Life in Richmond 1861-1865

Julia Cuthbert Pollard

College of William & Mary - Arts & Sciences

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LIFE IN RICHMOND 1861-1865.

By

Julia Cuthbert Pollard.
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS
OF
COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY
for the degree
MASTER OF ARTS
1939
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Chapter I.
The Setting.

In 1861, the appearance of Richmond from the Manchester side of the James was both varied and picturesque. Three of its seven hills stood out prominently. To the south, the red clay sides of Chimborazo Heights shone in the sunlight. To the north, was the new cemetery, Hollywood, its green slopes dotted with monuments. Between these two and further from the river was Council Hill. On it and dominating the view of the city stood the capitol, its classic dignity, gleaming white from a distance, yet grimy and weatherbeaten on close inspection. The "Post Office and many churches, mills and factories, stand out prominently . . . in queenly splendor and beauty."¹

Before the city was the James River, dotted with many islets and boulders, over which the water rushed noisily. The Petersburg and the Danville Railroad bridges spanned it. The "Petersburg" crossing over Belle Isle was described by DeLeon as a "frail and giddy structure"² high above the river, just wide enough for the track and a footway. Lower down was the old Mayo wagon bridge.

From the Capitol Square, north and west spread the residenc-

¹ Jones, B. W. Under Stars and Bars, p. 57
² DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 86
tial section. Houses of the urban type near the square stood close together. Those further out were more spacious, of clap-board or red brick — usually of the Georgian style with gardens, yards, carriage houses and cabins.

On the eastern side of Council Hill to Shockoe Valley were hotels, Metropolitan Hall, the African Church, the Medical College and residences growing progressively poorer as the hill sloped to the valley.

Shockoe Valley, sometimes spoken of as "the Valley" or "Butcher Town" held many tobacco warehouses, the Central Railroad Yards, the Lancastrian School (free), and many tenements and houses of squalid disorder. Across the Valley was "Church Hill," a residential section, almost the oldest of the city. This section extending to Chimborazo Heights included Old St. John's Church and the home of Miss Elizabeth Van Lew. During the war, many knew her to be a federal spy, but they could not find sufficient proof to bring charges against her.

Before the capitol, lay the business section including factories, banks, stores, etc. The Basin, an enlargement of the canal, extended about eight squares — east and west — between the foot of the hill and the river. It was the center of the city's commercial interests. Here was the Tredegar Works which, under the management of Mr. J. R. Anderson, was becoming famous. This was the only rolling mill of the South capable of casting heavy guns. In 1861, the
mills were making guns under government contract. One of the first acts of the state government after secession was to forbid the company to send the completed guns to Washington.

Other rolling mills, flour mills and warehouses clustered around the Basin. The city's dock was at the lower end, just beyond the first locks in the canal. The large warehouse of Libby & Sons, Ship Chandlers, later to become famous as Libby Prison, was near the dock on Canal Street.

Just below the Basin between 17th and 18th on Cary Street was a section known as "Dublin." At this time the inhabitants were not Irish as the name seems to indicate, but a conglomerate mixture of Negroes, foreigners, and "wharf rats" of every type. It was from this section and lower "Butcher Town" that most of the crimes and disorders of the city seemed to emanate.

The city had a population of about 40,000 composed of native Virginians, English, Scotch, Irish, Jews, a few southern Europeans, free Negroes, and slaves. The citizens of German descent comprised a large quota of the population. Their presence was important enough for the Enquirer, to publish in January and February 1861 a German-English edition, the outside pages of which were printed in German, with German script.

Richmond was prosperous and fast becoming a leading industrial city of the South. Mrs. Putnam wrote that its "trade (was)
flourishing; articles of food abundant and cheap; the stores were well stocked with merchandise; pauperism was almost unknown; the people were independent and happy."4

In 1859, the tobacco companies, forty-three of them, employed 2,388 workers and produced 20,000 hogsheads of tobacco a month. The James River Manufacturing Company had 4,000 spindles. In 1860, 143,000 bushels of wheat and 42,300 barrels of flour were exported by the Gallego and Columbian Mills alone.5

The City Directory of 1860 gives the following inventory of enterprises and businesses of the city:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mercantile Agencies</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising Agencies</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>General and Collecting Agents</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Insurance Agents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pension and Bounty, Land Agents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Real Estate Agents</td>
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<td>Shipping Agents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agricultural Implements</td>
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<td>Ambytypist, Photographist</td>
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<td>Apothecaries</td>
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<td>Architects</td>
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<td>Attorneys at Law</td>
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<td>Auctioneers</td>
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<td>Savings Banks</td>
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4. Putman, Sallie A. Richmond During the War, p. 23
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Bell Hangers and Locksmiths - 5
Belting, Leather, and India Rubber - 1
Billiard Saloons - 2
Bird Dealers - 1
Blacksmiths and Wheelwrights - 24
Boarding Houses - 43
Book Binders - 6
Book Sellers and Stationers - 10
Brew Factories - 1
Boots and Shoes - 42
Bottlers - 6
Brickmakers - 2
Brokers - 17
Brushmaker - 1
Cabinet Makers - 6
Cap Makers - 2
Carpenters and Builders - 34
Carpets and Oil Cloth - 3
Carriage and Coach Makers - 13
Carvers - 2
Chemists - 1
China, Glass, Crockery - 9
Cloaks and Mantillas - 3
Retail Clothing - 60
Second Hand Clothing - 4
Wholesale Clothing - 2
Cloth, Cassimores, Vestings - 1
Coal Dealers - 19
Coal, Oil, and Lamps - 2
Commission and Forwarding Merchants - 136
Retail Confectioners - 120
Coopers - 6
Cuppers and Leeches - 4
Cultors and Instrument Makers - 3
Dentists - 11
Dressmakers - 3
Wholesale Druggist - 7
Retail Dry Goods - 70
Wholesale Dry Goods - 3
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Earthen Ware - 2
Engravers - 4
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Wholesale Fancy Goods - 3
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<td>Gas Fitters and Plumbers</td>
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<td>Gas Regulators</td>
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<td>Gents' Furnishing Goods</td>
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<td>Gilders</td>
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<td>Grates and Fenders</td>
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<td>Guano Dealers</td>
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<td>Guns and Pistols</td>
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<td>House Furnishing Goods</td>
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<td>Ice Dealers</td>
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<td>Insurance Co.</td>
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<td>Instrument Workers</td>
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<td>Iron Railing Manufacturing</td>
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<td>Iron and Steel Works</td>
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<tr>
<td>Junk Dealers</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knitting Machines</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leather, Hides, etc.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lime, Cement, etc.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquors, Wines, etc.</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lithographers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Livery Stables</td>
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<td>Looking Glasses, Picture Frames</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lumber Dealers</td>
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<td>Machinists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marble and Stone Works</td>
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<td>Medical Colleges</td>
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<td>Merchants and Tailors</td>
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<td>Millinery Goods</td>
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Opticians - 4
Ornamental Plasterers - 1
Oyster Dealers - 8
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Shooting Galleries - 2
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Stove Manufactury - 1
Sugar Refinery - 1
Tailors - 25
Telegraph Office - 1
Teamsters - 4
Tobacco and Cigars - 17
Tobacconist - 56
Tobacco Mills and Boxes - 9
Tobacco Warehouses - 7
Tobacco Exchange - 1
Toys - 3
Trimmings, Lace, etc. - 4
Turners - 4
Umbrella Manufacturys - 1
Undertakers - 4
Upholsterers - 8
Washing Machine Makers - 1
Watches and Jewelry - 23
Wigmakers - 1
Wood Dealers - 13
Wooden and Willow Ware - 4

All of this formed the setting for the Capital of the
Confederate States and made it the coveted goal for each of the
five Northern generals who urged his troops "On to Richmond."
Chapter II.

Scession.

The last few months of 1860 and the first in the new year made apparent to Virginia the necessity for deciding at once how she would proceed in the rift between the Northern and Southern states. Every effort must be made to heal the breach, so Virginia sponsored a delegation to Washington and a conference of the Southern states.

To know her own position if a choice between the two factions became necessary, a state convention was called on February 13, 1861.

As the legislature was in session, the Convention met in Mechanics Hall on 9th Street. The question was of vital interest. Those who wished to preserve the union at any price were called Union Democrats and those who, in the early days of the Convention, were considered radical were called Sessionists. The debates were long and Fiery. Crowds attended. The western gallery was reserved for the ladies who came in great numbers. Many of the delegates - affected by their presence, flamed into long winded oratory to such an extent that a rule was made limiting all speakers to ten minutes. So many people attended each day - standing in the aisles and doorways - that the Convention insisted admission be allowed only by official tickets. Later in March secret sessions were felt necessary. The citizens, getting only brief accounts of the meetings from the
Monroe. The order not only included the guns but some heavy columbiads. Mr. Archer requested the people of Richmond, Chesterfield, and Powhatan not to comply with the order since all future action was so uncertain. This order caused so much agitation in the city and state that it was withdrawn April 1.

The popular feeling of the citizens was becoming greater for secession. The Union Democrats held one meeting after another in the African Church using every form of national propaganda to try and hold the citizens to the Union. The State legislature sent a delegation to Lincoln to try and find what his policy was toward the Southern states that had seceded. They returned only to report that Lincoln would hold the Union together. The same day guns were fired on Fort Sumter. Before the report was made to the legislature, Lincoln had sent to Virginia for her quota of the 75,000 troops to march against the seceding states. Governor Letcher refused to obey the order.

