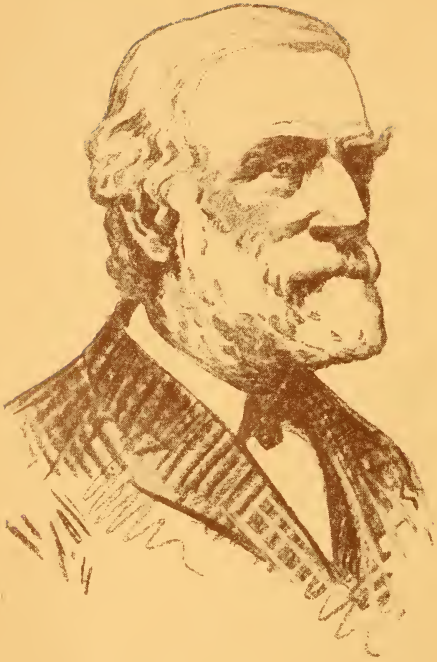
THE HEART OF LEE



THE
HEART OF LEE

By

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I

THE HEART OF CHIVALRY

Fair Land of Chivalry, the Old Domain! . . .
Yet hast thou scenes of beauty richly fraught
With all that wakes the glow of lofty thought.

—*Mrs. Hemans.*

INTO the great stone house at "Stratford" in Westmoreland, the Virginia county in which Washington was born, an infant came on the 19th of January, 1807. He appeared in no way different from nearly every other white baby boy born in the Old Dominion, but his antecedents and surroundings were unique—for an American child, at least.

"Stratford House," in whose spacious chambers this boy, named Robert

Edward Lee, first saw the light, was a combination of mansion, palace, castle and stockade. Built with the thick stone walls of a fortress, it served as a sort of palatial block-house to protect its inmates—and all the people for many miles around, if sufficient warning were given—in case of attack.

The first house, named for the ancestral estate of the Lees in England, and built by Richard, the first Lee who emigrated to Virginia, had been burned to the ground. His grandson Thomas determined to build a mansion which would "endure unto many generations." To help in doing this, Queen Caroline of England sent him, as to an absent knight, a handsome largess from her private purse. The Lees had been friends at the English court for five or six centuries. Here are a few of the noble names in the annals of chivalry:

Launcelot fought under William the

Conqueror at Hastings; Lionel went with Richard Lion-heart in the Third Crusade; and Sir Henry was made a Knight of the Garter by Queen Elizabeth.

So little Robert, when he was old enough to run about the mansion, then a century old, heard, along with ancient tales of the "Knights of the Table Round," similar stories of the doughty deeds of his own forbears. A favorite place for such recitals was the flat arbored roof, where musicians had used to play while the "First Families of Virginia" promenaded and listened, and Colonial youths made love to ladies fair.

No wonder this diminutive scion of the purest and best of English chivalry —that of Walter Raleigh and Philip Sidney—grew up to consider all that sort of thing a family affair. Still, it needed even more than the flower of

English knighthood to produce that consummate flower of the chivalry of the Old Dominion, Robert E. Lee.

The Lees were among the leaders who remained loyal to the House of Stuart through the Civil War of the "Roundheads" and "Cavaliers" of England. When Charles the First was beheaded, Colonel Richard Lee emigrated to the new province of Virginia, which Sir Walter Raleigh and other knightly adventurers had settled and named in honor of "Our Dread Souvereign Ladye, Good Queen Bess."

His son Richard, the second of the name in America, was the friend and adviser of Governor Spotswood, the great-grandfather of Anne Carter, who became the wife of Henry Lee and the mother of Robert; and this little boy of "Stratford," traced back, through her and this provincial governor, to Robert Bruce, the Scottish conqueror.

Under the roof-garden of " Stratford House " were born these heroes of Colonial days:

Richard Henry Lee, called " the Cicero of the Revolution," who made the historic motion in the Continental Congress, that all the American colonies assert their independence; Francis Lightfoot, who, with his brother Richard Henry, signed the Declaration of Independence; and Arthur, a younger brother, who represented the struggling colonies at four courts of Europe, and, with Benjamin Franklin, helped bring about the French Alliance which enabled Washington, with his worn-out army, to win the independence of the United States.

These three brothers were cousins of Henry Lee, the " Light-horse Harry " of the Revolution, the father of Robert E. Lee. It was, therefore, a matter of course that the Lees were admitted to

be leaders among "the First Families of Virginia"—that charmed circle which even the Washingtons entered through Major Lawrence Washington's marriage to a daughter of the Fairfaxes, and through Colonel George Washington's wedding the widow of the wealthiest of the Custises.

Through many intermarriages among the "F. F. V.'s," Robert E. Lee was connected with nearly all the leading families of the Old Dominion and Maryland. If any one had a right to indulge in family pride it was he—but he seemed wholly indifferent to distinctions of birth. When he was a white-haired general, writing from the front to his wife, he expressed the following wish concerning a gentleman's proposal to trace out and publish a book showing his family tree:

"I am very much obliged to Mr. Blank for the trouble he has taken in

relation to the Lee genealogy. I have no desire to have it published, and do not think it would afford sufficient interest beyond the immediate family to compensate for the expense. I think the money had better be applied to relieving the poor."

He was passionately devoted to the memory of his father, and to every member of his own family, but he thought more of the good he could do for those around him than of the adventures of those who lived centuries ago. For a modern knight, pure and simple, like Robert E. Lee to boast of his ancestry is as unthinkable to those who knew him as of Sir Galahad prating of his pedigree!

II

THE HEART OF "LIGHT-HORSE HARRY"

Thou art my father, and thy gain is mine.
—*Matthew Arnold.*

One reason assigned for Washington's partiality to Harry Lee can never be proven—that the young man was the son of his first love, a young lady older than himself, to whom he referred in a letter to another youth as "the Low-land Beauty." But the identity of the object of this boyish love is shrouded in a mystery somewhat like that which surrounds "Junius" or "the Man in the Iron Mask."

Whatever may have been the reason, it was well observed by many of General

Washington's friends that he showed a special fondness for the versatile young officer of the Revolution. To "Light-horse Harry's" bravery and brilliancy were added his rare force and skill as an author, debater and orator. These seemed to intensify the admiration and love of the fatherly General and President, as in the case of his deep affection for Alexander Hamilton which stood the long strain of that young official's temperamental touchiness and his unreasonable jealousy of Jefferson.

But Harry Lee made no such draft upon the friendship of his chief. He was an agreeable companion withal, both kind of heart and witty in conversation, which the First President enjoyed with all the gusto of a seasoned epicure. As he had no children of his own, it is rather pleasant to think of "Light-horse Harry" as the son of the lady he had loved and lost. Nor should

it excite wonder if that father-hearted, childless man recognized the sonship of young Lee as truer than that of his wife's grandson, who became his by an adoption enforced by the death of his stepson, this boy's father. Whether or not Washington could bring himself to believe it, George Washington Parke Custis was a commonplace young gentleman whose sole claim to popular interest lay in the fact that he was the adopted son of the Father of his Country, and finally inherited the larger share of the great estate of his grandfather, who was Martha Washington's first husband.

Although the master of Mount Vernon may never have acknowledged, even to himself, the true spiritual kinship of Henry Lee, that bright young officer was a man after his own heart. After being graduated from Princeton he joined the army in the Summer of 1777,

along with Lafayette, another young man Washington soon learned to love. The French marquis was also a great admirer of Harry Lee—was it not, in part at least, to gain more favor with the great commander?

Although the General's paternal interest in Lee was manifest in the field, there was no partiality shown in the matter of promotion until the young student had won his spurs. Washington did not have long to wait for this. At Valley Forge, already a captain of dragoons, Lee had also won the title which clung to him always—"Light-horse Harry."

A British foraging party of two-hundred horse attacked a stable and warehouse which Captain Lee had to guard with only a few men. There is a note of boyish exulting in his report, to the chief, of this skirmish:

"So well directed was the [our] op-

position that we drove them from the stables and saved every horse. We have got the arms, some cloaks, etc., of their wounded. Their enterprise was certainly daring, though the issue was very ignominious. I had not a soldier for each window."

Irving, in his "Life of Washington," goes on to relate:

"Washington, whose heart evidently warmed more and more to this young Virginian officer, the son of his 'Low-land Beauty,' not content with noticing his exploit in general orders, wrote a note to him on the subject, expressed with unusual familiarity and warmth. . . .

"In effect, Washington, not long afterwards, strongly recommended Lee for the command of two troops of horse, with the rank of major, to act as an independent partisan corps. . . .

"It was a high gratification to Wash-

ington when Congress made this appointment; accompanying it with encomiums on Lee as a brave and prudent officer who had rendered essential service to the country and acquired distinguished honor to himself and to the corps he commanded."

"Light-horse Harry" was one of the heroes with "Mad Anthony" Wayne at Stony Point, where he was reported for bravery with the new rank of Major. Then came Paulus Hook, where he was in command, performing a feat so daring that he received another meed of praise from Congress, by whose order a medal was struck in commemoration of his brave exploit. General Washington, proud and happy, sent his young friend another letter of congratulation.

Colonel Lee spent the later years of the war in the South, as leader of his own company, called "Lee's Legion," under the immediate command of Gen-

eral Nathanael Greene, who wrote of him to the president of Congress that, as chief commander for the Southern States, he was " more indebted to this officer than any other for the advantages gained over the enemy in the last campaign."

After the Revolution Colonel Henry Lee entered upon a political career quite as brilliant as his military achievements. He was a delegate to the convention which met to approve the Constitution, and took an active part in its deliberations. From 1792 to 1795 he was Governor of Virginia. While acting in this capacity, President Washington appointed him to lead the fifteen thousand militia sent to quell the " Whisky Insurrection " in certain counties of western Pennsylvania, and accompanied him from Philadelphia, then the national capital, to Bedford, in the southwestern part of that State.

After the First President retired to his long-yearned-for "vine-and-figtree" at Mount Vernon, ex-Governor Lee was his most frequent guest. It was observed that Harry Lee could "say things" to the ex-President which would never be tolerated from any one else. Mrs. Washington would flush and purse her lips at these liberties until she noticed, with some surprise, that "the General" did not mind them. Still, this vivacious visitor kept the good lady of Mount Vernon in a constant state of nervous excitement.

One day, at table, the host mentioned that he was in need of a span of carriage horses.

"I have a fine pair, General," Lee promptly replied, "but you cannot get them."

"Why not?" Washington asked, surprised.

"Because you will never pay more

than half price for anything, and I must have full price for my horses."

This left-handed compliment to the General's shrewdness in a horse-trade made Mrs. Washington laugh nervously. A parrot, perched near her, joined in the immoderate merriment. This set General Washington laughing too, and he responded without resenting his guest's sally:

"Ah, Lee, you *are* a funny fellow. See, that bird is laughing at you!"

Ex-Governor Lee was elected to the national House of Representatives in 1799. General Washington died in December of that year. There was a special fitness in George Washington's

"Brother at once and son"

being chosen to deliver the eulogy in honor of the Father of his Country before both Houses of Congress. The actual words which Henry Lee pro-

nounced for the first time on this great occasion were:

> "First in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his *fellow-citizens,*"

but the last word has been changed by popular authority to "countrymen."

Henry Lee first married his cousin Matilda Ludwell Lee, through whom "Stratford" came into his possession. Matilda and her children having died, he married, as his second wife, Anne Carter of "Shirley," a sightly estate on James River. Robert Edward, born in 1807, was five years old when war was declared against Great Britain, and his father was made a Major-General. But before General Henry Lee could enter this war he was badly injured while defending from an angry mob his friend who was a newspaper editor in Baltimore. So he had to go to the

West Indies in search of health instead of going again into his country's service.

In this place of his banishment, General Lee—no longer the "Light-horse" or the "Light-heart Harry" of other days—penned his "Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department."

Meanwhile he kept on writing faithfully and fondly to his wife and "the little ones at home," asking especially what his boys—Charles Carter, Sydney Smith, and Robert Edward—were doing; if they were learning to ride horseback and to shoot straight. He also tried to impress truths upon them, of religion, morality and learning. "Fame," he charged them, "in arms and art, is nought unless betrothed to virtue."

Once he wrote to his wife: "Robert was always good, and will be confirmed in his happy turn of mind by his ever-

watchful and affectionate mother. Does he strengthen his native tendency?"

After nearly five years of this sad separation, the devoted father, at last giving up hope of recovery, started home to die, as Lawrence Washington journeyed back from Barbados, sixty years before. On the way General Lee became so ill that he begged to be put ashore on Cumberland Island, off the coast of Georgia, where the family of his old friend, General Greene, still lived. The general's daughter did all she could to relieve his sufferings, which at times were so excruciating as almost to rob him of his reason.

A skillful surgeon, who was called to see him, urged him to undergo a certain operation, in the desperate hope of saving his life. General Henry Lee's answer was an illustration of the "ruling passion strong in death:"

"My dear sir, were the great Wash-

ington alive and here, joining you in advocating it, I would still resist!"

He did not live long after this. "Light-horse Harry" was denied even the boon of gathering his family around his dying bed. In almost his last utterance he breathed the dear name of Washington. He was buried in the garden near the grave of General Greene. His son Robert was only eleven, the age of little George Washington when he lost his father, and was left to be the stand-by "of his mother, and she was a widow."

III

HIS MOTHER'S SON

With a hand as gentle as woman's.
—*Longfellow.*

Because of the frequent intermarriages among the "First Families," most of the "gentry" of the Old Dominion were so related that "a Virginia cousin" became the common phrase for a distant connection. Through this custom the people of influence in the State were merged into a great family, so that the initials "F. F. V." might have stood for the one First Family of Virginia. Of the first five Presidents of the United States, four of them—Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Monroe—all resided in Virginia, within driving distance of one another!

Therefore, Virginia had a certain right to ask herself:

"Was not the Father of his Country and leading Federalist one of US? And the original Democrat with his 'Jeffersonian Simplicity'—was he not ours? Who was 'the Father of the Constitution' but our 'great, little Madison?' And James Monroe—did he not absorb the Monroe Doctrine, of 'America for Americans!' from the very breast of Mother Virginia?"

Then why should not the Mother of Presidents and the Father of his Country be conscious of a good claim to be both head and heart of the United States of America?

On all these accounts "Old Virginia" considered herself the organizer and builder, as well as the founder of the nation, by a hereditary, divine and constitutional right.

When Robert E. Lee was born into

this great Virginia family, Thomas Jefferson of "Monticello" occupied the President's chair. James Madison of "Montpellier" and James Monroe of "Oak Hill"—all nearer together than "Stratford," his father's estate, and "Shirley," his mother's home—were yet to take the helm of state and be among his earlier recollections. Robert was only five when the War of 1812 was declared. As soon as he could understand, he heard British infringements on American rights discussed with deep earnestness, and often with bitterness, for the Second War for Independence was but the continuing of the old struggle for liberty. "Boarding our ships and impressing sailors into the service of England, to make them help fight her battles with Napoleon, is as wicked and unlawful as to break in and rob our homes," they said in his hearing—"for a man's house is his castle!"

" Stratford House " was filled with family portraits and Colonial furniture, each having its own history and significance. The servants loved to take the dear, earnest little fellow up to the roof, and sit under one of the canopies there to tell him about all the brave gentlemen who were " raised on the place," while the boy's father told him of the noble knights, " without fear and without reproach," who bore the name of Lee, with the banner of the Cross, and waged war against the Turk, to wrest from him the Holy Sepulchre.

Much as the tales of Christian chivalry appealed to the little boy, he liked still better to hear of the exploits of his own handsome father and his cousin Richard Henry, with Washington, in the Revolution.

When Robert was four, General Henry Lee removed to Alexandria, between Mount Vernon and the national

capital, to educate his growing children. Here the family attended old Christ Church, held doubly sacred because Washington had worshiped there. Besides returning often to "Stratford," the Lee boy sometimes went with his mother to visit Grandfather Carter at "Shirley."

After General Henry Lee had gone to the West Indies, hoping against hope, to recover his health, the lad's heart followed the absent father, alone in a distant land. This love for his father and his boyish devotion to Virginia's greatest son, Washington, were soon blended into a passionate patriotism as the devout lad grew to manhood. All this, in its fervent intensity, was poured out upon his native State, of which his father had been a soldier, leader, statesman and governor—especially after that sainted exemplar had taken his journey to —

"The undiscover'd country from whose
bourn
No traveler returns."

When the tender letters ceased to come, and the little ones were told, in a solemn hush, that they could never see their blessèd father's face again, eleven-year-old Robert took it upon himself to comfort and care for his invalid mother. One of the cousins related of him about this time:

"I remember Robert well as a boy at school to Mr. Leary at the Alexandria Academy, and afterward at the school of Mr. Hallowell, when his mother lived next door. I recollect his correct deportment at school and elsewhere, and his attention to his studies.

"What impressed me most in my youthful days was his devotion to his mother, who was for many years an invalid. . . . He was her housekeeper, relieved her of all domestic

cares, looked after the horses, rode out in the carriage with her, and did the marketing."

