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ROBERT EDWARD LEE.

BY GENERAL LORD GARNET WOLSELEY.

Macmillan's Magazine.

The history of the war between the Northern and Southern States of North America is yet to be written. General Long's work on the great Confederate general is a contribution toward the history of that grand but unsuccessful struggle to the seceding States to shake off all political connection with the Union Government. It will be read with interest as coming from the pen of one who was Lee's military secretary, and its straightforward, soldier like style will commend it to all readers. It is not my intention to enter upon any narrative of the events which led to that fratricidal war. The unprejudiced outsider will generally admit the sovereign right, both historical and legal which each State possessed under the Constitution, to leave the Union when its people thought fit to do so. At the same time, of Englishmen who believe that "union is strength," and who are themselves determined that no dismemberment of their own empire shall be allowed, few will find fault with the men of the North for their manly determination, come what might, to resist every effort of their brothers in the south to break up the Union. It was but natural that all Americans should be proud of the empire which the military genius of General Washington had created, despite the efforts of England to retain her Colonies.

It is my wish to give a short outline of General Lee's life, and to describe him as I saw him in the autumn of 1862, when at the head of proud and victorious troops he smiled at the notion of defeat by any army that could be sent against him. I desire to make known to the reader not only the renowned soldier, whom I believe to have been the greatest of his age, but to give some insight into the character of one whom I have always considered the most perfect man I ever met. Twenty-eight years have passed since the battle of Secession was ended, but even still, anger remembrances of it prevent Americans from taking an impartial view of the contest, and of those who were the leaders in it. Outsiders can best weigh and determine the merits of the chief actors on both sides, but if in this attempt to estimate General Lee's character I offend any one by the out-spoken expression of my opinions, I hope I may be forgiven. On one side I can see, in the dogged determination of the North persevered in to the end through years of recurring failure, the spirit for which the men of Britain have always been remarkable. It is a virtue to which the United States owed its birth in the last century, and its preservation in 1865. It is the quality to which the Anglo-Saxon race is most indebted for its great position in the world. On the other hand, I can recognise the chivalrous valor of those gallant men whom Lee led to victory; who fought not only for fatherland and in defence of home, but for those rights most prized by free men. Washington's stalwart soldiers were styled rebels by our king and his ministers, and in like manner the men who wore the gray uniform of the Southern Confederacy were denounced as rebels from the banks of the Potomac to the head waters of the St. Lawrence. Lee's soldiers, well versed as all Americans are in the history of their forefathers' struggle against King George the Third, and believing firmly in the justice of their cause, saw the same virtue in one rebellion that was to be found in the other. This was a point upon which, during my stay in Virginia in 1862, I found every Southerner laid the greatest stress. It is a feeling that as yet has not been fully acknowledged by writers on the Northern side.

"Rebellion, foul dishonoring word,
Whose syllables blight as with blasting breath
The noblest name that lives on scroll
Of mortal revolt or rights!
How many a spirit born to blest
Has sunk beneath the withering name,
Whom fate's a day's, an hour's mischance,
Has wafted to eternal fame."

As a looker-on, I feel that both parties in the war have so much to be proud of, that both can afford to hear what impartial Englishmen or foreigners have to say about it. Inflated and bubble reputation were acquired during its progress, few of which will bear the test of time. The idol momentarily set up, often for political reasons, crumbles in time into the dust from which its limbs were perhaps originally moulded. To me, however, two figures stand out in that history towering above all others, both cast in hard metal that will be forever proof against the belittling efforts of all future detractors. One, General Lee, the great soldier: the other, Mr. Lincoln, the far-seeing statesman of iron will, of unflinching determination. Each is a good representative of the genius that characterized his country. As I study the history of the Secession war, these seem to me the two men who influenced it most, and who will be recognized as its greatest heroes when future generations of American historians record its stirring events with impartiality.

General Lee came from the class of landed gentry that has furnished England at all times with her most able and distinguished leaders. The first of his family who went to America was Richard Lee, who in 1641 became Colonial Secretary to the Governor of Virginia. Several of the family distinguished themselves during the War of Independence, amongst whom was Henry, the father of General Robert Lee. He raised a mounted corps known as "Lee's Legion," in command of which he obtained the reputation of being an able and gallant soldier. He was nicknamed by his comrades, "Light Horse Harry." He was three times Governor of his native State. To him is attributed the authorship of the eulogy on General Washington, in which occurs the so-often-quoted sentence, "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," praise that with equal truth might have been subsequently applied to his own distinguished son.

