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THE COURTS.

Supreme Court of Louisiana—Decision by Judge Taliaferro.

In the case of Brenner & Ranlett vs. J. T. Michel and P. Gallagher, in which an appeal was taken from the decision of the Second Judicial District Court, parish of Jefferson, Judge Taliaferro has rendered the following opinion sustaining the decision rendered by that tribunal:

The defendants are sued for two thousand dollars as damages alleged to have been sustained by the plaintiffs from the illegal seizure and sale, under execution, by defendants, of the property of the plaintiffs. The answer is a general denial. Plaintiff had judgment for one thousand dollars, and defendants have appealed.

Gallagher having obtained a judgment against B. F. Hughes, caused execution to issue, and the Sheriff, Michel, seized as property of Hughes the contents of a drug store in the City of Jefferson, at the corner of Magazine and Jena streets, and after an inventory and appraisement of the effects seized and advertisement made, sold the entire stock for $163. It is in proof that after the seizure was made the Sheriff was distinctly informed by Brenner, one of the plaintiffs, that the property seized did not belong to Hughes, but to himself and Ranlett. The defendants show that the contents of the drug store were under the control of Hughes, who held himself out to the world as the owner; that he kept the establishment, made sale of the drugs, and was considered the owner. They contend that the plaintiffs' claim as owners is simulated and set up to screen the property of Hughes from the pursuit of his creditors.

It appears from the evidence that, in the latter part of the year 1865, and in the early part of 1866, this apothecary establishment belonged to a Dr. Hyne, who, during the time he left it, had Hughes employed as a clerk; that Hyne sold the establishment to Ranlett at the price of $1700, the estimated value of the entire stock, as appears by the receipt of Hyne, dated March 17, 1866. An instrument is in evidence dated March 11, 1866, and signed by Ranlett and Hughes, the purport of which is that they were to carry on the drug and apothecary business in the City of Jefferson; that it was to be carried on in the name of B. F. Hughes, who was to keep the accounts and render a full statement of affairs at the end of each month, and pay over to Ranlett such sum of money as might be on hand after deducting the expenses of carrying on the business.

Ranlett was to buy the stock in trade of Hyne, the profits and losses to be equally divided. The seizure was made on the ninth of August, 1867. On the nineteenth of June previous an estimative inventory of the stock of drugs on hand was made, and as stated the value of the drugs was set down according to wholesale prices, the aggregate amount being $1103. Hughes testifies that between the time of the making the inventory and the seizure there was sold an amount between $50 and $100. The Sheriff's inventory and estimate seem to have been made carelessly, and the drugs set down at about what the appraisers judged they would be likely to bring at an auction sale.

The fact that the plaintiffs permitted Hughes to hold himself out to the world as the owner of the establishment would, according to well established principles, involve a responsibility to persons giving him credit on the faith of the pretended ownership. Still, under the facts shown in this case, we think no liability results against them.

This judgment of Gallagher against Hughes arose from a debt contracted jointly by the latter and one Spann before Hughes had anything to do with the drug store. The defendants were notified that the property they had seized belonged to the plaintiffs, but they proceeded, notwithstanding, to sell it, and consequently the sale was made at their peril.

The evidence, we think, sufficiently shows that the plaintiffs were the owners of the property sold. Hughes was destitute of means. That Ranlett paid the whole price of the stock purchased from Dr. Hyne there can be no doubt. The statements of Ranlett and Hughes, in connection with the receipt of Hyne, make this clear, and the tenor of the contract between Ranlett and Hughes corroborates their statements under oath as to the ownership of their stock in trade. If Hughes were to participate in the profits, it does not follow that there was a community of interest in the property itself. The contrary, we think, is established.

In estimating the value of the plaintiffs' property sold, we are inclined to adopt the opinion of the judge *a quo*, who assumed the valuation made shortly before the seizure as more reliable than the evidently vague appraisement made at the time of the sale. Deducting $100, the amount sold after the first appraisement or valuation, from $1100, he gave judgment for $1000, and we think correctly.

It is therefore ordered, adjudged and decreed, that the judgment of the District Court be affirmed with costs.

Sixth District Court.

Louis E. Reynolds has entered suit against the Sugar Shed Company to recover $1400 for services in drawing plans, specifications, and for the erection of the sheds of said company. He alleges that, according to contract, he was to receive two and a half per cent on the cost of the buildings, which, amounting to $240,000, entitles him to $6000. Of this sum he has been paid $1600, leaving unpaid $4400, as aforesaid, and demand having been refused, suit is brought to recover.

Fifth District Court.

William Leslie, an attorney at law, is the defendant in a suit before this court, in which Jean Mac seeks to recover from him certain moneys, which, it is alleged, Leslie is retaining without any legal cause or right.

United States Circuit Court.

There was no business of moment before the court yesterday. Cases came up for continuation; papers were withdrawn from records; applications for supersedeas were made or passed on; in fact, Saturday in the courts has some affinity to Saturday in the household. A great many small things are attended to, and there is a general setting to rights.