Another cousin told of young Robert while he was going to school next door, hoping to fit himself, if possible, to enter West Point:

"When he was going to Mr. Hallowell's school he would come out at twelve o'clock, have their carriage gotten, and go with his mother to ride, doing and saying everything to amuse her. When she was sick in bed, he mixed every dose of medicine she took, and nursed her night and day."

Robert was his mother's fourth child. His eldest brother, named Charles Carter, for his mother's father, was at Harvard College. Sydney Smith Lee was in the Naval Academy at Annapolis. Anne, the sister older than himself, was already a partial invalid, and away from home much of the time.

The youngest child, Mildred, was too small to be of assistance to him.

As the handsome youth grew taller and stronger, his mother became more feeble and helpless. Most of his time out of school was devoted to her. The neighbors used to tell how he carried her in his arms to and from the old-fashioned family coach. Having placed her within, he arranged the cushions—always chatting gaily and doing his best to cheer and entertain her. Thus Robert became almost his mother's only happiness.

Feeling that the family could not afford to let him go to college, as his brother Carter had done, and since Smith was now in the Navy, Robert determined to be a soldier, like his father and the venerated Washington. Carter was already a practising lawyer, so a friend of the family remarked that Mrs. Lee should be proud and happy to have

one son in the State, one in the Navy, and the third in the Army.

The feeble, dependent mother was too unselfish to wish to spoil her noble son's career, so she encouraged him in his ambition to be like his brave father; then he took the necessary steps for entrance at the United States Military Academy.

When her tall stand-by had gone away to the West Point Academy, the heroic little mother exclaimed, with a hopeless sigh:

"How *can* I do without Robert? He is both son and daughter to me!"

IV

CADET TO CAPTAIN

The sex was ever to a soldier kind.
—*Pope.*

THE youth of eighteen who registered at West Point Military Academy in the Summer of 1825 had—thanks to his own ambition and thoroughness—more than usual preparation. The entrance requirements were quite simple, hardly more than "Reading, Writing and Arithmetic," but he had studied Latin and Greek, besides mathematics and drawing.

Mr. Benjamin Hallowell, the strict Quaker master who had conducted Robert Lee's recent studies, has left on

record that " he was never behindhand in his studies, never failed in a single recitation, was perfectly observant of the regulations of the institution; was gentlemanly, unobtrusive, and respectful in his deportment to teachers and fellow-students."

Also that he did with " a finish and neatness everything he undertook. One of the branches of mathematics he studied with me was conic sections, in which some of the diagrams were very complicated. He drew the diagram on a slate; and although he well knew the one he was drawing would have to be removed to make room for another, he drew each one with as much accuracy and finish, lettering and all, as if it were to be engraved and printed."

No one realized then that this manifestation of the courteous, good-tempered young man was but the budding of genius.

At that time, drunkenness and other dissipation were found among the cadets. The story of Robert Lee's course there is one of uniformly correct deportment, for he passed through the whole four years without a single demerit. He did not drink with his friends, though nearly every one in those days thought conviviality was necessary in the society of gentlemen. He did not even smoke. When a fellow-student proposed the least infraction of the rules, he declined with a smile so frank and kind as to disarm the natural resentment which such refusals generally arouse among young men.

Robert E. Lee's conduct at the Military Academy was so exemplary that if it had not revealed the heart of a true gentleman, other young men would have shrugged and called him a "prig" or a "snob"—the contemptuous epithets too often misapplied.

Though there was no trace of superciliousness in his manner, Cadet Lee did not wear his heart on his sleeve. Joseph E. Johnston, afterward the great Confederate general, said of their life together at West Point:

"We had the same associates, who thought as I did, that no other youth or man so united the qualities that win warm friendship and command respect. For he was full of sympathy and kindness; genial and fond of gay conversation, and even of fun, that made him the most agreeable of companions, while the correctness of his demeanor and language, and attention to all duties, both personal and official, and a dignity as much a part of himself as the elegance of his person, gave him a superiority that every one acknowledged in his heart."

"He was the only one of all the men I have known who could laugh at the

faults and follies of others so as to make them ashamed without touching their affections."

Another West Point cadet has said of him since:

"He never 'ran the sentinel post,' did not go off the limits to the 'Benny Havens' of his day, nor put 'dummies' in his bed to deceive the officer in charge as he made his inspection after 'taps,' and at the parades stood steady in line. It was a pleasure to look down the barrel of his gun, for it was bright and clean, and its stock was rubbed so as to resemble polished mahogany."

One of Lee's few intimates at the Academy was young Jefferson Davis, with whom he was later to be so closely associated. The most popular place of "stolen waters" for the cadets was "Buttermilk Falls," about two miles away, where they used to go and indulge in certain refreshments, liquid and

otherwise, purveyed by one Benny Havens, who has become famous in the annals of West Point. Young Lee, Joseph and Albert Sidney Johnston refused to join in any of these clandestine visits to "Benny Havens, Oh"—but Jefferson Davis is said to have gone repeatedly, and to have been court-martialed once for drinking there. While trying to escape a second arrest, Cadet Davis fell over a cliff sixty feet high and was seriously hurt.

In 1828, Robert Lee took the usual vacation of several months at home. His mother had every reason to be proud of her handsome soldier boy. She must have known then that she had not long to live, but she went with him just the same to visit friends and relatives, making the most of her opportunities. This mid-course furlough is the happiest time in the life of many a cadet—indeed, General Grant said,

after he had been President of the United States, that this visit to his home and friends, from West Point, was the best time he ever enjoyed, because of the interest every one, especially the young ladies, take in youth dressed in gold lace and gilt buttons. A cousin of young Lee's describes his appearance during this furlough:

"The first time I remember being struck with his manly beauty and attractiveness of manner was when he returned home during his course at West Point. He came with his mother and family on a visit to my father's. He was dressed in his cadet uniform of West Point gray with bullet buttons, and every one was filled with admiration of his fine appearance and lovely manners."

Among the places visited by the young cadet was stately "Arlington," where he met the charming Miss Custis

whom he had known ever since she was a " sweet little girl." " Mary of Arlington " would have been more hard-hearted than human if she could have resisted the tender glances of this soldier " youth with his heart in his eyes "—such an earnest young man with such a full heart and such deep eyes!

Robert Lee had a special reason to remember this time as the happiest in his life, when he returned to the Military Academy for the final year, the accepted lover of the daughter of Washington's adopted son, the granddaughter of Martha Washington and sole heiress of the great Custis estates—but family and estates were of small moment in Robert Lee's eyes compared with the love of the " dearest little girl in the world."

On his return he received that coveted honor among cadets—the appointment as Adjutant of the Battalion.

His standing as a student was second in a class of forty-six.

The motto on the shield of the Academy was, "Duty, Honor, Country,"—these three, but the "greatest of these" was Duty in the eyes of Robert E. Lee—not that he loved Honor or Country less, but Duty more.

The first duty to which Lieutenant Lee was assigned was in the Engineer Corps, at Fort—usually called "Fortress"—Monroe, Virginia. Soon after his arrival there, he was summoned to "Ravensworth," a great estate in Fairfax County, where his mother lay dying. He cared for her tenderly, never leaving her bedside till the end came.

Much as he revered the memory of his father, he said, in later life, in almost the very words of Abraham Lincoln:

"All I am I owe to my mother."

Still, after both father and mother had "passed into the skies," Lieutenant

Lee did not spend his time in repining. He was already too devout a Christian to rebel against the decree of his real and loving Father above. Besides, life in him was young, and hope and faith were fresh and strong. He seemed to have developed an intenser affection for his living kindred and friends. A near relative wrote of a visit from him soon after his mother died:

"I remember being for some time with him at my grandfather Randolph's. . . . I think it was the Fall after he graduated. The house was filled with the young people of the family, of both sexes. He was very much matured since I had seen him, splendid looking, as full of fun, and particularly of teasing, as any of us.

"Although we all admired him for his remarkable beauty and attractive manners, I did not see anything in him that prepared me for his so far out-

stripping all his compeers. The first time this idea presented itself to me was after my marriage. We were all seated round the table at night, Robert reading. I looked up and my eye fell upon his face in perfect repose, and the thought at once passed through my mind:

"'You certainly look more like a great man than any one I have ever seen.'

"The same idea presented itself to me as I looked at him in Christ Church, Alexandria, during the same visit."

Robert E. Lee's past had gone with the life of his beautiful, devoted mother. His future was to be interwoven with that of Mary Custis, to whom he was married two years after his graduation, in the lordly mansion at Arlington, overlooking the Potomac and the city of Washington.

Here is the modest newspaper ac-

count of that event, on which a Sunday paper today would lavish column after column: "Married, June 30, 1831, at Arlington House, by the Rev. Mr. Keith, Lieutenant Robert E. Lee, of the United States Corps of Engineers, to Miss Mary A. R. Custis, daughter of G. W. P. Custis, Esq."

In spite of the brevity of this announcement there was a gay and brilliant company in the spacious rooms of Arlington that happy night, among the portraits of patriots and heroes, quaint Colonial furniture and other relics from Mount Vernon—of Martha Washington, the bride's great-grandmother, as well as of the Father of his Country.

It was not the fashion in those days to go away on wedding journeys, so the young bride and groom spent the rest of the lieutenant's leave of absence in nuptial festivities among their near relatives and friends. Then the happy

benedict returned to Old Point Comfort to help fortify Hampton Roads.

At the end of four years Lieutenant Lee was commissioned to aid in marking out a boundary line between Ohio and Michigan. After this he was employed as a clerk in the engineering department at Washington. He was now enabled to live at Arlington, where that courtly gentleman, his father-in-law, was glad to keep his only daughter as long as possible.

Lee was promoted to the First-Lieutenancy in 1836. During these early years of their married life three children were born. The first was named George Washington Custis Lee for his mother's father. The happy young father told of taking this baby boy out to play in the snow. The little fellow dropped behind, and Lieutenant Lee, looking back, saw him with shoulders squared and chin up, mimicking his

movements, even to stretching his little fat legs in an attempt to step in his footprints.

"When I saw this," said the fond father, "I said to myself, 'It behooves me to walk very straight, when this fellow is already following in my tracks!'"

Those were happy years in the life of the young couple. Lieutenant Lee was also fortunate in his associates in the national capital. Among the officers of his "mess" there, was a lieutenant familiarly called "Colonel" Joseph E. Johnston.

Two years later, as Captain Lee, he was ordered to St. Louis to perform a great engineering feat. The Mississippi, in its "unvexed" course, had a vexatious way of changing its channel without much warning, to the keen annoyance of those who were doing business on its banks. Just at this time

the experts apprehended that the river was about to turn aside and go through Illinois, thus leaving St. Louis and many miles of river front in Missouri high and dry.

So the little Eden at Arlington was broken up when Benedict Lee was sent to the then "Far West" to put the "Father of Waters" in a "strait-jacket!" He went right to work, but the authorities of the town, impatient at what they considered slow work, and believing the thing an impossibility, withdrew their part of the appropriation to pay for such a job. As Captain Lee had received no further instructions from the government, he kept on as though nothing had happened, saying calmly:

"They can do as they like with their own, but I was sent here to do certain work, and I shall do it."

Riots broke out in St. Louis, and a

mob of superstitious people thought that young army captain was "flying in the face of Providence" in presuming to divert the course of one of the greatest rivers in the world from the way it wanted to go. So they threatened to drive away the ridiculous captain and his crew. But the work was finished and Captain Lee was found to have rendered a great service not only to St. Louis and Missouri, but also to the whole country, by improving the navigation of the Upper Mississippi.

Lee's correspondence at this time reveals his kindness and humor. In a letter to a cousin in Alexandria, he put his son Fitzhugh, whom he had nicknamed "Rooney," against all comers in the baby race:

"I wish you could undeceive her ('my cousin Philippa') on a certain point, for, as I understand, she is laboring under a grievous error. Tell her

that it is farthest from my wish to detract from any of the little Lees, but as to her little boy being equal to 'Mr. Rooney'—it is a thing not even to be supposed, much less believed, although we live in a credulous country where people stick at nothing, from a coon story to a sea-serpent!"

To Mrs. Lee he wrote:

"You do not know how I miss you and the children, my dear Mary. In the woods I feel sympathy with the trees and birds, in whose company I take delight, but experience no pleasure in a strange crowd. I hope you are all well and will continue so; and therefore must again urge you to be very prudent and careful of those dear children. If I could only get a squeeze at that little fellow turning up his sweet mouth to 'keeze Baba!'"

Here is another letter showing the heart-hungry officer's deep love of child-

hood, though not of his own flesh and blood:

" A few evenings since, feeling lonesome, . . . I got a horse and took a ride. On returning through the lower part of the town, I saw a number of little girls all dressed up in their white frocks and pantalets, their hair plaited and tied up with ribbons, running and chasing each other in all directions. I counted twenty-three nearly the same size. As I drew up my horse to admire the spectacle, a man appeared at the door with the twenty-fourth in his arms.

" ' My friend,' said I, ' are all these your children? '

" ' Yes,' he said, ' there are nine more in the house, and this is the youngest.'

" Upon further inquiry, however, I found that they were only temporarily his, and that they had been invited to a party at his house. He said, however, he had been admiring them before I

came up, and just wished that he had a million of dollars and that they were his in reality.

"I do not think the eldest exceeded seven or eight years old. It was the prettiest sight I have seen in the West, and perhaps in my life."

Recalled to Washington in 1840, Captain Lee had two more years with his precious little family—there were four children then—Custis, Mary, Fitzhugh and Annie—before he was sent, in 1842, to Fort Hamilton, opposite Staten Island, to improve the defenses of New York Harbor. The years he spent here were memorable and happy because he was able to have his wife and children with him.

One day while crossing "the Narrows" he saved a poor little black-and-tan terrier from drowning, and took her home to the children. This dog lived long enough to show her gratitude to

the kind officer who had rescued her, by leaving him her dear little puppy, which the family named " Spec." Once after the wife and children had all gone home to Arlington for a visit, Captain Lee wrote to them from the fort:

" I am very solitary, and my only company is my dog and cats. But ' Spec ' has become so jealous now that he will hardly let me look at the cats. He seems to be afraid that I am going off from him, and never lets me stir without him. Lies down in the office from eight to four without moving. . . . I catch him sometimes sitting up looking at me so intently that I am for a moment startled."

V

IN MEXICO WITH SCOTT

Who does i' the wars more than his captain can
Becomes his captain's captain.

—*Shakespeare.*

For years Texas had been struggling for independence and separation from Mexico. Its people succeeded in electing a separate government, and as a republic it applied for admission to the United States. This roused the stronger opposition of the jealous republic of Mexico. Then came the annexation of Texas by the United States in 1845. This precipitated war with Mexico, which was declared by the United States government in May,

1846. Both commanders-in-chief in this war were Virginians. The two men, Winfield Scott and Zachary Taylor, were exactly opposite in their natures and habits. General Taylor cared little for forms and precedents. He was so blunt and impetuous in action that he was nicknamed "Old Rough-and-Ready."

General Scott was equally, if not even more, capable as a commander. He was a man of heroic size, but showed himself to be a martinet for forms and regulations. He had the eye of a matinée idol for a dramatic situation, and a self-conscious way of announcing trivial personal matters as if they concerned every one as much as himself. So they called General Scott, with all his ability and success, "Old Fuss-and-Feathers."

Lee, of course, being a successful engineer and military man, had to be

with the army of the United States when it was ready to enter Mexico from the North. This was to be the young captain's first experience in the field. While they were waiting on the border, he wrote to his wife, under date of October 11th, 1846, on the Rio Grande:

"We have met with no resistance yet. The Mexicans who were guarding the passage retired on our approach. There has been a great whetting of knives, grinding of swords, and sharpening of bayonets since we reached the river."

The father-heart dwelt ever upon those at home. He wrote to his two older sons—Custis was thirteen then, and Fitzhugh, nine—from the camp at Saltillo:

"I have frequently thought that if I had one of you on each side of me, riding on ponies, such as I could get you, I would be comparatively happy.

"I have three horses. 'Creole' is my pet; she is a golden dun, active as a deer, and carries me over all the ditches and gullies that I have met with; nor has she ever yet hesitated at anything that I have put her at; she is full-blooded and considered the prettiest thing in the army; though young, she has so far stood the campaign as well as any horses of the division."

He planned to write to his wife next day, as his Christmas celebration, but word came in the morning that the Mexicans were coming. So he wrote later:

"The troops stood to their arms and I lay on the grass with my sorrel mare saddled by my side, and telescope directed to the pass of the mountain through which the road approached. The Mexicans, however, did not make their appearance.

"Many regrets were expressed at

Santa Anna's having spoiled our Christmas dinner for which ample preparations had been made. The little roasters remained tied to the tent-pins, wondering at their deferred fate, and the headless turkeys retained their plumage unscathed. Finding the enemy did not come, preparations were again made for dinner.

" We have had many happy Christmases together. It is the first time we have been entirely separated at this holy time since our marriage. I hope it does not interfere with your happiness, surrounded as you are, by father, mother, children, and dear friends. I therefore trust you are well and happy, and that this is the last time I shall be absent from you during my life."

