SHERMAN'S CAMPAIGN IN THE CAROLINAS.

by

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December, 1864, was a busy month in the Department of the South. All the available troops had been sent up the Broad River, where, after some sharp fighting, they had secured a safe lodgment and intrenched themselves upon the Charleston and Savannah Railroad, to furnish a base of support to General Sherman, should he seek to reach the coast between Charleston and Savannah. Vast quantities of military stores had been accumulated at Hilton Head, and all were in daily expectancy of news from the army marching through Georgia.

Long shall I remember the morning when a courier rode rapidly to headquarters with the despatch: "Sherman is safe, — Savannah is ours!" It thrilled through the ranks like electric fire. Cheer after cheer rang out along the lines as the news spread from camp to camp. In a wild commotion of joy, in common with a grateful people, as the lightning flashed the news all over the North, our hearts went up in thanksgiving for Sherman's Christmas greeting and present to his country.

Weeks rapidly sped away in preparation for the coming campaign. Our vast stores were depleted, and the army refitted anew. The men became restive in their desire to begin their promised and dearly cherished work of teaching South Carolina a lesson of war, and of testing the prowess of her vaunted chivalry.

The Seventeenth Corps was transferred by water to Beaufort, a pleasing little town of summer residences, which for two years had been civilized by the occupation of our armies. The
corps was quartered in the immediate vicinity of the town. The morning after its entrance the inhabitants were surprised to find their friends had quietly taken possession of almost everything of value. Houses no longer possessed back or front yards, for our veterans did not scruple to use wood, even fences, when they found themselves in the vicinity of dry fuel. Poultry was missing, storehouses were empty, barns had been ransacked, etc. Although painful to the victims, many of these incidents were of too ludicrous a character to cause them loss of temper. A friend of mine from near Boston was an officer in the Internal Revenue Department, and was called "Colonel" out of respect. All who knew him loved him as a whole-souled fellow with a heart as tender to suffering as a woman's; yet he was fully impressed with the importance of his position under the government, which military men, to some degree under his surveillance, liked to ignore. He was impetuous, easily angered, and at first impressed one unpleasantly, and, as a consequence, was by no means a general favorite. He was unfortunate at this time in occupying a house in Beaufort, and in having it well stored with good things from Boston; perhaps in these days it will not be to the colonel's discredit to tell that among other luxuries there was a barrel of sherry in the cellar, while in the yard, when he retired that night, was a coop full of turkeys which had survived the holidays. More than usual noise aroused our worthy colonel upon the aforementioned morning, and, proceeding to investigate the cause of the disturbance, his eye rested upon the empty coop of his favorite fowls, and at the same moment fell upon a soldier, sitting on a fence-post, busy in making his breakfast of broiled turkey. As the idea of this outrage to justice, visited upon an officer of the law, seized the colonel, he eagerly exclaimed: "You scoundrel, where are my turkeys?" The veteran deigned no reply, but with a gesture more emphatic than words, held up the leg of the bird and pointed to the feathers strewing the ground. We make no attempt to paint the colonel's indignation, and his
emphatic language when he found that his six months' supply of good cheer, including his wine, had disappeared from his cellar as mysteriously as his turkeys and his fences.

The sutlers had prepared to welcome the veterans with a large stock of northern delicacies, held at prices which only a sutler's conscience dared to impose, but they breathed a sigh of relief when the good-natured vandals marched out of town. When an account of stock was taken and compared with the amount of money received, they found a large balance to be placed to the debit side of profit and loss. The soldiers' excuse was that they had been promised liberty and license when on the soil of Carolina, and was not Beaufort within the limits of this state?

Kilpatrick and his cavalry, with the Fourteenth and Twentieth Corps, ploughed slowly through the overflowed lowlands and crossed the Savannah River at Sister's Ferry, while the Fifteenth and Seventeenth Corps broke the enemy's line at Pocotaligo, a few miles to the right of our winter quarters, and there rendezvoused for the final start. Here our division joined, and relieved these veterans of all extra duty, busied as they were with all the detail of final preparation for the repetition of their herculean efforts.

