

GENERAL SHERMAN

In the Last Year of
THE CIVIL WAR



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Last Year *of* the
Civil War

An Address delivered at the
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of the Army of the Tennessee
at St. Louis, Missouri

By

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Robert Grier Cooke
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General Sherman *in* the Last Year *of* the Civil War

WITHOUT pretensions to oratory and without the ability to describe from knowledge experiences or campaigns in that great war, whose memories it is the object of these reunions to perpetuate, I am at a disadvantage compared with those who have delivered the addresses upon previous occasions. Thus handicapped, I have contented myself with preparing a condensed narrative of the acts and operations of my father, General Wm. Tecumseh Sherman, during the last year of the war, in which I have attempted to explain his opinions and motives in the light of tradition and of information derived from private or unpublished papers. I can present little that is new, perhaps nothing new of historical importance, yet I hope that what I have to present may prove not altogether uninteresting.

When in February, 1864, General Grant was appointed to the command of all the Union armies and went East to direct personally the operations of the Army of the Potomac in Virginia, he left my father, General Sherman, to succeed him in command of the Military Division of the Mississippi, which comprised, roughly, all the territory between the Alleghany Mountains, the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers and the Gulf. The number of soldiers borne on its rolls mounted high into the hundreds of thousands; but many of them were sick or at home on furlough, or were recruits or trainmen or teamsters. Of the remainder

a large part were distributed in garrisons along the lines of the Tennessee and Mississippi Rivers and of the railroads South from Nashville. There remained for offensive operations about 100,000 men, consisting of the united Armies of the Tennessee, the Cumberland and the Ohio, who were in winter quarters around Chattanooga.

General Grant promptly formulated his plan for the coming campaign. It provided for the Army of the Potomac, under Grant personally, to attack Lee and Richmond; for Sherman's army to take Atlanta, keeping the opposing Confederate army, however, as his main objective all the while; and for Banks' army, then up the Red River, to seize some seaport, either Savannah or Mobile, and move inland some hundred miles, opening a railroad from the coast. Atlanta being taken and Banks' army pushed inland towards him from the coast, my father was then to move out from Atlanta to join Banks, still holding onto and extending his railroad, and thus again divide and sever the Confederacy by a second line of occupation, as it was already divided farther West by the occupation of the line of the Mississippi. Based upon this new line of occupation, with two lines of supplies, one from Nashville and the North and the other from Savannah or Mobile and the sea, his army was still to operate against the Confederate forces of the Middle West.

In pursuance of this plan, in April, 1864, Sherman's army moved out from Chattanooga against the Confederate army, numbering at first about 45,000 but soon reinforced to 60,000 men, then commanded by General Joseph E. Johnston; and, after five months of desperate and continuous fighting and a loss of over 30,000 killed, wounded and missing, it captured Atlanta. This campaign was replete with technical military features, which I am incompetent to describe, but with which many of you are sufficiently familiar. I can, however, tell you a story that gives some idea of its character.

When I was a small boy I was generally told that the Rebels under Johnston, ran away. At first I took this literally; but later, some doubts arising in my mind, I asked my father if they really ran away. "Yes," he answered. "But," I again inquired, "did they really run, or did they walk?" "Oh, that is what you mean, is it," he replied, "why, they walked, and they walked almighty slow, too."

As the result of this campaign not only was Atlanta, the most important railroad center and workshop in the South, captured; but also in the final struggles for it the Confederate army, then under Hood, was badly demoralized and heavily reduced in numbers; while the Union losses had been replenished by reënlistments. This was a substantial triumph, and with Lincoln's reëlection, to which it materially contributed, everything at first glance seemed bright and promising. But in reality, the future remained dark and uncertain. Banks' former army was scattered and otherwise engaged, and although Admiral Farragut had taken the forts of Mobile Bay there was no Union army either at Mobile, Savannah or any other convenient point on the coast, strong enough to coöperate with General Sherman as General Grant had planned. Therefore he abandoned his plan for a foreward movement from Atlanta; and, instead, he ordered my father to go after Hood's army and destroy it. There was little doubt as to his ability to destroy it if he could catch it. But could he catch it? That was an open question. Hood's army lay some miles South of Atlanta, and my father prepared to start after it. But having gained in mobility by its decrease in size, it took the initiative itself, and—moving practically without baggage and through a friendly and familiar country—it marched to the northward right around the Union army; and, in spite of a lively pursuit, would have effected an almost fatal lodgment on and destruction of the railway that brought our supplies from the North had it not been

