PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE WAR.

BY A VIRGINIAN.

[First Paper.]

IT is with unfeigned reluctance that I have undertaken to write upon subjects which have been so recently and exhaustively treated by contemporaneous pens and pencils; to pass over ground which has been illuminated by the calcium light of the American press; or to touch on questions which have been subjected to the intelligent scrutiny of Congressional Committees; yet I am encouraged by the hope that views taken from an original and somewhat peculiar stand-point may still possess sufficient attraction to justify their publication, and that a personal narrative, with all its incidental trivialities, errors, inconsistencies, and egotism, may find an acceptable apology in the superior interest of the grand historic drama with which it is interwoven.

A native of the valley of the Shenandoah, I have passed the greater part of my life on the Northern border of Virginia—a region which, from its geographical position and mixed population, has always been debatable ground between the contending opinions of the age, and which eventually became a most important theatre of the war, resulting from these opinions. It is thus that I became, almost from necessity, an interested observer of many of the opening scenes of the contest, and subsequently an active participant in its armed solution.

During the winter of 1860-61 I was residing at my father's house in Martinsburg, occupied with my private affairs and arranging plans for a future of peace and seclusion. These dreams were disturbed from time to time by the indications of the approaching storm, but I resolutely closed my eyes and stopped my ears, determined not to be disturbed. I had never taken any active interest in the party politics of the day, and was the less disposed to mingle in the present strife, as I sympathized with neither of the extreme factions which, from opposite quarters, seemed to be mutually intent on breaking down the Government and destroying the peace and prosperity of the country. I saw nothing in the contest but the rage of adverse dogmatisms, sharpened by the baser lust for official plunder—that party spirit, which, Addison says, "robs men, not only of all honor and decency, but of every particle of common sense."

In the rapid progress of events, however, it became manifest that the questions before the country were not to be put aside with this cyn-
ical and superficial observation. Under a mon-
archy a subject may be permitted to seclude
himself from the political storms that shake
thrones and menace dynasties. Even amidst
the fury of war he can calmly pursue some fa-
vorite science with reasonable assurance that
his motive and character will be respected. The
citizen of a free Republic can claim no such
privilege. "The price of his personal liberty
is eternal vigilance." Under whatever pretext
he may seek to hide himself or evade the re-
sponsibilities of his condition, when the storm
rises he is sure to feel his neighbor's hand upon
his shoulder, and hear the cry of warning and
reproach: "What meanest thou, O sleeper?
arise and call upon thy God."

It was, indeed, high time that the Border
Virginians should awake, for the gulf that was
opening between the adverse sections yawned
beneath their very hearts; and the sword which
was drawn to divide the nation must also cut
their hearts in twain. When, at length, im-
pelled to the serious consideration of the im-
pending crisis, I can not boast, as many do,
that I clearly appreciated the merits of the quar-
el or foresaw its results. Preferring to pre-
serve a reputation for frankness to the doubt-
ful honor of being enrolled among the ex post
ficto prophets, I am fain to acknowledge (in
the phrasology of tobacco planters) that I had
very few opinions "ready cut and dry" for the
occasion. I heard nothing but a confusion of
tongues such as followed the destruction of Ba-
bel. I saw nothing but political chaos which
seemed about to swallow up government, law,
life, and property together. There had been
a prevalent and growing conviction among what
were called Conservative men, especially at the
South, that the experiment of popular Govern-
ment was a failure. Macaulay had written a
letter to some one prophesying that the Ameri-
can system would break down on the first se-
rious trial. I shared this belief to some extent.
The revolutionary anarchy which was spreading
like a fire from State to State, the seeming hel-
lessness of the General Government, the chaos
of opinion—all combined to convince me that
the predicted day of trial had arrived, and that
it needed no Daniel to interpret the handwrit-
ing on the wall.

Impressed at the same time with the belief
that we were entering upon an era which would
figure in history, I determined to take advan-
tage of my position to observe the progress of
events and to keep a Diary.

This promise, however, was but negligent-
lly performed at first. During the winter of
1860-61 I find nothing recorded beyond an
occasional comment, opinion, or anecdote sug-
gested by the current news, and these jotted
down hastily, without date or continuity. In
time my journal became more methodical, and
after I entered the military service was as full
and accurate as possible under the circum-
stances.

In preparing these notes for the press I have
endeavored to preserve all the freshness and
personality which pertain to the original manu-
script. If some things have been omitted (that
might be worth the telling, in place and season),
and certain obscure passages made clearer by
the light of after-knowledge, in the main the
recorded facts and opinions of the day remain
unchanged. There will appear the uncertain
prophesies, the hallucinations, the inconsistencies
of opinion, the errors of hasty and partial ob-
servation, the vain hopes, the senseless fears,
the embittered prejudices, and excited passions
which necessarily accompany the progress of a
political revolution, so radical and comprehen-
sive, accomplished through a social war so
bloody and vindictive as that which has recent-
ly ended.

It will be also seen that in writing these in-
dividual experiences it is not proposed to emu-
late the dignity and comprehensiveness of His-
tory, but to give closer and more detailed views of
characters and events, a series of photo-
graphe pictures hastily caught, during the ac-
tion of the changing drama. Scenes where the
greatness of little things, and the littleness of
great things, will sometimes be strikingly illu-
trated by juxtaposition, where tragedy and com-
edry, laughter and tears, frenzy and face walk
arm in arm together. And it may be that a
more thoughtful class who would look behind
the creaking machinery and tinselled actors of
the drama, may find in these crude and un-
skilled observations suggestion of queries which
will be found as difficult to answer as those of
the poet laureate:

—"Shall error in the round of time
Still father truth? O shall the blazier show
For some blind glimpse of crimson work itself
Through madness, honest by the wire, in law,
System, and empire? Sir! shall he found
The cloudy ports, off opening on the sea?"

Having thus indicated the geographical and
political stand-point from which my opening
views of the war were taken, I commence tran-
scribing from my Diary.

——South Carolina has actually seceded!
and what of that? South Carolina is a great
way off, and has been threatening Secession
for thirty years or more. The Tyranny of
1776 has never died out in South Carolina, nor
have her gentry ever fully acquiesced in our
republican form of government. It is high
time the questions between her and the coun-
try were settled. I wish she had made up her
mind to try conclusions with Andrew Jackson,
when she had her hand raised to pluck the for-
bidden fruit. Does she think it more nearly
ripe now? or that the present "Old Man"
won't throw stones? I'll vonch for it, that if
he does not, somebody will.

——.I am rather glad South Carolina has tak-
en this decisive step. Her arrogance and rash-
ness have arrayed even her Southern neigh-
bors against her. She will not be supported
by a single State. I have not heard a voice
raised in her behalf. Even those who have
heretofore been most vociferous about Southern
rights unite in condemning her premature pre-
sumption. A ship of war in the harbor of
Charleston, and a battalion of national troops
thrown into the forts, will quench South Caro-
line as briefly as one may snuff out a tallow dip
with his thumb and finger.

"Sedition is like fire, easily extinguished
at the commencement, but the longer it burns
the more fiercely it blazes."

South Carolina is not quenched, and
there seems to be no disposition on the part of
those in power to put the extinguisher on her.
As she pursues her course of presumptuous
madness with impunity other States are
following her example.

Each day brings tidings of fresh out-
rages and humiliations heaped upon the Gov-
ernment, seizures of arsenals, arms, forts, dock-
yards, and vessels—of traitorous officers sur-
rendering their charges without defense—of
faithful officers arrested and thrown into pris-
on, besieged in forts where they are cut off
from supplies and assistance—our national flag
hauled down and trampled in the dust, with all
its glorious historic memories, to be replaced by
some tawdry rag flaunting an obscene device
known only to local office-holders and militia-
men.

The effect of this state of things is distinctly
perceptible in the tone of opinion around us.
State Sovereignty dogmatism is becoming daily
more open and arrogant. County court meta-
physicians are modifying their Unionism with
if's and ands and peradventures—small anglers
in the mud-puddle of village tavern opinion are
drawing in their lines and changing their bait
—petty politicians are craftily trimming their
sails that their cock-boats may run with the
rising wind. But while the weak-kneed are
thus tottering, and trimmers fluttering in the
breeze, the storm serves to fan to fiercer flame
the indignation of all true men. All eyes and
hearts are now turned toward Washington, ex-
pectant, eager, hopeful. There centres the
power which in its infancy has met and twice
foiled the giant of Great Britain, which in the
very wantonness of its lusty youth made a holi-
day frolic of throttling poor Mexico. What
will the Government do in this crisis?

Is it secret sympathy with treason or
mere drivelng that tells the American people
"the Government has no right to coerce a
State?"—a nation that for more than eighty
years has maintained fleets and armies, has
waged wars and made peace, has collected cus-
toms and coined money; whose commerce cov-
ers the globe, whose flag is known and honored
wherever the sun shines; whose power and
civilization are acknowledged by the proudest
and most enlightened peoples; whose future
promises to surpass in grandeur all that history
has yet recorded. Such a nation has not the
right to suppress domestic insurrection! So
vast an aggregation of power, prosperity, and
hope must submit quietly and unresistingly to
perish at the bidding of a local faction, a con-
federacy of visionary schemers, conceited dog-
matists, self-deluding and self-stultifying econ-
omists—base hucksters, who unblushingly pre-
tend to barter the national honor and safety for
the advantage of cheap negroes and a good cot-
ton market; unprincipled politicians, whose vul-
pine instincts have warned them that the power
and places which they have so long abused and
so deeply corrupted are about to be withdrawn
from their keeping!

Is nothing lawful or constitutional but the
outrages of revolutionary mobs, the violation
of solemn oaths, the plundering of national prop-
erty, and the babbling of seditious orators?

Is the Government we have loved and trust-
ed indeed so pitiable and impotent a sham?
Have the founders, whom we have been ac-
customed to regard as wise and good men, rea-

tly put such a scurril trick upon us? Have we
built houses, laid up wealth, begot children, ac-
quired honors, and recreated in boasting and
self-glorification under the delusion of a Politi-
cal Idea that would disgrace a council of Potta-
matomies?