As before, General Sherman again succeeded in mystifying the enemy as to his future course. Although he had just severed the Confederacy in twain, they did not deem it possible for him again to cut loose from his base and plunge boldly into their country, but fondly hoped he would follow the old routine, fighting upon the line of the coast, where they believed that they, aided by the immense natural and artificial defences of the country, might detain him. They supposed the city of Charleston to be his objective point. Many of her citizens had sent their valuables, and had fled themselves in consternation to the interior, chiefly to Columbia.

The last day of January saw the busy work of preparation cease. The grand army was ready for its last and greatest
campaign. General Sherman, now free from the constant anxieties attending the outfitting and supplying, took a day for rest.

I have pleasant remembrances of an hour spent in his presence that day. He told us that the road to Charleston by way of Columbia was the easiest to travel, and said that he expected by this movement to mystify the enemy. He talked freely and easily, and was in this respect the very opposite of General Grant, making all about him feel perfectly at ease. His clear eye and thoughtful expression taught us that he was master of the situation, but there was a depth of meaning in his semi-playful words that we did not then comprehend.

The first day of February opened as fair and bright and beautiful as a May morning in New England. Many brave hearts swelled with hope, and, may I say, trembled with fear, as again they cut loose from all communications. A large army with Johnston, the wisest of rebel leaders, at its head, confronted them. There were swamps and marshes to cross, rivers to bridge, battles to fight, an enemy to conquer, a confederacy to annihilate, before again father or mother, brother or sister, wife or children, could know of their fate, and who could say that he might not be numbered with those who would fall by the wayside, and that his requiem would not be sung by the winds as they waved the tall reeds and wild grasses growing over a nameless and forgotten grave?

The order of march was issued the preceding night. At three o'clock in the morning the camp fires were burning dimly, giving only here and there a flickering glow, and all was so silent that it seemed difficult to believe oneself in presence of a large army. Suddenly from headquarters a bugle sounded the reveille. Another and another caught up the strain and echoed and re-echoed the call. The beating of drums everywhere struck upon unwilling ears, dispelling all thought of peace and quiet, as they aroused the veterans of Sherman for their last campaign. Breakfast around the camp fires followed. Then the bugles rang out again, and soon the long lines of men
and trains stretched out over the thinly-settled, pine-clad lowlands. The march through the Carolinas had commenced.

The advance struck the enemy near Midway on the Edisto River, some distance above Branchville. As General Sherman had predicted, the Confederates were not looking for him here, but had made great effort at preparing defences at the last mentioned place. The advance was gallantly made through swamps, now floundering in the mud, now scrambling over prostrate trees, now waist deep in water; at last our men emerged in sight of the enemy's works.

A steady, unflinching step, the hurrahs ring along the line, and the rapid discharge of repeating rifles drive the demoralized enemy from works which, stubbornly held, should have cost us dearly. Pursuit was kept up, until the wayside was lined with muskets, haversacks, canteens, etc., cast away in rapid flight. One hundred of our men were killed and wounded. A gallant Ohio colonel who came under my care severely wounded, mourned the death of his favorite horse more than the loss of his leg. This horse had been taken from the old home, had carried him gallantly through Kentucky, over the mountains of Tennessee, was foremost in the fight when his command captured Atlanta, and had borne him triumphantly through Georgia. In the delirium that ensued four days after the amputation of the leg, as I sent him to the rear, he exclaimed to me: "The sacrifice of a leg is accounted as simply a part of a soldier's misfortune, but, Oh, doctor, the death of that horse is an irreparable loss! I had thought that my children yet unborn should fondle the dear creature, and that unvexed with bridle or rein he should pass his declining years in the peaceful quiet of the old Ohio home."