The subject of this slight sketch, Robert Edward Lee, was born January 8th, 1807, at the family place of Stratford, in the county of Westmoreland, State of Virginia. When only a few years old his parents moved to the small town of Alexandria, which is on the right bank of the Potomac river, nearly opposite Washington, but a little below it.

He was but a boy of eleven when his father died, leaving his family in straitened circumstances. Like many other great commanders, he was in consequence brought up in comparative poverty, a condition which has been pronounced by the greatest of them as the best training for soldiers. During his early years he attended a day school near his home in Alexandria. He was thus able to lend his leisure hours to help his invalid mother in all her household concerns, and to afford her that watchful care which, owing to her very delicate health, she so much needed. She was a clever, highly gifted woman, and by her fond care his character was formed and stamped with honest truthfulness. By her he was taught not only to fear God, but that he was well-born, and that it was his bounden duty through life to act up to the high standard of a true gentleman. It was from her lips he learnt his Bible, from her teaching he drank in the sincere belief in revealed religion which he never lost. It was she who imbued her great son with an ineradicable belief in the efficacy of prayer, and in the reality of God's interposition in the every-day affairs of the true believer. No son ever returned a mother's love with more heartfelt intensity. She was his idol, and he worshipped her with the deep-seated, inborn love which is known only to the son in whom filial affection is strengthened by respect and personal admiration for the woman who bore him. He was her all in all, or, as she described it, he was both son and daughter to her. He watched over her in weary hours of pain, and served her with all that soft tenderness which was such a marked trait in the character of this great, stern leader of men.

He seems to have been throughout his boyhood and early youth perfect in disposition, in bearing, and in conduct—a model of all that was noble, honorable, and manly. Of the early life of very few great men can this be said. Many who have left behind the greatest reputations for usefulness, in whom middle age was a model of virtue and perhaps of noble self-denial, began their career in a whirlwind of wild excess. Often, again, we find that, like Nero, the virtuous youth develops into the middle-aged fiend who leaves behind him a name to be execrated for all time. It would be difficult to find in history a great man, be he soldier or statesman, with a character so irreproachable throughout his whole life as that which in boyhood, youth, manhood and to his death, distinguished Robert Lee from all contemporaries.

He entered the military academy of West Point at the age of 18, where he worked hard, became adjutant of the cadet corps, and finally graduated at the head of his class. There he mastered the theory of war, and studied the campaigns of the great masters in that most ancient of all sciences. Whatever he did, even as a boy, he did thoroughly with order and method. Even at this age he was the model Christian gentleman in thought, word, and deed. Careful and exact in the obedience he rendered his superiors, but remarkable for that dignity of deportment which all through his career struck strangers with admiring respect.

He left West Point when twenty-two, having gained its highest honors, and at once obtained a commission in the Engineers. Two years afterward he married the grand-daughter and heiress of Mrs. Custis, whose second husband had been General Washington, but by whom she left no children. It was a great match for a poor subaltern officer, as his wife was heiress to a very extensive property and to a large number of slaves. She was clever, very well educated, and a general favorite: he was handsome, tall, well made, with a graceful figure, and a good rider: his manners were at once easy and captivating. These young people had long known one another, and each was the other's first love. She brought with her as part of her fortune General Washington's beautiful property of Arlington, situated on the picturesque wooded heights that overhang the Potomac river, opposite the capital to which the great Washington had given his name. In talking to me of the Northern troops, whose conduct in Virginia was then denounced by every loyal paper, no bitter expression passed his lips, but tears filled his eyes as he referred to the destruction of his place that had been the cherished home of the father of the United States. He could forgive their cutting down his trees, their wanton conversion of his pleasure grounds into a grave-yard; but he could never forget their reckless plunder of all the camp equipment and other relics of General Washington that Arlington House had contained.

Robert Lee first saw active service during the American war with Mexico in 1846, where he was wounded, and evinced a remarkable talent for war that brought him into prominently into notice. He was afterward engaged in operations against hostile Indians, and obtained the reputation in his army of being an able officer of great promise. General Scott, then the general of greatest repute in the United States, was especially attracted by the zeal and solidity instincts of the young captain of Engineers, and frequently employed him on distant expeditions that required cool nerve, confidence, and plenty of commonsense. It is a curious fact that throughout the Mexican war General Scott in his dispatches and reports made frequent mention of three officers—Lee, Beauregard, and McClellan—whose names became household words in America afterward, during the great South ern struggle for independence. Gen. Scott had the highest opinion of Lee's military genius and did not hesitate to ascribe much of his success in Mexico as due to Lee's "skill, valor, and unbounded energy." Indeed subsequently, when the day came that these two men should pass each to take a leading part in the terrible contest before them, Gen. Scott is said to have urged Mr. Lincoln's Government to secure Lee at any price, alleging he "would be worth fifty thousand men to them." His valuable services were duly recognized at Washington by more than one step of brevet promotion: he obtained the rank of colonel, and was given command of a cavalry regiment shortly afterward.