Commissioner Weller's Court.

As a rule, it is of no public interest to publish the multitudinous suits brought by crews of vessels against their employers. In a majority of cases these suits are utterly groundless—that is, the money claimed may be owing, but the vessel is perfectly willing to pay. It frequently happens that a half hour's waiting when the clerk is busy would settle the claim, but the impatient "hand" rushes off to the court, where he finds he can get a judgment for his claim, but must pay costs for want of amicable demand.

It very often happens, however, that he has reason to congratulate himself on having brought his case before Commissioner Weller, who is extremely lenient in enforcing the payment, and often lets the *pauvre diable* go clear. This was the case yesterday, where one of the crew of the Bannock City sued the boat for three dollars, the amount due him being two dollars and ninety cents. In other words, this advocate of "sailors' rights" sued, and caused no small trouble to all parties, for ten cents. He should not have got off so easy.

The smugglers of cigars on the steamship Havana, Busse and Berman, found bail and were released to appear for examination.

Some excitement was caused in the Italian town of Barri lately by the arrival there of an unknown impostor styling himself Francis II., and who, in his person, his manners, and his suite, greatly resembled the ex-King of Naples. He gave audiences to numerous adherents and friends of the exiled Neapolitan Bourbons. He flattered them and promised and granted nominal pensions, contingent to his speedy elevation to the throne of Naples. Finally, on the third day after his arrival, he gave a grand banquet, at which about forty persons were present, at which the most extravagant toasts were drunk, and vivas were shouted for the shortly to be reinstated king and his cause. While the banquet was in progress, however, a party of carabineers and guards appeared, who arrested the individual and his guests and carried them to prison.

ARMY OF THE POTOMAC SOCIETY

THE CELEBRATION AT BOSTON

ORATION BY GOVERNOR FAIRCHILD

We reproduce from the *Transcript* the report of the oration by Governor Fairchild at Boston last week:

Comrades: What shall I say to you today, or rather what can I leave unsaid?

So many recollections crowd upon me in this presence, sweeping as a flood from out our common past, that I find it harder than I can tell you to know what not to say. This meeting calls up so vividly the whole story of the war; the political events which led to it; the enormity of the treason which caused it; the danger to our country; the appeal to arms, and the answer to that appeal—any of which suggest so much that I find it difficult to know where to begin, and even more difficult to know where to leave off.

After some hesitation I have decided to suggest to you to-day what I have long had in my mind, that it would be well for our society to have upon its records as full an account as we can gather of the part the Army of the Potomac took in the war, and, by way of illustration, I propose, in the short space allotted me, to trace for you, briefly, a sketch of the first organization of that army; the events which led to it, and the circumstances surrounding it, down to the time when it marched out to the first battle of Bull Run. If others coming after me care to take up the thread, at intervals, perhaps, and it may be not consecutively, we shall in the end have secured a more complete and more truthful history than any now in existence. You will understand better than any others the difficulties involved in such a task; how almost impossible it will be to select from these choicest recollections of our lives the details most proper to present. If I have taken note of matters you would have passed by in silence it is because I find an unfailing attraction in whatever pertains to the war. Its every feature is of interest to me. The simplest record upon the gravestones of its dead appeals to me as nothing else can. If I omit some things you would wish to hear, I can only plead the shortness of the time, for I do not intend to keep you long.

The soldiers of our Union army had everywhere many qualities in common. All were earnest, intelligent, self-contained, self-sacrificing, generous and brave. All were possessed with the true spirit of patriotism. A purer, holier devotion was never known in the history of the world. Much that may be said of the army of the Potomac to-day might with equal force be said of all our armies.

Every army, however, has certain distinguishing characteristics. The nature of its service, the character of its commanders, the materials of which its ranks are composed, the results of its earlier efforts, the field of its activity, and the strength and quality of the army opposing it—all are circumstances that develop the character of an army, just as the vicissitudes and associations of life develop the character of a man.

Of the characteristics of our army, we, my comrades, have some right to be proud, for many of them grew out of our peculiar surroundings. They cost us the lives of many brave men, and came to us through many bitter days. From the first it was our especial charge to guard the city of Washington. Every campaign was embarrassed by this necessity. This kept us constantly near the seat of government, made us the special objects of attention in high civil quarters, and led to a perpetual interference with the plans of our commanding generals. It was our fortune to make many fruitless marches, to fight many aimless battles, to suffer many unmerited defeats; and what was harder yet to bear, it was ours to know that our name was almost a by-word and reproach, because of delays and disasters for which we were in no way responsible. A harsh schooling, lasting through the earlier years of our history, but it was an experience from which came many sterling qualities—an organization which no defeats could destroy; an unquestioning obedience to orders, a steadfast courage which shrank not, whether in the fatigues of the march, in the danger of the field of battle, the dreariness of the hospital or the hopelessness of long delays in camp; a loftiness of purpose which made it strong to bear unjust criticism when defeats were almost overwhelming, and tardy praise when victory had perched upon its banners.

