obtained permission from the lieutenant-general to visit his home, his family, and his friends.

On his arrival at his old home, at Lancaster, Ohio, on the 24th of June, 1865, General Sherman was met at the railway station by several thousands of his friends, neighbors, and veteran soldiers, and was welcomed by Judge Hunter, on the part of the citizens, and Colonel Connell, on behalf of the veterans.

The general replied :—

“FRIENDS OF MY BOYHOOD :

“ I thank you for this most hearty welcome. I am especially thankful for the kind words of the tried and valued friend of my family, Mr. Hunter, and for the warmth with which Colonel Connell and the soldiers have received me. With the latter, I can deal in very few words, for they know that with us words are few and mean much, and that when the time comes again, we will go where the stars and stripes lead, without asking many questions.

“ My old friends and neighbors, I knew your fathers before you better than yourselves, for it is near thirty years since I left here a boy ; and now, in full manhood, I find myself again among you, with a name connected with the history of our country.

“During the past four years my mind has been so intent upon but one thing—the success of our arms—that I have thought of nothing else. I claim no special honor, only to have done a full man’s share; for when one’s country is in danger, the man who will not defend it, and sustain it, with his natural strength, is no man at all. For this I claim no special merit, for I have done simply what all the boys in blue have done. I have only labored with the strength of a single man, and have used the brains I inherited and the education given by my country. The war through which we have just passed has covered a wide area of country, and imposed upon us a task which, like a vast piece of machinery, required many parts, all of which were equally important to the working of the whole. Providence assigned me my part, and if I have done it, I am well satisfied.

“The past is now with the historian, but we must still grapple with the future. In this we need a guide, and, fortunately for us all, we can trust the constitution which has safely brought us through the gloom and danger of the past. Let each State take care of its own local interests and affairs—Ohio of hers, Louisiana of hers, Wisconsin of hers—and the best results will follow. You all know well that I have lived much at the South, and I say that though we have had bitter and fierce enemies in war, we must meet this people again in peace. The bad men among them will separate from those who ask for order and peace, and when the people do thus separate we can encourage the good, and, if need be, we can cut the head of the bad off at one blow. Let the present take care of the present, and with the faith inspired by the past, we can trust the future to the future. The Government of the United States and the constitution of our fathers have proven their strength and power in time of war, and I believe our whole country will be even more brilliant in the vast and unknown future than in the past.

“Fellow-soldiers and neighbors, again I thank you. I do not wish you to consider this a speech at all, for I do not profess to be a man of words. I prefer to see you separately, at



your leisure, in a social way. I shall be with you for some days, and shall be pleased to have you call in whenever you feel like it, in the old familiar way, without any of the formality and reserve which were proper enough in the midst of the armies."

He remained with his family but a few days when an invitation from his old comrades of the Army of the Tennessee to attend their barbecue at Louisville, on the approaching 4th of July, in honor of victory and peace, again drew him from his retirement. On his way to Louisville, he passed through Cincinnati, arriving there on the night of the 30th of June, to find that the citizens had hastily arranged a formal welcome.

On making his appearance on the balcony of the Burnett House, General Sherman was greeted with deafening cheers. Mr. Stanberry, in a pleasant and courteous speech, formally tendered the welcome of the city, and then, with a brief reference to the general's extraordinary career, introduced him to the citizens. Mr. Stanberry was frequently interrupted by applause, and at the close of his address three cheers were given for Sherman, who, in response, said:—

"FELLOW CITIZENS—I am not so accustomed to speaking as my friend Stanberry, and therefore you must be a little more silent as to noise, and charitable as to words. I am very proud that he, before every other man, has received me here on this portico, for, as he says, he knew my father before me, and all my family. He knew me when I was a little red-headed boy, running about Lancaster stealing his cherries. I am thankful that he has introduced me, for I believe he understands the workings of my heart as well as I do myself, and I know that he can tell it better than I can, therefore I accept his version without qualification.

"While we are here together to-night let me tell you, as a point of historical interest, that here, upon this spot, in this very hotel, and I think almost in the room through which I reached this balcony, General Grant and I laid down our maps

and studied the campaign which ended our war. I had been away down in Mississippi finishing up an unfinished job I had down there, when he called for me by telegraph to meet him in Nashville. But we were bothered so much there that we came up here, and in this hotel sat down with our maps and talked over the lines and the operations by means of which we were to reach the heart of our enemy. He went to Richmond, and I to Atlanta. We varied as to time; but the result was just as we laid it out in this hotel, in March, 1864.

“General Grant and I had only one object to fulfil. Our hearts and feelings are one: we were determined the United States should survive this war with honor; and that those who came after us, in future years and centuries, should never turn upon this generation and say we were craven cowards. Now what is the truth? Are you not proud? You are not proud of me, but you are proud of the result. General Grant, and General Sherman, and every other patriot think of but one thing; we don't bother ourselves about local details; we think of only one idea—the supremacy of our country represented by Congress, the judiciary, and the executive—the people being a part of the grand whole. We may think differently about the roads, the mud, about horses and mules; but in one thing we do not differ—that this country shall survive, and be honored not only here but all over the world.

“When our thoughts are of this character, don't let us bother ourselves about little things. There are great thoughts abroad in America, and you and I and all of us are charged with them, and let us see that our country stands unchanged as to boundaries. We have the best country on earth. Our history in the past is beautiful, and her future is in our keeping. I hope and pray that the present generation will maintain the present; and I know that those who come after us will make that present more glorious than it now is. We have but begun the work. I have travelled from one part of the country to the other, and I know that we are almost in a state of wilderness yet. Not one acre in ten in Ohio, and not one in forty in Tennessee, is improved as it ought to be. When we are as popu-



lous as Europe, it will be time to tread upon our neighbor's heels. You in Ohio have the most lovely country the sun ever shone upon; and every returned Ohio soldier, I hope, will take my advice and go to his farm and cultivate it the best he can, rather than wander away into new enterprises. For fifty years to come, at least, I never want to hear a word about war in America. If anybody, at home or abroad, treads upon our coat-tails we will be ready for a fight. But I am for peace now. The Army of the Tennessee is now peaceably disposed. We simply warn our friends not to tread upon our coat-tails; that is all."

The general then thanked the people for the interest they had taken in his presence, and bid them good-night.

The army received their old leader with cordial and unrestrained enthusiasm. After spending an agreeable anniversary among his old fellow-soldiers, Sherman went to St. Louis to assume formal command of his new military division, preparatory to availing himself of a more extended holiday.

At a public dinner given to him by the citizens at St. Louis he spoke as follows:—

"Here, in St. Louis, probably began the great centre movement which terminated the war—a battle-field such as never before was seen, extending from ocean to ocean almost, with the right wing and the left wing; and from the centre here I remember one evening, up in the old Planters' House, sitting with General Halleck and General Cullum, and we were talking about this, that, and the other. A map was on the table, and I was explaining the position of the troops of the enemy in Kentucky when I came to this State. General Halleck knew well the position here, and I remember well the question he asked me—the question of the school teacher to his child—'Sherman, here is the line: how will you break that line?' 'Physically, by a perpendicular force.' 'Where is the perpendicular?' 'The line of the Tennessee River.' General Halleck is the author of that first beginning, and I give him

credit for it with pleasure. Laying down his pencil upon the map, he said, 'There is the line, and we must take it.' The capture of the forts on the Tennessee River by the troops led by Grant followed. These were the grand strategic features of that first movement, and it succeeded perfectly.

"General Halleck's plan went further—not to stop at his first line, which ran through Columbus, Bowling Green, crossing the river at Henry and Donelson, but to push on to the second line, which ran through Memphis and Charleston; but troubles intervened at Nashville, and delays followed; opposition to the last movement was made, and I myself was brought an actor on the scene.

"I remember our ascent of the Tennessee River: I have seen to-night captains of steamboats who first went with us there. Storms came, and we did not reach the point we desired. At that time General C. F. Smith was in command. He was a man indeed: all the old officers remember him as a gallant and excellent officer; and had he lived, probably some of us younger fellows would not have attained our present positions. But that is now past. We followed him the second time, and then came the landing of forces at Pittsburg Landing. Whether it was a mistake in landing them on the west instead of the east bank, it is not necessary now to discuss. I think it was not a mistake. There was gathered the first great army of the West, commencing with only twelve thousand, then twenty, then thirty thousand, and we had about thirty-eight thousand in that battle; and all I claim for that is, that it was a contest for manhood: there was no *strategy*. Grant was there, and others of us, all young at that time, and unknown men, but our enemy was old, and Sidney Johnston, whom all the officers remembered as a power among the old officers, high above Grant, myself, or anybody else, led the enemy on that battle-field, and I almost wonder how we conquered. But, as I remarked, it was a contest for manhood—man to man—soldier to soldier. We fought, and we held our ground, and therefore accounted ourselves victorious.



