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From the Richmond Dispatch May 20.
"The Destruction of the Virginia."
LETTER FROM COM. TATNALL.

The following is a copy of a letter addressed by Commodore Tattall to Secretary Mallory.

RICHMOND, May, 14th 1862.
In detailing to you the circumstances which caused the destruction of the C. S. steamer Virginia, and her movements a few days previous to that event, I begin with your telegraphic dispatches to me of the 4th and 5th instants, directing me to take such a position in the James river as would entirely prevent the enemy's ascending it.

General Huger commanding at Norfolk, on learning that I had received the order, called on me and declared that its execution would oblige him to abandon immediately his forts on Craney Island and Sewall's Point, and their guns to the enemy. I informed him that, as the order was imperative, I must execute it, but suggested that he should telegraph you and state the consequences. He did so, and on the 6th instant you telegraphed to me to endeavor to afford protection to Norfolk as well as the James river, which replaced me in my original position. I then arranged with the General that he should notify me when his preparations for the evacuation of Norfolk were sufficiently advanced to enable me to act independently.

On the 7th instant Commodore Hollins reached Norfolk with orders from you to consult with me and such officers as I might select in regard to the best disposition to be made of the Virginia, under the present aspect of things.

We had arranged the conference for the next day, the 8th; but on that day, before the hour appointed, the enemy attacked the Sewall's Point battery, and I left immediately with the Virginia to defend it.

We found six of the enemy's vessels, including the iron clad steamers Monitor and Naugatuck, shelling the battery. We passed the battery, and stood directly for the enemy, for the purpose of engaging him, and I thought an action certain, particularly as the Minnesota and Vanderbilt, which were anchored below Fortress Monroe, got under way and stood up to that point, apparently with the intention of joining their squadron in the Roads. Before, however, we got within gun-shot, the enemy ceased firing and retired with all speed under the protection of the guns of the Fortress, followed by the Virginia until the shells from the Rip Raps passed over her.

The Virginia was then placed at her moorings near Sewall's Point, and I returned to Norfolk to hold the conference referred to.

It was held on the 9th, and the officers present were Colonel Anderson and Captain— of the army, selected by General Huger, who was too unwell to attend himself, and of the navy, myself, Commodore Hollins, and Captains Sterritt and Lee, Commander Richards, L. Jones, and Lieutenants, Ap. Catesby Jones and J. Pembroke Jones.

The opinion was unanimous that the Virginia was then employed to the best advantage, and that she should continue, for the present, to protect Norfolk and thus afford time to remove the public property.

On the next day, at 10 o'clock, A. M., we observed from the Virginia that the flag was not flying on the Sewall's Point Battery, and that it appeared to have been abandoned. I dispatched Lieutenant J. P. Jones, the Flag Lieutenant, to Craney Island, where the Confederate flag was still flying, and he there learned that a large force of the enemy had landed on the bay shore, and were marching rapidly on Norfolk, that the Sewall's Point Battery was abandoned and our troops were retreating. I then dispatched the same officer to Norfolk, to confer with General Huger and Captain Lee. He found the Navy Yard in flames, and that all its officers had left by railroad. On reaching Norfolk he found that General Huger and all the other officers of the army had also left, that the enemy were within a half mile of the city, and that the Mayor was treating for its surrender.

On returning to the ship, he found that Craney Island and all the other batteries on the river had been abandoned. It was now seven o'clock in the evening, and this unexpected confirmation rendered prompt measures necessary for the safety of the Virginia.

The pilots had assured me that they would take the ship, with a draft of sixteen feet, to within forty miles of Richmond.

This the chief pilot, Mr. Parrish, and his chief assistant, Mr. Wright, had asserted again and again; and on the afternoon of the 7th, in my cabin, in the presence of Commodore Hollins and Captain Sterritt, in reply to a question of mine, they both emphatically declared their ability to do so.

Confiding in these assurances, and, after consulting with the First and Flag Lieutenants, and learning that the officers, generally, thought it the most judicious course, I determined to lighten the ship at once, and run up the river for the protection of Richmond.

All hands having been called on deck, I stated to them the condition of things, and my hope that, by getting up the river before the enemy could be made aware of our designs, we might capture his vessels which had ascended it and render efficient aid to the defence of Richmond; but that to effect this would require all their aid in lightening the ship. They replied with three cheers, and went to work at once. The pilots were on deck and heard this address to the crew.

Being quite unwell, I had retired to bed. Between one and two o'clock in the morning the First Lieutenant reported to me that, after the crew had worked for five or six hours, and lifted the ship so as to render her unfit for action, the pilots had declared their inability to carry eighteen feet above the Jamestown Flats, up to which point the shore, on each side, was occupied by the enemy.

