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THE

LIFE

OF

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,

BY

ALEX'R. DELMAR.

Author of "Gold Money and Paper Money; "Abraham Africanus;" "The Great Paper Bubble;" "The House with Two Windows." &c., &c.

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The Life of George B. McClellan.

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CHAPTER I.

THE BOY AND THE OFFICER.

Birth and Parentage—Education—Personal Characteristics—The Cadet—The War in Mexico—State Rights—Monarchy—The Siege of Vera Cruz—The Winning Gun—Gallantry and Intrepidity—Contreras—Cherubusco—Chepultepec—Mexico—Victory—Thanks of the Commander-in-Chief—Return to the United States.

THE subject of the present volume, GEORGE BRINTON MCCLELLAN, was born in Philadelphia, on the 3d day of December, 1826, and is consequently but thirty-eight years of age.

His father, Dr. George McClellan, was a well-known surgeon and physician of the Quaker City—a man of cultivated manners and kind heart, who never failed to win the esteem and admiration of all who came in contact with him.

Philadelphia being the seat of the first Medical College in the United States, and giving to the country every year a fresh batch of well-educated and ardent young followers of Galen, it is easy to infer that to be a successful physician in the Quaker City requires more than ordinary talent and address.

Dr. McClellan was a man of this stamp, and his skill and perseverance did not fail to win him an emiuent reputation.

As his name indicates, he came of Scotch blood, and the family claims to be of kin to that brave Highland shepherd whose genius turned his flock into an army and

his crook into a flaming sword that waved them on to victory with Colin Campbell.

Of George B. McClellan's mother little is known. A lady of quiet, modest habits, the world saw and heard but little of her. But her warm and generous nature is seen in that of her son. Ardent and sincere natures speak plainly of the kind maternal source from which these qualities of mind invariably flow.

George, as a child, was neither remarkable for his bodily strength or the precocity of his intellect. He took his turn at being knocked down, and at knocking his fellows down, as other children did; while the inevitable satchell and burden of books graced his back, and portentious bunches of marbles and China-alleys bloated his pockets in due time. Then came school days; and, who knows, perhaps, a day or two of sweet, long-drawn happiness at—hookey! The Zane street school was the first that closed its academic doors on the sobbing, reluctant George, who wasn't much of a boy in size, by the way, and didn't mind crying when he felt miserable.

But Zane street is not a dreary place withal, the discipline being very liberal, and the course not over irksome. A year or two at this excellent institution is generally sufficient to fit a bright intelligent lad for college, and we may be sure that George did not take longer at it than his mates did.

A friend of his father's, who remembers him as his friend, says that he was quite a gentlemanly little boy, tolerably playful, and boisterous, but respectful to his elders, and affectionate to his friends.

He used to be fond of drawing, and his books were splattered all over with specimens, exceedingly crude to be sure; of that graceful accomplishment. Portraits of the school teachers, embellished the title pages, and fly leaves; flocks of birds of unknown species adorned the chapter headings; while groups of dislocated cows and impossible horses wandered all over the earth, as it lay portrayed on the pages of his geography, and with their legs in the middle of the South Sea, and their tails hanging over the Antarctic Zone they cropped the herbage of Nova Zembla or quenched their thirst in the refreshing waters of the Dead Sea.

George received a severe whacking at one time for these innocent recreations, and was exhorted never to practice them again without first providing himself with spare drawing paper. The birds accordingly disappeared from view, and the teachers' portraits were rubbed out with repentant bread crumbs; the cows died off, and the horses became a totally extinct species. More of their tails are still to be found in the vicinity of the region subsequently discovered by Sir James Hop, near the South Pole.

At the age of thirteen, George was sent to the University of Pennsylvania, a Freshman of the freshest kind. This Seminary of learning is not one of the big-wig kind. In a word, it is not a University in the European sense of the term, but as a State institution ranking second only to that of New York, it affords the youth of the Keystone State advantages of a sound course of instruction in the higher branches of education, and well answers the purpose of its noble and enlightened founders.

After three years of study at the University, during which time he displayed talents of a very high order for one so young, George earned his diploma, and returned home in triumph. The fatted calf was killed, although George protested that he was not fond of veal; and his parents arms received him with that fondness and pride that always falls to the lot of blustering graduates. The lad was full of health, eager, and tractable; and displayed a knowledge of mathematics and kindred sciences far beyond his years. It was very plain he was ripening into a soldier. His temperament indicated the possession of these two cardinal qualities for a soldier—obedience and fire. His constitution was healthy, his movements active, and his bearing brave and manly. Add to this a keen eye, and a generous hand, and *the soldier* was written as plainly upon him as nature could make it.

Dr. McClellan, a very observant man, was not slow to perceive the growing bent of his son—his fondness for outdoor sports, his progress in geometry, his firm tread and defiant port, all marking him out for a military life—and at once sought to gratify it.

Being a very influential man, he obtained without difficulty, an appointment for George to the United States Military Academy, where, after four years of study and exercise, he was graduated second in his class, in 1846.

At this time, the United States were engaged in war with the republic of Mexico.

In 1835, Mexico, after many years of internal revolution and civil discord, decreed the confederation of States, of which she was then composed, to be a consolidated re-

public in which the rights of the separate States were by this simple act at once swept away. This was the deed of Santa Anna, who, at the time, was nominally her constitutional President, but, in fact, her dictator.

Bereft of the means of organized resistance, the Mexican States, all but Texas, where several thousand American colonists had settled, bowed to the yoke, and the glorious Mexican Constitution of 1824 existed no longer. Not so with Texas, whose people clung to the Constitution, and rejected the centralized despotism which civil war had invited, and her cunning and ambitious chiefs were not slow to seize upon as a means of perpetuating their force.

This period of Mexican history is repeating itself now in ours, where, with a false cry and a falser purpose, the leaders of an aristocratic party, which affects to centre in itself all the purity, learning and worth of the country, have fastened themselves upon the Constitution, in order to tear it to pieces, and erect upon its ruins a North American despotism. Their disregard for the reserved rights of the States, and their plain attempt to obliterate State lines, by means of a consolidated republic or monarchy, is also noticeably in keeping with Santa Anna's consolidation of Mexico.

The brave people of Texas disdaining to lose their individuality, and sink into a position of suffering dependance towards the Mexican Capitol, heroically rebelled, and pronouncing the government of Mexico a usurpation and a despotism, and its chief a dictator and a tyrant, flew to arms to defend their right of revolution. Placing them

selves under the leadership of Gen. Sam. Houston, the battle of San Jacinto was fought and Santa Anna's army was defeated, and himself taken prisoner and sent to Washington, where, in the following year, the republic of Texas, with its first President, David J. Burnett was formally recognized.

San Jacinto was not the only battle fought, though, for who can forget Goliad, Conception, San Antonia de Bexar, and the cold blooded tragedy of the Alamo?

But San Jacinto practically terminated the war, and was therefore the most noticeable action that occurred. Mexico, however, continued to maintain a hostile attitude towards her new neighbor, which was only restrained from breaking into open war, by the dissentions, which, at the same same time, unremittingly weakened her at home. She captured Texan vessels, and incited the Indians on the Texan borders to murder the people; while nothing was left undone in the way of diplomacy to effect the ruin of the infant republic, by throwing her into the arms of, successively, France and England.

This constant exposure to attacks made the Texans anxious to place their country among a sisterhood of other States, for mutual protection and support; and proposals were accordingly made to the U. S. Government at Washington for annexation. For fear of provoking Mexico into a war, this proposal at first met with but partial favor; but an election for President occurring in the States at the time, this question of annexation was made a party question, and James K. Polk was elected with the understanding that he was favorable to the measure. In December,

1845, Texas was formally admitted to the Union, and war at once broke out with Mexico. This furnished the young McClellan with the opportunity he so ardently desired. War is the time for military promotion and military honor, and George was immediately brevetted second lieutenant and ordered to Mexico. Taking leave of home with heart-broken words, but filled with enthusiasm for the cause, the young adventurer turned his face for the first time towards glory and danger—eager to win the one, and quick to scorn the other. Once away from the scenes of home and boyhood, in a ship crowded with hundreds of the rough but brave troops, he was afterwards destined to command, the shyness and reserve which had previously distinguished his manners at once disappeared, and he became a pleasant, humorous companion, the very soul of his brother officers, and the idol of the men.

How many of us at this critical period of life, when the temptation to sacrifice duty to the pleasures which are sure to be derived from popularity and jovial companionship, forget all the fine resolutions with which we set forth.

And particularly does this remark affect the young officer. With a score of jovial blades for companions, and several hundred men about you, who, from the necessities of the service, are obliged to show you invariable respect, no matter whether it is deserved or not, and can in no way exercise a check upon your inclinations, the temptations to fall are very difficult to resist.

For this reason I have always regarded a military officer, of serious and affable manners—with double respect, for he exhibits not only great firmness of mind in being

refrained from falling into the mere sensualist and dandy—qualities that distinguish half the military men of the day—but an equal firmness in having resisted the temptation to become proud and affected.

Arrived at Corpus Christi, McClellan was assigned to the command of a company of sappers, miners, and pontoniers, with whom he performed distinguished services. His command was in Gen. Worth's division; that heroic Gen. Worth, whose monument stands in Madison Square.

Worth commanded that division of the army, which, in the battle of Monterey, had been ordered to carry the heights on the Saltillo road, while Gen. Taylor, with the other division, advanced along the Seraloo road. As it was impossible to communicate with the Commander-in-chief, Worth was obliged to act independently throughout the battle. He carried the forts commanding his line of approach, stormed the bishop's palace, and had fought his way through the streets nearly to the Grand Plaza, when the town capitulated to Taylor, approaching from the other side. This was September 23d, 1846. McClellan was then not quite twenty years old, yet he not only conducted himself with distinguished bravery, for which he was commended in the official reports, but evinced that coolness under fire, and that deliberate judgment ready made for trying emergencies, which has characterized him ever since.

At the siege of Vera Cruz, McClellan again made himself conspicuous for his military ability and gallant conduct, and was mentioned with high enconiums in the official reports.

Had the United States then been convulsed with the throes of civil war and revolution as France was, when Lieutenant Bonaparte planted a three gun battery upon the shores of the harbor of Toulon, how different might have been the fate, not only of the country, to-day, but of the brilliant subject of this sketch!

But our young officers grow up with different ideas from what they do in Europe. There they are younger sons who adopt the profession simply because it is honorable. They grow up in it, confident of their ability to remain in it, and careless of the acquirements which their academies offer to them. They live in it, and they die in it. They are good fellows, merry fellows, mostly dandies or tipplers. There is nothing beyond the routine of garrison life within their reach. If they go out of the service, their pride and connections forbid them to adopt any other profession, without, indeed, as has been the case in very rare instances, they enter the church or practice law. Once a soldier, always a soldier. There is no change that is possible to them, A commission in the army condemns a man either to the life of a recluse, or that of a carouser.

But it is far different at home. Our officers here are not the refuse of younger sons and good-for-nothings; but on the contrary, are selected from among the most promising youths in the land. They are educated in the most thorough manner, and with a view of their pursuing other professions besides that of arms. Knowing full well that war-times are happily but temporary ones, and that a career of usefulness is always open to them upon a return

to peace, the American officer is generally a thoughtful, intelligent gentleman.

When men of superior atttainments, like Napoleon Bonaparte or Arthur Wellesley, arises amid the crowd of tight-waisted exquisites, who wear the epaulettes in European armies, they soon become a military chieftain and conquerors. But such men are not exceptions in the United States. They are the rule. And instead of rising into military eminence, their mutual superiority counterbalances, and their genius usually finds vent in other employments where such excellence is not so commonly found. It is thus that most of our best officers are in civil employments during times of peace. Even McClellan, when the present war broke out, was the President of both the Illinois Central and the Ohio and Mississippi Railroads, and in both these capacities became as distinguished for business scope, financial talent, and practical enterprise, as he had been for gallantry in the Mexican war, or for diplomacy in St. Domingo.

But this is anticipating. The point we wish to make is this: that while European officers have no other career but that of arms, and are therefore satisfied with attaining enough proficiency to keep up a decent appearance at the head of a company, our officers have the whole world before them, and qualify themselves for success in the most distinguished walks of life. They, therefore, are careless of any very great military distinction, and while they are nearly all of them Napoleons in talent, there is no fear of any of them becoming Napoleons in tyranny.

But we must return to our young hero, who, having

aided in reducing Vera Cruz, was now on his way to still more bloody fields. At Cerro Gordo, and the occupation of the city of Mexico, McClellan was again noticed for gallant conduct, and, together with General Beauregard, then Lieutenant Beauregard, and General Foster, then also a lieutenant, was commended in the official reports.

Cerro Gordo, it will be remembered, was a pass on the road between Vera Cruz and Mexico, which the Mexicans had fortified with great care, and defended with 12,000 men under Gen. Santa Anna in person The American force was 8,500 men under Scott. With this force the old hero, with terrific energy, crossed a ravine hitherto deemed impassable, and by a series of manœuvres, remarkable for their skill and boldness, took the enemy in reverse, surprised him in the time of action, made a general assault on all the posts at once, cut off the retreat of infantry, artillery, and even a part of the cavalry, and gallantly carrying the almost insuperable heights, defeated the Mexicans, killed 1,000 to 1,200 of them, and captured 3,000 prisoners, 5,000 stand of arms, 43 pieces of artillery, 7 standards, 5 generals, and Santa Anna's private baggage and money chest. The movement was likened to the passage of Bonaparte over the Alps, and its importance is evidenced by the almost immediate surrender of the Mexican capital to our victorious arms. This was on the 18th of April, 1847. In this action McClellan again demonstrated his extraordinary ability. During the night preceding the battle, with 500 men to each gun, he managed, with incredible labor, to drag up to the summit of a hill, broken by deep chasms and commanding a portion of the enemy's posi-

tion, one heavy 24-pounder and two 24 pound howitzers Like Bonaparte's battery at Toulon, these guns won the day, the astonished Mexicans being utterly unable to account for their having got there, except by means of a balloon! The American loss in this memorable action, was but 33 officers and 398 men—of whom only 63 were killed. At Contreras and Cherubusco, both of which battles were fought on the same day, he won the brevet of 1st lieutenant; and at Molino del Rey, that of captain, which he, from a sense of modesty, declined. He accepted a brevet, however, for "gallant and meritorious conduct" at Chepultapec, the last of the brilliant series of victories which, under Gen. Scott, preceded the occupation of the Mexican capital. This action was fought Sept. 13, 1847, and consisted of a series of movements which, while they deceived Santa Anna, who was in Mexico, two miles off, with his army, into the belief that the city itself was being attacked, resulted in the storming and capture of a heights and castle 90 feet high, and defended by the able and heroic Gen. Bravo, with a large force of picked men.

