

ADJUTANT AND INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Richmond, August 1, 1862.

GENERAL ORDERS, }
No. 54. }

I. The following Orders are published for the information and observance of all concerned :

II. Whereas, by a General Order, dated the 22d July 1862, issued by the Secretary of War of the United States, under the order of the President of the United States, the military commanders of that government within the states of Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas and Arkansas, are directed to seize and use any property, real or personal, belonging to the inhabitants of this Confederacy, which may be necessary or convenient for their several commands, and no provision is made for any compensation to the owners of private property thus seized and appropriated by the military commanders of the enemy :

III. And whereas, by General Order number eleven, issued on the 23d July 1862, by Major General Pope, commanding the forces of the enemy in Northern Virginia, it is ordered that all "commanders of army corps, divisions, brigades and detached commands, will proceed immediately to arrest all disloyal male citizens within their lines or within their reach, in rear of their respective commands. Such as are willing to take the oath of allegiance to the United States, and will furnish sufficient security for its observance, shall be permitted to remain at their homes, and pursue in good faith their accustomed avocations. Those who refuse, shall be conducted South, beyond the extreme pickets of this army, and be notified that if found again any where within our lines, or at any point in rear, they will be considered spies, and subjected to the extreme rigor of military law. If any person having taken the oath of allegiance as above specified, be found to have violated it, he shall be shot, and his property seized and applied to the public use :"

IV. And whereas, by an order issued on the 13th July 1862, by Brigadier General A. Steinwehr, Major William Steadman, a cavalry officer of his brigade, has been ordered to arrest five of the most prominent citizens of Page county, Virginia, to be held as hostages, and to suffer death in the event of any of the soldiers of said Steinwehr being shot by "bush-

whackers," by which term are meant the citizens of this Confederacy who have taken up arms to defend their homes and families :

V. And whereas it results from the above orders that some of the military authorities of the United States, not content with the unjust and aggressive warfare hitherto waged with savage cruelty against an unoffending people, and exasperated by the failure of their effort to subjugate them, have now determined to violate all the rules and usages of war, and to convert the hostilities hitherto waged against armed forces into a campaign of robbery and murder against unarmed citizens and peaceful tillers of the soil :

VI. And whereas this government, bound by the highest obligations of duty to its citizens, is thus driven to the necessity of adopting such just measures of retribution and retaliation as shall seem adequate to repress and punish these barbarities ; and whereas the orders above recited have only been published and made known to this government since the signature of a cartel for exchange of prisoners of war, which cartel, in so far as it provides for an exchange of prisoners hereafter captured, would never have been signed or agreed to by this government, if the intention to change the war into a system of indiscriminate murder and robbery had been made known to it : and whereas a just regard to humanity forbids that the repression of crime which this government is thus compelled to enforce should be unnecessarily extended to retaliation on the enlisted men in the army of the United States, who may be the unwilling instruments of the savage cruelty of their commanders, so long as there is hope that the excesses of the enemy may be checked or prevented by retribution on the commissioned officers who have the power to avoid guilty action, by refusing service under a government which seeks their aid in the perpetration of such infamous barbarities :

VII. Therefore, it is ordered that Major General Pope, Brigadier General Steinwehr, and all commissioned officers serving under their respective commands, be and they are hereby expressly and specially declared to be not entitled to be considered as soldiers, and therefore not entitled to the benefit of the cartel for the parole of future prisoners of war. Ordered further, that in the event of the capture of Major General Pope, or Brigadier General Steinwehr, or of any commissioned officer serving under them, the captive so taken shall be held in close confinement so long as the orders aforesaid shall continue in force and unrepealed by the competent military authorities of the United States ; and that in the event of the murder of any unarmed citizen or inhabitant of this Confederacy

by virtue or under pretext of any of the orders hereinbefore recited, whether with or without trial, whether under pretence of such citizen being a spy or hostage, or any other pretence, it shall be the duty of the Commanding General of the forces of this Confederacy to cause immediately to be hung, out of the commissioned officers, prisoners as aforesaid, a number equal to the number of our own citizens thus murdered by the enemy.

By order.

S. COOPER,
Adjutant and Inspector General.