On demanding from the chief pilot, Mr. Parrish, an explanation of this palpable deception, he replied that eighteen feet could be carried after the prevalence of easterly winds, and that the wind for the last two days had been westerly.

I had no time to lose. The ship was not in a condition for battle, even with an enemy of equal force—and their force was overwhelming. I therefore determined, with the concurrence of the First and Flag Lieutenants, to save the crew for future service, by landing them at Craney Island, the only road for retreat open to us, and to destroy the ship to prevent her falling into the hands of the enemy. I may add, that although not formally consulted, the course was approved by every commissioned officer in the ship.

There was no dissenting opinion. The ship was accordingly put on shore near the mainland, in the vicinity of Craney Island, as possible, and the crew landed, as possible, and the ship after burning fiercely fore and aft for upwards of an hour, blew up a little before five on the morning of the 11th.

We marched for Suffolk, twenty-two miles, and reached it in the evening, and from thence came by railroad to this city.

It will be asked what motives the pilots could have had to deceive me. The only imaginable one is, that they wished to avoid going into battle.

Had the ship not been lifted, so as to render her unfit for action a desperate contest must have ensued with a force against us too great to justify much hope of success; and, as battle is not their occupation, they adopted this deceitful course to avoid it. I cannot imagine any other motive; for I had seen no reason to distrust their good faith to the Confederacy.

My acknowledgments are due to the First Lieutenant, Ap. Catesby Jones, for his untiring exertions, and for the aid he rendered me in all things. The details for firing the ship and landing the crew were left to him, and everything was conducted with the most perfect order.

To the other officers of the ship, generally, I am also thankful for the great aid they displayed throughout. The Virginia no longer exists, but 300 brave and skillful officers and seamen are saved to the Confederacy.

I presume that a Court of Inquiry will be ordered to examine into all the circumstances I have narrated, and I earnestly solicit it; public opinion will never be put right without it.

I am, sir, with great respect,
Your obedient servant,
[Signed] JESSE TATNALL,
Flag Officer Commanding.

Hon. S. R. Mallory, Secretary of Navy.

Those who walk most are generally healthiest; the road of perfect health is too narrow for wheels.

If a steamboat passenger can't pay fare, he is sure to get a blowing up.

(Written for the Beacon.)
SUGGESTED

BY READING CAPT. JONES' LINES
ENTITLED

"MY MARYLAND."

BY LADY OF ST. MARY'S COURT.

Oh! Capt. Jones don't write again—
Your silly lines cannot be scanned.

Take up the sword—resign the pen
And cease to sing "My Maryland."

Alas! Lincoln calls for fighting men
(These wretched Yankees will not stand.)

Then Capt. Jones resign the pen
And meet the men of Maryland.

You'll find them where the cannons roar—
You'll find them where the bullets fly—
You'll find them on Virginia's shore
Where brave old true men win or die.

Virginia called to them for aid
(She called upon a gallant band)

With willing hearts each one obeyed,
And left their homes in "Maryland."

They strike for just and equal laws—
They strike to free their native land—
Their war-cry at Manassas was
"My Maryland! My Maryland!"

God of the just spread thy shield
Around the brave heroic band,
And guard on every battle field
These noble men of Maryland.

"THE SOUTHERN CROSS"

In the name of God! Amen!
Stand for our Southern Rights!

Over you, Southern men,
The God of battles fights!

Fling the Invader's flag—
Hurl back their work of woe—
The voice is the voice of a brother,
But the hands are the hands of a foe.

They come with a trampling army,
Tearing our native soil—
Stand, Southern, fight and conquer!
In the name of the mighty God!

They are singing our song of triumph,
Which was made to make us free,
While they're breaking away the heart strings
Of our Nation's harmony.

Sadly it floats from us,
Sighing o'er land and wave,
Till mute on the lips of the Poet,
It sleeps in his Southern grave.

Spirit and song! departed!
Mist and mistle! depart!
We mourn thee, heavy-hearted!
But we will, we shall be free!

They are waving our flag above us,
With a despotic tyrant will,
With our blood they have stained its colors,
And call it holy still.

With fearful eyes, but steady hand,
We'll tear its stripes apart,
And fling them like broken fetters,
That may not bind the heart—
But we'll save our stars of glory,
In the night of the sacred sign
Of Him who has fixed forever
Our "Southern Cross" to shine.

Stand Southern, fight and conquer!
Solemn and strong and sure!
The fight shall not be longer
Than God shall bid endure.