The victors now pressing forward with unabated ardor concluded the campaign, and the war with the occupation of Mexico.

From this time, 1847, until the breaking out of hostilities in Virginia, 1861, McClellan laid aside the profession of arms.

We shall see him in his new career, exercising the same moderation and displaying the same gallantry and decision which so eminently distinguished him in Mexico. We

shall see through all, the modest gentleman, the pure patriot, and the man of high talent.

His sojourn in Mexico had inured him to fatigue and familiarized him with danger. His appearance denoted a hardy constitution and great personal strength and agility. His features were bronzed, and an air of determination manifested itself in all his actions. A slight compression of the under lip and an almost imperceptible knitting of the brow, which subsequent trials and hardships have since deepened, now first began to show themselves.

They afforded a harmonious contrast to his other personal characteristics, which were generally of an affectionate and cheerful nature. The veterans who have fought with him during the present war, all testify to these qualities in their beloved General, without ever being a martinet, and yet without forgetting the responsibility of his position, as the Commander-in-Chief of an army of sometimes one hundred thousand men ; he invariably attached every man to him who came within his personal supervision, and this without any effort on his part. It was simply that courage and delicacy, that warmth of nature and that decision combined which he had first developed in Mexico, and afterwards ripened during the fourteen years of intercourse he enjoyed with men of taste, culture, and distinction, which followed the close of the war in Mexico.

CHAPTER II.

THE PATHFINDER.

McClellan's Activity and Industry. Scott's Friendship for Him. McClellan an Author. His Journey to San Francisco. Exploration of the Cascade Range. Hardships. Sufferings in the Mountains. Tribute to the Catholic Missionaries. Opinion of Governor Stevens and Secretary Davis. Anecdotes. The Priest's Blessing. Jefferson's Medal. Peace and Friendship. An Offer of Marriage. Four Hundred Horses and an Indian Wife. McClellan's Abhorrence of Personal Vanity. Gold-Seeking. The Big Thought. The Unexpected Election. Return to Washington in 1854.

THE *sobriquet* of THE PATHFINDER has been applied to several of those hardy pioneers who have, at various periods in our history, opened the path of empire to our advancing civilization. To none will it apply with more aptness than to George B. McClellan. But before advancing his claim to the proud title of Pathfinder, we shall have to detail that portion of McClellan's career which followed his return from active service in Mexico.

Upon his arrival in the United States, George at once proceeded to his home and received the gratified embraces of his family, and the well-earned admiration of his friends, for his gallantry and devotion to our glorious flag.

His nature was of too active a kind to endure leisure. Invested with the command of a corps of engineers at West Point, he undertook his new duties with alacrity, and during such moments of time as remained at his own disposal, he prepared a translation and adaptation of M. Gomard's bayonet exercise, from the French, under the

title of "Manual of Bayonet Exercise, prepared for the use of the Army of the United States, by George B. McClellan, Brevet Captain U. S. A." This work was prepared during the years 1849 and 1850, and was published in 1852, by Lippincott, Grambo & Co., Philadelphia. It was warmly recommended to the Secretary of War by Gen. Winfield Scott, and at once adopted as a text-book for the army.

To appreciate the truly modest manner in which McClellan ventured to lay this little work before the public, we can do no better than to introduce a portion of the remarks with which it was prefaced:

"The Bayonet Exercise presented in the following pages, is chiefly from the French of M. Gomard, an eminent French teacher of the art of fencing.

"After an examination of the systems of Selmnitz, Pinette, Muller, &c., the superiority of Gomard's was very evident. It is in its arrangement very analagous to the infantry tactics, and of such a nature that it can readily be taught by the non-commissioned officers.

"In addition, it is far the simplest system of all. In the others are to be found many different "guards," very inefficient thrusts, and an almost infinite number of parries, against the lance, dragoon, hussar, cuirassier, infantry soldier, &c., *ad infinitum*.

"Gomard lays it down as a principle, that the most formidable antagonist an infantry soldier can encounter is an infantry soldier; that the bayonet is more formidable than either the lance or the sabre. This assertion may seem surprising, but trial will convince any one of its truth,

and of the consequent fact, that an infantry soldier who can parry the attack of a well drilled infantry soldier, has nothing to fear from a cavalry soldier, because simple variations of the parries against infantry are perfectly effective against the sabre and lance, *e. g.*, the parries in high tierce and quarte.

"There is an instance on record of a French grenadier who, in the battle of Polotsk, defended himself, with his bayonet, against the simultaneous attack of eleven Russian grenadiers, eight of whom he killed. In the battle of Janguessa. two soldier's of Abbe's division defended themselves, with their bayonets, against twenty-five Spanish cavalry, and, after having inflicted several severe wounds, rejoined their regiment without a scratch. At that period there was little or no regular instruction in the use of the bayonet."

A very noticeable feature in McClellan's life, is the warm friendship he enjoyed from Scott. It was Scott who first detected McClellan's extraordinary genius in Mexico. It was Scott who repeatedly marked him for distinguished conduct. It was Scott who recommended his maiden effort of authorship. It was Scott who remarked his ability as an explorer. Finally, it was Scott who recommended him to the chief command of the armies of the United States, after the first battle of Bull Run, and who resigned his own command in his favor.

To Gen. Scott, no less than to his own great merit, is he therefore, deeply indebted for his signal success in life. Genius unrecognised often falls into decay, and many and

many a hero has passed unrecognized into an oblivious tomb, unwept, unhonored, and unsung.

> Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
> The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
> Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
> And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

To none, therefore, does McClellan bear that unmixed affection and respect, that he does towards the old hero of Lundy's Lane and Mexico.

This gratefulness is but one of the many estimable qualities of George B. McClellan's character. He never forgets his friends.

Shortly after the publication of his Manual of Bayonet Exercise, McClellan was appointed by the Secretary of War to the joint command of an expedition, which had for its main object the discovery and survey of a railroad route from the Pacific Ocean to the Mississippi River, across the Cascade Range of Mountains.

This important mission was executed with such success, that on the 27th of February, 1855, after its results had been officially laid before Congress, Jefferson Davis, then Secretary of War, published the following enconium on McClellan's expedition:—

"The examination of the approaches and passes of the Cascade mountains, made by Captain McClellan, of the corps of Engineers, presents a reconnoisance of great value, and though performed under adverse circumstances, exhibited all the information necessary to determine the practicability of this portion of the route, *and reflects the highest credit on the capacity and resources of that officer.*"

This expedition was under the joint command of Isaac J. Stevens, Governor of the Territory of Washington, Stevens being the senior officer.

Starting from Washington, May 9th, 1853, Gov. Stevens proceeded at once to St. Paul's, while McClellan took passage for San Francisco, the plan being that Stevens should proceed with his party in an westerly direction, and McClellan with his in an easterly direction, until a junction was effected. Stevens had with him a large and well appointed party, with Professor Spencer F. Baird as naturalist, Dr. John Evans as geologist, and Mr. Stanley as artist. They had abundance of instruments and supplies. McClellan, on the contrary, was obliged to organize his expedition on the Pacific, the whole region of which was, at that time, wild with excitement concerning the recent discovery of gold in California. His instructions were to proceed to San Francisco, collect such information as he could there, and either there or at his next appointed rendezvous, at Astoria, to organize a corps of savans, guides, hunters, trappers, and mule packers.

Imagine the difficulty of such an undertaking in a new country like California! But McClellan was not a man to halt at trifles. With indefatigable energy he collected all the information he could in San Francisco, and then proceeded at once to Vancouver's Island where he succeeded, after many mishaps, in organizing his command. The army officers at our frontier forts, all of whom are men of education and culture, afforded him the materials for a scientific expedition. Lieut. J. L. Duncan, of the Third Artillery, became the astronomer, topographer and

draughtsman of the party; Lieut. H. C. Hodges, Fourth Artillery, the quartermaster and commissary; Lieut. J. Mowry, Third Artillery, the meterologist; Mr. George Gibbs was appointed geologist and ethnologist; Mr. J. F. Minter, assistant engineer, in charge of courses, distances, &c.; Dr. J. G. Cooper, surgeon and naturalist; and Mr. A. L. Lewes, assistant engineer and interpreter.

In addition to these, there were five assistants in observations, &c., two sergeants, two corporals, and twenty-four privates of the Fourth Infantry, two chief packers, three hunters and herders, and twenty packers, besides McClellan himself. This made sixty persons in all.

There were one hundred and seventy-three horses or mules—seventy-three for riding, and one hundred for packing—besides cattle and sheep,

McClellan arrived at Vancouver, June 27, 1853, yet by the 24th of the following month, all was ready. As an instance of how difficult a matter it was to simply organize the expedition, we may mention that of the only two chronometers it was possible to procure, one was utterly worthless, and the other none of the best. The barometer was good for nothing, the saddles so worthless that they fell to pieces after a few days service, and some of the men so eager to be off to the diggings, that it was with difficulty they could be kept from deserting. Once away from the immediate vicinity of the settlements, and under the inspiriting guidance of McClellan all went well, and such was the success with which the expedition was conducted, notwithstanding all the drawbacks we have related, and the many other ones which proceeded from limited supplies, rugged tra-

velling, intense cold and heavy rains and snow, that Gov. Stevens issued the following order concerning it on the 29th of Oct., 1853 :—

"To Captain McClellan, his officers and men, too much praise cannot be ascribed for their indefatigable exertions, and the great ability of all kinds brought to their division of the work. They can point with just pride to the determination of two practicable passes in that most formidable barrier from the Mississippi to the Pacific, of the Cascade range, and to a most admirable development of the unknown geography of the region eastward of the Columbia, *as showing the unsurpassed skill and devotion which has characterized the chief of the division*, (Captain McClellan,) and all of his assistants."

The expedition started from Vancouver, July 24, 1853, with instructions to explore the Cascade mountains from the Columbia river to the 49th parallel, to examine the line from Wallah-Wallah to Steilcoom, and thence east to the Rocky mountains, in order to fall in with the other division under command of Gov. Stevens. The strictest economy was enjoined upon our young adventurer, and a handsome sum of money placed at his disposal for the expenses of the journey. Orders were also left by Gov. Stevens with his own party, that in case of his absence, and of falling in with McClellan's party from the westward, the latter was to assume command of the whole.

Of its signal success we have been already advised. The economy and business tact displayed by McClellan in managing his command, are also noticeable features of the expedition.

Of his adventures in the mountains, the terrible sufferings he endured, and the admirable manner in which he supported the spirits of all, by his cheerfulness and endurance, we would like to speak at length, but the limits of this work forbid.

A few anecdotes relating to this part of his life, however, may not be out of place.

At a distant post near the Cascade range, there exists a Catholic mission, called that of Atahnan, which was then under the care of the Rev. Fathers Pandozy and D'Harbomey. Shut out from the world by the remoteness of their solitude, the devotion which these worthy priests exhibited for their charitable work, made a strong impression upon McClellan's mind, and he took particular pains to pay them a beautiful tribute to their philanthropy. He said: "The simple fare you put up with, the want of all comfort you endure, the unbroken solitude into which you have buried yourselves, surrounded only by the most wild and tremendous works of nature, excites my admiration for the motive that has impelled you here—a motive which has for its only object the diffusion of morality and intelligence to the wandering savages who occasionally frequent the spot."

The worthy fathers, touched by his ardor and ingenuousness, blessed him, and wished him a happy voyage. Their wishes were fulfilled. McClellan traversed over a *thousand miles* through these deserts without a personal mishap to himself, although always at the head of his party, and exposed to the most danger. On one occasion his command was reduced to 36 persons, 42 horses and 52

packing animals. On another, two of the mules near him went over an unseen precipice, but McClellan's animal passed the danger unharmed, and his rider escaped. The good priests' blessings were effectual.

An Indian chief, with the extraordinary name of Wattai-Wattai-pow-lis, exhibited to McClellan a medal which had been presented to him in 1801 by Capts. Lewis and Clark, the first white explorers of a route between the Mississippi and the Pacific. The medal was embellished with a bust of "Thomas Jefferson, President of the U. S. A., 1801," and the chief exhibited it as a token of his rank, and indicative of the powers with which he might oppose the entrance of the whites into that region, if he choosed. "Ah, chief," replied McClellan, "you have only looked upon one side of the medal. The other has upon it the emblems of two clasped hands, a pipe of peace, and a battle axe broken in twain, with the motto 'PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP to all men.' Wattai-Wattai-pow-lis was never heard to say anything about attacking the expedition after that.

A chief named Kam-ai-ya-kam, was made acquainted with the object of the expedition, and told that in the event of that route being decided upon for a railroad, the whites might wish to purchase the land from him. The chief replied that he had no objection to dispose of the land for a good consideration, but that he had lost a great

deal already by accepting inconsiderable presents from various parties, who afterwards came and claimed his lands, saying that the presents he had accepted had bound him to part with them. McClellan explained to him that no bargain on his part was binding without his signature, nor on the part of any white trader, for lands, without the authority of the government, a copy of whose seal he furnished him with. Kam-ai-ya-kam was so delighted at this that he offered McClellan *four hundred horses* if he would marry his daughter and become his son-in-law. It is needless to say that the captain respectfully declined.

It is the common practice of explorers to bestow their own names upon such remarkable works of nature as they may be the first to discover. In this manner Amerigo Vespucci has wrongfully given his name to this continent. In the same way we find between the Mississippi and the Pacific such names as Fremont's Peak, Fremont's Island, Fremont's Pass, Gunnison's Island, Pike's Peak, Denver City, &c.

McClellan has furnished the only exception to this species of personal vanity. He carefully preserved all the aboriginal names of localities, and only ventured in one instance to infringe upon this rule. This was in the case of a mountain which he called Mount Stuart, the Indian name of which could not be ascertained.

During one part of the journey, some of the party discovered gold in the waters of the Yakima. The men all rushed after the treasure, and the objects of the expedition were for the time forgotten. McClellan, chafing with scorn and mortification at this evidence of avarice, had the patience to resign himself to circumstances, and to calculate the time lost by the men, and compare with it the meagre results of their diggings. These results he exhibited to them on paper. They at once saw that it paid them a great deal better to devote their services to the legitimate objects of the expedition; and accordingly the march was at once resumed.