Not braver than the soldiers of other armies, they encountered greater obstacles to test their bravery; not more zealous lovers of the Union, they suffered defeats and disasters which would have utterly discouraged and demoralized men less determined to win the prize for which they fought. And through it all they never for one moment lost confidence that in the end they would be victorious, and that those who should survive would one day return to their homes, their task accomplished, their country reunited, and its flag waving undisputed over the whole of the national domain.

On the day of Mr. Lincoln's inauguration the situation was briefly this: Seven Southern States had adopted ordinances of secession, and there were no persons within their limits to represent the powers of the federal government, or to execute its laws. All forts, arsenals, customhouses, docks, and all other public property had been seized by the authority of the States within whose boundaries they lay, and were held in possession by persons denying the authority of the general government, and owing allegiance only to a new government claimed to have been created by the united action of these seven States. Under appointments from this new-born source of power, they claimed to discharge the functions of their various offices. It was only over Fort Sumter, in Charleston harbor, and Forts Pickens, Jefferson and Taylor, near the Florida coast, that the flag of the Union continued to be displayed. The commanding officers of Forts Pickens and Sumter had been summoned to surrender. Professedly to capture these and other forts and to protect from recapture the places and property already seized, armed forces had been organized and were still organizing. Over thirty-five thousand men were already in the service of the Confederate States, and under the militia laws of individual States a large number of regiments were rapidly forming. Around Sumter formidable batteries had been erected, mounted with guns of heavy calibre taken from the captured forts and arsenals, and on the third day of March General Beauregard had been ordered to assume command of the forces there gathered. On the sixth of March measures were adopted by the Confederate Congress for calling into the service of the rebellion one hundred thousand men.

Up to this point the policy of the general government had been one of peace. There was among all parties a profound wish that better counsels might prevail, and that the horrors of civil war might be averted. Mr. Lincoln closed his inaugural address with a touching appeal to his "dissatisfied fellow-countrymen," saying, "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 battle field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

Because of this strong desire in all hearts to avoid a rupture, no step had been taken which might look like an intention to coerce the seceding States. The army had not been increased, nor had its disposition been materially changed. Such changes as had been made appeared to have been inspired by a sympathy with the threatened rebellion, rather than a devotion to the interests of the federal government. Consisting of not more than 16,000 men, it was mostly scattered among the extreme frontier forts in the Indian country, weeks away from the Atlantic seaboard. Nor was there any considerable naval force available for the immediate defense of the capital.

During the winter a rumor had gained credence that Washington was to be captured by the rebels, and the seat of government of the new confederacy removed thither. In view of the violence and turbulent disorders already exhibited in the South, the existence of this scheme was not altogether improbable. To guard against such a contingency General Scott had ordered to Washington a small body of regulars (653), and had procured the organization of some battalions of militia in the District of Columbia (about 2000). These, with a very inconsiderable number of marines at the navy yard, were his entire available force at the time of the inauguration.

After the address of Mr. Lincoln events crowded one another with startling rapidity, and it soon became evident that civil war was indeed upon us, and that the danger of the seizure of Washington was imminent. Its isolated position almost invited attack. At a distance from the unquestionably loyal States, between two States whose action in the coming struggle could not then be foretold, with Alexandria upon one side and Baltimore on the other, avowedly secession in their sympathies, with Georgetown scarcely less so, and with a large disloyal element among its own citizens, Southerners by birth, who, if they were not prepared to join openly in the rebellion, would gladly have welcomed an attacking party, and would probably have risen to its aid; at the same time there was a well founded distrust of the loyalty of many of the leading officers of the regular army and navy then stationed at Washington. Robert E. Lee was there, Samuel Cooper, Adjutant General, was there, John C. Pemberton, John B. Magruder, Joseph E. Johnston, Quartermaster General; A. P. Hill, L. L. Lomax, Robert S. Garnett, of the army; Commanders Boutwell, Fairfax, Maury, Semmes, and Captain Ingram of the navy. All these and others were there, and nearly all were occupying high and important positions. One after another these men dropped away, deserting their country's flag in sorest need, to become leaders of the forces of rebellion. As their native States seceded, many others grew lukewarm, and some, who afterward came to be pillars of strength of their country, seemed then almost to waver, or were so much depressed as to be objects of suspicion. At one time the rumor spread, and was almost believed, so great distrust had grown, that General Scott himself had resigned. That grand old hero, whose loyalty was as his very life-blood, even he was thought to have yielded to the flood of treason which swept away so many from around him. To one who told him of these painful rumors, he answered: "I have served my country under the flag of the Union for more than fifty years; as long as God permits me to live I will defend that flag with my sword, even if my own native State assails it."

