PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE WAR.

BY A VIRGINIAN.

[Second Paper.]

THE VALLEY OF THE SHENANDOAH.

February 22, 1861.—The prospect of immediate activity seems to have inspired every one. General Williams's brigade turned out in honor of the day, one rifle regiment, three of infantry, and two companies of cavalry, all in their gala attire and marching to spirited music, with a bright sky and genial atmosphere, combined to raise our spirits to the highest point of helpfulness.

As Colonel Donnelly sends an ambulance to Hagerstown to-morrow, I concluded to lie by for a day longer and accept the seat so politely offered.

In the afternoon refugees from Morgan brought reports that Jackson was again approaching by the Winchester road with eighteen thousand men. As the room next to that which I occupied had been perforated by a rebel shell during the former bombardment I took the precaution to put my baggage in order for a move; at the same time feeling convinced that the alarm was occasioned by the presence of a squad of horse-thieves in the vicinity of Berkeley, usually led by some of the States-Rights heroes furnished by Morgan to the Confederacy. At brigade head-quarters I found the same opinion prevailing, and also that a competent force had been sent to ambuscade these fellows in the mountains. I offered my services to lead any detachment that might be sent over to support the "hiers in wait" in case of necessity, and was promised an opportunity should any occasion arise for such a movement. After which I went to bed and slept soundly until morning.

February 23.—Fair and mild. Yesterday's news turned out as expected—"ex nihilo nihil fit." Taking leave of my family and friends, I started for Hagerstown in Colonel Donnelly's ambulance. Two of my traveling companions were worthy farmers from the neighborhood of Niagara Falls, who had come on to visit their sons, soldiers in the Grand Army. At the Fairview House I found a party of Virginia loyalists, refugees from Berkeley County, endeavoring to soothe the sorrows of their exile by "seven up" and whisky, of which it seems "Old Virginia never tires." They stopped their game for a moment to reproach us of the military service for our inaction, and wanted to know "why the devil we did not advance and drive the rebels away from their homes?" which were in tantalizing sight from their present lodge. We arrived at Hagerstown about dark.

February 24.—This morning took the coach for Frederick, and by the way encountered a furious storm, which blew down trees and telegraph-poles and threatened to overturn our coach. On arriving at Frederick, about mid-day, I called at the head-quarters of General Banks to pay my respects. The General informed me that a movement on Winchester was in progress, and insisted that I should accompany his division. I told him of my engagements with General Birney; but as I felt myself more competent for usefulness in the Valley, I was willing to remain with him if General Birney could be satisfied. A direct order from the Commander-in-Chief of the army settled the question definitely, and I immediately set about equipping myself for the campaign. A visit to a Jew's shop, and another to the Division Quarter-master, sufficed to put me in marching order.

February 25.—Clear and cold. Alexander Difey arrived from Baltimore last night, with a pontoon train and eighty
PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE WAR.

February 27.—Clear and cold. This morning I met General Banks on the street, and was informed that McClellan was at Harper's Ferry, and desired to see me immediately. Within fifteen minutes I was mounted and on the road. Passing through Jefferson, Petersburg, and Knoxville, I arrived at Sandy Hook about midday; and there giving my horse in charge of a negro of General Banks’s household, I sought the general head-quarters, in a large green passenger-car which stood upon the siding. On entering I saw my friend, Captain B——, closely engaged in conversation with an officer whom I did not recognize. The stranger looked up, and immediately addressed me by name. “Ah, Mr.——, I was this moment speaking of you, and wishing to see you.” As he spoke I remarked the three stars glittering on his shoulder. So thin and pallid had his late attack of typhoid fever left him that I found difficulty in recognizing the person of the Commander-in-Chief as the same I had seen so fresh, florid, and vigorous on the Potomac Bluffs at Edward’s Ferry.

The maps which he and Captain B—— had been examining were again spread, and I was invited to join the council. They had been discussing the question of the most available routes by which Lander and Williams might reach the main thoroughfare leading up the Valley. My local knowledge readily supplied the necessary information. The prompt, clear, and soldierly manner in which McClellan discussed the subject in hand showed that the fever had in no wise attainted the vigor of his mind. This examination concluded, I was presented to the officers of the general staff, a dozen or more of whom were present in the car. Among these were the French Princes De Joinville and his nephews Louis Philippe and Robert. The elder Prince De Joinville was a tall, slender person, stoop-shouldered, rather ungainly in his movements, and wearing a huge, ugly cap, which gave him an air any thing but “distinguished.” I should have taken him for a cattle-dealer, waiting an opportunity to have a talk with the commissary. The young men, who wore the shoul-
der-knots of captains, were slender, light-haired, frank-mannered, unassuming youths, in no way differing, either in appearance or manner, from our young Americans of the educated classes. Although but little influenced by names and titles, I could not suppress a feeling of admiring and sympathetic interest for these young men, Princes but in name. They were also the victims of a political revolution—exiles from home and country, scions of a brave race, who had volunteered to strike a blow for the cause of humanity and civilization, prompted, no doubt, by that manly and generous instinct that loves war and the companionship of great deeds; and doubtless, too, by some shrewd political foresight from beneath that great, ugly cap, which recognizes in the present movement the cause of the nineteenth century, and with a view to future possibilities perceives the utility of having made a mark on the right side. Decidedly the handsomest and most distinguished-looking officer present was a young Prussian, Baron Radovitz.

After accepting the hospitality of the car, agreeably dispensed by Colonel Astor of New York, I started out to look after my horse, and presently met with Colonel Clarke, of Bank’s staff, and accompanied him across the pontoon bridge to the town of Harper’s Ferry. Here was a vast heap of charred and crumbling ruin. The five national arsenals, work-shops, railway-bridges, store-houses, hotels, and private dwellings all mingled in a common destruction. Winding up the hill we took possession of a deserted stable for our horses, and then found entertainment for ourselves in the house of a widow woman near by.

February 28.—Clear and cool. On rising this morning I walked over to Sandy Hook and reported to General McClellan, who requested me to meet him in half an hour at General Sedgwick’s quarters in Harper’s Ferry. Returning, I saddled my steed and repaired to the rendezvous, where I found the staff and escort in the saddle awaiting the advent of the Generals, who were at the moment within doors engaged in consultation. In half an hour we were in motion. The air was deliciously bracing, and the brilliant trappings of our cavalcade showed superbly in the clear sunlight. On reaching the summit of the Bolivar Heights, the view of the magnificent Valley elicited a general murmur of astonishment and admiration. This was the Valley of which I had so often boasted among my friends and comrades as the fairest land under the cope of heaven—the home and play-ground of my childhood, and endeared to me by many ties in later life; and it was with a glow of heart-felt satisfaction that I heard the full justification of my partiality from the lips of these distinguished strangers. I had been seven months in exile, and after the momentary burst of pleasure called forth by the view my mind was filled with varied and contending emotions.

I had my full share of Virginianism, and had
garnered up a store of pride respecting this beautiful region, whose attractions I always considered were a part of my birthright. I admired the inhabitants with their genial hospitality and cultivated simplicity of character and manner. I was attached to the old customs that lingered pleasantly among the refinements of modern progress, indicating a retrospective dignity, like those antiquated and moss-covered mansions that we sometimes see, still standing amidst the crude splendor of our fresh-built cities. And while my judgment might acquiesce in the unanswerable logic of Northern humanitarians and political economists, in regard to the "peculiar institution," it was not from this favored region that either would have chosen to draw illustrations wherewith to enforce their appeals or point their arguments. I had lived my life in its midst, and knew that, like all other phases of human society, it had its lights as well as shadows. Every hill and dale, every house with its barns and cabins. The faces of the negroes as they came out to stare at our sweeping cavalcade. The soft, broad accent of the voices we heard by the way-side, were all so touchingly familiar, and carried back so far among the good old peaceful times that I would momentarily forget my surroundings. Then the clash of our swinging sabres or the gleam of a marching column of bayonets would rend this haze of softening thought, like sharp lightning through a gilded cloud—with a flash of fierce and bitter realization now it was war—cruel and wasting war, destructive of property and life. Well, time and industry will soon restore the former, and we must all die sooner or later, but what time will restore the scattered household gods, the riven bonds of society, the blighted honor, violated oaths, the overthrown respect for all sacred things, human and divine?—when will the fires of fraternal hate be quenched, and the darker malignity of party-spirit, that seeks a vengeance deeper than death? And with this contrasting of the past and present comes the hot tide of indignation against those unscrupulous and besotted demagogues who had most wickedly and stupidly brought all these woes upon this once innocent and happy region. But the soul that is armed in a great cause must be proof against all weaknesses, whether of sentiment or passion. Let us look to the work in hand.

As we rode through Charlestown I met and exchanged congratulations with several friends whose loyalty had been hardy enough to survive the seven months' darkness. The main street was lined with the National infantry, who, with bands playing and colors flying, saluted the commander as we passed. It was a glorious hour for me, and for some others who had looked for the coming with an abiding faith. There were many also—anxious waiters on the tide of circumstance—who met us with smiling faces and a ready welcome, as our coming afforded relief from the ever-impending terror of conscription, of forced loans of money and material, and a currency, to say the least, very suspicious. Yet in the general condition of the popular mind I was grievously disappointed. The seven months of undisputed rebel sway had done its work with astonishing completeness. The first-born of every family was in the ranks of the rebellion. The pockets of every sharp attorney and local official and general speculator were filled with rebel scrip, gorgeous with showy vignettes and high figures. Every anxious and plodding farmer had his greasy wallet swelled with vouchers signed by officers of the C. S. A., for horses, cattle, and grain, furnished voluntarily, under pain of death or confiscation. With a devilish skill the Richmond conspirators had sounded and turned all the sentiments, passions, and interests that govern mankind to their service. Where lures, tricks, and falsehoods failed to accomplish the purpose, violence and terror succeeded. But willing or unwilling, entrapped or seized, dupes or victims, all were now marked alike with the fatal brand—C. S.