“The possession of the Mississippi River is the possession of America, and I say that had the Southern Confederacy (call it by what name you may)—had that power represented by the Southern Confederacy held with a grip sufficiently strong the lower part of the Mississippi River, we would have been a subjugated people; and they would have dictated to us if we had given up the possession of the lower Mississippi. It was vital to us, and we fought for it and won. We determined to have it; but we could not go down with our frail boats past the batteries of Vicksburg. It was a physical impossibility; therefore what was to be done? After the Tallahatchie line was carried, Vicksburg was the next point. I went with a small and hastily collected force, and repeatedly endeavored to make a lodgment on the bluff between Vicksburg and Haines’ Bluff, while General Grant moved with his main army so as to place himself on the high plateau behind Vicksburg; but ‘man proposes and God disposes,’ and we failed on that occasion. I then gathered my hastily collected force and went down further; and then, for the first time, I took General Blair and his brigade under my command.

“On the very day I had agreed to be there I was there, and we swung our flanks around, and the present governor of Missouri fell a prisoner to the enemy on that day. We failed. I waited anxiously for a co-operating force inland and below us, but they did not come, and after I had made the assault I learned that the depot at Holly Springs had been broken up, and that General Grant had sent me word not to attempt it. But it was too late. Nevertheless, although we were unable to carry it at first, there were other things to be done. The war covered such a vast area there was plenty to do. I thought of that affair at Arkansas Post, although others claim it, and they may have it if they want it. We cleaned them out there, and General Grant then brought his army to Vicksburg. And you in St. Louis remember well that long winter—how we were on the levee, with the waters rising and drowning us like muskrats; how we were seeking channels through Deer Creek and Yazoo Pass, and how we finally cut a canal across the

peninsula, in front of Vicksburg. But all that time the true movement was the original movement, and every thing approximating to it came nearer the truth. But we could not make any retrograde movement. Why? Because your people at the North were too noisy.

“We could not take any step backward, and for that reason we were forced to run the batteries at Vicksburg, and make a lodgment on the ridges on some of the bluffs below Vicksburg. It is said I protested against it. It is folly. I never protested in my life—never. On the contrary, General Grant rested on me probably more responsibility even than any other commander under him; for he wrote to me, ‘I want you to move on Haines’ Bluff to enable me to pass to the next fort below—Grand Gulf. I hate to ask you, because the fervor of the North will accuse you of being rebellious again.’ I love Grant for his kindness. I did make the feint on Haines’ Bluff, and by that means Grant ran the blockade easily to Grand Gulf, and made a lodgment down there, and got his army up on the high plateau in the rear of Vicksburg, while you people here were beguiled into the belief that Sherman was again repulsed. But we did not repose confidence in everybody. Then followed the movements on Jackson, and the 4th of July placed us in possession of that great stronghold, Vicksburg, and then, as Mr. Lincoln said, ‘the Mississippi went unvexed to the sea.’

“From that day to this the war has been virtually and properly settled. It was a certainty then. They would have said, ‘We give up;’ but Davis would not ratify it, and he had them under good discipline, and therefore it was necessary to fight again. Then came the affair of Chickamauga. The Army of the Mississippi, lying along its banks, were called into a new field of action, and so one morning early I got orders to go to Chattanooga. I did not know where it was, hardly. I did not know the road to go there. But I found it, and got there in time. And although my men were shoeless, and the cold and bitter frosts of winter were upon us, yet I must still go to Knoxville, one hundred and thirteen miles further, to relieve Burnside. That march we made. Then winter forced



us to lie quiet. During that winter I took a little exercise down the river, but that is of no account."

General Buell has since published a lengthy reply to this speech, showing, by official documents: I. That as early as the 3d of January, 1862, he himself proposed to General Halleck the identical plan of operations that was subsequently followed; II. That General Halleck had at that time neither formed nor adopted any plan of operations for the ensuing campaign. General Buell also endeavors to prove that the delays which occurred in the execution of the plan were not chargeable to him.

The prime object of General Sherman's remarks, however, was simply to award credit which he supposed due to one who had become his enemy. To that end he stated the facts as they came within his knowledge, and could hardly have been expected to be cognizant of the confidential dispatches quoted by General Buell.

From St. Louis, General Sherman went to Chicago, Columbus, and other places, on his way home, everywhere heartily greeted by the people and the returned soldiers, and everywhere compelled, in spite of himself, to satisfy the desire of the crowd for a speech.

After his return to St. Louis, General Sherman was present, with General Grant, at a banquet given to a party of English capitalists, consisting of Mr. James McHenry, the Hon. T. Kinnaird, Sir Morton Peto, and others, at the Southern Hotel, on Thursday night, September 14th, 1865. General Grant, who was present, having been in vain called upon to reply to a toast, General Sherman said:—

"GENTLEMEN—I regret exceedingly that my commanding general will not respond to the sentiment. As a citizen of St. Louis, rather than as an officer in the army, I will thank these gentlemen for the kindly mention they have made of General Grant, the whole army, and myself. I believe it is sincere. I believe they appreciate and realize the fact that General

Grant, as the representative of the Army of the United States has had, from the beginning to the end, but one single purpose in view. He has not sought to kill, slay, and destroy, but resolved on the first day of the war that this country should live one and inseparable forever. He felt as we all should feel, prepared for this very occasion, when honorable gentlemen may come from abroad, and not have occasion to blush that the sons of Englishmen permitted anarchy and downfall in the country intrusted to them. And notwithstanding the spirit of the press at one time in England, I believe then and now every true Anglo-Saxon, every Irishman, and every Scotchman rejoiced, and rejoice now, that we are men, and that we did not permit our country to break in two or many sections. And, moreover, I believe every foreign nation—France, Spain, Germany, and Russia—have as much interest in our national existence as we have ourselves; and now, that peace is once more attained, these gentlemen come of their own accord, generously and kindly, to see for themselves whether we merit the assistance which they have in abundance to develop the resources of our country, yet new, with forests still standing on nine-tenths of it. They seem to be impressed favorably, and I have no doubt, in their influential stations abroad, they will induce thousands and millions to think and feel as they do. They have seen this day the iron-clads stripped of their armor. They have seen your levee for three miles lined with peaceful steamboats loaded with corn and oats to go to that Southern country with which we have been at war. They see the lieutenant-general of all our armies dressed as a citizen at this table, and they will carry abroad a perfectly comprehensive, clear, and mathematical intelligence that we are at peace, that we want peace, and that we will have it, even at the expense of war.

“But I am well assured that there is no nation that desires war with us; that every question that can possibly arise can be adjusted by statesmen, by merchants, by men of intelligence and public citizens, assembled together just as you are, discussing just as you would the affairs of the Pacific Railroad,



or any thing else—adjusting differences, striking the balance, and paying it out in bank when called for. Therefore, gentlemen, I am glad to see you among us, and I know the people of St. Louis are glad to see you. You can see in one hour what you could not procure by reading one thousand columns of closely printed matter in the London Times. There are things seen, things felt within, which cannot be described. Even Shakspeare fails to convey a full and intelligent description of many thoughts, and no author can convey a description of a place or locality that will give you in a month of reading what you acquire to-day by simply running back and forth by our city, and traversing it right and left in carriages.

“You have seen the streets of the city and the form and manner of building, and the character of the buildings; and you have seen where but a few years ago there was nothing but a wild prairie, and where, as has been stated, forty years ago there was but a French village of four thousand inhabitants, and you find yourself in a palace—in a room which will compare favorably with any on earth. From these facts, you can arrive at conclusions in regard to the future. Whether vivid or not, it is for the future. The present you have seen for yourselves. You have seen the material resources of the country. The people of the country have heard the kindly words which you have spoken, and I know we receive it in the plain British meaning. I, therefore, simply, gentlemen, beg to assure you of my respect—a respect which all educated officers in the army bear to England, and all nations that act fairly, manfully, and without concealment.”

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

## CONCLUSION.

WHEN Count Segur, in giving his graphic account of Napoleon's great Russian campaign, declared it was impossible to comprehend the great events of history without a perfect knowledge of the character and manners of the principal actors, he disclosed a profound knowledge of his art. Such knowledge of Sherman, however, can only be had by being associated with him both at home and in the field. If we form our estimate of General Sherman's character and manners from his brilliant but hasty letters and military reports alone, or from the record of his military career, or from such descriptions of him as have been given by army correspondents, or from all these sources of information together, we will be likely to have a very imperfect idea of the man. The country, however, and the world will probably agree in according him military genius of a high order. Indeed, this judgment can hardly be withheld without obliterating the most brilliant achievements of the war, still fresh in the memory of all.

It has been the fortune of but few eminent men like General Sherman, to receive both the applause and abuse usually accorded to greatness, in the short space of four years. It is too early to write his history. Fifty or a hundred years hence he will be better understood than now, and more appreciated.

In personal appearance and manners, General Sherman is not essentially different from other men of American education and culture. At this writing, he is past forty-five years of age, of tall and commanding form; and a stranger, introduced to him for the first time, without any previous knowledge of his



real character, would be more impressed by his individuality than by his personal presence. His head is large and well-developed, and covered with straight auburn hair. His eyes are dark hazel, large and piercing. He wears his hair carelessly, and his beard short-cropped. The pictures of him in the shop windows hardly do justice to his actual personal appearance, the deep lines of his face giving him the aspect of a man of rather harsh and repulsive manners, not consonant with his ordinary habits and character.