Such are the questions that loyal Virginians
in the bitterness of their humiliation now ask
each other, as the daily mails bring in the ac-
cumulating details of rebel outrage, arrogance,
and menace, responded to only by governmental
acquiescence, deprecatory remonstrance, and
despicable compromise.

"Ah, God! for a man with heart, head, hand,
Like some of the simple great ones gone
For ever and ever by—
One still strong man in a blatant land,
Whatever they call him, what care I.
Aristocrat, Democrat, Autocrat—one
Who can rule and dare not lie."

The proposition to call a Convention in
Virginia is opposed by all discreet men. The
people of the State are opposed to Secession, or
even to the consideration of the subject. This
idea of a Convention is only a scheme of cer-
tain Richmond conspirators to get the repre-
sentative power of the Commonwealth under
their hands into a more compact and conven-
tient form for manipulation.

In the recent election for members of the
Convention the people of Virginia have ex-
pressed their determination to remain in the
Union by an overwhelming majority. Glori-
ously has the good old State vindicated her
honorable traditions and the memory of those
noble sons whose effigies fill the chief places in
the National Pantheon.

We have been wrong in doubting the solidi-
ity of popular government. Solomon says:
"Many are in high place and of renown, but
mysteries are revealed to the meek." So
it seems in our day—while our statesmen are
turned drivelers, our honorables colloquing
with treason, the wise and crafty mazed in a
labyrinth of foolishness, the simple faith of the
people is steadfast, and is alone sufficient to
save us. While those learned in the law and
subtle expounders of constitutions are choking
us with the metaphysical doubts and twaddle, comes forth the plowman from his field, the grimy artisan from his shop, the meek, unlettered citizen, without Latin enough to translate "E pluribus unum," and barely English enough to decipher the vernacular "United we stand, divided we fall." This comprises all his knowledge of statesmanship. He never has read any Constitutions, or Bills of Rights, or Resolutions of '98, or Congressional Debates. It is well for the country, perhaps, that he has not, or they might have added his brains as they have those of many others; yet, though his political creed is so simple, he understands it, not so clearly with his head as with his heart. He learned it from his father, who fought under Jackson in 1812; who learned it from his father, who marched with Washington in 1776. He has taught it to his bare-legged boy, who tends the plow or blows the bellows at the forge. He has faith in it, and will stand by it when the day of trial comes. We, the people of these United States, will not be divided. I have never seen our people so serious on the occasion of an election. They seem to have had an instinctive warning of coming evil, and, distrusting their old political leaders, have spurned the party trammels and personal prejudices which have heretofore influenced them. They seem every where in the State to have chosen the best men that were offered. Virginia is safe. I thank God for this signal rebuke to those degenerate Virginians who would have sold this glorious old Commonwealth as a convenient tool to the weak and selfish schemers of the Gulf States—a tool to be worked with, ruined, and scorned.

.....We have vexatious news from Richmond. The tone of the Convention seems to be giving way. The pressure brought to bear against the Unionists is said to be very heavy. The oily blandishments of a wealthy and polished society are spread to catch the lighter flies; the weak and convinced are taken with wordy subtleties; the venal are bought by promises; the timid assailed with insult and menace. Hired bullies and howling mobs besiege the Convention in its Courts, and follow the Union members to their lodgings, threatening assassination and lynch law. Some have yielded with a facility which indicates that their treachery was premeditated. Simultaneously with these proceedings at Richmond I perceive the State is flooded with letters, printed documents, and oratorical emissaries, circulating the most baseless impurities, backed by the most insinuating threats, intended to bring the people over to the support of the proposed action of the Convention in favor of Secession.

It is declared that if the State can not be carried out by an ordinance of the Convention it shall be by armed revolution, and war to those who oppose it.

It is frankly asserted, moreover, that of the voting population of Virginia not more than thirty thousand are uncompromising Secessionists, against an equal number of decided and unconditional Unionists; the usual bodies, and estates of the remaining one hundred thousand conservative, vacillating, and undecided citizens would belong to the victor in the contest, serving to swell their triumph and assure their power. They hopefully claim that the Secessionists have in their ranks all the

PARK FOREST.
active fighting element, all the available political ability, arms, organization, and a determined purpose, besides complete control of all branches of the State and municipal government. The domineering insolence of their tone seems to give assurance of triumph before it is actually achieved.

The Unionists, they say, on the other hand, are conservative, timid, unprepared, deprecatory, without organization or positive purpose. They must therefore succumb or leave the State. This is Richmond opinion; but Virginia is a State of imperial boundaries, and these James River people will find out ere long that:

"There are hills beyond Pentland
And streams beyond Forth."

......I have just returned from a visit to Charlestown. The politicians and tavern loungers are very full of Secession talk, but, as far as I could learn, the more solid men and rural gentry are decidedly adverse to it.

In returning I called at Park Forest, the birth-place of my father. The white family was from home, but the clouds of high-bred poultry which surrounded the establishment gave an idea of the bountiful and succulent hospitality of rural life in Jefferson. All the surroundings betokened easy and plenteous living. In the kitchen I found the cook—a picture of abundance, shining with greasey contentment, all unconscious of the coming wars, and unambitious of the glorious future destined for her race.

With hospitable alacrity she brewed me the needful cup of coffee, and I pursued my solitary way. The road I took was through a wooded and secluded region traversing the Opequan pine hills, so my time was occupied with melancholy musings: "There will be war. Thirty years of political wrangling have made war inevitable. 'As the smoke and vapor of the furnace goeth before the fire, so reviling before blood.'"

There must be war. Four-score years of unchecked and unexampled prosperity has made the nation drunk—"Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked."

There must be war. These convulsions are essential to the political as storms and tornadoes are to the physical world. We have gone a very long time without one. That of 1812 was superficial. The war with Mexico a mere joke. The restless and growing energies of
our people have for eighty years been
turned toward the subjugation of nature.
The continent has at length succumbed.
Our pioneers return disappointed and check-
ked from the shores of the Pacific. The con-
tinuity of the nation’s dream has been inter-
rupted. There are no more El Dorados to
explore, to waste and cast aside like broken
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while a more elegant but equally vigorous physique characterizes the polished, proud, subtle, ambitious, warlike, domineering class who will lead them.

The Southern editors, on the other hand, jealous of assumed Northern pre-eminence in silly and brazen imposture, make haste to assure their readers that the people of the late United States are now a frantic mob of Yankees and abolitionists, manufacturers of wooden nutmegs and patent apple-peelers, seedy pedagogues and brain-sick ideologists, and won't fight. Now if these adverse utterances are any thing more than the ravings of partisan passion—if the people of the sections do entertain such opinions of each other, it is high time they had a war. It will then be shown satisfactorily to both parties whether or not the hardy pioneers who have subjugated a rugged continent to the sons of the Vikings, who have driven the whales from the high seas, will fight, and whether or not the dominating lords of Southern soil and sorrows are effective.

...Although this people has been chiefly occupied in talking politics for eighty years or more, I can not perceive that they have made any advance toward enlightenment on the subject. Not one man in ten of those I meet seems to have the slightest idea of where his duty or allegiance lies in the present crisis. This condition of things reminds me of Italy in former times, when popes, emperors, dukes, freebooters, municipalities, miracle-mongers, and dogmatists disputed for empire and the right of fleecing the distracted masses. Our people choose sides positively enough sometimes, but they seem to be decided more by passion, prejudice, or interest than by any clearly-defined principle. The masses are certainly adverse to the secession movement, yet they seem to be yielding to the revolution—yielding to arrogant assumption, terrorism, rather than a sense of right.

...Fort Sumter surrendered; the President calls for seventy-five thousand men to suppress the insurrection. This is a great relief, as it brings the question to a decision, and puts an end to foolish speeches and arguments. It is at least a consolation to know that the Government will not perish ignobly of immolation.

There is a great amount of sentiment about brothers imbruing their hands in each other's blood, as if it was not the most invariable of natural laws that both love and hate attain their fullest measure by reason of propinquity. One who loves his neighbor's daughter and hates his rival over the way attains to a sublimity of passion which could never be awakened by remote objects.

...A border war at home—we have romance and ruin staring us in the face. Ten years ago I should not have thought it so great a misfortune. For me it comes too late; I have nothing left but to let the world wag—

"I shall bury myself in my books,
And the devil may pipe to his own."

...I had hoped the decisive results of the recent election would have quieted the ferment about secession in Virginia, but it seems not. The people appear uneasy and distrustful of those they have chosen to represent them. The reports from Richmond are unfavorable, they say. The Union delegates are parleying with their adversaries, arguing questions of States rights, and considering compromises. This does not satisfy the people. They wish the Convention to vote down the question of secession conclusively—to emphasize the adherence of Virginia to the Union under all circumstances—then to adjourn and come home. They insist that unless this is done presently they will be betrayed and sold.

...It is reported that certain Secessionists in a neighboring county are arranging a plot to seize upon the Government arsenals at Harper's Ferry. Several members of the Union Association at Martinsburg have applied to me to take command of five hundred volunteers, who are ready to march to the defense of the place against any unlawful attempts whatsoever. I assured them that the United States, forewarned, would certainly take care of the place. It would also require a large sum to provision and maintain so many men for an uncertain time; and it would be more judicious to hold themselves in readiness and not attempt to act until called on by the Government. In that case I promised to command them.

April 18, 1861.—This morning I took the cars at Sir John's for the purpose of visiting Charlestown on personal business. A stranger from the West who sat beside me opened conversation on the all-absorbing subject: Would Virginia secede? I replied, somewhat dogmatically perhaps, "That she would not, and could not." I then went on to explain to him the grounds for my assertion, the immense popular majority in the State opposed to it, the decided majority in the Convention against
secession under any circumstances. The high personal and political character of that body. The impossibility of their betraying their constituents. Their pledges, their interests, their common sense forbid the supposition. They would never dare to face the people of Virginia with the stain of so dark a treachery on their souls. By the time the train reached Harper's Ferry I had quieted the apprehensions of my fellow-passenger, and had argued myself into a very contented frame of mind.