A chief named Skloo tried a trick on McClellan, which the latter detected, and foiled. Another chief, one Owhai, hearing of it, struck his forehead and said: "Ah, that Skloo—big head—big thought. Captain McClellan—bigger head—bigger thought—*like myself!*"

The Indians in that region are very fond of horse-racing. In order to divert themselves, the officers of the expedition offered the Indians a much coveted piece of scarlet cloth. This caused a large entry to be made for the race. In short, the whole tribe was present, and what is more, they were all stripped stark naked for the ride. In order to distinguish one from the other, the officers had them painted in stripes like a barber's pole, when off they went. The course was not measured or the time marked

but the winner received his prize, and went on his way rejoicing. Such was the envy which followed him, that McClellan, to please the chief, offered another prize of equal value to he who should be elected chief, at a general election to be then and there held by the Nomads. This was at the chief's own suggestion, for, like Mr. Lincoln, he was confident of re-election. As if to complete his chagrin and mortification, an entirely new man was elected, and the chief retired into private life, not altogether unconsoled, however, for Captain McClellan gave him a handsome present at parting.

In the spring of 1854, McClellan returned to Washington, after one of the most successful expeditions ever ordered by the United States Government, and received the congratulations of all parties.

CHAPTER III.

THE COMMISSIONER.

Construction of Fort Delaware—Exploration of Red River—Exploration of Texas—McClellan as a Sailor—His intense activity—The van of civilization—McClellan's Railroad System Adopted by Government—His Secret Mission to the West Indies—His Mission to Europe—The Celebrities he Met—McClellan the Perfect Gentleman—The Historic Scenes he Visited—The Value of his Labors in Introducing Rifled Arms and other Improvements into our Service.

We should have mentioned that previous to McClellan's journey to San Francisco, and his survey of the Northern Pacific Railroad route, he was ordered to Fort Delaware,

in 1851, to superintend its construction under Major John Sanders. The next year he accompanied Capt Randolph B. Marcey, (whose daughter he subsequently married,) on an expedition to explore the Red River. This duty, performed with great ability and to the complete satisfaction of the government, he next accompanied Gen. P. F. Smith in September, 1852, to Texas, to survey the rivers and harbors of that State.

As a sailor, no less than as a soldier, McClellan again distinguished himself, and the practical experience of salt water life he gained in this exploration stood him a good turn, when he subsequently became engaged in the survey of the waters of Puget Sound, during the stay at Vancouver's Island, related in the last chapter.

His life, it will be seen, was one of constant activity. Nothing could satisfy his restless desire to be doing something, but a constant devotion to active service.

Our lives are all too short here below to waste any of its precious hours. The man who does the most towards adding to the stock of human knowledge, does the most good in this world. Knowledge is civilization, and civilization is virtue and morality. The more we work, the greater mark we leave behind. Our labor is never lost. Some day or other it is picked up and turned to account. Those who do nothing, might as well never have existed. The march of humanity is slow at best, for error has to be encountered at every step, and knowledge diffused. But how much slower would it not be if no one came forward to lead the way.

McClellan fully appreciated this, and determined to lose

no time. Procrastination is a thief. To-day is always the best time.

Had this brilliant young officer died before his journey to the Columbia, at the youthful age of twenty-six, he still would have left behind him a name celebrated in the history of the country. Had he died upon his return from that expedition, at the age of twenty-eight, he would have been written down in history as one of the great Pathfinders of the American empire, What a shining example is he not to the youth of this vast republic!

But his life has been happily spared for a further career of usefulness and honor, a career brilliant in all its details, and glorious in the results it has already achieved.

To lead his countrymen in a war that added California to the Union, to map out the pathless solitudes of the great mountain ranges of Western America, to represent his country among the courts of Europe, and to become the foremost leader in the present war for the Union, has already been his proud destiny.

May it be his to consummate a grand work of national regeneration, and lead his now distracted fatherland to an honorable and permanent peace!

Upon McClellan's return from Oregon, he was immediately detailed by the government to investigate the entire railroad system of the United States, with a view to obtain all the necessary data on construction, equipment and management, for the successful operation of the contemplated Pacific Railroad.

Of the result of his proceedings, he presented a full report in November, 1854.

This report is remarkable, as, indeed, are all his writings, for its brevity, lucidity and directness. He never intrudes himself or his personal opinions in his reports. They are all strictly scientific, and for this reason have proved of great service to the country.

His report upon the railroad system of the United States has become a text-book on the subject, and the various acts of Congress concerning railroads, which have passed since its publication, are all more or less based upon its contents. It was this admirable report which first brought him to the notice of the great Illinois Central Railroad Company, and which induced it to subsequently invite him to resign his commission in the army, and undertake the superintendence of that wonderful highway.

He had received his commission as first lieutenant in 1853, and in March, 1854, he was promoted to be captain in the First Cavalry.

In the winter of 1854–5 he was employed by the Government on a secret mission to the West Indies. The results of this mission were never made public, but he performed his part of ambassador as satisfactorily as he had that of warrior, author and pathfinder, and received the thanks of the Government. So satisfactorily was his mission to the West Indies concluded, that he was next ap-appointed, with Colonel Delafield and Major Mordecai, two of the best educated officers in our service, to study the organization of European armies, and observe the war in the Crimea.

For this reason, his mission to the Caribbean Islands was supposed to have been connected, the capacity they pos-

sessed, of being used as military and naval bases of operations, in the event of our being attacked by European powers.

McClellan wrote one volume of the report of this European commission, which was printed by order of Congress. His portion of it was republished in Philadelphia, after the Commissioners' return to the United States, under the title of "The Armies of Europe; comprising Descriptions in Detail of the Military Systems of England, France, Russia, Prussia, Austria and Sardinia." (8vo. 1861.)

In this important commission, Capt. McClellan had an opportunity to become personally acquainted with some of the most celebrated men in Europe. Lord Clarendon, the British Minister of War, Lord Raglan, then commanding the British forces in the Crimea, Sir Edmund Lyons, Admiral of the Black Sea Fleet, Count Walewsky, the French Foreign Minister, Baron Manteuffel, the Prussian Foreign Minister, Baron de Budberg, the Russian Ambassador at Berlin, Baron Krusenstein, the Russian Diplomat, Prince Paskievitch, the old Russian hero and Marshal, Count Nesselrode, the Prime Minister of Russia, Count Dalgourouki, the Russian Minister of War, the Emperor Nicholas, Baron Lieven, Prince Ouroussoff, Count Waldersee, the Prussian Diplomat, Count Buol Schawenstein, the Austrian Minister, and Baron Tecas, the Sardinian Minister.

Arriving at Balaklava October 8th, he enjoyed, with his brother officers, the personal acquaintance of General Simpson, the successor to Lord Raglan in command of the British Army, General La Marmora, Commander-in-chief

of the Sardinian contingent, General de Martimprey, chief of the personal staff of Marshal Pelissier, the French commander, General Niel, Chief of Engineers, and many other illustrious persons.

On their way home, leaving Constantinople and Scutari on the 13th November, they successively enjoyed the society of the Grand Dukes William and Leopold of Austria, the veteran Marshal Radetsky, at Verona, Marshal Castillon, at Lyons, General Grouchy, at Strasbourg, Marshal Maguan and Marshal Vaillant, at Paris, and numerous dignitaries of lesser note.

This personal contact with men of fame and high social position, was a source of great pleasure to Captain McClellan, because it afforded him a rare opportunity to study their manners and their attainments.

A gentleman himself, McClellan delighted to encounter other gentlemen.

A man of rare ability himself, he loved to meet with men of genius.

A man bent upon a high and an honorable career, he derived pleasure in meeting with others whose names had become famous in the history of their countries.

But personal intercourse with the high and noble of many lands, was not the only privilege he enjoyed. He was recognized everywhere as a man of great talent, and people of all conditions rejoiced to see him, and to do him honor.

In addition to this, he visited almost every spot of interest in Europe. He stood where William conquered and Richard perished; where Hampden struck, and Burke

thundered forth for liberty; where Magna Carta was signed; where Charles was beheaded; and Fox, Pitt and Sheridan proclaimed American Independence.

He beheld the mansoleum of Napoleon, the place of the Bastile, the spot where Louis perished, and where the French Republic was born.

He visited the birth places of Steuben and Kosciusko, and saw the city which its own inhabitants had destroyed, rather than it should fall into the hands of the invader—the heroic city of Moscow.

He viewed the little Gibraltar of Toulon, the bridge of Australitz, and the plains of Waterloo—successive monuments of Napoleon's meteoric career. And as the grass grew over these spots, where the history of nations was decided in blood and in carnage, he read the lessons that nature eventually triumphs in her quiet, gentle way over all.

Warsaw, where "quiet" ferociously reigned; Venice, Vienna, Mantua and Milan, the scenes of Shakspeare's "divine comedies," the Bosphorus, where Leander dashed the briny wave aside, and Marseilles the cradle of French republican liberty, were successively visited by the commission.

Their labors comprised a vast collection of facts concerning systems of fortifications, the use of rifled arms and cannon, medical and hospital arrangements, ambulances, clothing, camp equippage, accoutrements, ordnance, ammunition, permanent fortifications, sea-coast and land defences, seige operations, bridge trains, boats, wagons, torpedoes, iron floating batteries, barracks, army bakeries,

gun carriages, cooking, dessicated food, hygeine, electric firing, balloons, field guns, fuses, gun cotton, furniture for camps and hospitals, dresses for soldiers, litters, magazines, mortar boats, military railroads, stables, steam transports, tents, laundries, ventilation of hospitals, care of horses, treatment of wounded, and care for the personal comfort of troops in action.

To Captain McClellan is due the credit of constant observations on all these important matters. Not a moment of time was lost. The commission returned to the United States in the summer of 1856, after having collected a vast amount of information of the most important description—all of which has been turned to the highest account in the present conflict.

A quarto volume, embellished with hundreds of maps, diagrams, wood cuts, and colored lithographs, embodied the results of these labors, and was published by order of Congress, dated March 2d, 1861. This work is of the highest value. It was scarcely printed when the fall Fort of Sumter occurred. Its contents assumed a deep importance at once. We owe to the labors of this commission the introduction of rifled arms, the use of earthen fortifications, the appreciation of railroads for purposes of war, the adaptation of iron-plated vessels, the employment of steam transports, the balloon telegraph, the floating ram, the sanitary commission, the improved hospital, and the many improvements in the art of war which have lately been put into service.

This ends McClellan's services as a Commissioner and Diplomat.

As in every other respect, we are compelled to acknowledge him the possesser of extraordinary talent and address—much greater than are commonly attributed to him, for his early history is obscured to us by the still greater brilliancy of his subsequent career as Commander-in-chief of the Army of the Potomac.

His grasp of mind and tenacity of purpose appear to no greater advantage than in the manner in which he succeeded in rendering his early life alike honorable and famous.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BUSINESS MAN AND FINANCIER.

McClellan as Superintendent and Vice-President of the Illinois Central Railroad.—The Vast Undertaking entrusted to him.—His Financial and Business Ability.—President of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad.—Breaking out of the War in 1861.*—He tenders his Resignation.—It is not Accepted.—He writes his last Report and announces his intention of Seeking the Field.—His Resignation Reluctantly Accepted.—He accepts a Major-Generalship and unsheathes his sword for Union and Liberty.*

In the month of January, 1857, Captain McClellan resigned his commission and accepted the invitation of the Illinois Central Railroad to become its General Superintendent. He was soon after elected Vice President of the corporation, and acted in this double capacity for over three years.

This Illinois Central Railroad was called into existence by act of Congress, September, 1850, and the act of the Legislature of the State of Illinois, February, 1851.

At that time there were but twenty-two miles of Railroad in the State.

The company were granted the right to construct a road from Cairo to Chicago—three hundred and fifty miles—and a branch line from Centralia to Dunleith, on the Mississippi river—two hundred and fifty miles—making altogether, with connections, seven hundred and eight miles of railroad. This grant included the fifth of every alternate section of land for six sections in width, (a section is one mile square,) on each side of the road and branches.

This grant amounted in the aggregate to four thousand and fifty-five square miles of land, or two million five hundred and ninety-five thousand acres—very nearly as large an area as that comprised within the entire State of Connecticut, twice as large as Delaware, more than half as large as Massachusetts, about the same size as the Electorate of Hesse-Cassel, three-fourths as large as the Grand Duchy of Baden, and half as large as the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.

To superintend the construction and repair of this great thoroughfare, and bring into the market and dispose of this vast territory, in farms suited to the occupant, to develope the agricultural and mineral resources of a new State, containing 55,409 square miles, in order that they might bear upon the value of the property owned by the company; and to promote emigration from Eu-

rope, and commerce by the lakes, in order to settle and improve the lands of the company, was the vast undertaking to which George B. McClellan was called.

Nor were the company disappointed in their choice. McClellan did all this, and more. $23,437,669 were expended upon this road. *Not a penny was wasted.* No shinplaster bonds, no fifth mortgages, no "suspended requisitions," were issued to raise the wind. The financial policy of the company was simple and effective. $17,000,000 of construction bonds were issued, and their payment *secured* by the mortgage of 2,000,000 specified acres of land. As fast as these lands were sold and paid for, the bonds were liquidated.

The system was a plain, hard cash system. No irresponsible paper money. No long promises drawn upon posterity.

Of course, it was in every way the interest of the company to sell the lands forthwith. First, because every section sold would make the rest more valuable. Next, because it would bring additional traffic to the road. Finally, it would assist to pay off the construction bonds and set the company free from debt.

Agents were accordingly dispatched to Europe, prospectuses published, handbills and posters circulated, and advertisements displayed inviting emigration and settlement on the Illinois Central Railroad lands.

These efforts were attended with so much success, that not only is the railroad almost free from debt to-day, but the State is teeming with a population of two millions of souls.

This system of sending agents to Europe has been recently adopted by the United States government to promote the sale of Five-Twenty bonds, with great success.

It is a pity it has not copied some more of the features which distinguished the fiscal management of the Illinois Central Railroad, by George Brinton McClellan.

The country might have been better off for it to-day.

The following is the plan of sale of the Illinois Central Railroad lands :—

Payment of one year's interest in advance, at six per cent. per annum; and six interest notes at six per cent., payable respectively in one, two, three, four, five, and six years from date of sale; and four notes for principal, payable in four, five, six, and seven years from date of sale; the contract stipulating that one-tenth of the tract purchased shall be fenced and cultivated, *each and every year*, for five years from the date of sale, so that at the end of five years, one-half shall be fenced and under cultivation.

Twenty per cent. deducted from the valuation for cash, except the same should be at six dollars per acre, when the cash price was five dollars per acre.

A purchaser's account would stand as follows, supposing he contracted for eighty acres of land at $10 per acre, on March 1, 1859.

March 1, 1859, Cash Payment, 1 year's interest in advance, at 6 per cent. $ 48 00

	PRINCIPAL NOTES.	INTEREST NOTES.	
" 1860,		$48 00	48 00
" 1861,		48 00	48 00
" 1862,		48 00	48 00
" 1863,	$200 00	36 00	236 00
" 1864,	200 00	24 00	224 00
" 1865,	200 00	12 00	212 00
" 1866	200 00		200 00
Total,			$1064 00

Thus, with $48 cash, a poor man might purchase eighty acres of the richest prairie farming land in Illinois, requiring no clearing, and no manuring, and with ordinary labor, might succeed in six years time in becoming its entire owner in fee simple.