What first struck me was the seedy and old-fashioned appearance of the people. The dial-hand of fashion had not stood still with them, but had gone back, by the enforced resumption of the wardrobes of former years cast off and packed away. Next was the expression of their countenances, where the free, frank, and kindly air, warm with jovial good-living and innocence, was succeeded by the haggard impress of terror, anxiety, and suspicion. This struck me most painfully in my intercourse with old personal friends, who had remained firm and unchanged in their loyalty. My vehement and unreserved expression of our common wishes and opinions seemed to fill them with alarm. When they ventured to speak, in an undertone, there was an anxious scanning of windows and doors, a nervous whispering and taking you aside, when none were present. Yet these were the truest and the boldest, who had never bent the knee to Baal—and this while the Union armies thronged the roads and occupied all the surroundings. I had seen this same thing in Naples during the reign of the Bourbons, and in Venetia during the darkest days of Austrian domination; but to find it here, among my own once independent and free-spoken people, shocked me inexpressibly, and revealed more clearly than all else I had seen and heard how remorseless and arrogant had been the despotism which, in so brief a period, had left such impress upon the souls of brave and free citizens.

As I conversed more generally with acquaintances I was equally amazed to hear the monstrous stories of all sorts that had obtained credence. The prosperity of the North had already withered, the voices of its factories were hushed, commerce lay rotting at the wharves—the silence, of the once busy streets broken only by howling mobs demanding bread. Then, in regard to the conduct and character of the National troops, there was nothing too absurd or impossible to find easy belief. But of all subjects on which the passionate credulity of the
people had been exercised the story of their victories was the favorite. Common-sense and possibilities were not allowed to enter into the composition of their beliefs in the smallest degree. It robbed the choicest dishes of all flavor. The air at Ball's Bluff, as I had foreseen, had made the most decided and mischievous impression. The exaggerations were ludicrous in the extreme. Some believed that the navigation of the Potomac had been impeded by the thousands of dead Yankees that choked its current; and others piously hoped that, with the opening of the warm weather, the stench of this mass of bodies would breed a pestilence in Washington and clean out the Yankee Government. With all this nonsense one is continually exercised between pity and laughter. Graver thoughts were suggested when, coming in contact with more methodical minds, I perceived how rapidly we had been drifting in opposite directions, and how wide the gulfs of opinion had become.

On the glady levels that characterize the dividing ridge of the Allegheny Mountains are many swamps and ponds which are the sources of numerous rivulets that meander aimlessly through these pleasant highlands, as they glide along, turned kither and thither by a breath of air, a hillock of grass, a fallen tree, or some like trifling accident, their gentle currents flowing eastward or westward as this seeming chance may determine. Their volume swells as they progress; their current becomes more rapid, their course more decided, their soft, tinkling voices changed to a hoarse and clamorous roar. No weak impediment turns them now, but, sweeping earth and trees with their force, they cut themselves eternal channels through the solid rock. Still onward, gathering tributary power, they presently become great rivers, modeling the topography of continents, bearing the wealth of nations. And so we may curiously conceive that of a drop of water splitting upon a blade of grass, part may in time find its way through the deep mountain channels of the Monongahela, between the fair and fertile bluffs of the Ohio, the dark swamps and cane-brakes of the Mississippi, to mingle with the salt waters of the Mexican Gulf, and play its part amidst tropical hurricanes. The other globule, divided from its brother by that small incident, through the picturesque vales of the Susquehanna or Potomac, finds its way to the Atlantic Ocean, and thence, by winds and currents, to the fog-banks and icebergs of Newfoundland. Thus it is with the course of opinion. We are nurtured at the same breast; we drink from the same cup, and read in the same book; we discuss the signification of a word, and argue about the color of a hair. We divide on a blade of grass; we drift apart; each thinks the other deviating, perverse, absurd. Then comes the sweep and power of passion, and in the end we are as far apart as the frigid and the torrid zones. Thus I find it with some fair-reasoning minds, which in the muddle of opinion a year ago mixed cordially with mine, scarce divided by the breadth of a hair. There is an awful gulf between us now, and it needs be that we have both drifted and will continue to drift. Montesquieu takes the more hopeful and kindlier view when he says: "Men are never so absurd or so wicked as they think each other—they simply misunderstand each other."

A pleasant incident, in verification of this, occurred to-day. Seeing a clergyman of my acquaintance on the street, apparently in great haste, I hailed him and asked what was the matter. He had scarcely breath to answer and invoke my assistance. The soldiers were occupying his church, and he was filled with apprehensions of spoliation and desecration. On entering the church we found it occupied by Colonel Ruger's Minnesota regiment. Some of the men, under the direction of the officers, were taking up the carpets—for what purpose the good man did not know. I commended him to the officer, and he begged that he might be permitted to remove the Bible, lamps, and other pulpit furniture, to a place of safety. The request was courteously granted; when a new horror burst upon the alarmed pastor. A crowd of rude bearded and belted fellows had got into the gallery, and were engaged in opening the organ and fumbling among the books of sacred music. With an agonized look the clergyman exclaimed to the commander: "I hope, Sir, you will not permit them to destroy it!" The officer smiled, and quietly replied: "They will not injure it, Sir." A moment of silence was followed by a voluntary prelude, played with admirable taste and skill; then a hundred rich and many voices took up a strain of sacred music, so grand and solemn that we involuntarily took off our hats. It was curious to see the pastor's face as his look of anxiety changed to one of astonishment, and then settled into a smile of devotion-al calmness. When the hymn was finished he turned to the officer, and said: "I perceive it will not be necessary to move the furniture, Sir;" and so left the church in peace. It is to be regretted, however, that in many other instances a closer acquaintance did not tend to remove existing prejudices, but rather to aggravate them.

While the commanders rode forward to view the roads and positions in front of the village I dropped back to enjoy an hour's intercourse with my friends who for the last year had been confined in this political bedlam. Here I was beset from all quarters with applications for protection of property, restoration of seized horses, and release of prisoners. Believing it better for the cause and the service that all unnecessary and unauthorized oppression should be avoided, I readily undertook these cases. The Generals, meanwhile, satisfied with their reconnaissance, rode back to Harper's Ferry, whither I followed them later in the afternoon. I here reported to General Banks the result of my observations, and the information I had obtained at Charlestown. I was confirmed in
surmises respecting the moral and military weakness of the Confederacy, and had information, which I conceived positive, that Winchester would be abandoned on the approach of our troops without a fight. In short, that there was not in the Valley any adequate force to dispute our advance. This information was considered so important that General Banks proposed that I should deliver it in person to M'Clellan.

We accordingly rode over the river by the pontoon bridge, and spent an hour painfully threading the mazes of railway and forage trains which crowded the Maryland shore, searching in vain for the green car. We were at length informed that the Commander-in-Chief had left for Washington. I was greatly disappointed, for I deemed the information both important and reliable. We turned our horses’ heads for the Ferry, and, in spite of the bitter and blasting wind that cut our faces and dimmed our eyes, I could not but look with interest on the scenes through which we rode. The whole level bench between the mountain and canal, extending from Weverton to the Ferry bridge, was one mass of railway trains, engines, forage wagons, and mules—the animals and machines yoking with each other in their horrible yelling and braying. Mountains of forage and commissary stores lay piled beside the trains; while groups of teamsters, negroes, quarter-masters’ clerks, and train guards, cooking, sleeping, or dancing, huddled around the numerous fires that lighted this chaotic picture. Below, the river flashed and roared in unison with the noisy and restless world; above, rose the impending cliffs of naked rock, so high they seemed to touch the frosty stars, looking cold, silent, and fixed as destiny.

March 1.—I rose this morning before the sun, and to escape the frosty air entered the room where my hostess was preparing breakfast. There, the better to warm my hands, I laid my new gloves upon the table. At the moment some soldiers of a Rhode Island battery entered ostensibly for the purpose of getting a drink of water. I turned to call the woman to serve them, and when I came again the visitors were gone and my gloves had disappeared with them. On repairing to head-quarters I found the information of the previous evening under discussion. From the experiences of Patterson’s campaign it was apprehended that the reverse game might be played on our column, and instead of reinforcing Manassas from Winchester, a wily enemy might evade the overwhelming power of M'Clellan, and reinforcing Winchester from Manassas, concentrate his whole force and crush us before we could be supported. My information in regard to the state of affairs at Winchester was twenty-four hours old. There might have been changes in the mean time. Could I get a trusty messenger to visit Winchester and bring us the latest tidings? I promised to do so, and immediately after breakfast rode back to Charlestown. Along the route I observed the country covered with our stragglers helping themselves. Almost every man I saw had a pig or a leg of mutton upon his bayonet, or a pair of chickens in his haversack. Besides the seizing and cooking this dainty plunder with fence rails I did not observe any ill-natured or wanton disturbance of the inhabitants or property.