As we passed the Armory shops I observed they were closed. And the United States soldiers there on duty (fifty or sixty men) stood in groups about the grounds apparently awaiting orders. As the train stopped opposite the hotel I missed the mob of idlers that usually crowded the platform, but remarked a collection of half a dozen gentlemen standing near the steps which led to the telegraph office. While engaged in getting my baggage I heard my name called by one of the group, and on approaching recognized several acquaintances, whose presence there at that time struck me as ominous. Among them were Captain II. Turner Ashby and a stranger whom I afterward ascertained was Mr. J. A. Seddon of Richmond. I felt assured, from the anxiety expressed in their faces and the restlessness of their manner, that some extraordinary occasion had assembled them here; but I was not allowed much time for speculation, for as Ashby advanced to shake hands with me he said, "We are here in the name of the State of Virginia to take possession of Harper's Ferry. Three thousand Virginians are marching to support us, and I am expecting their arrival every moment. They should have been here ere this. An Ordinance of Secession has been passed by the Convention, and the Navy-yard at Norfolk is already in our hands."

I was so stunned by these revelations that I had scarcely breath to utter the usual and appropriate ejaculation of astonishment—"The Devil!"

Ashby further stated that he had taken possession of the telegraph office, and then walking to and fro and looking at his watch at every turn, gave vent to reiterated expressions of impatience at the non-appearance of the expected forces.

As I rallied from the surprise into which I had been thrown by these sudden developments, I began to wonder what the authorities at Washington were dreaming of, and why the Government troops were lying idle in their barracks. I saw but half a dozen men who seemed to be arranging their plans and awaiting reinforcements at their leisure. Why were they not immediately arrested or shot down?

I also began to feel annoyed at finding myself the recipient of these quasi-confidential communications from persons with whom I had formerly had agreeable social relations and some affinity in political sentiment, but whose present position was abhorrent to me. The frank and unreserved manner in which they detailed their plans seemed purposely designed to implicate me, at least by approval, and I was glad when a direct question afforded me the opportunity of undeceiving them.

R—asked, "How many men can we bring from Martinsburg to sustain them?"

I answered, "None at all; we are all Union men at Martinsburg." This reply appeared to startle them, and was followed by an interchange of significant glances among the party.

Ashby then said that he had always been a sincere Union man heretofore, but that as the action of the General Government had already destroyed the Union he now felt bound to stand by his State.

R—said that he too always had been a Union man, and was one now, but felt himself driven into the present movement as the only means of preserving the Union. Although I could not perceive the adaptation of the means to the end, I wished him success.

The whistle of the Charleston cars terminated a conversation which had become embarrassing, and I took leave of my acquaintances with decidedly less of cordiality than had been exhibited at our meeting.

In passing around to the platform of the Winchester and Potomac Railroad I became aware for the first time that the street in front of the Armory-yard was crowded with people, a number of whom were engaged in a rough and tumble fight, accompanied with the usual noise and hubbub appertaining to this Democratic amusement.

A bystander informed me that the crowd was composed chiefly of Government employees, citizens of the town at large and from the surrounding country. Lieutenant Jones, in command of the United States troops, had been endeavoring to enlist the Armory men in the defense of the place, while Barbour, late superintendent and member of the Convention, was there with other secession demagogues, endeavoring to induce them to join the State troops, or at least to remain neutral during the expected attack. The artisans in the employ of the Government had for several years past been organized and equipped for military service, and could have reinforced the guard to the extent of three hundred men well drilled and skilled in the use of arms.

As the great majority of these men were native Virginians, but citizens of the country at large, depending upon the General Government for their means of support, and the perpetuity of the Armory for the continued value of any local property they might have acquired, it is natural to suppose they would have eagerly volunteered to resist a movement which menaced them with total and immediate ruin.

But Harper's Ferry had been for a long time little other than a political stew, more occupied with the intrigues of district politicians than devoted to the objects for which it had been founded and maintained. The United States
officer found that he could not rely on any considerable number of them for assistance. Division of opinion, drunkenness, confusion, and fisticuff fights were the only results obtained. The sight of this tumultuous crowd, however, explained to me why the small guard was kept quiescent in the Armory grounds. Without delaying longer to unravel this entanglement I took the train and proceeded to Charlestown. Here there was as much excitement as at Harper's Ferry, but among a different class of people, and consequently less noisy and vulgar in its demonstrations.

The Jefferson Volunteer Battalion, organized and armed under pretexts founded on the John Brown affair, stood paraded in the street, in marching order. As almost every family in the county had one or more representatives in the ranks, there was a hurrying to and fro of mothers, sisters, sweet-hearts, wives, and children of the Volunteers, showing their agitation and excitement in the most varied and opposite forms. In a community so seceded, and so essentially Virginian, there could not be found many uninterested spectators on an occasion like this. Every body was neighbor and cousin to every body else, and political dissension had not yet reached the point where it sears hearts and poisons the fountains of social sympathy. Even the negroes were jubilant in view of the parade and unusual excitement among their masters and mistresses. Yet I thought I could discern in the eyes, of some of the older and wiser woolly-heads a gleam of anxious speculation—a silent and tremulous questioning of the future.

There were also some among the white citizens who stood aloof in silence and sadness, protesting against the proceeding by an occasional bitter sigh or significant snore, but nothing more. I recognized in the ranks some that I had known as Union men, whose restless and troubled looks seemed to question me as I passed.

I had scarcely got through greeting the friends I had come to visit when I was waited on by Captain Lawson Botts, an officer of the regiment, a citizen highly esteemed for his general intelligence and probity, and known as a decided and uncompromising opponent of secession doctrines. Calling me aside, in a manner which evidenced great and painful excitement, he asked "what I thought of the present state of affairs?" I replied by asking what was the meaning of this martial array, and why I saw him armed and equipped as a participator? He said that Ashby and Seddon had arrived that morning from Richmond, and, in the name of the Governor of Virginia, had ordered the regiment to which he belonged to assemble and march immediately on Harper's Ferry, to take possession of the United States armories and arsenals there, and hold them for the State. I then gave him an account of my conversation with Ashby and his colleagues, and what I had seen at Harper's Ferry.

As these gentlemen had advisedly, perhaps, communicated their plans to me, I might under ordinary circumstances have felt avverse to saying or doing anything calculated to thwart them. I had determined not to meddle with public affairs, and did not care to exhibit any officious zeal in a matter respecting which the Government was doubtless better informed than myself. Yet there was a nearer view of the subject. If anything I could say would prevent Captain Botts, or any of my young friends and kinsmen whom I had seen under arms, from taking a step which I was assured would be fatal to them, I certainly would not permit any trifling punctilio to interfere with a full expression of my views. I told him that I considered the whole movement an atrocious swindle, contrived by a set of desperate and unprincipled conspirators at Richmond, who, fearing that their treasonable schemes would be denounced by the people at the polls, had determined to plunge the State irrevocably into a war with the General Government without allowing an opportunity for the expression of popular opinion on the question.

I did not believe the statements made to me at Harper's Ferry in regard to the passage of an act of Secession by the Convention and the seizure of the Norfolk Navy-yard. There was no public information that either of these events had occurred, and it was impossible that these gentlemen, who had come by the inland route from Richmond, could have knowledge of occurrences at Norfolk in advance of the telegraph. On the other hand, it was clearly evident that they were agents of the Revolutionary Committee, whose business it was to precipitate the events referred to by accomplishing the seizure of Harper's Ferry. Moreover, what does it signify if all the agencies of the State—Governor, Legislature, and Convention combined—should order you to draw your sword against your country. Can you feel yourself in any manner bound to obey such an order? Does it not rather prove to you that those whom the people have intrusted with the management of their State affairs have themselves turned traitors and are conspiring against our common Government? So far from feeling it my duty to obey under such circumstances, I would, if I had control of these troops, march them to Harper's Ferry and, without hesitation, arrest and imprison every man I found there engaged in this infernal business, and then offer my services to the United States Government for the defense of the place. I believed that such action would be not only right and justifiable in itself, but would be highly applauded by the people of Virginia. Unless this rebellious movement was immediately met with some such decisive counteraction we would presently find both our State and country involved in revolutionary anarchy, with a future of irretrievable ruin.

Without hoping to obtain his acquiescence
in my extreme views, I was nevertheless gratified to perceive that what I said made its impression upon Captain Botts. Educated at a Southern college, the narrow political ideas so sedulously inculcated at those schools still combated the more liberal and national teachings of his maturity life. His social sympathies and soldierly pride were also enlisted in the struggle against his clearer and higher sense of duty to his country. Thanking me courteously for my frankness he left me for a time, and I saw him engaged in earnest and excited conversation with some of his brother-officers. Presently he returned and asked if I would repeat to the field-officers of the regiment what I had said to him.

I consented without hesitation, and accompanied him to a private room, where I met Colonel Allen and some others. I here repeated substantially what I had said to Captain Botts—with somewhat more of reserve in language, however, as I was not so well acquainted with the gentlemen present. I was heard with respect and evident emotion. A printed proclamation, which had been circulated by the Richmond emissaries, was brought in and subjected to critical discussion. It was a call upon the volunteer military and the people generally to rise and protect their honor, their property, and their rights, by seizing the national arsenals at Harper's Ferry. It recited the passage of the Secession Ordinance and the seizure of the Norfolk Navy-yard, and was signed by Turner Ashby, claiming to act by order of the Governor of Virginia. On examination it was pronounced unsatisfactory, and Colonel Allen declared that unless he had some better authority his regiment should not move. He, moreover, became excited at the suggestion that there was an attempt to practice deception by the State agents: and declared that if they had dared to deceive him he would hold them to personal account.

Acquaintances of Messrs. Ashby and Seddon insisted that they were honorable men, and that their personal statements had been more clear and conclusive than the printed circular. I asserted broadly that I did not believe either what they had said or what was published, and that in times like the present I would trust no man's word or honor who was acting with the revolutionary junto, whatever might have been his previous character.

