

*Mob in Coward*

*Speech*

OF


**General McDowell,**

AT

**SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA,**

**3d NOVEMBER,**

**1864.**



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# Speech

## Of General McDowell, delivered at the Union Demonstration, Sacramento, California, on the 3d November, 1864 :

Fellow Citizens: When, recently, I ventured to make a public speech with reference to the coming Presidential election, I knew I laid myself open to attack from political enemies, and expected to hear of criticisms on all I did or said. I am, therefore, not surprised at the speech made on the 29th ultimo by the leading orator of the opposition, the Hon. Edward Stanly—who, I am told, is, however little his speech may indicate it, not only a gentleman but a Christian. And as, besides other public trusts, he has held, for a short time under Lincoln's appointment, or, with his sanction, the post of Military Governor of North Carolina, and has been in the Eastern States during the war, his statements may be considered of importance with respect to the subjects to which my speech referred. I propose, therefore, so far as they call in question what I have said, to reply to so much of them as it becomes me to notice—and to do so as briefly and at the same time as fully as the present occasion and the short time I intend to tax your forbearance will permit. I do this with the less hesitation as I trust I may be able to show you, in my answer to the late Military Governor, some additional reasons for your choice of Lincoln. The first thing objected to, is, that I should speak at all! What business has this man with "eighteen brass buttons on his coat and several stars on his shoulder to say a word?" How "impudent!" What "folly!" What "audacity!" With "becoming insolence," the Governor says, "he tells us that few men have as good a right to be heard in this election as the soldiers—few whose votes should have more influence." Yes! and I repeat it, and the country recognizes it. In another place the honorable gentleman adds: "This is the first time I have ever known an officer in the army to take an active part in a political canvass."

Has General McClellan taken no part? Did he not, even before he became a candidate, interfere in a State election and give his pen to the party who were endeavoring to defeat the Governor of Pennsylvania—that Governor who had so often and so cordially supported him? Was not the letter he wrote printed and sent by express in all directions and placarded on every corner, and was it not written for this purpose? Who in the army has ever been so much of a politician as General McClellan himself? Who has turned aside from his duty as a military commander, and at a critical moment, not only to advise, uninvited, but to lecture, the chief magistrate of his country on matters of administration and governmental policy, which he (the General) admitted at the time "did not relate to the situation of this [his] army, or strictly come within the scope of my [his] official duties?"

But I do not seek to sustain my course by pleading General McClellan's example. I prefer that of my noble old Professor, D. H. Mahan, of the United States Military Academy, who, in his recent letter published in New York, says, when speaking adversely of General McClellan, whose friend he had always been:

\* \* \* "I believe that our country is in great peril from this nomination, even, of General McClellan; and so believing, my duty is as clear to me as the noonday sun. There are seasons when to break silence is sheer fool-hardiness; there are seasons when to keep silence is base cowardice."

I believe this is the season to keep silent no longer; therefore is it I now speak. And if a party comes into the army for their candidate because of his military services and military qualifications, there are none, I beg leave to say, who have a better right to be heard than those who have served with him and can show wherein his claims are without foundation. With reference to my late speech, it is asked if the occasion when he "wanted 20,000 men for a short expedition was not the one when McClellan had planned an expedition into Virginia, and by making his plans known the enemy were informed of them and escaped," I answer no. The occasion of the alleged communication of McClellan's plans to the enemy, and to which reference is made, was when the enemy abandoned Munson's and Upton's Hills, and when a scape-goat was made of a fellow statesman of the late Military Governor of North Carolina—General Scott's son-in-law, Colonel Scott. Colonel Scott was entirely innocent of communicating any of McClellan's plans, if he had any, as to Munson's Hill. General Scott felt this accusation against a member of his family, which accusation both he and McClellan knew to be false; but which McClellan, with his characteristic want of magnanimity, has never publicly contradicted, as under the circumstances, he was in all honor bound to do. But the outcry all over the country was so great at nothing having been done to an enemy who for two months had insulted the Capitol and covered us with reproach, that General McClellan suffered an innocent man to be denounced as a traitor in order to shield himself from the storm.