Saturday evening (April 13th) the news of the surrender of Fort Sumter reached Richmond. The Dispatch² said that the reception of the news was "one of the wildest, most enthusiastic and irrepressible expressions of heartfelt exuberant joy on the part of the people

2. Daily Dispatch. March 29, 1861

3. The Daily Dispatch was the official title of the newspaper but it was spoken of as "The Dispatch."
papers, felt that little was being accomplished, and complained over the length of the session.

Lincoln's inaugural address gave little hope of peace. The President announced his intention of relieving the garrison at Fort Sumter, peaceably if he could, forcibly if he must.

Public meetings were held night after night by Sessionist and Union Democrats, who yet hoped for a settlement. There were very able speakers on both sides. The people listened with rapt attention. Many were convinced that secession was the only stand that Virginia could make. Sessionist flags appeared in the city - particularly in Jackson Ward.

In March the city seemed divided between the two parties. For instance, Mrs. J. A. Belcher, a resident of Sidney, a suburb on the edge of Richmond, raised the emblem of Southern independence. That evening, a group of young boys from Oregon Hill, Richmond, appeared and demanded she take down the flag. She complied with the request only to raise it again. This time about one hundred citizens who had read the story in The Dispatch were on hand to see that the boys did not remove it as had been threatened.

On the 26th of March, Junius L. Archer of the Bellona Foundry announced to the Convention that he had received an order from the federal government to send all guns in his possession to Fortress

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1. Richmond, Daily Dispatch, March 27, 1861
generally that we have ever known to be the case in Richmond."^4

Nothing was thought or talked of save the great triumph achieved by
the heroic troops of the glorious Southern Confederacy in obliterat-
ing "one of the Illinois ape's standing menace against the assertion
of Southern rights and equality."^4 Crowds assembled around the bul-
letin boards of the different newspaper offices watching for the
latest dispatches. By sundown the advocates of Southern rights had
resolved to celebrate the momentous event.

The iron cannon of the Fayette Artillery Company fired a
salute of 100 guns from Shockoe Hill. All the bells rang. The windows
rattled in the Capitol, Exchange Hotel, and Ballard House. Thick
powder smoke hung around the Washington monument. Gun flashes illum-
inated the Square and the animated faces of the people with a play
of red light.^5

Stirring addresses were made to the crowd in the Square.
Several impulsive men rushed to the roof of the Capitol and hoisted
the Confederate flag (taken down later on Governor Letcher's order).

Bonfires were lighted at almost every corner of the principal streets. Beacon fires were started on Union and Church Hills.
Almost every house was ablaze with lights. Transparencies were dis-
played throughout the city.

4. Daily Dispatch, April 15, 1861
5. Thomason, John W. Jr. Jeb Stuart, p. 33-34
Many feared fires from the transparencies because the only water available was in the reservoir, and that was quite low. Some of the citizens requested through the newspapers that they would not be considered unpatriotic if they displayed none on Monday night when the torch light parade was planned.

The torchlight procession composed of men and women bearing transparencies, banners, flambeaux, and the new flag, stretched almost a mile down the street. The militia companies in ranks, and under arms but not in uniform, joined the procession. Brass music, the fife and drum, gave a martial touch. The crowd dragged a brass cannon from the State Armory.

The saloons, bars, and corner groceries alike, dealt toddies and straight drams. Fizimni's Palace of Sweets served ice cream and sherbets to the ladies and gentlemen.

The procession halted before the Governor's Mansion and clamored for a speech. Governor Letcher was annoyed by the demonstration because Virginia had not seceded and was still a part of the Union. He spoke very briefly saying that he did not know what they were celebrating, and advised them to return the cannon to the armory and disperse. He thanked them for the courtesy of calling and bade them "goodnight." The crowd cheered him and passed from the Square still celebrating the fall of Fort Sumter.6

The city was anxious and restless. The proceedings of the Virginia Convention, (its members torn by conflicting ideals and ideas had been meeting for fifty-two days) seemed slow and undecided. The Legislature was holding back to try and save Virginia from both the North and the South.

Both men and women became politicians and lobbyists trying to influence the delegates. Becoming impatient, the people called an unofficial convention to meet the 16th. If the regular Convention did not act by that time, the people were going to take over the affairs of Virginia. Ex-Governor Wise was one of their most popular speakers.

They met at Metropolitan Hall on the 16th and called themselves the "Spontaneous Peoples' Convention." (Grandsons of both Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson were members.) After organization they agreed to give the Virginia Convention one more day to take action.

On the night of the 17th, the Virginia Convention, meeting in secret session, by a large majority vote passed the Ordinance of Secession, "to repeal the ratification of the Constitution of the United States by the State of Virginia and to resume all the rights and powers granted under the said Constitution."7

The news was made public the next morning. Cannons were

---

fired from Capitol Hill. Business was suspended. People embraced on the streets. The United States Customs House of the city was seized by Col. J. L. Davis on orders from the governor. The sign over the Bank Street entrance proclaiming "United States Court" was torn down by a mob. Confederate and State flags were hoisted on public buildings, Union flags disappeared in haste, and orators declaimed from every vantage point.

A proclamation was issued calling for armed volunteer regiments for immediate action. All over the city companies were being organized. The City Council voted $50,000 for equipping them.

That night, the greatest torchlight parade of the city's experience took place. Mrs. Putman, who witnessed it, says that in practically every house some form of illumination was displayed. The favorite form was the Cross of the South "and if any among the poor and humble, were wanting means to illuminate grandly, a single light in the window proved that at least the inclination to rejoice was not wanting. . . . As far as the eye could reach down the line of Franklin Street, and over the hill, more than a mile distant, gleamed the torches, and the dim transparencies shone like illuminated squares of vapor, or gigantic fireflies; the sounds of musical instruments growing fainter and fainter, until they were lost upon the ear, or drowned in the hum of the multitude, which now and then burst forth in the wildest hurrahs."8

8. Putman, Sallie A. Richmond During the War, p. 20-21
Richmond prepared for war. Martial music was heard throughout the city for days after the news. Police were doing their best to preserve order. A crowd, hearing that one of Lincoln's emissaries was passing, blocked the thoroughfare, stopped the emissary and turned him over to the police. All trappings and war's decorations were in great demand. Women were sewing everywhere, even in churches. On the 26th, Northern merchants and Jews were in the streets busily collecting the debts owed them. The Convention had thrown some impediments in the way, but many Southern merchants recognized a debt of honor and were sending money North.9

The week following the excitement and bustle of Secession, Richmond received her first war scare. Just at the close of the Sunday services, the bell from the tower in the Capitol Square, clanged out an alarm. Other bells in the city rang madly. The citizens did not know what it meant except that the city was in danger. Soon word came that the federal man of war, Pawnee, and several gunboats were on their way up the river to shell Richmond.

Noise and confusion reigned in the city. One thousand soldiers were sent to the dock. Some citizens got in their carriages and fled; some rushed to Chimborazo Heights to watch for the enemy; the majority seized every possible weapon and rushed to Rocketts.10

9. Jones, J. B. A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, p. 27-28
10. The city dock
to meet the enemy. The two bronze French cannons which Lafayette
had presented to the city, were dragged from their places at the
State Armory, without powder or shell, toward Rockets for the de-
defense of the city. Dr. J. J. Jeter, pastor of the Grace Baptist
Church, secured an old shotgun, that some said had no lock or load
and set out for war. He double-quicked down Broad Street with the
empty shotgun, going alone to engage the United State's man of war.
(Years later he was teased about this, but he declared he was at
least an example.)

After much deliberation, a detachment of the local artil-
lery was sent down to Drewry's Bluff to greet the Pawnee. Hours
later the crowd slowly dispersed. The report proved a false alarm.
The Pawnee and escort had merely pointed their noses up the river
and withdrawn. In A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, Mr. Jones states that
he believed it was an invention of the enemy to divert the South
from attacking Washington.

War was formally declared by Act of the Congress of the
Confederate States on the 10th of May. On the 23rd, Virginia formally
ratified the Ordinance of Secession and by December had adopted a new
State Constitution. At that time three important legislative bodies
were meeting in Richmond, the state legislature, the Constitutional
Convention and the provisional Congress of the Confederate States.
Chapter III.

Problems of the Confederate Capital.

Virginia invited the confederate states to make Richmond the capital of the Confederate States of America. The city awaited the reply to the invitation with poorly concealed excitement and impatience. The 23rd of May, it was formally announced that the Confederate Congress had adjourned to meet in Richmond, the new capital of the Confederacy.

The city probably was chosen for several reasons. It was the terminus of railroads from every direction. Few southern cities had this advantage because many of the southern railroads were short lines, often of different gauge. The Tredegar Works was a factor considered because of its facility to turn out heavy armament. The city was also a more central location in event that Maryland and Kentucky joined the Confederacy.

Before the arrival of Congress, the whole complexion of Richmond had changed. It was the center of a whirlpool. Strange faces greeted citizens at every turn. The population of 40,000 tripled in one month through the presence of government officials and clerks, office seekers, merchants and "hangers on" of every description, from all sections of the South. Queer costumes were seen on the streets worn by people from inland Georgia and Tennessee.
Hotel accommodations and boarding houses were difficult to find. The Spotswood, Exchange Hotel, Ballard House, and the American held beds at the highest premiums in the halls, parlors and on billiard tables. Lesser houses were equally packed. Guests stood at the dining room doors waiting to grab the first vacant seat. DeLeon said that Richmond hotels were always mediocre but in the spring of '61 they were wretched. A clean room, a hot steak, or an answered bell could not be bought by flagrant bribery. Private boarding houses increased in number. Many homes took boarders, partly because the great number in the city had to be accommodated, and because the confederate currency had depreciated – even in the early months of the war. Many citizens already felt the results of this.