Referring to the black-and-tan dog he had been told was pining for his absent master, Captain Lee added:

" Can't you cure poor 'Spec?' Cheer

him up; take him to walk with you—and tell the children to cheer him up."

General Taylor practically ended the war in northern Mexico by defeating twenty thousand Mexicans with five thousand Americans at Buena Vista. This left a large contingent, including Captain Lee's, free to meet forces gathering for the southern campaign under General Scott. These met at Tampico and proceeded from there to Vera Cruz, far down on the Gulf coast, which city was chosen as the next scene of action. On his way down the coast the Captain wrote a long letter to Custis and Fitzhugh, of which this is part:

" Ship Massachusetts, off Lobos,
" February 27th, 1847.

"My dear Boys:

" There were six thousand soldiers in Tampico. . . . We only remained there one day. I have a nice

stateroom on board this ship. Joe Johnston [afterward the great Confederate general, who had been a fellow-cadet at West Point] and myself occupy it, but my poor Joe is so sick all the time, I can do nothing with him.

"I left 'Jem' to come on with the horses, as I was afraid they would not be properly cared for. . . . I took every precaution for their comfort, provided them with bran, oats, etc., and had slings made to pass under them and be attached to the coverings above, so that, if in the heavy sea they should slip or be thrown off their feet, they would not fall. . . .

"I do not think we shall remain here more than one day longer. General Worth's and General Twiggs's divisions have arrived, which include the regulars, and I suppose the volunteers will be coming every day. We shall probably go on the first [March] down the coast, select a place for debarkation, and make all the arrangements preparatory to the arrival of the troops. I shall have plenty to do there, and am anxious for

the time to come, and hope all may be successful." . . .

At Vera Cruz Captain Robert E. Lee became a member of "the Little Cabinet," the name given to his staff and advisers by General Scott, who made no secret that he expected that a man of such stately presence and heroic achievements must in time be elected by a grateful people, President of the United States. Among those around him were Lieutenants George B. McClellan, also of the Engineer Corps, and P. G. T. Beauregard, and many other officers who became great generals at a later day.

First they determined to lay siege to the city, and Engineer Lee was busy, day and night, for weeks. Then a joint attack upon it by the Army and Navy was decided upon. It was during these preparations that Robert met his

brother, Sydney Smith Lee of the Navy. Of the bombardment which followed, the Captain wrote, referring to his brother's conduct in it:

"The first day this battery opened, Smith served one of the guns. I had constructed the battery and was there to direct the fire. No matter where I turned, my eyes reverted to him, and I stood by his gun whenever I was not wanted elsewhere.

"Oh, I felt awfully, and at a loss what I should have done had he been cut down before me! I thank God he was saved. He preserved his usual cheerfulness, and I could see his white teeth through all the smoke and din of the fire. I had placed three 32 and three 68-pound guns in position. . . . The fire was terrific and the shells thrown from our battery were constant and regular discharges, so beautiful in their flight and so destructive in their

fall. It was awful! My heart bled for the inhabitants. The soldiers I did not care so much for, but it was terrible to think of the women and children."

From this vicinity he wrote home about "Spec," the forlorn rat-terrier:

"Tell him I wish he was here with me. He would have been of great service in telling me when I was coming upon the Mexicans. When I was reconnoitering around Vera Cruz, their dogs frequently told me, by barking, when I was approaching them too nearly."

After the taking of Vera Cruz, General Scott began the invasion of the country—to "conquer a peace," as he pompously announced, "in the Halls of the Montezumas." But at Cerro Gordo the Americans were met by Santa Anna, with his Mexican hosts. Scott's report of the battle which ensued contained this honorable mention:

"Reconnaissances were pushed in search of some practicable route other than the winding, zigzag road among the spurs of the mountains, with heavy [Mexican] batteries at every turn. The reconnaissances were conducted with vigor under Captain Lee at the head of a body of pioneers, and at the end of the third day a possible way for light batteries was accomplished without alarming the enemy, giving the possibility of turning the extreme left of his line of defense and capturing his whole army, except the reserve that lay a mile or two up the road. Santa Anna said that he had not believed that a goat could have approached him in that direction. Hence the surprise and the results were the greater."

After this battle Lee wrote to his eldest son:

"I thought of you, my dear Custis, on the 18th [April, 1847] in the battle,

and wondered, when the musket balls and grape were whistling over my head in a perfect shower, where I could put you, if with me, to be safe. I was truly thankful you were at school, I hope learning to be good and wise. You have no idea what a horrible place a battlefield is!"

From Cerro Gordo General Scott advanced toward the Mexican capital, stopping to win battles at Contreras, Churubusco, Molino del Rey and Chapultepec. At Contreras there was a great lava-bed called the Pedregal. This has been described as "a vast surface of volcanic rocks and scoriæ, pathless, precipitous, broken into every possible form, presenting sharp ridges and deep fissures, exceedingly difficult for the passage, even in the daylight, for infantry, cavalry or single horsemen."

This great tract was flanked by a swamp in such a way as to form what

the Mexicans believed to be an impenetrable wall in front of Contreras, which was defended, also, by their army. General Scott detailed seven officers to see if the Pedregal could be crossed at night. They reported that the place was absolutely impassable, night or day.

Then Captain Lee offered to lead a detachment across that gruesome waste. This he did, through storm and darkness, "without light, without a companion or guide—scarcely a step could be taken without fear of death."

Some time afterward, General Scott had occasion to testify of this exploit:

"Captain Lee, of the Engineers, came to me from Contreras with a message. . . . I think about the same time—midnight—he, having passed over the difficult ground by daylight, found it just possible to return on foot and alone to St. Augustine in the dark—

the greatest feat of physical and moral courage performed by any individual, to my knowledge, pending the campaign."

It would seem that nearly every report of the commander-in-chief in Mexico contained some allusion to Captain Lee's bravery and efficiency, showing that "he was as famous for felicitous execution as for science and daring."

The dispatch reporting the battle of Chapultepec stated that he "was constantly conspicuous, bearing important orders from me till he fainted from a wound and the loss of two nights' sleep at the batteries."

At the end of the campaign General Scott entered the beautiful City of Mexico in triumph, riding like a royal knight at the head of his army through the crowded streets to the "Halls of the Montezumas." The victorious com-

mander was not too engrossed in his own great achievements to forget to deal out well-earned praise, in the course of which he stated that his own "success in Mexico was largely due to the skill, valor and undaunted courage of Robert E. Lee, . . . the greatest military genius in America."

In six months Captain Lee had been brevet major, brevet lieutenant-colonel and brevet colonel. He could well afford, then, to write to the once unfavorable George Washington Parke Custis, who had expressed a fear that his son-in-law might not receive preferments in proportion to his merits:

"I hope my friends will give themselves no annoyance on my account, or any concern about the distribution of favors. I know how those things are awarded at Washington, and how the President will be besieged by clamorous claimants. I do not wish to be num-

bered among them. Such as he can conscientiously bestow I shall gratefully receive, and have no doubt that those will exceed my deserts."

A bitter disappointment awaited poor, vain, kind-hearted General Scott. Instead of being nominated for the presidency, he was haled before an unfriendly " court of inquiry "—for political effect. Colonel Lee wrote of this indignity to his brother Smith:

" General Scott, whose skill and service have crushed the enemy and conquered a peace, can now be dismissed and turned out as an old horse to die! "

It was " Old Rough-and-Ready," after all, who was rewarded, against his own wish, with the presidency of the United States of America, and " Old Fuss-and-Feathers," who so ardently desired and expected it, was treated with derision by the ungrateful people

of the country. This was not a mere matter of political intrigue, but of nicknames. For General Scott really had greater ability than General Taylor.

There was a long wait, after the surrender of the Mexican capital, before the terms of peace could be agreed upon so that the army could be permitted to go home. Colonel Lee, much as he yearned to be with his family after years of separation, made the best of this delay, and improved the time in every way he could. In the long list of now-familiar names of those who won their spurs in Mexico were:

Albert Sidney Johnston, with a Texas regiment; Braxton Bragg, Richard S. Ewell, Edward Kirby Smith, A. P. and D. H. Hill, Jubal Early, Simon B. Buckner, James Longstreet, and, last, but by no means least, Jefferson Davis, who was in command of a Mississippi regiment. He married a

daughter of General, afterward President, Zachary Taylor.

Joseph E. Johnston wrote of the tender heart of his friend Lee:

"I saw strong evidence of the sympathy of his nature the morning after the first engagement of our troops in the valley of Mexico. I had lost a cherished young relative in that action. Meeting me, he suddenly saw in my face the effect of that loss, burst into tears, and expressed his deep sympathy in words as tenderly as his lovely wife would have done."

Colonel Robert E. Lee returned from Mexico in the Spring of 1848, at the age of forty-one, "crowned with honors and covered with brevets." In one respect, at least, his home-coming was like that of Ulysses, for he was first recognized, as he rode up to the mansion at Arlington, by his faithful dog. Poor old "Spec," an object of deep solicitude

in several of his master's letters, was almost delirious with joy, remembering his long-absent friend.

Of his home-coming Colonel Lee wrote from Arlington to his brother, now a captain in the Navy:

"Here I am, once again, my dear Smith, perfectly surrounded by Mary and her precious children, who seem to devote themselves to staring at the furrows in my face and the white hairs in my head. It is not surprising that I am hardly recognizable to some of the young eyes around me, and am perfectly unknown to the youngest. But some of the older ones gaze with astonishment and wonder at me, and seem at a loss to reconcile what they see with what was pictured in their imaginations. I find them, too, much grown, and all well, and I have much cause for thankfulness and gratitude to that good God who has once more united us."

VI

"FROM PILLAR TO POST"

The soldier's virtue rather makes choice
of loss
Than gain which darkens him.
—*Shakespeare.*

ALTHOUGH Colonel Lee had then lived out two-thirds of his days and was already laughing about his white hairs, he was still a young man, in the measure of experience. He hoped to spend the rest of his days in peace and at home, leading the agreeable, useful life of the Virginia "gentleman farmer."

Unconscious as Colonel Lee was of that likeness, there were a number of points of resemblance between himself and Colonel Washington. The real resemblances were more than such externals as that both lived in beautiful

mansions with pillared porticoes overlooking the Potomac — each sightly estate having fallen to his lot by inheritance and the marrying of a wealthy wife; or that the wife of Colonel Lee was the granddaughter of the "agreeable consort" of Colonel Washington— for the Knight of the Nineteenth Century also had won his spurs, like the hero of the Colonial period, by the loftiest physical and moral courage.

The inner likeness between the Master of Mount Vernon and the Man of Arlington shone out through their later careers, when Washington became the leader of what would have been the War of the Rebellion, *if it had failed,* while Lee became commander-in-chief of a revolution which would now be known as the Third War for American Independence if it had not proved a "Lost Cause."

Lee was as far in advance of his own

age as Franklin was of his time. In matters of the heart he was of the quality of Lincoln without the great Emancipator's eccentricity—and "saving humor." In face and form, Lee was singularly blessed, possessing the rare and manly expression of his inward beauty and grace, as he became the Sir Galahad of a higher quest than that of the Holy Grail. His heart was so clean and free from any "lurking root of bitterness" that, as he passed through the furnace of affliction, he grew more and more into the likeness of the "Man of Sorrows." If ever a son of man beheld the Son of Man in His truth and beauty, it was Robert Edward Lee. A New England writer, descended from William Bradford, the Puritan leader of Plymouth, after an earnest study into the life of "Lee the American," wrote of him: "Lee had one intimate friend—God."

It was this intimacy shining out, even in his earlier years, that made Robert's very presence, unconsciously, a convicting witness against an elderly "man of the world" whose guest he was, so that the old *roué* followed the youth to his room, confessed his sins and promised to amend his life. It was his manifest modesty in religious expression, which in another man would have sounded like cant or religiosity, that was accepted from him in sincerity and truth.

In spite of his rueful pleasantries about growing old, Colonel Lee was now in the prime and vigor of his manhood. Not quite six feet in height, he was so erect without and upright within that he seemed much taller. His wavy, jet-black hair was just tinged with gray. His deep hazel-brown eyes were bright and full of animal spirits and humor. His ruddy complexion was

indicative of correct life and good health.

As his own father had been solicitous about him, so he saw to it that his boys learned to shoot, ride, swim, and skate. He called them by pet names: Custis was "Boo," and Fitzhugh, "Rooney."

Colonel Lee was one of a commission of engineers in Florida the year following his return from Mexico, to inspect the fortifications along the coast and designate sites for new defences there.

Next he was ordered to build Fort Carroll, on Soller's Point, eight miles below Baltimore. This kept him busy three years. Then, in 1852, he was appointed Superintendent of West Point Military Academy. This position was not to his liking, but a good soldier obeys orders. During the three years of his administration there, his brother Smith's son, Fitzhugh Lee, and his own son, Custis, were among the graduates.

"Little Phil" Sheridan and "Jeb" Stuart were cadets at this time.

In 1854, while Franklin Pierce was President and Jefferson Davis Secretary of War, two regiments of cavalry were added to the regular army. Albert Sidney Johnston was made Colonel of the Second Cavalry, with Robert E. Lee, Lieutenant-Colonel. After twenty-five years in the Engineer Corps, Colonel Lee was sorry to leave a department in which he had succeeded so thoroughly—but again he obeyed orders. He was exceedingly fond of horses, and this went far to reconcile him to the change.

In the absence of Colonel Johnston, Lee took command of the Second at Louisville, Kentucky. The regiment was removed to Jefferson Barracks, a few miles below St. Louis, where, as Captain Lee, he had accomplished such marvels of river engineering. At "the

Barracks" he rendered great service in drilling and organizing recruits.

From St. Louis Lee was sent in command of a detachment to Camp Cooper on Brazos River, Texas, to keep the Indians within bounds, on a wide tract, from the Rio Grande on the south, to the Arkansas river on the north, which has been described as an "extensive territory occupied exclusively by wild animals and Comanche Indians"—ferocious beasts having been mentioned as beings superior to those horrible savages! From this point Lee wrote, on the 12th of April, 1856:

"We are on the Comanche Reserve, with the Indian camps below us on the river belonging to Catumseh's band, whom the Government is endeavoring to humanize. It will be uphill work, I fear. Catumseh has been to see me, and we have had a little talk, very tedious on his part, and very sententious

on mine. I hailed him as a friend as long as his conduct and that of his tribe deserved it, but would meet him as an enemy the first moment he failed to keep his word. The rest of the tribe (about a thousand, it is said) live north of us, and are hostile. Yesterday I returned his visit, and remained a short time at his lodge. He informed me that he had six wives. They are riding in and out of their camp all day, their paint and ornaments rendering them more hideous than nature made them, and the whole race is extremely uninteresting."

To the ordinary settler in the Southwest, calling a devilish Comanche merely " uninteresting " was " damning him with faint praise." He wrote of them that Fall:

" Those people give a world of trouble to man and horse, and, poor creatures! they are not worth it."

While out pursuing some savage renegades, he wrote to his wife:

"I hope your father continued well and enjoyed his usual celebration of the Fourth of July; mine was spent, after a march of thirty miles on one of the branches of the Brazos, under my blanket, elevated on four sticks driven in the ground, as a sunshade. The sun was fiery hot, the atmosphere like the heat of a hot-air furnace, the water salt—still my feelings for my country were as ardent, my faith in her future as true, and my hopes for her advancement as unabated as they would have been under better circumstances."

For a man who stood ready to give his life for his country, whenever it would do the least good, this was an unusual witness to his absolute loyalty. Could Nathan Hale have said more?

Lee soon had to proceed to Ringgold Barracks as a member of a court-

martial. He went there on horseback and the journey lasted twenty-seven days. On September 1st, 1856, the day he left Camp Cooper, he wrote to Mrs. Lee, whose father had been concerned about his being promoted to a brigadier-generalcy recently left vacant:

"Do not give yourself any anxiety about the appointment of the brigadier. If it is on my account that you feel an interest in it, I beg you will discard it from your thoughts. You will be sure to be disappointed; nor is it right to indulge improper and useless hopes. It, besides, looks like presumption to expect it."

While at Ringgold Barracks, he commented in a letter home on something he had read in "a stray number of the *New York Times,*" and added:

"In the same paper there are ill-natured strictures upon our regiment. They may suit themselves in everything

relating to my services, and whenever they tell me they are no longer required, they will not be obtruded on them."

From this place Colonel Lee passed on to Fort Brown, Texas. In spite of the earnest wish he had expressed years before, he had to spend Christmas away from his family. He wrote to Mrs. Lee on the 29th of December, 1856:

"The steamer has arrived from New Orleans, bringing full files of papers and general intelligence from the 'States.' I enjoyed the former very much. . . . We are now assured that the Government is in operation, and the Union in existence. Not that I had any fears to the contrary, but it is satisfactory always to have facts to go on. . . .

". . . In this enlightened age there are few, I believe, but will acknowledge that slavery is a moral and political evil in any country. . . . I think it,

however, is a greater evil to the white than to the black race. . . . Their emancipation will sooner result from a mild and melting influence than from the storms and contests of fiery controversy. . . .