A quotation is given from General McClellan's letter to the Secretary of War of February 3d, 1862, concerning the state of affairs at Washington when he took command. I will add a quotation from General McClellan's own report on the same subject:

"On the Virginia bank of the Potomac the brigade organization of General McDowell still existed, and the troops were stationed at and in rear of Fort Corcoran, Arlington and Forts Albany, at Fort Runyon, Roach's Mills, Cole's Mills, and in the vicinity of Fort Ellsworth, with a detachment at the Theological Seminary.

"There were no troops south of Hunting Creek, and many of the regiments were encamped on the low grounds bordering the Potomac, seldom in the best positions for defence, and entirely inadequate in numbers and condition to defend the long line from Fort Corcoran to Alexandria.

"On the Maryland side of the river, upon the heights overlooking the Chain Bridge, two regiments were stationed, whose commanders were independent of each other.

"There were no troops on the important Tenallytown road, or on the roads entering the city from the south.

"The camps were located without regard to purposes of defence or instruction, the roads were not picketed, and there was no attempt at an organization into brigades.

"In no quarter were the dispositions for defence such as to offer a vigorous resistance to a respectable body of the enemy, either in the position and numbers of the troops, or the number and character of the defensive

works. Earthworks, in the nature of *tetes de pont*, looked upon the approaches to the Georgetown aqueduct and ferry, the Long Bridge and Alexandria, by the Little river turnpike, and some simple defensive arrangements were made at the Chain Bridge. With the latter exception not a single defensive work had been commenced on the Maryland side.

“There was nothing to prevent the enemy shelling the city from heights within easy range, which could be occupied by a hostile column almost without resistance. Many soldiers had deserted, and the streets of Washington were crowded with straggling officers and men, absent from their stations without authority, whose behavior indicated the general want of discipline and organization.”

Let it be understood that there were two commands. One under the gallant old soldier, Mansfield, on the Maryland side, and one under McDowell on the Virginia side—both under General Scott. And in reference to this statement, made by McClellan, of the state of affairs as he says he found them, and which he made as bad as possible to suit his own views, General Scott says in his letter of August 9, 1861, as follows:

“Major General McClellan has propagated, in high quarters, the idea expressed in the letter before me that Washington was not only insecure, but in imminent danger. Relying on our numbers, our forts and the Potomac river, I am confident in the opposite opinion; and considering the stream of new regiments that is pouring in upon us (before the alarm could have reached their homes), I have not the slightest apprehension for the safety of the Government here.”

You will see, from the printed correspondence, that General Scott, seeing that it would be, as he says, idle to be filing “daily complaints against an ambitious junior,” as he styled McClellan, asked the President to relieve him.

McClellan, with his usual unfairness when treating of matters affecting his brother officers where anything can be gained for himself, does not inform you that the troops sent to me were largely of the three months men, who, at the time of his relieving me, were going out of service. He says he found the brigade organization of General McDowell. He might also have said—and told the truth if he had—that General McDowell’s division organization also existed, though broken in upon by the discharge of the volunteers of the first call. He has said that *he* did not organize his army into Army Corps (now done all over the large armies in the East), and he has blamed General McDowell for having caused it, by his representations and his arguments, backed as they were by all the other Generals holding chief commands. As to refilling the ranks of his army—General McDowell had no opportunity to do so—that devolved on McClellan, and I do not see *he* is entitled to much credit for doing what any graduate of West Point, of average ability, could have done. With reference to McClellan’s failure to do anything with his army till the Spring of 1862. Mr. Stanly says:

“It was the President who caused the delay. It was not until the 27th of February, 1862, that the President ordered the Assistant Secretary of War, John Tucker, to procure steamers and sailing crafts to transport the army to the Peninsula. It was done in less than forty days, but still McClellan was waiting and compelled to wait. Tucker says: ‘That for economy and celerity of movement, this expedition is without a parallel on record.’”