I had often regretted that the name of this valiant soldier should have escaped my memory, but I had supposed that the sands of the coast received the remains of another of our gallant young men, sacrificed on the altar of our country. About eight years ago, while travelling east from Vancouver over the Cana-
dian Pacific Railway, in passing through the car, I noticed a gentleman wearing the button of our Commandery. Seeing the insignia upon my coat, he said: "I permit no comrade of the Loyal Legion to pass without recognition." It was General Wager Swayne of New York City, well known for his heroic services during the war, and his equally distinguished career in civil life. He had just returned from Alaska, having made the excursion in company with General Sherman, and very naturally the conversation turned upon personal incidents relating to the great commander. I had told of General Sherman showing me some of his favorite horses, of which he was very fond, particularly of one fine, thorough-bred mare which he said Kilpatrick gave him, remarking playfully that "Kil stole him up in Georgia.' Thus the conversation turned upon the fondness which the soldier has for his steed, and I recited the story just told of the love which the Ohio colonel, wounded, as I thought, fatally, had shown for his favorite horse. When I finished, tears were coursing down the cheeks of my hearer, and in a husky voice he said, placing my hand upon his artificial limb: "I am sorry to have spoiled the diagnosis of such a famous surgeon, but I am that young Ohio colonel, and am glad to meet the man who ministered to me in my dire necessity."

At last the South Carolina Railroad was reached. Our men, trained to the laying waste of railroads in Tennessee and Alabama, set to work upon the long lines through Georgia with alacrity, and this last artery of communication between the Gulf and the sea-coast states of the Confederacy met the fate of the Charleston and Savannah Road.

Each corps had its badge, worn upon the cap of the wearer. The soldiers were very much in the habit of tracing the outlines of their emblems upon the trunks of trees by the wayside. This habit found expression of poetic character here in the heart of the Confederacy, upon the railroad. With the aid of neighboring trees the ponderous iron rails were shaped into huge letters of U and S. With bolts and spikes these were
fixed and firmly nailed upon the crossings, and left for the consideration of those who should come after. Letters pregnant with meaning to this misguided state, of union more enduring than the iron of which they were made, of prosperity which should follow retribution, of peace on earth and good will towards men.

Orangeburg fell, and the different corps concentrated, until the grand army invested Columbia; this bold movement carried dismay to the hearts of the Confederate leaders. Augusta was threatened on the left. Charleston was hastily abandoned lest a sudden swinging of our forces to the right should cut off all possible means of escape. In the front Beauregard and Hampton retreated from the devoted city towards Charlotte in North Carolina.

The property stored here was of untold value. Columbia had been considered a city of refuge and safety. Here gentlemen had sent their works of art, libraries even, and more valuable articles of personal property. The bank vaults were filled with boxes of jewelry and plate. The store houses were overflowing with cotton, munitions of war and provisions. The Treasury Depot of the Confederate States here printed its multitudinous promises to pay, with proper foresight based upon one condition,—"two years after ratification of the treaty of peace with the United States of America."

Hampton in his retreat had ordered all cotton to be burned. Long lines of burning bales filled the streets. Generals Sherman and Howard were among the first to enter the city. A scene of confusion surrounded them; cotton, household property of all kinds strewed the streets. Crowds of colored men, women and children awaited their approach with respectful attention. When asked if they were not afraid of the Yankees, they replied: "Lors, no, massa, we knowed yous coming. We's prayed de good Lord dis long time fur yous, and we t'anks him dat Mister Sherman an' his company is here sure enuff!"

Our forces were encamped outside the city, excepting a
brigade which performed guard duty within its precincts. Night fell quietly over Columbia, a city noted for its broad avenues, the regularity of its streets, its wealth of shade, its splendid mansions and beautiful gardens. There was no warning of the desolation coming on the morrow. A strong wind fanned to flame the embers strewing the streets, and bore here and there flakes of burning cotton. Flames shot forth from an hundred places, aided doubtless in some instances by wanton hands.

The black smoke rolled up in dense volumes upon the midnight air, shutting in the heavens and spreading its sable wings like a funeral pall over the doomed city. The lurid flames, like the tongues of mammoth serpents, shot out from side to side, leaping from house to house and square to square, crossing streets, gaining volume and impetuosity at every moment, driving helpless before them a fleeing, terror stricken, half clad population of women and children.

Crowds, too, of the sable sons and daughters of toil were hurrying this way and that, carrying large bundles, precious freight for massa or mistress or self. Some gathered at the street corners with wonderment, awe and amazement portrayed upon every feature, listening to the crash of falling buildings, the crackle and roar of devouring elements. Others, with prayerful attitude and upturned countenance, were invoking the blessing of heaven, as if they thought the day of judgment had come. The sharp voice of command rang through the streets. Soldiers by platoons and companies hurried this way and that, restoring order, preventing rapine and plunder, rescuing life and property, doing all that could be done to stay the spreading destruction.

