

HOW LEE ENDED WAR NEW SHORT STORIES

Would Not Keep Up Guerrilla Struggle After Appomattox.

IT WAS A MOMENTOUS DECISION

Charles Francis Adams Draws a Parallel Between Situation in South Africa and the Closing Days of the Confederacy—Paper Read Before American Antiquarian Society.

Charles Francis Adams in an address before the American Antiquarian society at Springfield, Mass., reviewed the history of Lee's surrender and compared the struggle of the south with the present war in South Africa. What he said was new and included a hitherto unpublished chapter of American history. He said in part:

The present seems to me a sufficiently proper occasion, and this a good place, to call attention to a matter not otherwise than germane to the purpose of this society. Historical in its character, it conveys a lesson of grave import. One of the most unhappy and, to those concerned in it, disastrous wars of the century is that now in South Africa dragging itself out to a conclusion apparently still remote and, in every way, unsatisfactory. There is good reason to think that the conflict was unnecessary in its inception; that by judicious action it might long since have been brought to a close, and, finally, that it is now continued simply because the parties to it cannot be brought together to discuss and arrive at a sensible basis of adjustment—a basis upon which both are in reality ready to agree. Nevertheless, as the cable dispatches daily show, the contest drags wearily along to the probable destruction of one of the combatants, to the great loss of the other and, so far as can be seen, in utter disregard of the best interests of both.

My purpose, however, is to draw attention to the hairbreadth escape we ourselves had from a similar experience now thirty-five years ago and to assign to whom it belongs the credit of that escape. In one word, in the strong light of passing events I think it now opportune to set forth the debt of gratitude this reunited country of ours—Union and Confederate, north and south—owes to Robert E. Lee.

The decision rested in the hands of one man—the commander of the Army of Northern Virginia. Fairly reliable and very graphic accounts of what took place at General Lee's headquarters in the early morning hours of that day have either appeared in print or been told in conversation, and to two of these accounts I propose to call attention. Apparently the second of the interviews described followed close on the first, not more than a couple of hours intervening between them. Of the first I find this account in a book recently published by John Sargent Wise, entitled "The End of an Era." John Sargent Wise is the son of Henry A. Wise, once prominent in our national politics. Governor of Virginia in the later fifties, he was subsequently a brigadier general in the Confederate service. Though in 1865 but a youth of nineteen, John S. Wise was a hot Confederate and had already been wounded in battle. At the time now in question he chanced to have been sent by Jefferson Davis, then on his way to Richmond, to Danville with dispatches to Lee, and, while seeking Lee's headquarters, he came in the early morning of April 9 across his father, Governor and General Wise, in bivouac with his brigade. The father was then nearly sixty years of age, but the son found him lying on the ground asleep among his men. A typical southern "fire eater" of the extreme type, Henry A. Wise was an out and out secessionist and Confederate. Aroused by his son from his uneasy slumber, almost the first wish he expressed was to see General Lee, and he inquired impetuously of his whereabouts. The two started to go to General Lee's headquarters.

"We found General Lee on a rear portico of the house he occupied," says Mr. Wise. "He had washed his face in a tin basin and stood drying his beard with a coarse towel as we approached. 'General Lee,' exclaimed my father, 'my poor, brave men are lying on yonder hill more dead than alive. For more than a week they have been fighting day and night without food, and, sir, they shall not move another step until somebody gives them something to eat.'

"Come in, general," said General Lee soothingly. "They deserve something to eat and shall have it, and meanwhile you shall share my breakfast." He disarmed everything like defiance by his frankness.

"It was but a few moments, however, before my father launched forth in a fresh denunciation of the conduct of General Bushrod Johnson in the engagement of the 6th. I am satisfied that General Lee felt as he did, but, assuming an air of mock severity, he said, 'General, are you aware that you are liable to court martial and execution for insubordination and disrespect toward your commanding officer?'