McClellan formed the plan in November, 1861, to divide his army and take part of it by water to the lower Chesapeake Bay, where he says in

his letter of February 3d "the roads are passable at all seasons of the year." Recollect this, for on it he based largely his plans! The roads in front of Alexandria used by both armies were bad. Here was a case where by transporting his army by water to a place where he knew the roads to be good, leaving the enemy in the mud—much advantage was to be had. Why then did he wait two months, if not more, before he asked for that fleet of transports for the removal of his army which it required forty more days to assemble? I know that nothing had been commenced by the officers of his staff up to about the middle of January! Why was it that something was not doing to get ready all this time? He was sick in December. Yes! but was the whole nation to spend its millions per day and have nothing done by any one till he should recover? What but criminal ambition or inordinate self-conceit could have actuated such a course? Stanly says:

"McClellan had fortified Washington, had done what McDowell had neglected, and had said over and over again that when he moved to the Peninsula the enemy would retire from the neighborhood of Washington."

In his report he tells us: "On Sunday, the 9th of March, information from various sources made it apparent that the enemy was evacuating his positions at Centreville and Manassas, as well as on the Upper and Lower Potomac." This report proved correct. By the aid of traitors connected then with the Government the enemy heard of McClellan's plan. They were alarmed, saw their danger and immediately retired to the defences of Richmond. When then, early in April, McClellan started for the Peninsula, he went to fight the enemy "where he was."

McDowell was not charged with the fortifications for the defence of Washington. Before General McClellan came the subject was in the hands of the Engineer Bureau under General Scott, and afterwards in the same hands under McClellan. All that McDowell did was to carry out what they desired. He never had control of the question, but did on his own judgment strengthen Upton's Hill, which McClellan afterwards pronounced as the key of the position.

As to the enemy having evacuated the position of Centreville because, by the aid of traitors connected with the Government, they heard of McClellan's plan, I have to say they needed no traitor to tell them of McClellan's plan. That plan of removing the army to the Lower Chesapeake was revealed by McClellan himself. The very fact of the assembling of the number and character of the transports betrayed it!

Stanly says:

"He (McClellan) had on the 7th of June assured the President he would be in perfect readiness to move forward and take Richmond the moment McCall's division reached him; and McCall's division reached him on the 12th and 13th.

"Why could not General McDowell tell the whole truth? Now hear what McClellan said on the 7th of June. I use his own words:

"The Chickahominy river has risen so as to flood the entire bottom to the depth of three and four feet. I am pushing forward the bridges in spite of this, and the men are working night and day, up to their waists in water, to complete them.

"The whole face of the country is a perfect bog, entirely impassable for artillery, or even cavalry, except directly in the narrow roads, which renders any general movement, either of this or the rebel army, utterly out of the question, until we have more favorable weather."

I give but part of Stanly's quotation. I have simply to say that I did not fix the 7th, or the 12th or 13th, or any particular date, as the time when McClellan should move. He said he would be perfectly ready to do so when McCall joined him, and McCall did join him on the 12th and 13th, so, after that, it was the weather only which prevented him from doing anything. Barnard, his Chief Engineer, says the bridges were ready and waiting before he was ready. He delayed moving *till the enemy came to him*, on the 26th, I think. He was attacked, and—changed his base!

Stanly proceeds to say:

“General McDowell is guilty of another misrepresentation, so palpable that it should be attributed to his stupidity. At the risk of being tedious, I make full quotation that I may do him no injustice. He says: ‘There is one point too characteristic of General McClellan, and too much connected with my own operations, for me to pass by. At the close of his (McClellan’s) report he says: ‘The brilliant battle of Hanover Court-House was fought, which opened the way for the First Corps (then forming part of the Army of the Rappahannock,) with the aid of which, had it come, we should then have gone into the enemy’s Capitol. It never came.’ McDowell continues thus—I beg your attention to it—‘How disingenuous, to say the least of it, this is. The First Corps of the Army of the Potomac, as organized by him, consisted of the three divisions of Franklin, King and McCall, of these, at the time to which he refers, he had Franklin and McCall. The time referred to, of course, was the time of the ‘brilliant battle of Hanover Court-House.’ That was fought on the 27th of May. McCall’s division did not reach McClellan until the 12th and 13th of June. And this is admitted by McDowell himself, in the sentence next to that that I have just quoted!’”