" I hope you had a joyous Christmas at Arlington. . . . Mine was gratefully but silently passed. I endeavored to find some little presents for the children in the garrison, and succeeded better than I had anticipated.

" The stores are very barren of such things here, but by taking the week beforehand in my daily walks I picked up, little by little, something for all. Tell Mildred I got a beautiful Dutch doll for little Emma Jones—one of those crying babies that can open and shut their eyes, turn their head, etc. For the other two little girls, Puss Shirley and Mary Sewell, I found handsome French teapots to match cups

given them by Mrs. Waite; then by means of knives and books I satisfied the boys.

"After dispensing my presents I went to Church; the discourse was on the birth of our Saviour. It was not as simply or touchingly told as in the Bible. By previous invitation I dined with Major Thomas at 2 P. M. on roast turkey, and plum pudding. I had provided a pretty singing bird for the little girl, and passed the afternoon in my room. God bless you all."

Mrs. Lee had already become an invalid. The tender husband, thousands of miles away, attempted in a letter to comfort and advise her:

"Systematically pursue the best course to recover your lost health. I pray and trust your efforts and the prayers of those who love you may be favorably answered. Do not worry yourself about things you cannot help,

but be content to do what you can for the well-being of what properly belongs to you. Commit the rest to those who are responsible, and though it is the part of benevolence to aid all we can and sympathize with all who are in need, it is the part of wisdom to attend to our own affairs. Lay nothing too much to heart. Desire nothing too eagerly, nor think that all things can be perfectly accomplished according to our own notions."

Not liking to write gloomy letters home, on his return to Camp Cooper, Colonel Lee seized upon cats as an interesting subject, for Grandfather Custis was a connoisseur in those pets. To his youngest daughter, he wrote:

"You must be a great personage now—sixty pounds! I wish I had you here in all your ponderosity. I want to see you so much! Can you not pack up and come to the Comanche country?

I would get you such a fine cat you would never look at 'Tom' again. Did I tell you 'Jim Nooks,' Mrs. Waite's cat, was dead? He died of apoplexy. I foretold his end. Coffee and cream for breakfast, pound cake for lunch, turtle and oysters for dinner, buttered toast for tea, and Mexican rats, taken raw, for supper. He grew enormously and ended in a spasm. His beauty could not save him. . . . But I saw 'cats as is cats' in Tarassa, while the stage was changing mules. I left the wildcat on the Rio Grande. He was too savage; had grown as large as a small-sized dog, had to be caged, and would strike at anything that came within his reach. His cage had to be strong, and consequently heavy, so I could not bring it."

While he could humor his father-in-law's taste for cats, Colonel Lee wrote of other matters when occasion de-

manded. During this long absence his son Fitzhugh was graduated at Harvard, in 1857. Although "Rooney," as this young man was called at home, had not gone through West Point, General Scott secured for him an appointment as Second-Lieutenant in the army. When the father heard of this he wrote:

"You are now in a position to acquire military credit, and to prepare the road for promotion and future advancement. . . . I hope you will be always distinguished for your avoidance of the universal balm, *whiskey,* and every immorality. Nor need you fear to be ruled out of the society that indulges in it, for you will rather acquire their esteem and respect, as all venerate, if they do not practise, virtue."

A while later he wrote to the son, also in the Far West, on his way to the Pacific:

"I cannot express the gratification I

felt at the encomiums passed upon your soldiership, zeal, and devotion to your duty. But I was more pleased at the report of your conduct. That went nearer to my heart, and was of infinite comfort to me. Hold on to your purity and virtue. They will proudly sustain you in all trials and difficulties, and cheer you in every calamity.

"I was sorry to see from your letter to your mother that you smoke occasionally. It is dangerous to meddle with. You have in store much better employment for your mouth. Reserve it, 'Roon,' for its legitimate pleasure. Do not poison and corrupt it with stale vapors, or tarnish your beard with their stench."

Colonel Joseph E. Johnston, being called to Washington to take command of an expedition to Utah, Lieut.-Col. Lee was left in charge at Camp Cooper. He did not remain long chief in com-

mand, for his distinguished father-in-law died on the 10th of October, 1857. As the adopted son of the Father of his Country, he had been venerated. He was a "gentleman of the old school," wealthy and hospitable. He bequeathed to his only daughter, Mrs. Robert E. Lee, the parts of Mount Vernon left to him in Washington's will, besides properties which had descended to him from his grandfather.

Under these circumstances there seems to have been no difficulty in obtaining a long leave of absence for Colonel Lee from his Texas post.

Among Mr. Custis's bequests were a large number of slaves who were to be set free after five years from the testator's death. The mansion at Arlington was left to Mrs. Lee during her life, to go at her death to the grandfather's namesake, her eldest son, George Washington Custis Lee. With char-

acteristic devotion, the young man when he heard of it in California, before his father could prevent it, deeded that grand estate to Robert E. Lee, who promptly but delicately declined to accept the gift.

Colonel Lee remained in the East until the Summer of 1859, and then returned to his post in Texas. He was recalled from there early in October of that year. He was "relieved" in a double sense, for the duties among the Comanches were irksome, though he performed them with faithfulness and without complaint.

Directly after Colonel Lee's return to Arlington, Secretary of War Floyd called on him to lead a detachment of marines to Harper's Ferry, where John Brown, a violent abolitionist and religious fanatic who had been engaged in antislavery skirmishes and killings in Kansas, had induced a number of

negroes and white men to join him, and had taken possession of the United States Arsenal in that village, expecting slaves and antislavery whites would flock to him there.

Colonel Lee and his men surrounded the arsenal, where he found that Brown had taken several citizens of Harper's Ferry prisoners and was holding them as hostages against an attack. Lee sent Lieut. J. E. B. Stuart, who had volunteered to accompany him, with a flag of truce to call for the surrender of John Brown and his fellow conspirators.

Brown refused, and demanded permission for his men to march out with their arms. This absurd proposal was emphatically refused by Colonel Lee. Then Brown threatened to kill his prisoners, leading citizens of the town, among whom was Colonel Lewis Washington, a grand-nephew of the first President, who shouted out:

"Never mind us—*fire!*"

Stuart then raised his hand, giving the preconcerted signal, and Lee's marines rushed into the arsenal and forced the door of the engine room before Brown's men could slay the white prisoners.

In February of the next year, Colonel Lee returned again to Texas as commander and wasted many weeks trying to catch a cunning Mexican bandit, named Cortinas. While he was there it was expected that he would be elevated to the rank of Brigadier-General. Instead of this Secretary Floyd promoted his cousin, Joseph E. Johnston, over Lee and others who ranked Johnston. Colonel Lee, instead of being indignant at this, wrote:

"I rejoice in the good fortune that has come to my old friend, Joe Johnston, for while I should not like, of course, that this should be taken as a

precedent in the service, yet so far as he is concerned, he is in every way worthy of promotion, and I am glad that he has received it."

Extreme abolitionists in the North "made a martyr" of John Brown. Some of them expressed themselves in speeches which were so downright sacrilegious that they shocked and enraged the South. A novel, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," written by Harriet Beecher Stowe, had been published serially years before, in "The National Era." The story was afterward printed in book form and a half-million copies were sold. That fiction inflamed the mind of the North against slavery. This also was bitterly resented by the Southern people who believed slavery to be unjust though there were certain ministers who favored it as a "divine institution," because Noah had cursed his son Canaan, the father of the

black people of Africa. Of course, Robert E. Lee looked upon these clerical advocates of slavery with disfavor. It was such mistaken champions of slavery, in Church, in State, as well as among the people, who confused the mind of the North so that millions of people to this day believe that the South entered the Civil War to perpetuate it.

Colonel Lee, now returned in command of the Department of Texas, with headquarters at San Antonio, looked on in sorrow as he read in tardily received newspapers and the long-delayed letters of the coming break. To one of his sons he wrote from his department headquarters:

"My little personal troubles sink into insignificance when I contemplate the condition of the country, and I feel as if I could easily lay down my life for its safety. But I also feel that it would bring little good."

Not long after this, he wrote again:

"Major Nichols thinks the Union will be dissolved in six weeks. If I thought so, I would return to you now. I hope, however, the wisdom and patriotism of the country will devise some way of saving it, and that a kind Providence has not turned the current of His blessings from us. . . .

". . . Feeling the aggressions of the North, resenting their denial of equal rights to our citizens, . . . I am not pleased with the course of the 'Cotton States,' as they term themselves. In addition to their selfish, dictatorial bearing, the threats they throw out against the 'Border States,' as they call them, if they will not join them, argues little for the benefit or peace of Virginia, should she determine to coalesce with them. While I wish to do what is right, I am unwilling to do what is wrong, either at

the bidding of the South or the North."

During the years of Lee's banishment the famous "Dred Scott" decision was rendered, in 1857, by Chief-Justice Taney of the United States Supreme Court. This recognized the property rights of slaveholders as upheld by the Constitution. For the North to consider it fair to enter any Southern State, to force slaveholders to free their slaves, was considered about as rank a piece of injustice as if soldiers from Georgia or a group of Southern States, which have taken an advanced stand on prohibition, should enter Pennsylvania, with an armed force, to coerce its inhabitants to enact prohibition and practise temperance! The people of Pennsylvania would fight to the bitter end against such an invasion of their rights—not because they believe in drunkenness but in their right to deal

with such a question in their own way and at their own convenience. It may be properly objected that this comparison may not be parallel, yet by its recognition of slaves as property and of slavery as an institution, the Constitution of the United States was more in favor of the South than with the Keystone State in this assumed case.

While Lee was in Texas, Abraham Lincoln rose like Saul, head and shoulders above the people, and went up and down the State of Illinois debating with Senator Stephen A. Douglas, and proclaiming that the country could not exist, " half slave and half free." Many an enlightened Southern man agreed with Mr. Lincoln and Colonel Lee that slavery was a cancer in the body politic, but he believed in the right of the South to its own opinion as to how the black ulcer should be removed. Was he to blame for believing that this could be

done better by Southern legislation under a Constitution (like that adopted by the Confederate States) so that it should not be ruinous, nor a disaster to the country? Lincoln's election, by a minority of the Northern people, was regarded ominous to the South. The whole country began to realize that the "irrepressible conflict" was at hand.

The fires of secession were now at white heat. South Carolina went out of the Union, with colors flying, December 20th, 1860. By the 1st of February, 1861, Georgia, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, and Texas—six other States in the so-called "Cotton Belt"—had followed. On February 4th, delegates from all these States except Texas, met in Montgomery, Alabama, to organize a confederation of States. Lee's friend, Jefferson Davis of Mississippi, was elected President. These delegates be-

lieved that the Southern States were driven out of the Union by the tyranny of the North.

Instead of slavery being the "chief corner stone" of the Confederacy, these delegates recognized it as an inherited evil and provided for its gradual uprooting. It had been made a "stone of stumbling" to both North and South.

In February, 1861, Robert E. Lee was instructed to "report to the commander-in-chief at Washington." This order was significant. The Virginia Colonel reached the national capital the first of March, just in time to witness Abraham Lincoln's inauguration.

If ever a man was between two fires it was Robert E. Lee, during the six weeks he spent at home—those first crucial days of Lincoln's administration. The familiar Scriptural query and command, "Choose ye whom ye

will serve!" rang in his ears with haunting iteration.

"My country, right or wrong," was Captain Decatur's motto. "Right or wrong?" No, Duty never demands that a man do wrong.

No one can say with truth that Robert E. Lee was not a great lover of his country. His devotion to Virginia was akin to his love for his own family. His father, who had been her governor, had thus expressed the intensity of his love for her: "Virginia is my country, her will I obey, however lamentable the fate to which it may subject me."

No one was more far-seeing in those trying times than Colonel Lee. He saw that his beloved State, with Arlington, and the estates of his kindred all over the "Old Dominion," would be laid low by invasion of the armies of the North. He felt that a decision akin to that of Washington was now forced

upon him. He afterward said of this crisis:

"We had, I was satisfied, sacred principles to maintain, and rights to defend, for which we were in duty bound to do our best, even if we perished in the endeavor. . . . You cannot barter manhood for peace, nor the right of self-government for life or property. . . . Let us then oppose constancy to adversity, fortitude to suffering, and courage to danger, with the firm assurance that He who gave freedom to our fathers will bless the efforts of their children to preserve it."

"I had no other guide, nor had I any other object than the defence of those principles of American liberty upon which the constitutions of the several States were originally founded; and unless they are strictly observed, I fear there will be an end to republican government in this country."

The "Cotton States" already in secession, recognizing the leadership of Virginia, sent a commission to Richmond to urge that State to go with them and make her capital theirs.

The firing on Fort Sumter, on the 13th of April, and President Lincoln's call for troops to invade the South precipitated Virginia's action. No doubt old General Scott was aware of the struggle going on in the heart of Lee and suggested to the new administration that a word in time might save the greatest military genius of the country for Northern arms. At all events, President Lincoln sent Francis P. Blair to offer Robert E. Lee the chief command of the United States Army, thinking this would appeal to his ambition as well as the common instinct of self-preservation.

But Colonel Lee replied simply to Mr. Blair: "If I owned four million

slaves, I would cheerfully sacrifice them to the preservation of the Union, but to lift my hand against my own State and people is impossible."

Blair reported his failure to tempt Lee, but General Scott could not give it up yet. He seized upon an occasion to persuade his former friend to accept the highly flattering offer. Colonel Lee, though he saw rule on one hand and ruin on the other, replied to his old general that he must resign:

"I am compelled to; I cannot consult my own feelings in the matter."

Virginia, on the 17th of April, passed the ordinance of secession. The interview with Scott was on the 18th. All that day and the next—the day the Massachusetts troops passed through Baltimore on their way to invade the Southern States, of which Virginia would be the first to be attacked—Robert E. Lee pondered over the step

which he feared was inevitable. If he could not consult his ambition, his financial welfare, or even his personal preference, what *could* he consider?

"*Duty,* then, is the *sublimest word in our language,*" he had written to his own son. Duty to what—to whom? He went up to his room and walked the floor for hours. The duty to his family was plain. The duty to his State—that larger family embracing his kindred, the family traditions, was not that the higher obligation? . . .

Soldiers were already on their way from the North. The President had called for them to march against the South. They would begin to attack, burn, frighten, insult in Virginia—and Arlington, his own home, would be a "shining mark" singled out for bayonet and torch. Should he—could he—lead such men in an invasion of his native State? They might spare

Arlington and Stratford House for his sake, if he were their commander-in-chief. And "White House" on the Pamunkey, one of the homes of his wife, where George and Martha Washington were married—they might let that house stand for its century-old associations. But there were the homes associated with the memory of his mother—"Shirley," where she was born, "Ravensworth," where she died—and the estates of his kindred, neighbors and friends—could he lead a Northern army to drive out his own people and destroy their homes? Monstrous! Did the invaders' uniforms make their quarrel just? If a squad of police turned housebreakers should he give them right of way in his own house?

Yes, the State is greater than the family. He had no right to save himself and his, and betray the State. But the whole Country—is that not, in the

same way, greater than the State? "Ay, there's the rub!" . . .

But that "Rail-Splitter" with the motley crew he called his Cabinet, backed by abolitionists and other haters of the South—did they constitute the country of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and many other Fathers—his Country? "No, a thousand times no!"

It would do no good to die for such. But his blessed little invalid wife, his darling children. What kind of a man would he be not to stand up for and defend them? Were not the other wives and children of Virginia—of the whole South—just as dear to their husbands and fathers and friends?

There was a long silence. Then a pleading voice was heard, in prayer—God is above all—over Country, over State, over family. What does the Word say? Ah, here it is! St. Paul's

First Letter to Timothy, fifth chapter, eighth verse:

"But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

How clear it was! How could he have doubted. God had spoken peace to his soul in the stormy tempest. He went to his desk and wrote to the Hon. Simon Cameron, Secretary of War:

"SIR:—I have the honor to tender the resignation of my commission as Colonel of the First Regiment of Cavalry.

"Very respectfully,
your obedient servant,
"R. E. LEE."

Then he went down stairs, with a calm smile on his noble face, and said gently to his anxious wife:

"Well, Mary, the question is settled."

VII

LOYAL EVEN IN REBELLION

Yet I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer
Right onward.

—*Milton.*

As soon as he felt that he had reached the right decision in that upper room alone with God, Robert E. Lee's heart was fixed. He seems never again to have entertained any question as to the rightness of his course. Even after the Cause seemed lost he never wavered, but firmly said that if he had to decide again he would do exactly as he did before. But he had not decided for

any one else. Every other man's duty was to be decided in the same way, between himself and God. Yet Robert E. Lee recognized that God could speak through others. That is why he was criticized for listening to the views of subordinates in his conduct of the war. Many of them were men of God; might He not speak through them in matters not revealed to himself? Lee was different from any other general in this kind of open-mindedness. But when he was conscious of wisdom from on high he was as confident in disregarding the advice of his best generals as Napoleon Bonaparte.

