

CHAPTER IX - SECESSION AND CIVIL WAR

It is a significant fact that the news of Lincoln's election which caused so much dismay and searching of heart throughout the Southern and Border States was received with defiant cheers in Charleston, the chief port of South Carolina. Those cheers meant that there was one Southern State that was ready to answer on the instant the whispered question which was troubling the North, and to answer it by no means in a whisper.

South Carolina occupied a position not exactly parallel to that of any other State. Her peculiarity was not merely that her citizens held the dogma of State Sovereignty. All the States from Virginia southward, at any rate, held that dogma in one form or another. But South Carolina held it in an extreme form, and habitually acted on it in an extreme fashion. It is not historically true to say that she learnt her political creed from Calhoun. It would be truer to say that he learnt it from her. But it may be that the leadership of a man of genius, who could codify and expound her thought, and whose bold intellect shrank from no conclusion to which his principles led, helped to give a peculiar simplicity and completeness to her interpretation of the dogma in question. The peculiarity of her attitude must be expressed by saying that most Americans had two loyalties, while the South Carolinian had only one. Whether in the last resort a citizen should prefer loyalty to his State or loyalty to the Union was a question concerning which man differed from man and State from State. There were men, and indeed whole States, for whom the conflict was a torturing, personal tragedy, and a tearing of the heart in two. But practically all Americans believed that some measure of loyalty was due to both connections. The South Carolinian did not. All his loyalty was to his State. He scarcely pretended to anything like national feeling. The Union was at best a useful treaty of alliance with foreigners to be preserved only so far as the interests of the Palmetto State were advantaged thereby. His representatives in House and Senate, the men he sent to take part as electors in the choosing of a President, had rather the air of ambassadors than of legislators. They were in Congress to fight the battles of their State, and avowed quite frankly that if it should ever appear that "the Treaty called the Constitution of the United States" (as South Carolina afterwards designated it in her Declaration of Independence) were working to its disadvantage, they would denounce it with as little scruple or heart-burning as the Washington Government might denounce a commercial treaty with England or Spain.

South Carolina had been talking freely of secession for thirty years. As I have said, she regarded the Union simply as a diplomatic arrangement to be

maintained while it was advantageous, and again and again doubts had been expressed as to whether in fact it was advantageous. The fiscal question which had been the ostensible cause of the Nullification movement in the 'thirties was still considered a matter of grievance. As an independent nation, it was pointed out, South Carolina would be free to meet England on the basis of reciprocal Free Trade, to market her cotton in Lancashire to the best advantage, and to receive in return a cheap and plentiful supply of British manufactures. At any moment since 1832 a good opportunity might have led her to attempt to break away. The election of Lincoln was to her not so much a grievance as a signal--and not altogether an unwelcome one. No time was lost in discussion, for the State was unanimous. The legislature had been in session choosing Presidential electors--for in South Carolina these were chosen by the legislature and not by the people. When the results of the voting in Pennsylvania and Indiana made it probable that the Republicans would have a majority, the Governor intimated that it should continue to sit in order to consider the probable necessity of taking action to save the State. The news of Lincoln's election reached Charleston on the 7th of November. On the 10th of November the legislature unanimously voted for the holding of a specific Convention to consider the relations of South Carolina with the United States. The Convention met early in December, and before the month was out South Carolina had in her own view taken her place in the world as an independent nation. The Stars and Stripes was hauled down, and the new "Palmetto Flag"--a palm-tree and a single star--raised over the public buildings throughout the State.

Many Southerners, including not a few who were inclined to Secession as the only course in the face of the Republican victory, considered the precipitancy of South Carolina unwise and unjustifiable. She should, they thought, rather have awaited a conference with the other Southern States and the determination of a common policy. But in fact there can be little doubt that the audacity of her action was a distinct spur to the Secessionist movement. It gave it a focus, a point round which to rally. The idea of a Southern Confederacy was undoubtedly already in the air. But it might have remained long and perhaps permanently in the air if no State had been ready at once to take the first definite and material step. It was now no longer a mere abstract conception or inspiration. The nucleus of the thing actually existed in the Republic of South Carolina, which every believer in State Sovereignty was bound to recognize as a present independent State. It acted, so to speak, as a magnet to draw other alarmed and discontented States out of the Union.

The energy of the South Carolinian Secessionists might have produced less effect had anything like a corresponding energy been displayed by the Government of the United States. But when men impatiently looked to Washington for counsel

and decision they found neither. The conduct of President Buchanan moved men at the time to contemptuous impatience, and history has echoed the contemporary verdict. Just one fact may perhaps be urged in extenuation: if he was a weak man he was also in a weak position. A real and very practical defect, as it seems to me, in the Constitution of the United States is the four months' interval between the election of a President and his installation. The origin of the practice is obvious enough: it is a relic of the fiction of the Electoral College, which is supposed to be spending those months in searching America for the fittest man to be chief magistrate. But now that everyone knows on the morrow of the election of the College who is to be President, the effect may easily be to leave the immense power and responsibility of the American Executive during a critical period in the hands of a man who has no longer the moral authority of a popular mandate--whose policy the people have perhaps just rejected. So it was in this case. Buchanan was called upon to face a crisis produced by the defeat of his own party, followed by the threatened rebellion of the men to whom he largely owed his election, and with it what moral authority he might be supposed to possess. Had Lincoln been able to take command in November he might, by a combination of firmness and conciliation, have checked the Secessionist movement. Buchanan, perhaps, could do little; but that little he did not do.

When all fair allowance has been made for the real difficulties of his position it must be owned that the President cut a pitiable figure. What was wanted was a strong lead for the Union sentiment of all the States to rally to. What Buchanan gave was the most self-confessedly futile manifesto that any American President has ever penned. His message to the Congress began by lecturing the North for having voted Republican. It went on to lecture the people of South Carolina for seceding, and to develop in a lawyer-like manner the thesis that they had no constitutional right to do so. This was not likely to produce much effect in any case, but any effect that it might have produced was nullified by the conclusion which appeared to be intended to show, in the same legal fashion, that, though South Carolina had no constitutional right to secede, no one had any constitutional right to prevent her from seceding. The whole wound up with a tearful demonstration of the President's own innocence of any responsibility for the troubles with which he was surrounded.

It was not surprising if throughout the nation there stirred a name and memory, and to many thousands of lips sprang instinctively and simultaneously a single sentence: "Oh for one hour of Jackson!"

General Scott, who was in supreme command of the armed forces of the Union, had, as a young man, received Jackson's instructions for "the execution of the laws" in South Carolina. He sent a detailed specification of them to Buchanan;

but it was of no avail. The great engine of democratic personal power which Jackson had created and bequeathed to his successors was in trembling and incapable hands. With a divided Cabinet--for his Secretary of State, Cass, was for vigorous action against the rebellious State, while his Secretary for War, Floyd, was an almost avowed sympathizer with secession--and with a President apparently unable to make up his own mind, or to keep to one policy from hour to hour, it was clear that South Carolina was not to be dealt with in Jackson's fashion. Clay's alternative method remained to be tried.

It was a disciple of Clay's, Senator Crittenden, who made the attempt, a Whig and a Kentuckian like his master. He proposed a compromise very much in Clay's manner, made up for the most part of carefully balanced concessions to either section. But its essence lay in its proposed settlement of the territorial problem, which consisted of a Constitutional Amendment whereby territories lying south of latitude 36° 30' should be open to Slavery, and those north of that line closed against it. This was virtually the extension of the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific, save that California, already accepted as a Free State, was not affected. Crittenden, though strenuously supported by Douglas, did not meet with Clay's measure of success. The Senate appointed a committee to consider the relations of the two sections, and to that committee, on which he had a seat, he submitted his plan. But its most important clause was negated by a combination of extremes, Davis and the other Southerners from the Cotton States combining with the Republicans to reject it. There is, however, some reason to believe that the Southerners would have accepted the plan if the Republicans had done so. The extreme Republicans, whose representative on the committee was Wade of Ohio, would certainly have refused it in any case, but the moderates on that side might probably have accepted and carried it had not Lincoln, who had been privately consulted, pronounced decidedly against it. This fixes upon Lincoln a considerable responsibility before history, for it seems probable that if the Crittenden Compromise had been carried the Cotton States would not have seceded, and South Carolina would have stood alone. The refusal, however, is very characteristic of his mind. No-one, as his whole public conduct showed, was more moderate in counsel and more ready to compromise on practical matters than he. Nor does it seem that he would have objected strongly to the Crittenden plan--though he certainly feared that it would lead to filibustering in Mexico and Cuba for the purpose of obtaining more slave territory--if it could have been carried out by Congressional action alone. But the Dred Scott judgment made it necessary to give it the form of a Constitutional Amendment, and a Constitutional Amendment on the lines proposed would do what the Fathers of the Republic had so carefully refrained from doing--make Slavery specifically and in so many words part of the American system. This was a price which his intellectual temper, so elastic in regard to details, but so firm in its insistence on sound first principles,

was not prepared to pay.

The rejection of the Crittenden Compromise gave the signal for the new and much more formidable secession which marked the New Year. Before January was spent Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi were, in their own view, out of the Union. Louisiana and Texas soon followed their example. In Georgia the Unionists put up a much stronger fight, led by Alexander Stephens, afterwards Vice-President of the Confederacy. But even there they were defeated, and the Cotton States now formed a solid phalanx openly defying the Government at Washington.