Please notice that the words “of course” in the foregoing are Stanly’s; that he establishes as the time I refer to—the date of the battle of Hanover Court-House. I refer to “the way for the First Corps,” which, it is said, that battle opened—in connection with the statement that the corps “never” came, when McClellan had Franklin’s division long before that way was opened, and McCall’s soon after it; and here let me call your attention to the fact that after the way was opened for it, General McClellan would not hear of its coming by that way, but insisted it should come by a round about one requiring three times the time! Stanly adds:

“In the same paragraph of his reported speech he says: ‘The troops he wanted were under my command and near Fredericksburg. A little further on he says: ‘Let it be understood that he had then precisely the control of McDowell’s troops which he asked for.’”

“How was this possible, when McDowell kept them fifty-eight miles off? Thirty thousand men marching up the hill and down again, with plenty of ‘wagons and beef cattle’—but they never marched to the aid of McClellan’s army. This assertion is in his revised speech.”

Why should there be anything strange in the fact of McClellan controlling McDowell when he was fifty-eight miles off, when it is asserted he controlled the other commanders, more than five hundred miles off? Stanly gives a list of all the victories gained in the West under Burnside, and under Banks—all of which belong, it is claimed, to McClellan. On this subject I was struck with an article in a recent number of the *New York Herald*, commenting on a recent speech of General McClellan at

Orange, New Jersey. McClellan was speaking of the war, and referring in complimentary terms to Sherman, Sheridan and Farragut; but, as the *Herald* says, very strangely omits the name of the greatest of them all—General Grant.

Yet, says the *Herald*, there is a general belief in the country that there is such a man. It is thought there was a man of that name who took Fort Donelson and captured a large number of prisoners there; and it is said he also captured Vicksburg, with some thirty or forty thousand prisoners, with quantities of ammunition, guns, etc. There is a strong impression prevailing, also, that he conducted a brilliant campaign in Tennessee, and another in Virginia. When General McClellan was General-in-Chief, it was claimed for him that he was entitled to the credit of all victories which anybody in the army gained, no matter where they were, and the country admitted it. Why cannot he now mention the name of the man who, by this rule, would be entitled to all that Sherman, all that Sheridan or anyone else has done, in addition to what he (Grant) has done himself? The want of magnanimity will not allow him.

The control which McClellan wanted, and which the President gave him, was that stated in McClellan's letter of May 21st, as follows:

I consider that he (McDowell) will be under my command, except that I am not to detach any portion of his forces or give him any orders which can put him out of position to cover Washington."

In regard to this, McClellan says, in his report:

"This information—that McDowell's corps would march from Fredericksburg on the following Monday (the 26th)—and that he would be under my command, as indicated in my telegram of the 21st, was cheering news."

Yet when, in conformity to this, I sent him a telegram concerning one of my divisions (McCall's) which had gone in advance, he sends—not to me, but to the War Department—his message imputing to me a wish to "sacrifice the interests of the country for the purpose of increasing his [my] command."

Much is said by Stanly about an error in my speech, in saying a quotation I made from one of General McClellan's dispatches was at the end of the dispatch, whereas it is in fact nearly in the middle of it; and he charges that this is done with a bad purpose, and to keep out of sight something in that dispatch which I did not wish to appear. It is beyond a question I was wrong in saying the quotation was at the end; but I am glad of the change of improper motives in reference to this error, inadvertently overlooked in preparing my speech, for it in some measure justifies my referring, on this occasion, to the subject of General McClellan's remarkable dispatch.

If you will refer to pages 247, 248 and 249, of Raymond's book entitled "President Lincoln's Administration," you will see this subject fully gone into, and that the part which is said to have been suppressed for bad motives is given. I wish to add that these pages, to the middle of the 249th, were furnished by me to Raymond to put before the country an answer to what I considered a most unwarranted aspersion.

I will add that I did not see General McClellan's dispatch till it was printed by Congress; since which General McClellan has republished it in his report. Stanly says:

"In the speech read by General McDowell at Platt's Hall, he made some statements which are not printed in the *Alta*. He charged there that McClellan had neglected to send troops to Pope, and if he had done so the result of Pope's efforts would have been different.



“This charge is so utterly unfounded, the proof to the country was so clear and overwhelming, that I am not surprised at the trickery of suppressing it. But it was quite characteristic of General McDowell. He scatters false accusations among the multitude, but shrinks from being responsible for the charge.