for the heroic defence of the fort of Allatoona. It would, I am sure, interest some of you very much could I read you several letters written by my father to my mother at this time. They show how extreme was his exasperation caused by this reverse. He hopelessly damned his cavalry;—declared that it got in the way of his infantry. (This was, of course, only an expression of impatience and not his deliberate judgment.) His artillery and wagon trains, also, he characterized as nuisances. And the way he wrote of some staff officers, headquarters' clerks and even generals, with their heavy baggage and slow movements, was, to say the least, far from complimentary. But his confidence in his swift marching infantry, was, he declared, if possible, increased. He then for the first time expressed the wish that he might cut loose from his railroads and trains, with four or five pet infantry corps. Then, he predicted, the enemy that tried to march around him "would get into trouble." The same idea he repeated several days later in a letter to General Grant, in which he advocated the proposition that he be allowed to "cut loose." "Now," he said, "Hood keeps me guessing. Then I could keep him guessing." But Grant still wished to have Hood followed. However, on the next move, Hood slipped off into the mountains of Northern Alabama, the winter rains set in, and the pursuit became hopeless. In addition there arose the further danger that, if Sherman should push the pursuit of Hood too far North, the latter might double back and retake Atlanta, and the results of a whole year's fighting be lost. To add to his troubles, "that devil Forrest," as my father called him—using the epithet in a sense complimentary to a foeman—broke through the line of the Tennessee River, and disputed his hold on Western Tennessee.

As has been stated, General Grant's original plan for the movements after the fall of Atlanta had contemplated three conditions: First—the aid and coöperation

of a strong Union army from the coast. Second—the holding of Atlanta and of all of Tennessee; and, Third—the continued occupation and operation of the long line of railroad from Nashville down to Atlanta. But, now, when the time had come, there was no such army on the coast. The Union hold on Tennessee, also, was seriously menaced, and to maintain it required the use of large forces in scattered garrisons, which were thereby wasted for offensive operations. And, finally, Sherman's hold upon the railroad to Atlanta was demonstrated to be too precarious to allow his army to operate safely from its extremity. That line ran for 250 miles through the enemy's country, where it was continuously threatened and frequently broken by its cavalry and guerillas, and had once barely escaped being seized at a vital point—Allatoona—by Hood's army in force. Every break in the road meant on the average a day's delay in supplies; and ten days' successive delay would have reduced an army at the front to the verge of starvation. Thus conditions forbade following out General Grant's original plan. His modified plan required that Hood's army be caught; but events had shown that it could not be caught. The problem therefore had to be solved in some other way.

The solution my father proposed was this: Instead of holding Atlanta and the railway back to Nashville he would abandon and destroy them. He would abandon Southern Tennessee. Of the garrisons thereby released he would create the nucleus of a new army to be gathered at Nashville under the command of General Thomas; to it he would add the larger part of his artillery and cavalry, two of his corps of infantry, and the bulk of the 16th Corps, then returning under A. J. Smith from the Red River. From Nashville North, the railroads ran through a comparatively friendly country; its line of supplies was therefore secure. About Nashville, therefore, this force would be free from the dangers to which an army at Atlanta or