The motives of this first considerable secession--for I have pointed out that the case of South Carolina was unique--are of great importance, for they involve our whole view of the character of the war which was to follow. In England there is still a pretty general impression that the States rose in defence of Slavery. I find a writer so able and generally reliable as Mr. Alex. M. Thompson of the *Clarion* giving, in a recent article, as an example of a just war, "the war waged by the Northern States to extinguish Slavery." This view is, of course, patently false. The Northern States waged no war to extinguish Slavery; and, had they done so, it would not have been a just but a flagrantly unjust war. No-one could deny for a moment that under the terms of Union the Southern States had a right to keep their slaves as long as they chose. If anyone thought such a bargain too immoral to be kept, his proper place was with Garrison, and his proper programme the repudiation of the bargain and the consequent disruption of the Union. But the North had clearly no shadow of right to coerce the Southerners into remaining in the Union and at the same time to deny them the rights expressly reserved to them under the Treaty of Union. And of such a grossly immoral attempt every fair-minded historian must entirely acquit the victorious section. The Northerners did not go to war to abolish Slavery. The original basis of the Republican party, its platform of 1860, the resolutions passed by Congress, and the explicit declarations of Lincoln, both before and after election, all recognize specifically and without reserve the immunity of Slavery in the Slave States from all interference by the Federal Government.

American writers are, of course, well acquainted with such elementary facts, and, if they would attempt to make Slavery the cause of the rebellion, they are compelled to use a different but, I think, equally misleading phrase. I find, for instance, Professor Rhodes saying that the South went to war for "the extension of Slavery." This sounds more plausible, because the extension of the geographical area over which Slavery should be lawful had been a Southern policy, and because the victory of the party organized to oppose this policy was in fact the signal for secession. But neither will this statement bear examination, for it must surely be obvious that the act of secession put a final end to any hope of

the extension of Slavery. How could Georgia and Alabama, outside the Union, effect anything to legalize Slavery in the Union territories of Kansas and New Mexico?

A true statement of the case would, I think, be this: The South felt itself threatened with a certain peril. Against that peril the extension of the slave area had been one attempted method of protection. Secession was an alternative method.

The peril was to be found in the increasing numerical superiority of the North, which must, it was feared, reduce the South to a position of impotence in the Union if once the rival section were politically united. Lowell spoke much of the truth when he said that the Southern grievance was the census of 1860; but not the whole truth. It was the census of 1860 plus the Presidential Election of 1860, and the moral to be drawn from the two combined. The census showed that the North was already greatly superior in numbers, and that the disproportion was an increasing one. The election showed the North combined in support of a party necessarily and almost avowedly sectional, and returning its candidate triumphantly, although he had hardly a vote south of the Mason-Dixon line. To the South this seemed to mean that in future, if it was to remain in the Union at all, it must be on sufferance. A Northerner would always be President, a Northern majority would always be supreme in both Houses of Congress, for the admission of California, already accomplished, and the now certain admission of Kansas as a Free State had disturbed the balance in the Senate as well as in the House. The South would henceforward be unable to influence in any way the policy of the Federal Government. It would be enslaved.

It is true that the South had no immediate grievance. The only action of the North of which she had any sort of right to complain was the infringement of the spirit of the Constitutional compact by the Personal Liberty Laws. But these laws there was now a decided disposition to amend or repeal--a disposition strongly supported by the man whom the North had elected as President. It is also true, that this man would never have lent himself to any unfair depression of the Southern part of the Union. This last fact, however, the South may be pardoned for not knowing. Even those Northerners who had elected Lincoln knew little about him except that he was the Republican nominee and had been a "rail-splitter." In the South, so far as one can judge, all that was heard about him was that he was a "Black Abolitionist," which was false, and that in appearance he resembled a gorilla, which was, at least by comparison, true.

But, even if Lincoln's fairness of mind and his conciliatory disposition towards the South had been fully appreciated, it is not clear that the logic of the

Secessionist case would have been greatly weakened. The essential point was that the North, by virtue of its numerical superiority, had elected a purely Northern candidate on a purely Northern programme. Though both candidate and programme were in fact moderate, there was no longer any security save the will of the North that such moderation would continue. If the conditions remained unaltered, there was nothing to prevent the North at a subsequent election from making Charles Sumner President with a programme conceived in the spirit of John Brown's raid. It must be admitted that the policy adopted by the dominant North after the Civil War might well appear to afford a measure of posthumous justification for these fears.

In the North at first all seemed panic and confusion of voices. To many--and among them were some of those who had been keenest in prosecuting the sectional quarrel of which Secession was the outcome--it appeared the wisest course to accept the situation and acquiesce in the peaceable withdrawal of the seceding States. This was the position adopted almost unanimously by the Abolitionists, and it must be owned that they at least were strictly consistent in taking it. "When I called the Union 'a League with Death and an Agreement with Hell,'" said Garrison, "I did not expect to see Death and Hell secede from the Union." Garrison's disciple, Wendell Phillips, pronounced the matter one for the Gulf States themselves to decide, and declared that you could not raise troops in Boston to coerce South Carolina or Florida. The same line was taken by men who carried greater weight than did the Abolitionists. No writer had rendered more vigorous service to the Republican cause in 1860 than Horace Greeley of the New York Tribune. His pronouncement in that journal on the Southern secessions was embodied in the phrase: "Let our erring sisters go."

But while some of the strongest opponents of the South and of Slavery were disposed to accept the dismemberment of the Union almost complacently, there were men of a very different type to whom it seemed an outrage to be consummated only over their dead bodies. During the wretched months of Buchanan's incurable hesitancy the name of Jackson had been in every mouth. And at the mere sound of that name there was a rally to the Union of all who had served under the old warrior in the days when he had laid his hand of steel upon the Nullifiers. Some of them, moved by that sound and by the memory of the dead, broke through the political ties of a quarter of a century. Among those in whom that memory overrode every other passion were Holt, a Southerner and of late the close ally of Davis; Cass, whom Lowell had pilloried as the typical weak-kneed Northerner who suffered himself to be made the lackey of the South; and Taney, who had denied that, in the contemplation of the American Constitution, the Negro was a man. It was Black, an old Jacksonian, who in the moment of peril held the nerveless hands of the President firm to the tiller. It was Dix,

another such, who sent to New Orleans the very Jacksonian order: "If any man attempts to haul down the American flag, shoot him at sight."

War is always the result of a conflict of wills.

The conflict of wills which produced the American Civil War had nothing directly to do with Slavery. It was the conflict between the will of certain Southern States to secede rather than accept the position of a permanent minority and the will expressed in Jackson's celebrated toast: "Our Union, it must be preserved." It is the Unionist position which clearly stands in need of special defence, since it proposed the coercion of a recalcitrant population. Can such a defence be framed in view of the acceptance by most of us of the general principle which has of late been called "the self-determination of peoples"?

I think it can. One may at once dismiss the common illusion--for it is often in such cases a genuine illusion, though sometimes a piece of hypocrisy--which undoubtedly had possession of many Northern minds at the time, that the Southern people did not really want to secede, but were in some mysterious fashion "intimidated" by a disloyal minority. How, in the absence of any special means of coercion, one man can "intimidate" two was never explained any more than it is explained when the same absurd hypothesis is brought forward in relation to Irish agrarian and English labour troubles. At any rate in this case there is not, and never has been, the slightest justification for doubting that Secessionism was from the first a genuine popular movement, that it was enthusiastically embraced by hundreds of thousands who no more expected ever to own a slave than an English labourer expects to own a carriage and pair; that in this matter the political leaders of the States, and Davis in particular, rather lagged behind than outran the general movement of opinion; that the Secessionists were in the Cotton States a great majority from the first; that they became later as decided a majority in Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee; and that by the time the sword was drawn there was behind the Confederate Government a unanimity very rare in the history of revolutions--certainly much greater than existed in the colonies at the time of the Declaration of Independence. To oppose so formidable a mass of local opinion and to enforce opposition by the sword was for a democracy a grave responsibility.

Yet it was a responsibility which had to be accepted if America was to justify her claim to be a nation. To understand this certain further propositions must be grasped.

First, the resistance of the South, though so nearly universal, was not strictly national. You cannot compare the case with that of Ireland or Poland. The

Confederacy was never a nation, though, had the war had a different conclusion, it might perhaps have become one. It is important to remember that the extreme Southern view did not profess to regard the South as a nationality. It professed to regard South Carolina as one nationality, Florida as another, Virginia as another. But this view, though it had a strong hold on very noble minds, was at bottom a legalism out of touch with reality. It may be doubted whether any man felt it in his bones as men feel a genuine national sentiment.

On the other hand American national sentiment was a reality. It had been baptized in blood. It was a reality for Southerners as well as for Northerners, for Secessionists as well as for Union men. There was probably no American, outside South Carolina, who did not feel it as a reality, though it might be temporarily obscured and overborne by local loyalties, angers, and fears. The President of the Confederacy had himself fought under the Stars and Stripes, and loved it so well that he could not bear to part with it and wished to retain it as the flag of the South. Had one generation of excited men, without any cognate and definable grievance, moved only by anger at a political reverse and the dread of unrealized and dubious evils, the right to undo the mighty work of consolidation now so nearly accomplished, to throw away at once the inheritance of their fathers and the birthright of their children? Nor would they and their children be the only losers: it was the great principles on which the American Commonwealth was built that seemed to many to be on trial for their life. If the Union were broken up, what could men say but that Democracy had failed? The ghost of Hamilton might grin from his grave; though his rival had won the laurel, it was he who would seem to have proved his case. For the first successful secession would not necessarily have been the last. The thesis of State Sovereignty established by victory in arms--which always does in practice establish any thesis for good or evil--meant the break-up of the free and proud American nation into smaller and smaller fragments as new disputes arose, until the whole fabric planned by the Fathers of the Republic had disappeared. It is impossible to put this argument better than in the words of Lincoln himself. "Must a government, of necessity, be too strong for the liberties of its own people, or too weak to maintain its own existence?" That was the issue as he saw it, an issue which he was determined should be decided in the negative, even at the cost of a long and bloody Civil War.