Aided by some who afterward came to be recognized as among our ablest officers, he was busied, even then, with further preparations for the defense of the city against a sudden attack. More of the District militia were organized; patrols moved constantly through the streets to guard against fires; mounted sentries were posted at all the bridges and avenues leading out of the city; field pieces, with infantry supports, were so posted as to command the river; Colonel George H. Thomas (afterward major general) was placed in command of Georgetown; Captain Shiras (afterward commissary general) in charge of the Treasury building; Captain Charles P. Stone (then colonel of militia) guarded the President's house; Major McDowell (afterward major general) had command of Capitol Hill from the railroad depot to the navy yard. Commissary supplies were stored in and around the general postoffice; a body of troops was stationed at the Patent Office. In the basement of the Treasury building were strange deposits of whole tiers of barrels of beans, pork, beef, and sacks of coffee, while its porticos bristled with cannon. The Capitol, under Major McDowell, was rapidly converted into a fortress. The grounds were put under the strict regulations of a military camp. Sentries paced everywhere. The porticos were barricaded; the iron plates for the unfinished dome were used for breastworks between the marble columns; behind these were placed barrels of cement, piles of stone and timber, forming an almost impenetrable barrier. The crypt was made bomb proof. Howitzers were placed so as to sweep every approach. The Supreme Court room was converted into a hospital. The basement was stored with an abundant supply of provisions and ammunition, and everything put in readiness to stand a siege if necessary, until aid could come from the North. In the basement, too, a bakery was established, which did good service long after that in supplying daily fresh bread to the army about Washington.

On the seventeenth day of April there were with Major McDowell, Captains McComb and Woodruff (engineer officers), two companies of militia two hundred strong, composed of the stone cutters and other workmen about the Capitol. Near the navy yard were four other companies, and near the railroad depot still another, all local militia. The company at the depot, some of my hearers may remember, was composed of Germans, many of whom were soldiers in the fatherland, and whose captain kept a theatre and tavern in that part of the city, where he provided quarters and rations for his men.

In the midst of this excitement the President, at last convinced by the attack upon Fort Sumter that all peaceful measures had failed, and that an appeal to arms could alone save the country, issued on the fifteenth day of April a proclamation calling into the service of the United States 75,000 men of the militia forces of the several States.

The response which this call received none could have foreseen. Almost as one man the people of the North made answer to it. Many were stunned and humiliated by the simple knowledge of the existence of such a treason, but none were dismayed. There was no hesitation; there was no faltering; there was no doubt. In the face of this common danger all parties and all classes made common cause. East and West the language was the same. Everywhere the press, with its million-tongued voice, called the people to arms. Everywhere the pulpits told the true lesson of the hour, that next to service to our God we owed a sacred duty to our country. On the streets, in all public places, at our homes, there was but one expression; in our closets there was but one prayer. No tongue or pen can describe the profound enthusiasm which stirred throughout the land. No one who saw can ever forget that grand uprising of a free people. Men rushed to arms by tens of thousands. The quota of every State was filled at once, and in every State many regiments stood begging to be received into the service. A peaceful people, skilled only in the arts of peace, ignorant of war, and with nothing in their simple annals to inspire them with martial spirit, they accepted war. Not attracted by its pomp and circumstance, not drawn to "seek the bubble reputation at the cannon's mouth," with no selfish ambitions to serve, but stirred to their inmost depths by love of country, they went forth to do battle for a principle, and to lay down their lives, if need be, for the cause of liberty and free government.

The heart of the people beat with one desire: By the grace of Almighty God, at whatever cost of blood or treasure, this unholy treason must be put down.

Another has said that the thrilling events of those days now seem like a dream to us who survive them. To me the solemn grandeur of that time of sorrow and sacrifice and high resolve seems more like another age and another life than like a dream.

The impression had spread throughout the North that the national capital was in imminent danger, and that its protection was the first thing to be secured. As early, therefore, as seven o'clock, afternoon, on the eighteenth day of April, five companies of Pennsylvania militia arrived from Harrisburg. These were the first troops to report at Washington, in response to the President's call. They were the Washington Artillery, Captain Wren, and National Light Infantry, Captain McDonald, from Pottsville; the Ringgold Artillery, Captain McKnight, from Reading; Logan Guards, from Lewiston, and the Allen Rifles, from Allentown; and with them went some forty men belonging to the regular infantry, making about five hundred in all.

Without arms and without regimental organization, they were simply a hasty levy of militia hurrying to the front to assist in guarding the capital.

These troops were immediately marched to the Capitol grounds, were reviewed by Major McDowell and were quartered in the hall of the House of Representatives, where in staying their hunger his stores of bread and bacon were at once turned to good account.

On the nineteenth of April, the anniversary of Lexington and Concord, the hearts of all loyal men in Washington were gladdened by the arrival of the Sixth Massachusetts regiment, six hundred and forty strong, commanded by Colonel Jones. This was an efficient organization, thoroughly armed and equipped, and well drilled and disciplined, among the best citizen soldiers from a State whose militia laws were in excellent working order; cool, brave men, as had been shown in their conduct when in Baltimore, earlier in the day, they had been called upon to endure threats and insults from the mob until they could endure no longer, and had then resolutely fought their way through the rebel city, and continued their journey to Washington. Upon their arrival they were quartered in the Senate chamber. "Thus, under the roof of the Capitol, were sheltered the men who first marched to save it, and in whose ranks the first blood had been shed, and the first lives sacrificed in its defense."