By the lie which only yesterday
Waked with the infant's breath!
By the feet which, ere the morn, may
Tread to the soldier's death!

By the blood which cries to heaven!
Crimson upon our soil!
Stand, Southern, fight and conquer
In the name of the mighty God!

(From the Richmond Dispatch.)
NEVER DESPOND.

There is no denying the fact that the course of this war has brought many Southern men to a condition of depression which is not warranted by the facts, and which, for the sake of the cause, ought to be shaken off. For the sake of the cause, we say—may, for the sake of their own credit, as patriots and men, let them cheer up, take new resolution and fresh hope, and giving their hands with renewed energy to the struggle, with the blessings of God, a few months will put a new phase on affairs, and destroy the hopes of the enemy in his boasted efforts to "crush out the rebellion."

It cannot be denied that many things have gone away. It cannot be denied that our preparations for defence on the water were critically delayed. It cannot be denied that a long pause of apathy, indolence, dissipation, and recklessness, followed the battle of Manassas. The Government went to sleep, officers, if not soldiers, drank hard and did not a great deal of discipline and less in the way of campaigning, while the enemy worked night and day for our subjugation. Nothing was done worthy of notice in the way of increasing our forces until the beginning of the present year. Up to the time of McClellan's advance upon Manassas, General Johnston was left with no effective force to meet such an army as the enemy brought into the field. Our defensive policy, pushed to an extreme that many thought perilous, became unavoidable for the want of power to pursue a different one. It is true, that our only great achievement on the water was the greatest known to the world; but it is equally true, that the wonderful agent by which it was accomplished has recently been blown up in full view of the enemy which dreaded her and which had repeatedly run from her as they would from Vesuvius while in a state of eruption. All this is true, and more than this,

to produce dissatisfaction and complaint. Let us look on the other side of the picture.

The best of Governments, in a time like that we are passing through, would be complained of, and the complaints would be upon every reverse or discomfiture, and might be, however blameless the Government might be. Through our fault, we have been driven to the men who compose it are true to the cause, that they are the constituted authorities under the Constitution; that under them we must conquer or be conquered, and that we must give them all the support and confidence we can, trusting that they will profit by experience and make every disaster the occasion for improving their measures for defence.

But with all the mistakes and blunders that may be alleged, what is the state of the case? The Southern army has not been defeated anywhere in a field fight in which the enemy was not assisted by his gunboats. The disasters we have met with have been all at isolated posts on the water, where the enemy could bring the most approved machinery of his mechanical genius to bear upon our imperfectly constructed and imperfectly guarded defences. There, and there only, has he triumphed. It is true, he has gained important advantages by our disasters at these points; but they did not establish for him any such superiority over us as to justify a hope that he would conquer us, or to warrant the fear on our part that we would be subjugated. They forced us to draw in our lines of defence and concentrate our troops; and they forced him, of necessity, to follow after us and essay our defeat by attacking our army, thus concentrated, away from the element where his only great advantage over us is apparent. In this new phase of the game of the war, if we may judge from the great contests with the enemy in the open field as indicative of the future—we may not only be hopeful, but confident. Our armies must triumph. We cannot doubt it. The motives, the men, the situation, all inevitably force the conclusion that victory, undisputed, clear and decisive, must finally be on our side.

The summer is at hand. The waters must fall so as to curtail the power of the too much dreaded gunboats. The diseases of the climate must tell upon the invader. He has more country to guard in the far South, and must be severely harassed and weakened by pestilence. His large armies in various directions, as they have penetrated farther from their homes, must be vitiated with immense increasing difficulty, (indeed we know here how they have already suffered in the Peninsula.) Our sufferings in our own land cannot be so great as his; but we ought to endure and bear more than he can, as we struggle for all that is dear on earth, and be only for power and plunder. At such a time, and amid such discomfords of the enemy, if we are not sufficiently active and sagacious, we shall strike blows upon him from which he cannot recover. He is expending all his power and means to subjugate us. We have but to be constantly persevering and watchful—never relaxing, never desponding—and he will inevitably break down in his night crusade. It cannot be long maintained in such vast proportions. It is a thing impossible.

The first great event will likely be the attempt to take this city. The fight in this vicinity will be a great struggle. Our soldiers are confident, and our people rely upon them and their commanders. Beauregard's great battle, if it does not precede this, will follow soon afterwards. If they are in our favor it will probably end the war; at all events, the enemy could not recover two such defeats this year. Should either or both be against us, we must only gather up the remains of battle and prepare for that prolonged struggle which, with a brave people and undegenerate descendants of the men of the Revolution of '76, must terminate in favor of liberty and independence.