After some further discussion it was determined by the Colonel that the regiment should move to Halltown, the appointed place of rendezvous, but they should go no further unless he obtained more satisfactory authority from the State Government.

I was disappointed at this conclusion, for I felt assured that, once at the rendezvous, influences would be brought to bear which would carry Colonel Allen forward in spite of himself; and as he was disposed to acknowledge the validity of an order from a State officer commanding him to make war on the United States, I did not doubt he would be speedily furnished with such authority.

Although apparently acquiescing in the Colonel's decision, I could perceive that Captain Botts was as much disappointed as myself, and before parting he urged me to accompany them to the rendezvous, with the expression of a vague hope that I might use some influence, even there, to avert the commission of a deed which he abhorred from his holiest soul. I promised to follow them. The regiment moved off, and after dinner I walked down the turnpike to Halltown, four miles distant from Charleston. Here I found the troops halted, awaiting reinforcements, which were reported on the march from various quarters to join them.

By this time I had satisfactorily weighed the elements by which I was surrounded, and concluded not to meddle further with the business unless formally called upon for counsel. So I sat apart and amusing myself sketching the animated and picturesque scene. In the course of the afternoon several of the expected companies arrived. Captain Ashby and Mr. Seddon had come up from Harper's Ferry, while Dick Ashby, a brother of the Captain, had arrived from Faquier with a small squad of cavalry. An earnest and excited discussion among the leaders was kept up for a long time, and while some counterpoises appeared vested with doubt and indecision, others lowered with anger and dissatisfaction. I was not invited to join the council, but could easily divine the trouble. Ashby, who had greeted me so frankly in the morning, now passed with averted face. As we supped together at a neighboring farm-house he studiously avoided exchanging words or looks with me. I was glad that we had understood each other without the scandal of an open quarrel. This seal, however, bore evil fruit at a future day.

While we were at table a courier arrived from the direction of Winchester, man and horse bespattered with mud and reeling with fatigue. On opening his dispatch Ashby's cloudy brow cleared, and rising hastily from his chair he handed the paper to Colonel Allen. As he read it Allen also sprang to his feet, and turning to me said, cheerily, "Now I can act with a clear conscience. Here is a paper I can recognize, a peremptory order to seize Harper's Ferry, with the official indorsement of the Adjutant-General of the State."

The arrival of this paper seemed to have satisfied all scruples and dispelled all doubts. Spurs jingled, sabres rattled, horses neighed, and the voices of officers were heard in every direction marshaling their troops. The men, flushed with the idea of being foremost in the enterprise, sprang to arms and formed their column with alacrity.

It was quite dark, and as I passed out of the house Captain Botts took my arm, and in an agitated manner inquired what I thought now of the posture of affairs.

I asked if he was sure the order which had
arrived was not a forgery. He was fully assured of its authenticity. I then went on to repeat the views and arguments I had exhibited in the morning, urging them with still greater vehemence of manner, and, if possible, in stronger language.

Admitting that he chose to recognize a right which I did not—the right of the Convention to pass an act of secession—this act could have no validity, even under the assumption of legality upon which it was based, until accepted and confirmed by a formal vote of the people. That vote had not been taken. It could not lawfully be taken for thirty days after the passage of an ordinance of secession by the Convention. The people of Virginia would never confirm such an act by their vote. The proposed movement on Harper's Ferry was therefore not only a treasonable attack upon the Government of the country, but it was also a most atrocious outrage and fraud upon the people of Virginia. In electing the Convention the people had demanded the right to consider and pronounce upon its action. By this rash and unauthorized move the people were betrayed, their rights trampled upon, and by those whom they had trusted with their guardianship.

"Yet I hold my commission from the State, and am bound to obey the orders of the Governor," said the Captain. "What would you have me to do?"

I answered with heat: "Can any miserable local functionary have the right to order a free citizen to commit a crime against his country? Can you feel bound to obey an order which involves so flagrant a violation both of State and National law; of all faith and honor both to Government and people? Does your commission bind you to this extent? If so, you should tear it to shreds and throw it to the winds."

My friend listened without essaying to reply, but sat with his elbows resting on his knees and covering his face with his clenched hands.

When I concluded he rose, and in a voice of anguish exclaimed: "Great God! I would willingly give my life to know at this moment what course I ought to pursue, and where my duty lies!" With this he hurried to join the column, which was already in motion.

I had intended to go no further than Halltown, but the entrance of curiosity and interest was irresistible, and I continued to follow the march of the troops at a short distance. The stars twinkled clear and chill overhead, while the measured tread of the men and an occasional half-whispered word of command were the only sounds that broke the stillness of the night. It was an awful opportunity for reflection.

The column was suddenly brought to a halt by the peremptory and startling challenge of a sentinel in the road. It was too dark to see what was going on, but I presently heard the order given to load with ball-cartridge, followed by the ringing of ramrods and clicking of musket-locks. The leading company then fixed bayonets, and forming across the turnpike, swept forward at a double quick. The challengers had retired, and the column resumed its march. At the toll-gate near Alstadt's they were again challenged and halted, with the same result.

Here I overtook an acquaintance who was following the column in a buggy, and feeling fatigued from my walk, accepted the vacant seat beside him. He professed himself greatly distressed at the proceedings, and said he had done all in his power to stop them, but without avail. I told him I had "said my say," and did not intend to meddle further with the business, yet, from present appearances, it was possible there would be a fight. I suggested that during the tremor which immediately precedes decisive action men are sometimes more willing to accept reasonable counsel, and conjured him to use his influence (which I knew was great) to stop the movement.

He said it was useless to attempt further interference, as every thing had been ordered and determined by high authority. He was doubtless better informed than I, at that time, of the power and deep design which directed the movement.

The troops were now marching up the southern slope of the hill, since called Bolivar Heights, the crest of which was covered with pine woods and dense thickets of undergrowth, and furnished a favorable position from which to resist their advance. From certain unmistakable symptoms I concluded that very little force would have been required to drive back the raw soldiers and morally irresolute men who composed the advancing column. I expected momentarily to hear the opening volley from the summit, and advised my companion to drive his wagon aside from the line of fire. To my surprise the march was unmolested, and they moved on to the cemetery at the forks of the road above the village of Bolivar. Here another challenge halted them for the third time.

Meanwhile emissaries from the town had brought information that the Armory employees and citizen volunteers had joined the United States troops, and would assist in defending the place. Taking advantage of this unreliable report I again urged my companion to attempt some interference which might avert the impending calamity. The defenders would now have the advantage in numbers as well as in the superior skill and hardihood of the men. An attempt to seize the national property must surely result in bloodshed and disaster, filling our whole district with mourning, and entailing upon those engaged the double dishonor of unsuccessful treason. While we were talking a group of the leaders came riding to the rear, engaged in high discussion. I heard Colonel Allen say, in a peremptory tone, that his men should not move another step.

It appeared that instead of three thousand men expected by Ashby, only three hundred
and forty had been assembled, including the cavalry and some artillerists, with an old iron 6-pounder from Charleston. At Halltown the paucity of numbers was overlooked in the eagerness to seize the virgin honors of the enterprise. Now, when within musket-shot, more prudent counsels were entertained. A little less glory and a few more men would answer the purpose quite as well. It was not a fight they were seeking, but the possession of Harper's Ferry, with its supplies of arms and valuable machinery. If this purpose could be better accomplished without bloodshed, why not wait for the reinforcements now on their way? Colonel Harman, of Augusta, who had arrived since dark, reported them to be hastening forward from all points up the Valley. Mr. Seddon said, as he was not a man of war he could not advise in the premises. But as Allen's command comprised nearly the whole force present his decision was generally acquiesced in. Ashby alone seemed impatient and dissatisfied with the proposed delay. While the officers were thus discoursing and looking toward the town there was a sudden flash that illuminated for miles around the romantic gorge where the rivers meet. Then followed a dull report, reverberating from mountain to mountain until it died away in a sullen roar. The flashes and detonations were several times repeated; then a steadier flame was seen rising from two distinct points, silently and rapidly increasing in volume until each rock and tree on the London and Maryland Heights were distinctly visible, and the now overclouded sky was ruddy with the sinister glare. This occurred, I think, between 9 and 10 o'clock P.M. For the moment all was excitement and conjecture. Some thought they had heard artillery, while others declared the Potomac bridge had been blown up. The more skilful presently guessed the truth, and concluded that the officer in command had set fire to the arsenals and abandoned the town. Ashby immediately dashed down the hill at the head of his cavalry to reconnoitre and ascertain the facts. The idea that there was to be no fight seemed to afford very general relief. My sympathy with this feeling was mingled with a deep sense of humiliation, in knowing that my Government had yielded so rich a prize to the revolution upon so feeble a demonstration.

Quietly withdrawing from the circle of acquaintances with whom I was conversing, I walked down to the town alone, by the Bolivar Road. The Old Arsenal buildings on Shenandoah Street and several of the shops in the Armory inclosure on Potomac Street were in full blaze. The road was alive with men, women, and children hurrying to and fro laden with spoils from the work-shops and soldiers' barracks. There were women with their arms full of muskets, little girls loaded with sheaves of bayonets, boys dragging cartridge-boxes and cross-belts enough to equip a platoon, men with barrels of pork or flour, kegs of molasses and boxes of hard bread on their shoulders or trundling in wheel-barrows.

Taking advantage of the first opportunity that had offered during their lives perhaps, these people seem to have entered upon the work of sacking and plundering as promptly and skillfully as veteran soldiers could have done, wherefrom I conclude that this propensity is inherent in the human character, and only awaits opportunity for development. The ground around the burning buildings was glittering with splinters of glass which had been blown out by the explosion of gunpowder used to ignite the fires. The streets in the vicinity were silent and vacant, the train of plunderers from the shops avoiding the route. I took my seat upon a barrel and commenced sketching the scene by fire-light, when a man called to me from a distance advising me to leave, as the whole place was mined and would presently be blown up. I thanked him, but concluded in taking my chance, as I thought all the powder was already burned.