“McClellan was at Alexandria on the 27th of August, 1862. He had no troops to command, having even loaned Burnside his ‘personal escort,’ to scout down the Rappahannock. On the 29th of August, he writes to the President: ‘Tell me what you wish me to do, and I will do all in my power to accomplish it. I wish to know what my orders and authority are. I ask for nothing, but will obey whatever orders you give.’”

I presume reference is made to the incomplete report of my speech, for in the full report it will be seen I distinctly say I believe General McClellan did what he could to avoid sending troops to Pope on the occasion in question; and I will say here, I do not think any unprejudiced man can read General McClellan’s own dispatches without coming to the same conclusion. From the above quotation one would think General McClellan had been in doubt as to what was wanted of him. “Tell me,” he says, “what you wish me to do.” This was August 29th. Stanly says:

“What are the facts? On the 30th of August the crisis was so alarming that the Secretary of War issued an order saying: ‘General McClellan commands that portion of the Army of the Potomac that has not been sent forward to General Pope’s command.’

“How much remained that has not been sent forward? On the 31st of August General McClellan writes to General Halleck: Under the War Department order of yesterday, I have no control over anything except my staff, some one hundred men in camp here, and a few remaining near Fort Monroe.’ Did not some prudent man advise General McDowell that it was better not to print that part of his speech?

“On the 27th of August Halleck writes to McClellan: ‘I can get no satisfactory information from the front, either of the enemy or our troops. There seems to have been great neglect and carelessness about Manassas.’ Was not General McDowell about Manassas at that time?”

In the first place General McDowell was not about Manassas at that time. He was about as far west of Manassas as General McClellan was east of it. McDowell was checking the advance of the enemy, and McClellan checking the advance of reinforcements. The impression is sought to be given that General McClellan was at Alexandria, without orders and without troops, and reference is made to the dispatch, dated August 31st, where General McClellan says he has no control over anything except his “staff, one hundred men in his camp, and the few remaining near Fort Monroe.” To all this I have to say, first, that McClellan knew very well what was wanted of him. That when he asked that question, August 29th, he had been receiving the most positive and peremptory and specific orders for two days to send reinforcements to Pope. As to the command he had at that time, hear General Halleck’s testimony, March 11th, page 453, part 1, Report on the Conduct of the War:

“On his (General McClellan’s) arrival at Alexandria, he was told to take immediate command of all the troops in and about Washington, in addition to those which properly belonged to the Army of the Potomac. Some days after he had been verbally directed to take such command, he asked for a formal order, which was issued from the Adjutant General’s Office. The order issued from the Adjutant General’s Office was after General Pope’s army commenced falling back, and was dated September

2d; but *General McClellan had been in command ever since his arrival in Alexandria!*" General McClellan arrived in Alexandria August 26th. On the evening of that day Pope's troops fought the enemy, and continued fighting there from that time to August 31st, when they began to retire to Centerville.

"August 27th you find McClellan, at a time when he knew nothing of the state of affairs in front, and when Pope's army had just won a battle, suggested, instead of reinforcing Pope, as follows:

"I still think we should first provide for the immediate defence of Washington, on both sides of the Potomac." (August 27th—2:30 A. M.)

And so all the way through, you will find him doing all he could to throw the troops, which should have been sent forward to Pope, and which Pope was expecting, into some position, into some work or beyond the river—anywhere but to join Pope. He kept Franklin's corps—which landed August 27th—back so long that it did not get into the battle; so with Sumner's. A quotation is made from Sumner's testimony to show that he understood his movements were controlled by Halleck, through McClellan. And reference is made to pages 366 and 367, (Part I, Report on the War) to prove it. Look a little further into this subject, and you will see who controlled these movements, and on what suggestions and reports of McClellan (who had charge of the whole matter) any action was taken by Halleck. Halleck approved of some of these suggestions of McClellan. The whole scheme was, however, the latter's. One remarkable thing is, that all the suggestions for withholding troops from Pope came from McClellan; all the positive orders for troops to go to Pope came from Halleck. One thing further on the subject of the failure to do anything to help Pope, whom McClellan proposed to the President should be left to get out of his scrape himself.