We here perceive those talents of which the country stands in most need to-day—the talents of a thorough business man and a financier.

So conspicuously did they exhibit themselves in the person of our hero, that he was called in 1860, to the general superintendency of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad, which connects the cites of Cincinnati and St. Louis, crossing the line of the Illinois Central Railroad at Odin and Sandoval.

Two months later, he was elected President of the eastern division of the same.

The Ohio and Mississippi Railroad is three hundred and forty miles in length, the eastern division extending a distance of one hundred and ninety-two miles from Cincinnati to Vincennes, on the boundary line of the State of Illinois.

He held this office, and also that of Director of the road, until the breaking out of the war, when fired with the desire to lead his countrymen to the field, in defense of the Union, he sent in his resignation, received a commission as Major General from the Governor of the State of Ohio, and proceeded at once to organize the nine months volunteers from that State.

Such was the esteem in which he was held by the company, that his resignation was not accepted at first; but

upon being assured that nothing would induce him to forsake the service of his country in the hour of her need, they reluctantly accepted it when tendered for the second time.

The following is the letter which accompanied McClellan's last report as President of the company. It was written after his first offer of resignation, and before his second :—

PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

To the Stockholders of the Eastern Division of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad:

I herewith submit Reports of the Superintendent and Treasurer, showing the business operations of the company for the year, ending April 30th, 1861.

It is needless for me to call your attention to the disturbed state of the political and commercial affairs of the country, as affecting the business of the Company. Our connecting roads have all suffered from the same cause, some of them to a greater extent than ourselves, and, therefore, the future prospects of the company cannot be considered as less promising, relatively, than they were at the date of the last Annual Report.

Having been called into the military service of the country early in April last, by the exigencies of the national affairs, and most unremittingly occupied since that time by the duties of the service, I have not been able to give that detailed and careful consideration to the annual statement which I should otherwise have done; but must content myself with referring you to the reports and statements which follow, and which will give you a full exhibit of the transactions and condition of the company.

Very Respectfully,

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,

Cincinnati, June 3rd, 1861. *Prest.*

We have thus traced George B. McClellan's career as the Officer, the Pathfinder, the Commissioner, and the Bu-

siness Man and Financier. We have only to rapidly sketch it as the Commander-in-Chief and the Statesman.

Much as we would have loved to dwell upon the early days of McClellan, our limited space has forbidden.

We see him constantly actuated by one desire—to make himself an honorable and a useful name.

As long as the country called for his services in Mexico, he was ready to devote them to her. When they were no longer needed in battle, he cheerfully became an instructor at West Point. For her again he toiled over the pathless wastes of the Cascade mountains, or traced the Red river through its long and sinuous windings to its source. For her he braved the fevers of the Texan coast, and the hot suns of St. Domingo; and for her he sped all over Europe, to garner the scientific information of which she stood so much in need.

It was only when she had no further employment for him that he retired to private life.

But the moment the tocsin was sounded, the moment the country was called to arms, he deserted all—home, friends and business prospects, to unsheath his sword for the second time in her defence.

This gallantry and devotion shines all through McClellan.

Is it any wonder, then, that being first in war, and first in peace, he should be first in the hearts of his countrymen?

The particulars of General McClellan's career after the breaking out of the war, can be given in no better language than his own. He says:

"The attack upon Fort Sumter, on the 12th of April, 1861, took the northern people by surprise, and found them entirely unprepared to carry on a serious contest. Our people were born and educated amidst the blessings of peace and material prosperity; they were in the habit of yielding obedience to the laws of the country and the will of the majority, as expressed in the elections, and had become accustomed to see great political excitement and animosity calmly subside, through the deference of the minority to the decision of the majority. Thus to the last moment it was difficult to realize that a great civil war was imminent; and men clung fondly to the hope that the good sense of both sections would, in the eleventh hour, find some honorable solution of the difficulty, as had so often been the case before.

"It is probable that neither section fully realized the power and violence of the passions evoked, and that each flattered itself with the delusive hope that the other would yield something, rather than risk the inevitable and terrible consequences of an appeal to arms. Each underrated the strength, resources and courage of the other. These mutual misunderstandings, ably used by a comparatively small number of ambitious and unscrupulous men, were at their height, when the insult offered the national flag in the harbor of Charleston, aroused both parties to something like a true sense of their condition.

"The South were warned that they were irrevocably committed to make good their threats, and to establish by force their vaunted right of secession.

When brought clearly to the minds of Northern men

that it was now too late to inquire what were the original causes of the contest, and that it only remained for them to avenge the insult to the flag, and to sustain the government in supporting the inviolability of the Constitution, maintaining the unity of the nation, and enforcing its laws.

There can be no question that these were the true issues which called forth that wonderful enthusiasm manifested by our people in 1861. When the President, on the 19th of April, 1861, issued his call for seventy-five thousand volunteers to suppress the rebellion, the difficulty was to restrain the ardor of the nation, and to limit the number of volunteers to something like that called for. The struggle then was as to who should be so fortunate as to be received, not as to who should avoid the call.

The governors of States were beseiged by eager crowds, anxious to be permitted to fight for their country; and they, in turn, importuned the authorities in Washington for permission to increase their quotas—a permission usually very difficult to obtain—for the men were still few who foresaw the magnitude and duration of the struggle in which we had embarked.

While there was no difficulty in procuring men, it was no easy task to arm, equip, and organize them, especially in the western States.

The scanty supplies of war material at the disposal of the general government were mainly in the east, with the exception of the arms at the St. Louis arsenal, which were not much more than sufficient to meet the demands in Missouri. There was no United States arsenal in the

States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois or Kentucky. The West, at that time, possessed no establishment capable of manufacturing arms on a large scale, and few for the preparation of clothing and equipments. In proportion to the population, there was less military information in the West than in the East.

It was under these circumstances that on the 23d of April, 1861, I was appointed by Gov. Denison, Major General of the Ohio contingent, under the three months call, and at once undertook the task of rendering available for the field the mass of unorganized and unarmed men who were colleeting upon the call of the President.

From Ohio, thirteen regiments of infantry were demanded; in a few weeks, the same number of three years regiments was called for, and by the middle of July the number was increased to twenty-two. No cavalry or artillery were embraced in the original call.

On the 23rd of April, there were in the State of Ohio 1880 small arms, mostly altered flint locks; 31 field guns, many of which were unfit for service, and few provided with the indispensable equipments; 120 tents; not regimental, yet mustered into the United States Service.

Such were the preparations of a State which has since sent vast armies into the field. Indiana and Illinois were not in a more favorable condition.

All mail communications with Washington were at that time interrupted in consequence of the occurrences at Baltimore, and were for a long period difficult and uncertain.

The attention of the authorities was fully occupied in

arranging for the immediate defence of the Capital,—and the supplies being limited in amount—but little could be done for the Western States, which were for some weeks compelled to rely on their own resources.

Neither the people nor the Governors failed in the emergency, but both manfully met the crisis.

It was then that the strength and value of the State Governments were made fully manifest, for to them was the safety of the West due in that hour of trial.

I have good reason to know that all the loyal Governors of the Western States did their full duty in the emergency, but being in more direct personal communication with Governor Dennison, of Ohio, during the most critical portion of this period, I desire to bear testimony to the triple qualities he then displayed. He manifested a degree of energy, ability, untiring devotion, and disinterested patriotism which was creditable in the extreme.

As has already been said, the Western States were totally unprepared for the impending struggle. It may be asserted, with almost literal truth, that neither arms, ammunition nor equipments existed there. We had nothing but the men—all else was to be created.

Another great difficulty arose, from absence of Government funds; the Subsistence Department soon supplied its agents with money, but none was received from the Quartermaster's Department until after the 20th of May, and then for some time in insufficient amounts.

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The Governors of States now exerted themselves to the utmost.

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On the 3rd of May, the States of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois were formed into the Department of the Ohio, which the General-in-Chief placed under my command.

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During the month of May, the political aspect of affairs in Kentucky and Western Virginia was uncertain and threatening. In the latter, a Convention had been called, to assemble at Wheeling, on the 13th of May, to decide upon the question of separation from the eastern portion of the State, while the election upon the question of ratifying the Richmond ordinance of secession from the *United States*, was fixed for the 23d of the same month.

Excitement ran high, and honest men differed widely as to the policy that should be pursued by the military authorities of the General Government.

I received a multitude of letters from a large number of sincere Union men, who entertained widely divergent views as to the measures adequate to the emergency. Many urged, as early as the beginning of May, that troops should immediately be sent into Virginia, to encourage the Union men and prevent the secessionists from gaining a foothold. At least an equal number insisted with equal force that the arrival of troops from other States would merely arouse State pride, throw many wavering men into the rebel ranks, and at once kindle the flames of civil war.

In Kentucky the struggle was much more bitter than in Western Virginia. The State government, the arms, and the military organization, were to a great extent in the hands of men who favored the secession of the State; but

so able and determined was the course of the Union leaders, and so marked did the majority of the people soon became in their support, that the secessionist leaders were compelled to content themselves with the avowal of the position of neutrality, while awaiting the results of the elections to be held on the 26th June for Congressmen, and on the 4th August for members of the Legislature.

The policy of the leaders of the Union party was, "To remain in the Union without a revolution, under all the forms of law, and by their own action." The words of Garret Davis were, "We will remain in the Union by voting if we can, by fighting if we must, and if we cannot hold our own, we will call on the general government to aid us."

It was the desire of these true and able men that no extraneous elements of excitement should be introduced in the State until the elections were over; they felt sure of carrying these elections if left to themselves. I fully coincided with them in their expectations and opinions, and, so far as was in my power, lent them every assistance in carrying out their views, among which were the organization of Home Guards and the distribution of arms to Union men. In Missouri, hostilities had already broken out, and it was evident that that State was destined to become the seat of serious fighting; nor was it then supposed that our tenure of St. Louis was entirely secure.

Collections of Southern troops at Memphis and Union City threatened Columbus, Ky., and Cairo, and made it necessary to keep a vigilant watch in that direction. It should also be remembered that in the early part of May

the national capital was by no means secure, and it was not at that time an improbable contingency that Western regiments might yet be needed to protect or regain Washington. As bearing upon this point, it may be stated that in a letter addressed to the General-in-chief on the 21st May, I informed him that from the information in my possession the indications were that the disposable troops in the regular Confederate service, from Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas and Louisiana had gone to the East via Lynchburg; leaving in Tennessee the State militia, who were badly armed and under no discipline. On the 26th April, when my command was confined to the limits of the State of Ohio, I submitted to the general-in-chief certain suggestions, the substance of which was:—That, for the purposes of defense, Cairo should be occupied by two battalions, strongly intrenched, and provided with heavy guns and a gunboat to control the river; that some eight battalions should be stationed at Sandoval, in Illinois, to observe St. Louis, sustain the garrison of Cairo, and if necessary, reinforce Cincinnati; that a few companies should observe the lower Wabash; that some four thousand men should be posted at Seymour, in Indiana, to observe Louisville, and be ready to support either Cincinnati or Cairo; that there should be five thousand men at or near Cincinnati, and two battalions at Chillicothe, Ohio. With the troops disposable for active operations, it was proposed to move up the valley of the Great Kanawha upon Richmond; this movement to be made with the greatest promptness, that it might not fail to relieve Washington, or to insure the destruction of the enemy in Eastern Virginia, if aided by

a prompt advance on the eastern line of operations. Should Kentucky assume a hostile attitude, it was recommended to cross the Ohio with eighty thousand men, and move straight on Nashville, acting thence in concert with a vigorous offensive on the Eastern line. It was strongly urged that everything possible should be done to hasten the equipment and armament of the Western troops, as the nation would be entirely deprived of their powerful aid until this should be accomplished.

It was not until the 13th May that the order, forming the Department of the Ohio and assigning me to the command, was received. In the meantime, as much excitement existed in Cincinnati, which city was regarded as a tempting object to the enemy in the uncertain condition of Kentucky, I took steps to concentrate the greater part of the Ohio troops at Camp Dennison, on the Little Miami Railroad, seventeen miles from Cincinnati; a favorable position for instruction, and presenting peculiar facilities for movement in any direction. As soon as the new department was placed under my command, I took steps for the immediate erection of heavy batteries at Cairo. In the letter of May 21st, already referred to, after giving the information gained in regard to the position of the enemy on the Mississippi River, it was stated that I was convinced of the necessity of having, without a day's delay, a few efficient gunboats to operate from Cairo as a base; that if they were rendered shot-proof, they would enable us at least to annoy seriously the rebel camps on the Mississippi, and interfere with their river communications—their main dependence; that I request-

ed authority to make the necessary expenditures to procure gunboats, and that I regarded them as an indispensable element in any system of operations, whether offensive or defensive. In the same letter the necessity for light batteries was strongly set forth.

* * * * * * *

In the early part of May, I declined moving troops into Western Virginia for the reasons already given, and because I regarded Kentucky as of much greater importance. It was not until the latter part of the month that I became fully satisfied as to the favorable tendency of affairs in that quarter.

It was difficult to obtain accurate information as to the movements of the secessionists in Western Virginia, and the results proved that it was always necessary to make great allowances for the exaggeration which ever attends ignorance of military affairs, and the alarm consequent upon the shock produced by a novel and abnormal state of things. Early in May, Governor Letcher called out the militia of Western Virginia under the State laws; Charleston, in the Great Kanawha Valley, Parkersburg, in Wood County, and Grafton, in Taylor County, being the points at which they were to be assembled. The accounts we received at the time, in regard to the numbers of the militia thus collected, varied much, and great alarm frequently manifested itself on the Ohio frontier, lest it should be invaded. To quiet this not unnatural feeling, a few arms were distributed among the Home Guards, and about the middle of May some regiments of the Ohio State troops were moved to points convenient to the more ex-

posed portions of the frontier. I did not share the apprehensions of an invasion, for I saw no good reason to suspect the existence of the necessary preparations, and did not regard it as probable that the Confederates would at that period consider Western Virginia as a suitable base for offensive operations north and west of the Ohio river. I supposed it to be the object of the Richmond authorities to hold possession of Western Virginia, and to coerce its loyal inhabitants into the secession movement.