Every train brought its freight of soldiers. Fifteen thousand and were encamped on the outskirts of the city. In the early days, they were given a most cordial welcome "and they bore the appearance of guests at a holiday festival."2 The promenades on Franklin Street, Gambles' Hill and Church Hill were crowded by officers and young ladies to whom the uniform was the symbol of the glory of war. The Dispatch makes the following comment in an article entitled Changes in the Landmarks of Etiquette and Social Life Made by War: "The time

1. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 86-87
2. Putnam, Sallie A. Richmond During the War, p. 85-86
was when it was dangerous to a man's reputation to enter the presence of ladies with anything short of a clean dickey, a shaven face, an uncreased suit and patent leather brogans. . . . Now if a man only wears brass buttons and a stripe down his leg, a rumpled shirt or a dirty pair of pantaloons it is all right. To be a soldier is to be a man, and its a passport to anywhere in his patriotism."3

Richmond had reason to regret the presence of many of its new citizens. Drunkenness was common. Prior to this period, the city had very little drunken disorder in places where society attended. The Varieties, one of the theatres, had to be closed by the police. Not only was the theatre losing its better type audience, but plays were being interrupted by the drunkards who argued, started fights, and even used firearms.

Crime such as garrotting and assaults mounted. Many soldiers were arrested. Mrs. Putnam says that there were many "villains who donned military dress, and for a while this was a passport to notice and respect; but growing wary of the imposition, society required some other voucher to pass an unknown and suspicious individual. Guards halted every man at every corner, and unless supported by proper credentials, a safe place was found for delinquents in durance vile."4

3. Daily Dispatch, January 8, 1861
4. Putnam, Sallie A. Richmond During the War, p. 86
In spite of this never before had business had more life. New stores opened in Richmond. Garment makers, cobblers, machinists and bakers had so much trade that they saw great opportunity of becoming wealthy. Prices soared. The people were at the mercy of a band of profiteers.

Preparations were made for arrival of the President. The city bought the old Brockenborough home on 16th and Leigh Streets for the White House. The provisional Confederate government said that they could not accept the gift as all states should have a share in providing a home for the President. Therefore the mansion was rented from the city.

Houses were decorated for the arrival of the President. He was met by Governor Letcher, his advisory council, Mayor Mayo, a delegation from the city council, and crowds of citizens. A fifteen gun salute was fired when he entered the carriage. People cheered as he passed. Many times the carriage was halted for someone to shake Davis' hand. At the Spotswood, he addressed the crowd. His remarks were few, to the point, and convincing. The citizens were confident that he was the "man for the occasion." At the Fair Grounds that afternoon, men and women greeted him with the heartiest demonstrations of pleasure.6

5. Daily Dispatch, May 30, 1861
6. Tate, Allen. Jefferson Davis, p. 105
Jefferson Davis' previous career was well known in Rich-
mond. He was a graduate of West Point and had served in the Mexi-
can War. He had been Secretary of War under President Pierce, and
senator from Mississippi before the Confederate States seceded.
Davis was an excellent speaker, he had the ability to make crowds
believe what he told them. His very appearance helped him as every-
one received the impression that he was a mystic. He was "austere
and thoughtful at all times, rarely unbending to show the vein of
humor hidden under his stern exterior." He was called the "Just"
as he seemed to have a divinity about him.

Mrs. Davis had all the qualities to make an excellent
"first lady." She was warm hearted, a devoted wife and mother, and
a most gracious hostess. She had an impetuous tongue, witty and
cautious, with a sensitive nature underlying it. She could discuss
the latest book, or talk knowingly of the latest picture, or opera.
She could comfort the unhappy and sick, or entertain the most dis-
tinguished guests.

Mrs. Davis was "at home" every afternoon. A group of
brilliant women, both strangers to the city and residents dropped
in for a "cup of tea." Many gentlemen from the army and the govern-
ment departments came. Mr. Davis always came for an hour's relaxa-
tion. All were assured of a hearty welcome.

7. DoLeon, T. G. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 153
Later, when the first enthusiasm for the new government and all for which it stood had worn off, these "at homes" came in for a great share of criticism. The tea was called the "court," and the people said "our court ladies assume too much state." Mrs. Davis was called a martinet in social matters. The critics announced "... a sort of court is being kept up there but the wives of the generals are conspicuous by their absence." "

President and Mrs. Davis held bi-monthly levees that were both aristocratic and democratic. "To them... flocked the world and his wife in what holiday attire they possessed, in the earlier days; marked by the dainty toilettes of really elegant women, the "butter-nut" of the private soldier and the stars and yellow sashes of many a general..." The levees were useful in letting all classes of people have a glimpse of the inner workings of the great machine of government.

President and Mrs. Davis shone brilliantly, but this was not all that the society of Richmond demanded. Who were their ancestors? Whence did they come? Virginians had little sympathy with the dream of the lower South of becoming a great empire. "There is no doubt that (Virginia) considered the lower South as 'upstarts.'"

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8. Tate, Allen. Jefferson Davis, p. 226
9. Stanard, Mary Newton. Richmond, its People and its Story, p. 176
10. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 155
Therefore, Mrs. Davis was received none too warmly. The local ladies called her "that western woman" and later "that coarse western woman," even saying that she was rude to a plainly dressed lady whom she had not recognized as Mrs. R. E. Lee. Petty feuds arose among the wives of the generals and cabinet ministers and Mrs. Davis. Many said that the feud between Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Johnson was the cause of the animosity between the President and the General who were earlier firm friends. Mrs. Toombs was so anti-Davis that when it was announced that the President was ill, declared it was all "humbug" and he was not sick at all. The squabbles and jealousies kept the gossips' tongues busy, and ladies' sewing circles from being dull.

When the Confederate Congress first met in the Virginia Capitol, crowds of spectators filled its galleries, and lobbies. They listened attentively to the speeches and debates, interested in the affairs of state. After the meeting of the first permanent congress and Jefferson Davis' inauguration, the galleries became practically empty of citizens. The pride in the government turned to shame and disgust. Gradually the masses began to realize that the government was inefficient. Mr. Davis's position changed from that of the idol of the people to that of a dictator.

11. Tate, Allen. *Jefferson Davis*, p. 105 - Chesnut, Mary B. A Diary from Dixie, p. 101

12. Chesnut, Mary B. A Diary from Dixie, p. 112
Just after the first Battle of Manassas, the first definite breath of criticism was directed against Davis. The citizens held him responsible for the failure of the Confederates to pursue the fleeing enemy into Washington. On Davis' inauguration, the Richmond Examiner openly criticised him for his failure to state his future policy in the inaugural address.13

The Examiner was the critic of the administration. John M. Daniel, the editor, criticised Davis' appointments, his leniency to the troops of Dahlgreen, his "rubber stamp" cabinet, his policy of setting aside days for fasting and prayer, etc.

Before the fall of Nashville, Davis had become very unpopular. Almost half the country was against him. "No one act could have encouraged this feeling more than his relieving Floyd and Pillow from command, for abandoning their post and leaving a junior officer to capitulate in their stead. . . . Mr. Davis stood firm and - as was his invariable custom in such cases - took not the least note of popular discontent. And still the people murmured more loudly, and declared him an autocrat, and his cabinet a bunch of imbeciles."14

Davis' policy of keeping all the reins of government and conduct of war in his own hands irritated the people. Many were certain of his favoritism for any man who had been to West Point, at the

13. Richmond Examiner, February 22, 1862

14. DeLeon, T. G. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 163
expense of those who had proved themselves worthy of trust, and that Davis would relieve any minister or official, who disagreed with him and replace him by some favorite. They criticised his appointments of Northerners and men with Union sentiments to high offices in his government. General Winder of Maryland was in charge of martial law in Richmond. More "leakage" of Confederate policies and conditions went to the North by way of his imported Maryland police than in any other way. Major General Gustavus Smith of New York City was appointed Secretary of War when Mr. Randolph resigned in November 1862. Too many clerks were imported from Washington.15 It was not to be wondered that the North had news of facts within the capital almost, and sometimes before, they were made known to the citizens. Davis issued the proclamations of a dictator. He constantly ignored both congress and the courts. He proclaimed martial law and suspended the writ of habeas corpus.16

The Examiner made this comment in 1863 on his policy: "Mr. President Davis' proclamations and pronunciamientos, his horrible threatenings and gloomy appeals have so often been repeated they are the laughing stock of the world. But never have they resulted in one solitary performance. He is obstinate, very bitter when he gets in a quarrel with some official over whom the law gives him temporary control. He is very firm indeed in maintaining a minion or a measure

- against the smothered indignation of a people who are compelled by
their present unfortunate situation, to support silently, a great
deal from their officials. But when his duty brings him in contact
with the enemy, he is as gentle as a lamb.  

Congress did little to inspire the confidence of the people. After the fall of Vicksburg, its debates and speeches were con-
cerned with the cause of the defeat, the number of pounds of pork and
guns in that city, etc., instead of making plans to prevent such a
disaster ever happening again; While Richmond was in a state of siege
its weighty discussions concerned the questions of limiting the num-
ber of heads of departments, and the number of newspapers each senator
should have on his desk each morning.  

Not only the people of the South, but the army realized that
there had been gross mismanagement in all departments of the govern-
ment.

The Treasury Department was a failure. It failed to get the
currency of the Confederacy recognized in Europe. It was so sure of
foreign recognition and "King Cotton," that it printed worthless paper
money on future sales of cotton and tobacco which never materialized.
In 1861, one gold dollar was equivalent to $4.50 in Confederate notes.