General Sherman always aims at what is practical, solid, and useful, and not to what is merely specious and attractive. His historical researches have, accordingly, been of greater use to him in actual experience than those of many a more widely-read student. He seems to have read history for the useful lessons it imparts; to learn what men have said and done in the past, which may be used as guides for the future, just as he would judge of the topography of a country on the far side of a river, which he cannot see, by carefully surveying the side he can see. In conversation he is clear, direct, comprehensive, and intelligent. In social life he is exceedingly agreeable, polite, and hospitable, and is very fond of children, generally selecting a dancing partner from the little girls. His action in the case of the boy Howe, wounded at Vicksburg, and who showed such remarkable presence of mind amid danger, illustrates his appreciation of boys who give evidence of uncommon ability and promise. Young Howe was sent to a naval school, at his suggestion; and two other youths were selected by him, for meritorious conduct in the field, and sent to the Government academy at West Point.

During the autumn of 1863, General Sherman sent for his family to visit him at his military camp on the Big Black, in Mississippi, to enjoy their society for a month or more, while his corps was being prepared for other operations. On the way back his eldest boy, Willie, was taken ill and died. He had been made, by vote of the Thirteenth Regiment United States Infantry (his father's old regiment), an honorary sergeant at nine years of age. This regiment escorted the re-

mains of the little sergeant, and bestowed the same honors as if he had been such officer in fact, which so touched the heart of the father that he wrote the following letter of acknowledgment, which is worthy of preservation :—

“GAYOSO HOUSE, MEMPHIS, TENN.  
October 4th—Midnight.

“CAPTAIN C. C. SMITH,

*Commanding Battalion, Thirteenth Regulars :*

“MY DEAR FRIEND—I cannot sleep to-night till I record an expression of the deep feelings of my heart to you and to the officers and soldiers of the battalion for their kind behavior to my poor child. I realize that you all feel for my family the attachment of kindred, and I assure you all of full reciprocity.

“Consistent with a sense of duty to my profession and office I could not leave my post, and sent for my family to come to me in that fatal climate and in that sickly period of the year ; and behold the result ! The child that bore my name, and in whose future I reposed with more confidence than I did in my own plans of life, now floats a mere corpse, seeking a grave in a distant land, with a weeping mother, brother, and sisters clustered about him. But for myself, I can ask no sympathy. On, on I must go to meet a soldier’s fate, or see my country rise superior to all factions, till its flag is adored and respected by ourselves and all the powers of the earth.

“But my poor Willie was, or thought he was, a sergeant of the Thirteenth. I have seen his eye brighten and his heart beat as he beheld the battalion under arms, and asked me if they were not real soldiers. Child as he was, he had the enthusiasm, the pure love of truth, honor, and love of country which should animate all soldiers.

“God only knows why he should die thus young. He is dead ; but will not be forgotten till those who knew him in life have followed him to that same mysterious end.

“Please convey to the battalion my heartfelt thanks ; and



assure each and all that if in after years they call on me or mine, and mention that they were of the Thirteenth Regulars when my poor Willie was a sergeant, they will have a key to the affections of my family that will open all it has—that we will share with them our last blanket, our last crust.

“Your friend,

“W. T. SHERMAN,

‘Major-General.’”

General Sherman is a thorough organizer, and believes in the necessity of adapting means to proper ends. He is no fatalist; but, like Napoleon, seems to think “the gods generally favor the strongest battalions;” nevertheless, he prefers to have them well appointed, disciplined, and handled in battle, lest the gods might happen to help the other side. But he is not one of those cool, scientific, methodical, and tenacious men, bent on owing every thing to tactics and nothing to fortune, and calculating every thing, even the chances of hazard; nor yet does he rush into battle relying chiefly on the inspiration of his own genius and the happy chances of fortune. Different from all this, his theory is, so far as it can be deduced from his military operations, first to have a properly appointed and duly proportioned army equal to the undertaking in hand; next, to school his army in tactics, so as to make it capable of quick and accurate movement; then to accustom it to battle in minor engagements and secondary victories; and finally, to strike home for grand results. And in doing this, General Sherman hesitates at no detail of preparation however trifling, and never loses sight of the idea that every thing, after all, must depend on the head that plans and the hand that guides the whole. He has a constitution of iron and nerves of steel; and his thoughts come to him with the quickness of the lightning and as clear as the light. Before starting out for battle or on a campaign, he always makes himself acquainted with every road, stream, and farm-house on his line of march; and having these, he calculates, with surprising accuracy, the topography of the country though he never saw it. He was

three years studying the route of his campaigns through Georgia and the Carolinas ; not that he had any reason to believe he would be called upon to lead an army over it, but because he saw in the dim future such a campaign would eventually be necessary to put down the rebellion. He was so impressed with this idea at the very beginning of the war, that he obtained from the Census Bureau in Washington a map, made at his own request, of the Cotton States, with a table showing the cattle, horses, and products of each county, according to the last census returns reported from those States ; so that afterwards, when the time for such enterprise arrived, he was practically familiar with the resources of the whole country on his line of march.

General Sherman's military orders and letters are models of composition ; and those written and issued by him during his operations from Chattanooga to Raleigh would, without much alteration, make an instructive hand-book of war. His habit is to look at every thing from a military standpoint ; and he invariably touches the salient point of his subject in the centre. By both natural gift and education a soldier, he possesses a soldier's strength, and a soldier's high sense of honor ; and is not without a soldier's foibles. Straight-forward, high-minded, just, and honorable himself, he has no patience with such as resort to trickery or subterfuge to accomplish their ends. Of the trade of politicians he knows but little, and ever seemed careless to learn. He was once nominated for public office, some years ago, in California. His good-natured but sarcastic reply was : " Gentlemen, I am not eligible ; I am not properly educated to hold office." To understand the full force of the expression, it must be remembered it was uttered in San Francisco ten years ago. This nomination was the commencement of his political career, and his reply was the end of it.

General Sherman's master qualities are of the military order. His military estimate of men requires the most heroic proportions ; his written orders are luminous of the inspiration of his own matchless genius ; and when his directions to sub-



ordinates in command are given orally, they are absolutely irresistible ; and, estimating difficulties by his own ability to overcome them, he usually winds up by saying : " And this must be done at any expense of life or horseflesh." He speaks rapidly and distinctly, without hesitation, and using the fewest words possible. He is no orator, but with practice could easily become a public speaker of more than ordinary power.

General Sherman, in moral resources and in that peculiar power to inspire confidence and command men, is not unlike the popular idea of Andrew Jackson, who, as all the world knows, never hesitated to " take the responsibility," and do what he thought to be right, no matter who opposed. His marvellous power over his troops in the field consists in his being able to make them feel they are the best troops in the world, taking good care to make them so by never allowing them to be unnecessarily beaten, and by being himself equal to the high courage of his army and the occasion at the proper moment. When he commanded the Fourth Corps, it was, in his estimation, the best corps in the Armies of the United States ; afterwards the Army of the Tennessee was the best army in the West, because it was his ; and, finally, when he had two other armies under his command, they were all best. " Show me," said Napoleon, " the best officer in the regiment." " Sire, they are all good." " Well, but point out to me the best." " Sire, they are all *equally* good." " Come, come, that is not an answer ;—say, like Themistocles, ' I am the first, my neighbor is the second.' " " Sire, I mention Captain Moncey, because he is absent—he was wounded." " What," said Napoleon, " Moncey, my page, the son of the marshal ? Mention another." " Sire, he is the best." " Well, then, he shall have the decoration."

General Sherman seems to have had a similar regard for such as were wounded or disabled while serving in his command. His letter-books show many instances of this, which the following extract from a letter written to a wounded officer will sufficiently illustrate :—

“I see you desire promotion, and to be returned to duty in the field. Indeed will I aid you all in my power to obtain what you merit and must have. The loss of your hand is no objection, and in your case is an evidence of title to promotion—with your one arm you are worth half a dozen ordinary men. Your left hand, guided by a good head and willing heart, can wield the sword to good purpose. I inclose you a strong letter to Governor Todd, urging your promotion.”

General Sherman's favorites among his officers were such as could do the best. He was always severe on such as sought personal advancement by unfair means. The following letter written by him from Atlanta, under date of July 25th, 1864, directed to Colonel Hardie at the War Office in Washington, is of itself more descriptive of General Sherman's method of treatment in such cases than any description we could give :—

“I have your dispatch of yesterday announcing the appointment of General —— as major-general. I am not objecting to this appointment, but I wish to put on record this my emphatic opinion, that it is an act of injustice to officers who stand at their post in the day of danger to neglect them and advance such as Generals —— and ——, who left us in the midst of bullets to go to the rear in search of personal advancement. If the rear be the post of honor, then we had better change front on Washington.”

In further illustration of General Sherman's characteristics in the field, the following incident is given. When General Halleck ordered a junction of the Armies of the Ohio and Tennessee at Pittsburg Landing, in the spring of 1862, it was a part of his plan to destroy as much as possible of the Charleston and Memphis Railroad between Corinth and Iuka, in order to embarrass the enemy in collecting his forces and supplies at the former place. This had been twice attempted by General Sherman without success. It was now determined to make another attempt, and break the road east of Iuka,



when he started for that purpose up the river with two gunboats and a detachment of infantry under command of General Fry, and a hundred picked cavalry selected from the third battalion of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, under command of Major Bowman, on transports, and landed in the night at Chickasaw, above the mouth of Bear Creek, and quietly invested the town while the inhabitants were asleep. Before daylight General Sherman had succeeded, by some means, in finding an intelligent negro acquainted with the country and the roads, and from information derived from him quickly sketched a map of the country for the use of the cavalry. All things being arranged for the start, he called General Fry and Major Bowman one side and gave them their orders: "The object of this expedition is," said Sherman, "to destroy the railroad-bridge across Bear Creek and the tressel-work on this side. I have tried twice to break that road—it must be done now at any cost—it is worth millions to the Government—to fail now will be a disgrace to us all. Major, I expect you to surprise the guards, seize the bridge and burn it. I will look for the smoke about noon. General Fry, you march out on the pike and prevent the enemy from sending forces from Iuka, to cut off the retreat, and if you hear fighting by the cavalry, burn the turnpike bridge and hurry on to the support of the cavalry."