He wrote that very day, April 20th, '61, to his brother in the Navy, who followed him and fought on the Confederate side:

"The question . . . has in my mind been decided. . . . I wished to wait until the ordinance of secession

should be acted upon by the people of Virginia; but war seems to have commenced, and I am liable at any time to be ordered on duty which I could not conscientiously perform. To save me from such a position, and to prevent the necessity of resigning under orders, I had to act at once and before I could see you again on the subject as I had wished.

"I am now a private citizen, and have no other ambition than to remain at home. Save in defense of my native State, I have no desire ever again to draw my sword."

The same day he wrote to General Scott: "Since my interview with you . . . I have felt that I ought not to retain my commission in the Army. I therefore tender my resignation, which I request you will recommend for acceptance. It would have been presented at once but for the struggle it

has cost me to separate myself from a service to which I have devoted all the best years of my life, and all the ability I possessed."

To his sister, Mrs. Marshall of Baltimore, who shared her husband's loyalty to the Union, he also wrote: "I am grieved at my inability to see you. I have been waiting for a 'more convenient season.' We are now in a state of war which will yield to nothing. The whole South is in a state of revolution, into which Virginia, after a long struggle, has been drawn; and though I recognize no necessity for this state of things, and would have forborne and pleaded to the end for redress of grievances, real or supposed, yet in my own person I had to meet the question whether I should take part against my native State.

"With all my devotion to the Union, and the feeling of loyalty and duty of

an American citizen, I have not been able to make up my mind to raise my hand against my relatives, my children, my home. . . .

"I know you will blame me; but you must think of me as you can, and believe that I have endeavored to do what I thought right. To show you the feeling and the struggle it has cost me, I send you a copy of my letter of resignation. I have no time for more."

It has been argued that Lee was a double-dyed traitor because he used the education he had received at West Point in his defensive struggle against the armies of the United States government. Such an idea seems not to have entered his head when he was confronted with the sublime heart-question of the Duty to God, family, State and the country, as he saw it with the eye of his sublime faith.

If he had thought merely of the pe-

cuniary cost of his education, he would have known that Virginia had paid her full quota for that. But it would never have struck Robert E. Lee that but few who have been educated at West Point have rendered so large and valuable return to the country as he had, in his twenty-five years of loyal service.

Besides, West Point could make theoretic generals, like McClellan, "and others" turned out in job lots by that Academy, but only God could build a general like Lee. Did Brienne, the French military school, produce Napoleon Bonaparte? Yet that was more likely than that West Point could have been the making of Robert E. Lee. A great general, like a great poet, "is born, not made." Lee's genius was manifest in his inspired deviations from the academic in field tactics. He was far above the military martinet, he was the man of God.

Two days later Lee left Arlington for Richmond where his presence was greatly desired. It was after a sad parting from the loved ones where he had "no other ambition" than to stay. Much as he feared the horrors of the war, he did not realize that his eyes were beholding his beautiful home for the last time. Governor Letcher of Virginia had summoned him to the State capital where he was immediately appointed Major-General and Commander-in-Chief of the forces of Virginia.

He was received by the convention still in session. The president of that body closed an address to him with these words:

"Yesterday your mother, Virginia, placed her sword in your hand, upon the implied condition, which we know you will keep to the letter and in spirit, that you will draw it only in defense,

and that you will fall with it in your hand rather than that the object for which it was placed there shall fail."

This nomination, the unanimity of it, the modesty of the recipient were almost a repetition of the honor paid to Colonel George Washington in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, on a similar occasion.

General Lee replied clearly and very briefly:

"Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Convention: Profoundly impressed with the solemnity of the occasion, for which I must say I was not prepared, I accept the position assigned me by your partiality. I would have much preferred that your choice had fallen upon an abler man.

"Trusting in Almighty God, and an approving conscience, and the aid of my fellow-citizens, I devote myself to the

service of my native State, in whose behalf alone will I ever again draw my sword."

Alexander H. Stephens, Vice-President of the newly formed Confederacy, described him as he appeared on this occasion:

"As he stood there, fresh and ruddy as a David from the sheepfold, in the prime of his manly beauty, and the embodiment of a line of heroic and patriotic fathers, and worthy mothers, it was thus I first saw Robert E. Lee.

"I had preconceived ideas of the rough soldier with no time for the graces of life, and by companionship almost compelled to the vices of his profession. I did not know then that he used no stimulants, was free even from the use of tobacco, and that he was absolutely stainless in his private life. I did not know then, as I do now, that he had been a model youth and

young man; but I had before me the most manly and entire gentleman I ever saw."

Instead of feeling any elation over the honors conferred upon him by the State, or recognizing any approval but that of Heaven, Lee sent this message to his eldest son:

"Tell Custis he must consult his own judgment, reason and conscience as to the course he may take. I do not wish him to be guided by my wishes or example. If I have done wrong, let him do better. The present is a momentous question which every man must settle for himself and upon principle."

At other times he had told his boy: "There is a true glory and a true honor, the glory of duty done; and the honor of the integrity of principle." . . . "I know that wherever you are placed you will do your duty. That is all the pleasure, all the comfort,

all the glory we can enjoy in this world."

The letters of the anxious husband reveal that he knew, in his heart of hearts, that the struggle would be fearful and long. During the first week after leaving Arlington he wrote to Mrs. Lee that he was " glad to hear all is well and as yet peaceful. I fear the latter state will not continue long. I think, therefore, you had better prepare all things for removal from Arlington—that is, plate, pictures, etc., and be prepared at any moment. Where to go is the difficulty.

" When the war commences no place will be exempt, in my opinion; indeed, all the avenues into the State will be the scenes of military operations. I wrote to Robert that I could not consent to take boys from their schools and young men from their colleges, and put them in the ranks at the beginning of

the war, when they are not needed. The war may last ten years. Where are our ranks to be filled from then?"

A few days later he repeated the warning to his wife:

"I am very anxious about you. You have to move, and make arrangements to go to some point of safety which you must select. . . . War is inevitable and there is no telling when it will burst around you. Virginia yesterday, I understand, joined the Confederate States. What policy they may adopt I cannot conjecture."

Still the distracted wife could not bear to leave. Her husband wrote again on the 8th of May from Richmond: "I received yesterday your letter of the 5th. I grieve at the anxiety that drives you from your home. I can appreciate your feelings on the occasion, and pray that you may receive comfort and strength in the

difficulties that surround you. When I reflect upon the calamity pending over the country, my own sorrows sink into insignificance."

Five days later he wrote her again: "Do not put faith in rumors of adjustment. I see no prospect for it. It cannot be while passions on both sides are so infuriated. Make your plans for several years of war. . . . I agree with you in thinking that the inflammatory articles in the papers do us much harm. I object particularly to those in Southern papers, as I wish them to take a firm, dignified course, free from bravado and boasting. The times are indeed calamitous. The brightness of God's countenance seems turned from us. . . . It may not always be so dark, and He may in time pardon our sins and take us under His protection."

June 9th he wrote to her again informing her of the removal of the Con-

federate capital from Montgomery to Richmond: "You may be aware that the Confederate government is established here. Yesterday I turned over to it the military and naval forces of the State, in accordance with the proclamation of the governor, under an agreement between the State and the Confederate States. I do not know what my position will be. I should like to retire to private life, so that I could be with you and the children, but if I can be of service to the State or her cause, I must continue. Mr. Davis and all his Cabinet are here."

On the 24th of May, about a month after Lee left home, detachments of the Northern army occupied the heights about Washington.

General McDowell, in command, wrote to Mrs. Lee, and treated the family with the highest courtesy, only regretting the military measures which

required the temporary appropriation of Arlington as headquarters. Later, in the war, after General Lee came to be considered an arch-rebel, Arlington was looted and Washington relics and other articles were carried off and kept in one of the government departments in the capital, and the beautiful estate, built by Washington's adopted son, was turned into a soldiers' cemetery.

Mrs. Lee clung to her home, soon to belong to her eldest son who bore her father's name, with the heroic devotion of a true wife and mother, but she soon had the deep sorrow of parting with it forever. She visited relatives at "Ravensworth" before retiring to "White House," her estate on the Pamunkey, where Washington had wooed and wed her grandmother.

Virginia soon became the stamping-ground of the awful game of "red-and-

black," and Mrs. Lee was forced even to leave the home of the Washingtons at the mercy of the enemy. She had fastened on the front door of "White House" this placard:

> "Northern Soldiers Who Profess to Reverence Washington: Forbear to desecrate the home of his first married life—the property of his wife, now owned by her descendants.
>
> (Signed) *"A granddaughter of Mrs. Washington."*

General McClellan appropriated "White House" for his headquarters, and one of his staff wrote under that war-hunted woman's appeal:

"A Northern officer has protected your property in sight of the enemy." But Mary Custis Lee had bitter occasion to reflect that —

"An habitation giddy and unsure
Hath he that buildeth on the vulgar heart."

After McClellan changed his base of operations, some one burned that historic house!

General Lee may have comforted himself with the Scripture that "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel," and mingled with his sorrow for his wife the sincere compassion of his heart for those wicked enough to wish to do a deed like that. He was too magnanimous to blame such an act upon the North, or hold it against General McClellan.

After turning over his command to the Confederacy, Lee remained in Richmond, with the courtesy title of Brigadier-General, then the highest rank in the new Confederate service. He continued his labors, through his devotion to President Davis, as per-

sonal adviser, while preparing Southern men for the defense of their homes and States. A friend reported of his work up to the last of May—five weeks after taking command of the Virginia forces:

"Lee had organized, equipped, and sent to the field more than thirty thousand men, and various regiments were in a forward state of preparation."

On the 28th of May his duties took him up to Manassas, where the battles of Bull Run were fought later. Being within a few miles of "Ravensworth," where his mother died, and where his wife was then staying, he wrote a note to her in which he showed his delicate consideration for those under whose roof his family had found a brief shelter:

"I reached here, dearest Mary, this afternoon. I am very much occupied in examining matters, and have to go out to look over the ground. Cousin

John tempts me strongly to go down, but I never visit, for many reasons. If for no other, to prevent compromising the house, for my visit would certainly be known. . . .

"I am decidedly of the opinion that it would be better for you to leave, on your account and Cousin Anna's. . . . If you prefer, go to Richmond. . . . Otherwise, go to the upper country. . . . I fear I cannot be with you anywhere."

How well this military "power behind the throne," and Mentor of generals in command, did his work was soon demonstrated at Manassas, where, in what is known at the North as "the First Battle of Bull Run," Beauregard—on a very hot day, July 21st, 1861—drove the Federals under McDowell back to Washington.

It is stated that the reason the Confederates failed to follow up their vic-

tory and capture Washington when they might have done so, was because, at this time, the Southern leaders were fighting only in defense of their rights and homes.

Soon after the battle of Manassas, General Lee wrote:

" It was indeed a glorious victory and has lightened the pressure on us amazingly. Do not grieve for the brave dead, but sorrow for those left behind—friends, relatives and families. The former are at rest; the latter must suffer. The battle will be repeated there in greater force. I hope God will again smile on us and strengthen our hearts and arms. I wished to participate in the former struggle, and am mortified at my absence. But the President thought it more important that I should be here.

" I could not have done as well as has been done, but I could have helped and

taken part in a struggle for my home and neighborhood. So the work is done, I care not by whom it is done. I leave tomorrow for the army in western Virginia."

In that part of the Old Dominion many of the inhabitants were in sympathy with the North and therefore aided the invaders, commanded by "Little Mac," as General George B. McClellan was called.

Soon after his arrival General Lee wrote from Valley Mountain, September 1st, 1861, to his wife:

"We have had a great deal of sickness among the soldiers, and those now on the sick list would form an army. The measles is still among them, but I hope is dying out. The constant cold rains, mud, etc., with no shelter or tents, have aggravated it. All these drawbacks, with impassable roads, have paralyzed our efforts."

Two weeks later, he wrote again: "I had hoped to surprise the enemy's works on the morning of the 12th, both at Cheat Mountain and on Valley River. I had taken every precaution to insure success, and counted on it; but the Ruler of the Universe willed otherwise, and sent a storm to disconcert the well-laid plan. We are no worse off now than before, except for the disclosure of our plan. . . .

"We met with one heavy loss which grieves me deeply: Colonel Washington accompanied Fitzhugh [their son] on a reconnoitering expedition. . . . The first they knew there was a volley from a concealed party within a few yards of them. Three balls passed through the Colonel's body, three struck his horse, and the horse of one of the men was killed. Fitz mounted the Colonel's horse and brought him off. I am much grieved."

A quarrel between two commanders in this campaign must have discouraged Lee more than the stormy elements and bottomless mud. Winter came on and put an end to the work, and the Confederate government decided to abandon that region. The Union people there soon withdrew and formed the State of West Virginia.

The newspapers attacked Lee as an unsuccessful general, greatly overrated because of his "historical name," "family connections" and "showy presence." They sneered at his "West Point tactics," nicknamed him "Evacuating Lee," and said all he knew was to "dig entrenchments."

Lee bore all these unjust taunts in silence. He could never defend himself, especially at another's expense. The only selfishness he ever betrayed was in taking blame belonging to others! President Davis afterward de-

scribed the baffled, abused officer's return: "Lee came back, carrying the weight of defeat, and unappreciated by the people whom he served, for they could not know, as I knew, that, if his orders and plans had been carried out, the result would have been victory rather than defeat. . . .

"Yet through all this, with a magnanimity rarely equaled, he stood in silence without defending himself or allowing others to defend him."

General Lee spent that Winter in the South, strengthening the defenses and fortifying the coast so that the enemy could do but little damage before the close of the war. On his return, in March, 1862, he saw his wife and daughters for the first time since he parted from them at Arlington nearly a year before. He arranged for them to follow him to Richmond as soon as McClellan's advance rendered it

necessary for them to leave their country home. He became, at once, President Davis's military adviser. He was restive and anxious for active service in the field, and it is said that he seriously considered enlisting in his son Custis's new command as a " high private."

No sooner had General Lee returned to Richmond, than his youngest son, Robert Junior, determined to leave the University and enter the service as a private soldier. The father consented to the inevitable, and wrote to the boy's mother:

" I went with him to get his overcoat, blankets, etc. . . . God grant that it may be for his good. I told him of the exemption granted by the Secretary of War to the professors and students of the University, but he expressed no desire to take advantage of it. . . . I hope our son will make a good soldier."

After the disastrous Northern defeat at the first battle of Manassas, (Bull Run) President Lincoln, finding 75,000 soldiers wholly inadequate, issued a call for 500,000 men to carry on the war in the South. These responded promptly. General McClellan was now in command of the (Federal) Army of the Potomac, and "On to Richmond" became the Northern war-cry. McClellan and an army of 150,000 men, counting available reinforcements, had come up the "Peninsula," between the York and the James rivers, to Fair Oaks and Seven Pines within a few miles of the Confederate capital on the East, so that, "oft in the stilly night," the Federal pickets could hear the bells of Richmond.

General "Joe" Johnston, who had been Lee's friend at West Point and in Mexico, was in command of the defense of Richmond in which he had been ably

seconded by General Thomas J.—popularly known as "Stonewall"—Jackson, because at Manassas, General Bee, seeing him at his post, pointed to him saying: "There stands Jackson like a stone wall!" These daring generals, with their brave soldiers, had alarmed the North to such an extent that many governors made stirring appeals for volunteers to save the country.

The battle of Seven Pines and Fair Oaks lasted several days. President Davis and his military adviser, General Lee, rode out on June 1st, 1862, to watch the fighting. About sunset that evening, General Johnston was shot out of his saddle and badly wounded. The command was assumed by General G. W. Smith, next in rank. On the way back to Richmond, Jefferson Davis, as commander-in-chief of the Confederate Army and Navy, appointed Lee commander of the Army of Northern Vir-

ginia. Lee did not assume control next day but left General Smith in actual charge, the new commander merely endorsing and carrying out his subordinate's instructions.

An officer in Longstreet's Corps asked Colonel Ives of President Davis's staff whether Lee was possessed with *audacity* enough to command in such a crisis. According to Alexander, Ives "reined up his horse, stopped in the road and said, 'Alexander, if there is one man in either army, Confederate or Federal, head and shoulders above every other in audacity, it is General Lee. His name might be *Audacity.*'"

The new commander called his generals together, and his meeting with them is said to have had somewhat the same effect as that of Napoleon with his officers at the opening of the Italian campaign. But there must have been a wide difference in one respect, for

grizzled old General Auguereau came out from the presence of young Bonaparte, hissing between his teeth: "That little devil makes me tremble all over!"

Napoleon's power over men was largely hypnotic—and his manner often insulting. He had a wonderful brain; he was a genius in strategy—but a monstrosity, rather than a man. His influence was strange and uncanny; while Lee won the hearts of his generals as a man of character and a warm-hearted Christian gentleman. Yet in military genius, in bold, creative, opportune strokes, the best military authorities declare that Robert E. Lee, more than any other English speaking general, resembled Napoleon Bonaparte. Lee was a gentleman like Washington, with a heart like Lincoln's, and a strategic brain like Napoleon's. The Southern generals soon felt that the mild-mannered gentleman before them was their

master. General "Stonewall" Jackson, Lee's second in command, soon learned to know Lee so well that when he heard his chief criticized for being too deliberate, he said: "He is cautious. He ought to be, but he is not slow. Lee is a phenomenon. He is the only man I would follow blindfold."