17. Richmond Examiner, July 13, 1863
18. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 317
19. Morgan, James M. Recollections of a Rebel Reefer, p. 226
In 1865, a man was fortunate if he could exchange $3,000 in notes for $30 in silver. Every time there was great scarcity of foodstuffs and exorbitant prices, Congress would authorize the Treasury Department to heavily increase the money in circulation. This attempt to improve conditions was going from bad to worse. Wild speculation and most ruthless extortion resulted. A system of barter was instituted with little success. Finally the Treasury Department issued a replacement of the old currency. The new notes were less valuable than the old by 33-1/3%. By the end of the war the "gray-back" of the Confederacy had depreciated $1,000 for one in gold.

By aiding the Treasury Department, the citizens of Richmond were practically reduced to panic. Early in 1861, the City Council loaned the Confederacy $50,000. In order to do this and appropriate money for city defense, the city printed notes, all smaller than $5.00. These notes were called "shin plasters." The courts declared the issue illegal. Since the citizens, banks and business houses had used the notes freely, a condition of near-panic prevailed. Case after case was brought before the courts, banks refused to accept the "shin plasters." Finally the matter was brought before the legislature which passed a bill making "shin plasters" legal tender.

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20. Last Days of the Southern Confederacy, New York Herald, March 13, 1891
21. Putman, Sallie A. Richmond During the War, p. 203
22. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, chapt. XXVI
Another reason for the deflation of the currency was that the blockade runners demanded gold in payment. This caused a constant flow of gold from the South. The government's failure to control blockade running was another source of grievance. By the time it realized that it must make an attempt to take control, it was too late. Two large blockading companies had formed, and though they agreed to go in partnership with the government, they always continued their own policies, regardless of restrictions placed upon them.

The Commissary and Transportation Departments were the worse managed of all. Commissary General Northrop was the most villified man in the Confederacy. He was "celebrated as much for his want of judgment as for his contempt for advice..." Meat spoiled in the Commissary depots in the city for want of proper packing. Grain and beef rotted in the summer sun on various station platforms throughout the South. The citizens and armies in Virginia starved. The Commissary Department reported that it had supplies but could not get transportation, yet every citizen knew that whenever a blockade runner slipped into the ports of Charleston or Wil-

23. Daily Dispatch, August 3, 1863
24. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 280
25. Putman, Sellie A. Richmond During the War, p. 352
26. Daily Dispatch, August 27, 1862
mington, part of their cargo was on sale in Richmond auction houses within record time.\textsuperscript{27}

The Ordnance Department received less criticism than any governmental department. It had been well organized by Major Gorgas. His efforts were seconded by the whole-hearted support of the Tredegar Works which were considered so important that its employees, white and black, received some of the privileges of government officials. One negro worker was riding on the train. The conductor demanded his fare. The Negro replied that he did not have to pay as he rode on a pass. When asked if he worked for the government, he rolled his eyes, with an expression of disgust and replied with disgust, "Ne-sah! Fur t'uther consarn!"\textsuperscript{28}

As long as the war lasted the Tredegar Works supplied heavy guns, and brought old style muskets up to date. The "Brook gun" - a seven inch rifle - was cast, tested and perfected. Plates for iron-clads and heavy ordnance for forts, shell, shot, and torpedoes were made. Men worked night and day to complete as much work as their capacities would allow. In spite of the fact that conscription took most of the skilled mechanics, compelling the use of slave labor, the Tredegar Works continued throughout the war to supply the army with most necessary ordnance.

\textsuperscript{27} DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 281
\textsuperscript{28} DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 92
The declaration of martial law in Richmond caused much dissatisfaction. General Winter of Maryland was put in command in the city and he was responsible for his acts only to President Davis. There was no doubt that martial law or some other type of law enforcement was needed. The soldiers from the camps were being demoralized by the long spell of inactivity following the first Battle at Manassas. Stragglers were pouring into the city, going and coming as they wished. Among them, Northern spies had been apprehended. The city officials could not control these conditions.

Martial law, for the city and a ten mile radius, suspended all civil jurisdiction except that of the mayor of the city; forbade all distillation of spirituous liquors (all sales and gifts of it) and closed all saloons and distilleries. All who broke the law, were subjected to court martial and the punishment of one month of hard labor.

One of the first reactions to the prohibition law was the formation, by a few citizens, of the "Free and Easy Society." At their first meeting, they denounced the law. They appointed a committee to wait on the President for a modification of the law that was a definite deprivation of a man's rights. A committee was appointed to visit the hospitals to see if fewer were there as "sots" than before, to prove whether or not whiskey was harmful. Another

29. Daily Dispatch, March 4, 1862
delegation was to visit General Winder and ask if the law was made for gentlemen, or only vagabonds.\(^3^0\)

Everyone had to get General Winder's permission, in the form of a passport, in order to leave the city, or to enter it, in the case of market men. For about ten days the markets were empty, as passes had not been supplied, and men did not bring their wares into the city for fear of being imprisoned by the squads of patrolling foreigners (as Winder's police from Baltimore and points north were designated).

General Winder brought his own detectives with him to the city. They were so much hated that the citizens dubbed them the "Plug Uglies." The citizens believed that these men were in the pay of the federal government, as in many cases it was proved. They controlled the passport office. Any one of their "friends" could get passes to Maryland and the North, but it was very difficult for a citizen to get one to go out of the city for a few days to visit and nurse the wounded or for relaxation. Accusations against the "Plug Uglies" finally became so general, and so many detectives had been proved guilty of fraud, bribery and illegal passports that they were dismissed in October 1862. J. B. Jones commented in his diary: "General Winder's late policemen have fled the city. Their monstrous crimes are a theme of universal execration. But I reported them many

\(^3^0\) Daily Dispatch, March 21, 1862 (This was probably a satirical comment by the editor on the general feeling of the citizens.)
months ago, and General Winder was cognizant of their forgeries, correspondence with the enemy, etc. The Secretary of War and the President, himself, were informed of them, but it was thought to be a 'small matter.' "31 General Winder allowed them to return later.

The questionnaire on the new passport was very embarrassing to the ladies as it asked for personal appearance and age. But the Dispatch reported that "Major Griswold with his usual gallantry, has discontinued such questions of the ladies."32

The conscription law brought violent opposition from the citizens who were staunch defenders of personal and state's rights. The Whig drew attention to the number of able-bodied men of wealth in the city who had been declared "indispensable at home."33 The citizens objected to the methods that were used. J. B. Jones noted in his diary, "The 'dog catchers,' as the guards are called, are cut again, arresting able-bodied men (and sometimes others) in the streets, and locking them up until they can be sent to the front. There must be extraordinary danger anticipated by the authorities to induce a resort to so extreme a measure."34 These officers

31. Jones, J. B. A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, V.1, p. 179
32. Daily Dispatch, August 29, 1863
33. Richmond Whig, April 5, 1864
34. Jones, J. B. A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, V. 2, p. 317
entered the theatre and carried a number of actors to Camp Lee. However, they soon returned — whether paroled or exempted was unknown. From street gossip it was said that Davis had declared actors exempt as they provided a beneficial recreation to thousands of soldiers who yearly passed through the city.

The impressedment of horses and flour; the law against substitutes; the sale of tobacco to the North; and the leniency to spies, added to the dissatisfaction with the government and a great distrust of it. Mrs. Putnam copied an article from the city newspaper that told very clearly how the citizens felt about the situation. The article was entitled "Strangers' Guide."

"1. The large number of houses on Main and other streets which have numbers painted in large gilt figures over the doors and illuminated at night, are Faro Banks. The fact is not known to the public.

2. The very large number of flashily-dressed young men, with villainous faces, who hang around the street corners in the day time, are not gamblers, garrotters and plugs, but young men studying for the ministry, and therefore exempt from military duty. The fact is not known to General Winder.

3. The very large number of able-bodied, red-faced, beefy, brawny individuals, who are engaged in mixing very bad liquors in the very large number of bar-rooms in the city, are not, as they appear to be, able to do military duty. They are consumptive individuals from the other side of the Potomac, who are recommended by the Surgeon-General to keep in cheerful company, and take gentle exercise. For this reason only, they have gone into the liquor business.

35. Richmond Whig, April 5, 1864
4. The very large number of men who frequent the very large number of bar-rooms in the city, and pay from one to two dollars for drinks of very bad liquor, are not men of very large fortunes, but out-of-door patients of the hospitals who are allowed so much a day for stimulants, or else they belong to that very common class who live nobody knows how. None of them are government clerks on small salaries with large beards to pay. This fact is not known to the heads of departments.

5. The people of Richmond have little or nothing to do with the government of the city. Early in the war it was, for some reason, handed over to Maryland refugees, who were not thought fit for the army. Strangers, stabbed, robbed, garrotted or drugged in Richmond, will not charge these little accidents to the people, but to the city of Baltimore."36

36. Putnam, Sallie A. Richmond During the War, p. 255
Chapter IV.

Siege.

Richmond was not easy to defend. The river was navigable to the falls leaving the lower half of the river front open to attack. The other three sides were not easily defended. The Westham Plank Road and Three Notch (Chopt) led into the city from the west. On the north were the old Mountain Road, Brook Road and the Mechanicsville Turnpike. The Williamsburg and Darby Town roads gave access from the east.

Just after the city became the capital, the newspapers began a campaign to awaken the citizens to the need of breastworks and batteries. They met with little success at first. The news of fighting at Bethel and Bull Run awakened the city to a certain extent. The Council then made an appropriation and hired Negro slaves to start work on a line of batteries and breastworks around the city. News of federal invasions in the northern part of the state finally made the city "defense conscious." Prisoners in the penitentiary were put to work, and free Negroes were impressed into service.