The work was done precisely as ordered, and our troops returned to the gunboats the same night, a part of the infantry having marched thirty-four miles.

It will be seen, by the foregoing, there is much in Sherman's manner and style of command to remind the reader of Soult: "I have chosen you," said that consummate general, addressing himself to that most daring officer, Major Dulong—"I have chosen you, from the whole army, to seize the Ponte Neva, which has been cut by the enemy. Select a hundred grenadiers and twenty-five horsemen; endeavor to surprise the guards and secure the passage of the bridge. If you succeed, say so; but send no other report—your silence will suffice."

General Sherman seems to comprehend the value of time in war. Every thing that he says in the presence of his officers, and all that he does, inspires all around him with the idea *that not a moment must be lost*. Above all his other excellences shine his promptitude, celerity, and immeasurable activity. Always ready for the start, indefatigable on the march, omnipresent in battle, relentless in pursuit, unfailing in mental resources, fruitful of expedients, enthusiastic in victory, he seems to carry his army in his hand and push it forward with irresistible power. In all military movements his strict punctuality is observable. In his own words, he "is always on time;" whether starting from Vicksburg to Chattanooga on an hour's notice, or turning to the relief of Knoxville, or moving down on Dalton on the very day appointed, or in the great marches to the sea and through the Carolinas.

"Tell my old friend, D. D. Porter, to look out for me about Christmas," he wrote from Gaylesville; four days before that time his army occupied Savannah. His chief quartermaster and chief commissary were told to expect him on the North Carolina coast on the 15th of March. On the 14th he entered Fayetteville and communicated with the sea.

It will probably be the judgment of history that the deliverance of the country was not due so much to the foresight and ability of the administration and Congress as to the skill of our generals in the field, and the courage of our troops, whom no dangers could daunt and no hardships dishearten. Grant was made lieutenant-general to remedy the internal errors of the War Department at Washington, and Sherman's capture of Atlanta saved the presidential election and stimulated the patriotism of the people. While Sherman was leading his conquering legions to the sea, Congress was hesitating about filling up our decimated ranks by a general draft, rendering the great result doubtful at the very threshold of eventful triumph. "Give us a universal draft," wrote Sherman from the battle-field near Atlanta; "any man who can fight and won't fight now, ought to be made to fight, or be banished or denationalized."



Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Stanton, and General Halleck had jointly and severally managed the war until the military establishment had been well-nigh destroyed, and the resources of the country well-nigh exhausted. No one understood this better than Mr. Lincoln himself, and none were more free to acknowledge it. "You know," he declared to Mr. Stanton, "we have been trying to manage this war thus far, but without success. I promised General Grant, when he accepted his present office, he should not be interfered with in his military plans and operations by mere civilians. I think we will be obliged to let Mr. Grant (as Mrs. Grant calls him) have his own way;" and this simple declaration was worth forty thousand men in the field.

"When you were about to leave Atlanta for the Atlantic," wrote Mr. Lincoln to General Sherman, "I was *anxious*, if not fearful. Now, the undertaking being a success, the honor is all yours, for I believe none of us went further than to acquiesce." "Not only," he continued, "does it afford the obvious and immediate military advantages," etc., but "it brings those who sat in darkness to see a great light."

The preacher tells us, "no man can serve two masters," and the maxim is as true in war as in religion. General Sherman found it comparatively easy to co-operate with the President his honest, candid, out-spoken, and enterprising character were such as Mr. Lincoln most needed and most admired. Sherman's practical character, his knowledge of business, his quickness of perception, and rapidity of execution, his clear statement, his ready answers, his accurate and varied intelligence on all subjects, whether as to the qualities of a horse, the proper keel of a steamboat, the length and depth of a river, the outfit of an army, or the laws of war, were precisely those qualities that charmed Mr. Lincoln, whose mind ever recurred to what was useful rather than ornamental. Even Sherman's frank, bold, and honest opposition to measures favored by Mr. Lincoln himself pleased him, especially in regard to matters connected with the army, such as trade in cotton and negro recruiting by Massachusetts agents; and no

one enjoyed Sherman's peculiar spice more than he did. Mr. Lincoln sought that light which comes from above, but he did not arrogantly despise the wisdom of man. He greatly admired Sherman, and Sherman in turn strove earnestly and honestly to execute his policy.

But not so with Mr. Stanton, who is liable to false impressions beyond most men, is arrogant and proud of his arrogance, as if it were a virtue; fond of power, and unscrupulous in its exercise; tenacious of his opinions, and holding on to them with a tenacity in proportion to their grossness, and often rash in the exercise of his enormous power, he will appear to the reader in strange contrast with the mild and judicious character of Mr. Lincoln. But he was probably the man for the place for the time being. It was the boast of Prince Metternich that he served, during the period when Napoleon was overturning thrones, as the grand high-constable for all the crown-heads of Europe, and Mr. Stanton has been ours during our own great civil war. Such a man was necessary, and he will take his place in the history of the country. But if Sherman disliked Stanton because he could not understand him, Stanton in turn hated Sherman; and the personal collision which came at last makes it necessary for the reader to make the acquaintance of both. Like Castor and Pollux among the constellations, it is difficult to look at one without seeing the other. If Mr. Stanton is a great organizer of war—"like Carnot"—he fights battles like a Brutus. "I little dreamed," wrote Sherman to General Halleck, "when you warned me of the assassin Clark being on my track, he would turn up in the direction and guise he did." Cæsar's last speech—"Et tu Brute"—was more terse, but not more expressive than this.

General Sherman was born of New England parents, and descended from New England stock. He was probably all the better for being born in the then far West, amid the wilds, the hardships, and primitive people of the frontier. The children of New England, like cercals, are often improved by trans-



planting. On the western slope of the Alleghany Mountains the lands are richer, the rivers larger and longer, the lakes are magnificent, the prairies are almost boundless, and the climate is salubrious. There is ample room for all, food for all, work for all, and happiness for all. It was good fortune and happiness to be born in such a country. Society there was less conventional than in any other section of the country; religious denominations were more tolerant, religious creeds pinched the conscience less, and the population was more transient. In early times in the West, men seemed to forget for awhile the creeds to which they were educated. Presbyterians often became Methodists or Baptists, and Baptists became Presbyterians; and some of each became Catholics, and Catholics, in turn, became Protestants, according to the circumstances of each case. The ways to heaven were regarded like railways—the traveller ready to start on his momentous journey would generally take the first train of cars that came along, without special inquiry as to the character of the parties who owned the stock and run the road, taking his chances of making connections with the great “highway” as he neared his eternal home. Sherman’s parents were Episcopalians, but the Episcopal Church was not well adapted to small settlements in the backwoods; or if well adapted, was unable to keep track of all its flock scattered throughout the broad expanse, and hence the family availed themselves of such pious advantages, for awhile, as the Presbyterian Church could afford. But General Sherman, while he has a sincere admiration for good Christians, has a most provoking disregard for religious creeds, regarding them as a sort of relative good or necessary evil, depending more or less upon the intelligence, honesty, and general excellence of the men who instruct, lead, and control the religious impulses of the human heart in their respective “commands.” His appreciation of a Christian soldier may be inferred from the following.

“At my last interview with Mr. Lincoln,” he wrote to Mr. James E. Yeatman of the United States Sanitary Commission, May 21, 1865, “on his boat anchored in James River, in the

midst of the army, your name came up as one spoken of to fill the office of commissioner of refugees, freedmen, etc., and I volunteered my assertion that if you would accept office, which I doubted, the bureau could not go into more kind and charitable hands; but since that time the office has, properly enough, been given to General Howard, who has held high command under me for more than a year; and I am sure you will be pleased to know that he is as pure a man as ever lived, a strict Christian, and a model soldier, the loss of an arm attesting his service. He will do all that one man can do, if not forced to undertake impossibilities," etc.

General Howard, it is well known, has been pious and exemplary from his boyhood, was ever faithful and devoted in the discharge of his religious duties, and this even while a student at West Point. He carried his religious principles with him into the army, and was guided and governed by them in all his relations with his officers and men. No matter who was permitted to share his mess or partake of his repast, whether the lowest subaltern of his command or General Sherman himself, no one thought to partake, if General Howard were present, without first the invocation of the Divine blessing, himself usually leading, like the head of a family. General Sherman seems greatly to have admired the Christian character of General Howard, making frequent mention of him in his correspondence in terms similar to those above quoted; and not only as a Christian but as a soldier, preferring him and promoting him to the command of one of his armies.