Generals Sherman and Howard and a host of others worked the night long and did all that men could do, to lessen the terrible scourge, and when morning came, aided the destitute, fed the hungry from the soldiers' scanty store, and provided for the suffering.

A discussion has since arisen as to who was responsible for
the burning of Columbia, Hampton claiming it to be the wanton act of a vandal soldiery; but Sherman has shown, and we think beyond controversy, that the responsibility of the city's destruction rests with its own would-be defenders in their hasty attempt to burn the immense quantity of cotton stored there, lest it fall into the hands of the Yankees.

The uneasiness and dread which came over the inhabitants of South Carolina as Georgia opened a highway for its conqueror when Sherman marched down to the sea, had been hanging over their heads during all these weeks of preparation and march. The destruction of Columbia capped the climax and confirmed belief in the wildest stories of ravage, rapine, lust and blood. The horrible tales of Yankees so often told to frighten the slaves, were at last believed by the master, and the disordered imagination of their heated and terror stricken brains could picture nothing more frightful than to fall into our hands.

And thus by a series of natural causes and their effects, the state which had earliest, loudest and longest clamored for heroic defence, for blood, for the raising of the black flag, for a grand rally in the "last ditch," as the tide of war swept through other states, now when called upon to be the martyr to its own principles, made the least honorable, the most ignoble and pusillanimous show of defence seen within the limits of the Southern Confederacy.

Far and wide a very general, almost universal flight, even of women and children, preceded our approach. Hiding of articles of value had usually occurred, and door-yard, garden and cellar were the most common places of secretion. I have spoken of this wide-spread panic especially to explain that anomaly of these campaigns of which you have all heard much, the bummers.

The origin of this nickname is unknown. No English dictionary contains it, only the bummers themselves knew exactly what it meant, except, perhaps, inferentially. Probably the word originated among themselves, certainly they were not
ashamed of it. In campaigns like those in Virginia or in northern Georgia, thickly strewn with danger, soldiers stick close to the main line of march. But in Georgia, and especially in South Carolina, the veterans had learned to consider the danger just enough to give zest to personal adventure, and prompted by its spirit, many brave fellows tired of the march, of roll call and the sameness of regimental life, temporarily deserted the ranks, and banding together in small companies for defence, for days and weeks together went roaming whither they would, keeping in the same general direction, but far in advance of the main body. These bummers were usually stragglers from the infantry, but they became cavalry of the most unique and grotesque sort. The great, cardinal, characteristic, distinguishing feature of the bummer was that he believed it the first and last maxim of war to live off the enemy’s resources, and judged from this standpoint he never was remiss in his duty. Horse and rider were frequently seen bedecked in the most independent, unmilitary, Don Quixote style imaginable. He had no distaste for the uniform he wore, but a strange longing for citizen’s dress not infrequently cropped out in the donning of some huge, old-fashioned bell-crowned hat, long-tailed surtout and other fixings of olden style which his investigating spirit had discovered. His Rosinante, sometimes a blooded horse that a general might be proud of, sometimes a broken down, wheezing old nag that gave you pain to see ridden, but oftener the patient, ever-ready mule, was bedecked as his favorite, with female adornments, and softer goods than a government blanket served as a saddle-cloth. His gastronomic propensities were simply enormous; chickens, turkeys and pigs, honey, butter and eggs, sweetmeats, preserves and wines, all found their way to stomachs as ignorant of dyspepsia as the consciences of their owners to confession. The bummers had a strong liking for watches, jewelry and money, in the finding of which some became very dexterous. A new made garden or spaded patch was sure to attract the attention of these
military agriculturists, and almost every inch was probed by ramrod, poked by bayonet, or pierced by sabre, and when some lucky digger found a vein, the spade was brought into speedy requisition and hopeless and irretrievable confiscation followed. Our experience was replete with personal incidents in connection with these good-natured vagabonds. Governor Aitken of South Carolina sent to the up country for safety a beautiful silver service which cost six thousand pounds sterling. It fell into the track of Sherman's raiders, and the only piece the Governor ever again secured was an elegant silver waiter which was found in the hands of a plantation darkey, who, with an eye to the practical, was using it as a frying-pan for cooking his bacon.