In spite of the law requiring that the Negroes have a pass to move from one locality to another, Richmond had become crowded with them. They congregated on the corners, jostled the whites or caused them to walk in the streets. The amount of thefts had increased, and punishment by the Mayor's Court (lashes — usually 39) seemingly had
no effect. Finally the Council proclaimed that any free Negro who had not paid his taxes would be impressed for work on the preparations for defense. The law was very effective. The Negro "menace" was removed from the streets, and the work on batteries and earthworks was speeded up.

The bell in the Capitol Square tower was designated as an alarm, to be rung at the slightest sign of danger, a signal for the local defense companies to report to stations immediately.\(^1\) Guards were placed on duty at the tower, day and night.

The factories, banks, and stores organized battalions. The Tredegar Works had three, the "Home Guards," "Home Artillery," and "Mounted Rangers."

In May all the security that had been felt by the city, after the federal route at Bull Run, was lost. Rumor, soon verified, reached the city of the approach of the enemy by both the peninsulas, and by gunboats on the river. News of the silencing of the batteries at Day's Neck and Hardy's Bluff (the outer river fortifications) filled the city with panic. The destruction of the Merrimac\(^2\) deepened the feeling of hopelessness and despair. The people of Rich-

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1. This bell had always been a factor in Richmond life. It struck the hour; called the Legislature; and summoned the fire department.

2. When the Merrimac had been made an ironclad, it had been rechristened Virginia. The city had rejoiced over its success in Hampton Roads. Church societies had collected $1,500 to build more ironclads for city defense.
mound had a phobia of gunboats, believing that nothing could stop them but the Merrimac and now that had been destroyed by the Confederates to prevent its capture. Only the batteries on Drewry's Bluff were between the city and disaster.

The Confederate Congress did little to inspire confidence. Reports of the debates were long and unimportant in the face of an emergency. When it adjourned all the records and papers of the various departments had been packed in boxes ready to be shipped from the city. Rumor that the city was to be evacuated spread. The fact of the packed records gave it credence. Many citizens left to refuge in quiet sections of the state, North Carolina and Georgia.

The legislature and the Council of Richmond waited on the President and told him that they would stand any loss of life and property before giving in to the enemy.

President Davis and Governor Letcher addressed the people. They declared that the city was not to be evacuated, and both Confederate and state troops would defend the city as long as there was a man left. Richmond seemed to gather new courage and pinned its faith on the batteries at Drewry's Bluff.

Reverberation of cannon from down the river announced that the enemy had arrived. The city hoped the firing would cease but feared that silence might mean a federal victory. The batteries were successful. The Yankees could not pass. Losing four gunboats and a monitor they crept down the river to greater safety near Westover.
The siege by river was over, but danger by land threatened. McClellan's troops were within twelve miles of the city and "digging in." Only the troops of Johnson and Lee separated them from the city. News that General Meade was planning to join McClellan did not make the city feel easier. Battle was imminent. Troop baggage was sent to the rear. Hospitals were made ready to receive patients. The government lent its wagons to scour the city for the ice that would alleviate so much suffering and deaden the pain of amputations. All tobacco was stored in one locality in order that it might be easily destroyed if the city fell.

Mayor [name] called a mass meeting at the request of the citizens who felt that greater defense was necessary. Several resolutions were passed, such as to declare the city in danger; to form a Home Guard of all men in the city over eighteen; and to suspend business at twelve noon for thirty days so the militia might drill in the afternoons. It was unnecessary for the city to follow this plan as the governor in a proclamation called for the Second Class Militia of all over forty-five and between sixteen and eighteen years old. Business was to be closed at two P.M. Drill was called at three P.M. daily.

The citizens saw the use of balloons in war. The federales had several and sent them up for observation purposes. The Confederates wasted much ammunition trying to destroy them. The federales would

3: Ice was very scarce. The winter had been unusually warm and wet. Very few private ice houses had been filled.
leave them up until the range of the Southerner's guns was close, then they would haul them down, only to send up others in different localities. 4

For three days there was an ominous quiet without the city. Richmonders waited with determination and the "calmness of despair." Business, visiting, rolling bandages, drilling, and theatre going went on as usual. On the 31st, the thunder of cannon notified the people that the awaited battle had come.

"All night groaning columns of transports rolled through the streets with the wounded." 5 The hospitals 6 were filled. The morning papers carried requests for cooked provisions, bandages, lint, coffee, and tea. As the number of wounded swelled, private homes were pressed into service.

The citizens were so busy that there was little time for rejoicing over the success of the Confederates and McClellan's withdrawal to the Chickahominy River. Gratification was expressed when the president put R. E. Lee at the head of the armies of Eastern Virginia and North Carolina. 7

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4. At the beginning of the war, Professor James C. Patterson had offered to construct balloons for the use of the Confederate States of America but was refused. After seeing the federal success, the Confederate States of America gave an order to Professor Patterson.

5. Thomason, John W., Jr. Jeb Stuart, p. 185

6. The city had thirty-two at this time. The largest on Chimborazo Heights would accommodate several thousand.

7. Johnson was wounded in the Battle of Seven Pines. Lee replaced him.
Only a few skirmishes broke the quiet that surrounded the city. Lee was very anxious to know the strength of the enemy and the topography of the vicinity in order to make plans for battle. General J. E. B. Stuart, in attempting to discover this, made his famous circuit of the enemy lines around Richmond. Stuart was already one of the most popular officers of those who had encamped around the city. The success of his ride enhanced his popularity a hundred fold. He not only brought Lee the necessary information, but also 107 prisoners, 300 horses and mules, and a million dollars worth of the sorely needed rations. Only one soldier was lost.

More preparations were made for defense. The state called for 8000 for the militia. (This was a call for volunteer service rather than a draft. In the early days of the war, conscription was deemed unnecessary as any Southerner would do "the right thing.") The citizens were very slow in enlisting, but the men from the counties made up a large proportion of the quota. The Confederate States of America Navy Yard formed a battalion. All bridges across the James were closely guarded. No one was allowed to cross after ten P. M.

8. The citizens found ample grounds to criticise the inadequacy of the Confederate government as no maps had been made of the vicinity of the city and the army leaders were often at a loss as to procedure.

9. State of siege had cut the city's market supplies.

10. Latane was killed just north west of the city. The circumstances of his burial were such as to make him forever famous. The lithograph of the Burial of Latane graces many homes.
Richmond was calmer when the fighting started near Mechanicsville than during the Battle of Seven Pines. It had had its first baptism of war. Ambulance after ambulance passed through the city. The President and many citizens had watched the battle from the surrounding hills — interested spectators. "The balloons of the enemy hovering over the battlefield could be distinctly seen from the outskirts of the city, the musketry as distinctly heard. All were anxious, but none alarmed for the safety of the city. From the firing of the first gun until the close of the battle, every spot favorable for observation was crowded. The tops of the Exchange, the Ballard House, the Capitol and almost every tall house were covered with human beings."

That night the commanding hills from the new Alms House to the President's were covered with "men, women, and children witnessing the grand display of fireworks - beautiful yet awful." Even when the crowd dispersed, it seemed tranquil, as if they had watched something impersonal.

During the next morning and days to follow, war was anything but "impersonal." The hospitals were full. Private homes had many wounded. The number of nurses was inadequate. The women were called to assist, in giving water, keeping off flies, etc., only to find that many were soon pressed into the service of bandaging, cleansing wounds, and even assisting the surgeons with amputations. The

newspapers plead that every private wagon, carriage and buggy be sent to help bring the wounded from the field. The government issued a proclamation ordering that all mattresses, except those used by the ladies, be brought to the Provost Marshal's office, and stating that if this were complied with impressment would be unnecessary.

The city facilities were absolutely unequal to the strain and necessities of Seven Days Battles. Even with the use of private means of transportation, many of the wounded remained on the fields in the blazing June sun for days. The blockade and the speculators, who directed and financed blockade-running, had cut off the supplies of needed medicines and disinfectants.

Because of the hot weather and the lack of disinfectants, gangrene set in very rapidly and amputations were necessary. The surgeons worked as quickly as possible. There was no time to clean up between operations. The amputated arms and legs were just thrown out of the windows. The stench of rotting flesh was obnoxious among the other odors of the hospitals. Through experimentation by trial and error, it was found that burning tar in the basements of the hospitals made an excellent fumigant.

12. The speculators made an excellent profit on clothes and luxuries, whereas the profits on medical supplies was small.
Burials of those who died in hospitals was performed quickly— in such haste that many citizens feared some of the soldiers were buried alive. There was no time at first to bury those who had died on the field or on the way to the hospital. The Dispatch carried an item for four days requesting that someone inter the body of a federal soldier that was lying on the station platform of the Virginia Central Railroad.

So many prisoners were taken that there was no place to hold them. The solution was found in sending them to Belle Isle which was equipped with one large shed and a few tents into which they could crowd when it rained. Needless to say, there were not enough blankets in the city to supply the prisoners.

The battles of Meadows' Bridge, Gaines' Hill, Frazier's Farm and at last Malvern Hill followed in quick succession. After Malvern Hill the federal troops withdrew toward Westover. General Lee's report said that: "The siege of Richmond was raised. The object of the campaign which had been prosecuted after months of preparation, at enormous expenditure of men and money, completely frustrated." 13 Mrs. Judith McGuire’s diary records: "Richmond is disenthralled and the only Yankees there are in Libby and other prisons. McClellan and his 'Grand Army' are on the James River near 'Westover'.

13. Stanard, Mary Newton. Richmond, its People and its Story, p. 191
enjoying mosquitoes and bilious fever."14

Richmond took time from administration to the wounded to rejoice over the Confederate victories. Colors were presented to distinguished regiments. Military bands blared "Dixie" and the "Bonnie Blue Flag." The soldiers of Jackson, Longstreet, Hill, Magruder, and the troopers of Stuart swaggered through the streets, proud of their weathered uniforms.