From the same letter from which the last extract was taken, we make a further extract in regard to the Andersonville prisoners and the conclusion of the war:—

“I was as glad as you could have been to learn that those boxes of stores, prepared by you with so much care and promptness for the Andersonville prisoners, reached them at last. I don't think I ever set my heart so strongly on any one thing as I did in attempting to rescue those prisoners; and I had almost feared instead of doing them good I had



actually done them harm, for they were changed from place to place to avoid me, and I could not with infantry overtake railroad trains. But at last their prison-doors are open; and I trust we have arrived at a point when further war or battle, or severity, other than the punishment of crime by civil tribunals, is past.

“You will have observed how fiercely I have been assailed for simply offering to the President ‘terms’ for his approval or disapproval, according to his best judgment—terms which, if fairly interpreted, mean, and only mean, an actual submission by the rebel armies to the civil authority of the United States. No one can deny I have done the State some service in the field, but I have always desired that strife should cease at the earliest possible moment. I confess, without shame, I am sick and tired of fighting—its glory is all moonshine; even success the most brilliant is over dead and mangled bodies, with the anguish and lamentations of distant families, appealing to me for sons, husbands, and fathers. You, too, have seen these things, and I know you also are tired of the war, and are willing to let the civil tribunals resume their place. And, so far as I know, all the fighting men of our army want peace; and it is only those who have never heard a shot, never heard the shrieks and groans of the wounded and lacerated (friend or foe), that cry aloud for more blood, more vengeance, more desolation. I *know* the rebels are whipped to death, and I declare before God, as a man and a soldier, I will not strike a foe who stands unarmed and submissive before me, but would rather say—‘*Go, and sin no more.*’”

In another letter, to Chief-Justice Chase, written about the same time, General Sherman says:—

“I have had abundant opportunities of knowing these people (the people of the South), both before the war, during its existence, and since their public acknowledgment of submission to the national authority, and I have no fear of them, armed or disarmed, and believe that by one single stroke of the pen,

erous as he is honest. Let those who shall come after us judge the man and his actions. To this test all men must submit. Time ever withers the laurels of the selfish and base, but freshens the beauty of virtue. Sherman can afford to wait.



# APPENDIX.

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## I.

### TESTIMONY OF GENERAL SHERMAN

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON THE CONDUCT OF THE WAR, RELATIVE  
TO THE TRUCE.

EXAMINED BY THE CHAIRMAN :

*Question.* What is your rank in the army ?

*Answer.* I am major-general in the regular army.

*Q.* As your negotiation with the rebel General Johnston, in relation to his surrender, has been the subject of much public comment, the committee desire you to state all the facts and circumstances in regard to it, or which you wish the public to know.

*A.* On the 15th day of April last I was at Raleigh, in command of three armies, the Army of the Ohio, the Army of the Cumberland, and the Army of the Tennessee ; my enemy was General Joseph E. Johnston, of the Confederate army, who commanded fifty thousand men, retreating along the railroad from Raleigh, by Hillsboro', Greensboro', Salisbury, and Charlotte. I commenced pursuit by crossing the curve of that road in the direction of Ashboro' and Charlotte. After the head of my column had crossed the Cape Fear River at Aven's Ferry, I received a communication from General Johnston, and answered it, copies of which I most promptly sent to the War Department, with a letter\* addressed to the secretary of war, as follows.

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\* See page 391.

I met General Johnston in person, at a house five miles from Durham's Station, under a flag of truce. After a few preliminary remarks, he said to me, since Lee had surrendered his army at Appomattox Courthouse, of which he had just been advised, he looked upon further opposition by him as the greatest possible of crimes; that he wanted to know whether I could make him any general concessions; any thing by which he could maintain his hold and control of his army, and prevent its scattering; any thing to satisfy the great yearning of their people. If so, he thought he could arrange terms satisfactory to both parties. He wanted to embrace the condition and fate of all the armies of the Southern Confederacy to the Rio Grande,—to make one job of it, as he termed it.

I asked him what his powers were,—whether he could command and control the fate of all the armies to the Rio Grande. He answered that he thought he could obtain the power, but he did not possess it at that moment; he did not know where Mr. Davis was, but he thought if I could give him the time, he could find Mr. Breckinridge, whose orders would be obeyed everywhere, and he could pledge me his personal faith that whatever he undertook to do would be done.

I had had frequent correspondence with the late President of the United States, with the secretary of war, with General Halleck, and with General Grant, and the general impression left upon my mind was, that if a settlement could be made, consistent with the constitution of the United States, the laws of Congress, and the proclamation of the President, they would not only be willing, but pleased to terminate the war by one single stroke of the pen.

I needed time to finish the railroad from the Neuse Bridge up to Raleigh, and thought I could put in four or five days of good time in making repairs to my road, even if I had to send propositions to Washington. I therefore consented to delay twenty-four hours, to enable General Johnston to procure what would satisfy me as to his authority and ability, as a military man, to do what he undertook to do. I therefore



consented to meet him the next day, the 17th, at twelve o'clock noon, at the same place.

We did meet again; after a general interchange of courtesies, he remarked that he was then prepared to satisfy me that he could fulfil the terms of our conversation of the day before. He then asked me what I was willing to do. I told him, in the first place, I could not deal with anybody except men recognized by us as "belligerents," because no military man could go beyond that fact. The attorney-general has since so decided, and any man of common sense so understood it before; there was no difference upon that point as to the men and officers accompanying the Confederate armies. I told him that the President of the United States, by a published proclamation, had enabled every man in the Southern Confederate army, of the rank of colonel and under, to procure and obtain amnesty, by simply taking the oath of allegiance to the United States, and agreeing to go to his home and live in peace. The terms of General Grant to General Lee extended the same principles to the officers, of the rank of brigadier-general and upward, including the highest officer in the Confederate army, viz., General Lee, the commander-in-chief. I was, therefore, willing to proceed with him upon the same principles.

Then a conversation arose as to what form of government they were to have in the South. Were the States there to be dissevered, and were the people to be denied representation in Congress? Were the people there to be, in the common language of the people of the South, slaves to the people of the North? Of course, I said "No; we desire that you shall regain your position as citizens of the United States, free and equal to us in all respects, and wish representation upon the condition of submission to the lawful authority of the United States, as defined by the Constitution, the United States courts, and the authority of the United States supported by those courts." He then remarked to me that General Breckinridge, a major-general in the Confederate army, was near by, and if I had no objection, he would like to have

him present. I called his attention to the fact that I had, on the day before, explained to him that any negotiations between us must be confined to belligerents. He replied that he understood that perfectly. "But," said he, "Breckinridge, whom you do not know, save by public rumor as secretary of war, is, in fact, a major-general; I give you my word for that. Have you any objection to his being present as a major-general?" I replied, "I have no objection to any military officer you desire being present as a part of your personal staff." I, myself, had my own officers near me at call.

Breckinridge came, a stranger to me, whom I had never spoken to in my life, and he joined in the conversation; while that conversation was going on a courier arrived and handed to General Johnston a package of papers; he and Breckinridge sat down and looked over them for some time, and put them away in their pockets: what they were, I know not, but one of them was a slip of paper, written, as General Johnston told me, by Mr. Reagan, postmaster-general of the Southern Confederacy: they seemed to talk about it *sotto voce*, and finally handed it to me. I glanced over it: it was preceded by a preamble and closed with a few general terms. I rejected it at once.

We then discussed matters; talked about slavery, talked about every thing. There was a universal assent that slavery was as dead as any thing could be; that it was one of the issues of the war long since determined; and even General Johnston laughed at the folly of the Confederate government in raising negro soldiers, whereby they gave us all the points of the case. I told them that slavery had been treated by us as a dead institution, first by one class of men from the initiation of the war, and then from the date of the emancipation proclamation of President Lincoln, and finally by the assent of all parties. As to reconstruction, I told them I did not know what the views of the administration were. Mr. Lincoln, up to that time, in letters and telegrams to me, encouraged me by all the words which could be used in general terms, to believe, not only in his willingness, but in his desires that I



should make terms with civil authorities, governors, and legislatures, even as far back as 1863. It then occurred to me that I might write off some general propositions, meaning little or much, according to the construction of parties—what I would term “glittering generalities”—and send them to Washington, which I could do in four days. That would enable the new President to give me a clue to his policy in the important juncture which was then upon us: for the war was over; the highest military authorities of the Southern Confederacy so confessed to me openly, unconcealedly, and repeatedly. I therefore drew up the memorandum (which has been published to the world)\* for the purpose of referring it to the proper executive authority of the United States, and enabling him to define to me what I might promise, simply to cover the pride of the Southern men, who thereby became subordinate to the laws of the United States, civil and military. I made no concessions to General Johnston’s army, or the troops under his direction and immediate control; and if any concessions were made in those general terms, they were made because I then believed, and now believe, they would have delivered into the hands of the United States the absolute control of every Confederate officer and soldier, all their muster-rolls, and all their arms. It would save us all the incidental expense resulting from the military occupation of that country by provost-marshals, provost-guards, military governors, and all the machinery by which alone military power can reach the people of a civilized country. It would have surrendered to us the armies of Dick Taylor and Kirby Smith, both of them capable of doing infinite mischief to us, by exhausting the resources of the whole country upon which we were to depend for the future extinguishment of our debt, forced upon us by their wrongful and rebellious conduct. I never designed to shelter a human being from any liability incurred in consequence of past acts to the civil tribunals of our country, and I do not believe a fair and manly interpreta-