General Lee's youngest son, Robert E., Junior, has related an incident which occurred at this time:

"The day after the battle of Cold Harbor, during the 'Seven Days' fighting around Richmond, was the first time I met my father after I had joined General Jackson. The tremendous work 'Stonewall's' men had performed, including the rapid march from the Valley of Virginia, the short rations, the bad water, and the great heat, had begun to tell upon us, and I was pretty well worn out. On this particular morning my battery had not moved

from its bivouac ground of the previous night, but was parked in an open field all ready, waiting orders. Most of the men were lying down, many sleeping, myself among the latter number. To get some shade and be out of the way, I had crawled under a caisson, and was busy making up many lost hours of rest.

"Suddenly I was rudely awakened by a comrade prodding me with a sponge-staff and told . . . that some one wished to see me. Half awake, I staggered out, and found myself face to face with General Lee and his staff. Their fresh uniforms, bright equipments and well-groomed horses contrasted so forcibly with the war-worn appearance of our command that I was completely dazed.

"It took me a moment or two to realize what it all meant, but when I saw my father's loving eyes and smile,

it became clear to me that he had ridden by to see if I was safe and to ask how I was getting along.

"I well remember how curiously those with him gazed at me, and I am sure that it must have struck them as very odd that such a dirty, ragged, unkempt youth could have been the son of this grand-looking, victorious commander."

It must have seemed very strange, also, that the commanding general did not provide an officer's rank for his son, but Robert E. Lee knew it was kinder to the son to let him win his spurs and earn his own rank than to have premature "greatness thrust upon" him.

In the strenuous time to which Private Robert E. Lee referred, General Jackson, with only 15,000 men, had been moving with such celerity through the Shenandoah Valley that they were

called "Jackson's Foot Cavalry." They had been sent to meet three generals on their way to aid McClellan, who already had over 100,000 men ready to take Richmond. Jackson had prevented the three approaching detachments from getting together and had fought them separately, nearly destroying those contingents numbering nearly three times his own company.

Knowing McClellan's habit of overestimating the strength of the force he was to meet, Lee's first move was to send a large detachment as if to reinforce Jackson, possibly in attacking Washington, though this audacious move left him with only 25,000 men between the Federal army and Richmond.

McClellan, as Lee believed he would, telegraphed President Lincoln that Lee was confronting him with 200,000 men—about twice the number of his

own forces. A general, to be successful, must understand his antagonist and anticipate the moves he will make. So Lee's next move was to find out just the strength of McClellan's right wing and how it was disposed.

There was another well-known "Bible Christian" soldier among the men of Lee's army—General J. E. B. (nicknamed "Jeb") Stuart. He started out from Richmond, on the 11th of June, with 1,200 cavalry, and made a *détour,* breaking down the feeble opposition they encountered, destroying Federal supplies and railroad communications, besides noting the lay of the land as he hurried along. Finding that he was pursued and that he could not return by the way he had come, Stuart rode on, night and day, and made the circuit of McClellan's entire army, with the loss of only one man!

This was one of the most brilliant cav-

alry exploits in history, and it reflected as much discredit upon McClellan as credit upon "Jeb" Stuart and Lee.

The new commander, at a great loss of men, crushed McClellan's right, as he intended, in a series of engagements—from Gaines's Mill to Malvern Hill, called the "Seven Days Battles"—by which McClellan was driven down the James and found refuge within range of the Federal gunboats at Harrison's Landing.

Thus, in less than one month, General Lee had driven McClellan's great army out of his intrenchments, and, for a time at least, had raised the siege of Richmond.

Nothing but defensive warfare was expected of General Lee, but he saw that the offensive was the best defensive—and it proved "offensive" enough to the Northern people.

McClellan and his army were recalled

to Washington, for Lee's surprising evolutions had thoroughly alarmed the authorities there. Old General Halleck, now Commander-in-Chief of the Federal armies, decided to send out General Pope, who had been successful in the West, with the remnant commands of three Generals, Frémont, Banks and McDowell.

Being assigned to complete a difficult task in which so accomplished a general as McClellan had failed, seems to have turned poor Pope's head. He issued boastful orders from his "headquarters in the saddle," announcing that such obsolete terms as "base of supplies" and "lines of retreat" were to be dropped forthwith from "the bright lexicon" of his heroic deeds!

The Southern commander, amused and disgusted, wrote to Mrs. Lee: "Tell Rob to catch Pope, and also to bring his cousin, Louis Marshall, who,

I am told, is on his staff. I could forgive the latter fighting against us, but not his joining Pope!"

Young Marshall was Lee's Baltimore sister's son, whose father was a Union man. Another time, on hearing that his Federal nephew was looking wretched, he wrote: "I am sorry he is in such bad company, but I suppose he could not help it."

More than a year before, General Lee had predicted that another engagement, in greater numbers, would have to be fought at Manassas. The fulfilment of his prophecy was at hand, but instead of being detained in Richmond as before, Lee was now chief in command.

To meet Pope and his three contingents made it necessary to bring together with himself, both Jackson and Longstreet. There was much sparring and fencing, before the great engage-

ment, during which the commander on each side learned, by accident, the other's plan of campaign. Lee here resorted to Washington's strategic specialty of changing his scheme so that Pope's discovery, instead of being a revelation, proved only a delusion.

General Pope showed real ability along some lines, but seemed quite lacking in others. Instead of preventing the junction of Jackson with Longstreet by fighting them separately, he sent a dispatch to Halleck in Washington that he was going to "bag the whole crowd." Instead of keeping Lee from getting through Thoroughfare Gap, as he should have done at all hazards, he allowed him to come, cut off his "base of supplies" and the three coalesced to "bag" the bragging "bagger."

"They fought like brave men, long and well," but it was too late. Pope

battled valiantly, but he had blundered in the planning. Even while his men were following their obsolete "lines of retreat" toward Washington, Pope was telegraphing Halleck that they were winning the victory, and promising that he would do great things on the morrow. When he found no chance to fight next day, Pope retired to Washington, and resigned his command.

As after the first defeat at Bull Run President Lincoln now issued another call for volunteers, and men came marching southward from all directions to the refrain:

> "We are coming, Father Abraham,
> Three hundred thousand more."

Lee now decided to carry his offensive-defensive into the North. Virginia had been forced by position and circumstances to bear the terrible burden of

the war. So he issued a proclamation to the lovers of right and liberty in Maryland, hoping thus to gain possession of Baltimore and attack Philadelphia.

Singing "Dixie" and "Maryland, My Maryland," the Confederate army crossed into Maryland at Harper's Ferry. In that part of the State, as in Western Virginia, the Union sentiment prevailed, and the people were not inclined to rally round the banner of the "Southern Cross."

Lee's men were half-starved, barefooted and ragged. The Marylanders refused to give or even to sell them the fruits wasting on the ground, or any other provisions. To enforce his strict rule against foraging, Lee ordered a soldier shot for stealing a pig.

To feed and clothe his army, Lee detached "Stonewall" Jackson to capture Harper's Ferry, which he did after

a sharp encounter, on the 15th of September, thus procuring food, clothing and arms. What the Army of Northern Virginia most needed now was horses.

After Pope's defeat at Bull Run General McClellan was again placed in command of the Army of the Potomac, for President Lincoln hoped he might strive with " a fervor now acute " and " haply compensate for old delay."

McClellan might have intercepted Lee before he could enter Maryland. Though his progress was more rapid than ever before, he did not reach Harper's Ferry in time to save it from the Confederates. They were now well fed, clothed and equipped to meet him near Sharpsburg, at Antietam Creek, by the name of which the North called the battle that ensued.

It was a terrible conflict—the bloodi-

est for the time it lasted, according to most authorities, in the war between the States. The slain lay in long heaps of blue and gray, like windrows in a new-mown hay-field.

Young Robert Lee writes of meeting his father in this battle:

"As one of the Army of Northern Virginia, I occasionally saw the Commander-in-Chief . . . but . . . at the battle of Sharpsburg . . . our battery had been severely handled, losing many men and horses. . . .

"General Lee was dismounted. . . . I went up to my father . . . and said:

"'General, are you going to send us in again?'

"'Yes, my son,' he replied with a smile; 'you must all do what you can to drive these people back.' . . .

"He was much on foot during this part of the campaign, and moved about

either in an ambulance, or on horseback, with a courier leading his horse. An accident, which temporarily disabled him, happened before he left Virginia. He had dismounted and was sitting on a fallen log, with the bridle reins hung over his arm. 'Traveler,' becoming frightened at something, suddenly dashed away, threw him violently to the ground, spraining both hands and breaking a small bone in one of them."

It was many weeks before General Lee could use his hands, or sign his name, but he never blamed the horse, for "Traveler" and he were friends. The master would whisper affectionately in the horse's ear, and the intelligent animal would nod his head as if he understood every word.

The battle of Sharpsburg, or Antietam, was counted a triumph by the North, because Lee's invasion of Mary-

land was stopped, so President Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation, which he had held back for a Northern victory. Lee was not driven back from Maryland, however, for he waited five weeks before crossing the Potomac into Virginia, hoping that McClellan would give him another chance to fight him. But that general was either too timid or too tired. During this time "Jeb" Stuart repeated his former feat of riding around the entire Federal army, this time capturing 1,000 horses greatly needed for the Southern cavalry and artillery service. It was this raid, after getting full supplies at Harper's Ferry, that enabled Lee to win the great battles which followed.

McClellan's failure to follow up the drawn battle at Sharpsburg (Antietam) and his allowing Stuart to ride around his army again, raised popular clamor at the North to such a pitch that

he was permanently removed from the command.

General Burnside was now appointed to command the Army of the Potomac in place of McClellan. He recommended making a dash for Richmond by way of Fredericksburg.

Lee and Jackson had separated again, "Stonewall" having been sent back to the Valley of Virginia. While in camp near Winchester, an officer received his orders, in regular form, from the commander-in-chief and left to attend to their execution. Returning unexpectedly, he was surprised and pained to find General Lee kneeling beside his little bed, sobbing as if his heart were breaking, holding in his hand a letter which told of the death of his daughter Annie in North Carolina. He had received the letter earlier but controlled himself for the routine work of the morning, and now at last, he was

alone to talk it over with his most intimate Friend.

Lee, having learned of the Federal design, intrenched himself on the hills around Fredericksburg, which he defended with 78,000 men against Burnside with 116,000. The Federals began the attack on the 11th of December, 1862, and after a terrific conflict, were defeated with great loss, on the 13th. The Southern commander wrote on the 16th:

" This morning they were all safe on the north side of the Rappahannock. They went as they came—in the night. They suffered heavily as far as the battle went, but it did not go far enough to satisfy me. Our loss was comparatively slight, and I think will not exceed two thousand."

On the 25th—another Christmas away from home—Lee wrote to his daughter:

"I cannot tell you how I long to see you when a little quiet occurs. My thoughts revert to you, your sisters and your mother, my heart aches for our reunion. Your brothers I see occasionally. . . . I have no news, confined constantly to camp, and my thoughts occupied with its necessities and duties. I am, however, happy in the knowledge that General Burnside and army will not eat their promised Christmas dinner in Richmond today. . . .

"What should have become of us without His crowning help and protection? Oh, if our people would only recognize it and cease from vain self-boasting and adulation, how strong would be my belief in final success and happiness to our country!"

It was while at Fredericksburg that General Lee freed all the slaves left to him as executor of the estate of his

father-in-law, George Washington Parke Custis, as provided in the will, five years before.

General Burnside also was removed after his defeat at Fredericksburg, and General Joseph—popularly known as "Fighting Joe"—Hooker was appointed to lead the Army of the Potomac. The two armies remained facing each other all that "long and dreary Winter." On the day after Washington's Birthday, General Lee wrote home from "Camp Fredericksburg:"

"The weather is now very hard upon our poor bushmen. This morning the whole country was covered with a mantle of snow fully a foot deep, . . . and our poor horses were enveloped. We have dug them out, . . . but it will be terrible, and the roads impassable. . . . I fear our short rations for man and horse will have to be curtailed.

"Our enemies have their troubles too. They are very strong immediately in front. . . . I owe Mr. F. J. Hooker no thanks for keeping me here. He ought to have made up his mind long ago what to do."

The engagement at Chancellorsville, fought a few miles north of Fredericksburg, May 1st to 4th, 1863, was Lee's greatest battle. So great was the confidence of the David and Jonathan of the Southern Cause, by this time, that when "Stonewall" Jackson sent to Lee for orders the commanding general replied: "Say to General Jackson that he knows just as well what to do with the enemy as I do."

Captain Robert E. Lee has written of the general grief over the loss of General Jackson, who had thoughtlessly gone in front of the firing line and was shot by his own men: "The joy of our victory at Chancellorsville was sad-

dened by the death of 'Stonewall' Jackson. His loss was the heaviest blow the Army of Northern Virginia ever sustained. To Jackson's note telling him he was wounded, my father replied:

". . . 'Could I have directed events, I should have chosen, for the good of the country, to have been disabled in your stead. I congratulate you on the victory, which is due to your energy.'

"Jackson said, when this was read to him: 'Better that ten Jacksons should fall than one Lee!'

"Afterward, when it was reported that Jackson was doing well, General Lee playfully sent him word:

"'You are better off than I am, for while you have only lost your *left,* I have lost my *right* arm.'

"Then, hearing that he was worse, he said:

" 'Tell him that I am praying for him as I believe I have never prayed for myself.' "

The night after the Northern defeat at Chancellorsville was, according to President Lincoln's secretary-historians, the darkest of all in the terrible war. Abraham Lincoln spent his time walking the floor, turning his ashy-pale face toward Heaven and crying out: " O what will the country say! "

Lincoln, like Lee, was a firm believer in prayer. He was speaking a little later of an experience he had in connection with this awful defeat. After Lee started North again and was invading Pennsylvania, President Lincoln said:

" Oppressed by the gravity of our affairs, I went to my room one day, locked the door, and, getting down on my knees before Almighty God, I prayed to Him mightily for victory at

Gettysburg. I told Him this was His war, and our cause His cause, but we couldn't stand another Fredericksburg or Chancellorsville. I then and there made a solemn vow to Almighty God that if He would stand by our boys at Gettysburg I would stand by Him."

To the Army of Northern Virginia, which had now become a great praying band, the loss of "Stonewall" Jackson was more than a calamity; it was a "dispensation of Providence." This made them more anxious about their beloved commander. When General Lee would ride along in front to inspire his men they pointed their guns down and shouted—their deep bass sounding like the voice of thunder:

"Go back, Lee!" "Lee to the rear!"

They refused to fire a shot until their general had retired to a place of safety, which, to their minds, was the only

" point of vantage " for him. The Commander-in-Chief exclaimed, after one of these remonstrances: " I wish some one would tell me my proper place in battle. I am always told I should not be where I am! "

On the 9th of June, General Lee's son Fitzhugh was wounded in a skirmish; he was sent to " Hickory Hill," an estate about twenty miles from Richmond, to recover. His wound was healing when a group of Northern cavalrymen came and carried him away before the eyes of his astonished wife and relatives. He was removed, at mortal risk, to " Fortress " Monroe. General Lee wrote to his indignant and distressed daughter-in-law:

" You must not be sick while Fitzhugh is away, or he will be more restless under his separation. Get strong and hearty by his return. . . .

" I can appreciate your distress. . . .

I deeply sympathize with it, and in the lone hours of the night, I groan in sorrow at his captivity and separation from you. . . .

"I can see no harm that can result from Fitzhugh's capture, except his detention. . . . He will be in the hands of old army officers and surgeons, most of whom are men of principle and humanity. . . . Nothing would do him more harm than for him to learn that you were sick and sad. How could he get well? So cheer up and prove your fortitude and patriotism."

But the daughter-in-law grew ill and worse, and when the word came to her husband that she was dying, he applied to General Butler, now in command there, to let him go to her for forty-eight hours, for his brother Custis, of equal rank, had offered to take Fitzhugh's place as a hostage. This request was curtly denied, and the wife died

calling for her captive husband. General Lee wrote of this to his wife:

"I grieve for our lost darling as a father only can grieve for a daughter, and my sorrow is heightened by the thought of the anguish her death will cause our dear son, and the poignancy it will give to the bars of his prison."

Even then there was no word of bitterness against Butler, the most hated Northern general in all the South, because of his infamous "Woman Order," which was taken as an insult to the ladies of New Orleans, and other "high crimes and misdemeanors" in Southern eyes.

In June, 1863, Lee was again in the North, this time in Pennsylvania. In his "General Orders" issued June 27th, 1863, he announced:

"The commanding general considers that no greater disgrace could befall

the army, and through it our whole people, than the perpetration of the barbarous outrages upon the innocent and defenseless, and the wanton destruction of private property, that have marked the course of the enemy in our country. . . . It must be remembered that we make war only upon armed men, and that we cannot take vengeance for the wrongs our people have suffered without lowering ourselves in the eyes of all whose abhorrence has been excited by the atrocities of our enemy, and offending against Him to whom vengeance belongeth, and without whose favor and support our efforts must all prove in vain."