This impression accounted for the lackfulness of the neighborhood when I arrived. As I kept my position in apparent security the thread of a general explosion gradually disappeared and the reassembled inhabitants began to swarm around the fires. Some of the workmen got out the engines and succeeded in extinguishing the flames at the stock factory.

The people were for the most part terrorized with terror. Overwhelmed with rain, they either did not know who was responsible, or were afraid to speak their thoughts. Occasionally a woman would use the privilege of her sex and open her mind freely, abusing Yankees and Southerners alternately, and designating both parties to the bottom of the river.

When at length it seemed to be definitely ascertained that there were no mines to be exploded a mutter and more demonstrative company of actors appeared on the stage. These were the chronic loafers who used to crowd the barracks discussing local politics and strong drinks, who were regular attendants on the platform on the arrival of the passenger trains, and prominent men about elections. These fellows were armed to the teeth, and ran hither and thither in high excitement, threatening blood and thunder against whomsoever it might concern. Chief among them was a late civil functionary of the county, well known in former times. Racing with dirt and whisky this worthy paraded the streets armed like a war mandarin of the Celestial Empire, carrying a rifle with sabre bayonet on either shoulder, and girt about with a belt containing several additional bayonets of the old pattern.

For some time I was in doubt as to which side of the question these fellows had espoused, but at length the tendency of their sympathies was developed by a furious discussion as to whether they should pursue Lieutenant Jones, who was said to be retiring with his men toward Hagerstown, or whether they should go
down to Washington forthwith and "jerk old Abe Lincoln out of the White House." The majority in council having determined on sacrificing the Lieutenant, they started for the Potomac bridge with frightful yells and many formidable gestures.

A by-stander happening to suggest that the bridge might possibly be mined, they considered the question and concluded that Jones was not a bad fellow after all, and had only obeyed the orders of his rascally Government. Whereupon they retired, in search of more ammunition perhaps.

As the night advanced the streets became more crowded with people from the town and neighborhood, but up to the hour of midnight no troops except Ashby's squad of horse had made their appearance. By one o'clock the fires had sunk in ashes, when, gloomy, chilled, and fatigued, I sought a bed at the house of an acquaintance.

As I ascended the hill I met Colonel Allen's regiment coming down. From over-exertion and excitement I did not sleep soundly, and was frequently disturbed during the night by the sound of drums and the tramp of passing squadrons.

April 19.—On going down into the town this morning I found that there had been considerable accessions to the State forces, seven or eight hundred having arrived during the night and morning, while as many more were reported on the way.

Confusion reigned supreme, ably seconded by whisky. The newly-arrived troops having nothing to eat, consoled themselves as usual by getting something to drink. Parties were detailed to search the houses for the arms and public property which had been carried off the evening before. This search was stoutly resisted by the women, who skimmed after their fashion with the guard, with tongue and broomstick, holding them at bay while their husbands endeavored to conceal the spoils they had acquired.

A rough estimate of the night's work showed that about sixteen thousand muskets had perished by the burning of the arsenals, and that one building (the carpenter shop) of the Potomac Armory had also been destroyed.

On the other hand, several thousand new rifles and muskets complete, with all the costly material and machinery of the National Armory, had passed into the power of the revolution without a blow.

Such were the visible and material results, but the social and political consequences who could estimate?

I must confess that I felt this morning like a man wandering in a maze. The future exhibited but a dim and changing vista. Was the experiment of popular government indeed a failure, as our conservatives had been predicting from the commencement? Was Macanlay right when he said that our system would crumble into anarchy upon the first serious trial? If the present Government of the United States, as many maintain, and as its own attitude of late seems to admit, has neither the right to punish privy conspiracy, nor the power to defend itself against factions aggression, then why should we regret its overthrow? Let the impotent imposture perish, and the American people will speedily establish a more respectable and manly system on its ruins.

While indulging in these speculations my attention was directed to the flag-staff which stood in the yard of the Old Arsenal. The national standard had been lowered, and in its place floated the State flag of Virginia.

It would be difficult to describe the mingled emotions excited in my mind by this simple incident.

Once in my early youth I visited the crater of Vesuvius, and, venturing down the interior slope for some distance, I found myself upon a projecting cliff of lava. Here I stood for a time looking curiously down upon the sea of smoke that concealed everything around and beneath, when a sudden breeze rolled the clouds away and for a moment my eyes beheld the hideous gulf that yawned below. A pit whose sulphurous horrors and immeasurable depth were revealed only by the glare of lurid flames and boiling lava—whose appalling aspect paralyzed the senses like the grasp of a nightmare. A sight which memory never recalls without the shudder that accompanied its first revelation.

So it seemed that the sudden gust of emotion, excited by the lowering of our starry flag, had swept away the mists of speculation and revealed in its depth and breadth the abyss of degradation opened by secession.

Yesterday I was a citizen of the great American republic. My country spanned a continent. Her northern border neared the frigid zone while her southern limit touched the tropics. Her eastern and her western shores were washed by the two great oceans of the globe. Her commerce covering the most remote seas, her flag honored in every land. The strongest nation acknowledged her power, and the most enlightened honored her attainments in art, science, and literature.

Her political system, the cherished ideal toward whose realization the noblest aspirations and efforts of mankind have been directed for ages. The great experiment which the pure and wise of all nations are watching with trembling solicitude and imperishable hope. It was something to belong to such a nationality. Something to be able, in following one's business or pleasure, to travel to and fro without question or hindrance, to take red-fish in the Mexican Gulf or trout in the great lakes, to chase deer in the Alleghancies or adventure among grizzly bears in the Rocky Mountains, and every where to remember, as you inflated your lungs with the free air, "This is my country!" It was something, when questioned of one's
nationality in foreign lands, perhaps by the subject of a petty monarchy or obscure prin-
picipality, the impoverished and degraded fraction 
of a once powerful empire, ruined by the mad-
ness of faction, local ignorance, and secession. 
It was something, in replying to such inquiry, 
to feel one's heart swelling with imperial pride 
such as moved the ancient Roman in the days 
when he could quell the insolence of barbaric 
knights with the simple announcement, "Ceres 
Romanus sum."

This was yesterday. To-day, what am I? 
A citizen of Virginia. Virginia, a petty com-
mmonwealth with scarcely a million of white in-
habitants. What could she ever hope to be 
but a worthless fragment of the broken vase? 
A fallen and splintered column of the once 
glorious temple.

But I will not dwell longer on the humili-
ting contrast. Come harness up the luggy 
and let us get out of this or I shall suffocate.

On our way to Charleston we met great 
numbers of persons about, on horseback, and on 
wheels, hurrying to the scene of excitement.
Some attracted simply by curiosity, others 
aimed and demonstrative, eager to claim a 
share of the glory after the danger was over.
My friend and I discoursed mournfully of the 
prospect before us and the country. Indeed 
there was nothing in the subject calculated to 
promote cheerfulness. He hoped that the great 
change might be accomplished without war. 
I neither believed in the possibility of such a 
result, nor did I wish it. Of the great twin go-
verning powers in human society—Fraud and 
Force—I decidedly preferred the latter. I was 
weary and disgusted with the reign of subtle 
phraseomongers and empty ladders, and looked 
the dawn of an era which promised to develop 
the latent manhood of the nation, and sweep 
away the cobwebs of tricky and compromising 
politicians with sword and fire.

April 20, Charleston.—To-day we received 
confirmation of the passage of the ordinance of 
Secession by the Virginia Convention. This 
was followed by news of the riots of the 19th 
in Baltimore, and the destruction of the Navy-
yard at Norfolk.

Under these accumulating proofs of the insa-
nibility or unwillingness of the General Govern-
ment to defend itself the arrogant confidence 
of the Secessionists continued to increase, while 
the Unionists exhibited a corresponding depres-
sion. Every hour brought accessions to the 
forces at Harper's Ferry. The volunteer com-
panies from the adjoining counties were gath-
ered in without the slightest regard to the po-
litical views of officers or men. The Border 
Guard of Martinsburg, a fine company, whose 
Captain and seven-eighths of whose members 
were decided Union partisans, at first made 
some difficulty about obeying the Governor's 
order; but at length, mystified by subtle coun-
sels, they agreed to march to Harper's Ferry 
with the United States flag flying. As may be 
supposed the flag was soon harled after their 
arrival; but the opinions it typified ranked 
for some time after and bore troublesome fruits.

On Sunday, April 21, in pursuance of im-
portant private business, I went from Charles-
town to Harper's Ferry, and thence by the train 
to Baltimore. As Maryland was at that time 
supposed to be one of the elect, and Baltimore, 
by the acts of the 12th, had earned the right 
to be regarded as a true Southern city, the 
railroad communication was uninterrupted.

At the stations near the city we heard the 
wildest rumors of fights going on and battles 
impending. The conductor told me that a 
large body of Pennsylvania volunteers were 
advancing on the town by way of Cockeysville, 
and that the Baltimoreans, six thousand strong, 
had marched out to meet them.

At the Camden Street depot I met Captain 
K— of the United States navy, with whom I 
exchanged salutations. He seemed in a 
good deal of perplexity, and, after some hesita-
tion, told me he was about going to Wash-
ton, and asked if he could trust me with a 
message?

I replied with warmth that he might rely 
upon me, even if the message involved a ques-
tion of life or death.

He frankly apologized for the implied doubt, 
but said that everything was in such confusion 
that he did not know who to trust. He went 
on to state that the city was in the hands of a 
revolutionary mob, and he wished to send a 
message to the officers in charge of the Naval 
Depot not to display the United States flag as 
usual on the next morning. There was no 
fear to prevent it, and, if displayed, it might 
bring the officer into trouble and would be torn 
down by the rabble.