I have endeavoured to state fairly the nature of the conflict of wills which was to produce Civil War, and to explain how each side justified morally its appeal to arms. Further than that I do not think it necessary to go. But I will add just this one historical fact which, I think, supplies some degree of further justification for the attitude of the North--that concerning this matter of the Union, which was the real question in debate, though not in regard to other subsidiary matters which will demand our attention in the next chapter, the South was ultimately not only

conquered but persuaded. There are among the millions of Southerners alive today few who will admit that their fathers fought in an unjust cause, but there are probably still fewer, if any at all, who would still wish to secede if they had the power. Jefferson Davis himself could, at the last, close his record of his own defeat and of the triumph of the Union with the words *Esto Perpetua*.

Lincoln took the oath as President on March 4, 1861. His Inaugural Address breathes the essential spirit of his policy--firmness in things fundamental, conciliation in things dispensable. He reiterated his declaration that he had neither right nor inclination to interfere with Slavery in the Slave States. He quoted the plank in the Republican platform which affirmed the right of each State to control its own affairs, and vigorously condemned John Brown's insane escapade. He declared for an effective Fugitive Slave Law, and pledged himself to its faithful execution. He expressed his approval of the amendment to the Constitution which Congress had just resolved to recommend, forbidding the Federal Government ever to interfere with the domestic institutions of the several States, "including that of persons held to service." But on the question of Secession he took firm ground. "I hold that, in contemplation of universal law and of the Constitution, the union of these States is perpetual.... It follows from these views that no State upon its own mere motion can lawfully get out of the Union; that resolves and ordinances to that effect are legally void; and that acts of violence within any State or States, against the authority of the United States, are insurrectionary or revolutionary, according to circumstances." He accepted the obligation which the Constitution expressly enjoined on him, to see "that the laws of the Union be faithfully executed in all the States." He would use his power "to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the Government and to collect the duties and imposts," but beyond that there would be no interference or coercion. There could be no conflict or bloodshed unless the Secessionists were themselves the aggressors. "In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine is the momentous issue of Civil War.... You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the Government, while I have the most solemn one to 'preserve, protect and defend it.'"

He ended with the one piece of rhetoric in the whole address--rhetoric deliberately framed to stir those emotions of loyalty to the national past and future which he knew to endure, howsoever overshadowed by anger and misunderstanding, even in Southern breasts. "We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

But there was not much evidence of the active operation of such "better angels" at the moment. Half the Southern States had not only seceded, but had already formed themselves into a hostile Confederacy. They framed a Constitution modelled in essentials on that of the United States, but with the important difference that "We the deputies of the Sovereign and Independent States" was substituted for "We the people of the United States," and with certain minor amendments, some of which were generally thought even in the North to be improvements.

They elected Jefferson Davis as President, and as Vice-President Alexander Stephens of Georgia, who had been a Unionist, but had accepted the contrary verdict of his State.

The choice was, perhaps, as good as could have been made. Davis was in some ways well fitted to represent the new Commonwealth before the world. He had a strong sense of what befitted his own dignity and that of his office. He had a keen eye for what would attract the respect and sympathy of foreign nations. It is notable, for instance, that in his inaugural address, in setting forth the grounds on which secession was to be justified, he made no allusion to the institution of Slavery. There he may be contrasted favourably with Stephens, whose unfortunate speech declaring Slavery to be the stone which the builders of the old Constitution rejected, and which was to become the corner-stone of the new Confederacy, was naturally seized upon by Northern sympathizers at the time, and has been as continually brought forward since by historians and writers who wish to emphasize the connection between Slavery and the Southern cause. Davis had other qualifications which might seem to render him eminently fit to direct the policy of a Confederation which must necessarily begin its existence by fighting and winning a great and hazardous war. He had been a soldier and served with distinction. Later he had been, by common consent, one of the best War Secretaries that the United States had possessed. It was under his administration that both Lee and McClellan, later to be arrayed against each other, were sent to the Crimea to study modern war at first hand.

But Davis had faults of temper which often endangered and perhaps at last ruined the cause he served. They can be best appreciated by reading his own book. There is throughout a note of querulousness which weakens one's sympathy for the hero of a lost cause. He is always explaining how things ought to have happened, how the people of Kentucky ought to have been angry with Lincoln instead of siding with him, and so on. One understands at once how he was bested in democratic diplomacy by his rival's lucid realism and unfailing instinct for dealing with men as men. One understands also his continual

quarrels with his generals, though in that department he was from the first much better served than was the Government at Washington. A sort of nervous irritability, perhaps a part of what is called "the artistic temperament," is everywhere perceptible. Nowhere does one find a touch of that spirit which made Lincoln say, after an almost insolent rebuff to his personal and official dignity from McClellan: "Well, I will hold his horse for him if he will give us a victory."

The prize for which both parties were contending in the period of diplomatic skirmishing which marks the opening months of Lincoln's administration was the adherence of those Slave States which had not yet seceded. So far disruptional doctrines had triumphed only in the Cotton States. In Virginia Secession had been rejected by a very decided majority, and the rejection had been confirmed by the result of the subsequent elections for the State legislature. The Secessionists had also seen their programme defeated in Tennessee, Arkansas, and North Carolina, while Kentucky, Missouri and Maryland had as yet refused to make any motion towards it. In Texas the general feeling was on the whole Secessionist, but the Governor was a Unionist, and succeeded for a time in preventing definite action. To keep these States loyal, while keeping at the same time his pledge to "execute the laws," was Lincoln's principal problem in the first days of his Presidency.

His policy turned mainly on two principles. First, the South must see that the administration of the laws was really impartial, and that the President executed them because he had taken an oath to do so; not because the North wanted to trample on the South. This consideration explains the extreme rigour with which he enforced the Fugitive Slave Law. Here was a law involving a Constitutional obligation, which he, with his known views on Slavery, could not possibly like executing, which the North certainly did not want him to execute, which he could be executing only from a sense of obligation under the Constitution. Such an example would make it easier for moderate Southern opinion to accept the application of a similar strictness to the seceding States.

The second principle was the strict confinement of his intervention within the limits presented by his Inaugural. This was calculated to bear a double effect. On the one hand, it avoided an immediate practical challenge to the doctrine of State Sovereignty, strongly held by many in the Middle States who were nevertheless opposed to Secession. On the other, it tended, if prolonged, to render the Southern assumption of the rôle of "a people risen against tyrants" a trifle ridiculous. A freeman defying the edicts of the oppressor is a dignified spectacle: not so that of a man desperately anxious to defy edicts which the oppressor obstinately refuses to issue. It was possible for Lincoln to put the rebels in this position because under the American Constitution nine-tenths of the laws which

practically affected the citizen were State and not Federal laws. When people began to talk of protesting against tyranny by refusing to allow the tyrant to deliver their mails to them, it was obvious how near the comic the sublime defiance of the Confederates was treading. There were men in the South who fully realized the disconcerting effect of the President's moderation. "Unless you baptize the Confederacy in blood," said a leading Secessionist of Alabama to Jefferson Davis, "Alabama will be back in the Union within a month."

Unfortunately Lincoln's attitude of masterly inactivity could not be kept up for so long, for a problem, bequeathed him by his predecessor, pressed upon him, demanding action, just where action might, as he well knew, mean a match dropped in the heart of a powder-magazine. On an island in the very harbour of Charleston itself stood Fort Sumter, an arsenal held by the Federal Government. South Carolina, regarding herself as now an independent State, had sent an embassy to Washington to negotiate among other things for its surrender and transfer to the State authorities. Buchanan had met these emissaries and temporized without definitely committing himself. He had been on the point of ordering Major Anderson, who was in command of the garrison, to evacuate the fort, when under pressure from Black, his Secretary of State, he changed his mind and sent a United States packet, called Star of the West, with reinforcements for Anderson. The State authorities at Charleston fired on the ship, which, being unarmed, turned tail and returned to Washington without fulfilling its mission. The problem was now passed on to Lincoln, with this aggravation: that Anderson's troops had almost consumed their stores, could get no more from Charleston, and, if not supplied, must soon succumb to starvation. Lincoln determined to avoid the provocation of sending soldiers and arms, but to despatch a ship with food and other necessaries for the garrison. This resolution was duly notified to the authorities at Charleston.

Their anger was intense. They had counted on the evacuation of the fort, and seem to have considered that they held a pledge from Seward, who was now Secretary of State, and whose conduct in the matter seems certainly to have been somewhat devious, to that effect. The Stars and Stripes waving in their own harbour in defiance of their Edict of Secession seemed to them and to all their people a daily affront. Now that the President had intimated in the clearest possible fashion that he intended it to be permanent, they and all the inhabitants of Charleston, and indeed of South Carolina, clamoured loudly for the reduction of the fortress. In an evil hour Jefferson Davis, though warned by his ablest advisers that he was putting his side in the wrong, yielded to their pressure. Anderson was offered the choice between immediate surrender or the forcible reduction of the fortress. True to his military duty, though his own sympathies were largely Southern, he refused to surrender, and the guns of three other forts,

which the Confederates had occupied, began the bombardment of Sumter.

It lasted all day, the little fortress replying with great spirit, though with insufficient and continually diminishing means. It is an astonishing fact that in this, the first engagement of the Civil War, though much of the fort was wrecked, no life was lost on either side. At length Anderson's ammunition was exhausted, and he surrendered at discretion. The Stars and Stripes were pulled down and the new flag of the Confederacy, called the Stars and Bars, waved in its place.

The effect of the news in the North was electric. Never before and never after was it so united. One cry of anger went up from twenty million throats. Whitman, in the best of his "Drum Taps," has described the spirit in which New York received the tidings; how that great metropolitan city, which had in the past been Democrat in its votes and half Southern in its political connections--"at dead of night, at news from the South, incensed, struck with clenched fist the pavement."