The story of Gettysburg, the greatest conflict that ever took place on the American continent, and counted among the "fifteen decisive battles" of history, is too well known to be repeated here. It was called "the high-water

mark " of the Civil War and was fought on a field containing twenty-five square miles, around Gettysburg, a little town in southwestern Pennsylvania, near the Maryland line, July 1st, 2nd and 3d, 1863.

Hooker had given place to General Meade, the fifth commanding general the North had sent against Lee, who had beaten four. Everything seemed to favor the Southern arms, except that General James Longstreet was second in command, in " Stonewall " Jackson's place. The Army of Northern Virginia never fought with more signal bravery. Pickett's charge was one of the most heroic in all history—outvying in numbers and ratio of loss the Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaklava.

The engagement was precipitated on the first day before Lee was ready, and there was much sparring and struggling for position. That night there was a

him after Montereau—"It was not *fifty* little boats I needed—only *twenty* —only *twenty!*" The difference was in Napoleon's belief in his *fate*—Lee's, in his *faith*. The Confederate general, however, admitted, privately to a friend, years after the war:

"If I had had 'Stonewall' Jackson at Gettysburg, I would have won that battle, and a victory there would have given us Washington and Baltimore, and would have established the independence of the country."

Long after the war a Northern Grand Army man told of meeting Lee in the field of Gettysburg under circumstances which revealed to him the true heart of the Southern commander:

"I had been a most bitter anti-South man, and fought and cursed the Confederates desperately. I could see nothing good in any of them. The last day of the fight I was badly wounded.

A ball shattered my left leg. I lay on the ground not far from Cemetery Ridge, and as General Lee ordered his retreat, he and his officers rode near me.

"As they came along I recognized him, and, though faint from exposure and loss of blood, I raised up my hands, looked Lee in the face, and shouted as loud as I could—'Hurrah for the Union!'

"The General heard me, looked, stopped his horse, dismounted and came toward me. I confess I at first thought he meant to kill me. But as he came up he looked down at me with such a sad expression upon his face that all fear left me, and I wondered what he was about. He extended his hand to me, grasping mine firmly, and looking right into my eyes, said:

"'My son, I hope you will soon be well.'

"If I live a thousand years I shall never forget the expression on General Lee's face. There he was, defeated, retiring from a field that had cost him and his cause almost their last hope, and yet he stopped to say words like these to a wounded soldier of the opposition who had taunted him as he passed by! As soon as the General had left me I cried myself to sleep there on the bloody ground."

That look of General Lee's produced the same result as that of his Lord who only "looked on Peter," and he

"Did quail and fall . . .
And went out speechless from the face of all
And filled the silence, weeping bitterly."

Lee's feeling toward the Boys in Blue was like that of Lincoln for Boys in Gray. He never expressed himself unkindly against the enemy. He re-

ferred to them as "those people," and the worst thing he said against them was, "I wish they would stay at home and attend to their own affairs, and let us do the same!"

No one knew better than Lee, as he marched down from Gettysburg, that the Cause was now losing ground. Could Longstreet have been right after all? Sincerely feeling that a younger man might retrieve the great loss and yet win the Cause, he tendered his resignation as commander. But President Davis refused to receive it, saying it would be an impossibility to find a general "more fit to command or who would possess more of the confidence of the army."

The brave fellows were barefooted once more, and ragged and hungry. It was a bitter experience for Lee to return to war-ridden, impoverished Virginia for another Winter. He had

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twice left that destitute State partly for the sake of its devoted people who suffered most of all in being unable to give necessary assistance to him and his gallant army.

Lee wrote to his wife and daughters to get them to double their already great exertions in knitting stockings for the men. In the winter of 1863-4 Lee and his heroes suffered similar privations to those of Washington's terrible Winter at Valley Forge. Captain Robert Lee wrote of this season of suffering: "There was at this time a great revival of religion in the army. My father became very much interested in it, and did all he could to promote in his camps all sacred exercises."

His son Fitzhugh was released in April, 1864, through an exchange of prisoners. General Grant came that Spring from his triumphs in the West—the sixth general to take com-

mand of the Army of the Potomac. His policy was to wear out and starve the Confederates. He had a splendidly equipped army, sometimes several times the number of Lee's ragged followers, and even then he kept sending for reinforcements, which were always on the way from the North.

Others than General Lee had begun to see "the beginning of the end," for the fact was, the South was not only bankrupt, but had no more men to fill up its sadly thinning ranks. Yet the Chief gave no sign of wavering.

"It becomes no man to nurse despair
But in the teeth of clenched antagonisms
To follow up the worthiest till he die."

His faith in God and the righteous Cause was still strong. It led him, like Moses, through the Wilderness against Grant, but, at the battle of Spottsylva-

nia General "Jeb" Stuart, his Chief of Cavalry, and strong brother and helper in the Christ-life, was slain.

Soon after this General Lee was seriously ill on the North Anna, and it was feared that he also might be taken from the leadership of the army. But he grew better soon and went on fighting with grim determination, his invincibles, only half as many men as Grant, making the dear-bought Federal victories cost double their own great losses. No commander ever loved his men more than Lee, and no general ever had a greater right to love them. He had said that he had the best army in the world, and it was doubly hard to lose his men now.

There was a terrible struggle around Petersburg, which Grant mined and blew up, but even in that sudden, ghastly conflict, known as the "Battle of the Crater," Grant, after many

months of preparation, lost more men than Lee. There was a long, hard siege, and the few starving Confederates were overwhelmed by a mighty army from the North.

Meanwhile Sheridan was sent into the Valley to drive out General Early, who had threatened and frightened Washington. Sheridan, carrying out Grant's policy, burned two thousand barns filled with grain, seventy mills of flour and wheat, and drove away almost all the cattle and other live stock that was left. To the poor Virginians Grant seemed a butcher, and Sheridan, a demon—especially when he reported to his chief: "A crow flying across the Valley will have to carry its own rations."

Before Petersburg fell, Lee warned President Davis to make his escape from Richmond. Even then they planned to meet farther South. But

Grant and Sheridan were able with unlimited resources to surround Lee, and the long, stern chase ended at Appomattox, about fifty miles west of Richmond.

Lee's army had been marching along Appomattox Creek like a company of military tramps, munching parched corn. Thanks to Grant and Sheridan, there was nothing to eat in the country, and now they had captured the train of supplies which had been sent, for Lee's desperate need, to Appomattox Court House.

A Southern corps commander approached his leader to intimate that it would be a physical impossibility for the men to march more than a day or two longer without rations, and suggested the terrible alternative—surrender or starve.

Robert E. Lee's deep hazel eyes flashed as he replied: "Surrender! I

have too many good fighting men for that!"

The querulous general backed out of his commander's presence abashed. Then another proposed that they disband and escape to the mountains and by guerrilla warfare, badger the enemy for many years. Lee thought of the families of his faithful Christian soldiers longing for them to come home even as his own dear ones wished to see his face again. It was a terrible alternative.

As they marched along, Lee riding "Traveler," he pondered earnestly. They saw his lips move and knew he was talking with his best Friend.

What should he do? "Is His mercy clean gone forever?" Had the "Friend that sticketh closer than a brother" failed, and forsaken him after all? Had He not promised Joshua in the wilderness—"As I was with Moses, so I will

be with thee; I will not fail thee nor forsake thee?"

The white, sad face seemed unconscious of those near him.

. . . Worse than death? Worse than a thousand deaths! How blest and happy "Jeb" and "Stonewall" are now!

"How easily I could get rid of this and be at rest! I have only to ride along the line and all would be over. But *it is our duty to live.* What will become of the women and children of the South if we are not here to protect them? . . ."

They laughed and jeered at Him, taunting Him with failure. "The servant is not greater than his Lord." . . .

He looked around. The men seemed dispirited and out of sorts. Even "Traveler" stepped less proudly than usual. He thought of the humilia-

tion—of the pride of family, of the State, and of the whole South. It had done all that it could—and lost—*failed!* . . .

"Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

* * * * * * *

They found themselves headed off—Grant had intercepted a letter sent to Davis outlining their plan of escape. They were surrounded.

Grant had written to discuss a surrender—to "save further effusion of blood," he suggested. As soon as Lee saw how completely they were hemmed in, he said:

"There is nothing left but to go to General Grant, and I would rather die a thousand deaths."

A member of his staff, unconscious of all that had been passing in the mind of the chief, exclaimed: "O General,

what will history say of the surrender of the army in the field?"

"Yes," said the General, "I know they will say hard things of us; they will not understand how we were overwhelmed by numbers, but that is not the question, Colonel. The question is, 'Is it right to surrender this army?' If it is right, then I will take all the responsibility."

Once more Robert E. Lee looked Duty squarely in the face and sent a note to General Grant asking an interview. The two commanders with their staffs, met at the McLean house at Appomattox. General Lee, the tall, handsome, courteous gentleman of the old school, wore a new gray uniform, with a handsome sword and sash. General Grant, short, thin and stooped, with a soldier's blouse and trousers spattered with mud, was without sword, sash or spurs. Noticing Lee's observance of

the military proprieties, he was at once reminded of the occasion when the two met in the Mexican war, and Colonel Lee had said to him: " I feel it my duty, Captain Grant, to call your attention to General Scott's order that an officer reporting at headquarters should be in full uniform."

General Grant told a friend afterward that he felt uncomfortable that day lest General Lee should recall that reproof and think he now intended to retaliate, so he explained that he had not seen his headquarters' baggage for several days.

But General Lee did not even remember having seen Grant in the Mexican War. As soon as the preliminary courtesies were exchanged, General Lee, perhaps reminded of Grant's stipulations of " Unconditional Surrender " to General Buckner, said:

" General, I am here to ascertain the

terms upon which you will accept the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia; but it is due to proper candor and frankness that I should say at once that I am not willing to discuss, even, any terms incompatible with preserving the honor of my army, which I am determined to maintain at all hazards, and to the last extremity."

Grant hastened to reply, " I have no idea of proposing dishonorable terms, General, but I should like to know what terms you would consider satisfactory."

The conditions were generous, as became two Christian generals—even more liberal, Lee said, than the noble terms of General Washington to Cornwallis. Nothing was said about General Lee tendering his sword. Twenty-five thousand rations were dealt out to the starving Confederates, who were told to keep their horses to use on their farms. When the good, gray general

came out to his anxious soldiers, they received him with " the rebel yell." He told them the terms were to men and friends who had met reverses like heroes. Then he added, with a slight tremor in his voice:

" Men, we have fought through the war together. I have done my best for you. My heart is too full to say more."

VIII

ON THE MOUNT

And bear unmoved the wrongs of base mankind,
The last and hardest conquest of the mind.

—*Pope.*

Robert E. Lee mounted "Traveler" and rode away down the Valley of Humiliation. His head was bowed, his eyes on the ground. His lips no longer moved. Some of his men followed him in pitying silence. As he had been thinking only of them, their sorrow now was all for him. Their hearts also were " too full to say more," but they crowded around to press his hand and flash their sympathy up into

his sorrowing face. Of those heroes and martyrs of the "Lost Cause" it is written:

"Hunger and thirst could not depress them. Cold could not chill them. Every hardship became a joke. Never was such a triumph of spirit over matter. . . . One by one Death challenged them. One by one they smiled in his grim visage and refused to be dismayed."

"Human virtue ought to be equal to human calamity," Lee himself had said. Was he not proving it now in the supreme test? But he was not thinking of himself. Is the Cause lost—the Cause he would give his life for so gladly? Had he not given a thousand lives for it in spirit? What is it his Friend is saying to him? "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Did Robert E. Lee learn, through this awful experience, that there is some-

thing better than dying for country? His patriotism had now become the Religion of Country.

The next day, April 10th, he published his last order, which in the nature of things took the form of a valedictory:

" After four years of arduous service, marked by unsurpassed courage and fortitude, the Army of Northern Virginia has been compelled to yield to overwhelming numbers and resources. I need not tell the survivors of so many hard-fought battles, who have remained stedfast to the last, that I have consented to this result from no distrust of them; but feeling that valor and devotion could accomplish nothing that could compensate for the loss that would have attended the continuation of the contest, I have determined to avoid the useless sacrifice of those whose past services have endeared them to their countrymen. By the terms of the

agreement, officers and men can return to their homes, and remain there till exchanged.

" You will take with you the satisfaction that proceeds from the consciousness of duty faithfully performed; and I earnestly pray that a merciful God will extend to you His blessing and protection. With an unceasing admiration for your constancy and devotion to your country, and a grateful remembrance of your kind and generous consideration of myself, I bid you an affectionate farewell."

After this good-bye, Robert E. Lee turned and rode away toward Richmond, leaving them behind him, " sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake," in " that they should see his face no more." A few others, going his way, joined him and rode on in silence. At last he was to be permitted to live at home with his loved ones, a private

citizen. But no, after sacrificing to his high sense of duty the beautiful Virginia estates that were theirs, he and his invalid wife with their devoted children had no home!

Anyway, he was at last a private citizen. Citizen? No, only a paroled prisoner denied the franchise and other rights and rites of citizenship—like a common criminal? No, more like an uncommon criminal—the brutal murderer of many men! There were cruel, unseeing ones at the North who had said hanging was too good for him. A ribald song sounded in his ears. It pained him the more because it was a leer against "Jeff" Davis—that sincere Christian gentleman. The fact that they might hang *him* did not particularly concern Robert E. Lee—except for the sake of his suffering family and friends. That might be the easiest way, after all, to witness for the Cause.

Yes, Lowell was right, in "The Present Crisis:"

"Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne—
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above His own."

In contrast with such lofty sentiment, the shallow, spiteful spirit of the worst element at the North sickened Lee. How little they know what spirit we—men like President Davis—are of!

* * * * * * *

The little squad in tattered gray arrived on the bank of the James, opposite Richmond. The bridges had long since been destroyed by his own order—to convert the river into a moat like that of a great castle. Lee's home-coming was described by an eye-witness:

"Next morning a small group of horsemen appeared on the further side

of the pontoons. By some strange intuition it was known that General Lee was among them, and a crowd collected all along the route he would take, silent and bareheaded. There was no excitement, no hurrahing; but as the great chief passed, a deep, loving murmur, greater than these, rose from the very hearts of the crowd. Taking off his hat and simply bowing his head, the man great in adversity passed silently to his own door; it closed upon him, and his people had seen him for the last time in his battle harness."

Richmond had fallen, and some sections of it had been burned by the inhabitants before leaving the city. Grant had refused to enter there in triumph. Instead, he had said: "I felt like anything rather than rejoicing at the downfall of a foe who had fought so long and so valiantly, and had suffered so much for a cause."

So, when the Northern soldiers began firing cannon to celebrate the surrender, their chief stopped the salutes with this message: "The war is over, the rebels are again our countrymen, and the best way of showing our rejoicing will be to abstain from all such demonstration."

When many Southern people heard of these and later kindnesses to their beloved leader, they ceased calling Grant a "butcher." His terrible measures were more like those of a surgeon in the last extremity. It was a signal proof of Lee's relation to the South, that, as soon as he gave up, the war was ended.

General Chamberlain, who received the surrender of the Confederate arms and colors—as "a tribute of brave men to brave men, and a part of the cementing of the Union"—referred to the silence with which it was achieved:

"General Gordon, . . . facing

his own command, gives word for his successive brigades to pass us . . . honor answering honor.

" On our part, not a sound of trumpet nor roll of drum; not a cheer, not a word or whisper of vainglorying, nor motion of men; . . . but an awed stillness, rather, and breath-holding as if it were at the passing of the dead."

In the White House, during the meeting of the President with his Cabinet, the news of Lee's surrender was received. " At the suggestion of Mr. Lincoln, they all dropped on their knees and offered, in silence and in tears, their heartfelt acknowledgments to the Almighty."

On the night of the day on which General Lee returned to Richmond, a crowd of people gathered around the Executive Mansion, with a band, to serenade the President and hear what he would say. He congratulated them

because the cruel war was over, and suggested mild and friendly measures to win the South again to its primal allegiance. As he closed his remarks and was going in, he turned back and called out to the band:

"Play 'Dixie,' boys—play 'Dixie!' You know we have a right to it now." Those were the last words Abraham Lincoln spoke in public.

Three days later, the President was murdered at Ford's Theatre, by an irresponsible, crack-brained actor. John Wilkes Booth did not represent the South in that act any more than Charles J. Guiteau stood for the Republican party when he shot President Garfield.

That madman's freak inflamed the North, and did much to embitter again the mollified spirit, all through the trying months and years of so-called Reconstruction.

One Sunday night General Lee

was pained by hearing the minister bitterly denounce the North from his pulpit. After the service he took the rector to task. "Doctor," said he, "there is a good old Book which says, 'Love your enemies.' Do you think your remarks this evening were quite in the spirit of that teaching?" The pastor was astonished to hear a soldier who had "suffered many things" at the hands of the North speak without resentment. At another time the General explained his attitude more fully: "I have fought against the people of the North because I believed they were seeking to wrest from the South dearest rights. But I have never cherished bitter or vindictive feelings, and have never seen the day when I did not pray for them."