The Captain's eye flashed and his lip quiv-
ered as he spoke: "If I had any means of de-
fending it it should wave in the face of the 
whole city; but as we are helpless I do not 
with the flag exposed to insult." We clasped 
hands, and I promised the message should 
be duly delivered. As I walked up street carry-
ing my travelling sack I was accosted by men 
and women who, perceiving I was a stranger, 
besought me with questions and requested the 
most startling rumors. Harper's Ferry was occupied 
by fifteen thousand Virginians, with thirty pieces 
of artillery. Lee was on Arlington Heights 
preparing to bombard Washington; while Jeff 
Davis, at the head of fifty thousand men, was 
marching on that doomed city—these were the 
objections godowns: others in mental terror 
followed me to learn when the Virginia army 
was coming to relieve Baltimore, now threat-
exed by a hundred thousand Abolitionists, de-
termined to sack and burn it in revenge for 
the affair of the 19th. I said what I could to 
chasten the hopes and soothe the fears of these 
good people, and kept on my way.

Throughout the town every thing evidenced 
alarm and excitement. Men and boys were 
running wildly about armed with swords, horse-
pistols, fowling-pieces, bowie-knives, and every imaginable weapon of offense. At first I saw them singly or in small parties, anon they marched by in organized companies and even battalions. On Baltimore Street crowds were collected in front of hardware stores and shops, where fire-arms are sold, crushing in the doors and helping themselves to every thing that would answer for a weapon. Axes, scythes, hatchets, sword-canies, pitchforks, were distributed to the eager and half-frantic mobs. In addition to the weapons and utensils thus violently obtained there was a reasonable amount of promiscuous stealing of matters pertaining to the commissary rather than the ordnance department. Tobacco, whisky, jewelry, and, an article which in all civilized countries is recognized as the main-spring of war, money.

To these proceedings the city police appeared to make but a demonstrative resistance, occasionally firing a volley from their revolvers in the air, which only served to increase the turbulence of the mob, and evidenced that these guardians of law and order were either too timid to act, or were themselves in sympathy with the rioters.

In following up Captain K——'s directions for the purpose of delivering the message with which I was intrusted, I at length found myself at the head-quarters of the volunteer medical staff, hastily improvised to succor those who were expected to fall in the great battle that was to be fought. There were two or three wash-tubs full of lint, a barrel or two of rolled bandages, splints, tourniquets, and cases of baleful knives, hooks, and probes lying open and all ready for use. The cruel and blooded aspect of these apartments was softened by the presence of tables covered with sandwiches, cold fowls, sliced tongue, and pickles, flanked by decanters of whisky and baskets of Champagne.

Ignoring the patent lint and scientific cutlery I took a young surgeon's advice, gratuitously profiered, and helped myself to Champagne and sandwiches. I here learned that all communication with the North had been cut off by the burning of the railroad bridges, and that the city had risen in arms to drive back the Pennsylvanians "en route via Cockeysville" for Baltimore and the Federal Capital. No collision had yet been reported, but the surgeons waited in momentary expectation of a call for their services.

After some further search I at length found an opportunity to deliver the message with which I had been intrusted, and thus ended the adventures of the day.

Owing to the condition of the city, and the stoppage of communication with the North, I found it impossible to conclude my business as speedily as I had hoped. I therefore took quarters at the house of a friend, determined to bide my time, and meanwhile to amuse myself observing the march of events.

On Monday, 22d of April, the excitement
Vol. XXXIII.—No. 193.—B still continued, the mobs occasionally breaking into shops in search of arms.

The battle of Cockeysville did not take place as was expected. The Pennsylvanians, who for the most part unarmed and altogether unprepared for a warlike encounter, had received warning of the proceedings in Baltimore, and prudently halted. The Baltimoreans suspended their attack until the result of certain negotiations with the authorities at Washington should be known. It was finally conceded that these troops should turn back and reach the Federal city by another route. The immediate cause of the popular outbursts having been removed by this acquiescence, the excitement began visibly to subside; and although the revolutionary fiction had still absolute control of the city, symptoms of a sweeping reaction had begun to manifest themselves. Nevertheless, during the week that followed, the national flag was nowhere displayed, and on the street every body talked secession if they expressed any opinion at all. Around Baltimore's were congregated a number of sinister-looking fellows, who publicly boasted of the part they had taken in the affair of the nineteenth. Among these I recognized several border ruffians of Kansas notoriety. Volunteer companies still paraded the streets under the State flag of Maryland, yet it was evident that more discreet and methodical heads were directing affairs. Disorder and violence were repressed. The wild volunteers were organized and shut up in barracks where they could do no immediate mischief, and where their superfluous enthusiasm might be cooled off by hard drilling, guard-duty, and uncomfortable beds. For this judicious management of these dangerous elements I believe Maryland was somewhat indebted to Colonel Huger of South Carolina, then of the United States army.

Meanwhile the undercurrent of loyal feeling was becoming every day more decided. The best men in Maryland were known to be unwavering in their determination to support the nationality, while hundreds, who, under the sudden excitement and confusion of ideas incident to the times, had seemed to acquiesce or had actually joined in the late movement, believing they were called upon to defend the city from attack, now, upon reflection, perceived the ruin to which they were inadvertently hastening, and turned their backs on it. The leaders of the movement began to be alarmed at this aspect of affairs. One of them, a local politician, meeting an acquaintance from Virginia on the street expressed himself thus despairingly, "Damn it, the excitement is going down, they are all caving in; if something is not done to keep it up we are all ruined. Can't you tell me some exciting news? something that I may publish to keep the people moving? I don't care a damn whether it is true or not—if it is only sufficiently stimulating."

It was thus easy to perceive that Baltimore
was in the hands of the same sort of people who had played so successful and so fatal a game in Virginia and other Southern States: and notwithstanding these indications of a popular reaction, it was evident that the Maryland conspirators did not intend to relinquish their grasp upon the authority which they had seized by surprise and violence, or slacken in their efforts to drag their State into the vortex of secession. Shortly after the affair of the 21st a quantity of small-arms were forwarded to the city from Harper's Ferry. The revolutionary forces were strengthened by volunteer companies from the rural districts, and imposing reviews were held daily; while the most absurd and incredible reports of the conduct of the national troops moving through Maryland via Annapolis were industriously circulated to keep up the irritation of the popular mind.

On the 27th of April I met a friend who was on his way to Annapolis for the purpose of visiting his son, then a cadet in the Naval Academy. I was easily persuaded to accompany him, and at an early hour we took the steamer for that place.

As we passed Fort M'Henry the national flag was displayed from the boat in response to that which floated over the fort, while three cheers were given and returned with animation. The emotion excited by this incident awakened historic memories. It was the sight of the flag floating over the ramparts of Fort M'Henry during its bombardment by the British that suggested to Frank Key the verses that have since become our national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Arrived at Annapolis, we found that city occupied by the national forces under the command of Major-General Butler. The Navy School had been shipped bodily to Newport, Rhode Island, while its premises were used as barracks and drill ground for the volunteers arriving daily by shiploads. My companion, on ascertaining that the motive of his visit was removed, returned immediately to Baltimore. Finding in the Quiet antiquity of the city, and in the military activity of the rendezvous, an attractive field of observation I determined to remain for several days.

Through the politeness of Captain Rodgers, of the navy, I obtained a permit from General Butler to visit the academy grounds at pleasure. Here the work of organizing and equipping the troops hastening to the defense of the national capital was going on with all the promptness and efficiency that the occasion demanded. Vessels were continually arriving with supplies, arms, and recruits in the raw. These recruits generally had to be renovated from the epidermis outward, and then drilled into soldiers all in a few days. So far as external appearance went this was satisfactorily accomplished. Outside the military inclosure the city of Annapolis was as quiet as a New England village on a Sabbath morning. A few officers and curious country gentlemen hung about the latelts. A few immune admissions of volunteers (fellows who had never borne arms) dawdled about on their good behavior, trafficing at stores and candy-shops, and stilly sounding for forbidden stimulants. Few citizens were seen on the streets, and a number of the best residences were closed, the inmates having abandoned the town in terror or disgust. While strolling about the streets of rural aspect I frequently fell into conversation with citizens of the plainer class, and found them generally in sympathy with the rebellion, and studied with underground rumors of the most marvelous character. One man told me that since the advent of the Yankee troops several of his acquaintances had disappeared mysteriously, and he had satisfactory information that they had been kidnapped and hung by Butler in the academy grounds. For himself, he averred that he never went to bed at night with any certainty as to where he would find himself hanging in the morning.

From conversations here with officers of the army and navy I became satisfied that the National Government fully intended to assert and maintain its supremacy by arms, and for the first time since the commencement of our troubles I felt asked with a hope for the future of my country.

April 29.—In the afternoon I took passage on the steamer Delaware, and after encountering a severe gale on the bay arrived at Baltimore about ten o'clock at night.

On my return here I found the tide of revolutionist opinion decidedly ebbing. The national flag had reappeared in some places, communication with the North had reopened, and men no longer boasted in public of their complicity in the proceedings of the past.

Having at length succeeded in concluding the business for which I came, on the 20th of May I returned to Charlestown, Virginia.

In returning through Harper's Ferry I found the plot had thickened immensely during my absence. The military general, Harper, had been suspended in command by a Colonel T. J. Jackson, formerly of the United States Army, and latterly a professor at the Virginia Military Institute. There were probably at this time five thousand men assembled here, including regiments from several of the Southern States. A regiment of Kentuckians, under Colonel Coman of Louisville, had arrived, while detached companies and individual sympathizers from Maryland were being organized into a battalion. Several field-guns were in position commanding the railroad approaches, while batteries were exhibited on the neighboring cliffs in localities which struck me as more picturesque than judicious. Although still very imperfect in organization and discipline, and deficient in arms, ammunition, clothes, and equipment, the troops already showed the presence of a military head. Among the volunteers from Berkeley and Jefferson I perceived a good deal of discontent and dissatisfaction. Two weeks
of soldiering had already told on the enthusiasm of the feeble, while many of the more thoughtful, who had been decided Union men, found themselves in an awkward position between their political views and interests and their implied military engagements. Some with whom I conversed hoped to be delivered from their difficulties by the rejection of the Act of Secession by the people, and expressed their determination to vote against it if the opportunity was allowed them.

I talked freely to a number of acquaintances, and earnestly advised several young men, in whom I felt an especial interest, to get out of it while there was yet time.

Captain Botts looked haggard and care-worn, like a man who felt the force of the classic epigram, "nolentem traheant fata." He evidently avoided conversation with me, and I did not press it.