It is important to the true comprehension of the motive power behind the war to remember what this "news from the South" was. It was not the news of the death of Uncle Tom or of the hanging of John Brown. It had not the remotest connection with Slavery. It was an insult offered to the flag. In the view of every Northern man and woman there was but one appropriate answer--the sentence which Barrère had passed upon the city of Lyons: "South Carolina has fired upon Old Glory: South Carolina is no more."

Lincoln, feeling the tide of the popular will below him as a good boatman feels a strong and deep current, issued an appeal for 75,000 militia from the still loyal States to defend the flag and the Union which it symbolized. The North responded with unbounded enthusiasm, and the number of volunteers easily exceeded that for which the President had asked and Congress provided. In the North-West Lincoln found a powerful ally in his old antagonist Stephen Douglas. In the dark and perplexing months which intervened between the Presidential Election and the outbreak of the Civil War, no public man had shown so pure and selfless a patriotism. Even during the election, when Southern votes were important to him and when the threat that the election of the Republican nominee would lead to secession was almost the strongest card in his hand, he had gone out of his way to declare that no possible choice of a President could justify the dismemberment of the Republic. When Lincoln was elected, he had spoken in several Southern States, urging acquiescence in the verdict and loyalty to the Union. He had taken care to be present on the platform at his rival's inauguration, and, after the affair of Sumter, the two had had a long and confidential conversation. Returning to his native West, he commenced the last of his campaigns--a campaign for no personal object but for the raising of soldiers to keep the old flag afloat. In that

campaign the "Little Giant" spent the last of his unquenchable vitality; and in the midst of it he died.

For the North and West the firing on the Stars and Stripes was the decisive issue. For Virginia and to a great extent for the other Southern States which had not yet seceded it was rather the President's demands for State troops to coerce a sister State. The doctrine of State Sovereignty was in these States generally held to be a fundamental principle of the Constitution and the essential condition of their liberties. They had no desire to leave the Union so long as it were understood that it was a union of Sovereign States. But the proposal to use force against a recalcitrant State seemed to them to upset the whole nature of the compact and reduce them to a position of vassalage. This attitude explains the second Secession, which took Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Arkansas out of the Union. It explains also why the moment the sword was drawn the opinion of these States, strongly divided up to that very moment, became very nearly unanimous. Not all their citizens, even after the virtual declaration of war against South Carolina, wanted their States to secede, but all, or nearly all, claimed that they had the right to secede if they wanted to, and therefore all, or nearly all, accepted the decision of their States even if it were contrary to their own judgment and preference.

It is important to understand this attitude, not only because it was very general, but because it was the attitude of one of the noblest sons the Republic ever bore, who yet felt compelled, regretfully but with full certitude that he did right, to draw the sword against her.

Robert Lee was already recognized as one of the most capable captains in the service of the United States. When it became obvious that General Scott, also a Virginian, but a strong Unionist, was too old to undertake the personal direction of the approaching campaign, Lee was sounded as to his readiness to take his place. He refused, not desiring to take part in the coercion of a State, and subsequently, when his own State became involved in the quarrel, resigned his commission. Later he accepted the chief command of the Virginian forces and became the most formidable of the rebel commanders. Yet with the institution, zeal for which is still so largely thought to have been the real motive of the South, he had no sympathy. Four years before the Republican triumph, he had, in his correspondence, declared Slavery to be "a moral and political evil." Nor was he a Secessionist. He deeply regretted and so far as he could, without meddling in politics--to which, in the fashion of good soldiers, he was strongly averse--opposed the action which his State eventually took. But he thought that she had the right to take it if she chose, and, the fatal choice having been made, he had no option in his own view but to throw in his lot with her and accept his portion

of whatever fate might be in store for her armies and her people.

Virginia now passed an Ordinance of Secession, and formed a military alliance with the Southern Confederacy. Later she was admitted to membership of that Confederacy, and the importance attached to her accession may be judged by the fact that the new Government at once transferred its seat to her capital, the city of Richmond. The example of Virginia was followed by the other Southern States already enumerated.

There remained four Southern States in which the issue was undecided. One of them, Delaware, caused no appreciable anxiety. She was the smallest State in the Union in population, almost the smallest in area, and though technically a Slave State, the proportion of negroes within her borders was small. It was otherwise with the three formidable States which still hung in the balance, Missouri, Kentucky, and Maryland. That these were saved to the Union was due almost wholly to the far-sighted prudence and consummate diplomacy of Abraham Lincoln.

Missouri was the easiest to hold. Geographically she was not really a Southern State at all, and, though she was a Slave State by virtue of Clay's Compromise, the institution had not there struck such deep roots as in the true South. The mass of her people were recruited from all the older States, North and South, with a considerable contingent fresh from Europe. Union feeling was strong among them and State feeling comparatively weak. Her Governor, indeed, was an ardent Southern sympathizer and returned a haughty and defiant reply to Lincoln's request for soldiers. But Francis Blair, a prominent and popular citizen, and Captain Lyon, who had raised and commanded a Union force within her borders, between them carried the State against him. He was deposed, a Unionist Governor substituted, and Missouri ranged herself definitely with the North.

The case of Maryland was much more critical, for it appeared to involve the fate of the Capital. Washington lay between Maryland and Virginia, and if Maryland joined Virginia in rebellion it could hardly be held. Yet its abandonment might entail the most serious political consequences, certainly an enormous encouragement to the seceding Confederacy, quite probably its immediate recognition by foreign Powers. At first the omens looked ugly. The populace of Baltimore, the capital of the State, were at this time pronouncedly Southern in their sentiments, and the first Massachusetts regiment sent to the relief of Washington was hustled and stoned in its streets. The soldiers fired on the mob and there were casualties on both sides. Immediately afterwards the legislature of Maryland protested against the violation of its territory. Lincoln acted with admirable sense and caution. He pointed out that the Federal armies could not

fly, and that therefore to reach Washington they must pass over the soil of Maryland; but he made no point of their going through Baltimore, and he wisely provided that further contingents should, for a time, proceed by water to Annapolis. Meanwhile he strained every nerve to reassure and conciliate Maryland with complete success. Within a month or two Federal troops could be brought to Baltimore without the smallest friction or disturbance. Later the loyalty of Maryland was, as we shall see, put to a much more critical test and passed it triumphantly.

The President naturally felt a special interest in the attitude of his native state, Kentucky. That attitude would have perplexed and embarrassed a less discerning statesman. Taking her stand on the dogma of State Sovereignty Kentucky declared herself "neutral" in the impending war between the United and Confederate States, and forbade the troops of either party to cross her territory. Lincoln could not, of course, recognize the validity of such a declaration, but he was careful to avoid any act in open violation of it. Sometimes openly and sometimes secretly he worked hard to foster, consolidate, and encourage the Union party in Kentucky. With his approval and probably at his suggestion loyalist levies were voluntarily recruited on her soil, drilled and prepared for action. But no Northern troops were sent across her frontier. He was undoubtedly working for a violation of Kentuckian "neutrality" by the other side.

Circumstances and geographical conditions helped him. The frontier between Kentucky and Tennessee was a mere degree of latitude corresponding to no militarily defensible line, nor did any such line exist to the south of it capable of covering the capital of Tennessee. On the other hand, an excellent possible line of defence existed in Southern Kentucky. The Confederate commanders were eager to seize it, but the neutrality of Kentucky forbade them. When, however, they saw the hold which Lincoln seemed to be acquiring over the counsels of the "neutrals," they felt they dared not risk further delay. Justifying their act by the presence in Kentucky of armed bodies of local Unionists, they advanced and occupied the critical points of Columbus and Bowling Green, stretching their line between them on Kentuckian soil. The act at once determined the course of the hesitating State. Torn hitherto between loyalty to the Union and loyalty to State rights, she now found the two sentiments synchronize. In the name of her violated neutrality she declared war on the Confederacy and took her place under the Stars and Stripes.

The line between the two warring confederations of States was now definitely fixed, and it only remained to try the issue between them by the arbitrament of the sword.

At first the odds might seem very heavy against the Confederacy, for its total

white population was only about five and a half million, while the States arrayed against it mustered well over twenty million. But there were certain considerations which tended to some extent to equalize the contest.

First there is the point which must always be taken into consideration when estimating the chances of war--the political objective aimed at. The objective of the North was the conquest of the South. But the objective of the South was not the conquest of the North. It was the demonstration that such conquest as the North desired was impracticable, or at least so expensive as not to be worth pursuing. That the Union, if the States that composed it remained united and determined and no other factor were introduced, could eventually defeat the Confederacy was from the first almost mathematically certain; and between complete defeat and conquest there is no such distinction as some have imagined, for a military force which has destroyed all military forces opposed to it can always impose its will unconditionally on the conquered. But that these States would remain united and determined was not certain at all. If the South put up a sufficiently energetic fight, there might arise in the dominant section a considerable body of opinion which felt that too high a price was being paid for the enterprise. Moreover, there was always the possibility and often the probability of another factor--the intervention of some foreign Power in favour of the South, as France had intervened in favour of the Americans in 1781. Such were the not unlikely chances upon which the South was gambling.

Another factor in favour of the South was preparation. South Carolina had begun raising and drilling soldiers for a probable war as soon as Lincoln was elected. The other Southern States had at various intervals followed her example. On the Northern side there had been no preparation whatever under the Buchanan régime, and Lincoln had not much chance of attempting such preparation before the war was upon him.