After the outbreak in Baltimore on the nineteenth, no mail reached Washington until the twenty-seventh. In the meantime the greatest consternation prevailed. Harper's Ferry had been occupied on the eighteenth by some three thousand Virginia militia, and General Bradley Johnson was organizing the rebel forces in Baltimore. Rumors were afloat through the city that with the troops which had taken Harper's Ferry it was intended to attack the capital, and that a column from Baltimore would join in the movement. The gravest fears were entertained by loyal men; and traitors, who before kept silence, could no longer conceal their joyful hopes.

On the afternoon of the twenty-fifth, the Seventh Regiment New York Militia, Colonel Lefferts, reached Washington. They left New York on the eighteenth, and communication through Baltimore being interrupted, went from Philadelphia via Havre de Grace to Annapolis, where they joined the Eighth Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers, Colonel Monroe, who were accompanied by their brigade commander, General Butler. At Annapolis these regiments found their march again interrupted by the partial destruction of the Elk Ridge railroad. The Massachusetts regiment was, however, composed mainly of practical workingmen. A disabled locomotive was soon found; machinists were there to repair it. Engineers were wanted; nineteen of them offered their services. Railroad men were needed; there were scores of railroad builders ready for duty.

Working parties, strongly guarded by both regiments, and a fieldpiece mounted on a platform car, which was kept well up with the pioneers, marched and worked all day and all night relaying the track, rebuilding bridges, reaching Annapolis Junction, twenty-one miles distant, early next morning. Here the Massachusetts men were left to guard the way, and keep open communications, while the Seventh New York went on by rail that evening.

So far as Washington was concerned, the crisis was now passed. The way being open, other troops came forward rapidly from all parts of the North, so that by the first of May a general feeling of security prevailed. (I had intended to note the arrival of all the regiments which reached Washington at that early day, but at the last moment I was surprised to find so much conflict of authorities, as to days and dates, that I was compelled to abandon it for want of time.)

It was now evident, however, that the war was assuming daily grander proportions, and that the regiments of State militia in the field under the President's first call would be wholly inadequate to the work of sustaining the authority of the government. On the third day of May, therefore, the President issued another proclamation calling for volunteers to serve for three years or during the war. On the next day were issued two general orders by the War Department, extraordinary in their diction, and marking the assumption of extraordinary powers by the chief executive. The one begins: "The President of the United States having called for a volunteer force," the other, "The President of the United States having directed an increase of the regular army of the United States." With no power rested in him by law, and with no authority under the constitution to take these steps, the President had risen to the occasion, and had authorized the increase of the regular army, and had called upon the Governors of the loyal States for a volunteer force. Save that they spoke the great wish of the people and were authorized by the source of all governmental power in this country, these acts were simply revolution. But the emergency was great, the motive pure and the need vital. All justified the President, even the most conservative were sincerely if silently grateful for these measures. It is not, however, to discuss any questions of constitutional law involved that I have called attention to these orders. It is because they present the plan of company, regimental, brigade and division organization which was then adopted by the War Department, and afterward substantially adhered to throughout the war. They mark the birth, so to speak, of the grand army of the Potomac. Its small beginnings were soon afterward organized under these orders.

I am admonished that I must not dwell longer upon details, unless I would exhaust your patience. I shall, therefore, glance but hastily at the events of the next two months.

To a correct understanding of these, however, and much that followed, it is necessary that I should say just a word as to the division of counsels which had already grown up at Washington.

Among those high in power there were some who still hoped that the State of Virginia would not join in the rebellion, and by them it was insisted that there should be no armed occupation of her soil until after the election, to be held late in May, when the people were to vote upon the ordinance of secession already submitted to them by their State Convention. To this party General Scott gave the countenance of his support, adding weight to his opinion on this point, by the scheme of campaign which he advocated as best adapted to the suppression of the rebellion. This was to leave in the East only troops enough to guard the capital from capture, and the Northern States from an invasion, considered barely possible, and to concentrate the whole available force of the North at Cairo, and send them in overwhelming numbers down the Mississippi river. To this plan he clung tenaciously. When, late in May, the rebels were threatening to plant hostile batteries upon the heights of Arlington, and were flaunting their flag at Alexandria, within plain view from the White House, he consented to the occupation of the south bank of the Potomac, at these and intervening points, purely as a defensive measure. It was not until the capital of the Confederate States had been removed to Richmond, and the Southerners themselves, by word and act, announced that Virginia was to be the battleground of the war, that he would consent to such an advance to the south of Washington as would lead to a collision. This, doubtless, had much to do with the delays in making brigade and division organizations, and in supplying trains to the force south of the Potomac, while deference to the public distaste for parades of all sorts prevented reviews which would have been of great service in perfecting organization and in disciplining troops.