Chattanooga was exposed, and there it could guard Kentucky and the North from invasion. If Hood should venture into Tennessee to attack it, Thomas felt confident that he could, and gave his promise that he would "ruin him";—a promise which Thomas afterwards literally kept. A new army, strong enough to take care of the Western theater of war, being thus created, my father proposed, with the remainder of his old army—with four tried infantry corps, numbering 55,000 men, and some 5,000 picked cavalry—to march to the coast—to Savannah if he could, if unforeseen obstacles prevented, to Pensacola,—and to lay waste on his way so wide a belt of country with its railroads as to obtain temporarily the advantages contemplated by General Grant's plan of permanent occupation. As he expressed it, he would "thrust a rapier through the vitals of the Confederacy." He pointed out the moral effect that would result if he were allowed "to prick the bubble," and show to the world that the South was hollow and not a solid mass of armed men. The distinctive feature of the movement would be, that he should not hold or occupy railroads or places, but instead should destroy them, and move freely, cutting loose from his base of supplies and "living off the country." The fact that no large army had ever done this successfully on the offensive in modern warfare was, he argued, no reason why it could not be done. He knew the country well, knew that it could feed his army and that there were no vital obstacles in the way. If Hood should follow him, as he rather expected, he was confident that he could turn on him and beat him; while if, on the other hand, Hood should turn North, Thomas could beat him; in which event my father's army could proceed unopposed to the sea, establish a new base, and operate in the East in aid of Grant against Lee.

When he proposed actually to carry out this novel plan General Grant, after some consideration, acqui-

esced; but others to whom the secret was confided were aghast. General Rawlins hurried to Washington to appeal to Mr. Lincoln personally to veto the project. There is a tradition that Lincoln yielded, and that a telegram forbidding the campaign was sent to my father, but that he had anticipated it and cut the wire. That is not true; although the fact that such a telegram was contemplated is certified by the testimony of General Grant. The telegraph was used for some days longer for final correspondence with Thomas. Finally, on Nov. 12th, 1864, the last train bearing its load of sick and wounded steamed to the North; the wire was then cut and the railroad broken. Three days later the factories and warehouses of Atlanta were reduced to ashes and its fortifications dismantled; and a confident army with a satisfied commander cut loose for the sea.

For thirty-one days they were lost to the world. Rumors of disaster, more or less detailed, crept through the Southern lines to the Northern papers, and kept the North in alarmed suspense. In the Confederacy they caused overwhelming consternation and confusion. Its entire system of supplies, communications and military and civil organization was severed and shattered. Anxious messages of inquiry flew back and forth. In the War of the Rebellion Records there is a half volume of Confederate despatches at this time, all of which may be fairly paraphrased in the single sentence: "Where are we at?" Wild proclamations for the people to rise and defend their homes emanated from all parts of the invaded territory. A material force was gathered to stem the flood; but a feint by the right wing under Howard towards the South caused the Georgia militia to concentrate at Macon; while another feint by the left wing under Slocum towards the East kept the chivalry of South Carolina in the neighborhoods of Augusta and Columbia; and the pathway in between—to the South East—to the objective seaport of Savannah—was left clear and free. Down this clear way swept the

invading army. On December 13th Fort McAllister, at the mouth of the Ogeechee River, was stormed and communications with the world regained. A few days later Savannah was occupied, and the March to the Sea was over.

In the traditions of the North that march has always ranked as the romantic incident of the war. It came as a soft interlude between two hard campaigns—the bloody struggle for Atlanta that preceded it, and the toilsome winter march through the Carolinas that followed. It was fraught with the spirit of adventure, of plunging into the unknown. The only objective the soldiers knew was the ocean, which the large majority of them—inland born and inland bred—had never seen, and which therefore they looked forward to as an object of wonder. The march lay through a land figuratively flowing with milk and honey—in the fragrance of the Georgia pines—in the balmy air of a Southern autumn. It was begun in a golden Indian Summer morning of November and ended at Christmas-tide with the capture of the evergreen city of Savannah, which—in the romantic spirit of the whole march—was offered as a Christmas-gift to the nation.

As a military achievement it has also ranked high. While the result was yet in doubt the "London Times"* said of it:

"General Sherman's movement will result either in the most tremendous disaster that ever befell an armed host, or it will be written on the pages of history as the very consummation of the success of sublime audacity. The name of the captor of Atlanta, if he fail now, will become the scoff of mankind and the humiliation of the United States for all time. If he succeed it will be written upon the tablet of fame side by side with that of Napoleon and Hannibal. He will either be a Xerxes or a Xenophon."