One evening I set out to look for a missing brigade and took a cross road through the woods, of course unknown to me. Unattended I rode cheerfully on in the darkness for several miles. As I reached a fork in the roads, a noise sufficiently loud to mark the coming of the looked-for troops was heard. As they neared me, sounds of hilarious singing and boisterous laughing were prominent. A half dozen of the ever ready rifles glistened in the dim light as their owners in the advance caught sight of me, and in the most soldierly manner they called out: "Halt, or I will fire!" I upbraided them for their unmilitary conduct, and the coolest of "Who cares for you?" was given me in reply. When at length I was recognized, I heard this story from one of the soberest. The little party had found buried a quantity of fine old wines. They acknowledged they were jolly, but excused their condition because there happened to be some brandy in the cases, and unfortunately they had been drinking mixed liquors. They had vied with each other to see which could carry to camp the greatest quantity, but like many another unfortunate they had stowed it inside instead of outside, and the poor fellows were struggling under burdens which they would be unable to carry much longer. With generous thought for their comrades, however, they had packed
the bottles they could not drink into a carriage and harnessed in a lot of plantation slaves, and thus in triumph were marching to camp. A bountiful supply was offered me with a "Now don't report us at headquarters," and by a less premature method of stowage I disposed of more than my comrades and rode away. I did report the coming of the colored men with their carriage of precious freight, but when an aide was dispatched for its contents, only a buggy was found with a broken bottle to testify to the truth of my story.

As I have said, the bammers were always in the advance, and as ready for fight as for plunder. As our forces neared North Carolina, General Sherman learned that over one of the rivers in his front there was a long bridge, which if burned by the enemy according to their usual custom, would delay the army and disarrange important strategic movements. He sent for Kilpatrick, and consulted with him as to the best manner of securing it. At the head of his cavalry Kilpatrick made a long and forced march. As he neared the bridge, a strange figure, mounted on an old horse, with rope stirrups, came tearing down the road, swinging his hat and shouting at the top of his voice, "Come on, Kil, we've taken the bridge and we'll hold it until you can support us." Sure enough, they had captured the bridge, formed in line of battle, and were vigorously driving the enemy. The bammers had accomplished that which had cost the generals much anxiety, and the cavalry a night's march.

There is a comic side to many of the stories of these adventurers. A gentleman of much prominence whom I met in Charleston after its fall and the cessation of hostilities, told me his experience in illustration of the indignities to which he had been subjected. A colored soldier came up to his beautiful residence, and, meeting him at the door, asked for something to eat. The gentleman refused, whereupon he started for the kitchen for personal investigation. The proprietor soon followed. The soldier was master of the situation. He had laid
aside knapsack and rifle, was playing with the little colored "Pickaninies" and delighting a group of the servants with tales of his adventures, for a colored soldier was a novel sight to them. The master was a drawback to the enjoyment of the occasion. Not liking such close scrutiny, our hero exclaimed, "See here, sah, de Gineral want to see you at headquarters." Fearing for the safety of his property, and not daring to disobey, away went the gentleman and found the general after two hours of search, only to learn that he was the dupe of his colored visitor, who had found his presence disagreeable.

Officers' servants liked to play the part of bummers, as doubtless many of you know. I remember suddenly missing one who attended me upon a cavalry scout one day. The enemy was about, and we feared his capture. Before nightfall there loomed up in the distance behind us a queer, nondescript looking figure, coming at a rapid pace. As he neared us he proved to be the lost attendant. Beside the ordinary decking of turkeys, chickens, etc., he had taken the queer fancy to present me with a feather bed, and had thrown it over his saddle and sat astride of it as proud as a Roman conqueror.