But we repeat, the battles thus far in the field prove that our true and brave Southern men can defeat the enemy with the odds of numbers on his side. The continuation of the war will only continue this illustration in our favor. There is no reason for despondency. We may regret blunders and time lost; but we have the greatest cause for consolation, nay, rejoicing, that we have accomplished so much upon such short notice, and should never fail to remember that in every contest where there was the least semblance of fairness and with the odds always against us, we have proved our power to whip the enemy, and his utter inability to conquer the country.

Let us, therefore, take courage—cheer up—sustain the Government—strengthen and feed the army—stand by the cause to the bitter end, and we shall conquer gloriously, and ere long enjoy the peace and independence which it is so hoped we shall have merited.

"My boy," exclaimed a deacon, "you do very wrong to fish on Sunday."

"It ain't no harm, deacon, I haven't catch any," replied the boy.

AFFECTING SCENE.
LORD CHIEF JUSTICE TINDALE PRESIDING.

George Hammond, a portrait painter, was placed at the bar to be tried on an indictment found against himself by the Grand Jury, for the willful murder, with malice aforethought, of George Baldwin, a rope-dancer and mountebank. The prisoner was a man of moderate height, but slender form. His eyes were blue and mild. His whole bearing gave evidence of subdued sadness and melancholy resignation. He was 41 years of age, had a soft voice, and his appearance and manner bore evidence of his being a man of distinguished education, in spite of the poverty of his dress.

On being called out to plead, the prisoner admitted that he did kill Baldwin, and he deplored the act—adding, however, that, on his soul and conscience, he did not believe himself guilty. Thereupon a jury was empaneled to try the prisoner. The indictment was then read to the jury, and the act of killing being admitted, the Government rested their case, and the prisoner was called upon for his defence.

The prisoner then addressed himself to the Court and Jury:

"My Lord," said he, "my justification is to be found in a recital of the facts. Three years ago I lost a daughter, then four years of age, the sole memorial of a beloved wife, whom it had pleased God to recall to himself. I lost her, but I did not see her die. She disappeared—she was taken from me. She was a charming child, and but her I had nobody in the world to love me. Gentle men, what I have suffered cannot be described; you cannot comprehend it. I had expended in advertising and fruitless searches everything I possessed—furniture, pictures, even to my clothes. All have been sold. For three years on foot I have been seeking for my child in all the cities and all the villages in the three kingdoms. As soon as by painting portraits I had succeeded in gaining a little money, I returned to London to commence my adventures in the newspapers. At length, on Friday, the 14th of April last, I crossed the Smithfield cattle market. In the centre of the market a troupe of mountebanks were performing their feats. Among them a child was turning on its head, supported on a halberd. A ray from the soul of its mother must have penetrated my own, for me to have recognized my child in that condition. It was my poor child. Her mother would perhaps have precipitated herself toward her, and locked herself in her arms. As for me, a veil passed over my eyes. I knew not how it was—I, habitually gentle, even to weakness, seized him by the clothes—I raised him in the air, then dashed him to the ground—then again, he was dead. Afterward I repeated what I had done. At the moment I regretted that I was able to kill but one."

Lord Chief Justice Tindale—These are not Christian sentiments. How can you expect the Court and jury to look with favor on your defence, or God to pardon you, if you cannot forgive?"

Prisoner—"I know, my Lord, what will be your judgment, and that of the jury; but God has pardoned me; I feel it in my heart. You know not, I know not then, the whole extent of the evil that man had done. When some compassionate people brought me my daughter in prison, she was no longer my child; she was no longer pure and angelic as formerly; she was corrupt, body and soul—her manner, her language, infamous—like those with whom she had been living. I did not recognize her myself. Do you comprehend now? That man had robbed me of the love and soul of my child. And I—I have killed him but once."

Foreman—"My Lord, we have agreed on our verdict."

Chief Justice—"I understand you, gentlemen, but the law must take its course. I must sum up the case, and then you will retire to deliberate."

The Chief Justice having summed up the case, the jury retired, and in an instant after returned into Court with a verdict of "Not guilty."

On the discharge of Hammond, the sheriff was obliged to surround him with an escort. The women were determined to carry him off in triumph. The crowd followed him all the way to his lodgings with deafening shouts and huzzas.