* I have not been able to verify the source of this quotation. In "Townsend's Library" it is ascribed to the "London Herald" (?).

But my father always thought that this campaign was overrated in comparison with those that preceded and followed it, and believed its audacity exaggerated. He considered it primarily only as a change of base, whereby he transferred 60,000 trained veterans, superfluous in the West, to a new base on the coast, whence they could operate more effectively in the East.

Upon arriving at Savannah, General Sherman found despatches from General Grant ordering him to bring his army by sea to Virginia, there to join directly in the campaign against Richmond. To this he demurred; and urged instead, that he be allowed to march overland against Lee's rear, so as to destroy the Confederate railroads, arsenals and supplies on the way. General Grant immediately and cordially approved of this suggestion.

"Your confidence," he wrote, "in being able to march up and join this army pleases me, and I believe it can be done. The effect of such a campaign will be to disorganize the South, and to prevent the organization of new armies from their broken fragments. Hood is now retreating, with his army broken and demoralized. * * * * If time is given, the fragments may be collected together, and many of the deserters reassembled. If we can, we should act to prevent this. Your spare army, as it were, moving as proposed, will do it."

Floods in the Savannah River delayed the start until February 1st, 1865. Then began a march—through an enemy's country and without a base of supply—that for distance and difficulties surmounted has never been surpassed, unless by the armies of Xenophon and Hannibal. The final objective was Lee's army in Virginia. The intermediate objective was Goldsboro, North Carolina, where communications with the sea were to be regained and reinforcements expected. That point was 425 miles from Savannah; and the route between lay through a country largely in the state of nature, over narrow mud roads, through wild forests

and innumerable swamps, and across five large navigable rivers. It was in midwinter, under heavy rains, and nearly every mile of the road had to be corduroyed. The soldiers marched in deep mud—sometimes up to their waists in water—and loaded with heavy baggage and rations; often after the day's march many hours had to be spent in corduroying and in assisting the trains; and at nights they had to camp in wet and mire. Food also was scarce and poor. There are, therefore, few pleasant traditions of this march to perpetuate its story along with that of the march from Atlanta to Savannah. Moreover, a determined although inferior enemy encircled the invading host, and was rapidly accumulating in its front. At the start, Columbia, South Carolina, had been gained without serious opposition, because feints in false directions had kept the enemy deceived and divided. But after the fall of Columbia the Confederates from Charleston and Augusta hastened to unite in its front, the organized remnants of Hood's army were hurried over the mountains to reinforce them, and Lee made some small detachments to strengthen their numbers. And the redoubted Johnston, a leader whom no feints could deceive, was sent to command them. General Sherman therefore had reason to experience an anxiety unfelt during the march through Georgia. And there was one danger that he particularly feared—a risk that he had weighed in advance, and exposure to which made this movement essentially daring—which was, that Lee might break away from Grant, combine with Johnston, and overwhelm him in the wilderness, far away from any base of supplies and without ambulances or other provision for his wounded. He therefore pressed anxiously and rapidly on to Goldsboro; but not so hurriedly as to neglect his purpose of destroying all railroads and military supplies on the way. Columbia, Cheraw and Fayetteville, with their depots and arsenals, were taken, and the last great river crossed, without

difficulty. Then the crisis came as they were approaching Goldsboro. Supplies were low, the army was encumbered with many refugees, and—while almost entirely free from sickness—was without means of caring for its wounded in case of battle. When it should reach Goldsboro, all would be changed. At two points nearby on the coast were supplies and reinforcements. At Newbern was Schofield with the old Army of the Ohio, fresh from its victories at Franklin and Nashville. At Wilmington was Terry, with the captors of Fort Fisher. Once at Goldsboro therefore, my father's army would unite with these forces, be properly supplied and be well based upon the coast. Therefore, to prevent this junction, Johnston—at the last moment—struck daringly and desperately at the flank of the advancing columns, at Averysboro and Bentonville. But he was brushed aside; and on March 22nd Goldsboro was reached, the desired junction effected, and communications with the world again regained.