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\* See the original truce, page 396.

tion of my terms can so construe them, for the words "United States courts," "United States authorities," "limitations of executive power," occur in every paragraph. And if they seemingly yield terms better than the public would desire to be given to the Southern people, if studied closely and well it will be found that there is an absolute submission on their part to the Government of the United States, either through its executive, legislative, or judicial authorities. Every step in the programme of these negotiations was reported punctually, clearly, and fully, by the most rapid means of communication that I had. And yet I neglected not one single precaution necessary to reap the full benefits of my position, in case the Government amended, altered, or absolutely annulled those terms. As those matters were necessarily mingled with the military history of the period, I would like, at this point, to submit to the committee my official report, which has been in the hands of the proper officer, Brigadier-General Rawlins, chief of staff of the Army of the United States, since about the 12th instant. It was made by me at Manchester, Virginia, after I had returned from Savannah, whither I went to open up the Savannah River, and reap the fruits of my negotiations with General Johnston, and to give General Wilson's force in the interior a safe and sure base from which he could draw the necessary supply of clothing and food for his command. It was only after I fulfilled all this that I learned for the first time, through the public press, that my conduct had been animadverted upon, not only by the secretary of war,\* but by General Halleck and the press of the country at large. I did feel hurt and annoyed that Mr. Stanton coupled with the terms of my memorandum, confided to him, a copy of a telegram to General Grant, which he had never sent to me. He knew, on the contrary, that when he was at Savannah, I had negotiations with civil parties there, for he was present in my room when those parties were conferring with me; and I wrote him a letter, setting forth many points of it, in which I said I

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\* See page 418.



aimed to make a split in Jefferson Davis' dominions, by segregating Georgia from their course. Those were civil negotiations, and, far from being discouraged from making them, I was encouraged by Secretary Stanton himself to make them.

By coupling the note to General Grant with my memorandum, he gave the world fairly and clearly to infer that I was in possession of it. Now I was not in possession of it, and I have reason to know that Mr. Stanton knew I was not in possession of it. Next met me General Halleck's telegram,\* in- dorsed by Mr. Stanton, in which they publicly avowed an act of perfidy—namely, the violation of my terms, which I had a right to make, and which, by the laws of war and by the laws of Congress, is punishable by death, and no other punishment. Next, they ordered an army to pursue my enemy, who was known to be surrendering to me, in the presence of General Grant himself, their superior officer; and, finally, they sent orders to General Wilson and to General Thomas—my subordinates, acting under me, on a plan of the most magnificent scale, admirably executed—to defeat my orders, and to thwart the interests of the Government of the United States. I did feel indignant—I do feel indignant. As to my own honor, I can protect it. In my letter of the 15th of April, I used this language: "I have invited Governor Vance to return to Raleigh, with the civil officers of his State." I did so because President Lincoln had himself encouraged me to a similar course with the governor of Georgia, when I was at Atlanta. And here was the opportunity which the secretary of war should have taken to put me on my guard against making terms with civil authorities, if such were the settled policy of our Government. Had President Lincoln lived, I know he would have sustained me.

The following is my report,† which I desire to have incorporated into, and made part of, my testimony:

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\* See page 433.

† See Chapters XXVI. to XXX., *ante*.

Q. Did you have, near Fortress Monroe, a conference with President Lincoln; and if so, about what time?

A. I met General Grant and Mr. Lincoln on board a steamboat, lying at the wharf at City Point, during the evening of the 27th of March; I resumed my visit to the President on board the same steamer anchored in the stream the following day, General Grant being present on both occasions.

Q. In those conferences was any arrangement made with you and General Grant, or either of you, in regard to the manner of arranging business with the Confederacy in regard to terms of peace?

A. Nothing definite; it was simply a matter of general conversation, nothing specific and definite.

Q. At what time did you learn that President Lincoln had assented to the assembling of the Virginia rebel Legislature?

A. I knew of it on the 18th of April, I think; but I procured a paper with the specific order of General Weitzel, also a copy of the amnesty proclamation on the 20th of April.

Q. You did not know, at that time, that that arrangement had been rescinded by the President?

A. No, sir; I did not know that until afterwards; the moment I heard of that I notified General Johnston of it.

Q. Then at the time you entered into this arrangement with General Johnston, you knew that General Weitzel had approved of the calling together of the rebel Legislature of Virginia, by the assent of the President?

A. I knew of it by some source unofficially; I succeeded in getting a copy of the paper containing General Weitzel's order on the 20th or 21st of April.\*

Q. But at the time of your arrangement you did not know that that order had been rescinded?

A. No, sir; I learned that several days afterwards, and at once sent word to General Johnston.†

Q. At the time of your arrangement you also knew of the surrender of Lee's army, and the terms of that surrender?

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\* See page 420.

† See page 426.



A. I had that officially from General Grant ; I got that at Smithfield, on the 12th of April.

Q. I have what purports to be a letter from you to Johnston, which seems to imply that you intended to make the arrangement on the terms of Lee's surrender. The letter is as follows.\*

\*                    \*                    \*                    \*                    \*

A. Those were the terms as to his own army ; but the concessions I made him were for the purpose of embracing other armies.

Q. And the writings you signed were to include other armies?

A. The armies of Kirby Smith and Dick Taylor, so that afterwards no man within the limits of the Southern Confederacy could claim to belong to any Confederate army in existence.

Q. The President addressed a note to General Grant, perhaps not to you, to the effect of forbidding officers of the army from entering into any thing but strictly military arrangements, leaving civil matters entirely to him?

A. I never saw such a note signed by President Lincoln. Mr. Stanton made such a note or telegram, and says it was by President Lincoln's dictation : he made it to General Grant, but never to me ; on the contrary, while I was in Georgia, Mr. Lincoln telegraphed to me encouraging me to discuss matters with Governor Brown and Mr. Stephens.

Q. Then you had no notice of that order to General Grant.

A. I had no knowledge of it, officially or otherwise.

Q. In the published report of your agreement there is nothing about slavery, I believe?

A. There was nothing said about slavery, because it did not fall within the category of military questions, and we could not make it so. It was a legal question, which the President had disposed of, overriding all our action. We had to treat the slave as *free*, because the President, our commander-in-

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\* See page 390.

chief, said he was free. For me to have renewed the question when that decision was made, would have involved the absurdity of an inferior undertaking to qualify the work of his superior.

Q. That was the reason why it was not mentioned?

A. Yes, sir; subsequently I wrote a note to Johnston, stating that I thought it would be well to mention it for political effect, when we came to draw up the final terms with precision: that note was written pending the time my memorandum was going to Washington, and before an answer had been returned.

Q. At the time you entered into these negotiations was Johnston in a condition to offer any effective resistance to your army?

A. He could not have resisted my army an hour, if I could have got hold of him; but he could have escaped from me by breaking up into small parties, or by taking the country roads, travelling faster than my army, with trains, could have pursued.

Q. Then your object in negotiating was to keep his army from scattering into guerrilla bands?

A. That was my chief object; I so officially notified the War Department.

Q. And not because there was any doubt about the result of a battle?

A. There was no question as to the result of a battle, and I knew it; every soldier knew it. Johnston said, in the first five minutes of our conversation, that any further resistance on his part would be an act of folly, and all he wanted was to keep his army from dispersing.

BY MR. LOAN:

Q. In your examination by the chairman you stated that you were acting in pursuance of instructions from Mr. Lincoln, derived from his letters and telegrams at different times?

A. Yes, sir.



Q. Have you any of these letters and telegrams which you can furnish to the committee?

A. I can furnish you a copy of a dispatch to General Halleck from Atlanta, in which I stated that I had invited Governor Brown and Vice-President Stevens to meet us ; and I can give you a copy of Mr. Lincoln's answer, for my dispatch was referred to him, in which he said he felt much interested in my dispatch, and encouraged me to allow their visit : but the letter to which I referred specially was a longer letter, which I wrote to General Halleck from my camp on Big Black, Mississippi, at General Halleck's instigation, in September, 1863, which was received in Washington, and submitted to Mr. Lincoln, who desired to have it published, to which I would not consent. In that letter I gave my opinions fully and frankly, not only upon the military situation, but also the civil policy necessary. Mr. Lincoln expressed himself highly pleased with my views, and desired to make them public, but I preferred not to do so.

Q. And by subsequent acts he induced you to believe he approved of these views?

A. I *know* he approved of them, and always encouraged me to carry out those views.

BY THE CHAIRMAN :

Q. The following is a letter published in the newspapers, purporting to have been addressed by you to Johnston, dated April 21, 1865.\*

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This is the letter in which you say that it would be well to declare publicly that slavery is dead?

A. Yes, sir ; that is the letter.

BY MR. LOAN :

Q. Will you furnish the committee a copy of the letter

written by you to Mr. Stanton, in January last, from Savannah?

A. I will do so.

THE CHAIRMAN :

Q. And when the manuscript of your testimony is prepared it will be remitted to you for revision, and you can add to it any statement or papers that you may subsequently desire or consider necessary.

A. I have the above, and now subjoin copies of letters from my letter-book, in the order of the bringing in the questions revised by this inquiry :—

“HEADQUARTERS MIDDLE DEPARTMENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI,  
In the Field, Raleigh, N. C., April 18, 1865.