May 6.—This morning the business which had taken me to Charlestown was concluded. I was married to a lady of that place, and immediately thereafter started for Berkeley Springs via Duffield's Depôt.

At Berkeley we found the Judge and lawyers assembled to hold the spring term of the Superior or District Court. Amidst the turmoil of arms on all sides it was consolatory to find this vestige of established forms. The
court was thinly attended, however, and there was little or no business transacted, it being painfully apparent to every one that the reign of civil law in this region was approaching its end, and the elements of social order rapidly resolving into armed anarchy.

Practically the revolution had not yet reached Morgan County. Except a few petty politicians, and some who held civil or military commissions from the State, the people of the county were almost unanimous in their loyalty. In maintaining their position against the entangling influences of State and county organization they were counselled, encouraged, and assisted by my father, who from the beginning had exhibited the most uncompromising and defiant opposition to the secession movement. In oral or written arguments he asserted without reserve the paramount authority of the National Government. He maintained that he was born, and had always lived, a citizen of the United States, and regarded as insolent presumption the action of any local assembly which pretended to dispute this claim or absolve him from his true allegiance.

He scorned all ideas of compromise or concession to such local assumption, and scouted at every suggestion of doubt or timidity in regard to the result of the approaching contest. While elsewhere every thing seemed to be yielding, defiled by the specious falsehoods or overawed by the terror of armed treason, all within the influence of this strong spirit seemed to partake of his courage and steadfastness. At Berkeley loyalty still enjoyed freedom of speech in public places, while it was secession that sneaked about, silent, apologetic, eaves-dropping, and meditating treachery.

For my own part I had become disgusted with the course of public affairs. I had been disappointed both in Government and people. All my prophecies had failed. The delay and indecision still manifested at Washington chilled my impatient zeal, and I turned resolutely to the accomplishment of the personal plans which I had formed. I had been for some time engaged in fitting up a house at Berkeley and making arrangements for a future that pleased my fancy. These plans I developed to my wife as I brought her home and installed her in the cottage. For the present we have enough of social life around us, composed of the nearest and dearest of our kindred, while during the summer heats the baths of Berkeley will always attract a brilliant and cultivated society.

But the war? The war will not reach us here. This region is poor, sparsely populated, and difficult of access. The armies will avoid so inconvenient and unprofitable a field, and fight it out elsewhere.

Literature and the beautiful arts will furnish me with interesting and remunerative occupation. Here is my library—a pretentious name perhaps for the few hundred volumes I have collected; but in a county where an almanac and a Bible are considered a very creditable literary aggregation I may be allowed to call mine a library. There are some rare and valuable books in the collection well worth the perusal, under the trees of a summer morning, or at the winter fireside by the light of a kerosene lamp.

But the newspapers will be filled with exciting news of the war? It is to be hoped the mails will be stopped, and we will get no newspapers; or, in any event, we must not read them.

Here is the parlor, decorated with paintings and furnished with musical appliances—piano, violin, and guitar, with choice selections of music from the classic composers of Italy, Germany, and France. A parlor organ is all my ambition covets in this direction. I will get one some day when—

Hark, was that the sound of cannon?

No—it was only a book that struck the piano by accident.

My study is also well supplied with materials for work—crayons, oils, and water-colors. Here are drawers filled with sketch books, papers, engravings, photographs, and a mass of subterranean trumpery—the results of my beginnings, labor-saving covenants, and experimental failures, such as in time will accumulate upon the hands of every artistic amateur.

There are still some theories unexplored that haunt me—some sequestered paths in the paradise of Art yet unexplored. A few years of uninterrupted quiet will afford me the long-coveted opportunity of solving these problems. Also, before these years of quiet are attainable, there are other and greater problems to be solved. What is this?—a collection of engravings—"Battles of the French Revolution." That is continuous.

There will be no war. Civilization has advanced since that day. A people may rise against despotism, but not against a free government. The people of Virginia and the South will not be sold and trampled upon with impunity. The descendants of five generations of freemen can not be whipped like hereditary serfs.

Is that one of your unexplored theories?

Here are my trees and flowers. What more delightful relaxation from the weariness of books and penels than the cultivation of flowers and the planting of trees?

The man who is truncating the borders thrusts his spade in the ground and relieves himself of the burden of his thoughts: "I say, Captain, what are we going to do if these secessionists want to force us to serve against the United States? I'll tell the first."—"They will hardly dare to push things so far in this region, Sam. If they do attempt it, you understand?"

A walk through the adjacent woods and along the hill-sides develops even now more floral beauties than the cultivated garden; but in June there will be an exhibition that will put to shame all exotic collections.
But even these covert rabbit paths and secluded dells, where the pheasant hides its young, afford us no refuge from the omnipresent thought. Some axe-bearing mountaineer, sitting upon a prostrate log across our walk, propounds the inevitable question, "What news of the war?" We visit the village store to purchase a skein of thread, or stop at the post-office to inquire for a letter—at each place we find the little newsmongering conventions holding their daily sittings, assembling early and adjourning late, questioning all comers, and repeating the most exaggerated rumors.

Here is a room which seems to have been purposely avoided; mysterious and double-locked, like Blue Beard's fatal chamber. Ah! this room contains some rubbish; in truth, this room is my armory. That my health may not suffer from too much study I have arranged to indulge my taste for rural sports, for which the neighboring mountains and rivers afford ample opportunity. This neat English double-barreled piece is for birds, and this quaint and richly-ornamented jäger rifle is for deer and bear. Here, too, are several jointed fishing-rods, with a complete outfit of lines and flies.

And those grim-looking muskets in the corner—what are they for? They are for defense. When the worst comes—and perhaps it will come soon—we'll gather our mountainers together and fight it out with these brazen tricksters who have dared to sell our native State to treason and dishonor; bullet for bullet, and life against life. And that will be war after all—civil and social war in its most dreadful shape.

And thus it was. Whether we looked upon the pages of a book or the petals of a flower, the steadfast features of a picture or the countenance of a sympathizing friend; whether studying the tender tints of the budding for ests or the richer and more evanescent glories of the clouds, by sunlight or moonlight, alone or in company, sleeping or waking, there was the shadowy face of the Gorgon staring with its sleepless, stony eyes.

The cherished plan of philosophic seclusion was acknowledged a failure at the end of a fortnight, and I was glad when my wife proposed a visit to her friends in Charlestown.

May 21.—To-day we took the cars at Sir John's and returned to Charlestown. It was painful to remark the progress which the revolution had made during our absence. Joe Johnston had taken command at Harper's Ferry, and, it was said, had ten thousand men assembled there. Trains of cars loaded with troops were passing continually from Winches-
ter to Harper's Ferry. The war spirit was in full blaze, and all traces of Conservatism or Unionism seemed to be rapidly disappearing before the terror of armed force and the irresistible current of social sympathy.

May 22.—I visited Harper's Ferry to-day. The adjacent hills are covered with camps, and all the work-shops and public buildings converted into barracks. There were regiments from Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Maryland, and from various sections of Virginia. States that have seceded and those that are still loyal are here represented. How does this appear to those who insist on State sovereignty? These troops seem to be well equipped and fairly armed. They drill most industriously from morning till night. I am informed that Maryland Heights is occupied by a regiment of Kentuckians, while a company of Ashby's cavalry is established on the Maryland side, guarding the bridge at the Point of Rocks.

I observe, however, that the construction of stockades and block-houses on the Maryland and London Heights, commenced under Jackson's orders, has been discontinued, and that no further steps have been taken to mount and locate the heavy guns brought up from Norfolk. A farmer also told me that Johnston had made a requisition on the camp for three hundred wagons. I also noticed that they were removing the armory machinery and material from Harper's Ferry as rapidly as possible—to be set up at Richmond, it was rumored.

It required very little military sagacity to interpret these signs, and I became convinced that Johnston would abandon the place as soon as the Federal troops moved.

Considering the character of the forces thus hastily collected, the degree of order and discipline already attained is astonishing. Whiskey-shops, those great enemies of social order and military subordination, were mercilessly suppressed. A sense of soldierly pride that would have been creditable to veterans seemed to govern the conduct of both men and officers. Indeed, the orderly and business-like earnestness of the camp, to those who still cherish that the thing will blow over, is far more disheartening than the menaces and bluster of the world outside.

It was worthy of remark, too, and contrary to our ordinary experiences with raw troops, that in all these camps one never heard the report of fire-arms by day or night. It was understood at the time that ammunition was very scarce; and I afterward found a letter from Colonel Jackson, wherein he states that they were at that date especially deficient in percussion caps. He had managed to procure thirty thousand from the North—about three rounds per man—and was much in need of money to purchase a larger supply.

May 23.—To-day the polls were opened for the purpose of taking the popular vote on the Ordinance of Secession. As the State is already at war with the Government this seems to be a work of supererogation. So far as the County of Jefferson was concerned the polling was a farce. Troops were sent to the precincts where the force of the Union sentiment was expected to display itself, and violent threats were made against the persons and property of those who should dare to vote against the Ordinance. The result was that about one-half the voters of the county did not appear at the polls at all. A respectable minority registered their votes against it in face of the threats, and, with the assistance of the soldiers' vote at Harper's Ferry, there appeared but a small majority in this county sustaining the Ordinance.

In the adjoining County of Berkeley the troops sent to overawe public sentiment had to be shot up in their barracks to prevent their being attacked by the infuriated populace; while out of two thousand votes the county gave a majority of eight hundred in favor of the Union. In Morgan, where my father was then residing, the Ordinance was repudiated by a vote of six to one.

Whether the act of the Convention was countenanced by the popular vote of the State I do not know to this day; nor did I ever think it important to know, it being evident that all the agencies of the State Government were in the hands of conspirators who sustained at nothing which might serve to accomplish their ends. Without the knowledge or consent of the people the State was already involved in a war with the National Government. Under the pretense of asserting State sovereignty the Richmond junta had already violated all law and trampled on popular rights. Their usurped authority was maintained and enforced, not by Virginians, but by the bayonets of strangers gathered in from all parts of the South and West; from States that had seceded and those still supporting the Union, in short, from every quarter that could furnish the requisite supply of cash, reckless, adventurous material.