Arrived in Charlestown, I cast about to secure an agent to visit Winchester on the business spoken of at head-quarters. It was useless to think of applying to any white man for such service. The few who in their hearts were faithful to the National cause lived in terror even in the midst of our armies, and being “spotted,” as they significantly phrased it, could not have passed beyond our lines with safety. Those who were not with us from principle could not be relied on under any circumstances. Indeed it was impossible to find men willing to take any risks for a Government which thus far had manifested neither the power nor the disposition to protect its friends nor to punish its enemies. The negroes I knew were both faithful and willing, and, strange to say, were trusted on the other side with a persistence that amounted to fanaticism. While every white man’s motions and actions were watched with a most jealous scrutiny, the negroes were permitted to run hither and thither as if they had been merely domestic animals not fit to eat.

This was the Southern theory, and they acted in accordance with it throughout. Yet singularly enough the negro in his simplicity, his unlettered ignorance, his servile seclusion, seemed to have clearer and more comprehensive views of the upshot of this great question than either of the free, educated, and enlightened contestants. Blinded and inflamed by the madness of partisan politics the white man spurns away the patent facts that encumber his path and tramples common-sense under his feet, taking counsel only of his excited passions or concealed theories. The humble negro, gathering the crumbs that fall from his master’s table, finds enough to satisfy him. There is scarcely an officer in our division who will acknowledge or believes that he is warring for the abolition of negro slavery. The Southern people, on the other hand, talk and act as if they had no idea that such a thing could be accomplished by any power human or divine. They are buying and selling at high prices. They don’t believe the negroes will accept the boon of freedom if offered. They are actually running them off South on the approach of our armies. It reminds one of Jonah fleeing from the presence of God. The negro knows this war is for his liberation, and has implicit faith in its accomplishment.

So if I want a faithful emissary I must find a negro with sufficient arithmetic to know the difference between a hundred and a thousand, and sufficient military knowledge to avoid mistaking a forge or a caisson for a cannon. Presently I bethought me of a sharp fellow, who I knew had attempted to escape Northward a year ago, and
had been arrested and brought back. I sent for him upon some trifling pretext, and taking him aside thus addressed him:

"F——, I know you have long had a hankering for freedom."

"That I have, master," said he, his face lighting with an eager smile.

"That which you have so long wished for you can earn in two days if you have the nerve to follow my orders."

"What are they to be, master?" replied F——, in a dubious tone.

"I wish you to go to Winchester to-night, and with your own eyes and your own ears find out how many men are there; how many cannon, how they are posted; what they think of us, and what they intend to do when we advance. Ascertain all this, and return here with the information as soon as possible."

My man's countenance fell as terror superseded hope. "It is more than my life is worth to do that. They would hang me certain."

"Then you are not the man I took you for. You have not the pluck to grasp the fortune that is offered to you, and are not worth the trouble the white folks are taking on your account."

The fellow had spirit enough to feel this reproach. "But what good," said he, "will my freedom do me if I am caught and hung?"

"Well, it is even better to die like a man than live like a dog." Saying this, I turned away as if to give up the negotiation.

"Master," exclaimed F——, with a struggling voice, "if I go, how about my wife and children?"

"They shall be free."

"And if I come back safe with the news?"

"They shall be free, and you shall have a sum of money to take them away and establish them where you please."

"I'll go, Sir! I'll go!"

I impressed more particularly upon him the points I wished him to observe, and with a pass to carry him through the National picket lines he started on his adventurous journey.

Although up to this date the Government of the United States had disavowed all intention of interfering directly with the institution of slavery, and had even removed officers from high command whose impatient zeal had ventured boldly to attack the system, yet it was evident to me that the current of opinion was setting so strongly in that direction that the Government would presently be forced to acquiesce in its overthrow, if not openly to provide measures for its accomplishment. In many conversations which I had had with General Banks on this subject I deprecated any direct interference with the subject, as tending only to aggravate the difficulties in which the sections, and especially the Border States, were involved.
In its determination to sustain the national unity the Government would be supported by the people of the Northern and Middle States *en masse*, by a large fighting majority in most of the Border States, and by a large and influential, though apparently inert, party in the heart of the Confederacy itself. An open declaration of war against slavery at this time would at once destroy the unanimity of the North, both in political and military circles; would revolutionize loyal opinion in the Border States; and entirely crush that latent conservatism in the South, upon which all hopes of future peace and unity were founded.

Yet I had made up my mind long ago that the annihilation of slavery was to be the inevitable event of the war. And if in former times I had warmly defended it against the injurious attacks of fanatical ideologists and ignorant intermeddlers, it was because it was recognized and maintained by the Government of the country, and it was evident that any unauthorized disturbance of so great an interest must bring on civil war with enormous evils in its train. Although educated in abhorrence of that school of politics which made slavery and the South its corner-stone, I was willing to acquiesce in evils and abuses as they existed rather than rush upon those we knew not of. But when that wretched party, drunk with passion and besotted with presumption, undertook to destroy our common Government and forced this bloody and disastrous civil war upon the nation, I considered the dreadful price already paid, and determined, as far as my action and influence would go, to exact the full consideration. Public and private interest alike demanded the extinction of slavery. Without any proclamations or general orders on the subject, it is quite well understood at head-quarters that behind the Army of the Shenandoah slavery is practically wiped out. To-day general head-quarters are established in Charleston. It is pleasant enough to meet old friends; but I do not like this delay. We should have been in Winchester to-day instead of in Charleston.

March 2.—I am beset to-day, as usual, with petitions for protection, passes, and prisoners. Too many people are permitted to run through the lines on various pretenses. To-day all passes are refused. The General has just received information that Landor’s column is about to engage the enemy at Mill Spring Gap, in Berkeley County. A forward movement on our part is imminent to support Landor or create a diversion. None was ordered, however, and at night I again reported at head-quarters. General Banks seemed anxious and perplexed at having no recent tidings from Winchester. I had no later news, but reiterated my belief that no addition had been made to the forces there, and no resistance was practicable at that point to the force we had to carry against it. The facility with which the army in the Valley could be reinforced from Manassas seemed always the disturbing idea that weighed upon the General’s mind. I started to walk down street again. The General, still restless, proposed to walk with me.

As we descended from the porch we met two soldiers with fixed bayonets bringing in a prisoner. The man called my name. It was my messenger returned from Winchester. We immediately retired with him to a private room. The report was eminently satisfactory. He informed us that all the stores and heavy guns had already been removed to Strasburg; that the fortifications were dismantled, the principal citizens flying Southward with their families and movable property; and, in short, every indication of an intention to abandon Winchester on our advance. The number of troops under Jackson’s command he estimated at seven or eight thousand of all arms, with thirty pieces of light artillery. These guns were placed in battery commanding the different roads entering Winchester from Berryville, Martinsburg, Pughtown, and Romney; but the great excitement and movement of troops, he said, was on the Pughtown road. This we knew was caused by Landor’s erratic movement. My man had walked to Winchester, twenty-two miles, made all these intelligent observations, procured a pass from Jackson’s Provost-Marshal to carry some clothes to his young master in the rebel cavalry, on observation at Berryville, twelve miles distant; delivered the aforesaid clothes; told a variety of monstrous stories about the Yankee armies, suitable to the occasion; and then returned to Charleston, twelve miles further—all in little more than twenty-four hours. In home phraseology, “This was pretty well for a nigger.” The promised reward was made good to the letter by the order of the commanding General.

March 3.—Raining. A marauding scoundrel of a cavalryman stole my India-rubber over-coat. May it prove a “shirt of Nessus” to him!

I made a diagram of Winchester and surroundings, with the troops and guns posted according to my messenger’s report last night. I showed it to Generals Banks and Hamilton, and hope an immediate advance will be ordered. We have news that Landor’s movement is stopped, and the General himself quite sick.

March 4.—On reporting at head-quarters this morning I was introduced to the Council of War. Generals Sedgwick, Hamilton, Burns, and Gorman, Colonel Tompkins, Major Perkins, and Captain Best were present. Maps, topographical plans, and latest information were discussed, but nothing definite resolved upon. They seemed to be waiting to hear from McClellan.

March 5.—Landor is dead. There seemed to have been a continual misunderstanding between him and McClellan, and, considering the character and positions of the two men, it could scarcely have been otherwise. In the present plan of movement Landor had been ordered to Martinsburg by the nearest route, and instead of obeying, he moved directly for Winchester.
by way of Mill Spring Gap, and sent us word he expected a battle there. McClellan meanwhile sent a hasty and positive order to stop him. It reached him in time to prevent the expected fight. Next day he fell sick and the day following he died. The doctors differed as to the immediate cause of his death. One said it was from the wound received at Edward's Ferry; another supposed it was from exhaustion, the consequence of over-excitement and exertion; a third intimated it was from an overdose of morphia, taken accidentally. I am sorry for my part that he did not get a clip at Jackson. I think he would have given him an infernal thrashing. I met General Shields on his way to take command of Land's Division. Shields looks older than when I last saw him, but is full of fire still. They fear at Washington that Winchester may be reinforced from Manassas via Snicker's or Berry's Ferry. I gave Shields a sketch of the roads leading to Winchester. A courier brings news of the occupation of Bunker's Hill by General Williams after a skirmish, in which he captured half a dozen prisoners.