My father always rated this campaign as his greatest military achievement, and believed that it settled the fate of the Confederacy. Not only had he by this march wiped Georgia and the Carolinas off the map as sources of supplies and reinforcements for Lee; but by his junction with Schofield and Terry at Goldsboro, he had secured his army from any material danger from a combined attack of Lee and Johnston, and had placed it where it and Grant's army between them held the last two Eastern armies of the Confederacy figuratively "between a thumb and forefinger." That Lee had made no effort to combine with Johnston to attack him before he reached Goldsboro, was, in his opinion, a serious strategic error. On this subject General Lee wrote, after the war:

"As regards the movements of General Sherman, it was easy to see that, unless they were interrupted, I should be compelled to abandon the defense of Richmond, and with a view of arresting his progress I so

weakened my force by sending reinforcements to South and North Carolina, that I had not sufficient men to man my lines. Had they not been broken I should have abandoned them as soon as General Sherman reached the Roanoke."

In my father's opinion, Lee waited too long in Richmond, and according to this letter planned to wait longer. Johnston alone had done the best possible at the critical moment. Therefore, although holding Lee's tactical abilities in high estimation, he regarded Johnston as the abler strategist.

Leaving his army at Goldsboro, with General Schofield in charge, my father then made a hurried trip by sea to City Point, Virginia, to confer with General Grant. While there he had two long interviews with President Lincoln, at the more important of which General Grant and Admiral Porter were present. Mr. Lincoln first expressed anxiety about the safety of my father's army in his absence; but was quickly reassured on that point. He then expressed his extreme desire that the war might be terminated without further bloodshed; and stated that he was willing to make the greatest possible concessions to that end, and that he was all ready in his mind for the civil reorganization of affairs in the South as soon as the war should cease. According to my father's understanding—confirmed by Admiral Porter's recollection and notes of the conversation—Mr. Lincoln then distinctly authorized him to assure the people of North Carolina that, as soon as the rebel armies should lay down their arms, they would at once be guaranteed all their rights as citizens of a common country, and that, to avoid anarchy, the state governments then in existence, with their civil functionaries, would be recognized by him as the governments *de facto* till Congress could provide others. To my father's enquiry—should he let Davis and other political leaders escape?—Mr. Lincoln replied indirectly by telling the story of the teetotaler, who, being invited

to have some brandy in his lemonade, declined; but added, that if a little could be put in "unbeknownst" to him he would not object.

With this understanding of Mr. Lincoln's wishes, my father returned to his army in North Carolina. That he had misunderstood and that Mr. Lincoln had not intended that any assurances as to civil rights should be included in a military convention is generally inferred from the following despatch that Mr. Lincoln had caused to be sent to General Grant some three weeks previously:

"Washington, March 3d, 1865.

"Lieutenant General Grant,

"The President directs me to say that he wishes you to have no conference with General Lee, unless it be for the capitulation of General Lee's army, or on some minor or purely military matter. He instructs me to say that you are not to decide, discuss or confer upon any political questions. Such questions the President holds in his own hands, and will submit them to no military conferences or conventions.

* * * * *

"EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War."

But of this despatch Gen. Sherman had no knowledge or information, and it was not referred to in his conversation with Mr. Lincoln. And the approval a few days after that conversation by the Union commander in Richmond, of a call for a meeting of the existing pro-Confederate legislature of Virginia, coming promptly to Gen. Sherman's knowledge, confirmed his understanding of Mr. Lincoln's instructions.

Events now moved rapidly. On April 10th my father again started his army against his opponent, Johnston; on the 11th he received news of the surrender of Lee; on the 14th he received overtures for surrender from Johnston; and on the 17th met him under flag of truce at Durham Station, North Carolina. It was when on the point of starting to this meeting that he received the

news of the assassination of Lincoln. He first offered General Johnston the terms that General Grant had given General Lee; but Johnston pleaded for terms for all the Confederate armies. General Sherman answered that he had no authority to make any such arrangement. But at a second conference the next day, after consulting with his immediate subordinates, he wrote out terms to cover all the Southern armies, which he offered to submit to President Johnson for consideration, the two armies to maintain a truce in the meantime.