Stanly says that by reference to Haupt's evidence, he sees that McClellan approved of his sending out the reconnoissance to Bull Run to see after General Scammon. I am quite willing to call attention to this approval, and to give all the benefit to General McClellan to which it entitles him. As I see it, it amounts to this: That General McClellan, on the 27th of August, decided it would not be safe to send out to help General Scammon until he could get further information of the number and position of the enemy—and does nothing himself either to reinforce or reconnoiter, and on the 28th approves of his master of railroad transportation, doing without military aid what he could not, or would not, or did not do with military aid.

Stanly further says: "On the 31st of August, 1862, after McClellan's aid had been invoked, he writes to Halleck from camp near Alexandria: "I have no confidence in the disposition made as I have gathered them. To speak frankly, and the occasion requires it, there appears to be a total absence of brains, and I fear a total destruction of the Army."

This is part of a dispatch of McClellan's giving the story of a sergeant who told him the enemy was within a mile of Fairfax—that Pope's right was exposed, and Pope was badly beaten, etc. Much of the sergeant's story, meager as it was, was incorrect; yet how quick did McClellan pass judgment on his rival—how quick to suggest, instead of going to help Pope in his time of greatest need, that no more reinforcements be sent him. But one more item, and I will no longer tax your patience with the strictures of Stanly:

"I have no time to comment on General McDowell's sneer, that McClellan could not move, after the battle of Antietam, 'more than twenty or thirty-five miles beyond a railroad or canal terminus.' If you will look at General McDowell's testimony—(Part 1, report on the Conduct of the War, pages 132, 135 and 136)—you will see, before envy and malice took possession of his heart, he thought more highly of the necessity of railroads in war than McClellan did."

The question is not what *I* thought or think of the value or necessity of a railroad in our country for war purposes. It is General McClellan whose opinions are now in question, If he thought an enemy could not move more than from twenty to thirty-five miles from a railroad terminus—as was the case with reference to his own well equipped army, where it had a broad McAdam road to move over, and in the best season of the year for marching—should he have ordered Buel's badly equipped army to march three hundred miles from a railroad terminus, over bad roads, in the worst season? and should it have been part of the grand comprehensive plan of operations, that *he* (McClellan) was not to move his army till this impossible feat should be accomplished? Or, on the other hand, if Buel could, in McClellan's judgement, march three hundred miles, could not McClellan march more than thirty-five? Take the case as you will. What *I* think has nothing to do with the question.

And now, as I have done with Stanly, I wish to ask you not to allow yourselves to be diverted from the main question before you, and I beg you to recollect that it is not who or what is General McDowell; or what has he done or failed to do? but the question is, what has General McClellan done, and what has he failed to do, what is and what is he not, that you should be asked to make him your next President? As his acts and omissions are better known than is the man himself, I beg to call your attention to the opinion of him very recently given by Professor D. H. Mahan.

And who, I think I hear some one ask, is Professor Mahan. This is a question that no West Point officer would ask. Every officer who came into the army from our great military school knows him. All officers, whether in our army or that of the enemy, who have entered the service since long before General McClellan and long after him, as well as General McClellan himself, have studied all they ever learned at West Point in military engineering, in strategy, in the organization of armies, and in all the higher branches of military service, under Professor Mahan. He has been the Military Professor of the United States for all the officers, save Lee and perhaps Jo. Johnston (who were nearly of his date), who are now holding principal commands in the opposing armies. Professor Mahan is an earnest and true Christian gentleman, and from the purity of his character, his position, his knowledge of the persons of whom he speaks, has the highest claims on your consideration, and is entitled to your absolute confidence in his sincerity, his disinterestedness, as well as his ability. There is not a particle of base metal in the absolutely pure gold of his character. In his letter of September 23d. of this year, to the *New York Times*, we may see what he thinks of General McClellan. I can only take up your time with a few passages:

He says: \* \* \* \* "It is asked, is General McClellan a great man? I answer, put him on his record. He appeals to his past. Where is there one element of greatness shown in it? Compare it