March 6.—Variable. Troops are still moving forward. The New York Ninth passed through Charlestown in columns of companies, making a fine appearance. As the roads were opened by the advance of our lines I rode out to see some of my friends in the country. At Locust Grove I met a welcome as manly and cordial as if the eight months of bitter, civil war had never been. Here were the old barn, the white-washed cottage dwelling, and the negro cabins all unchanged as I had seen them in the happiest days of my boyhood. The negroes and negrolings of the present generation looked in all respects the same as those I had seen there thirty years ago. And the master, a worthy representative of the most large-hearted, true, and generous race I have ever known. The neighborhood had not escaped annoyance from the soldiers; but with characteristic carelessness of his own losses and troubles, my friend's whole care seemed to be for his neighbors. The Widow —, whose corn was seized, and poor old Mr. —, whose horses were pressed, and worthy Mrs. —, whose son was a prisoner.

The gravity of his surroundings had by no means quenched his perception of the humorous, as the following anecdote may attest. A picket of Van Allen's cavalry had quartered near his house. One day a mounted vidette came riding in with staring eyes, and reported that he had been fired on from the house of one Wright, near which he was stationed; the ball whistled near his head, and he saw the bushwhacker afterward creeping through the thicket with gun in hand endeavoring to get another shot at him. The house was of course condemned to be burned; but before the order was executed inquiry developed the following facts: An infantry soldier of one of the Massachusetts regiments was prowling about seeking what he might devour. He presently drew a bead on a sheep, missed it, and narrowly grazed the trooper's head. Perceiving the proximity of a mounted picket, he endeavored to sneak away unseen, and hence the alarm.

Before returning to town I rode over the country paying several visits, and conversing
freely with the inhabitants. The people and the
army do not understand each other, and
hence most of our difficulties. The inhabitants
have been led to believe that the army was a
horde of Cossacks and Vandals, whose mission
was to plunder, destroy, murder, and lord it
over the land without mercy or remorse.
Hence they are received with distrust and ter-
ror, and their slightest disorders magnified into
monstrous and menacing crimes. The soldiers,
on the other hand, thought they were entering
a country where every house was a trap and
every thicket a masked battery. In every man
they saw a concealed enemy, a spy, or assassin;
and in every woman a furious spitfire and per-
haps a poisoner. Mutual acquaintance and an
interchange of courtesies will soothe and do
much toward obliterating these prejudices, the
result of reckless political partisan teachings.
There is no foundation for this war among the
people—neither in their interests nor their feel-
ings.

March 7.—There was a terrible stampede last
night on our left near Kabletown. A squadron
of the First Michigan Cavalry was sent out to
relieve the infantry picket belonging to Colonel
Maulsby’s Maryland regiment. As the cavalry
approached they were fired into by the guard,
killing one man and three horses. The fire
was hastily returned, and both parties took to
their heels, creating an alarm equal to that
which brought on the famous “Battle of the
Kegs.” Fugitives from the Maryland regiment
reported they had been attacked and their pick-
et drives in by a large force of cavalry. The
troopers came in at full speed, saying that large
bodies of infantry were moving on our position,
and had already destroyed or captured the Ma-
ryland regiment. The combined report in the
morning was, that a regiment of infantry and a
squadron of cavalry had been surprised and cut
to pieces during the night. This choice mor-
can was greedily swallowed and keenly relished
by the secession element until the return of the
Second Massachusetts, which had been sent to
the scene of trouble, dissipated the illusion.

The Dutch caterer for the staff mess went to
the country on a foraging expedition, and hav-
ing found some fowls to his mind, offered the
proprietor a United States Treasury note in pay-
ment. The rebellious citizen refused the pro-
fered money with great contempt, saying, as he
thrust it back:

“No, I don’t want your damned Yankee
trash.”

“Vel,” replied the cool campaigner, “I do
vant, very much, dese secesh chickens—so I
dakes ‘em;” and repocketing the despised cur-
rency he lifted the fowls and departed.

As a general thing, however, and in spite of
the unavoidable irregularities attending the
movements of armies, there seems already to be
a notable improvement in the tone of feeling
between the soldiers and citizens, and the friend-
liness is increasing from day to day. If the
military question were satisfactorily disposed
of there would presently be a sweeping reaction
in favor of the Government; for notwithstanding
the astonishing reticence of those most deep-
ly implicated in the revolution, there are many
unmistakable indications that the experiences
of the first year of King Jeff’s reign have not
been of a character fully to sustain the enthusi-
astic hopes and promises that cheered its open-
ing scenes.

March 8.—Fair and mild. Society was thrown
into a ferment to-day by the advent of a wagon-
load of negroes, composed of several families,
with their household goods and plunder en voute
for a free country. They were halted for half
an hour before the Provost-Marshal’s office,
and then passed on to Harper’s Ferry. Since
our occupation of the country negro men have
never ceased to flock into our lines, and, as a
matter of military police, were arrested and
confined in the county jail, which was used as a
guard-house. They were here held and main-
tained to prevent the nuisance of so many
unrecognized loafers in our camps. Without
any authority or wish to return them to their
owners, the General was embarrassed to know
how to dispose of them. The Quarter-master
at Harper’s Ferry had demanded a detail of
men to load and unload army stores. This
seemed to afford a solution of the difficulty.
The blacks were marched in squads to Harper’s
Ferry, and set to work, earning their bread and
beans in Uncle Sam’s service. This looked
ominous; but as these refugees were only males,
it was thought probable they would presently
become disgusted with the work and rations at
Harper’s Ferry, and return voluntarily to their
homes and families. These calculations were
founded on knowledge; for the idea of freedom
from work predominates in the negro’s brain
at this time. But the sight of this family of
emigrants, with its household goods and gods,
passing northward unchecked, could not be mis-
understood. Hitherto the negroes who had
gone went light-handed and as fugitives; now
the exodus has commenced in open day, laden
with the spoils of the Egyptians. The sen-
sation created is profound. The land utters a
smothered groan and curses deep, which would
be louder but for the presence of military power.
Even the professed Union people meet us now
with clouded faces, and the growing friendliness
of the inhabitants has received a chilling check.

There is a good deal of murmuring among
our own men and officers. They say they did
not leave their homes to fight for the liberation
of the negroes. The Government had professed
that it had no intention of meddling with that
subject. Their cause was “National Unity,”
and that alone. They did not wish to see it
complicated with indifferent or mischievous
questions.

This incident reveals the real subject of diffi-
culty between the sections. The sentiment of
Christendom demands Abolition. That party
at the North which tolerated and protected Slav-
ery heretofore is becoming more and more fee-
ble. On the other hand, Southern sentiment has become gangrenous on the subject. They submit to all other losses with exemplary patience. The death of their brethren and children on the battle-field is regarded as a dispensation of Providence, and borne with Christian resignation. They will even discuss their favorite doctrine of State Sovereignty with moderation and liberality. They do not assert it so arrogantly as they did a year ago. But the slightest rub upon this black tumor drives them frantic. They seem at once to lose all traces of common-sense, decency, and discretion. It is both painful and humiliating to listen to the atrocious nonsense that is put forth on this subject. After having convinced himself and every one around him that the advent of the Yankee army brings robbery, rape, and murder in its train, at the first intimation of an advance of our estimable citizen, etc., abandons his terror-stricken family, his houses and lands, his cattle and crops, and endeavors to escape to some place of safety with half a dozen miserable negroes, sources of continual anxiety, expense, and irritation. Casting every other interest to the winds, disregarding every natural tie, he seems content if he can manage to hide his smelly idols for a few weeks or a few months longer from the Yankee invaders, whose sole business in making war on the South is to steal away this valuable property. Nothing but long-continued indulgence in partisan malignity could have brought a once fair-minded and enlightened people to such a point of mental degradation.

I have been continually hoping against conviction that by some turn of affairs there might be a speedy termination of this ruinous and unnecessary war. I now perceive how futile have been these hopes. I know that this war can not end except by the abolition of Slavery. It is equally evident the South will not surrender while there is a drop of blood in her veins. "Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone."

March 9.—Yesterday it was proposed to make a reconnaissance to Berryville, and I had expected to accompany it. To-day I hear that two brigades of infantry and a regiment of cavalry have gone forward. I am annoyed at not having been informed of it in time. We received news from Old Point of the sinking of the United States frigates Congress and Cumberland by the rebel iron-clad steamer Merrimac. The Secessionists are chuckling as if the United States Navy was destroyed.

March 10.—Our reconnoitering force have occupied Berryville, and advanced thence toward Winchester as far as the Opequon, without finding any other enemy than a few cavalry pickets. Our army trains and reserve batteries are in motion toward Berryville, but there are as yet no moving orders for the staff. Our secessionist friends have news of a great fight raging somewhere. They go out to hear the cannon, and meet together in little knots, discussing flank movements, grand strategy, and falling back on somewhere, with a rebel victory and a slaughter of Yankees to complete the feast.

March 11.—Made my preparations for a move, and reported to head-quarters. Perceiving there was no movement there, I asked and obtained permission to go to the front. Colonel Clarke of the staff and myself rode to Berryville together. Shortly afterward Captain Abert, with the Topographical party, came in and established himself in comfortable quarters, which, with the freedom of old companionship, I shared with him. As we were about retiring for the night a message was received from General Banks requesting us to meet him at a point indicated about midway between Charleston and Berryville.