Those terms were, in brief:

The Confederate armies to disband and deposit their arms in the state arsenals, to be disposed of as Congress might provide.

The recognition by the President, of the state governments, and of their officers, etc., upon their taking the oath of allegiance; where conflicting governments existed, their legitimacy to be determined by the Federal courts.

The people and inhabitants of the states to be guaranteed, so far as the Executive could, their political rights and franchises, as well as their rights of person and property.

The Executive authority of the government not to disturb any of the people by reason of the war, so long as they lived in peace and quiet, abstained from acts of hostility, and obeyed the laws.

In general terms, the war to cease, and, so far as the Executive could assure it, a general amnesty.

These terms were promptly agreed to and signed, and a copy sent to the authorities at Washington for such action thereon as they might see fit. General Sherman did not assume that, as a matter of course, they would be approved in substance; much less that they would be literally approved. On the contrary, the next day he wrote General Johnston, that they would doubtless have to be amended to contain an explicit admission

of the validity of emancipation. Therefore he was neither surprised nor greatly disappointed when they were disapproved; in fact, General Grant, when he joined General Sherman soon after the receipt by the latter of the official notification of their rejection, reported to the Secretary of War, that General Sherman "was not surprised, but rather expected their rejection." But he was astonished and mortified by the storm of indignation with which they were received in the North. He had not realized the change in public sentiment caused by the assassination of President Lincoln, nor the state of panic and confusion—amounting almost to hysteria—to which official Washington had been reduced by it. And he resented bitterly and openly the public announcements and orders then made by General Halleck and Secretary Stanton, in which his subordination and loyalty were questioned and his motives impugned. His feelings were best expressed in a letter to General Grant: "My opinions," he wrote, "on all matters are very strong, but if I am possessed properly of the views and orders of my superiors I make them my study and conform my conduct to them as if they were my own. The President has only to tell me what he wants done, and I will do it. I was hurt, outraged and insulted at Mr. Stanton's public arraignment of my motives and actions, at his endorsing General Halleck's insulting and offensive despatch, and his studied silence when the press accused me of all sorts of base motives, even of selling myself to Jeff Davis for gold, of sheltering criminals and entertaining ambitious views at the expense of my country." But denunciation on the one side and bitterness on the other subsided after a time. General Grant, who was ordered to North Carolina to supersede General Sherman, acted with his characteristic magnanimity and tact; and the incident was closed by Sherman's receiving the surrender of Johnston on the identical terms that had been granted to Lee.

The course of reconstruction in the bitter political years that followed was altogether contrary to the terms of the original convention between Generals Sherman and Johnston. Military governments were established in the South, the Confederate soldiers were temporarily disfranchised and the negroes en masse enfranchised; while those terms would have recognized the civil governments of the Southern states, enfranchised the Confederate soldiers immediately, and left the negroes disfranchised. For a generation, therefore, the popular verdict of the North and of history has been altogether against that convention. And almost equally general has been the verdict that its terms could not have represented the policy of Abraham Lincoln. But Admiral Porter, who was an attentive listener at and who kept notes of the final interview between President Lincoln and General Sherman, subsequently wrote:

“The terms of the convention between him and Johnston were exactly in accordance with Mr. Lincoln’s wishes. He [Sherman] could not have done anything that would have pleased Mr. Lincoln better.”

And General Sherman, although less positive as to the correctness of his construction of Lincoln’s verbal instructions, yet always firmly believed that the substance of those terms expressed the policy of reconstruction outlined by Mr. Lincoln in their interview, and which Mr. Lincoln would have followed, had he lived. And he always believed that that policy would have been the wisest and best; and that the course reconstruction actually followed was a continuing series of mistakes on both sides, for which Mr. Lincoln’s untimely death was responsible.