I must now pass to the most important epoch of his life, when the Southern States left the Union and set up a government of their own. Mr. Lincoln was in 1860 elected President of the United States in the Abolitionist interest. Both parties were so angry that thoughtful men soon began to see war alone could end this bitter dispute. Shipwreck was before the vessel of state, which General Washington had built and guided with so much care during his long and hard-fought contest. Civil war stared the American citizen in the face, and Lee's heart was well nigh broken at the prospect. Early in 1861 the seven Cotton States passed Acts declaring their withdrawal from the Union, and their establishment of an independent republic, under the title of "The Confederate States of America." This declaration of independence was in reality a revolution: war alone could ever again bring all the States together.

Lee viewed this secession with horror. Until the month of April—when Virginia, his own dearly-cherished State, joined the Confederacy—he clung fondly to the hope that the gulf which separated the North from the South might yet be bridged over. He believed the dissolution of the Union to be a dire calamity not only for his own country, but for civilization and all mankind. "Still," he said, "a Union that can only be maintained by swords and bayonets and in which strife and civil war are to take the place of brotherly love and kindness, has no charm for me." In common with all Southerners he firmly believed that each of the old States had a legal and indisputable right by its individual Constitution, and by its act of Union, to leave at will the Great Union into which each had separately entered as a Sovereign State. This was with him an article of faith of which he was as sure as of any Divine truths he found in the Bible. This fact must be kept always in mind by those who would rightly understand his character, or the course he pursued in 1861. He loved the Union for which his father and family in the previous century had fought so hard and done so much. But he loved his own State still more. She was the Sovereign to whom in the first place he owed allegiance, and whose orders, as expressed through her legally-constituted government, he was, he felt, bound in law, in honor, and in love to obey without doubt or hesitation. This belief was the mainspring that kept the Southern Confederacy going, as it was also the corner-stone of its constitution. In April, 1861, at Fort Sumter, Charleston Harbor, the first gun was fired in a war that was only ended in April, 1865, by the surrender of General Lee's army at Appomattox Court House in Virginia. In duration it is the longest war waged since the great Napoleon's power was finally crushed at Waterloo. As the heroic struggle of a small population that was cut off from all outside help against a great, populous and very rich Republic, with every market in the world open to it, and to whom all Europe was a recruiting ground, the Secession war stands out prominently in the history of the world. When the vast numbers of men put into the field by the Northern States, and the scale upon which their operations were carried on, are duly considered, it must be regarded as a war fully equal in magnitude to the successful invasion of France by Germany in 1870. If the mind be allowed to speculate on the course that events will take in centuries to come, as they flow surely on with varying swiftness to the ocean of the unknown future, the influence which the result of the Confederate war is found to exercise upon man's future history will even now go at. Think of what a power the re-United States will be in another century! or what it will be in the twenty-first century of the Christian era? If, as some believe, China is destined to absorb all Asia, and then to overrun Europe, may it not be in the possible future that Armageddon, the final contest between heathenism and Christianity, may be fought out between China and North America? Had secession been victorious, it is tolerably certain that the United States would have broken up still further, and instead of the present magnificent Anglo-Saxon speaking empire, we would now see in its place a number of small powers with separate interests.

Most certainly it was the existence of slavery in the South that gave rise to the bitter antagonism of feeling which led to secession. But it was not to secure emancipation that the North took up arms, although during the progress of the war Mr. Lincoln proclaimed it. The object of the North was to force the enemy across the Potomac, and to keep the Union together. Lee hated slavery, but, as he explained to me, he thought it wicked to give freedom suddenly to some millions of people who were incapable of using it with profit to themselves or the State. He assured me that he had long intended to gradually give his slaves their liberty. He believed the institution to be a moral and political evil, and more hurtful to the white man than to the black man. He had a strong affection for the negro, but he deprecated any sudden or violent interference on the part of the State between master and slave. Nothing would have induced him to fight for the continuance of slavery; indeed he declared that had he owned every slave in the South, he would willingly give them all up, if by so doing he could preserve the Union. He was opposed to secession, and to prevent it would willingly sacrifice everything except honor and duty, which forbid him to desert his State. When in April, 1861, she formally and by an act of her Legislature left the Union, he resigned his commission in the United States Army with the intention of retiring into private life. He endeavored to choose what was right. Every personal interest bid him throw in his lot with the Union. His property lay so close to Washington that it was certain to be destroyed and swept of every slave, as belonging to a rebel. But the die was cast: he forsook everything for principle and the stern duty it entailed. Then came that final temptation which opened out before him a vista of power and importance greater than that which any man since Washington had held in America. General Long's book proves beyond all further doubt that he was offered the post of commander-in-chief of the Federal army. General Scott, his great friend and leader, whom he respected and loved, then commanding that army, used all his influence to persuade him to throw in his lot with the North, but to no purpose. Nothing would induce to have any part in the invasion of his own State, much as he abhorred the war into which he felt she was rushing. His love of country, his unselfish patriotism, caused him to relinquish home, fortune, a certain future, in fact, everything for her sake.