* * * * * * *

Gen. McClellan then describes the two campaigns in western Virginia, including the battles of Grafton, Rich Mountain, and Laurel Hill, and concludes an account of his operations in that quarter, in the following words :—

"The result of these operations was thus to give us undisputed control of all that portion of Western Virginia north of the Great Kanawha, and of the passes leading in from the east. The enemy lost their general killed, and his second in command taken prisoner, all their guns, transportation, baggage, camp equipage, etc., about one thousand in killed and prisoners, several colors, and many small arms; the remains of their force was entirely disorganized. Our own losses in all these affairs, were a little less than one hundred men killed and wounded. From the best information that could be obtained, the total effective force in the district, under the command of Gen. Garnett, was about eight thousand men.

* * * * * *

In this brief campaign, the telegraph was extensively used in the field operations; the line was constructed as

the army marched forward, and we were seldom without an office at head-quarters. Great credit is due to the Superintendent, Mr. A. Stager, for his energy and intelligence.

I cannot close this brief narrative without bearing testimony to the good conduct, enthusiasm, and endurance of the young troops whom I then commanded. That they would be courageous was to be expected; but the patience and endurance they evinced under long marches, privations, and fatigue, exceeded all my anticipations. Their demeanor in this, their first campaign, gave promise of the achievements in which they have since participated on many hard fought fields.

OPERATIONS ON THE POTOMAC.

Charged, in the spring of 1861, with the operations in the department of the Ohio, which included the States of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and latterly, Western Virginia, it had become my duty to counteract the hostile designs of the enemy in Western Virginia, which were immediately directed to the destruction of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and the possession of the Kanawha Valley, with the ultimate object of gaining Wheeling, and the control of the Ohio River. The successful affairs of Phillippi, Rich Mountain, Carrick's Ford, etc., had been fought, and I had acquired possession of all Western Virginia, north of the Kanawha Valley, as well as of the lower portion of that valley.

I had determined to proceed to the relief of the upper

Kanawha Valley, as soon as provision was made for the permanent defense of the mountain passes leading from the east into the region under our control, when I received at Beverly, in Randolph county, on the 21st of July, 1861, intelligence of the unfortunate results of the battle of Manassas, fought on that day.

On the 22d, I received an order by telegraph, directing me to turn over my command to Brig.-Gen. Rosecrans, and repair at once to Washington.

I had already caused reconnoissances to be made for intrenchments at the Cheat Mountain Pass; also on the Huntersville road, near Elkwater, and at Red House, near the main road from Romney to Grafton. During the afternoon and the night of the 22d, I gave the final instructions for the construction of these works, turned over the command to Brig.-Gen. Rosecrans, and started, on the morning of the 23d, for Washington, arriving there on the afternoon of the 26th. On the 27th, I assumed command of the Division of the Potomac, comprising the troops in and around Washington, on both banks of the river.

With this brief statement of the events which immediately preceded my being called to the command of the troops at Washington, I proceed to an account from such authentic data as are at hand, of my military operations while commander of the Army of the Potomac.

The subjects to be considered, naturally arrange themselves as follows: The organization of the Army of the Potomac; the military events connected with the defenses of Washington, from July, 1861, to March, 1862; the campaign on the Peninsula, and that in Maryland.

The great resources and capacity for powerful resistance, of the South, at the breaking out of the rebellion, and the full proportions of the great conflict about to take place, were sought to be carefully measured; and I had also endeavored, by every means in my power, to impress upon the authorities the necessity for such immediate action and full preparation as alone would enable the government to prosecute the war on a scale commensurate with the resistance to be offered.

On the 4th of August, 1861, I addressed to the President, the following memorandum, prepared at his own request:

* * * * * * *

Without entering at present into details, I would advise that a strong movement be made on the Mississippi, and that the rebels be driven out of Missouri.

As soon as it becomes perfectly clear that Kentucky is cordially united with us, I would advise a movement through that State into Eastern Tennessee, for the purpose of assisting the Union men of that region, and of seizing the railroads leading from Memphis to the East.

The possession of those roads by us, in connection with the movement on the Mississippi, would go far towards determining the evacuation of Virginia by the rebels. In the meantime, all the passes into Western Virginia, from the east, should be securely guarded; but I would advise no movement from that quarter towards Richmond, unless the political condition of Kentucky renders it impossible or inexpedient for us to make the movement upon Eastern Tennessee, through that State. Every effort should, how-

ever, be made to organize, equip and arm as many troops as possible in Western Virginia, in order to render the Ohio and Indiana regiments available for other operations. At as early a day as practicable, it would be well to protect and re-open the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

Baltimore and Fort Monroe should be occupied by garrisons sufficient to retain them in our possession. The importance of Harper's Ferry and the line of the Potomac, in the direction of Leesburgh, will be very materially diminished so soon as our forces in this vicinity becomes organized, strong and efficient, because no capable general will cross the river, north of this city, when we have a strong army here, ready to cut off his retreat.

To revert to the west, it is probable that no very large additions to the troops now in Missouri, will be necessary to secure that State.

I presume that the force required for the movement down the Mississippi, will be determined by its commander and the President. If Kentucky assumes the right position, not more than 20,000 troops will be needed, together with those that can be raised in that State and Eastern Tennessee, to secure the latter region and its railroads, as well as ultimately to occupy Nashville.

The Western Virginia troops, with not more than 5,000 to 10,000 from Ohio and Indiana, should, under proper management, suffice for its protection. When we have reorganized our main army here, 10,000 men ought to be enough to protect the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and the Potomac. Five thousand will garrison Baltimore,

3,000 Fort Monroe, and not more than 20,000 will be necessary, at the utmost, for the defense of Washington.

For the main army of operations, I urge the following composition :—

250	Regiments of Infantry, say	250,000 men.
100	Field Batteries 600 guns	15,000 "
28	Regiments Cavalry	25,500 "
5	" Engineer troops	7,500 "
	Total	298 000

The force must be supplied with the necessary engineer and pontoon trains, and with transportation for every thing save tents. Its general line of operations should be so directed that water transportation can be availed of, from point to point, by means of the ocean and the rivers emptying into it. An essential feature of the plan of operations, will be the employment of a strong naval force, to protect the movements of a fleet of transports intended to convey a considerable body of troops from point to point of the enemy's sea-coast, thus, either creating diversions, and rendering it necessary to detach largely from their main body, in order to protect such of their cities as may be threatened, or else landing and forming establishments on their coast at any favorable places that opportunity might offer. This naval force should also co-operate with the main army, in its efforts to seize the important sea-board towns of the rebels.

It cannot be ignored that the construction of railroads, has introduced a new and very important element into war, by the great facilities thus given for concentrating at

particular positions, large masses of troops from remote sections, and by creating new strategic points and lines of operations. It is intended to overcome this difficulty by the partial operations suggested, and such other, as the particular case may require. We must endeavor to seize places on the railways, in the rear of the enemy's points of concentration, and we must threaten their sea-board cities, in order that each State may be forced, by the necessity of its own defense, to diminish its contingent to the Confederate army.

The proposed movement down the Mississippi, will produce important results in this connection. That advance, and the progress of the main army at the East, will materially assist each other by diminishing the resistance to be encountered by each. The tendency of the Mississippi movement upon all questions connected with cotton, is too well understood by the President and Cabinet, to need any illustration from me.

* * * * * * *

In conclusion, I would submit that the exigencies of the treasury may be lessened by making only partial payments to our troops, when in the enemy's country, and by giving the obligations of the United States for such supplies as may there be obtained.

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj. General.

* * * * * * *

This was the outline of operations proposed by McClellan. Had it been adhered to with the singleness of purpose which prompted its inception, the war might have

been ended in one campaign.

But the Administration had other objects in view than the restoration of the Union.

Its mission was to forcibly emancipate the slaves of the Southern United States; and the war was prolonged, and is still prolonged, in order that this act might be fully consummated.

We do not here discuss the right or the wrong of slavery. In a theoretical or moral point of view, no argument can successfully defend it; but in its practical bearings upon the welfare of this nation, taking it as it already exists, it becomes the duty of every statesman having the good of the people at heart, not only to defend it, but to defend others in defending it.

Everything comes in good time—even freedom. The world takes its time to grow—so does opinion; and when these is accelerated by extraneous means, reaction is sure to follow, and the hands which mark humanity's march on the dial of time are put back.

It is this acceptation of things as they are, with the resolution to improve them to an extent sufficient for his day, and suitable to the temper of his times, which marks the statesman.

The philosopher has no business with the world as it is. *His* world is yet to be born. But the statesman is the proper moralist of the hour. His concern is expediency —his basis, compromise.

We thus draw the line between those who urged on this war from motives of mistaken philanthropy, and those who flew to its support from motives of patriotism, and

the single desire to re-unite a broken and distracted country.

Foremost in the latter class stands the hero of our sketch—George Brinton McClellan.

We now proceed to rapidly sketch the various movements of the army under his control, skipping, for the sake of brevity, over that portion of its history which redounds mostly to the credit of McClellan—namely, its organization and equipment.

Passing over the battle of Ball's Bluff, the North Carolina Expedition, and the operations South and West which McClellan at once instituted, we produce President Lincoln's letters, of January 21, and February 3, 1862, intended to show that even at that early date, the policy which sought to prolong the war, in order that slavery might be the more effectually eradicated, was even then in active operation, and by the counter-current it initiated against the plans and intentions of the Commander-in-Chief of the army, embarrassed his operations, and multiplied the difficulties which surrounded him.

The order of January 31, 1862, is as follows :—

EXECUTIVE MANSION,

Washington, Jan. 31, 1862.

PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL WAR ORDERS, No. 1.

Ordered : That all the disposable force of the army of the Potomac, after providing safely for the defense of Washington, be formed into an expedition for the immediate object of seizing and occupying a point upon the railroad south-westward of what is known as Manassas Junction, all details to be in the discretion of the Commander-

in-Chief, and the expedition to move before or on the 22d day of February next.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

I asked his Excellency whether this order was to be regarded as final, or whether I could be permitted to submit, in writing, my objections to his plan, and my reasons for preferring my own. Permission was accorded, and I therefore prepared the letter to the Secretary of War which is given below. Before this had been submitted to the President, he addressed me the following note :—

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
Washington, February 3, 1862.

MAJ. GEN. MCCLELLAN,—

MY DEAR SIR.—You and I have distinct and different plans for a movement of the army of the Potomac. Yours to be done by the Chesapeake, up the Rappahannock to Urbana, and across to the terminus of the railroad on the York River: mine to move directly to a point on the railroad southwest of Manassas.

If you will give me satisfactory answers to the following questions, I shall gladly yield my plan to yours.

1st. Does not your plan involve a greatly larger expenditure of *time* and *money* than mine?

2d. Wherein is a victory *more certain* by your plan than mine?

3d. Wherein is a victory *more valuable* by your plan than mine?

4th. In fact would it not be *less* valuable in this; that it

would break no great line of the enemy's communications, while mine would?

5th. In case of disaster, would not a retreat be more difficult by your plan than mine?

Yours truly,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

These questions were substantially answered by the following letter, of the same date, to the Secretary of War.

HEAD-QUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
Washington, Feb. 3, 1862.

HON. E. M. STANTON,
Secretary of War.

SIR,—I ask your indulgence for the following paper rendered necessary by circumstances.

I assumed command of the troops in the vicinity of Washington on Saturday, July 27, 1861, six days after the battle of Bull Run.

I found no army to command; a mere collection of regiments, cowering on the banks of the Potomac, some perfectly raw, others dispirited by the recent defeat.

Nothing of any consequence had been done to secure the southern approaches to the capital by means of defensive works;—nothing whatever had been undertaken to defend the avenues to the city on the northern side of the Potomac.

The troops were not only undisciplined, undrilled, and dispirited; they were not even placed in military posi-

tions—the city was almost in a condition to have been taken by a dash of a regiment of cavalry.

Without one day's delay I undertook the difficult task assigned to me; that task the Hon. Secretary knows was given to me without my solicitation or foreknowledge. How far I have accomplished it will best be shown by the past and the present.

The capital is secure against attack; the extensive fortifications erected by the labor of our troops enable a small garrison to hold it against a numerous army; the enemy have been held in check; the State of Maryland is securely in our possession; the detached counties of Virginia are again within the pale of cur laws, and all apprehension of trouble in Delaware is at an end; the enemy are confined to the positions they occupied before the disaster of the 21st July; more than all this, I have now under my command, a well drilled and reliable army, to which the destinies of the country may be confidently committed; this army is young and untried in battle, but it is animated by the highest spirit, and is capable of great deeds.

That so much has been accomplishedand, such an army created in so short a time, from nothing, will hereafter be regarded as one of the highest glories of the administration and the nation.

Many weeks, I may say many months ago, this army of the Potomac was fully in condition to repel any attack; but there is a vast difference between that and the efficiency required to enable troops to attack successfully an army

elated by victory and intrenched in a position long since selected, studied and fortified.

In the earliest papers I submitted to the President, I asked for an effective and movable force far exceeding the aggregate now on the banks of the Potomac. I have not the force I asked for. Even when in a subordinate position, I always looked beyond the operations of the Army of the Potomac; I was never satisfied in my own mind with a barren victory, but looked to combined and decisive operations.

When I was placed in command of the armies of the United States, I immediately turned my attention to the whole field of operations, regarding the army of the Potomac as only *one*, while the most important, of the masses under my command.

I confess that I did not then appreciate the total absence of a general plan, which had before existed, nor did I know that utter disorganization and want of preparation pervaded the Western armies.

I took it for granted that they were nearly, if not quite, in condition to move towards the fulfillment of my plans; I acknowledge that I made a great mistake.

I sent at once, with the approval of the Executive, officers I considered competent to command in Kentucky and Missouri—their instructions looked to prompt movements—I soon found that the labor of creation and organization had to be performed there; transportation, arms, clothing, artillery discipline—all were wanting; these things required time to procure them. The generals in command have done their work most creditably; but we

are still delayed. I had hoped that a general advance could be made during the good weather of December; I was mistaken.

My wish was to gain possession of the Eastern Tennessee Railroad as a preliminary movement—then to follow it up immediately by an attack on Nashville and Richmond, as nearly at the same time as possible.

I have ever regarded our true policy as being that of fully preparing ourselves and then seeking for the most decisive results. I do not wish to waste time in useless battles, but I prefer to strike at the heart.

Two bases of operations seem to present themselves for the advance of the army of the Potomac.

1st. That of Washington, its present position, involving a direct attack upon the intrenched positions of the enemy at Centreville, Manassas, &c., or else a movement to turn one or both flanks of those positions, or a combination of the two plans.