The Captain was too unwell to turn out; but I got ready, and, accompanied by Luce, started for the rendezvous. The moon shone bright, the air was calm and temperate, and altogether the night was impressively beautiful. The white tents of Abercrombie's brigade looked silent and dreary as a mist upon the water, and rows of half-spent fires, with an occasional twinkle of moonlight upon the tarpaulin of a sentinel, indicated where the troops were lying on either side of the road. We cantered gayly along the turnpike, until halted by the sharp challenge of a mounted sentinel. I rode forward alone and, with his cocked pistol at my breast, gave the countersign, and we were permitted to continue our gallop until we passed the five-mile post. There, in a wood, we saw a number of men and horses grouped around a fire. As we approached an officer came out and halted us. It was Captain D'Haultville, Aid to General Banks. I immediately dismounted and joined the circle of consulting officers. General Banks informed me that McClellan occupied Manassas, the enemy having precipitately abandoned the place on his approach. The question of our movement upon Winchester was discussed. There seemed to be no probability that we should find an enemy there; but by a rapid forced march directly from Berryville to Strasburg we might catch Jackson, or at least some of the stores he had been moving at his leisure from Winchester during the last ten days. General Banks seemed annoyed at the idea of Jackson's escaping unscathed; but the council presently broke up, as usual, without determining upon any thing. General Banks and attendants rode back to Charleston, while we accompanied General Sedgwick to Berryville. The remainder of the night was passed in sweet and dreamless sleep.

March 12.—Fair and temperate. After an old-fashioned Topographical breakfast we had a visit from Colonel Clarke, who was in search of quarters for the Commanding General and staff. I hope this does not indicate that we are to spend any time here. About nine o'clock I called at General Sedgwick's quarters, and while there information was brought that Generals Williams and Hamilton were in Winchester. This created an excitement, and seeing
Colonel Brodhead at the head of a squadron of cavalry, I proposed we should ride forward. He consented, and with his staff and escort we started toward Winchester. We were welcomed with many demonstrations of joy by the inhabitants along the route. There seemed to be a great deal of Union sentiment among the middle and lower classes, but no Cambrian handkerchiefs nor national flags were waved from the better class of mansions. On entering Winchester we found the town alive with negroes and Federal soldiers; the crowd very sparsely sprinkled with white citizens. The houses generally were sealed up, both doors and windows, yet several were decorated with the Union colors, and their open windows crowded with ladies and children waving handkerchiefs and throwing bouquets. These demonstrations delighted both officers and soldiers.

We rode directly through the town and took the street leading to the Romney road, intending to take our quarters at Senator Mason’s house. On coming in sight of it we perceived the United States flag waving from the portico, and understood that we had been anticipated. Turning aside, the Colonel observed a pretty residence which seemed to be unoccupied. We dismounted, and our knock was presently answered by an old-fashioned Virginia negro servant. To my surprise the major-domo saluted me by name, and I ascertained the house belonged to some dear friends then absent on a visit to the lower part of the State. Everything had a comfortable air, so we made ourselves at home without further ceremony. After rest and refreshment we called to see General Shields, who was already in town. We found him lying down, suffering apparently from exhaustion; but he received us cordially, and we presently got into an animated conversation. The General told us some characteristic anecdotes of Jeff Davis, whom he knows well and despises. He says the Secessionists made a fatal mistake in placing Davis at the head of their movement. He is a narrow-minded martinet in military matters, and will sacrifice the cause to his vindictive prejudices and obstinacy. He is entirely wanting in that comprehensiveness of view and personal magnanimity essential in the leader of a great revolution.

On the street I have seen a number of my old acquaintances of secession proclivities, who fled from the northern tier of counties at the first burst of war. They say that for the last six months life in Winchester has been insufferable, and they determined to remain within our lines at the risk of hanging, rather than follow the fortunes of the Confederacy further South, as many others have done through folly and terror. I advised these people to return to their homes, and if they had committed no special outrages against their neighbors they would not be disturbed.

March 13. — Clouds. General Banks and staff arrived to-day and established head-quarters in town. The advance of Williams and Hamilton yesterday by the Martinsburg road was not contested except by some irregular cavalry, with whom they exchanged a few shots at long saw. Our cavalry rushed suddenly into the town, and thus captured a few stragglers—not unwilling ones perhaps; but of supplies and ordnance stores the enemy has left nothing beyond half a dozen cannon-balls and several bushels of old shoes and rags. As I was lounging down street a lady in black issued from one of the closed and contumacious houses, and in a manner betokening suppressed agitation inquired if she could by any possibility get a letter to her son in Richmond. I told her a letter might be sent by way of Fortress Monroe, and offered to forward it for her. She thanked me, and then asked some news of the war. I told her Manassas was occupied by Mc’Clellan, and Johnston had retired behind the Rappahannock without a fight. She asked, with sudden vivacity, “Is that true, Sir?” I replied the news was official. I thought she would have fallen on the steps as she exclaimed, with a look of agony, “Good God! then Jackson is cut off!” I thought it quite probable, and turned to leave, while my fair questioner regained the door and entered, closing it after her.

I rode alone upon the hills overlooking the town, and inspected the fortifications upon which we have speculated so much during the past winter. I was profoundly grieved and
mortified to see what mole-hills had been imposed upon our excited imaginations for impassable mountains. On the hills were the platforms of several heavy guns, flanked and protected by detached lines of rifle-pits, which I rode over with as little difficulty as I would have found in clearing the gutters of a highway. The only thing like a regular work was a very small redoubt on the Martinsburg road, which commanded that road, but was a trifling obstruction, easily knocked to pieces by field-artillery, and very easily turned and avoided, as the country was open and practicable in every direction. Our deserter, S——, of Patterson's campaign, gave a very accurate description of this work, but the drawing made by the engineer officer after his description was more formidable than the work itself. The soldiers' burying-grounds near the deserted cantonments tell a true and painful story of disease and death during the past winter.

On returning to head-quarters I was ordered to reconnoitre the road to Berry's Ferry. Without misleading I started, accompanied by Lieutenant Babcock and half a dozen dragoons. We had ridden about four miles when a courier, riding at full speed, overtook us. He brought an order to return, as information had been received that Ashby's cavalry occupied the road in force near Millwood. I doubted the report about Ashby's cavalry, but was glad of an apology to escape a long and wearisome ride.

March 14. — I met an old friend this morning who described to me the arrest of Union citizens which took place on the retreat of Jackson's army. Venerable and gray-headed men, accused of no crime but that of loyalty to their country, were seized and marched like felons through the streets, trampling through mud and rain between files of soldiers, followed at a distance by their weeping families. It was the most humiliating and damning scene that had occurred since the war, and had gone far to disgust honest but misguided men with the revolution.

The General thinks of going to Washington, and says he wishes me to go to Castlenau's, or Snicker's Ferry, where Captain Abert is constructing a military bridge. I asked if I might not turn aside by the way and visit Charles-town, where I hoped to meet my wife and daughter. This permission was granted, but with an appearance of reluctance, so that when I took the road to Berryville I doubted whether I should take advantage of the permission. At Berryville I found no one at the topographical head-quarters but my quandam minstrel, Adam, now acting cook. Captain A. and Luce were both at Snicker's Ferry looking after their bridge. Adam's assistant in the kitchen was a negro cook lately deserted from the enemy. He comprehends the situation, and expresses it graphically. Bob says the loss of the battle at Bull Run only served to open Uncle Sam's eyes and made him see things clear. At the same time it makes the rebels stark mad. They began to believe in their own braggadocio, and they thought the war must end presently. This made them careless, wasteful, and loose in their discipline. It has also unoffited them to meet their late reverses, which have cast a gloom over their spirits proportioned to their former elation. While waiting here for a cup of coffee Captain A. and party returned. Their observations and report are complete, and after dining we rode back to Winchester together.

I had intended that my service with General Banks should terminate with the occupation of Winchester. Meanwhile I had received a letter from General Birney saying that he still kept my place open for me, having relied on a temporary appointee to fulfill the duties of Assistant Adjutant-General until I should be enabled to join him. Considering my engagements in the Valley concluded, and eager to take part in the more interesting operations of the Grand Army, I asked permission to rejoin Birney immediately. General Banks responded by a flattering refusal, saying that he was about to move his division over the Blue Ridge by way of Snicker's Gap, to take position on the Rappahannock, from whence, doubtless, he would be called on to co-operate with the Army of the Potomac. I must accompany the division in this movement, after which I might join Birney if I desired. I am but a grain of corn cast into the mill of the gods. Let them grind: any thing but inaction.

March 15. — Raining. The General commanding started for Washington by way of the Winchester and Potomac Railroad. I had permission to accompany him as far as Charles-town, where I intended to pass a day or two with my friends. At Summit Point I saw my old and esteemed friend P—— S——, who recognized me with many demonstrations of joy. I presented him to the General as one of three in Clarke County who had had the moral courage to express his real sentiments by voting against the ordinance of secession. He was greeted by all present with the respect due to his heroism.

March 16. — Fair and cool. I had a quiet, lazy day among my friends and relatives. Since the fall of Winchester the tone of Secessionists in this region is much modified, while loyalty is becoming more confident and outspoken. The Government will have no trouble with the mass of this population. Their restoration to the world, its commerce, comforts, and conveniences, is more than their ill-temper can hold out against. Many are evidently pleased in spite of themselves.

March 17. — Cold and clearing off. I went to Harper's Ferry with some friends en route for Baltimore. General Sedgwick is now in command here. His command is leaving the Valley for service elsewhere. In the afternoon I took the train for Winchester, and found General Williams's head-quarters engaged in a punch-drinking. Every thing seemed in high feather, and Shields was concocting a plan to
circumvent Ashby, who was hanging around and annoying our picket-lines. I stopped at the guard-house to see two prisoners of Ashby's command just brought in. They had no information of any importance. As they retired the elder said to his fellow, "Lord! what a good sleep we'll have to-night! We don't have to watch the Yankees."