Further, it was probably true that, even untrained, the mass of Southerners were better fitted for war than the mass of Northerners. They were, as a community, agrarian, accustomed to an open-air life, proud of their skill in riding and shooting. The first levies of the North were drawn mostly from the urban population, and consisted largely of clerks, artisans, and men of the professional class, in whose previous modes of life there was nothing calculated to prepare them in any way for the duties of a soldier. To this general rule there was, however, an important reservation, of which the fighting at Fort Donelson and Shiloh afforded an early illustration. In dash and hardihood, and what may be called the raw materials of soldiership the South, whatever it may have had to teach the North, had little to teach the West.

In the matter of armament the South, though not exactly advantageously placed, was at the beginning not so badly off as it might well have been. Floyd, at one time Buchanan's Secretary for War, was accused, and indeed, after he had joined the Secessionists, virtually admitted having deliberately distributed the arms of the Federal Government to the advantage of the Confederacy. Certainly the outbreak of war found some well-stocked arsenals within the grasp of the rebellion. It was not until its later phases that the great advantage of the industrial North in facilities for the manufacture of armaments made itself apparent.

But the great advantage which the South possessed, and which accounts for the great measure of military success which it enjoyed, must be regarded as an accidental one. It consisted in the much greater capacity of the commanders whom the opening of the war found in control of its forces. The North had to search for competent generals by a process of trial and error, almost every trial being marked by a disaster; nor till the very end of the war did she discover the two or three men who were equal to their job. The South, on the other hand, had from the beginning the good luck to possess in its higher command more than one captain whose talents were on the highest possible level.

The Confederate Congress was summoned to meet at Richmond on July 20th. A cry went up from the North that this event should be prevented by the capture before that date of the Confederate capital. The cry was based on an insufficient appreciation of the military resources of the enemy, but it was so vehement and universal that the Government was compelled to yield to it. A considerable army had by this time been collected in Washington, and under the command of General McDowell it now advanced into Virginia, its immediate objective being Manassas Junction. The opposing force was under the Southern commander Beauregard, a Louisianian of French extraction. The other gate of Eastern Virginia, the Shenandoah Valley, was held by Joseph Johnstone, who was to be kept engaged by an aged Union general named Patterson. Johnstone, however, broke contact and got away from Patterson, joining Beauregard behind the line of a small river called Bull Run, to which the latter had retired. Here McDowell attacked, and the first real battle of the Civil War followed. For a time it wavered between the two sides, but the arrival in flank of the forces of Johnstone's rearguard, which had arrived too late for the opening of the battle, threw the Union right wing into confusion. Panic spread to the whole army, which, with the exception of a small body of regular troops, flung away its arms and fled in panic back to Washington.

Thus un auspiciously opened the campaign against the Confederacy. The impression produced on both sides was great. The North set its teeth and

determined to wipe out the disgrace at the first possible moment. The South was wild with joy. The too-prevalent impression that the "Yankees" were cowards who could not and would not fight seemed confirmed by the first practical experiment. The whole subsequent course of the war showed how false was this impression. It has been admitted that the Southerners were at first, on the whole, both better fitted and better prepared for war than their opponents. But all military history shows that what enables soldiers to face defeat and abstain from panic in the face of apparent disaster is not natural courage, but discipline. Had the fight gone the other way the Southern recruits would probably have acted exactly as did the fugitive Northerners. Indeed, as it was, at an earlier stage of the battle a panic among the Southerners was only averted by the personal exertions of Beauregard, whose horse was shot under him, and by the good conduct of the Virginian contingent and its leader. "Look at Jackson and his Virginians," cried out the Southern commander in rallying his men, "standing like a stone wall." The great captain thus acclaimed bore ever after, through his brief but splendid military career, the name of "Stonewall" Jackson.

Bull Run was fought and won in July. The only other important operations of the year consisted in the successful clearing, by the Northern commander, McClellan, of Western Virginia, where a Unionist population had seceded from the Secession. Lincoln, with bold statesmanship, recognized it as a separate State, and thus further consolidated the Unionism of the Border. In recognition of this service McClellan was appointed, in succession to McDowell, to the command of the army of the Potomac, as the force entrusted with the invasion of Eastern Virginia was called.

At the first outbreak of the war English sympathies, except perhaps for a part of the travelled and more or less cosmopolitan aristocracy which found the Southern gentleman a more socially acceptable type than the Yankee, seem to have been decidedly with the North. Public opinion in this country was strong against Slavery, and therefore tended to support the Free States in the contest of which Slavery was generally believed to be the cause. Later this feeling became a little confused. Our people did not understand the peculiar historical conditions which bound the Northern side, and were puzzled and their enthusiasm damped by the President's declaration that he had no intention of interfering with Slavery, and still more by the resolution whereby Congress specifically limited the objective of the war and the preservation of the Union, expressly guaranteeing the permanence of Slavery as a domestic institution. These things made it easy for the advocates of the South to maintain that Slavery had nothing to do with the issue--as, indeed, directly, it had not. Then came Bull Run--the sort of Jack-the-Giant-Killer incident which always and in a very human fashion excites the admiration of sportsmanlike foreigners. One may add to this the fact that the

intelligent governing class at that time generally regarded the Americans, as the Americans regarded us, as rivals and potential enemies, and would not have been sorry to see one strong power in the New World replaced by two weak ones. On the other hand, the British Government's very proper proclamation of neutrality as between the United States and the Confederacy had been somewhat unreasonably criticized in America.

Yet the general sympathy with the Free as against the Slave States might have had a better chance of surviving but for the occurrence in November, 1861, of what is called the "Trent" dispute. The Confederacy was naturally anxious to secure recognition from the Powers of Western Europe, and with this object despatched two representatives, Mason of Virginia and Slidell of South Carolina, the one accredited to the Court of St. James's and the other to the Tuileries. They took passage to Europe in a British ship called the Trent. The United States cruiser San Jacinto, commanded by Captain Wilkes of the American Navy, overhauled this vessel, searched it and seized and carried off the two Confederate envoys.

The act was certainly a breach of international law; but that was almost the smallest part of its irritant effect. In every detail it was calculated to outrage British sentiment. It was an affront offered to us on our own traditional element--the sea. It was also a blow offered to our traditional pride as impartial protectors of political exiles of all kind. The Times--in those days a responsible and influential organ of opinion--said quite truly that the indignation felt here had nothing to do with approval of the rebellion; that it would have been just as strong if, instead of Mason and Slidell, the victims had been two of their own Negro slaves. Indeed, for us there were no longer Northern and Southern sympathizers: there were only Englishmen indignant at an insult openly offered to the Union Jack. Northerners might have understood us better, and been less angry at our attitude, if they had remembered how they themselves had felt when the guns opened on Sumter.

The evil was aggravated by the triumphant rejoicings with which the North celebrated the capture and by the complicity of responsible and even official persons in the honours showered on Captain Wilkes. Seward, who had a wild idea that a foreign quarrel would help to heal domestic dissensions, was somewhat disposed to defend the capture. But the eminently just mind of Lincoln quickly saw that it could not be defended, while his prudence perceived the folly of playing the Southern game by forcing England to recognize the Confederacy. Mason and Slidell were returned, and the incident as a diplomatic incident was closed. But it had its part in breeding in these islands a certain antagonism to the Government at Washington, and thus encouraging the growing tendency to

sympathize with the South.

With the opening of the new year the North was cheered by a signal and very important success. In the course of February Fort Henry and Fort Donelson, essential strategic points on the front which the Confederate invaders had stretched across Southern Kentucky, were captured by General Ulysses Grant, in command of a Western army. The Confederate forces were compelled to a general retirement, sacrificing the defensive line for the sake of which they had turned the "neutral" border State into an enemy, uncovering the whole of Western Tennessee, including the capital of Nashville, and also yielding the Upper Mississippi. The importance of the latter gain--for the Mississippi, once mastered, would cut the Confederacy in two--was clearly apparent to Beauregard, who at once marched northward and attacked Grant at Shiloh. The battle was indecisive, but in its military effect it was a success for the North. Grant was compelled to abandon the ground upon which his army stood, but he kept all the fruits of his recent campaign.

Another incident, not only picturesque in itself but of great importance in the history of naval war, marks the opening months of 1862. After the failure of the first attempt to take Richmond by a coup de main the war became in its essence a siege of the Confederacy. To give it this character, however, one thing was essential--the control of the sea by the Union forces. The regular United States navy--unlike the regular army, which was divided--was fully under the control of the Federal Government, and was able to blockade the Southern ports. Davis had attempted to meet this menace by issuing letters of marque to privateers; but this could be little more than an irritant to the dominant power. It so happened, however, that a discovery had recently been made which was destined to revolutionize the whole character of naval war. Experiments in the steel-plating of ships had already been made in England and in France, but the first war vessel so fitted for practical use was produced by the Southern Confederacy--the celebrated Merrimac. One fine day she steamed into Hampton Roads under the guns of the United States fleet and proceeded to sink ship after ship, the heavy round shot leaping off her like peas. It was a perilous moment, but the Union Government had only been a day behind in perfecting the same experiment. Next day the Monitor arrived on the scene, and the famous duel between the first two ironclads ever constructed commenced. Each proved invulnerable to the other, for neither side had yet constructed pieces capable of piercing protection, but the victory was so far with the North that the hope that the Confederacy might obtain, by one bold and inventive stroke, the mastery of the sea was for the moment at an end.