* * * * * * *

Bearing in mind what has been said, and the present unprecedented and impassable condition of the roads, it will be evident that no precise period can be fixed upon for the movement on this line. Nor can its duration be closely calculated; it seems certain that many weeks may elapse before it is possible to commence the march. Assuming the success of this operation, and the defeat of the enemy as certain, the question at once arises, as to the importance of the results gained. I think these results would be confined to the possession of the field of battle, the evacuation of the line of the Upper Potomac by the enemy, and the

moral effect of the victory; important results, it is true, but not decisive of the war, nor securing the destruction of the enemy's main army, for he could fall back upon other positions and fight us again and again, should the condition of his troops permit. If he is in no condition to fight us again out of range of the intrenchments at Richmond, we would find it a very difficult and tedious matter to follow him up there, for he would destroy his railroad bridges, and otherwise impede our progress through a region where the roads are as bad as they well can be, and we would probably find ourselves forced at last to change the whole theater of war, or to seek a shorter land route to Richmond, with a smaller available force, and an expenditure of much more time, than were we to adopt the short line at once. We would also have forced the enemy to concentrate his forces, and perfect his defensive measures at the very points where it is desirable to strike him when least prepared.

II. The second base of operations available for the army of the Potomac, is that of the lower Chesapeake Bay, which affords the shortest possible land route to Richmond, and strikes directly at the heart of the enemy's power in the east.

The roads in that region are passable at all seasons of the year.

The country now alluded to, is much more favorable for offensive operations than that in front of Washington, (which is *very* unfavorable,) much more level, more cleared land, the woods less dense, the soil more sandy, the spring some two or three weeks earlier. A movement in force on

that line, obliges the enemy to abandon his intrenched position at Manassas, in order to hasten to cover Richmond and Norfolk. He must do this; for should he permit us to occupy Richmond, his destruction can be averted only by entirely defeating us in a battle, in which he must be the assailant. This movement, if successful, gives us the capital, the communications, the supplies of the rebels; Norfolk would fall; all the waters of the Chesapeake would be ours, all Virginia would be in our power, and the enemy forced to abandon Tennessee and North Carolina. The alternative presented to the enemy, would be to beat us in a position selected by ourselves; disperse or pass beneath the Caudine Forks.

Should we be beaten in a battle, we have a perfectly secure retreat down the Peninsula upon Fort Monroe, with our flanks perfectly covered by the fleet. During the whole movement our left flank is covered by the water; our right is secure, for the reason that the enemy is too distant to reach us in time; he can only oppose us in front; we bring our fleet into full play.

THE PENINSULA.

This plan was but partially adopted. Preparations, indeed, were made for a movement to the Peninsula, but under the pretence of covering Washington, a large force was retained in that city, which materially reduced McClellan's strength. Another reduction of his force was made the day after McClellan reached his base of operations—Fortress Monroe. General Wool, with 10,000 men

under him, were detached from the Chief's command.

The navy, also, which McClellan largely counted on for co-operation against the reduction of Yorktown, was summarily withdrawn.

To cap the climax, while McClellan was just on the point of turning Yorktown by West Point, the first corps, consisting of 60,000 men under General McDowell, was detached from his command.

Thus even in the beginning of his command, the shadows of treachery and envy deepened about him.

General McClellan thus alludes to it himself:

It was at this stage and moment of the campaign that the following telegram was sent to me:

ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
April 4th, 1862.

GEN. MCCLELLAN:—

By directions of the President, General McDowell's army corps has been detached from the force under your immediate command, and the General is ordered to report to the Secretary of War; letter by mail.

L. THOMAS,
Adjt-Gen.

The President having promised, in our interview following his order of March 31st, withdrawing Blenker's division of 10,000 men from my command, that nothing of the sort should be repeated, that I might rest assured that the campaign should proceed with no further deductions from the force upon which its operations had been planned, I may confess to having been shocked at this order, which, with that of the 31st ult., removed nearly 60,000 men from

my command, and reduced my force by more than one third, after its task had been assigned, its operations planned, its fighting begun. To me the blow was most discouraging. It frustrated all my plans for impending operations. It fell when I was too deeply committed to withdraw; it left me incapable of continuing operations which I had begun; it compelled the adoption of another, a different, and a less effective plan of campaign; it made rapid and brilliant movements impossible; it was a fatal error.

It was now, of course, out of my power to turn Yorktown by West Point. I had, therefore, no choice left but to attack it directly in front, as I best could with the force at my command.

* * * * * * *

It is useless to follow the melancholy recital. From that hour McClellan and the army were doomed.

The siege of Yorktown, the victorious pursuit and brilliant action at Williamsburg—one of the greatest battles of this war—the battles of West Point, Coal Harbor, White House, Chickahominy, Bottom's Bridge, New Kent and Seven Pines, and Fair Oaks, followed in quick succession. Never were such brilliant actions fought before. It only remained to form a junction with General McDowell, who, although for the time withdrawn from McClellan's command, was now positively to re-inforce him, and strike the final blow at the exhausted enemy.

On the 24th of May, 1862, the President re-assured McClellan, in a letter of that date, that he would surely have

McDowell, and the latter would set out to join him on the 26th. Here are the words:

"You will have command of McDowell after he joins you, precisely as you indicated in your long dispatch to us of the twenty-first (21st.)

A. LINCOLN,
President.

Says McClellan:

This information that McDowell's corps would march for Fredericksburg on the following Monday (the 26th), and that he would be under my command, as indicated in my telegram of the 21st, was cheering news, and I now felt confident that we would, on his arrival, be sufficiently strong to overpower the large army confronting us.

At a later hour, on the same day, I received the following:—

May 24, 1862.

FROM WASHINGTON, 4 P.M., 24th.

MAJ.-GEN. GEO. B. MCCLELLAN,—

In consequence of General Bank's critical position, I have been compelled to suspend General McDowell's movements to join you. The enemy are making a desperate push upon Harper's Ferry, and we are trying to throw General Fremont's force and part of General McDowell's in their rear.

A. LINCOLN,
President.

This filled the cup. It was all over. Richmond was in McClellan's grasp, and it needed but a turn of the finger, a single word upon paper, to secure it. That word never

came. The Commander-in-Chief was doomed. The time had not yet come to announce, as in the Chicago Manifesto, "to whom it may concern," that the Union was not to be reinstated without the destruction of slavery.

The memorable seven days now followed, days immortal in the history of America, and the gallant chief conducted his army by that most difficult of all movements, a flank march in the face of a large superior force of the enemy, to a place of rest and safety. Gaine's Mill, Savage's Station, White Oak Swamp, Charles City, and Malvern Hill, have become memorable names to our countrymen.

That the army of the Potomac did make a successful change of its base, and by an effectual resistance did repel all attacks made by the rebel army to prevent this change, and beat back with terrible slaughter the assailants; that the movements of our army on its march were by night, and the battles were through seven continuous days, are facts not disputed. These movements and sanguinary conflicts, terminating in the arrival at the position sought to be reached, were not unpremeditated, accidental or fortuitous, but were planned and ordered and supervised by the general commanding the vast host comprising the army of the Potomac, George B. McClellan. Never before on the American soil was such a feat performed; there is no passage in the military history of our country so luminous as that which records the doings of our army during those seven days. It is doubtful whether any act or series of acts has shed such lustre on our arms in the view of scientific and experienced military men in Europe, as the movements of our army in retiring from the Chick-

ahominy to the James, in the face of a foe superior in numbers and led by able commanders. No one military exploit in the progress of this civil war has done more to admonish foreign powers that it would be dangerous to interfere with the operations of the lawful government of the country to suppress the rebellion, and, therefore, to prevent such interference.

Even Pollard, the Confederate historian of the war, is compelled to admit with reluctance, that "skill and spirit with which McClellan had managed to retreat was indeed remarkable, and afforded no mean proofs of his generalship. At every stage of his retreat, says this author, he had confronted our forces with a strong rear guard, and had encountered us with organized lines of battle, and regular dispositions of infantry, cavalry and artillery. His heavy rifled cannon had been used against us constantly on his retreat. A portion of his forces had now effected communications with the rivers at points below City Point. The plan of cutting off his communication with the river, which was to have been executed by a movement of Holmes' division between him and the river, was frustrated by the severe fire of the gunboats, and since that the situation of the enemy appeared to be that of division or dispersion of his forces, one portion resting on the river, and the other to some extent involved by our lines."

"It had been stated to the public of Richmond, with great precision of detail, that on the evening of Saturday the 28th of June, we had brought the enemy to bay on the south side of the Chickahominy, and that it only remained

to finish him in a single battle. Such, in fact, appeared to have been the situation. The next morning, however, it was perceived that our resources of generalship had given us too much confidence; that the enemy had managed to extricate himself from the critical position, and, having massed his forces, had succeeded under cover of the night, in opening a way to the James River."

"Upon this untoward event, the operations of the army on the Richmond side of the Chickahominy, were to follow a fugitive army through a country where he had admirable opportunities of concealment, and through the swamps and forests of which he had retreated with the most remarkable judgment, dexterity and spirit of fortitude."

Thus much for the testimony of the Confederates. The commander and historian of the Army of the Potomac was fully authorized to say :—"The seven days are classical in American history; those days in which the noble soldiers of the Union and Constitution fought an overwhelming enemy by day, and retreated from successive victories by night, through a week of battle, closing the terrible series of conflicts with the ever memorable victory of Malvern, where they drove back, beaten and shattered, the entire Eastern army of the Confederacy, and thus secured for themselves a place for rest and a point for a new advance upon the capital from the banks of the James."

Mr. Motley, our Minister at the Court of Vienna, thus writes to Mr. Seward, Secretary of State, in October, 1862. The letter will be found in the diplomatic correspondence

communicated to Congress by the Secretary of State pages 569 and 570. Extract:

"In this connection I deem worthy of your notice, a brief extract from a remarkable series of papers in the principal military journal of this empire, in which the course of our campaigns is criticised, sometimes severely, but never ungenerously; always with talent, and with thorough knowledge of the subject, topographically and strategically, and with a firm disposition to do justice. You will be interested to read the comments of so able a writer, upon the withdrawal of our armies from the James River:

"It is not to be wondered at, then, if the General-in Chief of the Army of the Potomac was in haste to save the army entrusted to him from the dangers surrounding it, even from certain destruction; froom a noose, in fact, which required only to be drawn a little closely together in order to suffocate the soul of the Union. The manner in which he acquitted himself of this most difficult of all military tasks, redounds to his infinite honor, and places him at once in the ranks of those memorable commanders, whose name history treasures for posterity; men, who, if they have perhaps not had the art to chain victory to their banners, possessed, at any rate, the fortitude, the audacity and the circumspection to rescue their armies from impending ruin. * * * The American general has made a thorough study of war in the swamps of the Chickahominy, and has made himself a complete master in that most difficult of professions. * * * * He has manifested the unquestioned talent to save his ar-

my, in a manner not sufficiently to be admired, out of the most desperate of situations. Moreau made himself immortal by his famous retreat from the Iller to the Rhine, in the year 1796. What is due to the American General-Chief, who conducted, with a morally and physically exhausted army, through a swampy, pathless country, covered with ancient forests, and in face of an enemy outnumbering him two to one, the most classical of all retreats recorded in military history, without a single disaster?"

No doubt this criticism, from a high military source, in an empire thoroughly instructed in the art of war, must have been highly gratifying to our distinguished ambassador himself, the author of histories which are classics in our language. Similar emotions must have swelled the hearts of all our loyal countrymen in Europe at the time. With far different feelings, however, were the commendations of our American general regarded by the Committee on the Conduct of the War. They could easily sacrifice their country's renown to gratify their personal dislike for General McClellan.

It is a fact familiar to the student of history, that the military renown of armies, and the nations they served, has been often as much heightened by skillful and well-ordered retreats from situations of peril, as by successful assaults. The famous retreat of the ten thousand Greeks, under their leader, Xenophon, needs only to be mentioned in this connection. The hardly less famous retreat of Moreau in 1796, has been adverted to by Mr. Motley. In the war between this country and Great Britain, in 1812–15,

our navy performed exploits highly distinguished, and greatly elevated our national character.

In the early months of that war, when we had experienced little but disaster on the land, it was truly said, "Our little navy has dragged up by the locks the drowning honor of our country." But of all the feats of that navy in this memorable war, there was not one that reflected greater honor upon the naval arm of the service, than the masterly escape of Captain Isaac Hull, when in command of the frigate Constitution, from a squadron of British vessels, consisting of a razee of sixty-four guns, and four frigates, after a close pursuit of three days and nights. This display of American seamanship was viewed with admiration and astonishment by the greatest naval power in the world.

On the 20th of April the army returned to the Potomac, its discipline and equipment unimpaired, its morale magnificent, its bearing proud and defiant, and its standards torn and faded, but covered with glory.

McClellan no sooner returned than he was shorn of his command, and reduced to the position of a hanger-on of the army now under General Pope.

Stung with the injustice and mortification he was subjected to, he thus broke forth in an eloquent appeal to the authorities at Washington:

ALEXANDRIA, VA., Aug. 30, 1862.

* * * * * * *

I cannot express to you the pain and mortification I have experienced to-day in listening to the distant sound of the firing of my men. As I can be of no further use

here, I respectfully ask that if there is a probability of the conflict being renewed to-morrow, I may be permitted to go to the scene of battle with my staff, merely to be with my own men, if nothing more; they will fight none the worse for my being with them. If it is not deemed best to intrust me with the command even of my own army, I simply ask to be permitted to share their fate on the field of battle. Please reply to this to-night.

I have been engaged for the last few hours in doing what I can to make arrangements for the wounded. I have started out all the ambulances now landed.

As I have sent my escort to the front, I would be glad to take some of Gregg's cavalry with me, if allowed to go.

G. B. McClellan,
Major-General.

In vain. It was not until the bombastic Pope was overwhelmed by the enemy, and driven back in confusion to Washington, that McClellan was again reluctantly called to the command of the army, to save the capital, check the enemy, defeat him on the bloody fields of South Mountain and Antietam, and finally hurl him away in disorder across the Potomac.

That tremendous but glorious duty successfully performed, he was again deprived of his command, and, on the 5th November, 1862, retired to Newton, New Jersey.

His deposal was the signal for personal attack and crimination. In the Senate, in the Press, everywhere, except in the army, he was reviled as a fraud, a humbug, an imposter, and a traitor to his country. He was charged

with the defeat of the army, and a committee of investigation, ordered by Congress, published a report strongly condemning him for inefficiency. It was the report of this committee which ended in his being deposed from the command of the army of the Potomac.

But though successful in this, the force of malice could no further go. He was deprived of his command, but he still survived in the hearts of the people. He was successfully defended against the committee's decision, in a pamphlet published by Hiram Ketchum, on the 16th May, 1864.

A committee of his admirers bought and presented to him an elegant house and lot in Thirty-fifth street, New York, as a testimony of their admiration of his qualities as a soldier and a statesman. In this house he now resides, though most of his time is spent in Orange, New Jersey, in company with his charming wife, formerly Miss Ellen Marcy, daughter of Gen. R. B. Marcy, his former commander in Texas. By this lady he has one child.

