

which he had won. At all events, no one doubted that, with adequate supplies of men and materiel, Johnston would most effectually arrest the further progress of the invaders.

Applications of the most urgent entreaty were addressed by our delegates and leading men in Congress to the President, urging these objects. But, with that dogged and obstinate will which our President seems to regard as a virtue, he declined to restore the commander whom he had already so greatly wronged, and, in respect to reinforcements, these were too tardily furnished, and in too small number, to avail much in offering the requisite resistance to the foe. The reinforcements did not make their appearance in due season for a concentration of our strength at any one point, and our opposition to Sherman, everywhere, consisted of little more than a series of small skirmishes, without result on either side. No pass was held with any tenacity; no battle fought; the enemy were allowed to travel one hundred and fifty miles of our State, through a region of swamp and thicket, in no portion of which could a field be found adequate to the display of ten thousand men, and where, under good partisan leaders, the invaders might have been cut off in separate bodies, their supplies stopped, their march constantly embarrassed, by hard fighting, and where, a bloody toll exacted at every defile, they must have found a Thermopylae at every five miles of their march. We had no partisan fighting, as in the days of old. We had a system, which insisted upon artillery as paramount—in its ed upon arbitrary lines for defence, chosen without any regard to the topography of the country. "We will make a stand," said our chiefs, "at this river crossing or that; then fall back to the next river, and so on to the last." Although, in a thousand places of dense swamp, narrow defile, and almost impenetrable thicket, between these rivers, it would have been easy to find spots where three hundred men, under competent commanders, who knew the country, might most effectually have baffled three thousand. At this very moment, while we write, we doubt if the scattered members of our army have yet been able to rendezvous together for the arrest of Sherman's progress to the coast or through North Carolina. But to return.

IV.

The march of the enemy into our State was characterized by such scenes of brutality, license, plunder and general conflagration, as very soon showed that the threats of the Northern press, and of their soldiery, were not to be regarded as mere *brutum fulmen*. Day by day brought to the people of Columbia tidings of new atrocities committed, and a wider and more extended progress. Daily did long trains of mules line the roads, with wives and children, and horses and stock and cattle, seeking refuge from the wolfish fury which pursued. Long lines of wagons covered the highways. Half naked people covered from the winter under bush tents in the thickets, under the

eaves of houses, under the railroad sheds, and in old cars left them along the route. All these repeated the same story of brutal outrage and great suffering, violence, poverty and nakedness. Habitation after habitation, village after village—one sending up its signal flames to the other, pressing for it the same fate—lighted the winter and midnight sky with crimson horrors. All houses which had been left vacant were first robbed and then destroyed; and where the families still ventured to remain, they were, in most instances, so tortured by insult, violence, robbery and all manner of brutality, that flight became necessary, and the burning of the dwelling soon followed the flight of the owner. No language can describe the sufferings of these fugitives, or the demonic horrors by which they were pursued; nor can any catalogue furnish an adequate detail of the wide-spread destruction of homes and property. Granaries were emptied, and where the grain was not carried off, it was strewn to waste under the feet of their cavalry, or consigned to the fire which consumed the dwelling. The negroes were robbed equally with the whites of food and clothing. The roads were covered with butchered cattle, hogs, mules and the costliest furniture. Nothing was permitted to escape. Valuable cabinets, rich pianos, were not only hewn to pieces, but bottles of ink, turpentine, oil, whatever could efface or destroy, upon which they could conveniently lay hands, was employed to defile and ruin. Horses were ridden into the houses. Sick people were forced from their beds, to permit the search after hidden treasures. In pursuit of these, the most diabolic ingenuity was exercised, and the cunning of the Yankee, in robbing, proved far superior to that of the negro for concealment. The beautiful homesteads of the parish country, with their wonderful tropical gardens, were ruined; ancient dwellings of black cypress, one hundred years old, which had been reared by the fathers of the republic—men whose names were famous in Revolutionary history—were given to the torch as recklessly as were the rudest hovels; the ancient furniture was hewn to pieces; the costly collections of China were crushed wantonly under foot; choice pictures and works of art, from Europe; select and numerous libraries, objects of peace wholly; were all destroyed. The summer retreats, simple cottages of slight and unpretending structure, were equally devoted to the flames; and, where the dwellings were not destroyed—and they were only spared while the inhabitants resolutely remained in them—they were robbed of all their portable contents, and what the plunderer could not bear away, was ruthlessly hewn to pieces. The inhabitants, black no less than white, were left to starve, compelled to feed only upon the garbage to be found in the abandoned camps of the enemy. The corn scraped up from the spots where the horses fed, has been the only means of life left to thousands but lately in affluence. It was the avowed policy of the enemy to reach our armies through the suffer-

ings of their women and children—to starve out the families of those gallant soldiers whom they had failed to subdue in battle.

And thus plundering, destroying, burning, they made their way through a portion of Beaufort into Barnwell District, where they pursued the same game. The villages of Buford's Bridge, of Barnwell, Blackville, Graham's, Bamberg, Midway, were more or less destroyed; the wretched inhabitants everywhere left homeless and without food. The horses and mules, all cattle and hogs, whenever fit for service or for food, were stolen, and all the rest shot. Every implement of the workman or the farmer, tools, plows, hoes, gins, looms, wagons, vehicles, was made to feed the flames. From Barnwell to Orangeburg and Lexington was the next progress, marked everywhere by the same sweeping destruction. Both of these court towns were burned—the former partially, the latter wholly. Both were thoroughly plundered of all valuables which could be carried away.

V.

Tidings of these atrocities duly reached the people of Columbia, and might have prepared them for the treatment they were destined to receive. Daily accessions of fugitives flying before the enemy, bringing with them their valuables and provisions, made ample report of the horrid progress of the ruffianly despot. Hundreds of families had seasonably left long before, in anticipation of the danger. Columbia was naturally held to be one of the most secure places of refuge. It was never doubted that this capital city, which contained so many of the manufactures of the Confederate Government, the treasury, &c., would be defended with all the concentrated vigor of which the Confederacy was capable, especially, too, as upon the several railroads connected with the city, the army of Lee and the safety of Richmond were absolutely dependent. Young women of family were sent in large numbers to a city, where numbers seemed to promise a degree of security not to be hoped for in any obscure rural abode. The city was accordingly doubled in population, and here also was to be found an accumulation of wealth, in plate, jewels, pictures, books, manufactures of art and *virtu*, not to be estimated—not, perhaps, to be paralleled in any other town of the Confederacy. In many instances, the accumulations were those of a hundred years—of successive generations—in the hands of the oldest families of the South. A large proportion of the wealth of Charleston had been stored in the capital city, and the owners of these treasures, in many instances, were unable to effect any farther remove. If apprehensive of the danger, they could only fold their hands, and hoping against hope, pray for escape from a peril to which they could oppose no farther vigilance or effort.

Still, the lurking belief with most persons, who apprehended the approach of the enemy, encouraged the faith that, as the city was