Meanwhile all eyes were fixed on McClellan, who was busy turning the mob that

had fled from Bull Run into an army. His work of organization and discipline was by common consent admirable; yet when the time came when he might be expected to take the field, that defect in his quality as a commander showed itself which was to pursue him throughout his campaigns. He was extravagantly over-cautious. His unwillingness to fight, combined with the energy he put into bringing the army into an efficient state and gaining influence over its officers and men, gave rise to the wildest rumours and charges. It was suggested that he intended to use the force he was forming, not against Richmond but against Washington; to seize supreme power by military force and reconcile the warring States under the shadow of his sword. It is certain that there was no kind of foundation for such suspicions. He was a perfectly patriotic and loyal soldier who studied his profession diligently. Perhaps he had studied it too diligently. He seems to have resolved never to risk an engagement unless under conditions which according to the text-books should assure victory. Ideal conditions of this sort were not likely to occur often in real war, especially when waged against such an antagonist as Robert Lee.

McClellan remained in front of the Confederate positions throughout the winter and early spring. In reply to urgent appeals from Washington he declared the position of the enemy to be impregnable, and grossly exaggerated his numbers. When at last, at the beginning of March, he was induced to move forward, he found that the enemy had slipped away, leaving behind, as if in mockery, a large number of dummy wooden guns which had helped to impress McClellan with the hopelessness of assailing his adversaries.

The wooden guns, however little damage they could do to the Federal army, did a good deal of damage to the reputation of the Federal commander. Lincoln, though pressed to replace him, refused to do so, having no one obviously better to put in his room, and knowing that the outcry against him was partly political--for McClellan was a Democrat. The general now undertook the execution of a plan of his own for the reduction of Richmond. Leaving McDowell on the Potomac, he transported the greater part of his force by water and effected a landing on the peninsula of Yorktown, where some eighty years before Cornwallis had surrendered to Washington and Rochambeau.

The plan was not a bad one, but the general showed the same lack of enterprise which had made possible the escape of Johnstone. It is probable that if he had struck at once at the force opposed to him, he could have destroyed it and marched to Richmond almost unopposed.

Instead of striking at a vulnerable point he sat down in a methodical fashion to besiege Yorktown. While he was waiting for the reinforcements he had demanded,

the garrison got away as Johnstone had done from before Manassas, and an attempt to push forward resulted in the defeat of his lieutenant, Hooker, at Williamsburg.

McDowell, who was at Fredericksburg, was ordered to join and reinforce McClellan, but the junction was never made, for at the moment Jackson took the field and effected one of the most brilliant exploits of the war. The Union troops in the Shenandoah Valley were much more numerous than the force which Jackson had at his disposal, but they were scattered at various points, and by a series of incalculably rapid movements the Southern captain attacked and overwhelmed each in turn. The alarm at Washington was great, and McDowell hastened to cut him off, only to discover that Jackson had slipped past him and was back in his own country. Meanwhile McClellan, left without the reinforcements he had expected, was attacked by Lee and beaten back in seven days' consecutive fighting right to Harrison's Landing, where he could only entrench himself and stand on the defensive. Richmond was as far off as ever.

One piece of good news, however, reached Washington at about this time, and once again it came from the West. Towards the end of April Farragut, the American admiral, captured the city of New Orleans. The event was justly thought to be of great importance, for Grant already dominated the Upper Mississippi, and if he could join hands with a Union force operating from the mouth of the great river, the Confederacy would be cut in two.

Perhaps the contrast between the good fortune which had attended the Federal arms in the West and the failure of the campaign in Eastern Virginia was responsible for the appointment of a general taken from the Western theatre of war to command the army of the Potomac. Lincoln, having supported McClellan as long as he could, was now obliged to abandon his cause, and General Pope was appointed to supreme command of the campaign in Eastern Virginia.

The change brought no better fortune; indeed, it was the prelude to a disaster worse than any that McClellan had suffered. Pope advanced by the route of the original invasion, and reached exactly the point where McDowell's army had been routed. Here he paused and waited. While he lay there Jackson made another of his daring raids, got between him and Washington and cut his communications, while Lee fell upon him and utterly destroyed his army in the second battle of Bull Run.

Lee's victory left him in full possession of the initiative, with no effective force immediately before him and with a choice of objectives. It was believed by many that he would use his opportunity to attack Washington. But he wisely refrained

from such an attempt. Washington was guarded by a strong garrison, and its defences had been carefully prepared. To take it would involve at least something like a siege, and while he was reducing it the North would have the breathing space it needed to rally its still unexhausted powers. He proposed to himself an alternative, which, if he had been right in his estimate of the political factors, would have given him Washington and much more, and probably decided the war in favour of the Confederacy. He crossed the Potomac and led his army into Maryland.

The stroke was as much political as military in its character. Maryland was a Southern State. There was a sort of traditional sisterhood between her and Virginia. Though she had not seceded, it was thought that her sympathies must be with the South. The attack on the Union troops in Baltimore at the beginning of the war had seemed strong confirmation of this belief. The general impression in the South, which the Southern general probably shared, was that Maryland was at heart Secessionist, and that a true expression of her will was prevented only by force. The natural inference was that when a victorious Southern commander appeared within her borders, the people would rally to him as one man, Washington would be cut off from the North, the President captured, the Confederacy recognized by the European Powers, and the North would hardly continue the hopeless struggle. This idea was embodied in a fierce war-song which had recently become popular throughout the Confederate States and was caught up by Lee's soldiers on their historic march. It began--

"The despot's heel is on thy shore, Maryland! My Maryland!"

And it ended--

"She is not dead, nor deaf, nor dumb! Hurrah! She spurns the Yankee scum!
She breathes! She lives! She'll come! she'll come! Maryland! My Maryland!"

But Maryland did not come. The whole political conception which underlay Lee's move was false. It may seem curious that those who, when everything seemed to be in favour of the North, had stoned Union soldiers in the streets of the State capital, should not have moved a finger when a great Southern soldier came among them with the glamour of victory around him and proclaimed himself their liberator. Yet so it proved. The probable explanation is that, Maryland lying under the shadow of the capital, which was built for the most part on her territory, Lincoln could deal with her people directly. And wherever he could get men face to face and show the manner of man he was, he could persuade. Maryland was familiar with "the despot" and did not find his "heel" at all intolerable. The image of the horrible hairy Abolitionist gloating constantly over the thought of a

massacre of Southerners by Negroes, which did duty for a portrait of Lincoln in the South, was not convincing to Marylanders, who knew the man himself and found him a kindly, shrewd, and humorous man of the world, with much in his person and character that recalled his Southern origin, who enforced the law with strict impartiality wherever his power extended, and who, above all, punctiliously returned any fugitive slaves that might seek refuge in the District of Columbia.

Lee issued a dignified and persuasive proclamation in which he declared that he came among the people of Maryland as a friend and liberator. But Maryland showed no desire to be liberated. He and his soldiers were everywhere coldly received. Hardly a volunteer joined them. In many towns Union flags were flaunted in their faces--a fact upon which is based the fictitious story of Barbara Fritchie.

The political failure of the move led to considerable military embarrassments. Lee met with no defeat in arms, but his difficulties increased day by day.

Believing that he would be operating among a friendly population he had given less thought than he would otherwise have done to the problem of supplies, supposing that he could obtain all he needed from the country. That problem now became acute, for the Marylanders refused to accept the Confederate paper, which was all he had to tender in payment, and the fact that he professed to be their liberator actually made his position more difficult, for he could not without sacrificing a moral asset treat them avowedly as an enemy people. He found himself compelled to send Jackson back to hold Harper's Ferry lest his communications might be endangered. Later he learnt that McClellan, who had been restored to the chief command after Pope's defeat, was moving to cut off his retreat. He hastened back towards his base, and the two armies met by Antietam Creek.

Antietam was not really a Union victory. It was followed by the retirement of Lee into Virginia, but it is certain that such retirement had been intended by him from the beginning--was indeed his objective. The objective of McClellan was, or should have been, the destruction of the Confederate army, and this was not achieved. Yet, as marking the end of the Southern commander's undoubted failure in Maryland, it offered enough of the appearance of a victory to justify in Lincoln's judgment an executive act upon which he had determined some months earlier, but which he thought would have a better effect coming after a military success than in time of military weakness and peril.

We have seen that both the President and Congress had been careful to insist that the war was not undertaken on behalf of the Negroes. Yet the events of the

war had forced the problem of the Negro into prominence. Fugitive slaves from the rebel States took refuge with the Union armies, and the question of what should be done with them was forced on the Government. Lincoln knew that in this matter he must move with the utmost caution. When in the early days of the war, Frémont, who had been appointed to military commander in Missouri, where he showed an utter unfitness, both intellectual and moral, for his place, proclaimed on his own responsibility the emancipation of the slaves of "disloyal" owners, his headstrong vanity would probably have thrown both Missouri and Kentucky into the arms of the Confederacy if the President had not promptly disavowed him. Later he disavowed a similar proclamation by General Hunter. When a deputation of ministers of religion from Chicago urged on him the desirability of immediate action against Slavery, he met them with a reply the opening passage of which is one of the world's masterpieces of irony. When Horace Greeley backed the same appeal with his "Prayer of Twenty Millions," Lincoln in a brief letter summarized his policy with his usual lucidity and force.

"My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy Slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do about Slavery and the coloured race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union."

At the time he wrote these words Lincoln had already decided on a policy of military emancipation in the rebel States. He doubtless wrote them with an eye of the possible effects of that policy. He wished the Northern Democrats and the Unionists of Border States to understand that his action was based upon considerations of military expediency and in no way upon his personal disapproval of Slavery, of which at the same time he made no recantation. On the military ground he had a strong case. If, as the South maintained, the slave was simply a piece of property, then the slave of a rebel was a piece of enemy property--and enemy property used or usable for purposes of war. To confiscate enemy property which may be of military use was a practice as old as war itself. The same principle which justified the North in destroying a Southern cotton crop or tearing up the Southern railways justified the emancipation of Negroes within the bounds of the Southern Confederacy. In consonance with this principle Lincoln issued on September 22nd a proclamation declaring slaves free as from January 1, 1863, in such districts as the President should on that date specify as being in rebellion against the Federal Government. Thus a chance was deliberately left open for any State, or part of a State, to save its slaves by submission. At the same time Lincoln renewed the strenuous efforts which he had already made more than once to induce the Slave States which remained in

the Union to consent voluntarily to some scheme of gradual and compensated emancipation.