Newspaper and magazine jokes reflected the spirit of the time. The Richmond Examiner described Stuart and his ride as "a circuit rider conducting a series of missionary meetings" and reporting his success to 'Bishop' Robert E. Lee. 'Even their wagons were converted and purified by fire. Some of them constrained to come and abide with us, bringing with them their cattle.'

A writer of the Richmond Whig jocularly describes Jackson as a man dangerous to the peace of society, and issues a mock proclamation signed 'Jefferson Davis' offering $1,000 reward 'if the aforesaid Jackson is taken in Washington, $5,000 if taken in Philadelphia, and $20,000 if taken in Portland, Maine.'15

14. McGuire, Mrs. Judith. Diary of a Southern Refugee, During the War, p. 127
15. Stanard, Mary Newton. Richmond, Its People and Its Story, p. 195
Chapter V.

Camps, Military Prisons, and Hospitals.

Since Richmond was the railroad terminal for the south and west, it was naturally the rendezvous for all troops from every section of the Confederacy. Troops were stationed in camps around the city and sometimes factories were used as camps in emergencies.

The four largest camps were Chimborazo; Camp Lee, the old fairgrounds; the new fairgrounds; and Howard's Grove on the Mechanicsville Pike. Others were the Baptist College, Camp Letcher, and Camp Schermerhorn.

Camp Lee was the most important. Here the men were prepared to go to the battle field after extensive drills under Virginia Military Institute officers. Executions, ordered by the Court Martial, were carried out on the camp grounds.

The army was composed of all classes, from the highest born and richest, to the humblest and poorest, from grandfathers to teens. Of all the soldiers, the New Orleans Zouaves and the Virginia Military Institute cadets made the greatest impression on the citizens.

1. The old fairground is today Monroe Park.
2. Often called the Hermitage Fairgrounds.
3. Most of the students had formed a company in the Home Guards. They called themselves "The Richmond College Minute Men." (Daily Dispatch, April 29, 1861.)
The Zouaves were the most picturesque with their red trousers and blue embroidered coats and fezzes. They were the most unruly and undisciplined of all the soldiers. It was said that they had been recruited from jails and had been given the choice of fighting or confinement. "Where ever a Zouave was seen something was sure to be missed." Among other misdemeanors, they entered restaurants, ate and drank, and then ordered the proprietor to charge it to the government. The doors of private homes were kept locked, and the "strictest watch was directed upon the Zouaves as long as they tormented Richmond with their presence."

In May 1864, the Virginia Military Institute cadets were assigned duty under Brig. Gen. Custis Lee. The city gave them quite an ovation on their arrival. They paraded in the Capitol Square, "their proud banner rent by the bullets of Bloody New Market." They were received by the President. Governor Smith welcomed them in an address from the Governor's Mansion. The Secretary of War gave them new clothing.

The troops drilled twice a day, and did guard duty. B. W. Jones found "broom day" the most arduous of all camp duties. Full-dress parade was held in the late afternoon. Before the novelty of military camps near the city had waned, many citizens visited the

4. Putman, Mrs. Sallie A. Richmond During the War, p. 36
5. Whig, May 25, 1864
6. Jones, B. W. Under Stars and Bars (a letter from Camp Letcher, May 27, 1863, p. 115)
parade grounds daily. Camp Lee had the appearance of a picnic rather than a bivouac.7

Theatricals and balls were given by the soldiers. Singing was one of their most enjoyed recreations. "Annie Laurie," the "Bonnie Blue Flag," "Dixie," "My Maryland," "Stonewall Jackson's Way," and "Sweet Evelina" were among the favorites. As permits to go into the city were easily obtained, the soldiers participated in the city's life, visiting, going to the theatre, and attending church services.

Religion played a large part in the life of the soldiers. In the fall of 1863, a great revival took place in the city and throughout the army.8 B. W. Jones described it as a great "outpouring of the Spirit upon our people everywhere, ... among women and children and aged men and in all divisions of the army."9

The city churches welcomed the soldiers, and sent workers to the camps. Their publishing houses were kept busy printing tracts and sermons for distribution. Reverend Moses D. Hoge was sent to London to solicit a donation of Bibles10 for the soldiers. He re-

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7. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 95
8. Revival swept through the South.
9. Jones, B. W. Under Stars and Bars, p. 129-130
10. Publication of Bibles, tracts, etc. had been done in the North. In June 1861, the Baptists of the city started publishing them as did other denominations. The exigencies of war prevented the supply from ever equalling the demand.
ceived from the British 10,000 Bibles, 50,000 Testaments, and
250,000 Gospels and Psalms.\textsuperscript{11}

The city Y. M. C. A. did much for the comfort of the
soldiers. He was given the use of its library of 2,500 volumes\textsuperscript{12}
and newspapers from every section of the Confederacy (as long as
they could be obtained). Its Army Committee Association contrib-
uted for the relief of the soldiers in the hospitals and camps by
sending tracts, newspapers, and doing systematized visiting.

The Sons of Temperance conducted meetings in the churches
near the camps, and tried "to enlist the aid of soldiers in their
own behalf."\textsuperscript{13} Their success was meager as war made the odds against
temperance too great.

Many of the soldiers were of the same type as the New Or-
leans Zouaves. They caused much disorder in the city. Many drunken
soldiers were on the streets and in the bar rooms. Their quarrels
and arguments often led to the use of weapons. Some regarded their
uniforms as protection from the civil authority they continually
abused. Others accepted bribes. (The pay for the private was never
more than $11 to $12 a month, regardless of the fluctuation of the

\textsuperscript{11} Christian, W. Asbury. Richmond, Her Past and Present, p. 239
\textsuperscript{12} The Daily Dispatch, February 8, 1862
\textsuperscript{13} The Daily Dispatch, November 4, 1861
currency. The officers received from $80 to $100 with the privilege to buy at cost from the government.\textsuperscript{14} Desertions from the lines and camps were numerous. Every day the newspapers carried advertisements for the return of deserters. Rewards from $30 and up for their return were offered by the captains of the regiments. Castle Thunder was overrun with deserters. In the last raids against the city they were taken to the battlefields and compelled to fight.

Punishments for misdemeanors, imposed by the court martial, varied from having their beards shaved\textsuperscript{15} and drummed out of camp, to stripes, and to hanging. Stripes, which was usually a punishment for slaves, was later forbidden by a law signed by President Davis.

Except for a few months, the camps were filled to capacity, as was the city. This created a problem, as troops often were in Richmond over a short period when they were being moved from one locality to another, or on their ways to and from leaves of absence. There was no place in the city where they could stay over-night unless they roamed the streets or slept on the station platforms or sidewalks. Finally a "Soldiers' Home" was established. It was more

\textsuperscript{14} The Daily Dispatch, February 27, 1863 carries an article on the unfairness of the salaries of privates and officers. In 1863, the privates monthly pay was equivalent to fifty-five cents in coin, also T. C. DeLeon, Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 283 says that pay rose to twenty three dollars, but its value was still fifty-five cents.

\textsuperscript{15} The Daily Dispatch, April 28, 1863. Two soldiers of the city battalion were found guilty of taking a $10 bribe. Their beards were shaven and they were drummed out of service.
like a prison than a home but it at least furnished shelter and food of one type or another.

B. W. Jones describes the "Home" in a letter to his family in Surry. He had come into the city from Camp Schermerhorne without a pass (as many soldiers did). He was stopped by the city's patrol and having no permit was taken to the "Soldiers' Home" to give satisfactory reason for his being in the city and to remain there over night (which he did not as escape was easy and he had to be back in camp in time for roll call). A drum sounded the call for dinner. The "guests" formed a line and roll was called "and then a tray of light bread, cut into half-loaves, each loaf already small enough, was passed down the line." Each man took a piece. That was the only course; "a very light dinner, even for the times."军事监狱17 in the city were haphazard at best. They came into existence without any definite plan to meet the emergencies of war. There was no Commissary General of Prisoners until the last months of the war. The only prisons in the city were the City Jail, inadequate for the care of those imprisoned by the civil authorities, and the Henrico Court House Jail. The State Penitentiary was near the northern boundary of the city.

After the battles of Bethel and Bull Run, thousands of

16. Jones, B. W. Under Stars and Bars, p. 157,158
17. Hesseltine, William Beck, Civil War Prisons
prisoners were sent into Richmond. Warehouses on Cary, 17th and 18th Streets, were pressed into service. Libby Prison and Belle Isle were the most famous and important. The other large prisons were Castles Thunder, Lightning, and Godwin.

Libby Prison, occupying an entire city block, was a four story warehouse with four rooms and a privy on each floor. Small stoves, inadequate to heat the barnlike rooms, were installed for the prisoners to use for heat and cooking. The Northern officers were always confined in Libby with other prisoners. The prisoners taken after the Battle of Seven Pines and Seven Days Battles made it necessary to use a mill close to Libby which would hold 4,000 soldiers.

Though several thousand prisoners were sent south, more prison space was needed. The citizens were alarmed at the number in the city and feared they would mutiny, aided by the paroled Northern troops in the city. Finally, they decided to use Belle Isle as a prison. Not only would it take the Yankees out of the city, but its island fastness would keep the number of guards down to a minimum. The islet was equipped with a few large tents into which the prisoners could find crowded shelter from the elements. On clear nights they slept outside on the ground. The number of blankets never equalled the number of prisoners. The suffering was great and

18. The Confederate government planned to replace the tents by sheds when sufficient lumber could be procured. The Daily Dispatch, January 17, 1863.
the mortality rate, according to the Northerners, very high. Prisoners awaiting the irregular exchange were held on the island. At times there were as many as 5,000.