I called on General Shields and heard a detail of his plan to catch Ashby. He would send Colonel Mason with a brigade by a flanking road to the left, which came into the main turnpike at Middletown. After this column had got started fairly he would move with his main force on the Strasburg turnpike and keep Ashby amused until Mason struck his rear at Middletown. Shields's force was about ten thousand infantry with thirty guns. It reminded me of a bull undertaking to catch a fox, for such a slow-moving mass to start in pursuit of a legion of light cavalry only twelve or fifteen hundred strong, operating, too, in a country open and practicable every where, and perfectly well known to them. But behind this rather shallow plan it was evident that Shields had hopes of getting a fight out of Jackson. Pleased with his enterprising and gallant spirit, I volunteered to accompany him, and my offer was accepted with thanks.

March 18.—I slept last night with Colonel Brodhead. His regiment occupies the expedition, but as the movement is several hours behind time we need not take the road until after dinner. In due time we mounted, and passing the slow-moving column, overtook General Shields and staff near Middletown. While we stood upon a height, locating important points in the topography of the country, Colonel Mason's adjutant rode up and reported that his force already occupied Middletown, while Ashby had taken position between them and Strasburg, behind Cedar Creek. This of course. Our plan was as feasible as that of a child who tries to catch a bird by throwing salt on his tail. As we entered Middletown a column of smoke was seen rising in the direction of Strasburg. This, we were told, was the turnpike bridge over Cedar Creek.

As our advance reached the bluffs overlooking the stream Ashby opened upon them with three guns. I accompanied Colonel Brodhead, who rode rapidly to the front to take command of his regiment. Our skirmishers lined the hither bluffs, lying in groups among the cedar thickets and alternate open ground, paying no more respect to the whizzing balls and screaming shells than if they had been missiles from potato guns. A battery of Parrott guns stood in position unlimbered, but maintaining the same contemptuous silence. The column of cavalry, with drawn sabres, occupied the main road, ready for a move when ordered. An officer rode back for General Shields, who was near the rear of the column. Meanwhile the enemy, on the opposite side, kept humming away with his three guns, supported by a dropping fire of musketry, to neither of which did any one deign to make the slightest response, until a company of sharp-shooters, with rifles carrying four-ounce balls, came up, and, by way of experiment, sent a few of their patent missiles over the stream. When General Shields arrived on the ground the sun was just setting, and the enemy's cannon were withdrawn. By the light of the burning bridge it was seen that a mill-race and dam interrupted the crossing, and no one was found who knew the ford. Volunteers were called for to find the crossing, but so little spirit was shown that it was pitch dark before the volunteers were ready. The firing from the other side had ceased, and our men bivouacked on the ground they occupied. Brodhead and myself rode back to Middletown, where we found food and lodging for ourselves and horses.

March 19.—During the night the Colonel had a violent chill, and before daylight started back to Winchester, accompanied by his adjutant. When I arose the Colonel's orderly, Michael (a bloody Irishman), reported to me, informing me that his commander had left himself with two men and the light carriage under my orders. He also intimated that, as I was poorly mounted on a quarter-master's hack, he should like to have permission to "stake me a horse" that would become better. I thoughtlessly acquiesced and went to breakfast.

Before I had finished my meal Michael entered with a beaming countenance, and in a stage whisper informed me that he had stolen me an illigrant horse from a "dord seecesh." On going to the door I found the animal in hand, but was met at the same time by an application for his restoration. His owner, a poor man with innumerable children depending on him for support, with no other means of subsistence but this horse, all loyal citizens who loved the United States government and was always opposed to secession—all this backed by at least twelve respectable and loyal fellow-citizens, who with hats in hand responded at every pause as regularly as they do in church—"We beseech thee to hear us," etc., etc. I told the fellow to get home with his spavined tacker, and mounting my own raw-boned stumbler, hurried to the front, followed by Michael, rather disgusted with the results of his zealous service.

I joined General Shields just as he was about moving forward. Between Cedar Creek and Strasburg we found the smoking embers of the enemy's bivouac, with some remains of a hasty breakfast. There was nothing very tempting even to a campaigner's appetite. From the heights near Strasburg we could see Ashby on Fisher's Hill, about two miles distant, figuring on the inevitable white horse. He tried his guns, but the missiles fell about midway in the intervening meadow—so distant that we could scarcely hear the explosion of the shells.

Lieutenant-Colonel Daum, Chief of Artille-
ry, undertook another flank movement, for the purpose of getting his batteries within effective range of his light-footed antagonist. So he went creeping around the hills with his guns, like a boy trying to get a shot at a robin. After two hours' manoeuvring he got twenty or thirty guns in position, and all the infantry massed to support him in due form. Meanwhile Ashby cleared out, and the Michigan cavalry followed across the meadows and up Fisher's Hill by the winding road, all visible from our position behind Strasburg, but concealed from the artillerists. As the head of this cavalry column appeared on the summit of Fisher's Hill Daum opened upon it with a startling roar. The Michiganders retired precipitately, or they would have been destroyed before the mistake could have been communicated to the zealous artillerists. As it was, they lost four horses killed, and one or two men bruised, but not seriously. Ashby, meanwhile, had set fire to several more bridges and railway trestles, and by the time we again got in motion was quietly in position at Tom's Brook, waiting for us.

As our advance showed itself he opened again while we were at least two miles and a half distant. It was now about noon, and the futility both of flank movements and direct pursuit being satisfactorily demonstrated, a halt was ordered. The command had started with but three days' rations. Half the time was consumed, and it was determined to return. The troops seemed much dissatisfied at the retrograde, and the plucky commander equally disgusted at not having found a fight. He damned the rebels roundly. He had hoped, as they had disgraced themselves by their political follies, they would at least redeem their honor by making a manly fight. Thus far they had done nothing but retreat and burn bridges.

At Strasburg the command halted for the night, the General concluding that he would bring up supplies from Winchester, and remain here until further orders. Although there was no especial military capacity displayed in this movement, I was nevertheless pleased with Shields's spirit and enterprise, as I believed at this time we had only to advance boldly to conclude the war.

March 20.—A northeast storm with chilling rain. Arose with an atrabilious headache, and started for Winchester with my two orderlies. On the way passed several regiments of Shields's division en route for the same place. Middle-town was a scene of general lamentation, chiefly on account of bee-hives plundered by the Yankee bears. At Newton an old man rushed out, and, seizing my bridle, asked me to dismount and come into the house. I felt so weary that I yielded easily to his importunity. I found a cozy interior and a motherly dame arranging the table. My venerable host informed me that he was a Union man and stone-deaf. He wanted to hear news of the battle, and feared to question me in the street lest the neighbors should overhear and bring him to grief in case our army retreated. I gave him to understand there had been no battle, and only one or two men hurt. He was astonished, and said his neighbors had told him that a whole train of wagons loaded with Federal dead had passed through town last night. While I partook of a lunch my entertainer told dreadful stories of the abuses put upon them by the rebel troops. They had been robbed of horses, wagons, grain, and cattle without measure or remuneration. Their sons and negroes were conscripted and carried off with-
out remorse. Every man that dared open his mouth to remonstrate against these outrages was called a d—d abolitionist, and menaced with death and confiscation. While the tenor of these complaints was an infallible test of the citizens' political opinions, all joined in doing injustice to the poor soldier. The noble profession of arms, in whatever cause exercised, soon elevates a man above the baser influences of partisan politics. According to my observation it was very seldom that the soldiers of either army condescended to discuss the political bias of a horse, a sheep, a beehive, or a fodder-stack. They stole with admirable impartiality.

Arrived in Winchester, I reported at headquarters, and found General Banks returned. He informed us that there was a tremendous excitement in political and military circles at Washington. It was stated that the supposed formidable rebel works at Centreville and Manassas were a sham, mounted with Quaker guns, and occupied for some time past by not more than ten or fifteen thousand men. Certain political leaders were bent on breaking down McClellan, and Congressional resolutions to that end were in preparation. While there may be good grounds for the national mortification and disgust at these developments, it will be most unfortunate if their resuscitation shall be permitted to embarrass the operations of the Commander-in-Chief, now that he has taken the field. With a rapid and resolute concentration of all our forces upon Richmond I have no doubt it would be abandoned without a serious struggle. Drive the Confederacy out of Virginia, and it will perish of its own meanness in six months. Nothing but the pride and power of this misguided old State has given the least prestige or semblance of respectability to the accursed movement.

The bridge over the Shenandoah at Snicker's Ferry is completed, and the division will begin its march eastward to-morrow morning. Shields's division will be left for the protection of the Valley, with head-quarters at Winchester. This all seems satisfactory enough, but I do not like the idea of our standing on the defensive any where. According to my theory every thing should move and attack unceasingly, until all armed opposition to the Government is crushed, and the Southern people liberated from their oppressors.

March 21.—Clouds. Hearing that my wife and daughter had reached Charlestown, I wished to see them before starting on a distant campaign. The General accorded the permission with his usual complaisance, and yet I thought I detected some reluctance in his manner. As I could think of no reason why I should forego my visit, I determined to use the privilege without inquiring further. The General himself leaves to-day for Washington, and from there will join his command on the Rappahannock. McClellan has fallen back from Manassas, and is transporting the army by water to Fortress Monroe. He will move on Richmond by way of Yorktown and Williamsburg. This is the plan upon which every thing has been waiting. I must confess I do not see its advantages. We can not beat the rebellion by strategy or manoeuvring. We must beat it by main force.