Everywhere the negroes hailed our coming with delight, and at a moment's notice were prepared to fall in and leave their place of nativity, known to them by none of those endearing associations which cluster around the sacred name of home. To them it was a synonym of task, compulsion, tyranny and fear. When asked where they were going they would not unfrequently, cheerfully reply: "Don't know, we's goin' wheres youse goin', massa." The women and children, who could not be allowed to encumber and delay the trains, were sadly disappointed, but showed their confidence and hope by being easily satisfied with the promise that next time we would take them too. These colored men were no hindrance, but often of great value to us. They could always be trusted, they were invaluable as guides, proved the best of foragers, were ever ready to tell where "Massa" had hidden his horses, mules or provisions, and
not infrequently suggested to the inquisitive soldiers which part of the yard was best to experiment upon with ramrod or sabre.

I call to mind one notable exception. A fine looking negro of forty was true to his master. He buried and saved $30,000 worth of silver plate and many other valuables. He was promised by his former owner, who was his half brother, a farm from his thousands of acres, but two years later, lured by the expected fulfillment, the faithful fellow was still with his master, trying to feed a large family on the munificent recompense of eight dollars per month, paid him by this signer of the ordinance of secession.

One day I met a colored man, a near relative of his owner, who presented me with a gun and a pair of pistols. Equipped with these arms, under the direction of his master, whose pressing engagements just then called him to another part of the state, he had taken charge of a train of loaded wagons and choice slaves, and in company with a retreating Confederate battery was to find safety from the Yankees in the up country. For a while he followed the soldiers, but ruminating upon the chances of escape, he concluded it was better to return to the plantation. So he told the lieutenant that "Massa" had given him particular instruction to take good care of the mules, and he must feed them! The lieutenant replied that the Yankees would catch him if he stopped. "Leave me alone fur dat, sah, — I ain' gwine ter stop long," was his reply, and sure enough, he did not, for when the retreating soldiers were out of sight, he at once moved in the opposite direction and brought up safely in our lines.

Columbia proved the key of the enemy's position, and the mistake was in the Confederates not concentrating in its defence, instead of dividing their forces in covering Augusta, Columbia and Charleston. This last place, as we have seen, had to be evacuated, and the first ceased to be of value. We still see the strategic ability of General Sherman, and his success in deceiving the enemy.
From Columbia, the army moved by different roads to Minsi-
boro', demonstrating on Charlotte as if to march through the up
hill country into Virginia. By this movement the enemy was
well drawn to the left, away from our front, and a sudden turn
to the right caused Cheraw, almost on the border of North
Carolina, to fall, an easy prey to our arms. Here were found
immense stores, hurriedly forwarded from Charleston before its
evacuation. Provisions of all sorts were ready at hand to fill
our long trains. Thirty-six hundred barrels of powder, Blakely
rifled guns sent by blockade runners from English friends, and
other munitions of war fell into our hands. Here, as at Colum-
bia, quantities of plate and other valuables were stored. Thou-
sands of bottles of choice old wine were discovered, and many a
bumper filled to overflowing was drunk in honor of the inaugura-
tion of President Lincoln for his second term of office, a marked
contrast to the state of things four years previously, when in
South Carolina, no gun was fired nor wine drunk, save to pledge
the overthrow of both President and Government. The glorifi-
cation, even if a little excessive, went to make up for the defi-
ciency.

The insane fear which fell upon the inhabitants at our ap-
proach was illustrated by a lady of education and refinement,
who told me that she had sent her son, a lad of twelve years,
with his father who retreated with the Confederate army, for
she thought we would take him prisoner of war. No doubt our
soldiers were guilty of unjustifiable acts;—dwelling houses
were burned; but they had always been deserted by their mas-
ters, and I have yet to learn of a single instance where injury or
outrage was committed upon women or children. In some way
the most ignorant of plantation slaves had learned that their
freedom was secured by our approach. One day in company
with several officers I visited a large plantation miles from our
line of march. It was a beautiful place. The mother, grown
up daughters, sons' wives, numbered eight, including the daugh-
ter of an Episcopal Bishop from New Jersey, who had been
shut out from home all these years of war. Several of the young ladies were very pretty, and I confess that as we sat in the drawing room, we were guilty of saying gallant things in a pleasant way, and in an unfortunate moment, conquered by their smiles, were weak enough to accept an invitation to dinner. Our hostess, as she thought, and she reasoned well, had made an impression upon us. She spoke of her slaves, said that lately she had lost the power of control over them, in fact, they had refused to work, and her driver and herself had utterly failed to govern them. Turning to me, she asked in woman’s pleasantest manner, if I would not be kind enough to talk with them and tell them of their duties, saying that coming from an United States officer, it would have great influence. Could I do less than consent? A messenger was dispatched to the quarters, and soon I was notified that my audience was all ready. As I came out upon the veranda, I was welcomed by a gathering that quite surprised me. It was a motley crowd of about two hundred men and women, arrayed in the most grotesque costumes. There were pants of carpets, coats of quilts, and garments of many colors. But through all, in huge rents, armless coats and tattered dresses, were to be seen the patches of native color. With bared heads and shoeless feet they stood shivering in the winter wind. To my chagrin, our hostess and her fair daughters, accompanied by my brother officers, came out to hear what I had to say, and formed the background to the picture. It was a difficult audience to please, but then as now, having a strong desire to be a popular man, I went in for pleasing the largest number, and as I expatiated upon human rights, freedom under the old flag, and the inalienable right to the fruit of one’s labor, I succeeded in bringing down the house. Frowns and scowls sadly disfigured the fair features of the ladies behind me.