POLITICS OF FEDERAL GENERALS.—Among those understood to be of Democratic antecedents, are the following:—McClellan, Halleck, McDowell, Butler, Dix, Wood, Bull, Shields, Buensile, Men-feld, Keys, Heintzelman, Franklin, C. F. Smith, (deceased,) Lander, (deceased,) Anderson, Rosecrans, Sigel, Denner, Sturgis, G. A. Thomas, W. T. and T. W. Sherman, Grant, McClernand, Crittenden, Logan, Rousseau, Nelson, Wynn, I. I. Stevens, Sickles, Mulligan, Col. Corcoran, and Geary.

Among those of Republican antecedents, are:—Fremont, Banks, Sumner, Lane, Pope, Curtiss, Phelps, Tyler, Schenck, Hunter, Prentiss, Governor Morgan, Ferry, Terry, King, Pierce.

The Figures on Dress Parade.

Assuming an army of 600,000 men formed into line, single rank, they would show a front of 23 miles, allowing two feet to a man, which is rather close packing for free movements. We will counter-march one-half—the right wing—and place them as a rear rank, (the usual formation) which would have a front of 11 1/2 miles, while the front they would require when marching in column of platoons, should the generalissimo wish to make a rapid inspection, if he had the appliance of a parallel railroad track and a fast locomotive, he may run down in front of the lines in a quarter of an hour, and make a hasty review. If mounted on his charger, at a smart trot, it would require over a half hour. This respectable army formed in hollow square, (in double rank) would be nearly three miles from side to side, showing on each front a fraction under three miles. The inclosure would contain about 5,700 acres, an area equal to some immense Indian cornfields in Illinois. When marching in column, it would require a whole day, taking the thing easy, for the extreme left wing to reach the point left by the right wing in the early start. When we add the commissariat, artillery, ammunition, and other wheel transports, we must give the army two whole days before the left wing *dévoch* from the starting point of the right wing. If this immense army were formed in solid square, allowing about four feet for a man, they would cover about 150 acres, and form a block of bayonets a fraction under a quarter of a mile square. Estimating each man as carrying weight of muskets, equipments, rations, &c., at fifty pounds, this will have weighed along with 15,000 tons weight. Allowing two pounds of provisions per man for each man, they consume 600 tons per day, and if they consume one quart of water per day, which is the best drink for an army, they consume 150,000 gallons—say 1,200 hog-heads—which is a clever sized ship-load each day.

HUNTER VS. LINCOLN.—The difference between Hunter and Lincoln is not in any disagreement about the object desired by both, but as to who and in what manner it shall be done. Both parties evidently desire to crush the South and free the negroes. Mr. Lincoln, however, does not choose that any of his subordinates shall "assume" any of the prerogatives which he claims as his own. We do not think that the Constitution gives any more right to Mr. Lincoln to interfere with the personal rights of individuals, or the institutions of the several States, than to Gen. Hunter. Mr. Lincoln is as much bound by the Constitution, (the supreme law of the land,) as any other citizen, and has no more right to trample upon its express provisions than the meanest man among us.

If he does not intend to carry out the abolition schemes of Fremont and Hunter, why did he not say so in plain and unmistakable terms. Hunter's position is plain. Mr. Lincoln's holds in abeyance, to be adapted to future contingencies. This is the only difference in them.—*Balt. Republican.*

[From the Crescent.]
HON. PIERRE SOULÉ.—By some oversight we have neglected until this time to accord to our distinguished fellow-citizen, Pierre Soule, the just meed of praise which has been so eminently his due for services arduous and efficiently rendered in our present troubles. As the adviser of the Mayor and Council, as the mediator, with his mighty force of letters between them and the Federal Naval Commander, as the orator of the people, urging them to mildness and forbearance, yet transcendent dignity and honor—in all these capacities he has been the "head and front" of a people bowed in affliction, but not of despair, and whose wide and fearless action will be admitted to the "latest syllable of recorded time." No pen can over-estimate his worth, no words sufficiently recount his lofty patriotism.

PILL KEEP 'EM AWAKE.—Near Newark, N. J., lived a very pious family, who had taken an orphan to raise, who, by the way, was rather underwritten. He had imbibed very strict views on religious matters, however, and once asked his adopted mother if she didn't think it wrong for the old farmers to come to church and fall asleep, paying no better regard to the service. She replied she did. Accordingly, before going to church the next Sunday, he filled his pockets with apples. One, half-headed old man, who invariably went to sleep during the sermon, particularly attracted his attention. So he hid himself and nudging and giving nasal evidence of being in the "land of dreams," he handed off and took the astonished sleeper, with an apple, square on the top of his left pate.—The minister and aroused congregation at once turned around and indignantly eyed at the boy, who merely said to the preacher, as he took another apple in his hand, with a sober, honest expression of countenance:—"You preach I'll keep 'em awake."