When that consent was once given, however, we all know how earnestly he gave the movement his support.

Perhaps the sounder military measure advocated was that proposed by General McDowell, to occupy at once Manassas Junction and one or two important strategic points well to the front, and to hold them with the three months' militia, while the volunteer force then raising at the North should perfect its organization, and then to make an offensive campaign with an army sufficiently strong to insure success. The plan in circles not military was simply to advance and crush out the rebellion; and to this plan some of the leading members of the Cabinet were committed, influenced no doubt by the popular demand for the movement, and perhaps still more by the financial need of the country, which seemed to make it necessary to put to some active use the three months' men in the field.

Having called attention to these divergent forces which in turn prevailed, I now resume the story of events at the capital.

On the twenty-third day of May General Mansfield, commanding the department of Washington, had under him rather more than 30,000 men.

Rebel engineers were reported to have been seen selecting ground for the erection of hostile batteries on Arlington Heights, and the immediate defensive occupation of the south bank of the Potomac was determined upon. A force of about 13,000 men, of all arms of the service, was assigned to this duty, and on the beautiful moonlight night of the twenty-third the movement took place in three columns.

At the Aqueduct, crossed near midnight, a Georgetown battalion of militia under Major Hollingsworth, Captain Boyd's company in the advance, followed by the Carrington Guards of Georgetown, and the Johnson Guards of Washington. These were followed speedily by the Fifth Massachusetts, Twenty-eighth New York, (Brooklyn), Sixty-ninth New York, and one company of United States cavalry. These troops took possession of Arlington Heights.

At Long Bridge, crossed at about the same hour, a battalion of district militia, consisting of the National Rifles, Captain Smead; Zouave company, Captain Powell, and Constitutional Guards, Captain Digges; and later, the Seventh, Twelfth and Twenty-fifth New York volunteers, under command of Major General Sanford; and the Second, Third and Fourth New Jersey volunteers, under Brigadier General Runyon. The Seventh New York was posted at Hughes' Tavern, near the Virginia end of the bridge; the Second New Jersey half a mile further on, at Roach's Spring. The Twelfth and Twenty-fifth New York, and the Third and Fourth New Jersey, and one company of cavalry moved to the right, up the river, and joined the troops, who had crossed above, at Arlington Heights.

The First Michigan, Colonel Wilcox, a detachment of United States cavalry under Major Stoneman, and a section of Sherman's battery under Lieutenant Ransom, marched via Long Bridge to Alexandria. The Fire Zouaves, commanded by Colonel Ellsworth, went thither at the same time by water, their landing being covered by the United States steamer Pawnee. The troops arrived by land and by water at about the same time, occupied the city with a single exchange of shots with the pickets, and captured a small detachment of secession cavalry. The whole of Sherman's battery crossed during the night, and Rickett's battery marched over about noon on the twenty-fourth. Thus quietly was taken the first step into hostile territory—taken purely as a defensive measure, and even then reluctantly, as though with a sad foreknowledge of the fearful struggle which was to follow, whose beginning was here.

Intrenching tools were immediately sent to these troops, and they commenced that system of fortifications which finally encircled Washington.

On the twenty-seventh of May, Brigadier General Irwin McDowell was, by general order No. 26, assigned to the command of a new military department which embraced all that part of Virginia east of the Alleghany Mountains and north of James river, except Fort Monroe and sixty miles around the same. This energetic officer proceeded to his post at once, and began his work with characteristic vigor. On the twenty-eighth was issued his general order assuming command, announcing his adjutant general, and organizing three brigades, under Colonels Stone, Heintzelman and Hunter, of the regular army. The New Jersey troops were already under General Runyon, by virtue of their militia organization.

Three days later general orders announced other staff officers, directed commanders of brigades to submit reports on regular days, and a little later depots were established, the field commissariat and quartermasters' departments rendered more effective, other brigades organized, and the work of bringing something like order out of chaos was pressed with all possible dispatch.

The difficulties of this task can hardly be overestimated. I have already spoken of an aversion in high quarters to any such occupation of Virginia as should lead to serious fighting within that State; this now manifested itself in an unwillingness to furnish the force south of the river with such equipments and transportation as would render its advance possible. There was, too, a scarcity of war material, and that which was at hand was carelessly used, and in many cases wantonly wasted by troops ignorant of the strict economy of a soldier's life. I need scarcely add that regiments composed of men just called from the field, office and workshop to don the garb of soldiers, commanded, too, by persons as little experienced as themselves in all that pertained to military life, were far from being an army. Nor was it enough to constitute them such simply to assign them to brigades, and to see to it that these brigades were supplied with arms and subsistence. To the work of instruction an efficient staff organization of educated army officers was very much needed, and these could not be furnished—at least, not promptly.

