

THE
SOUTHERN REBELLION:
BEING
A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES.

BY W. A. CRAFTS.

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"APRIL 7, 1865.

"General: The result of the last week must convince you of the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the army of Northern Virginia in this struggle. I feel that it is so, and I regard it as my duty to shift from myself the responsibility of any further effusion of blood, by asking of you the surrender of that portion of the Confederate States army known as the army of Northern Virginia.

"U. S. GRANT, *Lieutenant-General.*

"General R. E. LEE."

Early the next morning General Grant received the following reply from Lee:—

"APRIL 7, 1865.

"General: I have received your note of this date. Though not entertaining the opinion you express on the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the army of Northern Virginia, I reciprocate your desire to avoid useless effusion of blood, and therefore, before considering your proposition, ask the terms you will offer on condition of its surrender.

"R. E. LEE, *General.*

"Lieutenant-General U. S. GRANT."

To this General Grant responded immediately:—

"APRIL 8, 1865.

"General: Your note of last evening, in reply to mine of same date, asking the condition on which I will accept the surrender of the army of Northern Virginia, is just received. In reply, I would say that *peace* being my great desire, there is but one condition I would insist upon, namely, that the men and officers surrendered shall be disqualified for taking up arms again against the government of the United States until properly exchanged. I will meet you, or will designate officers to meet any officers you may name for the same purpose, at any point agreeable to you, for the purpose of arranging definitely the terms upon which the surrender of the army of Northern Virginia will be received.

"U. S. GRANT, *Lieutenant-General.*

"General R. E. LEE."

But Lee, acting probably under instructions from the rebel government, sought to enter into negotiations of a wider scope than the surrender of his army, and to arrange terms of peace between the United States govern-

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ment and the insurgent states. He therefore, while he still attempted to extricate his army from the federal forces, which were more surely than he then supposed closing in upon him, sent to General Grant the following response to the general terms proposed by the latter:—

“APRIL 8, 1865.

“General: I received, at a late hour, your note of to-day. In mine of yesterday I did not intend to propose the surrender of the army of Northern Virginia, but to ask the terms of your proposition. To be frank, I do not think the emergency has arisen to call for the surrender of this army; but as the restoration of peace should be the sole object of all, I desired to know whether your proposals would lead to that end. I cannot, therefore, meet you with a view to surrender the army of Northern Virginia; but as far as your proposals may affect the Confederate States forces under my command, and tend to the restoration of peace, I should be pleased to meet you at ten A. M. to-morrow, on the old stage road to Richmond, between the picket lines of the two armies.

R. E. LEE, *General.*

“Lieutenant-General U. S. GRANT.”

General Grant replied:—

“APRIL 9, 1865.

“General: Your note of yesterday is received. I have no authority to treat on the subject of peace; the meeting proposed for A. M. to-day could lead to no good. I will state, however, general, that I am equally anxious for peace with yourself, and the whole north entertains the same feeling. The terms upon which peace can be had are well understood. By the south laying down their arms they will hasten that most desirable event, save thousands of human lives, and hundreds of millions of property not yet destroyed. Seriously hoping that all our difficulties may be settled without the loss of another life, I subscribe myself, &c.,

“U. S. GRANT, *Lieutenant-General.*

“General R. E. LEE.”

The events and prospects of this day convinced Lee that further resistance was hopeless, and he accordingly deemed it wise to hasten to accept the terms already offered by General Grant, and sent to the latter the following note:—

“APRIL 9, 1865.

“General: I received your note of this morning on the picket line, whither I had come to meet you, and ascertain definitely what terms

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were embraced in your proposal of yesterday with reference to the surrender of this army. I now ask an interview in accordance with the offer contained in your letter of yesterday for that purpose.

R. E. LEE, *General*.

“Lieutenant-General U. S. GRANT.”

The proposed interview was held near Appomattox Court-House, a small staff attending the two principal officers. It was one of momentous consequences, for it settled the terms of surrender of the principal rebel army, and by precedent, of all the rebel armies, though the fate of that army, as an organized body, was already determined by the heavy blows struck by the federal forces, and the movements of coöperating armies. There was no escape for it; for not only was it pursued, harassed, and broken by the overwhelming forces of General Grant, but General Hancock was approaching from the Shenandoah Valley with a large force, and General Stoneman's cavalry was advancing from the west, and eventually the rebel army must be crushed, though it escaped now. The result of the interview, which thus virtually settled the terms of surrender of the armed rebellion, is shown in the following correspondence:—

“APPOMATTOX COURT-HOUSE, VA., April 9, 1865.

“General: In accordance with the substance of my letter to you of the 8th instant, I propose to receive the surrender of the army of Northern Virginia on the following terms, to wit: Rolls of all the officers and men to be made in duplicate, one copy to be given to an officer to be designated by me, the other to be retained by such officer or officers as you may designate. The officers to give their individual paroles not to take up arms against the government of the United States until properly exchanged; and each company or regimental commander sign a like parole for the men of their commands. The arms, artillery, and public property to be parked and stacked, and turned over to the officers appointed by me to receive them. This will not embrace the side arms of the officers, nor their private horses or baggage. This done, each officer and man will be allowed to return to his home, not to be disturbed by United States authority so long as they observe their paroles and the laws in force where they may reside.

U. S. GRANT, *Lieutenant-General*.

“General R. E. LEE.”

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“HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA, }
April 9, 1865. } ”

“General: I received your letter of this date containing the terms of the surrender of the army of Northern Virginia, as proposed by you. As they are substantially the same as those expressed in your letter of the 8th instant, they are accepted. I will proceed to designate the proper officers to carry the stipulations into effect.

R. E. LEE, *General*.

“Lieutenant-General U. S. GRANT.”

The number of men surrendered was officially reported as twenty-seven thousand eight hundred and five, but of these hardly more than twenty thousand composed Lee's efficient force, and the number of muskets was scarcely more than ten thousand. When he left Petersburg and Richmond, Lee had not far from fifty thousand men; but many had been captured, killed, or wounded, and thousands, convinced that the fate of their army, if not their cause, was sealed, had deserted. The number of cannon surrendered was thirty, but in the battles and pursuit one hundred and forty pieces had been captured.

The surrender upon the terms granted was made forthwith, a portion of General Grant's forces being detailed to receive it, and the others returning to Burkesville. This surrender was soon followed by that of all the detached rebel forces in Virginia, and the rebel soldiers were soon returning to their homes, many of them rejoicing that the struggle was over. The news of the surrender, though expected by the people of the north, was received with the greatest joy. It was felt that the final blow at the rebellion was struck, that it was tottering to its fall, and that all the vestiges of its armed power would soon disappear. It was celebrated with salutes, bell ringing, and illuminations, and everywhere there were unrepressed demonstrations of joy.