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with Scott's. Compare it with Grant's. Compare it with Sherman's. Compare it with Rosecrans'. Will any man say that the deeds or the character of Scott are to be named with those of McClellan? That grand, old, heroic frame, upon which the country leaned with confidence until nature, in her inexorable course, bade it cease its earthly toils. That magnanimous heart, which, although it might swell to bursting with rage from injury received, never descended to detraction from a rival's or enemy's true worth. Is there any man who has the true stamina of a man in him who, whether civilian or soldier, would not, in a great strait, accept Grant's leadership, plain and unpretentious as he is, to that of McClellan? Is there any officer who has regarded the selections of subordinates for important duties, by these two men, who would not have more confidence in the judgment of Grant than that of McClellan? Ask those who have served under both. Is there a man in this land, of any political hue, who would place Sherman and McClellan side by side in mental or moral stature? Let any man read Sherman's late letter on enlistments in his department, and McClellan's letter of acceptance, and, if he has any sense of honest, unambiguous words, gushing from the heart, and not coined and conned by rote in the brain, can he hesitate to say which is the great man? Imagine Sherman's letter of reply to such a platform laid down for him to stand upon. How would he have shown, by a few heavy strokes, its utter rottenness. What would Rosecrans have written in answer to such an invitation, to put himself in their hands to be tutored and tortured into acquiescence in his country's dishonor? Alas! Alas! What an opportunity was here lost. What is the unmistakable test of a great master mind? Is it not to act out without hesitation a firm conviction at an important crisis, let the cause be good or bad?

"Cæsar was never greater than when he threw himself into that small boat to cross the Rubicon; Cromwell than when he bade 'take that bauble away;' Napoleon than when he decided upon scattering the pack of praters who were assembled in fatuitous wrath in the Council of the Five Hundred. Were not Cortez and Scott great when the one burnt his ships and the other plunged into the interior of Mexico, severing himself from even all communication with his home? Grant was great when he did a like deed behind Vicksburg. Sherman was great when he wrote his letter resigning his position at the head of the Louisiana Military School. Farragut was great when, in his plain, straightforward way, he said if he had known what was before him at New Orleans he would not have encountered it. I would not harm General McClellan as such. I would not wilt even the tiniest leaf of his laurel wreath; but I ask who can point me out one single act of his approaching to greatness? It is hard for me to say these things against one who even now, as a man, I feel most kindly toward. But there is a duty above all other ties. It is that which our country claims. When she calls for the sacrifice what are family ties, what are friendships that they should turn us aside? \* \* \* \*  
No, did I believe General McClellan a great man, I would exult in saying so. Did I approve his course and thought him equal to the crisis, I would go for his elevation heart and soul. But I can do neither. He is lamentably deficient in all that the times now demand for the leader of this people. He can neither conceive nor rise to the occasion of their wants now. It is not in him. The promethean fire cannot be enkindled by man. No, nor by all the Conventions the world has ever seen. \* \* \* \*

“But I am told that General McClellan is without ambition—that he is a pure man. Well, Judge Lane, of Indiana, a man of no small astuteness, said in my presence, shortly after General McClellan was placed in command of the army: ‘They think that little man is without ambition. He is as full of it as an egg of meat. Let him be successful and in four years he will control this country.’ I believe firmly, had General McClellan’s talents and his determination been equal to his desires, there was a moment when he might have done so; but he was again too late.’ \* \* \*

“I am told that General McClellan is a great statesman. Where and how did he learn his craft? Where is there a line of evidence of this? Entering, when only a little over fifteen a purely technical school; exercising his profession in a very subordinate grade, on a very narrow sphere, for a short time, sent on some explorations, and then on the Military Commission to Europe, by Jeff Davis; Vice-President of the Illinois Central Railroad until the rebellion broke out; since then in various positions in the army, what have been his opportunities for becoming a statesman? I understand the statesmanship of Jefferson, of Davis, of Calhoun, of Clay, of Webster, and even of Jackson; but I confess to being so obtuse as not to see it in McClellan. \* \* \* \* \*