“To LIEUTENANT-GENERAL U. S. GRANT, or MAJOR-GENERAL HALLECK,  
*Washington, D. C.:*

“GENERAL—I inclose herewith a copy of an agreement made this day between General Joseph E. Johnston and myself, which, if approved by the President of the United States, will produce peace from the Potomac to the Rio Grande. Mr. Breckinridge was present at the conference in the capacity of a major-general, and satisfied me of the ability of General Johnston to carry out to the full extent the terms of the agreement; and if you will get the President to simply indorse the copy, and commission me to carry out the terms, I will follow them to the conclusion. You will observe that it is an absolute submission of the enemy to the lawful authorities of the United States, and disperses his armies absolutely; and the point to which I attach most importance is, that the disposition and dispersment of the armies is done in such a manner as to prevent them breaking up into a guerrilla crew. On the other hand, we can retain just as much of an army as we please. I agree to the mode and manner of the surrender of armies set forth, as it gives the States the means of suppressing guerrillas, which we could not expect them to do if we strip them of all arms.

“Both Generals Johnston and Breckinridge admitted that slavery was dead, and I could not insist on embracing it in such a paper, because it can be made with the States in detail. I know that all the men of substance South sincerely want peace, and I do not believe they will resort to war again during this century. I have no doubt but that they will in the future be perfectly subordinate to the laws of the United States.



The moment my action in this matter is approved, I can spare five corps, and will ask for and leave General Schofield here with the Tenth Corps, and go myself with the Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Seventeenth, Twentieth, and Twenty-third corps, *via* Burkesville and Gordonsville, to Frederick or Hagerstown, there to be paid and mustered out.

"The question of finance is now the chief one, and every soldier and officer not needed ought to go home at once. I would like to be able to begin the march North by May 1.

"I urge on the part of the President speedy action, as it is important to get the Confederate armies to their homes, as well as our own.

"I am, with great respect,

"Your obedient servant,

"W. T. SHERMAN,

"Major-General commanding."

"HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DEPARTMENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI,  
In the Field, Raleigh, N. C., April 18, 1865.

"GENERAL H. W. HALLECK, *Chief of Staff, Washington, D. C. :*

"GENERAL—I received your dispatch describing the man Clark detailed to assassinate me. He had better be in a hurry or he will be too late. The news of Mr. Lincoln's death produced a most intense effect on our troops. At first I feared it would lead to excesses, but now it has softened down, and can easily be quieted. None evince more feeling than General Johnston, who admitted that the act was calculated to stain his cause with a dark hue; and he contended that the loss was most severe on the South, who had begun to realize that Mr. Lincoln was the best friend the South had.

"I cannot believe that even Mr. Davis was privy to the diabolical plot, but think it the emanation of a lot of young men of the South, who are very devils. I want to throw upon the South the care of this class of men, who will soon be as obnoxious to their industrious class as to us.

"Had I pushed Johnson's army to an extremity, it would have dispersed and done infinite mischief. Johnston informed me that General Stoneman had been at Salisbury, and was now about Statesville. I have sent him orders to come to me.

"General Johnston also informed me that General Wilson was at Columbus, Ga., and he wanted me to arrest his progress. I leave that to you. Indeed, if the President sanctions my agreement with Johnston, our interest is to cease all destruction. Please give all orders necessary, according to the views the Executive may take, and inform him, if possible, not to vary the terms at all, for I have considered every thing, and

believe that the Confederate armies are dispersed. We can adjust all else fairly and well.

“ I am yours, etc.,

“ W. T. SHERMAN,

“ Major-General commanding.”

Lest confusion should result to the mind of the committee by the latter part of the above letter, I state it was addressed to General Halleck, as chief of staff, when he was in the proper “line of order” to the commander-in-chief. The whole case changed when, on the 26th of April, he became the commander of the separate division of the James.

As stated in my testimony, General Grant reached Raleigh on the 24th, and on the 25th, on the supposition that I would start next day to chase Johnston’s army, I wrote to him the following letter, delivered in person :—

“ HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI,  
In the Field, Raleigh, N. C., April 25, 1865.

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL U. S. GRANT—*Present* :

“ GENERAL—I received your letter of April 21, with inclosures, yesterday, and was well pleased that you came along, as you must have observed that I held the military control, so as to adapt it to any phase the case might assume.

“ It is but just that I should record the fact that I made my terms with General Johnston under the influence of the liberal terms you extended to the army of General Lee, at Appomattox Courthouse, on the 9th; and the seeming policy of our Government, as evinced by the call of the Virginia Legislature and governor back to Richmond, under yours and President Lincoln’s very eyes. It now appears that this last act was done without any consultation with you, or any knowledge of Mr. Lincoln, but rather in opposition to a previous policy well considered.

“ I have not the least desire to interfere in the civil policy of our Government, but would shun it as something not to my liking. But occasions arise when a prompt seizure of results is forced on military commanders not in immediate communication with the proper authority. It is possible that the terms signed by General Johnston and myself were not clear enough on the point well understood between us—that our negotiations did not apply to any parties outside the officers



and men of the Confederate armies, which could easily have been remedied.

“No surrender of any army, not actually at the mercy of the antagonist, was ever made without ‘terms,’ and those always define the military status of the surrendered. Thus you stipulated that the officers and men of Lee’s army should not be molested at their homes so long as they obeyed the laws at the place of their residence. I do not wish to discuss these points involved in our recognition of the State governments in actual existence, but will merely state my conclusion, to await the solution of the future.

“Such action, on one point, in no manner recognizes for a moment the so-called Confederate government, or makes us liable for its debts or acts. The laws and acts done by the several States during the period of rebellion are *void*, because done without the oath prescribed by the constitution of the United States, which is a condition precedent. We have a right to use any sort of machinery to produce military results; and it is the commonest thing for military commanders to use the civil government, *in actual existence*, as a means to an end. I do believe we could and can use the present State governments lawfully, constitutionally, and as the very best possible means to produce the object desired, viz., entire and complete submission to the lawful authority of the United States.

“As to punishment of past crimes, that is for the judiciary, and can in no manner or way be disturbed by our acts; and, so far as I can, I will use my influence that rebels shall suffer all the personal punishment provided by law, as also the civil liabilities accruing from their past acts.

“What we now want is the new form of law, by which common men may regain their position of industry, so long disturbed by the war.

“I now apprehend that the rebel army will disperse, and instead of dealing with six or seven States, we will have to deal with numberless bands of desperadoes, headed by such men as Moseby, Forrest, Red Jackson, and others, who know not and care not for danger and its consequences.

“I am, with great respect,

“Your obedient servant,

“W. T. SHERMAN,

“Major-General.”

On the same day I wrote and mailed to the secretary of war the following :—

"HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI,  
In the Field, Raleigh. N. C., April 25, 1865.

"HON. E. M. STANTON, *Secretary of War, Washington* :

"DEAR SIR—I have been furnished a copy of your letter of April 21st, to General Grant, signifying your disapproval of the terms on which General Johnston proposed to disarm and disperse the insurgents, on condition of amnesty, etc. I admit my folly in embracing, in a military convention, any civil matter; but, unfortunately, such is the nature of our situation, that they seem inextricably united, and I understood from you at Savannah that the financial state of the country demanded military success, and would warrant a little bending to policy.

"When I had my conference with General Johnston, I had the public example before me of General Grant's terms to Lee's army, and General Weitzel's invitation to the Virginia Legislature to assemble. I still believe the general government of the United States has made a mistake; but that is none of my business. Mine is a different task; and I had flattered myself that by four years of patient and unremitting and successful labor, I deserved no reminder such as is contained in the last paragraph of your letter to General Grant.

"You may assure the President that I heed his suggestion.

"I am, truly, etc.,

"W. T. SHERMAN,

"Major-General commanding."

The last sentence refers to the fact that General Grant had been sent to Raleigh to direct military movements. That was the first time in my life I had ever had a word of reproof from the Government of the United States, and I was naturally sensitive. But all I said to any one was to General Meigs, who came with General Grant: "It was not kind on the part of Mr. Secretary Stanton." The fact known did not gratify my military conduct. The first interview with General Johnston followed, and the terms of capitulation were agreed upon and signed, and General Grant started for Washington bearing the news.

When, on the 28th of April, I received, in the *New York Times*, the most extraordinary budget of Mr. Stanton, which for the first time startled me, I wrote to General Grant this letter:



“HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI,  
In the Field, April 28, 1865.

“LIEUT.-GENERAL U. S. GRANT, *General-in-Chief, Washington, D. C.:*

“GENERAL—Since you left me yesterday, I have seen the New York Times of the 24th inst., containing a budget of military news, authenticated by the signature of the secretary of war, which is grouped in such a way as to give very erroneous impressions. It embraces a copy of the basis of agreement between myself and General Johnston, of April 18th, with commentaries, which it will be time enough to discuss two or three years hence, after the Government has experimented a little more in the machinery by which power reaches the scattered people of the vast country known as the South. But, in the mean time, I do think that my rank (if not past services) entitle me, at least, to the respect of keeping secret what was known to none but the cabinet, until further inquiry comes to be made, instead of giving publicity to documents I never saw, and drawing inferences wide of the truth.