I should do injustice to the volunteers, however, if I failed to note here the earnestness with which all sought, by every means in their power, to become familiar with their duties, and, so far as possible, to overcome the want of military education. Eager search was made by officers, and by many enlisted men, after books on military science, on tactics, field engineering, on duties of staff and line, and even in the broader and more difficult branch of strategy. This spirit of inquiry, this groping after knowledge, was perhaps of little practical value at that early day, but later it did much to add to the efficiency of the army.

The commander, however, was indefatigable, and worked to good purpose. By the beginning of July its effect could be seen in the improved appearance of the troops.

On the eighth of July general order No 13 announces the organization of the troops in the department as consisting of five divisions commanded by Generals Tyler and Runyon, and Colonels Hunter, Heintzelman and Miles. These divisions consisted of twelve brigades, an organization which was not materially changed until after the battle of Bull Run, when the discharge of a large number of three months' regiments left only skeletons of brigades in the field.

In the meantime, however, confidence in our strength had grown inordinately in the North, and the whole power of popular and congressional will was turned to forcing an immediate advance. "Onward to Richmond!" was the cry. Rulers, legislators and people seemed alike to forget that hastily collected bodies of men were not an army, and that without organization and discipline and science in its army, the material strength of the nation was but weakness.

So early had this demand for immediate action become urgent, that on the fourth of June we find General McDowell replying to a letter from the Adjutant General of the army as to the number of men necessary to the capture of Manassas Junction. It is worthy of notice that this letter proposed the organization of field brigades under educated regular officers—a suggestion which did not receive a favorable response, however, until weeks afterward, when the army was on the point of advancing to attack the enemy, and when there was little or no time for anything more than simple organization into brigades and divisions.

At this point I will end my sketch. The story is not new. Much that I have said was known to many of you before. But, if I have so grouped the facts at my command as to give you a clear impression of the danger and doubt which prevailed at Washington when the first troops from the North reached that city; of the efficient steps which were taken to save the capital from the danger of a sudden attack; of the circumstances which surrounded the first movement into Virginia; of the difficulties under which the early organization of this army was effected, and of the degree of organization actually reached prior to the battle of Bull Run; if, above all, I have done anything like justice to the efforts of our first commander, I shall feel that I have done all that I expected to do, and have contributed to the records of our society one brief chapter of the history of the Army of the Potomac.

The events of which I have spoken were rendered comparatively unimportant by the magnitude of its later operations. Of its subsequent trials and struggles and varying fortunes under McClellan, in whom it had so much faith; under brave, patriotic, honest Burnside; under the gallant "Fighting Joe Hooker;" under Meade, "him of the long enduring heart," who, on the soil of his own beloved State, won a fame that shall last as long as the higher qualities of the soldier are revered; of that brilliant campaign, in the immediate presence of Grant, the great captain of the age, which gave to you the final victory over Lee and all his hosts of rebellion; of that joyful meeting on Virginia soil with the gallant veterans who had marched with Sherman from Atlanta to the sea; of these I will not speak, they come not within the limits of my task, and it would require hours to give them the briefest mention.

It is not in vain, comrades, that we recount the story of the war. It can not be repeated too often, nor dwelt upon too long. We of this generation must treasure up its simplest incidents and give them lasting record, not to glorify ourselves, but that our children may know by how much sacrifice and suffering at home, and, alas, at what expense of priceless blood in the field, their liberties have been preserved to them, to the end that the devotion to country which has inspired and exalted the men and women of to-day may become an exhaustless well-spring of patriotism.

Nor is it without benefit to ourselves that we meet together as a society at these annual reunions; not as proud victors to boast "our battles won;" not to exalt ourselves, still less to exult over a brave but fallen foe; our meetings serve a nobler end. Mingling with one another; clasping the hands of comrades endeared by many common dangers; looking into the familiar faces of our beloved chiefs, we find renewed within ourselves, in these quiet days, that fervent love of country which swelled our hearts when dangers were upon us. The waning fire is rekindled. Here, before one another, in the presence of these living witnesses, and in the presence of our noble dead, we renew our vows of fidelity to our country. We go hence baptized anew into her service; as zealous now in this blessed time of peace to guard the honor of her flag as we were to uphold it amid the gloom of war.

LETTER FROM THE RED RIVER COUNTRY.

Grand Republican Demonstration in the Parish of Avoyelles—Reception of Representative Souer—Enthusiasm of the People—Speeches of the Hon. J. L. Souer, Judge Sloanaker and Others—Incidents, Etc.

[From Our Occasional Correspondent.]

MARKSVILLE, LA., May 16, 1871.

EDITOR REPUBLICAN:

As the people of our parish are dependent on the main to your valuable sheet for the news of the day and the needs of our times, I have thought it appropriate to burden the columns of the REPUBLICAN with one of my occasional epistles. The routine of the parish has been enlivened by the business prosecuted in our district court, which has just closed its session here with an enviable record, for the District Attorney has successfully caused the conviction of the petty larceny thieves in our live stock, and our judge has well sustained him by giving the severity of the law to these cormorants of society. This has met with the hearty approval of all classes of our people.