In his antagonism to secession General Sherman was radical. He held that it was rebellion—treason—which justified the harshest measures of war for its repression. But when war ceased he believed that punitive measures, with some possible exceptions, should also cease. And particularly towards the Con-

federate soldiers he believed in a conciliatory policy. He regarded them as the strongest and at the same time the least embittered element in the South. He believed, that having fought the war to a finish fairly, they were prepared to accept its results, and would not be disposed to thwart the North in attaining what it fought for. Therefore he thought that to them in large measure should be committed the task of restoring order and good government. Their disfranchisement, even for a short time, seemed to him a useless humiliation and an incentive to sectional hatred and hostility.

On the negro question he occupied neutral ground, midway between extreme opinions. He was not intensely hostile to slavery; but he believed in the ultimate right and economic superiority of freedom. He respected the negro race; and often used to describe instances that he had met of the highest intelligence and of the strongest sense of honor among negroes. And he admired their splendid record during the war. Therefore, although he had dwelt long and intimately in the slave states, he had no sympathy then and would have no sympathy now with the sectional contention that the negroes are all too hopelessly inferior to be admitted in any way, to any extent and at any time to equal rights with white men. But he did not believe that they should be enfranchised in mass at the end of the war. He never sympathized with the theory that the ballot is a means of education, to be given to children to teeth on. He regarded it rather as a power and a privilege to be won step by step after years of effort; and its exercise as a duty and a burden, which the negroes as a whole were not prepared and fitted to assume. Therefore he believed that its *imposition* upon the negroes, so soon, was not only unjust to their white neighbors but more unjust to them. "I never heard a negro," he wrote, "ask for that, and it would be his ruin. I believe it would result in riots and violence at all the polls." "I prefer to give votes to rebel

whites, now humbled, subdued and obedient, rather than to ignorant blacks, who are not yet capable of self government." And believing as he did that the Confederate soldiers as a class acquiesced in emancipation and then felt kindly towards the negroes, General Sherman thought that they would accord to the negroes all essential rights, and that without universal suffrage comparative harmony would exist between the two races.

But these questions did not arise and these opinions were not expressed until after the convention with Johnston. At that time the idea of negro suffrage and of military governments for the Southern states after rebellion had ceased had never occurred to or been heard of by General Sherman. Therefore when he framed the rejected terms with Johnston he was not betraying the known wishes of the government or of the Northern people in favor of ideas of his own; but was actuated by the sole and only motive of carrying out the wishes and instructions of Abraham Lincoln, as he understood them.

Reverting for a moment to military movements: From Raleigh, North Carolina, where peace found it, General Sherman led his army its last march, which terminated in the "Grand Review" at Washington.

Of that army, that had fought its way in triumph through the four quarters of the Confederacy, permit me, in conclusion, to add a few words. I remember as a boy seeing in the museum of one of the United States arsenals an old army wagon that had painted on its body the legend of its travels. As well as I can recollect, it started from Cairo, Illinois, went first to Shiloh, thence to Corinth and Memphis, thence South to the Tallahatchie River and back to Memphis, thence down to Vicksburg and Jackson and again back to Memphis, thence East to Chattanooga, on to Knoxville and back to Chattanooga, thence South from depot to depot that marked the steps on the weary way to Atlanta,

thence North to Huntsville, Alabama, and back South again to Atlanta, thence on to Milledgeville and Savannah, Georgia, Columbia, South Carolina, Fayetteville and Goldsboro, North Carolina, and Alexandria in Northern Virginia. In its essential parts that wagon was still solid, but it was so battered and bruised as obviously to have endured so much as to deserve place in a museum. And I reflected, as I looked at it, that there were thousands of men who had made that same journey or its equivalent on foot, and had in addition fought and labored on the way, who were stronger, therefore, than oak and iron—of which that wagon was constructed;—and that of such men, almost wholly, was composed the army that swept from Chattanooga to Goldsboro. I then comprehended a strong conviction held by my father, that had a controlling influence on many of his operations that I have attempted to describe; which was, his supreme confidence in the ability of his army, due to his lofty estimate of the material of which it was composed. That he had been deemed worthy to command such an army and had won its confidence, was to him—far beyond his strategic achievements—the source of his greatest pride and highest satisfaction.