On the occasion of the Metropolitan Sanitary Fair in New York, a sword was presented by a jewelry house in the city, to be the prize of he who should secure the largest number of votes, each vote to be accompanied by one dollar in cash.

For a long while the votes were cast almost exclusively for McClellan, andit was deemed certain that he would be awarded the prize.

On the last day of the fair, a secret ballot was announced. The object of this was plain enough. It was started by the friends of General Grant, who were determined to

see their favorite win, and knowing that no matter how many votes they cast for Grant, they would be met by a corresponding amount of McClellan votes, this course was determined upon. The result it is needless to relate. Up to the moment of secret balloting, McClellan had six thousand five hundred votes against Grant's two thousand. Upon counting the votes *after* the secret ballotting, Grant had fourteen thousand five hundred, while McClellan had scarcely seven thousand.

This shows the bitterness of party feeling which assailed him; but it is to just this feeling that his immense popularity is chiefly owing. The people do not like to see a man assailed by superior numbers, and always take his part. To this, then, is McClellan indebted for his popularity, as much as to his own merit.

To conclude this chapter, we cannot do better than subjoin McClellan's own conclusion to the report he has published of his own career as Commander-in-Chief:

In this report I have confined myself to a plain narrative of such facts as are necessary for the purposes of history. Where it was possible, I have preferred to give these facts in the language of dispatches written at the time of their occurrence, rather than to attempt a new relation.

The reports of the subordinate commanders, hereto annexed, recite what time and space would fail me to mention here—those individual instances of conspicuous bravery and skill by which every battle was marked. To them I must especially refer, for without them, this narrative would be incomplete, and justice fail to be done. But I

cannot omit to tender to my corps commanders, and to the general officers under them, such ample recognition of their cordial co-operation and their devoted services, as those reports abundantly vouch.

I have not sought to defend the army which I had the honor to command, nor myself, against the hostile criticisms once so rife.

It has seemed to me that nothing more was required than such a plain and truthful narrative, to enable those whose right it is to form a correct judgment on the important matters involved.

This report is, in fact, the history of the army of the Potomac. During the period occupied in the organization of that army, it served as a barrier against the advance of a lately victorious enemy, while the fortification of the capital was in progress; and under the discipline which it then received it acquired strength, education, and some of that experience which is necessary to success in active operations, and which enabled it afterward to sustain itself under circumstances trying to the most heroic men. Frequent skirmishes occurred along the lines, conducted with great gallantry, which inured our troops to the realities of war.

The army grew into shape but slowly, and the delays which attended on the obtaining of arms, continued late into the winter of 1861–2, were no less trying to the soldiers than to the people of the country. Even at the time of the organization of the Peninsular campaign, some of the finest regiments were without rifles, nor were the utmost exertions on the part of the military authorities adequate to overcome the obstacles to active service.

When at length the army was in condition to take the field, the Peninsular campaign was planned, and entered upon with enthusiasm by officers and men. Had this campaign been followed up as it was designed, I cannot doubt that it would have resulted in a glorious triumph to our arms, and the permanent restoration of the power of the government in Virginia and North Carolina, if not throughout the revolted States. It was, however, otherwise ordered, and instead of reporting a victorious campaign, it has been my duty to relate the heroism of a reduced army, sent upon an expedition into an enemy's country, there to abandon one, and originate another and new plan of campaign, which might and would have been successful if supported with appreciation of its necessities, but which failed because of the repeated failure of promised support, at the most critical, and, as it proved, the most fatal moments.

That heroism surpasses ordinary description. Its illustration must be left for the pen of the historian in times of calm reflection, when the nation shall be looking back to the past from the midst of peaceful days.

For me, now, it is sufficient to say, that my comrades were victors on every field save one, and there the endurance of a single corps accomplished the object of its fighting and, by securing to the army its transit to the James, left to the enemy a ruinous and barren victory.

The army of the Potomac was first reduced by the withdrawal from my command of the division of Gen. Blenker, which was ordered to the Mountain Department, under General Fremont. We had scarcely landed on the Penin-

sula, when it was further reduced by a dispatch, revoking a previous order giving me command of Fortress Monroe, and under which I had expected to take ten thousand men from that point, to aid in our operations. Then, when under fire before the defenses of Yorktown, we received the news of the withdrawal of General McDowell's corps, of about 35,000 men. This completed the overthrow of the original plan of the campaign. About one-third of my entire army (five divisions out of fourteen, one of the nine remaining being but little larger than a brigade), was thus taken from me. Instead of a rapid advance which I had planned, aided by a flank movement up the York River, it was only left to besiege Yorktown. That siege was successfully conducted by the army, and when these strong works at length yielded to our approaches, the troops rushed forward to the sanguinary but successful battle of Williamsburgh, and thus opened an almost unresisted advance to the banks of the Chickahominy. Richmond lay before them surrounded with fortifications, and guarded by an army larger than our own; but the prospect did not shake the courage of the brave men who composed my command. Relying still on the support which the vastness of our undertaking, and the grand results depending on our success seemed to insure us, we pressed forward. The weather was stormy beyond precedent, the deep soil of the Peninsula was at times one vast morass. The Chickahominy rose to a higher stage than had been known for years before. Pursuing the advance, the crossings were seized, and the right wing extended to effect a junction with reinforcements now

promised and earnestly desired, and upon the arrival of which the complete success of the campaign seemed clear. The brilliant battle of Hanover Court House was fought, which opened the way for the first corps, with the aid of which, had it come, we should then have gone into the enemy's capital. It never came. The bravest army could not do more, under such overwhelming disappointment, than the army of the Potomac then did. Fair Oaks attests their courage and endurance, when they hurled back again and again the vastly superior masses of the enemy. But mortal men could not accomplish the miracles that seem to have been expected of them. But one course was left; a flank march in the face of a powerful enemy, to another, and better base, one of the most hazardous movements in war. The army of the Potomac holding its own safety, and almost the safety of our cause, in its hands, was equal to the occasion. The Seven Days are classical in American history; those days in which the noble soldiers of the Union and Constitution, fought an overwhelming enemy by day, and retreated from successive victories by night, through a week of battle, closing the terrible scenes of conflict with the ever memorable victory at Malvern, where they drove back, beaten and shattered, the entire eastern army of the confederacy, and thus secured for themselves a place of rest, and a point for a new advance upon the capital from the banks of the James.

Richmond was still within our grasp, had the army of the Potomac been reinforced and permitted to advance. But counsels, which I cannot but think subsequent events proved unwise, prevailed in Washington, and we were or-

dered to abandon the campaign. Never did soldiers better deserve the thanks of a nation than the army of the Potomac for the deeds of the Peninsular campaign, and although that meed was withheld from them by the authorities, I am persuaded they have received the applause of the American people. The army of the Potomac was recalled from within sight of Richmond, and incorporated with the army of Virginia. The disappointments of the campaign on the Peninsula, had not dampened their ardor or diminished their patriotism. They fought well, faithfully, gallantly, under General Pope; yet were compelled to fall back on Washington, defeated and almost demoralized. The enemy, no longer occupied in guarding his own capital, poured his troops northward, entered Maryland, threatened Pennsylvania, and even Washington itself. Elated by his recent victories, and assured that our troops were disorganized and dispirited, he was confident that the seat of war was now permanently transferred to the loyal States, and that his own exhausted soil was to be relieved from the burden of supporting two hostile armies. But he did not understand the spirit which animated the soldiers of the Union. I shall not, nor can I living forget that, when I was ordered to the command of the troops for the defense of the capital, the soldiers with whom I had shared so much of the anxiety and pain and suffering of the war, had not lost their confidence in me as their commander. They sprang to my call with all their ancient vigor, discipline and courage. I led them into Maryland. Fifteen days after they had fallen back defeated before Washington, they vanquished the enemy on the rugged

heights of South Mountain, pursued him to the hard fought field of Antietam, and drove him, broken and disappointed, across the Potomac into Virginia.

The army had need of rest. After the terrible experiences of battles and marches, with scarcely an interval of repose, which they had gone through from the time of leaving for the Peninsula, the return to Washington, the defeat in Virginia, the victory at South Mountain, and again at Antietam, it was not surprising that they were, in a large degree, destitute of the absolute necessaries to effective duty. Shoes were worn out, blankets were lost, clothing was in rags; in short the army was unfit for active service, and an interval for rest and equipment was necessary.

When the slowly forwarded supplies came to us, I led the army across the river, renovated and refreshed, in good order and discipline, and followed the retreating foe to a position where I was confident of a decisive victory, when in the midst of the movement, while my advance guard was actually in contact with the enemy, I was removed from the command.

I am devoutly grateful to God, that my last campaign with this brave army was crowned with a victory which saved the nation from the greatest peril it had then undergone.

I have not accomplished my purpose, if, by this report, the Army of the Potomac is not placed high on the roll of the historic armies of the world.

Its deeds ennoble the nation to which it belongs. Always ready for battle, always firm, steadfast and trust-

worthy, I never called on it in vain; nor will the nation ever have cause to attribute its want of success, under myself or under other commanders, to any failure of patriotriotism or bravery in that noble body of American soldiers.

No man can justly charge upon any portion of that army, from the commanding general to the private, any lack of devotion to the service of the United States government, and to the cause of the Constitution and the Union. They have proved their fealty in much sorrow, suffering, danger, and through the very shadow of death. Their comrades dead on all the fields where we fought, have scarcely more claim to the honor of a nation's reverence, than the survivors to the justice of a nations gratitude.

I am, sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
GEORGE B. McCLELLAN,
Major-Gen. U. S. A.

To the Secretary of War.

CHAPTER V.

THE POLITICIAN AND STATESMAN.

His first participation in Politics.—Vigilance Committee of New Orleans. —Lawless acts of the Thugs.—The position of parties.—George builds a Barricade.—Street fighting.—The Vigilance Committee triumphant.—The Mayor resigns.—The barricades are demolished by the Committee, and quiet restored.—McClellan's political sayings and writings.—He proves himself a true Patriot.—His nomination to the Presidency.—Political prospects.—The End.

Previous to the breaking out of hostilities in 1861, Geo. B. McClellan had had but little experience as a politician. As a practical statesman he had had none.

The only political contest in which he had shared up to that time, was the organization of a people's Vigilance Committee in New Orleans, June, 1858.

We will now relate the history of this affair:

The people of New Orleans had for many years suffered from the lawless acts of the countless ruffians who infested the city. They had robbed and murdered with such frequency and impunity, that scarcely a day passed without a long list of crimes. Such few of these as came before the proper authorities for trial, alone amounted to frightful proportions. No less than five hundred indictments for murder, manslaughter, assaults with deadly weapons, and other similar crimes, stood on the docket at the time of which we write, while thousands of villainies

were daily committed, which escaped both detection and apprehension. The police force was notoriously leagued with the criminals, or Thugs, as they were called. The Mayor of the city, Charles M. Waterman, was too imbecile, or, as some insinuated, too guilty to arrest the evil. He was repeatedly requested to resign, but refused to do so, and things went on as before.

At this juncture a new election was drawing nigh. There were three candidates for the office, Mayor Chas. M. Waterman, Major P. G. T. Beauregard, of the United States Topographical Engineers, since General Beauregard, of the Confederate army, and a Mr. Stith. Waterman was the candidate of the Thug or rowdy party; Beauregard the candidate of the business community, and was endorsed by nearly every respectable signature in the city; and Stith the candidate of the Native American or Know-Nothing party.

The election was for the 5th, and had apparently settled down into a contest between Waterman and Beauregard.

Nothing occurred to indicate the explosion which threatened, so that the citizens of New Orleans were completely astonished, out of both their beds and their senses, when late on the night of June 2d, it was announced that a Vigilance Committee had been organized and armed, had marched to the arsenal in Jackson Square, supplied themselves with muskets and ammunition, and placed themselves in a hostile attitude towards the party of Mayor Waterman.

In the morning, New Orleans rubbed its eyes in wonder.

The Russ pavement of the principal streets had been torn up, and formidable barricades formed from it to obstruct the thoroughfares. In front of these stone barriers cotton bales were planted, and from behind them, cannon frowned upon the astonished citizens; while men formidably armed with muskets, bayonets and small arms, stood sentry over all.

Jackson Square was a complete tower of stone work and cotton bales. A ditch was dug inside of it, and a *cheval-de-frize* planted opposite to each of the streets that debouched into the square. This was the work of no inexperienced hand. We shall presently know under whose directions these defenses were erected.

The Vigilance Committee had 800 men under arms. They published in the *True Delta* of that morning a proclamation, setting forth the crimes and lawless acts from which the city had so long suffered, and declared their intention of usurping power for a short interval for the noble purpose of putting an end to this state of affairs, and restoring law and order. The proclamation was signed "True Delta," and was popularly ascribed to John Maginnis, the editor of the paper of that name.

As soon as the news got abroad, the Common Council of the city met in extraordinary session. The Mayor ordered out General Tracy's division of State militia. The First District armory was possessed by the Common Council, but only ten rounds of ammunition were found in it.

Meanwhile, the Vigilance Committee were not idle.—Eight hundred more men were enrolled and armed. Kittridge's gun store was sacked for arms. In this attitude,

a message was sent to the Mayor by the Common Council requesting him to resign. He refused. Meanwhile, another day wore on.

It is now time to relate who commanded the vigilance party, and who built the barricades.

The commandant was Major F. R. Duncan of the United States army—the barricade builder no less a person than the hero of this work—GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN, then lately resigned from the army, and engaged by the Illinois Central Railroad.

Next morning the newspapers took sides. The *Picayune* and *Crescent* sided with the Mayor. The *True Delta*, *Delta*, and *Bulletin*, went for the Committee. The editor of the *True Delta* had been ordered to be arrested by the Mayor on the previous day. Maginnis, however, took the matter very coolly. The vigilance party still kept to Jackson Square. The municipal party made Lafayette Square their head quarters. It was immediately in front of the City Hall. Fifty men and two cannon defended the approaches. The patrol of each party extended as far as Canal street, which was midway between the two squares, but neither of them attempted to pass this rubicon.

On the 4th of June, the excitement increased. Incendiary speeches were made all over the city. More murders were committed, and more violence attempted. The writer of this volume was attacked by a ruffian in broad daylight, and had to defend himself against his assailant who was armed with a loaded six shooter, by using upon him a blunted wood-axe, which he providentially picked

up at a critical moment. There was no police. Matters were in a worse state than before. At noon, Mr. T. P. White, a wealthy money broker, was shot and dangerously wounded in the open street. Lumsden, of the *Picayune*, was arrested by the vigilants. The municipals, after many ludicrous feints to cross Canal street with their two field pieces, and many returns to their base of operations, in order to supply missing lynch-pins, and repair newly discovered defects about their cannon wheels, and caissions, and so forth, finally screwed up their courage to the sticking point, by dint of listening to inflammatory appeals by the Mayor's friends, and by drinking a superabundance of hard whiskey—and passed the boundary line. This was the signal for battle. The vigilants ever vigilant, let fly too soon, and killed a number of women and other innocent lookers-on, who little expected that the affair would prove so serious. The attack began. The municipals poured in a hot fire of grape and cannister, which killed four and wounded twenty of their antagonists. They were then driven away by a brilliant sally of the vigilants, and Canal street again formed the barrier between the exasperated opponents. An ominous silence reigned throughout the city. The stores were closed, and people kept indoors. Things looked serious.