One cannot help asking, Why should a man who placed such implicit confidence in God be permitted to suffer de-

feat? His relations with the Almighty were even closer and more personal than Cromwell's—more like the intimacy of Moses, whom he also resembled in meekness and modesty. Some of his orders to his men read like the charges of Moses to the children of Israel in the wilderness. Once, in speaking about prayer, a minister in his army said of the commander: "He grasped my hand as, with voice and eye that betrayed deep emotion, he assured me that it was not only his comfort, but his only comfort, and declared the simple and absolute trust that he had in God and God alone."

Lee talked with God as a dutiful son with his father. He realized that, while God responds to prayer, He is not bound always to answer in the affirmative. He must sometimes withhold for the good of His child. "Special Providence" with him did not mean special

petting. His Heavenly Father did not grant every request as a human parent does when spoiling his child. Robert E. Lee, as with his prototype, Moses, was "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God. . . . By faith he forsook Egypt. . . . He endured, as seeing Him who is invisible."

Like Moses, he also recognized the voice of God when it said No, as well as when it answered in the affirmative. Therefore he accepted defeat, as he had welcomed victory, as the will of God. He recognized that God's dealings were not with him alone but with the whole South—yes, with the whole country, for he had prayed daily for the North. He knew that President Lincoln and many thousands of devout men and women among "those people," as he called them, were praying also to the same God. Not only did Lee believe that

slavery was wrong but that it was even worse for the white race than for the negroes themselves. He had come to realize the rank inconsistency of linking—manacling—Southern liberty with Southern slavery. The principles he believed in and had given thousands of loved and precious lives for had fallen upon evil times and into evil company.

Therefore he recognized the hand of God in the final defeat of the Southern armies. From that hour he was never impatient or querulous about what happened. The same sublime sense of Duty that prompted his acceptance of the sword now controlled him in surrendering it. Then whatever came to him he patiently "endured as seeing Him who is invisible."

He read in his Bible that Moses, who had hoped all things, believed all things, endured all things for forty years, was not allowed to enter the Land of Prom-

ise, but he was permitted to see it from afar. He knew also that the " Captain of his Salvation " he was trying so faithfully to follow, had suffered things infinitely worse than death in apparent failure. And Abraham Lincoln's assassination on the eve of the triumph of all his hopes—would not God overrule even that for the good of the greater country—the Promised Land of his own love and of Lincoln's?

There can be no doubt whatever that Robert E. Lee, with his God-given insight into the future, saw in the removal of Lincoln from the work of bringing the South, with all its noble chivalry, back to its earlier loyalty to the greater and better United States, had left so much the more for him to do. It was a work which he alone could do, as the beloved of the Southern people. Lee was permitted to do what Lincoln might have done if he had lived.

Therefore, he looked upon his personal trials as trivial. Great as Robert E. Lee's life had been—even as the rival of Napoleon in military genius—he was now armed and equipped in spirit for the grandest triumph of all. As "he that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city," he snatched from the jaws of defeat one of the sublimest triumphs ever compassed by one man.

Of course, he was too modest to see himself as anything other than a "poor old Confederate," as he ruefully called himself when people crowded round to honor him. All he meant to do was to retire to some quiet spot to pray for his beloved South, to love his enemies and to bless those who persecuted him.

Many stories are told of different propositions made to him, all looking to his own comfort and that of his family. An English admirer offered him a fine

estate, with an income of $15,000 a year, if he would only accept it and live abroad. Lee wrote: "The thought of abandoning the country and all that must be left in it is abhorrent to my feelings, and I prefer to struggle for its restoration and share its fate than give up all as lost, and Virginia has need for all her sons."

He was tendered the presidency of an insurance company with a salary of $50,000 a year. He declined this, saying he knew nothing about the business. "But, General," said the insurance man, "you will not be expected to do any work; what we wish is the use of your name."

"Don't you think," answered Lee, significantly, "that if my name is worth $50,000 a year, I ought to take good care of it?"

The appeal that came closest to his heart was that of an old Confederate

soldier who called on him in Richmond with this eager proposal:

"General, I'm one of your soldiers, and I've come here as the representative of four of my comrades who are too ragged and dirty to venture to see you.

"We're all Virginians, General, from Roanoke County, and they sent me here to see you on a little business. They've got our President in prison, and now"—here the poor fellow gasped—"they—talk—about—arresting—*you!* General, we can't—we'll never stand and see that! Now, we five men have got about 250 acres of land in Roanoke—very good land, too, sir—and if you'll come up there and live, I've come to offer you all of it, and we will do all the work for you as your field hands, and you'll have very little trouble managing it with us to help you. And, General, there are near about a hundred of us left in old

Roanoke, and they could never take you there, for we could hide you in the hollows of the mountains and the last man of us would die before we'd let 'em get *you!*"

Robert E. Lee's deep eyes were wet when he gratefully declined the offer, and took care that the ragged envoy, better dressed than when he came, was loaded with grateful remembrances for the other four who had offered to lay down their lives for him if need be.

In spite of all these requests and appeals, Lee's mind was fixed upon a quiet retreat, as he wrote to a friend: "I am looking for some little quiet house in the woods where I can procure shelter and my daily bread, if permitted by the victor."

"The victor" now took the form of President (elected Vice-President) Johnson, (a Southern man!) and of a grand jury in beloved Virginia, which

indicted Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis for treason. This jury was composed of negroes and low whites who acted under the direction of a malignant mind. Lee regarded this action with supreme indifference, once making this remark: "I have heard of the indictment by the grand jury of Norfolk, and have made up my mind to let the authorities take their course. I have no wish to avoid any trial the Government may order, and I cannot flee."

But the President's proclamation granting freedom to all the South but Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, and all officers in the army above a certain rank, would involve others in expense and danger, and was contrary to the terms of the surrender at Appomattox. So he wrote to General Grant:

"I had supposed that the officers and men of the Army of Northern Virginia were by the terms of their surrender

protected by the United States Government so long as they conformed to its conditions.

"I am ready to meet any charges that may be preferred against me, and do not wish to avoid trial; but if I am correct as to the protection granted by my parole, and am not to be prosecuted, I desire to comply with the President's proclamation, and therefore enclose the required application, which I request, in that event, may be acted upon."

In this letter he sent his application "for the benefits and full restoration of all rights and privileges extended," including those of ordinary citizenship. In doing this he was setting an example consistent with his urging, in every way he could, that "all should unite in an honest effort to obliterate the effects of the war and restore the blessings of peace."

To the eternal credit of General

Grant be it said that he wrote his official indignation to Secretary-of-War Stanton, and added, in a note to President Johnson:

"I have made certain terms with Lee, the best and only terms. If I had told him and his army that their liberty would be invaded, that they would be open to arrest, trial and execution for treason, Lee would never have surrendered, and we should have lost many lives in destroying him.

"Now, my terms of surrender were according to military law, and so long as General Lee observes his parole, I will never consent to his arrest. I will resign the command of the army rather than execute any order directing me to arrest Lee or any of his commanders so long as they obey the laws." (This is a reminder of the very spirit which Robert E. Lee manifested in resigning his command, four years before.)

The indictment against General Lee was quashed, but President Johnson paid no attention to his application for pardon, so Robert E. Lee went to and fro, himself a "Man without a Country," yet urging other men to become citizens of that country!

Before he could move to the modest little place where he could live in retirement, General Lee was offered the presidency of Washington College, an institution then more than one hundred years old. "The war had practically closed its doors, its buildings were pillaged and defaced and its library scattered." It had now only four professors. Even the small salary of the president would depend mostly on his own efforts and influence. Yet as soon as Lee was convinced that the incumbency of a disfranchised prisoner-at-large would not be an incumbrance, he gladly accepted the position, for this

stated reason: "I have a self-imposed task which I must accomplish. I have led the men of the South in battle, I have seen many of them die on the field; I shall devote my remaining energies to training young men to do their duty in life."

Here was an aged, white-haired man entering upon a new career instead of retiring to rest after an arduous, eventful life in which he had been making history. He was doing all this, too, without any preparation for such work since the school-days of his boyhood in Alexandria, and the few years he was superintendent at West Point. But he was well fitted to follow the great Teacher, as an educator of the heart. His meekness is disclosed in a few lines from a letter written at this time: "Life is indeed gliding away, and I have nothing good to show for mine that is past. I pray I may be spared to

accomplish something for the benefit of mankind and the honor of God."

This was true in a way of which the self-depreciating writer did not dream. Great as his achievements had been, those yet to come were more than great, they were sublime.

Nothing could have been more modest than the elderly, full-bearded man riding alone up into the western mountains on the old white horse which had carried him through the thick of many a fray. His love of his horse never grew old. One Summer, while he was absent, the master wrote back: "How is 'Traveler?' Tell him I miss him dreadfully, and have repented of our separation but once—and that is, the whole time since we parted!"

Once, as he mounted "Traveler," while taking leave of some ladies, he saw one of them reaching out to pluck a white hair from the horse's mane.

Wishing to spare the animal the least hurt, General Lee doffed his hat, bent his own white head low before the lady, and said, with a beseeching smile, "Please, madam, take one of mine instead!"

The General was inaugurated President of Washington College on October 2nd, 1865, with simple ceremonies, and started, in every way possible, to build up the college. His renown soon attracted students and endowments. Instead of the military regulations one would expect from a man who had spent nearly forty years in the army service, he announced: "We have but one rule here, that every student be a gentleman."

The young men believed that if there had been a chair for instruction in that popular study, their president was the best possible teacher! Far from being a martinet in matters of etiquet or con-

vention, President Lee once remarked: "I always respect persons and care little for precedent."

He was called to Washington in March, 1866, to testify before the Congressional committee on Reconstruction. Although he considered the Government policy a hideous blunder, he won the admiration of the whole country by his fairness, candor and fine feeling. After returning home, his daughter remarked upon his new hat. He replied with a laugh: "You do not like my hat? Why, there were a thousand people on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington the other day admiring this hat!" This illustrated the enthusiasm he encountered wherever he went. In the South, whether in city or country, they cheered him, greatly to his embarrassment.

The president of the struggling college was forced to refuse a friend who

offered him a salary of $20,000 a year, as president of a substantial company. "I would like to make some money for Mrs. Lee," he said, "as she has not much left, if it does not require me to leave the college." But President Lee considered it his duty to give the college all of himself at about one-tenth the additional salary he had declined.

One Summer, while he was away for his health, the trustees of the college, in consideration of the sacrifices he was making, and knowing that nearly the whole of Mrs. Lee's great fortune had been swept away by the war, voted to present him with a house and settle an annuity of $3,000 a year on his family.

Lee emphatically declined this. In thanking the board, he wrote: "I am unwilling that my family should become a tax to the college, but desire that all its funds should be devoted to the pur-

poses of education. I feel sure that, in case a competency should not be left to my wife, her children would never suffer her to want."

In spite of his limited resources he helped his sons establish themselves on farms, encouraged them to work hard at manual toil, telling them that the land would soon reward their labors, and that the future of the State and the nation depended on the industry and thrift of the farmers. His far-seeing eye had already beheld what the New South was yet to be.

General Lee was invited to become a candidate for governor of Virginia—probably the only civil office he had ever cared to hold, because his father, "Light-Horse Harry," had filled it. But he refused even to consider it. He still felt the apparent disgrace of disfranchisement, as if he were, in very deed, a criminal! Besides, it would im-

pair his influence with the people of the South if he went into time-serving politics.

Many men, official and military, North as well as South, tried to get expressions of approval from him, but he politely declined to be drawn into any controversy. He carefully abstained from making any remarks or criticism even about those who had been bitterly hostile to him. Having occasion to be in Washington, in 1869, soon after General Grant's inauguration, he called upon him but considerately refused to ask the President to visit Washington College, as had been suggested, lest it embarrass that official, or be made an occasion for hostile remark.

A young professor in the college harshly criticized Grant one day, and President Lee said severely:

"Sir, if you ever presume to speak disrespectfully of General Grant in my

presence, either you or I will sever his connection with this college."

To a Southern lady who inveighed against the national order of things, he replied earnestly: "Madam, don't bring up your sons to detest the United States Government. Recollect that we form one country now. Abandon all these local animosities, and *make your sons Americans!*"

One day the college president was seen at the gate talking in a friendly manner with a poor old man to whom he gave some money and sent on his way rejoicing. The observer asked who the stranger was.

"One of our old soldiers," said the General.

"To whose command did he belong?"

"Oh—he was one of those who fought against us," said Lee gently, "but we are all one now, and must make no difference in our treatment of them."

Perhaps there was never a better example of meekness under trying circumstances than the simple story of a sophomore who had been called before the president to be impressed with the fact that he must mend his ways or become a failure in life.

"But, General, *you failed!*" answered the youth (who, no doubt, regretted that thoughtless remark all through his after life). The great man of his day and generation answered without the least resentment: "I hope that you may be more fortunate than I."

Because he said least about what he felt most deeply, there can be no doubt that Robert E. Lee suffered keenly under his disfranchisement. The story of "The Man without a Country" had appeared early in the war, and such a tale must have made an abiding appeal to a man who loved Country so much.

General Zachary Taylor, another great military man of the South, had been elected to the presidency without ever having voted in his life. Here, now, was Robert E. Lee—far greater as a man and as a general—who, by his own personal influence, had done more for the country than any other living man in bringing back the Southern States into the Union, yet he was not allowed even to cast his vote which had now become the privilege of the most vicious and ignorant negro!

In his habit of self-depreciation Lee felt all this as keenly as though his home and property had been confiscated and he himself exiled from the country of his birth. No wonder that he yearned for the Home he so firmly believed was prepared for him by the Friend who had gone before him into the Beyond.

This was all the more heartbreaking in that he was too considerate to speak

even to his wife of his unutterable loss. His health had not been good after that illness in the Wilderness. He had never seemed quite so strong after the mental anguish before Appomattox. His famous physical heroism in the war was mere indifference beside the moral courage which carried him through the spiritual agony that followed. It was like an internal wound that proved to be mortal, of which no one knew until after he was gone.

The dagger of his disfranchisement was driven deeper into his own heart by the exasperating experiences of his beloved South under the ill-advised measures of "Reconstruction," often executed by Southern villains of the deepest dye. Unable to cry out against it, lest it add to the anguish of those he loved best, he bore it all in smiling silence. In his age and feebleness, as he witnessed the needless wranglings

and recriminations, how he longed, like the homesick Scot in a foreign land, for his "Ain Countrie!"

Early in 1870 his strength finally gave way and he consented to go South with his daughter Agnes in quest of health. They visited his father's "Light-Horse Harry's," grave on Cumberland Island, and that of his daughter Annie, over whose death he had wept so bitterly in the little tent not far from Fredericksburg.

Everywhere he went he received an ovation, but he could in no wise understand the love that all the people bore him. He returned, hoping against hope that his health had improved, and opened the college as usual that Fall. Coming home one evening after a trying day at his regular work, followed by a three-hour vestry meeting, he became unconscious at the supper table. After lingering for two weeks, he

passed away on the morning of October 12th. During his delirium he seemed to have gone back into his greatest battle—Chancellorsville—where he lost his "right arm," "Stonewall" Jackson, whose last words there had been: "Tell A. P. Hill to prepare for action." General Lee's last command was, "Tell A. P. Hill he must come up"—then the David and Jonathan of the Confederacy met and embraced in their "Ain Countrie." They now lie near each other in their home town of Lexington.

Robert E. Lee's name is linked with that of his father's friend in the title of the college he did so much to make—Washington and Lee University. He did not die literally a "Man without a Country," for Andrew Johnson had, on his last Christmas in the presidential office, extended a formal pardon to Robert E. Lee, Jefferson Davis, and

other men of high rank and achievement from whom it had been withheld. But, except in foolish form, it was far beyond the poor power of such a man as "Andy" Johnson to withhold citizenship from, or grant it to, such a man as Robert E. Lee! By his simple refusal to perform an official act, President Johnson had foolishly deprived the country of a legal right to have and to hold a citizen who was even then proving himself a most dutiful son—the greatest man living within her borders since the tragic death of Abraham Lincoln.

Only three men have possessed the country in such a lofty and lawful proprietorship: Washington, the father, Lincoln, the saver, and Lee, the redeemer of his country.

As George Washington, by force of the personal love of all the people, was able to join the States together in a

mutual bond, called the Constitution of the United States; and as Abraham Lincoln, who, like Samson of old, conquered more people in his seemingly disastrous death than all those he had won during his lifetime; so Robert E. Lee, through the pure and lofty loyalty of his life, brought back into one the eleven States that had seceded against his will, and locked them into a firm and eternal Union, from which "they shall go no more out forever."

What, then, did the eye of his sublime faith see from the Mount of Vision? Better, far better than the Promised Land of Moses, Robert E. Lee beheld from afar—not "the Lost Cause," but his "Paradise Regained"—yet to be, in the highest and noblest sense, his "Ain Countrie."

"He hath showed thee, O Man, what is good; and what doth the Lord

require of thee, but *to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"*