The first year of the war found many more Northerners in Southern prisons than there were Southerners confined in the North. The Washington government was very anxious to set up some system of exchange in spite of the fact that by doing this, they would be in a technical sense recognizing the Confederate States as a separate country. Finally a system of exchange was instituted.

Richmond was a depot for holding prisoners for exchange during the ten day period according to agreement. At the expiration of this time the prisoners were taken down the river to City Point, and the released Confederates were brought back. Exchange was never regular because the two governments were continually at odds, each side accusing the other of not living up to the agreement; and because of the fact that the South considered the Negro as "property," and not subject to exchange. Also, the South was holding two officers and threatened to hang them in retaliation for the execution of two southern officers in Kentucky. Often the steamer Schultze would take its quota to City Point, only to return with the same cargo.

This meant that many federal officers and privates were de-

19. During the ten day period, the commissioners met at City Point to arrange the terms of exchange.
tained in the city. The arrival of prisoners in large numbers always caused the market prices to soar. In January 1863, their arrival caused the price of butter to rise from forty to sixty cents a pound to $2.50 in a twenty-four hour period!

The fact that the prisoners were allowed to buy foodstuffs caused much disorder around the prisons. Women and children living in this vicinity, would crowd around the windows with any provisions they could secure and bargain with the Northern prisoners. Not only did the government feel that this was one means by which the Northerners knew of conditions in the Confederacy, but the prisoners brought with them a quantity of bogus Confederate bills which they dumped in the city when buying supplies, or when asking Negroes and children to get the bills changed for them. As a result of this the prisoners were searched. All but a portion of their money was confiscated. The rest was to be returned when they were exchanged. General Winder made the circulation of bogus money by prisoners a criminal offense.

According to an agreement between the North and the South, the prisoners were to receive the same rations in quality and quantity as the soldiers. The failure of the government to get foodstuffs brought in caused food shortage for all inhabitants of the beleagued city.

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20. Daily Dispatch, June 30, 1862
In May 1864, the prisoners received good flour and bread, salt pork, beef, rice, beans, and soup. The officers were allowed to buy apples, sugar, eggs, corn, coffee, tea, etc. (Because the Northerners possessed "greenbacks" it was easy for them to get luxuries which citizens could not afford.) The officers had to cook for themselves. They considered this a "fiendish cruelty" of the Rebels. Quality and quantity decreased from summer to autumn. Many suggested that the prisoners were receiving better rations than the soldiers around the city. They suggested that no meat be included in the prisoners' rations, but the Confederate Government would not hear of breaking the ration agreement.

In October, it was reported to General Winder that the prisoners were receiving no meat. He took up the matter with the Commissary General, who said that he could not get beef. General Winder negotiated to buy the meat that was on the way to Richmond to supply the city markets, but none was obtained. Officers in the city feared mutiny of the prisoners, and considered sending their families from the city. On November the twelfth the prisoners received aid from the United States.

Col. A. D. Streight, at one time confined in Libby Prison, and other officers, complained to the authorities in Richmond and to those in the North. They said that the prisoners did not receive enough food to support life and that many soldiers were dying of starvation, exposure, and fever. General Winder was asked by the United States offi-
cials to conduct an investigation. He did but the statistics were evidently juggled, even though the report that the prisoners were receiving the required amount of food was signed by several Northerners confined in Libby. General Singleton, a federal who had visited Richmond under the flag of truce, reported after a visit to Libby Prison that the prison was kept scrupulously clean and that there were sufficient blankets.21

Never-the-less, it was a fact that the city could not get supplies for itself and its hospitals, much less for the prisons, as the siege lines were so tightly drawn. Stories of the condition of the prisoners filled the papers of the North.

The United States instructed Meredith, Commissioner of Exchange, to send meat through the lines. The South agreed. General Neal Dow, the famous prohibitionist, reported the needs of the prisoners. Food, blankets, hats, shoes, overcoats, etc. were sent through the lines. Confederate money was also sent, disguised as tinned goods. Lieutenant-Colonel Hastings, a prisoner, was in charge of distribution of the goods at Libby Prison.

For a few weeks conditions were greatly improved in both the prisons and the city as market prices dropped. Soon the Commissioners of Exchange were bickering about the delivery of the goods. The South was accused of stealing from the prisoners for the Confederate soldiers,

21. *Daily Dispatch*, April 9, 1863. There were 11,650 prisoners, 6,300 of them on Belle Isle at this time.
and of violating the terms of exchange. The prisoners were stealing from each other and causing disaffection in the prisons.

The United States said it would send no more supplies and exchange was stopped. As a result there was starving time for both prisoners and citizens. Prices of commodities rose rapidly. The supply of food could in no way equal the demand. (The government tried to move the prisoners to the western part of the state where food was plentiful, but Danville, the only city to which it was possible to send and confine the prisoners, refused to have them).

The prisoners made many attempts to escape and, in small groups, succeeded by means of bribery, ropes and tunnels. One of the most famous escapes occurred in February, 1864. More than a thousand officers and privates left Libby Prison through a tunnel over fifty feet long that they had constructed. Only fifty or sixty were recaptured. It was thought that Miss Elizabeth Van Lew aided the prisoners' escape through the Confederate lines, but no proof could be obtained - and she was a "lady."

Of all the prisoners brought to Richmond, none created the same interest as Dr. Mary E. Walker of the Union Army. The Whig, when reporting her arrival, said, "She is about thirty years old and quite ugly, but she has an intelligent and a pleasant voice." It said that she was in men's clothes, black pants, fitting tight, a jacket and short tunic of black or dark blue cloth, but that she wore a "straw Gypsy hat that might be construed as announcing her sex. As
she passed down the streets in charge of a detective her appearance attracted unusual attention, and an immense crowd of negroes and idlers formed for her a volunteer escort to Castle Thunder."

After the too-near success of Dahlgren's raid and the report of his orders to release the prisoners in Richmond and burn the city, the city was both enraged and terrified that something of the sort might really happen. As a warning, the Confederate Government informed both the Northern officials and the prisoners that they were placing explosives under Libby Prison and would not hesitate to light the fuse if another such outrage was planned against the city. Exchange was resumed spasmodically before the end of the war but never to the extent that it could relieve the burden of feeding prisoners by a city already reduced to a condition of near starvation.

When the war opened, the city could boast of only two hospitals. With the arrival of the wounded from the battles of Bethel and Bull Run, the number increased to thirty-five. Like the prisons, the hospitals were converted warehouses. The impressment of the Baptist College, and the Female Institute, the St. Charles Hotel, the Seaman's Bethel, etc., brought the number of hospitals to about fifty.

22. Richmond Whig, April 22, 1864

23. I can find no proof that explosives were actually placed under the prison.

24. The divergent views of the North and South and the personal antipathy of the Commissioners prevented regular exchange.
The Winder Hospital on Chimborazo Heights was the largest and one of the few that was built for the purpose of hospitalization. It consisted of six separate units with 450 beds each. There were tents to accommodate 700 convalescents. It included a library and a central information bureau in which was recorded the names of all the wounded and the name of the hospital to which they were sent. In advent of a siege of the city, the capacity of the hospital could be stretched to accommodate 4,300. During 1863 and 1864, more than 47,176 had been admitted to Winder Hospital.25

There were never enough doctors or nurses, after the battles around the city, to attend the wounded. The Dispatch announced that there was a great need for nurses at the Alms House Hospital. The attending force was so small that many of the wounded received no attention the day they arrived. The Sisters of Charity were doing everything within their power, but they could not do it all. Volunteers to wait on the sick, by fanning away the flies and giving the wounded water, were greatly needed.26 Similar conditions existed in most of the hospitals.

Mrs. Chesnut described the conditions in the St. Charles and Gilland's in 1861. "Gilland's was the worst, with long rows of men on cots, ill of typhoid fever, and of every human ailment; on

26. Daily Dispatch, June 3, 1862
dinner tables for eating and drinking, wounds (were) being dressed; all the horrors to be taken at a glance.

Then we went to the St. Charles. Horrors upon horrors again; want of organization, long rooms of dead and dying; awful sights. A boy from home had sent for me. He was dying on a cot, ill of fever. Next to him a man died in convulsions as we stood there. I was making arrangements with a nurse, hiring him to take care of this lad; but I do not remember any more, for I fainted."

The suffering in the hospitals was great. There were very few disinfectants and opiates. Many of the government's organized "inland blockade runners" fell prey to the high prices received for luxuries, and brought few medical supplies through the lines. Ether was almost unknown and chloroform so scarce that many operations and amputations were done without its aid. Many brought to the hospital for slight wounds were so weakened by lack of food that they fell prey to typhoid, or the small pox epidemic that swept through the city in 1863. Gangrene was the worst foe of the wounded because there were not enough surgeons or supplies to give the needed treatment. If amputations were not successful there was no hope for the patient. The Seamen's Bethel was made a hospital for the prisoners with gangrene, as there was not enough room in the prison hospitals. The sufferers needed little watching. The only duties of the small guard was to see that the nurses at-

27. Chesnut, Mary B. A Diary from Dixie, p. 108
tended the sick.

The Commissariat was as delinquent in obtaining supplies for the hospital as for the army and the prisoners. The citizens were constantly asked to bring cooked provisions to the hospitals. The ladies of the city organized the "Hospital Committee" whose purpose was to plan means of helping the hospitals, directing the distribution of the donated supplies, and the relief work. (Mrs. Robert E. Lee was a prominent member of the Committee.)