"My father looked at him with lifted eyebrow and flashing eyes and exclaimed: 'Shot! You can't afford to shoot the men who fight for cursing those who ran away. Shot! I wish you would shoot me. If you don't, some Yankee probably will within the next twenty-four hours.'

"Growing more serious" General Lee inquired what he thought of the situation.

"'Situation?' said the bold old man. 'There is no situation! Nothing remains, General Lee, but to put your poor men on your poor mules and send them home in time for spring plowing.

Charity of Dan Rice.

The circus has not always been considered a desirable adjunct to the church, and it must have been a desperate situation, that tempted a group of Indiana women to seek aid in such a quarter.

It happened at a time when the famous Dan Rice was trying to steer his circus through financial breakers. He had got as far as Vincennes, and there one day in a melancholy mood he was standing in front of the tent figuring on the prospect of getting out of town at all and gloomily listening to disparaging comments on his band by the townsfolk when he was approached by a party of ladies, one of whom said:

"Colonel Rice, we have always heard of you as a very charitable man. Unfortunately our church has been damaged and needs a new roof. We thought you might be willing to subscribe toward it."

The humor of the situation appealed to the old showman. Here he was, without a dollar he could call his own, asked to contribute to charity. He pulled a nickel out of his pocket and said with the utmost gravity:

"Ladies, this may appear to you a small amount, but it represents all the money I possess. However, I believe heartily in the cause you are pleading, and I shall not utterly refuse your request. I promise you that if this show does any business here I will not only contribute toward repairing your church, but I will put a new roof on it."

For one reason or another—perhaps the ladies might explain it—the two performances that day netted so large a sum that the old showman was enabled to pay his way to the next town and the church to rejoice in a new roof.

Made Mr. McKinley's Speech.

A well known general of the civil war, who has since become prominent in United States politics and is now a senator from one of the western states, was going to speak at a political meeting at Marlboro, O., and so also was Mr. McKinley, then a congressman. They drove down from Canton together. As they were driving along the general asked his companion for some suggestions, and the latter kindly explained the situation and advanced arguments in support of the position of the Republican party. Mr. McKinley, as usual, had his subject well in hand, but, in addition, was fortified with notes giving certain statistics in corroboration of his argument. He told



"MAJOR, JUST HAND ME THOSE DOCUMENTS," the general about what line of thought he intended to pursue in making his speech at Marlboro, and the latter, who was to speak first, agreed that he would say very little and would leave the bulk of argument to Mr. McKinley. The general duly made his bow to the audience and began his speech. As he became warmed up the recollection of what Mr. McKinley had been talking about on the way to the meeting became stronger, and he began pursuing the line of argument that his companion had prepared for himself. The general laid down his proposition just as the major had done in the carriage and finally said: "And I can prove all this. Major, just hand me those documents." And then he proceeded to read at length from Mr. McKinley's notes. When the general had finished, there was little left for the major to say.—Chicago News.

Mrs. Cornwallis-West's Wit.

Not so long ago Joseph Chamberlain refused, with that firmness, not to say obstinacy, that is so irritating to the inquiring mind, to discuss the war with Mrs. George Cornwallis-West. "I see," she said sweetly, "you prefer to discuss your indiscretions in public." Not long after the colonial secretary made some rather sarcastic remark about the political activity of certain women, adding that he could not understand why American women, who kept out of politics at home, overwhelmed us in England. "Ah," said Mrs. Cornwallis-West innocently, "American men are too intelligent to need our educating influence."

Let Into a Secret.

During General Sherman's famous "march to the sea" both north and south were completely mystified as to what point the general was striking for, and one day an old Georgia planter who had called at his headquarters and enjoyed his good cheer asked him boldly if he had any objection to telling where his army was bound. "Not the least," said Sherman. Then, leaning over, he whispered in his guest's ear, but so loudly that everybody else in the tent overheard it, "We are going pretty much where we please!"

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