He was not, however, to remain a spectator of the coming conflict; he was too well known to his countrymen in Virginia as the officer in whom the Federal army had most confidence. The State of Virginia appointed him major-general and commander-in-chief of all her military forces. In open and crowded convention he formally accepted this position, saying, with all that dignity and grace of manner which distinguished him, that he did so "trusting in Almighty God, an approving conscience, and the aid of my fellow citizens. The scene was most impressive; there were present all the leading men of Virginia, and representatives of all the first families in a State where great stress was attached to gentle birth, and where society was very exclusive. General Lee's presence commanded respect, even from strangers, by a calm, self-possessed dignity, the like of which I have never seen in other men. Naturally of strong passions, he kept them under perfect control by that iron and determined will, of which his expression and his face gave evidence. As this tall, handsome soldier stood before his countrymen, he was the picture of the ideal patriot: an honest, and self-possessed in his strength; he struggled to say that great display of feeling. There was to be no fire and about him that great self-reliance which keeps people confidence in itself, and which in his case was kept within bounds, yet communicated its magnetic influence to others.

He was then just fifty-four years old, the age of Marlborough when he destroyed the French army at Blenheim: in many ways and on many points these two great men much resembled each other. Both were of a dignified and commanding exterior; eminently handsome, with a figure tall, graceful and erect, whilst a muscular, square built frame betokened great activity of body. The charm of manner which I have mentioned as very winning in Lee, was possessed in the highest degree by Marlborough. Both, at the outset of their great career of victory, were regarded as essentially national commanders. Both had strong religious feeling and were faithful husbands and devoted fathers. Both had in all their campaigns the same belief in an ever-watchful Providence, in whom help they trusted implicitly, and for whose interposition they prayed at all times. They were gifted with the same military instinct, the same genius for war. The power of fascinating those with whom they are associated, the spell which they cast over their soldiers, who believed almost superstitiously in their certainty of victory, their contempt of danger, their daring courage, constitute a parallel that is difficult to equal between any other two great men of modern times.

From the first Lee attempted a [illegible] from the beginning of the war he felt that if the people were left to decide the small business would be settled in a few weeks. This folly led to a serious evil, namely, the enlistment of soldiers for only ninety days. Lee who understood war, was in favor of the struggle not being for the term of the war, but he pleaded in vain. To add to his military difficulties, the politicians insisted upon the officers being elected by their men. This was a point which, in describing to me the constitution of his army, Lee most deplored. When war bursts upon a country unused to that ordeal, and therefore unskilled in preparing for it, the freshly babbling of politicians too often forces the nation into ill measures to its serious injury during the ensuing operations. That no great military success can be achieved quickly by an improvised army is a lesson that of all others is made most clear by the incidents of this war on both sides. All through its earlier phases, the press, both Northern and Southern, called loudly, and oftentimes angrily, for quick results. It is this impatience of the people, which the press enable to emphasize so strongly, that drives many weak generals into immature action. Lee, as well as others at this time, had to submit to the sneers which foolish men circulated widely in the daily newspapers. It is quite certain that under the existing condition of things no Fabius would be tolerated, and that the far-seeing military policy which triumphed at Torres Vedras would not be submitted to by the English public of to-day. Lee was not, however, a man whom any amount of irresponsible writing could force beyond the pace he knew to be the most conducive of ultimate success.