“I never saw, or had furnished me, a copy of Mr. Stanton's dispatch to you of the 3d of March, nor did Mr. Stanton, or any human being, ever convey to me its substance, or any thing like it; but, on the contrary, I had seen General Weitzel's in relation to the Virginia Legislature, made in Mr. Lincoln's very person, and had failed to discover any other official hints of the plan of reconstruction, or any idea calculated to allay the fears of the people of the South, after the destruction of their armies and civil authorities would leave them without any government at all.

“We should not drive a people to anarchy, and it is simply impossible for one military power to waste all the masses of this unhappy country.

“I confess I did not want to drive General Johnston's army into bands of armed men, going about without purpose, and capable only of indefinite mischief.

“But you saw, on your arrival at Raleigh, that I had my armies so disposed, that his escape was only possible in a disorganized shape; and, as you did not choose to direct military operations in this quarter, I infer that you were satisfied with the military situation.

“At all events, the moment I learned, what was proper enough, the disapproval of the President, I wished in such manner to compel the surrender of Johnston's whole army on the same terms as you had prescribed to General Lee's army, when you had it surrounded, and in your absolute power.

"Mr. Stanton, in stating that my order to General Stoneman was likely to result in the escape of 'Mr. Davis to Mexico or Europe,' is in deep error.

"General Stoneman was not at Salisbury then, but had gone back to Statesville. Davis was supposed to be between us, and Stoneman was beyond him.

"By turning towards me he was approaching Davis; and, had he joined me as ordered, I then would have had a mounted force needed for that and other purposes. But even now I don't know that Mr. Stanton wants Davis caught. And as my official papers, deemed sacred, are hastily published to the world, it will be imprudent for me to state what has been done in this respect.

"As the editor of the Times has (it may be) logically and fairly drawn the inference from this singular document, that I am insubordinate, I can only deny the intention. I have never in my life questioned or disobeyed an order, though many and many a time I have risked my life, my health, and reputation in obeying orders, or even hints, to execute plans and purposes not to my liking. It is not fair to withhold from me plans and policy (if any there be), and expect me to guess at them; for facts and events appear quite different from different stand-points. For four years I have been in camp, dealing with soldiers, and I can assure you that the conclusion at which the cabinet arrived with such singular unanimity differs from mine. I have conferred freely with the best officers in this army as to the points involved in this controversy, and, strange to say, they were singularly unanimous in the other conclusion, and they will learn with pain and sorrow that I am deemed insubordinate and wanting in common sense; that I, who have labored day and night, winter and summer, for four years, and have brought an army of seventy thousand men in magnificent condition across a country deemed impassable, and placed it just where it was wanted almost on the day appointed, have brought discredit on the Government.

"I do not wish to boast of this, but I do say that it entitled me to the courtesy of being consulted before publishing to the world a proposition rightfully submitted to higher authority for adjudication, and then accompanied by statements which invited the press to be let loose on me.

"It is true that non-combatants—men who sleep in comfort and security, while we watch on the distant lines—are better able to judge than we poor soldiers, who rarely see a newspaper, hardly can hear from our families, or stop long enough to get our pay. I envy not



the task of reconstruction, and am delighted that the secretary has relieved me of it.

"As you did not undertake to assume the management of the affairs of this army, I infer that, on personal inspection, your mind arrived at a different conclusion from that of Mr. Secretary Stanton. I will therefore go and execute your orders to the conclusion, and when done, will, with intense satisfaction, leave to the civil authorities the execution of the task of which they seem to me so jealous; but, as an honest man and soldier, I invite them to follow my path, for they may see some things and hear some things that may disturb their philosophy.

"With sincere respect,

"W. T. SHERMAN,

"Major-General commanding.

"P. S.—As Mr. Stanton's singular paper has been published, I demand that this also be made public, though I am in no way responsible to the press, but to the law and my proper superiors.

"W. T. SHERMAN,

"Major-General commanding."

Since my arrival at Washington, I have learned from General Grant that this letter was received, but he preferred to withhold it until my arrival, as he knew I was making towards Washington with my army. Upon my arrival, I did not insist on its publication till it was drawn out by this inquiry. I also append here the copy of a letter from Colonel T. S. Bowers, assistant adjutant-general, asking me to modify my report as to the point of violating my truce, with my answer.

"HEADQUARTERS ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES  
Washington, May 25, 1865.

"MAJOR-GENERAL W. T. SHERMAN, *Commanding Military Division of the Mississippi:*

"General Grant directed me to call your attention to the part of your report in which the necessity of maintaining your truce at the expense of many lives is spoken of. The general thinks that in making a truce the commander of an army can control only his own army, and that the hostile general must make his own arrangements with other armies acting against him.

"While independent generals acting against a common foe would naturally act in concert, the general claims that each must be the judge of his own duty, and responsible for its execution.

"If you should wish, the report will be returned for any change you may deem best.

"Very respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"T. S. BOWERS,

"Assistant Adjutant-General."

"HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI,  
Washington, D. C., May 26, 1865.

"COL. T. S. BOWERS, *Assistant Adjutant-General, Washington, D. C.:*

"COLONEL—I had the honor to receive your letter of May 25, last evening, and I hasten to answer. I wish to precede it by renewing the assurance of my entire confidence and respect for the President and Lieutenant-General Grant, and that in all matters I will be most willing to shape my official and private conduct to suit their wishes. The past is beyond my control, and the matters embraced in the official report to which you refer are finished. It is but just the reasons that actuated me, right or wrong, should stand on record; but in all future cases, should any arise, I will respect the decisions of General Grant, though I think them wrong.

"Suppose a guard has prisoners in charge, and officers of another command should aim to rescue or kill them, is it not clear the guard must defend the prisoners as a safeguard? So jealous is the military law to protect and maintain *good faith* when pledged, that the law adjudges death, and no alternative punishment, to one who violates a safeguard in foreign ports. (See Articles of War, No. 55.) For murder, arson, treason, and the highest military crimes, the punishment prescribed by law is death, or some minor punishment; but for the violation of a "safeguard," death, and death alone, is the prescribed penalty. I instance this to illustrate how, in military stipulations to an enemy, our Government commands and enforces "good faith." In discussing the matter I would like to refer to many writers on military law, but am willing to take Halleck as the text. (See his chapter, No. 27.)

"In the very first article he states that *good faith* should always be observed between enemies in war, because when our faith has been pledged to him, so far as the promise extends, he ceases to be an



enemy. He then defines the meaning of *compacts* and *conventions*, and says they are made sometimes for a general or a partial suspension of hostilities for the "surrender of an army," etc. They may be *special*, limited to particular places or to particular forces, but of course can only bind the armies subject to the general who makes the truce, and co-extensive only with the extent of his command. This is all I ever claimed, and it clearly covers the whole case; all of North Carolina was in my immediate command, with General Schofield, its department commander, and his army present with me. I never asked the truce to have effect beyond my own territorial command. General Halleck himself, in his Order, No. 1, defines his own limits clearly enough, viz., 'Such part of North Carolina as was not occupied by the command of Major-General Sherman.' He could not pursue and cut off Johnston's retreat towards Salisbury and Charlotte without invading my command; and so patent was his purpose to defy and violate my truce, that Mr. Stanton's publication of the fact, not even yet recalled, modified, or explained, was headed, 'Sherman's truce disregarded,' that the whole world drew but one inference. It admits of no other. I never claimed that that truce bound Generals Halleck or Canby within the sphere of their respective commands as defined by themselves.

"It was a partial truce of very short duration, clearly within my limits and right, justified by events; and as in the case of prisoners in my custody, or the violation of a safeguard given by me in my own territorial limits, I am bound to maintain good faith. I prefer not to change my report, but again repeat that in all future cases I am willing to be governed by the interpretation of General Grant, although I again invite his attention to the limits of my command, and those of General Halleck at the time, and the pointed phraseology of General Halleck's dispatch to Mr. Stanton, wherein he reports that he had ordered his generals to pay no heed to *my orders* within the clearly defined area of my command.

"I am, yours,

"W. T. SHERMAN,

"Major-General U. S. A., commanding."

I now add two letters written to Mr. Stanton\* at Savannah, and the dispatch from Atlanta mentioned in the body of my testimony, with Mr. Lincoln's answer :

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\* See pages 325 and 327.

"HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI,  
In the Field, Atlanta, Ga., September 15, 1864.

"MAJOR-GENERAL HALLECK, *Washington, D. C.* :

"My report is done, and will be forwarded as soon as I get a few more of the subordinate reports. I am now awaiting a courier from General Grant. All well, and troops in fine healthy camps, and supplies coming forward finely. Governor Brown has disbanded his militia, to gather the corn and sorghum of the State. I have reason to believe that he and Stephens want to visit me, and I have sent them a hearty invitation. I will exchange two thousand prisoners with Hood, but no more.

"W. T. SHERMAN,  
"Major-General commanding."

"WASHINGTON, D. C., September 17, 1864—10 A. M.

"MAJOR-GENERAL SHERMAN :

"I feel great interest in the subjects of your dispatch mentioning corn and sorghum, and contemplate a visit to you.

"A. LINCOLN."

I have not possession here of all my official records, most of which are out West, and I have selected the above from my more recent letter-books, and I offer them to show how prompt and full have been my official reports, and how unnecessary was all the clamor made touching my action and opinions at the time the basis of agreement of April 18 was submitted to the President.