“We are told that General McClellan is magnanimous. How has this trait been shown? Toward whom? The magnanimous man bears his own troubles as a man. He looks around for no small scapegoat for his mishaps. He deals in no mere complaints. General Scott had his troubles, but he fought his way stoutly through them. He offered no scapegoat. When he complained, the ring of it was manly. With Grant the sun has not always been bright. But we have heard neither untimely exulting words, nor complaints from him. Sherman has had his troubles, his great anxieties, but he has laid them under his pillow, and pushed on with his work. There have been no cliques, no female coteries, to excite sympathy for these men. None for George H. Thomas, who has not had a bed of roses under him. None for Rosecrans. These men have not received a patent of heroism from any fashionable lady boarding-school, that I have heard of. As to magnanimity to persons, when General McClellan might, by a word, have relieved McDowell from the obloquy that he was under in the Army of the Potomac, did he do so? When he might have saved poor Stone, the scapegoat of Ball’s Bluff; after all he endured, did he do so? These are hard words; from an old master of a favorite pupil, they must read like harsh words. But are they true? Search the records. Ask those in a position to know, are they true? General McClellan has plenty of real capital for all that nature and his own industry have fitted him for. His best friends are they who would not see him, or others for him, building on a spurious one for a position that he can only hold by the sufferance of the mushroom friends of party.

“From the kindly relations that had always subsisted between us, I might naturally have counted upon any of those small favors which General McClellan may have to bestow if raised to the Presidency. I have nothing to gain in opposing his election. I have no pique to gratify in doing so. If I ever had any ambitious desires, they have long since passed away. \* \* \*

“I have had every desire to see everything that regarded General McClellan in bright colors. I have turned away from the shadows that would sometimes force themselves across my mental visage. I was in Washington just at the time he was raised to the head of the army. I

found him then what I had known him at West Point as a youth. I returned to Washington again in January, 1861, to find gloom all around me, and none more changed than General McClellan. Doubt and distrust seemed pressing upon him. There was no more the open, unguarded expression of opinion. He was a man who had a part to play even with his friends. Admission could with difficulty be had to him, and when granted, persons were received standing in the well known attitude of young Napoleon. Men of distinction, like the late Charles Ellett a man, however irritable, of greater grasp of powers than General McClellan, danced attendance in vain in his ante-chamber, day after day, until maddened, as he became, they expressed themselves in deep disgust and words of bitter resentment. Although condemning in my secret breast this unwise course, I did my best to apologize for it, and to meet the attack to which it subjected General McClellan. Although not approving his surrounding himself with so numerous a staff, and parading them with his troop of life guards before the public, I tried to excuse it to myself as the harmless vanity of a still young man, suddenly raised from a Captaincy to the position of Commander-in-chief of half a million of men. That General Fremont should do such things was in natural keeping with his French origin, and the big-bow-wow Benton school in which he was trained, and in gathering around him so many mere foreign adventurers. In both cases a lamentable ignorance of the feeling of our people was shown. While such was the quasi European pomp of the two highest Generals, I found Mr. Lincoln still going on in his old homely way. One morning, with his inexhaustible fund of good nature, going from the White House to accompany a poor man and introduce him to General Totten, to beg the General to look into some invention of his of a military character. Instead of sending for heads of departments from their pressing business, going to their offices to see if they wanted anything from him. Accessible to all, whether in season or out of season. This, I grant, was not in keeping with our ordinary notions of the head of a State any more than the performances of the great Czar Peter in the dock yards of England and Holland. If there were an absence of dignification, there was a relishing smack of the earnest Western farmer, lawyer, railsplitter, if you like. It was, at least, not *un-American*. No one who had been to Europe, or been a denizen of the New York upper-tendom, would probably have so far demeaned himself; though in a little sharp practice he might have cornered and ruined his neighbor and his family. Such I found President Lincoln. Unlike Michal, who despised David for dancing before the ark, I honored Mr. Lincoln for acting out the promptings of a simple honest heart."

You have here a faithful analysis of General McClellan, and a faithful sketch of Mr. Lincoln, from one well able to give the one and draw the other. I feel that I have fully exhausted the time at my disposal, if not your patience. I also feel that I have now fulfilled my duty to the people of the Pacific coast, and with one parting word I will have done. It is, I am told, no longer a question which way California will go. I am glad to believe it will be for the Government, and since I have seen you I have no doubt of it; but it is of great consequence to your future peace that it should go with the greatest possible majority, to show the disaffected that any resistance is utterly hopeless—and, in this way, to nip in the bud any attempt at insurrection, or any opposition to our national authority.

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