At this moment the Mayor, yielding to the importunities and threats of the Common Council, not only resigned his office, but flew to the Vigilants for protection. They guaranteed his life, and escorted him in safety to the St. Charles Hotel, on condition that he would swear in their entire force, consisting of fifteen hundred men, completely

armed, as special policemen, and then stand an immediate impeachment.

This was accordingly done. The Vigilants were sworn in as "Specials," Col. Forno, Chief of Police and leader of the Municipals, was dismissed from office, the Mayor was impeached and his office vacated. H. M. Summers, President of the Board of Aldermen, was appointed in his place, and Colonel Jaques, of the Vigilants, appointed new Chief of Police.

In the evening, disturbances were attempted to be renewed. Incendiary speeches were delivered by Colonel Christy, an outside candidate for the mayoralty, and Col. Henry, of the Nicaraguan army. But in vain. The backbone of the Municipal party was broken, and people were satisfied with what had been done, and disinclined to renew the violent scenes of the three preceding days, simply because it was alleged that the Vigilants, instead of acting for the people, were only a force organized by the Native American party, to overawe opposition, and elect Stith.

On this day, Frederick S. Porter, son of Judge Porter, was killed by an unknown hand. The Vigilants, by mistake, fired on their own patrol, and killed and wounded several of them. Placards of a mysterious nature were posted on all the walls of the city.

The citizens wearied of all this turmoil and excitement, and wished for peace.

Accordingly, when it was announced on the following day, that the barricades had been demolished and quiet restored, the election proceeded without interruption, and

Mr. Stith, the Native American candidate, elected with little opposition.

As soon as he was installed into office, the most active measures were taken to bring the Thugs to justice; and for a long while New Orleans enjoyed the blessings of good government and impartially administered justice.

Thus, through the well-timed action of this Committee, order was restored, though at the expense of a few lives, which everybody, even they, themselves, regretted.

Its success was gained through the prompt action and professional services of he, whom the soldiers of the army of the Potomac afterwards affectionately nick-named "Little Mac."

The rest of the political action of George B. McClellan having occurred since the commencement of the present conflict, it will be necessary, in order to understand its bearing, to define the political situation of the times.

Upon the breaking out of the war, there were in the first wild days of national excitement but two parties—those For, and those Against the South, or, Secessionists and Unionists. No one stopped to think of the many possible phases into which civil war might grow. It was expected that it would end in a few days with an inevitable re-establishment of the national authority, and that consequently any man who had proved so treacherous as to raise his voice in favor of the enemy would ever afterwards be pointed at as a traitor. So there were only two sides to the question—Union or Secession.

In this era of sectional unity (to coin a phrase), General McClellan unsheathed his sword for Union.

Upon the opening of the campaign in Western Virginia he issued the following proclamation:

During the following month he issued other proclamations, in which these phrases occur:

"Soldiers! you are here to protect, not to destroy. Take nothing, destroy nothing. The rights of the people of Western Virginia, in person and property, shall be respected. We come here to save, not to upturn. Your enemies have violated every moral law. They have, without cause, rebelled against a mild and paternal government. They have placed themselves beneath contempt, unless they can retrive some honor on the field of battle. I fear but one thing—that you will not find foemen worthy of your steel."

Three sentiments are here distinctly discovered:

1st. The perception of but two sides to the political bearing of the war.

2d. A determination to restore, but not alter or destroy —to protect, not coerce.

3d. A contempt for the military prowess of the enemy, and disbelief in the sincerity or permanence of the rebellion.

After the battle of Bull Run, public opinion very sensibly altered.

It was admitted that the rebellion was not to be put down without a great effort;—in a word, that the rebellion was not a rebellion, but a revolution.

Then instead of two opinions there became four. People began to reflect upon the possibility of complications not contemplated before. It was now not simply a ques-

tion of simple restoration. There were the effects of a long war to be considered, change of national habits growing out of it, policy of confiscation, suppression of discontent at home, question of emancipation, status of Unionists in the South, and of Secessionists at the North, treatment of fugitive slaves, civic rights of soldiers, freedom of the press, right of free discussion, *habeas corpus*, reconstruction with or without slavery, or otherwise, payment of the enemy' s debt; and a great variety of other measures.

Parties now began to take somewhat this shape:

1st. *Abolition*—or those who saw that the war mainly grew mainly out of the irrepressible conflict between negro slavery or negro freedom, or the efforts of philanthropists to abolish, and of practical statesmen to retain, slavery. Fully persuaded that no peace could last with these two sentiments in antagonism, they sought to end the matter by declaring immediate freedom to the blacks, even at the risk of exterminating the whites, though it must be admitted, that they fully believed in the existence of a strong re-union feeling at the South, and the consequent easy restoration of power to the Federal Government. Wendell Phillips, Theodore Tilton, Dr. Cheever, Generals Fremont and Hunter, and many others, were the leading men of this party. There were many, however, of kinder feelings, who, rather than see the whites exterminated, in order to free the blacks, were in favor of dissolution, in order that the two conflicting systems might be forever separated. To this section of the Abolition party belonged that benignant philosopher, Horace Greeley.

2d. *Peace*—or those who, recognizing the irrepressible conflict, foresaw that in a Union based on emancipation, the Southerners would be ruined, and the lands forever wasted for want of fit laborers for a tropical climate; and that in a Union based on the *status quo ante bellum*, the South, bent upon independance, could only be conquered after a long and desperate struggle, which might end in the possession of their estates and negroes, by the victorious Northerners; or defeat; and the many evils which would follow it. In the former contingency, the Northerners would themselves in turn become slaveholders and strong pro-slavery men, and in a few years renew the conflict with changed sides. In the latter, our glory as a nation would be lost, ourselves burthened with a heavy debt, the North impoverished and enfeebled, and both sections an easy prey to foreign aggression. In both, military organization and power, so fatal to Republics, would first undermine our liberties at home, and prepare our people for the inevitable consequence of a stronger government—in other words, a Dictatorship or a Monarchy. Besides that, we should still be burthened, both North and South, with heavy war debts, and decimated in working population.

3d. *Copperhead*—or those who, recognizing the right of revolution, maintained that the South had already exhibited enough strength to deserve recognition. There were others of this party who argued that the States being sovereign, had the same right to separate that they had to unite, and that consequently their withdrawal and formation of a separate Confederacy was a matter of right, and

ought to be so accorded. Both arguments thus led to the same conclusion.

4th. *Union*—or those who yet believed that the two sections would come together again; who disbelieved in the irrepressible conflict of negro slavery, and the efforts and arts of white emancipationists.

This belief being the simplest, and requiring the least mental effort to bring it to conviction, was shared in by far the greatest numbers of our countrymen.

As it was coupled with associations of former national triumphs, with the flag, with the Constitution before it was perverted and broken, and with the livery of both soldier and sailor, it clung to the popular heart, as the ivy clings to the ruined wall, and bid fair to survive every other feeling. It was thought that compromise, kindness, concession, forbearance, and mutual guarantees of amity and forgiveness, would heal all.

To this faith George B. McClellan pinned his fortunes.

It is but fair to avow that Mr. Lincoln, at this time, was of the same opinion. This was directly after the first Bull Run. It was confidently expected that the next campaign would settle all. Active preparations were at once made for a decisive blow.

Gen. McClellan, at this time, wrote to Burnside:

"We are fighting for the Union. Say as little as possible about politics or the negro."

To Halleck he wrote the same. To Buell, "not to permit the domestic institutions of Kentucky to be interfered with, nor its inhabitants irritated."

The result of the Peninsula campaign rapidly changed

all the previous views of political parties. Everybody changed sides but the Peace men and the Unionists—the former because they had contemplated farther than any other, the possible political phases of the war—the latter, because they refused to contemplate anything but Union. At the period when we divided political sentiment into Abolition, Peace, Copperhead, and Union, the respective strength of the parties stood about as follows, in ten :—

Abolition, - - - - - -	2
Peace, - - - - - -	1½
Copperhead, - - - - - -	½
Union, - - - - - -	6
	10

But now the Copperheads were completely extinguished, and those of the Abolitionists, who, like Mr. Greeley, advocated separation, became coercionists, for fear of being mistaken for Copperheads; while those who had before loudly demanded immediate emancipation, now saw that their ends would be soonest gained by joining the Unionists, and gaining both the ear of the President, and the advantages of that coercion which the Unionists now deemed a matter of necessity. Hence, the Unionists rather gained in numbers, and their policy became imbued with schemes of emancipation, confiscation, and the harboring of "contrabands," and their employment as troops.

Parties now stood about thus, in numbers :

Union (including Abolition,) - - - -	7
Peace (including Copperheads,) - - -	3
	10

It will be seen that the Peace men gained beyond what accessions resulted from the alleigance of the now stifled Copperheads, and that the Unionists, though they gained all the Abolitionists, at the same time lost some of their own numbers.

McClellan, however, remained with the majority. It was at this juncture that the famous Harrison's Bar letter was penned. (See page 280 of his Report.)

Mr. Lincoln and his advisers, foreseeing the further change of public opinion which must ensue, now concluded that McClellan was in the way. The tenacity with which he held to one idea, made him an obstacle. It was clear that Union was impossible. The Confederates were defiant, the irrepressible conflict was staring the North in the face, and but two courses were left open—Subjugation or Recognition. As McClellen could accede to neither, he was plainly *de trop*. He was accordingly removed.

For a moment, when Pope was in danger, he was recalled; for so popular had he made himself with the army, that no other general could count upon an equal chance of success with it. When that moment passed, he was again dismissed, and ordered to Trenton, N. J.

Preparations were now made to conduct the war upon an entirely different basis. The object now was subjugation. The rallying cry of "Union" was retained, it is true; but this was only because it was popular with the masses, whose political ideas are always of the simplest kind. The employment of negro troops, confiscation, oaths of allegiance, military plantations, and censorship of speech, press and telegraph, were put in force; South-

ern banks and individuals upon re-conquered territory were compelled to disclose hidden property, and forced loans carried into effect.

Finally, the Emancipation Proclamation came out, and Mr. Lincoln now stood where both the Southerners and the Peace men foresaw he would, even before the war had broken out. He was obliged to. It was the inevitable result of coercion, no matter from what pure and patriotic motives coercion originated. Mr. Lincoln could not control events. He simply bowed to them, and, as he said himself, floated down the stream of circumstances.

We now approach events of a more recent date.

I shall endeavor to write of them impartially.

Upon McClellan's retirement to New Jersey, his time was spent mainly in study, and in watching with keen eyes the progress of national events.

His popularity with the masses never flagged.

Parties had again changed their complexion. The division of public sentiment was now about as follow:

1. *Radical Abolitionists.*—Those who, dissatisfied with even the rapid progress Mr. Lincoln had made towards abolition, desired to see even more extreme opinions avowed, and more extreme measures put in force. These men met in Convention at Cleveland, and nominated John C. Fremont for the Presidency.

2. *Union Abolitionists*—Or made up of those who, uniting themselves with the Unionists, conceded something to the latter, in order to avail themselves of their superior numbers, and of the Unionists who resigned themselves to the guidance and leadership of the former, because they

were already high in office, and possessed of great political power.

3. *Peace Men.*—After Fremont's nomination, however, Mr. Lincoln, in order to destroy his opponents' party, issued his celebrated Niagara Manifesto, "To whom it may concern," declaring that Union without the extermination of slavery was impossible. This swallowed up the Radical Abolition vote, but lost Mr. Lincoln a vast number of Unionists. Opinions now changed again, and stood about thus, previous to the assembling of the Democratic Nominating Convention at Chicago:

1. *Union Abolitionists.*
2. *Peace Men.*
3. *Constitutional Unionists*—Or those who, disagreeing with Mr. Lincoln in the policy or justice of his recent declaration concerning slavery, yet clung to the belief that a vigorous prosecution of the war would bring the Confederates to terms, and compel them to accept a fair offer of Union under the Constitution, as of old. Their respective numbers stood about thus:

1. Union Abolitionists—including a small part of the army vote—all men in office, all Abolitionists, - - - - - - - - - - 2½
2. Peace Men, - - - - - - - - - 3
3. Constitutional Unionists—including majority of army vote, all men whose interests prospered by the war, a large portion of the masses, some returned soldiers and officers, &c., - - - 4½

10

It will be seen that the Union Abolitionists, or the party in power, had lost largely through Mr. Lincoln's manifesto. This resulted from the fact that, as I have stated before, they depended for *numbers* on the Constitutional Unionists.

The Peace men showed no increase. It is probable a small increase had occurred, but it scarcely showed itself in the number of votes the party could command.

The Constitutional Unionists were therefore the largest of the three parties, but neither of them were enough to elect a Chief Magistrate. A change must therefore occur, or the election would be thrown into the House of Representatives, when Mr. Lincoln would inevitably be returned.

Accordingly, strong efforts were made to fuse the Peace men and Constitutional Unionists into one party. These efforts were successful, and the Chicago Convention united upon a platform, which, if the two parties who framed it can only hold together until the 8th day of November next, will assuredly elect their candidate.

George Brinton McClellan was nominated for President on the second ballot, by 202½ votes, Thomas H. Seymour having the remainder, or 23½.

Having thus accompanied our hero until the past events of his life are melted into the busy and shifting present, we leave him and the kind reader to act their parts in it, as we ourselves honestly intend to act our own.

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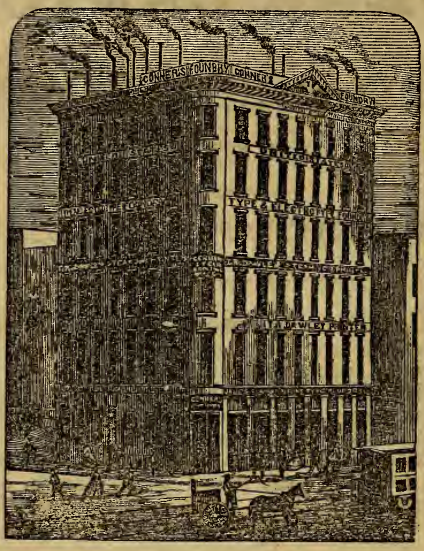

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