One effect of the Emancipation Proclamation upon which Lincoln had calculated was the approval of the civilized world and especially of England. This was at that moment of the more importance because the growing tendency of Englishmen to sympathize with the South, which was largely the product of Jackson's daring and picturesque exploits, had already produced a series of incidents which nearly involved the two nations in war. The chief of these was the matter of the Alabama. This cruiser was built and fitted up in the dockyards of Liverpool by the British firm of Laird. She was intended, as the contractors of course knew, for the service of the Confederacy, and, when completed, she took to the sea under pretext of a trial trip, in spite of the protests of the representative of the American Republic. The order to detain her arrived too late, and she reached a Southern port, whence she issued to become a terror to the commerce of the United States. That the fitting up of such a vessel, if carried out with the complicity of the Government, was a gross breach of neutrality is unquestionable. That the Government of Lord Russell connived at the escape of the Alabama, well knowing her purpose and character, though generally believed in America at the time, is most unlikely. That the truth was known to the authorities at Liverpool, where Southern sympathies were especially strong, is on the other hand almost certain, and these authorities must be held mainly responsible for misleading the Government and so preventing compliance with the quite proper demands of Adams, the American Ambassador. Finally, an International Court found that Great Britain had not shown "reasonable care" in fulfilling her obligations, and in this verdict a fair-minded student of the facts will acquiesce. At a later date we paid to the United States a heavy sum as compensation for the depredations of the Alabama.

Meanwhile, neither Antietam nor the Proclamation appeared to bring any luck to the Union armies in the field. McClellan showed his customary over-caution in allowing Lee to escape unhammered; once more he was superseded, and once more his supersession only replaced inaction by disaster. Hooker, attempting an invasion of Virginia, got caught in the tangled forest area called "the Wilderness." Jackson rode round him, cutting his communications and so forcing him to fight, and Lee beat him soundly at Chancellorsville. The battle was, however, won at a heavy cost to the Confederacy, for towards the end of the day the mistake of a picket caused the death by a Southern bullet of the most brilliant, if not the greatest, of Southern captains. As to what that loss meant we have the testimony of his chief and comrade-in-arms. "If I had had Jackson with me," said Lee after Gettysburg, "I should have won a complete victory." This, however, belongs to a later period. Burnside, succeeding Hooker, met at Lee's hands with an even more crushing defeat at Fredericksburg.

And now, as a result of these Southern successes, began to become dangerous that factor on which the South had counted from the first--the increasing weariness and division of the North. I have tried in these pages to put fairly the case for the defeated side in the Civil War. But one can have a reasonable understanding of and even sympathy with the South without having any sympathy to waste on those who in the North were called "Copperheads." A Northerner might, indeed, honestly think the Southern cause just and coercion of the seceding States immoral. But if so he should have been opposed to such coercion from the first. The Confederate case was in no way morally stronger in 1863 than it had been in 1861. If, therefore, a man had been in favour of coercion in 1861--as practically all Northerners were--his weakening two years later could not point to an unwillingness to do injustice, but only to the operation of fear or fatigue as deterrents from action believed to be just. Moreover, the ordinary "Copperhead" position was so plainly in contradiction of known facts that it must be pronounced either imbecile or dishonest. If these men had urged the acceptance of disunion as an accomplished fact, a case might be made out for them. But they generally professed the strongest desire to restore the Union, accompanied by vehement professions of the belief that this could in some fashion be achieved by "negotiation." The folly of such a supposition was patent. The Confederacy was in arms for the one specific purpose of separating itself from the Union, and so far its appeal to arms had been on the whole successful. That it would give up the single object for which it was fighting for any other reason than military defeat was, on the face of it, quite insanely unlikely; and, as might have been expected, the explicit declarations of Davis and all the other Confederate leaders were at this time uniformly to the effect that peace could be had by the recognition of Southern independence and in no other fashion. The "Copperheads," however, seem to have suffered from that amazing illusion which we have learnt in recent times to associate with the Russian Bolsheviks and their admirers in other countries--the illusion that if one side leaves off fighting the other side will immediately do the same, though all the objects for which it ever wanted to fight are unachieved. They persisted in maintaining that in some mysterious fashion the President's "ambition" was standing between the country and a peace based on reunion. The same folly was put forward by Greeley, perhaps the most consistently wrong-headed of American public men: in him it was the more absurd since on the one issue, other than that of union or separation, which offered any possible material for a compromise, that of Slavery, he was professedly against all compromise, and blamed the President for attempting any.

Little as can be said for the "Copperhead" temper, its spread in the Northern States during the second year of the war was a serious menace to the Union

cause. It showed itself in the Congressional elections, when the Government's majority was saved only by the loyalty of the Border Slave States, whose support Lincoln had been at pains to conciliate in the face of so much difficulty and misunderstanding. It showed itself in the increased activity of pacifist agitators, of whom the notorious Vallandigham may be taken as a type.

Lincoln met the danger in two fashions. He met the arguments and appeals of the "Copperheads" with unanswerable logic and with that lucidity of thought and expression of which he was a master. One pronouncement of his is worth quoting, and one wishes that it could have been reproduced everywhere at the time of the ridiculous Stockholm project. "Suppose refugees from the South and peace men of the North get together and frame and proclaim a compromise embracing a restoration of the Union: in what way can that compromise be used to keep Lee's army out of Pennsylvania? Meade's army can keep Lee's out of Pennsylvania, and, I think, can ultimately drive it out of existence. But no paper compromise, to which the controllers of Lee's army are not agreed, can at all affect that army." Reasoning could not be more conclusive; but Lincoln did not stop at reasoning. Now was to be shown how powerful an instrument of authority the Jacksonian revolution had created in the popular elective Presidency. Perhaps no single man ever exercised so much direct personal power as did Abraham Lincoln during those four years of Civil War. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended by executive decree, and those whose action was thought a hindrance to military success were arrested in shoals by the orders of Stanton, the new energetic War Secretary, a Jacksonian Democrat whom Lincoln had put in the place of an incompetent Republican, though he had served under Buchanan and supported Breckinridge. The constitutional justification of these acts was widely challenged, but the people in the main supported the Executive.

Lincoln, like Jackson, understood the populace and knew just how to appeal to them. "Must I shoot a simple-minded boy for deserting, and spare the wily agitator whose words induce him to desert?" Vallandigham himself met a measure of justice characteristic of the President's humour and almost recalling the jurisprudence of Sir W. S. Gilbert's Mikado. Originally condemned to detention in a fortress, his sentence was commuted by Lincoln to banishment, and he was conducted by the President's orders across the army lines and dumped on the Confederacy! He did not stay there long. The Southerners had doubtless some reason to be grateful to him; but they cannot possibly have liked him. With their own Vallandighams they had an even shorter way.

The same sort of war-weariness was perhaps a contributory cause of an even more serious episode--the Draft Riots of New York City. Here, however, a special and much more legitimate ground of protest was involved. The Confederacy had

long before imposed Conscription upon the youth of the South. It was imperative that the North should do the same, and, though the constitutional power of the Federal Government to make such a call was questioned, its moral right to do so seems to me unquestionable, for if the common Government has not the right in the last resort to call upon all citizens to defend its own existence, it is difficult to see what rights it can possess. Unfortunately, Congress associated with this just claim a provision for which there was plenty of historical precedent but no justification in that democratic theory upon which the American Commonwealth was built. It provided that a man whose name had been drawn could, if he chose, pay a substitute to serve in his stead. This was obviously a privilege accorded to mere wealth, odious to the morals of the Republic and especially odious to the very democratic populace of New York. The drawing of the names was there interrupted by violence, and for some days the city was virtually in the hands of the insurgents. The popular anger was complicated by a long-standing racial feud between the Irish and the Negroes, and a good many lynchings took place. At last order was restored by the police, who used to restore it a violence as savage as that of the crowd they were suppressing.

We must now turn back to the military operations. Lee had once more broken through, and was able to choose the point where a sortie might most effectually be made. He resolved this time to strike directly at the North itself, and crossing a strip of Maryland he invaded Pennsylvania, his ultimate objective being probably the great bridge over the Susquehanna at Harrisburg, the destruction of which would seriously hamper communication between North and West. At first he met with no opposition, but a Federal army under Meade started in pursuit of him and caught him up at Gettysburg. In the battle which followed, as at Valmy, each side had its back to its own territory. The invader, though inferior in numbers, was obliged by the conditions of the struggle to take the offensive. The main feature of the fighting was the charge and repulse of Pickett's Brigade. Both sides stood appalling losses with magnificent steadiness. The Union troops maintained their ground in spite of all that Southern valour could do to dislodge them. It is generally thought that if Meade had followed up his success by a vigorous offensive Lee's army might have been destroyed. As things were, having failed in its purpose of breaking the ring that held the Confederacy, it got back into Virginia unbroken and almost unpunished.

Gettysburg is generally considered as the turning-point of the war, though perhaps from a purely military point of view more significance ought to be attached to another success which almost exactly synchronized with it. The same 4th of July whereon the North learnt of Lee's failure brought news of the capture of Vicksburg by Grant. This meant that the whole course of the Mississippi was now in Federal hands, and made possible an invasion of the Confederacy from

the West such as ultimately effected its overthrow.