The formation of an army with the means alone at his disposal was a colossal task. Everything had to be created by this extraordinary man. The South was an agricultural, not a manufacturing country, and the resources of foreign lands were denied it by the blockade of its ports maintained by the fleet of of the United States. Lee was a thorough man of business, quick in decision, yet methodical in all he did. He knew what an army should be, and how it should be organized, both in a purely military as well as an administrative sense. In about two months he had created a little army of fifty thousand men, animated by a lofty patriotism and courage that made them unconquerable by any similarly constituted army. In another month, this army at Bull's Run gained a complete victory over the Northern invaders, who were driven back across the Potomac like herds of frightened sheep. As the Federals ran, they threw away their guns, and everything—guns, tents, wagons, etc.,—was abandoned to the victors. The arms, ammunition, and equipment then taken were real godsends to those engaged in the organization of the Southern armies. Thenceforward a battle to the Confederates meant a new supply of every-[illegible] It may be doubtful [illegible] practically all the government at Washington had to provide and pay for the arms and equipment of its armies as well as for all that its own enormous armies required.

The day I passed in General Lee's company I stood at the door of his tent receiving admission, I was among a crowd of stamped or bedaubed to a regiment of a New England regiment. I remarked upon this to General Lee, who laughingly replied, "Yes, I think you will find that all your traits, guns, [illegible] are peculiarly yours." Some days after, when General Pope and his large retreating army had been sent back flying across the Maryland frontier, I overheard the following conversation between two cadets [illegible] "Have you heard the news? Lee has resigned." Mr. Lincoln had just [illegible] Pope, replacing him by General McClellan.

The Confederate chief soon follow up his victory at Bull's Run. A [illegible] there [illegible] would have given them possession of Washington, the enemy's capital. Political considerations at Richmond were also [illegible] to weigh the very evident military expediency of reaping a solid advantage from this their first great victory. Often afterward, when the attempt to allay the anger feelings of the North against the Secession had failures from which the action of their political chiefs, [illegible] by the Commander-in-chief.

Intimate as I thought even a sketch of the salient military operations is not more thought of, both sides have fought well, and both have cause to be proud of their [illegible] that they can now afford to look the professional criticisms of English friends [illegible] Britishers have [illegible] by General Wade [illegible] Most men strike the great [illegible] in these [illegible] Lee is the [illegible] both he and his opponent were often served by [illegible] commanders, [illegible] the staff rode, [illegible] were generally was performed [illegible] difficult to move [illegible] young armies [illegible] as they were during the war. The [illegible] of large bodies of [illegible] troops, even [illegible] possible. Over and over again the South apparently within a stone's throw of independence," as it has been many times remarked, when, from want of a thoroughly [illegible] staff to organize pursuit, the occasion was lost, and the enemy allowed to escape. Lee's combinations to secure victory were the conceptions of a truly great strategist, and, when they had been effected, his tactics were almost always everything that could be desired up to a moment of victory, but there his action seemed to stop abruptly. Was ever an army so hopelessly at the mercy of another as that of McClellan when he began his retreat to Harrison's Landing after the seven days fighting around Richmond? What commander could wish to be for in a "tighter place" than Burnside was in after his disastrous attack upon Lee at Fredericksburg? Yet both instances could be mentioned. The critical military student of this war who knows the power which regular troops, well-officered and well-directed by a thoroughly efficient staff, place in the hands of an able general, and who has acquired an intimate and complete knowledge of what these two contending American armies were really like, will, I think, agree that from first to last the co-operation of even one army corps of regular troops would have given complete victory to which

Abridged from Fraser's Magazine.

Scrofula

Is one of the most fatal scourges which afflict mankind. It is often inherited, but may be the result of improper vaccination, mercurial poisoning, indelicacy, and various other causes. Chronic Sores, Ulcers, Abscesses, Cancerous Humors, and, in some cases, Emaciation, and Consumption, result from a scrofulous condition of the blood. This disease can be cured by the use of Ayer's Sarsaparilla.

I inherited a scrofulous condition of the blood, which caused a derangement of my whole system. After taking less than four bottles of Ayer's Sarsaparilla I was

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and, for the past year, have not found it necessary to use any medicine whatever. I am now in better health and stronger, than ever before.—O. A. Willard, 218 Tremont st., Boston, Mass.

I was troubled with Scrofulous Sores for five years; but, after using a few bottles of Ayer's Sarsaparilla, the sores healed, and I have now good health.—Elizabeth Warnock, 51 Appleton street, Lowell, Mass.

Some months ago I was troubled with Scrofulous Sores on my leg. The limb was badly swollen and inflamed, and the sores discharged large quantities of offensive matter. Every remedy failed, until I used Ayer's Sarsaparilla. By taking three bottles of this medicine the sores have been entirely healed, and my health is fully restored. I am grateful for the good this medicine has done me.—Mrs. Ann O'Brien, 179 Sullivan st., New York.

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