But the bright eyes of my listeners in front told me that I had hit the mark; murmurs of applause and “Dat so, Massa,” ran through the crowd, and when I told them of Massa Lincoln
and his proclamation, they tearfully replied, "We knows dat be true."

Turning to the lady, I could not help dryly remarking, "Madam, I think you will have no further trouble with your slaves!"

The greatest enemy which opposed our progress was found in the long continued heavy rains. Rain fell in torrents for days together. Small creeks were swollen to rivers of considerable magnitude. The long trains and thousands of animals cut the roads into a quagmire of mud. A wheel would suddenly sink in the quicksand. All efforts to pull it out only served to bury the animals still deeper. The driver soon learned that his occupation of whipping and swearing was useless, so he would dismount. The train guard would come to the rescue. A dozen work with shoulders at the wheels and body, and finally the wagon would be to hard ground. The road must be corduroyed. With jest and joke, the men seized the fence rails or, wading into the neighboring swamp, cut and split the trees, and soon bridged over the impassable morass.

The 12th of March saw the taking of Fayetteville, but not without opposition. As at Cheraw, the capture was of much greater importance than at first supposed. The magnificent arsenal which our Government built, contained millions of dollars' worth of machinery, materials and munitions of war. The Confederates tried to move the most valuable part, but it was too bulky for easy transportation, and our advance was so rapid that there was scarcely time for personal escape. All was left one mass of ruins.

General Johnston had at last collected the scattered fragments of the Confederate army from Charleston, Wilmington and Augusta, the remnants of Hood's old army of the Tennessee, all that could be spared from Virginia, all the detachments that were scattered through North and South Carolina, until a formidable force, in numbers at least, was in front. But they lacked the spirit which had characterized the enemy on other fields, for they now believed that their cause was hopeless.
Johnston had watched our long lines of march, our scattered trains, and deemed it possible to strike the flank, roll its disorganized masses back upon our centre before the reserves could be brought up for support, and thus at this last moment wring victory from the jaws of Fate, and give renewed hope to the cause now well nigh lost. His men fell upon the veteran ranks with the desperation of despair, but these heroes of a hundred battles were never caught napping. A wall of steel and fire arrested the rebel columns, which advanced only to destruction. Brigades and divisions came on to the support of our overmatched battalions. Not a foot was lost, not a man wavered.

The morning found us in undisputed possession of the field, covered with the enemy's dead and wounded. This battle of Averysboro' was followed by fighting on the 20th and 21st at Bentonville with like result, and the grand old army, heroes of Chattanooga, Chickamauga, Altoona, Lookout Mountain and Atlanta, who had taken the Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore of the Confederacy; whose delight had been in visiting the capitals of rebellious states; who had trodden two thousand miles through the length and breadth of the Confederacy, — had now fired its last shot and fought its last battle. Its crowning and highest glory was the surrender of its brave enemy.

Dear old army! Its mission is ended! Its flags are furled! Its tents struck, its comrades scattered in the quiet pursuits of peace, but its lessons remain and its glory is written in history, to the Nation's honor.