Lincoln, whose judgment in such matters was exceptionally keen for a civilian, had long had his eye on Grant. He had noted his successes and his failures, and he had noted especially in him the quality which he could not find in McClellan or in Meade--a boldness of plan, a readiness to take risks, and above all a disposition to press a success vigorously home even at a heavy sacrifice. "I can't spare that man; he fights," he had said when some clamoured for Grant's recall after Shiloh. For those who warned him that Grant was given to heavy drinking he had an even more characteristic reply: "I wish I knew what whisky he drinks: I would send a cask to some of the other generals."

Meade's hesitation after Gettysburg and Grant's achievement at Vicksburg between them decided him. Grant was now appointed to supreme command of all the armies of the Union.

Ulysses S. Grant stands out in history as one of those men to whom a uniform seems to be salvation. As a young man he had fought with credit in the Mexican war; later he had left the army, and seemingly gone to the dogs. He took to drink. He lost all his employments. He became to all appearances an incorrigible waster, a rolling stone, a man whom his old friends crossed the road to avoid because a meeting with him always meant an attempt to borrow money.

Then came the war, and Grant grasped--as such broken men often do--at the chance of a new start. Not without hesitation, he was entrusted with a subordinate command in the West, and almost at once he justified those who had been ready to give him a trial by his brilliant share in the capture of Fort Donelson. From that moment he was a new man, repeatedly displaying not only the soldierly qualities of iron courage and a thorough grasp of the practice of fighting, but moral qualities of a high order, a splendid tenacity in disaster and hope deferred, and in victory a noble magnanimity towards the conquered. One wishes that the story could end there. But it must, unfortunately, be added that when at last he laid aside his sword he seemed to lay aside all that was best in him with it, while the weaknesses of character which were so conspicuous in Mr. Ulysses Grant, and which seemed so completely bled out of General Grant, made many a startling and disastrous reappearance in President Grant.

Grant arrived at Washington and saw the President for the first time. The Western campaign he left in the hands of two of his ablest lieutenants--Sherman, perhaps in truth the greatest soldier that appeared on the Northern side, and Thomas, a Virginian Unionist who had left his State at the call of his country. There was much work for them to do, for while the capture of Vicksburg and its

consequences gave them the Mississippi, the first attempt to invade from that side under Rosecrans had suffered defeat in the bloody battle of the Chickamauga. Sherman and Thomas resolved to reverse this unfavourable decision and attacked at the same crucial point. An action lasting four days and full of picturesque episodes gave them the victory which was the starting-point of all that followed. To that action belongs the strange fight of Look Out Mountain fought "above the clouds" by men who could not see the wide terrain for the mastery of which they were contending, and the marvellous charge of the Westerners up Missionary Ridge, one of those cases where soldiers, raised above themselves and acting without orders, have achieved a feat which their commander had dismissed as impossible. To the whole action is given the name of the Battle of Chattanooga, and its effect was to give Sherman the base he needed from which to strike at the heart of the Confederacy.

Grant in Virginia was less successful. An examination of his campaign will leave the impression that, however superior he was to previous Northern commanders in energy, as a strategist he was no match for Lee. The Southern general, with inferior forces, captured the initiative and did what he chose with him, caught him in the Wilderness as he had previously caught Hooker, and kept him there on ground which gave every advantage to the Confederate forces, who knew every inch of it, where Grant's superiority in numbers could not be brought fully into play, and where his even greater superiority in artillery was completely neutralized. At the end of a week's hard fighting, Grant had gained no advantage, while the Northern losses were appalling--as great as the total original numbers of the enemy that inflicted them. At Spottsylvania, where Grant attempted a flanking movement, the same tactics were pursued with the same success, while a final attempt of the Northern general at a frontal assault ended in a costly defeat.

In the darkest hour of this campaign Grant had told the Government at Washington that he would "fight it out on that line if it took all the summer." It was, however, on another line that the issue was being fought out and decided against the Confederacy. From Chattanooga Sherman moved on Atlanta, the capital of Georgia. Joseph Johnstone disputed every step of the advance, making it as costly as possible, but wisely refused to risk his numerically inferior army in a general engagement. He fell back slowly, making a stand here and there, till the Northern general stood before Atlanta.

It was at this moment that the leaders of the Confederacy would have acted wisely in proposing terms of peace. Their armies were still in being, and could even boast conspicuous and recent successes. If the war went on it would probably be many months before the end came, while the North was bitterly

weary of the slaughter and would not tolerate the refusal of reasonable settlement. Yet, if the war went on, the end could no longer be in doubt. Had that golden moment been seized, the seceding States might have re-entered the Union almost on their own terms. Certainly they could have avoided the abasement and humiliation which was to come upon them as the consequence of continuing their resistance till surrender had to be unconditional. It might seem at first that Emancipation Proclamation had introduced an additional obstacle to accommodation. But this was largely neutralized by the fact that every one, including Jefferson Davis himself, recognized that Slavery had been effectively destroyed by the war and could never be revived, even were the South victorious. The acceptance by the Confederacy of a policy suggested by Lee, whereby Negroes were to be enlisted as soldiers and freed on enlistment, clinched this finally. On the other hand, Lincoln let it be clearly understood that if the Union could be restored by consent he was prepared to advocate the compensation of Southern owners for the loss of their slaves. The blame for the failure to take advantage of this moment must rest mainly on Davis. It was he who refused to listen to any terms save the recognition of Southern independence; and this attitude doomed the tentative negotiations entered into at Hampton Roads to failure.

Meanwhile, in the North, Lincoln was chosen President for a second term. At one time his chances had looked gloomy enough. The Democratic Party had astutely chosen General McClellan as its candidate. His personal popularity with the troops, and the suggestion that he was an honest soldier ill-used by civilian politicians, might well gain him much support in the armies, for whose voting special provision had been made, while among the civil population he might expect the support of all who, for one reason or another, were discontented with the Government. At the same time the extreme Anti-Slavery wing of the Republican Party, alienated by the diplomacy of the President in dealing with the Border States, and by the moderation of his views concerning the Negro and his future, put forward another displaced general, Frémont. But in the end circumstances and the confidence which his statesmanship had created combined to give Lincoln something like a walk-over. The Democratic Party got into the hands of the "Copperheads" at the very moment when facts were giving the lie to the "Copperhead" thesis. Its platform described the course of the war as "four years of failure," and its issue as hopeless, while before the voting began even a layman could see that the Confederacy was, from the military point of view, on its last legs. The War Democrats joined hands with the Republicans, and the alliance was sealed by the selection of Andrew Johnson, a Jacksonian Democrat from Tennessee, as candidate for the Vice-Presidency. The Radical Republicans began to discover how strong a hold Lincoln had gained on the public mind in the North, and to see that by pressing their candidate they would only expose the weakness of their faction. Frémont was withdrawn and McClellan

easily defeated. A curious error has been constantly repeated in print in this country to the effect that Lincoln was saved only by the votes of the army. There is no shadow of foundation for this statement. The proportion of his supporters among the soldiers was not much greater than among the civil population. But in both it was overwhelming.

Meanwhile Atlanta had fallen, and Davis had unwisely relieved Johnstone of his command. It was now that Sherman determined on the bold scheme which mainly secured the ultimate victory of the North. Cutting himself loose from his base and abandoning all means of communication with the North, he advanced into the country of the enemy, living on it and laying it waste as he passed. For a month his Government had no news of him. Ultimately he reached the sea at Savannah, and was able to tell his supporters that he had made a desert in the rear of the main Confederate armies. Thence he turned again, traversed South Carolina, and appeared, so to speak, on the flank of the main Confederate forces which were holding Grant.

The ethics of Sherman's famous March to the Sea have been much debated. He was certainly justified by the laws of war in destroying the military resources of the Confederacy, and it does not seem that more than this was anywhere done by his orders. There was a good deal of promiscuous looting by his troops, and still more by camp followers and by the Negroes who, somewhat to his annoyance, attached themselves to his columns. The march through South Carolina was the episode marked by the harshest conduct, for officers and men had not forgotten Sumter, and regarded the devastation of that State as a just measure of patriotic vengeance on the only begetter of the rebellion; but the burning of Columbus seems to have been an accident, for which at least Sherman himself was not responsible. It is fair to him to add that in the very few cases--less than half a dozen in all--where a charge of rape or murder can be brought home, the offender was punished with death.

As a military stroke the March to the Sea was decisive. One sees its consequences at once in the events of the Virginian campaign. Lee had suffered no military defeat; indeed, the balance of military success, so far as concerned the army directly opposed to him, was in his favour. Sheridan's campaign in the Shenandoah Valley had delighted the North as much as Jackson's earlier exploits in the same region had delighted the South; but its direct military effect was not great. From the moment, however, of Sherman's successful completion of his march, the problem of the Southern general becomes wholly different. It is no longer whether he can defeat the enemy, but whether he can save his army. He determined to abandon Richmond, and effect, if possible, a union with Johnstone, who was again watching and checking Sherman.

Did space permit, it would be a noble task to chronicle the last wonderful fight of the Lion of the South; how, with an exhausted and continually diminishing army, he still proved how much he was to be feared; how he turned on Sheridan and beat him, checked Grant and broke away again only to find his path barred by another Union army.

At Appomattox Court House the end came. The lion was trapped and caught at last. There was nothing for it but to make the best terms he could for his men. The two generals met. Both rose to the nobility of the occasion. Lee had never been anything but great, and Grant was never so great again. The terms accorded to the vanquished were generous and honourable to the utmost limit of the victor's authority. "This will have the happiest effect on my people," said Lee, in shaking hands with his conqueror. They talked a little of old times at West Point, where they had studied together, and parted. Lee rode away to his men and addressed them: "We have fought through this war together. I did my best for you." With these few words, worth the whole two volumes of Jefferson Davis's rather tiresome apologetics, one of the purest, bravest, and most chivalrous figures among those who have followed the noble profession of arms rides out of history.