In due time I reached Charlestown, and spent a happy evening with my family. We celebrated the twelfth anniversary of my daughter's birth, and the feast was cheered with the tidings of Burnside's victory at Newbern, in North Carolina.

March 25.—Clouds. Returning from an afternoon walk I met an acquaintance, who, with some trepidation of manner, informed me that there was a rumor of an engagement near Winchester; that Shields was wounded, and the battle still raging. As my informant was a loyalist I was somewhat disturbed by the news, but thought it exaggerated perhaps. These tidings, although vague, served to ruffle the serenity of the evening. After I had gone to bed I was aroused by a knock at my chamber door. My brother-in-law had called to inform me that there certainly had been a battle near Winchester, and the National troops had suffered great loss. This was conclusive as far as it went, but it did not prevent my sleeping soundly.

March 24.—I called on Colonel Maulsby, who commanded the post, and asked for news of the fight yesterday. He could give me no satisfaction as to its character or results, but said his regiment had marching orders. This looked serious; so, taking leave of my family and friends, I started for Winchester by the Berryville turnpike. As I rode out of town I met a friend, who earnestly endeavored to dissuade me from riding alone. He said the country was full of rebel cavalry, who would make an especial mark of me. I felt the full force of his friendly remonstrance, knowing that he was in the confidence of the enemy. But for that reason I was the less disposed to acknowledge any timidity. I thanked him for his friendly warning, touched my pistol, and rode on my way.

As I passed Clifton I saw five mounted men in gray approaching. I handled my revolver and stood on my guard, determined not to surrender on any terms. To my relief, they turn-
ed out to be a party of fugitive servants. Three of them were mulatto boys from Winchester, who had taken service with some of our officers. The sound of the guns had so alarmed them that they started forthwith for a free State. I advised them to keep directly on to Harper’s Ferry, deliver up their horses, and report to the commandant there. A little further on I saw at some distance ahead a group of saddled horses standing by the road-side. They resembled the horses of the local rebel cavalry. I hesitated a moment, but at length determined to push through. As I passed I perceived that several of the horses wore side-saddles, indicating rebels, but not dangerous ones. On nearing Berryville it was with unfeigned pleasure that I returned the salute of a Federal sentinel, and presently thereafter met an acquaintance of the Topographical party. He informed me that Mr. Luce had gone out the day before with Henshaw, the teamster, to survey the road toward Milwood, and that both had been captured—wagon, horses, instruments, and all. This is a fate we have often half jealously prophesied would befall him. I inquired the news from Winchester, but my friend had heard nothing of a battle there.

In this uncertainty I entered Berryville. Here I found Colonel Gordon, of the Second Massachusetts, with his regiment, on the march for Winchester. There had been a severe battle, and all Banks’s troops were recalled and moving thitherward. The enemy had been worsted, and was retreating toward Strasburg. I suggested to Gordon, who was in command of a brigade, that Banks’s troops, now on the Berryville and Snicker’s Gap road, should march directly toward Strasburg, and thus cut off the enemy’s retreat or take him in flank. The Colonel’s orders were peremptory, and he could not assume so much responsibility. We rode to Winchester together, and there had the first satisfactory news. Jackson had been severely beaten, and was in full retreat, ours pursuing.

Without dismounting I rode out to look at the field of battle, which was about three and a half miles distant, on the ridges west of Keswick. Broken fences and fields deeply rutted by the wheels of the artillery first indicated that I had arrived upon the ground. Presently I saw the dead body of an artilleryman, with the top of his head blown off. The body had been inclosed in a pen of rails to prevent its disturbance by hogs. Passing through a wood I perceived further traces of the fight in the splintered forest trees. At length reached the ground where our line of battle stood, and there saw some of our soldiers engaged in collecting and guarding the slain. Some thirty or forty bodies were stretched side by side on a rude grille made of fence rails; others were lying as they fell in the edge of the wood. The soldiers directed me to a thicket and stone-fence, where the rebel line had been formed. On approaching this thicket I observed what appeared to be a white border about three feet broad, which belted the wood with great regularity, its lower edge some four feet from the ground. This was where the fire of the National troops had splintered the trees and reaped the undergrowth. The regularity of this terrible work was astonishing, and bore witness to the skill of our Western riflemen. Within and behind this thicket, and along the stone-fence as far as I could see, the dead of the enemy lay thickly strewed, from their dirty gray and butternut jeans clothing often difficult to distinguish from the gray limestone rocks, decayed logs, and withered leaves, among which they were lying. Of forty or fifty bodies which I took the trouble to examine every one had a bullet through the head. Upon reflection I conclude that this is owing to the fact that they fought under cover, generally with only their heads exposed, and, further, that a shot in the head kills stone-dead; and such only were left on the ground where they fell. From wounds elsewhere, however mortal, the man does not die immediately, and is usually carried out alive.

Riding about half a mile to the rear of this line I found in a stack-yard several other dead bodies of men and several horses, two of which had been completely disemboweled by a shell. Behind this position, in a lofty wood, lay another line of rebel dead, with several horses. Among them lay the body of a large white horse, which no force nor persuasion could induce my animal to approach. It is a noticeable fact that, while he stepped among the human corpses with perfect composure, the sight of one of his own kind stretched in its gore filled him with the wildest terror. And indeed it was a cruel scene for man or beast to look upon. There was even a fascination in its very ghastliness, which presently drew me back to the bloody thicket, where the dead lay in greatest numbers. Dismounting here I tied my horse to a branch, that I might stroll about at will and glut my fancy on this feast of horrors. I was alone, no living thing within sight or hearing except my horse. The sun had set, but a dusky red twilight still glimmered upon the discolored and distorted faces of the dead, and occasionally lit up with a startling gleam their stony, staring eyes.

It must be that the strong fascination which constrains us, as it were, to dwell on scenes of death and agony, apparently so revolting to our nature, has a deeper motive than the mere gratification of a morbid curiosity. In thus communing with the dying and dead, do we not instinctively seek to catch a glimpse of the world of spirits through the gate by which a soul is passing, or from the cold and cast-off garment of humanity to snatch some clew to the awful mysteries of life and death?

Darkness came on apace as I continued to wander among the rocks and bushes, thinking that perchance I might see some face that I could recognize, stumbling now and then over a hummock of gory rags, scarcely recognizable
as the withered remains of what was but yest-

terday a fellow-man, perhaps a personal friend.

Anon I heard a trampling in the leaves as of

some one approaching. It was a gaunt sow,

followed by her filthy family, who went nosing

among the bodies, tearing open the bloody hav-

ersacks, and greedily devouring the dead men’s

rations of corn-bread and crackers. I drove

the ghoul-like beasts away, and sat down at

the foot of a tree to resume my meditations.

To me this day had appeared as an epitome

of human life. The sun had risen upon me

surrounded with friends—the faithful, the lov-

ing, and the beautiful. The meridian passed

in hopeful, anxious, and changeful activity. The

evening finds me weary and dreamy amidst

silence, shadows, and death. I was glad when

the notes of a distant bugle released me from

the nightmare that seemed to bind me to this

dreary spot. Though faint and far away, it

stirred my blood like strong wine. There had

been a battle, and the banners of my country

waved in victory—

"Good Lord in heaven, it was a joy

The dead men could not kill."

I hastily mounted and rode out into the open

ground, where I met Colonel Gordon and two

officers of his staff who had also come out to

view the field.

We returned to Winchester together, and

there repaired the fatigue of the day by a

hearty supper. After this refreshment I went

out to visit the hospitals. The court-house

and several other buildings were filled to their

capacity with the wounded of both parties.

The men lay upon the floor and benches with

no other bedding than their blankets and knap-

sacks. There were wounds of all grades and

characters. Some whose upturned eyes and

stertorous breathing showed them in the ago-

nies of death. Others lay stark and quiet,

their faces covered with a hat or blanket placed

by a friendly hand. These had died after be-

ing brought in. A Confederate captain—Glancy

Jones was the name, I think—lay among the

wounded, having both eyes and the bridge of

his nose plowed out by a musket-ball. He was
delirious at intervals, and raved about forming

his company and charging. Another Confed-

erate, delirious from a bullet wound in the

head, tore off his bandages, and starting up from

his place would pitch himself about the room

so violently that he had to be carried into the

dead-room to prevent his injuring the other

wounded. He lay here exhausted and curi-

ously picking the bloody lint from his wound

and rolling it into little balls. He died before

I left the room. An Ohio volunteer lay upon

his back with the brains oozing from a shot-hole

in his head, uttering with every breath a sharp,

monotonous cry like the creaking of a wheel.

The surgeon told me he had been in this con-

dition for thirty-six hours without apparent

change. The large majority of the cases lay

quiet, and apparently without much suffering.

Many were complaining of want of something
to eat. A stout, fine-looking Federalist, sup-

posing I was a surgeon, called my attention to

his shattered thigh, observing in a cool, manly

tone that he could wait if there were more

pressing cases that required my attention; but

he did not wish to lose his leg if it could be

prevented.