The proud and sensitive Virginians already saw the sacred soil of which he was so jealously trodden by the rude feet of strangers with whom he had no affinity, social or moral; the honor of his family, his property and person in the eye of power without law; villages occupied by swarms of bawling and bellowing Kentuckians; the oldest and most respected citizens insulted on the streets, for opinion's sake, by half-civilized Missourians; free rights at the mercy of the military telegraph; and free opinion covering the meaning of an Arkansas Bowie-knife. Virginia, so boastful of her history, so jealous of her independence, so captious in regard to her sovereignty, rights, now lay subj ected by armed strangers, groveling at the feet of the Cotton Confederacy.

It is not surprising, therefore, that so little interest was felt in the result of the voting on that day; and when the Governor of the State,
some time after, proclaimed a considerable majority in favor of Secession, very few persons thought themselves at all enlightened on the subject.

During the ensuing week I visited Harper's Ferry frequently, and amused myself sketching the picturesque scenery and the dramatic groups in which the camps abounded.

May 27.—To-day met an old acquaintance in a field-officer of one of the Alabama regiments, and took a camp dinner with him. When I came out of the dining-tent I found a dragoon waiting with orders for my arrest. Accompanied by my friend, I went to Provost Marshal's office to ascertain the nature of the charges against me. While awaiting that officer's arrival I had a view of the adjoining guard-house, densely populated with the sweepings of the camp. By reversing the ordinary acceptation of the phrase, it might have been termed a "select company," and very judiciously selected.

It appeared that I had been denounced by some fellow as a Union man and a correspondent of a Northern paper. I denied that I was a correspondent of any paper; stated that I was a native and resident of the district, and sketched for amusement, as had been my custom from childhood. I showed my sketches, and the Marshal, fully satisfied, released me, with many polite apologies.

I then resumed my drawing; but
perceiving that I was still jealously watched, and
being advised by some of the officers that I might
be mistaken for a Yankee and get into further
trouble, I put up my pencils and returned to
Charlestown, determined to visit Harper's Fer-
y no more.

Another incident occurred about this time
which indicated the direction in which we were
drifting, and revealed the precarious tenure upon
which life and personal liberty would depend
hereafter. One morning General Johnston, at
Harper's Ferry, received a telegram from Beau-
regard, at Manassas Junction, in these words:
"Arrest Abraham Herr."

Mr. Herr was a citizen of Harper's Ferry, a
wealthy manufacturer, and universally esteem-
ed. His Union sympathies were not doubted;
but as he was uniformly acquiescent and oblig-
ing, and seemed only interested in saving his
property, the most truculent Secessionists re-
spected his position. Johnston had him arrested
immediately; but as no charges were preferred,
and there appeared no reason for detaining him,
his case was turned over to the civil authority.
On his trial before a magistrate's court, al-
though there appeared no charges written or
oral, neither accusers nor witnesses, yet Mr.
Herr was put under bonds for thirty thousand
dollars, to answer generally to any thing that
might turn up. Such was already the zealous
subserviency of a civil tribunal to a remote mil-
itary whisper.

When it came to be understood among the
troops at Harper's Ferry that Virginia had been
transferred to the Southern Confederacy the
dissatisfaction was so serious that mutiny was
apprehended. This feeling was especially strong
among the Border companies, in which were
found so many Union men who had been de-
luded and dragged into a false position.

They had hitherto clung to the desperate
hope that a refusal of the people to confirm the
ordinance of Secession would deliver them from
their embarrassment. When it became appar-
ent that there was no hope from this quarter,
many threw down their arms and went home.
It was said that one-half of the Border Guard
from Martinsburg left their colors, declaring
they would not serve in such a cause. As most
of these young men went to their homes in
Martinsburg, a force was sent to arrest and
bring them back. For better assurance in find-
ing them the order was executed at midnight,
and the victims were dragged from their beds
amidst the shrieks and protestations of their
families. That night Martinsburg recalled the
words of Jeremy the prophet, "In Rama was
there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping,
and great mourning."

The prisoners were carried to Harper's Ferry
and tried for desertion. One who was con-
vincing and defiant was condemned to be
shot. This, however, was only intended as a
menace. The time had not arrived when such
extreme measures would have been judicious.
Some of these men were persistent, and finally
made their escape. Not a few finally joined
the United States army.

In the midst of the difficulties, both civil and
military, which surrounded him I could not but
admit the deportment of the Confederate com-
mander; his reticence, calmness, firmness in
essentials, easy acquiescence in non-essentials,
his avoidance of all needless irritations of hos-
tile political sentiment, of all needless severity
in dealing with men not yet accustomed to ar-
binary rule. In short, his judicious manage-
ment of a power, not yet secured by the habits
of military discipline and continually disputed
by adverse opinion, marked him as a man of
uncommon ability, and one likely to be dan-
gorous to the Government against which he had
taken arms.

May 28.—This afternoon I received some in-
formation which filled me with alarm and dis-
tress. A young kinsman, an officer of the Seco-
ond Virginia Regiment, told me that on yester-
day, while in Martinsburg, he was arrested by
a stranger who named himself Lieutenant Col-
onel Flagg, of the Morgan militia, and who
boastingly informed him that he had just re-
turned from Harper's Ferry, whether he had gone
to denounce old Colonel Surratt, at Berkeley
Springs, charging him with having several hun-
dred misfits in his possession, and exciting the
citizens of the county to organize and take arms
against the Confederacy. He further stated
that, at his suggestion, a body of troops had al-
ready been dispatched from Harper's Ferry to
crush the movement and arrest the traitors.
My cousin, to whom these statements were
made, did not disclose himself to his informant,
but immediately on arriving in Charlestown re-
lated them to me.

In view of my father's age and frail health
I could scarcely believe it possible that he had
committed himself by so rash and premature a
movement. I was aware that not long before he
had visited Washington and offered his serv-
es to President Lincoln. But as he was too old
for active service, I conceived this only as a
public declaration of loyalty to the Government
—a zealous demonstration, to show, amidst the
general defections, that there was, at least, one
Virginia gentleman who felt the diabolom tone
to his State, and the danger with which his
country was menaced by the late proceedings.

Yet I knew the Western Virginians were or-
ganizing and arming, and seriously apprehend-
ed that my father had received arms and become
involved in some movement from that quarter.
Knowing the extent and quality of the force at
Harper's Ferry. I felt that an attempt of the
sort in Morgan, without external support, must
necessarily be fatal to those who engaged in it.

An officer, just from Harper's Ferry, con-
firmed the report that troops had been sent to
Berkeley Springs, but he was enabled to give
no details.

May 29.—During a sleepless night I made
my plans. Arming myself with a revolver I
rode over to Duffields Depot, and there took
the cars for Berkeley Springs. I determined first to take summary vengeance on the wretch who had denounced my father, and then to join him and share his fortunes whatever they might be.

At Sir John's I ascertained that the Confederate troops had actually visited Berkeley, and returned, carrying with them several hundred old muskets, which had been sent from Harper's Ferry two years before to arm the citizens during the excitement which followed the John Brown raid. There had been no collision between the troops and citizens, and no one could tell whether or not any arrests had been made. Arrived at home, I entered the house with breathless anxiety. My sister met me with her accustomed cheerfulness, and, thus reassured, I had the courage to inquire for my father. At the sound of my voice he entered from an adjoining room, looking well and calm as usual. He said the officer commanding the State troops had quietly marched over from Sir John's, got the arms which were stored in the court-house, and returned without questioning or interfering with any one.

I did not tell him what alarming information had brought me up, but felt altogether so much relieved that I modified my plan of vengeance. Having quietly prepared a written paper, I took a friend and went in search of my Lieutenant-Colonel of militia. We overtook him walking out with a companion. Ordering him to halt, I confronted him, and taxed him with his treacherous conduct. He responded by an absolute denial of the whole matter, declaring, on his honor, that he had not even visited Harper's Ferry. I silenced him, and went on to state when, where, and to whom he had unbosomed himself. He was struck dumb.

After heaping upon him every outrageous insult that could be expressed in language, I produced the paper previously prepared, containing an acknowledgment of falsehood and an humble apology therefor: presenting it on the top of my hat with a pencil, I ordered him to sign it. Laying aside a large club which he carried, the stalwart Colonel obeyed the order with an alacrity that was creditable to his military education.

I then told him that I intended to publish this note at army head-quarters and elsewhere, and would be content for the present with having disgraced him; but I assured him that if he offended again in like manner he would not be allowed the opportunity of purchasing his life by ignominy.

In the public square of the village I called together such persons as were in sight, and read the paper to them, after relating the circumstances under which it was exacted.

I took the trouble to enact this little comedy with the hope that it might protect my father from treacherous dealings, which I apprehended from other quarters.

From further conversation I learned that there was no foundation whatever for the reports which this pragmatical scoundrel had set afoot. In full confidence that the General Government was preparing an adequate force to crush the rebellion, my father had been using all his influence to prevent local disturbance, counseling the elders to pursue their avocations quietly and the young men to join the United States army, where their fighting propensities might be lawfully gratified and their prowess turned to better account than it would be in private brawls.

Having satisfactorily disposed of this "ridiculous was," the product of the mountains, I started next morning (May 30) to return to Charlestown. At Martinsburg I found every thing in confusion and excitement. The Second Regiment of Virginia Volunteers had been for some time stationed at a point opposite Williamsport to observe the National forces concentrating at Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, and whose advance already occupied Williamsport. Upon some alarming indications from the other side the Second Regiment was ordered to retire, and being composed of raw material, it passed through Martinsburg in a condition bordering on stampede. The Union citizens were jubilant in expectation of an immediate advance of the National army, while many Secessionists, in their terror, packed up their household goods and fled southward, with their families and negroes.

Owing to detentions from this and other causes, I did not reach Dufields until after nightfall, and was obliged to make my way to Charlestown, five miles distant, on foot, through mud and darkness.