The absorbing topic of interest, which has moved our community out of their usual apathy, and caused rejoicing among the Republicans, and which may be considered as the event of the hour, was the reception extended to the Hon. L. J. Souer, our Representative in the Legislature, on his return in our midst. This was celebrated by a general mass meeting of the parish, held at Moreauville on Sunday, the fourteenth instant, under the auspices of our Republican Parish Executive Committee.

The day was all that the friends of the occasion could desire, although the high state of the water and bad condition of the roads prevented many of our friends from being present; but, notwithstanding these difficulties there were over one thousand of the stalwart yeomen of the parish assembled. At early dawn the appearance of Moreauville, indicated that something more than usual was to transpire during the day, for the flags were the insignia of the approaching celebration. After the usual religious exercises in the morning a procession was formed and marched to the grove, the place of the meeting, which, at two o'clock, was organized under the presidency of Sheriff Noguez, assisted by a long list of officers.

After several speeches by our local orators, Mr. Souer was called upon by the multitude to speak, and received with the greatest enthusiasm when he, in an honest, straightforward manner, rendered to his constituents a full account of his stewardship as their representative, which gave entire satisfaction to all there assembled. He showed them what he had individually endeavored to do in favor of general amnesty, civil rights, education, and the local measures of the parish, as well as the general measures of public policy that are essential to the welfare of our State, and the prosperity of our people.

In alluding to the amended civil rights bill, he sustained the former course of Governor Warmoth on that measure, and, while he supported the present bill which the Governor so heartily approved of, he wanted it distinctly understood that the black man was to have all the rights enjoyed under our system of government by the white men; and the sooner that all classes in good faith accepted this inevitable conclusion arising out of the results of the war the better it would be for the furtherance of the good ends of society; but, nevertheless, he would remind them that no law or custom could break down the social barriers of society, for every man's house was his own castle, and his own companions was the matter of his personal selection; and there always would be, as there always had been, rich and poor, educated and uneducated persons of different hues and complexions which was regulated by itself through the social channels of combination and interests arising through life and departing therefrom by the natural advancement of society in its march of civilization. Hence, into the courts of Europe color has never been a question of caste, while blood and birth always was, but in this country, our caste heretofore has been color, and the laws enacted now was to give all alike the common public rights, leaving the social rights to each individual within himself, as the surest method of mankind's capacity to sustain himself privately in society as publicly his privilege, to have an even chance in the race of life under the blessing of our government. Therefore he had, in advocating the civil rights of his colored fellow citizens, endeavored to promote the good cause of the education of their children, but not only their children, but all children; for education was the greatest boon that governments can confer upon the mass of their votaries, hence the defections in the old school law has been remedied by new legislation, and the school system is now inaugurated and in operation, and its good results will be found in the future, for he assured them that he would cause to be established at least eight schools in the parish, at the earliest practicable moment, for he was determined to have the doors of learning thrown open alike to the poorest of the poor, the whitest and blackest skin, and that, without regard to wealth, race, color, religion or nationality, and he was proud to say that in the future as in the past his constituency could rely upon him within his humble sphere to uphold the principles of the Republican party and the maintenance of the interests of the whole people in the furtherance of the prosperity of the parish, State and our common country. The last, but not the least, speaker of the occasion was that humorous orator of your city, Judge Sloanaker, who had not spoken more than two minutes before the immense crowd roared with laughter. He is one of the men that can not be reported. It is as much his manner as what he says that moves the people, and quite as much his humor and ability to tell a good anecdote well as either of the others. He alluded to the occasion that brought them to rejoice; for an acquaintanceship of years with him whom they delight to honor warranted him in an assurance to them that they had found the right man for the right place; and he gave a fine pen portraiture of Mr. Souer, following it up with a magnificent and eloquent review of the private character and administration of Governor Warmoth, and the annihilation he gave the Governor's foes will be long remembered by our citizens, especially our colored people. Close on the heels of this he gave a masterly review of the administration of President Grant, and then proceeded to dispatch our prejudices against the colored men in a manner that was rich in the extreme. His allusions to the peculiar relations that many of them bore to the whites, if not particularly complimentary, was amusing in the extreme. He hit the nail on the head in every particular in his immense argument, and in regard to the subject of slavery he made the most common sense review that we ever listened to, and was especially applauded when he declared to the negroes that they were set free by God and not by man, who was only a strong instrument in a stronger hand. His illustrative anecdotes in this particular baffles description, and he gave a hasty but eloquent history of the country before and since the war, showing particularly the causes and errors on the part of both sections that had perinduced the war, and the follies that had thus far prevented the return of our former peace to the country, and he called on all old whigs who revered the memory of gallant Henry Clay to rally to the support of Governor Warmoth and the Republican party of this State. "You," he said, "who follow the white plume of Harry of the West through disa