The history of the battle of Kernstown, as I

understood it, is this: The Richmond authori-
ties, perceiving that the National troops were

leaving the Valley to reinforce McClellan, or-
dered Jackson to make a demonstration which

would detain them. When already in motion
to accomplish this object he received informa-
tion from a lady of Winchester that all the Yan-
kee troops had left the place except two or three
regiments which remained to guard the military
dépôts, which were filled with supplies. Act-

ing upon this information, and eager to secure

the much-needed stores, the rebel commander,

with more haste than discretion, made a rapid
dash upon the place with his whole force, con-
sisting of seven or eight thousand men with

twenty-five or thirty guns. On the afternoon

of Saturday, the 22d, his advanced cavalry un-
der Ashby attacked and drove in the Federal
pickets, and, finding no force to oppose them, actually dashed into the southern suburb of the town. Shields, with premeditated subtlety, had, on retiring from Strasburg, marched all his troops through Winchester and located them on the northern side, leaving in the town only enough for provost guard and picket duty.

This disposition deceived the fair zealot of the secret service who sent Jackson the information. The feebleness of the opposition to Ashby's dash served to confirm this impression. Shields, surprised by the suddenness and audacity of the attack, hastily collected a few men nearest at hand, and with a battery went out to drive Ashby off; while engaged in locating the guns a shell from one of the enemy's guns struck an artillery horse in the head, and exploding at the same time killed the rider and inflicted a wound on General Shields, not dangerous, but severe enough to disable him completely for the time. Ashby was driven back, and the picket line re-established, when night put an end to the encounter.

On the following morning (Shields being confined to his bed) Colonel Kimball took command by right of seniority, and marched out with about eight thousand men of Shields, and Broadhead's Cavalry of Banks's Division, tak-
ing position near Kernstown, and engaging the enemy with artillery at long shot. This game was continued during the morning without any decisive results or developments. As the day advanced the enemy's fire increased, and his lines began to press us, the infantry showing themselves in force behind some thickets and a stone-wall which served as a breast-work.

There was for a time some light skirmishing and manœuvring between the Federal right and the enemy's left to secure a flanking position. About four o'clock in the afternoon, it appearing that the enemy's artillery was predominating, the National infantry were ordered to attack. The Eighty-fourth and One Hundred and Tenth Pennsylvania, the Eighth and Fourth Ohio Regiments, executed this order with great spirit. The enemy, with the advantages of his covered position, resisted with obstinacy, and for half an hour the roll of musketry was incessant and deadly. Finally, a regiment (I think Colonel Thoburn's First Loyal Virginians) turned the rebel left, and thus, ousted from their stone-wall defenses, they were presently driven from the field with great slaughter and the loss of several guns.

Our troops followed their success zealously, and in a wood about half a mile to the rear encountered another body of the enemy, who attempted to check their advance. The resistance was spirited but unavailing, and the field was speedily cleared. Our troops, notwithstanding the rough work they had performed, were eager to follow the affair to a crashing conclusion; but the sun had already set, and they were drawn off. The senior officer on the field, probably not feeling himself sufficiently in command to insure the necessary unity of action, did not care to assume the responsibility of a further pursuit. For, as I understand, General Shields, from his bed in Winchester, still continued to receive reports and issue orders.

The débris of the enemy's force fell back upon some fresh reserves that were moving up the Valley turnpike to their support. As night had closed the action the enemy bivouacked behind Kernstown, making a great show with his fires to deter the Federals from another attack, which was much apprehended.

Next morning, March 24, Jackson was in full retreat up the Valley. General Banks got information of the battle at Harper's Ferry, where he was en route for Washington. He returned in all haste, took command, and now led the pursuit.

The National loss at Kernstown was eighty-four killed and four hundred and twenty wounded, making a total of five hundred and four. The report of wounded was needlessly swollen by an honorable emulation among the regiments to show the longest list of casualties. Many of those reported were so slightly hurt that they did not leave their ranks. The enemy's loss in killed, wounded, and missing exceeded a thousand, of whom it was estimated that six hundred were hors du combat from death and wounds, three hundred and thirty prisoners unwounded, and the unestimated residue scattered to the mountains. The dead and nearly two hundred wounded fell into our hands, with two guns and three caissons of the artillery.

The conduct and results of this action were highly creditable to the troops engaged. They had met equal numbers of the enemy on a fair field, and under a favorite leader, had driven them from strong positions, captured guns, and utterly routed them. In rebel accounts of the action it is stated, apologetically, that they commenced the fight with a single battery, supported by a handful of men; that their troops, marching rapidly up the Valley turnpike, reached the field by detachments; and that, at the conclusion of the fight, not more than twenty-five hundred, or three thousand, or four thousand had been engaged. [I have heard these diverse estimates given at different
times by rebel officers who were present, and
spoke with equal positiveness as to numbers.] 
Without pretending to decide upon the num-
erical accuracy of these statements I have no
doubt their onslaught was made in the manner
described, and that they fought with spirit, al-
though very rashly and unskillfully managed.
I am also informed by the United States offi-
cers on the field that our battle was fought en-
tirely by the infantry of our right wing, consist-
ing of half a dozen regiments named, and num-
bering in the aggregate about twenty-six hun-
dred men. Our left and centre were not en-
gaged at all. It thus appears that the fight at
Kernstown was not a general battle, but only
a partial engagement of the opposing forces.
That there was not much generalship displayed
on either side, and that, considered as a test
of the pluck and efficiency of the rank and file,
the palm belongs most indisputably to the Na-
tional infantry. Our officers all say it was the
Soldier's Battle.

Before dismissing the subject I must be al-
lowed to anticipate, that the ensemble of the
narrative may be complete. Although Jackson
had been deceived, defeated, his army nearly
ruined and fugitive, the essential point of his
campaign was gained. General Banks's force
was detained in the Valley, and most important
movements from the Rappahannock did not
take place. Whether these fatal results were
due to Jackson's strategy or Washington tactics
I am not informed.

March 25.—This morning I started for the
front, diverging from the direct road, to look
again at the battle-field. I saw several par-
ties of citizens, male and female, looking
among the bodies for their relatives and ac-
quaintances. Those recognized were covered
with a sheet and carried away. Beyond the
field I found the Mayor of Winchester with a
party engaged in collecting and burying the
unclaimed dead in a trench. There were se-
veral young women here searching for their
friends as the corpses were carted in. Travel-
ning from hence across the fields I struck the
Valley turnpike at Newtown, and rode from
there directly on to Strasburg, where I found
General Banks's head-quarters. The pursuit
had added a few prisoners to our count, but
otherwise was futile, and had been aban-
doned.
A LONDON POLICE COURT.

WHAT a record of folly, of guilt, of squalid want, improvidence, and vice—of fashionable dissipation and vulgar crime—is that curious document of many-handed signatures and fabulous nomenclature called the "Charge Sheet," which is placed before the magistracy every morning, and faithfully reports the misdoings of the district—or rather, such of them as are "found out"—during the preceding night! You might almost fancy, on glancing at the names of the offenders, that the criminality of London is about equally divided among the Smiths, the Joneses, and the Johnsens of the town.

Here is the hopeful son and heir of my Lord Screwhay taking his turn in the dock with "Opera Jack," "Seven Dial Sam," and "Bedford-bury Bill," just out on ticket-of-leave. And the women, too! The bearded stranger from a foreign land, who has just stepped in to get a taste of London life "under lock-and-key," may well look startled to see the proportion which the fair and tender sex maintains in that sad collection of "night-charges"; for it is a fact that nearly two-thirds of the daily complaints for rioting and drunkenness are preferred against women.

But the sanguine believer in the popular notion that there is a law for the rich and none for the poor, must wait till the night-charges are disposed of, and the "summons-business" begins, if he would learn how the said "poor" would be likely to improve their shining hours if greater facilities were afforded them for taking "legal proceedings" against one another.

To-day there are sixteen summonses on the list, having relation to sixteen assaults, committed by sixteen people (nearly all women) against sixteen other people—each of the complainants and defendants being armed with at least half a dozen witnesses, ready to swear point-blank against each other: and oh, gentle reader, if you would see the oath-swearers system in all its fullness of perfection, take thyself unto Bow Street or Worship Street some thirsty July afternoon, and behold a well-educated gentleman sitting in open court, and receiving £1200 a year, chiefly for adjusting the squabbles arising daily among the female denizens of his district, who have parted with their only shawls or shoes to obtain the price of the summons—a charge of two shillings, imposed by the Legislature in the vain hope of checking frivolous complaints.

It is worthy of note that the magistrates, having their peculiarities also, adopt altogether different methods of dealing with this class of business.

His Worship, Mr. A., being a stickler for legal precision in regard to the rules of evidence, stops the witness every two minutes to remind her of the "inadmissibility of statements irrelevant to the case, or having reference to alleged misdemeanors not embraced in the terms of the summons." Thus:

"Please yer Worship, this female at the bar, if she can call herself such—"

"Now, my good woman, no reflections upon the defendant, if you please."

"Well, Sir, ever since last Tuesday-week, come next Christmas twelvemonth—"

"Never mind about next Christmas twelvemonth. Be good enough to confine yourself to what occurred last week."

"Please yer Worship, she told Mr. Waters, her landlord—"

"Don't bother us with what she said to Mr. Waters, the landlord, but tell us what she said to you" (getting angry).

"Well, Sir" (getting confused), "Mrs. Finch told me—"

"Never mind what Mrs. Finch told you" (enraged); "it isn't evidence, and it can't be taken down."

In this way half an hour or more is consumed in the useless effort to get an ignorant woman to conform with the principles of evidence, as laid down by the recognized decisions of the courts.

But his Worship's brother-magistrate, Mr. B., is not so scrupulous about the legal restrictions imposed by the forensic wisdom of ages in the way of giving common evidence. His theory, in dealing with a woman especially, is to let her have her own say in her own way. By suffering this simple process of self-exhaustion to go on it is surprising how soon the real facts