Many of the ladies were made matrons of hospital divisions. Others opened hospitals in their homes. "Captain" Sally Tompkins directed her hospital so well that she was given a commission in the Confederate Army. Mrs. Chesnut said that "the men under her care looked clean and comfortable, cheerful one might say." The ladies not only brought foods and rolled bandages but brought their blankets as long as there were any, finally sending their window draperies and carpets to be used for covering. They visited the hospitals, wrote letters for the soldiers, and read or talked to them. They did everything in their power to alleviate the suffering.

James Morgan told of one time when their kindness was misdirected. He said that the ladies were "very kind to the wounded and out of their scanty means they managed to make dainties which they would carry to the hospitals and distribute themselves." On a visit.

28. Chesnut, Mary B. A Diary from Dixie, p. 112
to the hospital he found his friend's cot was very near the door in the coolest place in the hot room. The patient, in a very weak voice, asked Morgan to have his cot moved to the back of the room. On being asked why, he replied, "that every lady who entered the place washed his face and fed him with jelly. The result was that his face felt sore and he was stuffed so full of jelly that he was most uncomfortable, as he was so weak he could not defend himself." Morgan gave his request to the surgeon who pinned a note on the sheet saying, "This man must only be washed and fed by regular nurses."  

29. Morgan, James Morris. The Recollections of a Rebel Reefer, p. 226-227
Chapter VI.
Social Life in the City.

Richmond society was made up of many groups, slaves and free Negroes; a shiftless disorderly class; the salaried class; foreigners; refugees; the "official families;" and a wealthy influential class of citizens.

The Negroes, free and enslaved, made up about a quarter of the city's population in 1860. Both groups were restricted in their movements by legislation. They were not allowed to leave the city without an official pass, or to congregate on the streets, or gather in church, homes, etc. unless a white person was present. They must step off the sidewalks if necessary to allow the white people to pass. The African Baptist Church was theirs for worship under the supervision of a white minister.

Some of the free Negroes ran hotels and restaurants, barber shops, blacksmith shops, etc., most of which enjoyed a large white clientele. Others worked in the local industries. Still others were lazy and restless doing nothing to better their condition. The last group kept the Mayor's Court crowded on account of their petty crimes, unlawful assemblies, and moving from place to place without permits.

The slaves in the city were both hired and owned. The week after Christmas was the slave holiday. They had no definite work to do. They paraded along the streets and had a fine time imitating the
manners of their masters and mistresses. During the last years of the war they were described as the best dressed group in the city when they enjoyed their holiday and Sunday meetings in their "handed-down" clothes which they wore only once a week. As it was very expensive to support the growing slave families in the city, their masters hired them, often allowing them to find their own employment, to the business houses, factories\(^1\) and private homes. "Hiring time" was the first week in January. Some found their own masters, others went to agencies to be hired. Many of the Negroes were never affected by the propaganda of liberty and emancipation, but others ran away to join the Northerners, as did Jeffersoun Davis' coachman.

The slaves were often brought before the Mayor's Court for stealing, unlawful assemblage and sometimes murder. The punishments were; stripes, usually 39, for minor offense; sale out of the state; and hangings for major offenses.

The shiftless lower class of whites kept the civil justice courts busy with cases of assault, garroting, burglary and murder. They kept low typed gambling houses and conducted "houses of ill fame." They hoarded their ill-gotten gains to sell them at exorbitant prices. The section between 17th and 18th on Cary Street was disorderly to the point of being dangerous. When the government, collecting all the fire arms and weapons in the city, went into that section, they took a

1. The Tradegar Works both owned and hired negroes.
company of soldiers to prevent rioting and disorder.

Most of the men in the salaried class were in the army, or working for the government on wages much too low for the "high cost of living." The Confederate Government employed their wives in the Treasury and the Confederate Clothing Bureau. Other women took in sewing as long as there was sewing to be done. Some were moderately well off, others proudly poor. Some became very wealthy as extortioners and speculators, taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the distressing conditions caused by war.

The wealthy old families, refugees, and "White House Set," as the families of the Confederate officials were called, set the pace for the social life of the city which was gay and brilliant. Richmond was a provincial city in ideas and ideals. The age and prominence of a family background was the passport to the inner door of society where everybody in it had known everybody else from childhood. It looked with askance at some of the members of the "White House Set," and traced the lineage of both the official families and the refugees as far as they could. But these were the guests of the city and as such should be honored, even if it did not appreciate having the modes of Washington society thrust upon them.2

One unique point in the society of Richmond struck Thomas

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2. A great number of the Confederate officials had been officials in the government in Washington. Their wives tried to implant the social manners and customs of that city in Richmond.
DeLeon, an official in the Confederate government, "I could not get accustomed to the undisputed supremacy of the unmarried element that almost entirely composed it. It constantly seemed to me that the young people had seized the society while their elders' heads were turned, and had run away with it for a brief space; and I always looked to see older people come in, with reproof upon their brows, and take charge of it again. But I looked in vain." He remarked on this to his neighbor at a dinner party. She answered that strangers always commented on this fact and that ever since she could remember only "unmarried people have been allowed to go to parties by the tyrants of seventeen who control them." When a young lady was married she put away her party dresses and had to content herself with visiting, teas, and an occasional dinner party.

When the war was young, society doubted the propriety of being gay and amusing while the horrors of war were so close, but it became accustomed to the brutalities of war, and gayety became an escape from horrors. It was their duty to see that the brave soldiers who came to the city should be amused and forget for their brief stay the realities of battle.

So Richmond dined and danced. Virginia hospitality was shared with all who fought for "the cause." They produced pantomimes, plays and concerts for the benefit of the needy, and for their own

3. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 149-150
amusement. The fame of "The Rivals" which was produced under the direction of the talented Mrs. Ives was so great that the enemy, encamped about the city, heard of it. A "Yankee" planned to attend disguised in a "Rebel" uniform. The actresses were always exceptionally good, but actors were hard to get as there were few young men in Richmond long enough to learn a difficult role.

As siege and the blockade reduced the city to poverty, the balls became "Starvation Parties." These were held once a month, first in one home then in another. The only refreshment allowed was amber colored water from the mighty "Jeems." The men "chipped in" to hire musicians. The girls, according to circumstances, wore expensive dresses brought through the blockade, or ones of cheese cloth, lace curtains, or from boxes and trunks stored in the garret. The rooms were seldom heated by more than a small carefully banked fire in one room. None of this dimmed the enjoyment of the parties. When General Lee was in town he always attended, highly approving them. On "such occasions, he was not only the cynosure of all eyes, but the young ladies all crowded around him, and he kissed every one of them. This was esteemed his privilege and he seemed to enjoy the exercise of it."4

The social leaders found many other ways of amusement and recreation. The "Mosaic Club"5 was a most popular organization. It

4. Alfriend, Edward M. Social Life in Richmond, p. 362
5. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 310
appealed to those who enjoyed using their "wits." At each meeting questions were drawn to be answered at the following meeting by an original answer in song, poem, story or dramatic interpretation.

General Stuart was a favorite at the club as well as at the Starvation Parties. Other amusements were picnics, and "danceable teas."

Social success, to some of the ladies, was attained by being taken to Fizzini's for strawberry ice cream with sauce and being serenaded that night by a brass band.

For all classes who had the price of admission, there were races, concerts, lectures and four theatres. One lecture was advertised in the Dispatch which the editor said the citizens would find very diverting. It was a lecture on Women's Rights. The editor went on to say - "lovers of intellectual amusement are promised a rich fund of entertainment in the lecture of Mr. Oliver P. Baldwin announced for delivery tomorrow night at the African Church..." Blind Tom, the famous blind slave pianist, was in Richmond for two weeks. His concerts attracted capacity audiences.

The Marshall Theatre on Seventh and Broad Streets catered to the more cultured, producing the plays of Shakespeare and other classics. The others had stock companies and vaudeville. As drunkenness and disorders increased in the city, it entered the theatres to the extent that the better clientele decreased and one of the theatres

6. Daily Dispatch, April 29, 1863
was closed by an order from the Mayor.

Those who could not afford admission prices, had amuse-
ments of their own. They played bandy in the streets, watched cock
fights on the corners, and gathered on the outskirts of the city to
enjoy, and sometimes to participate, in illegal prize fights.

A cross section of all classes of society was the boy gang.
Each locality had its gang but they called themselves "cats." There
were "Butcher Town Cats," "Oregon Hill Cats," and "Shockey Hill Cats."
Each gang was at war with all others. The boundary of each one's
province was known and it was as much as a boy's life was worth to go
alone through the territory of another gang. Whenever rival "Cats"
met rocks flew, regardless of adults who might be passing. The police
tried to break up the battles. The parents of the boys reported by
the police were fined five dollars, but the "Cat" gangs continued, to
the danger of windows and pedestrians, until many years after the war.

Almost all the women of the city participated in work to
relieve suffering in the hospitals and in the army. They cut and
rolled bandages, scraped lint, made uniforms, tents, and sand bags.
They shared their scanty provisions with the wounded. Many a sewing
circle of the young ladies became a "danceable tea," when the troops
came to the city.

Some of the members of the "White House Set" preferred
knitting to any other form of relief work. The clicking of the needles
kept pace with their gossiping tongues. The petty jealousy and rival-
ry in their set offered great opportunities for gossip.

The ladies formed the "Richmond Soup Association" to
serve the needy in the city. The soup was made of white potatoes
which were sold in the markets at forty dollars a bushel.

The foreigners in the city fitted into two groups. Those
who greatly aided the South, and those, who through exploitation,
helped in a great measure to cause much suffering. The majority of
the first group were of Anglo Saxon and Teutonic origin. They fought
in the army, held positions in the government, and were skilled me-
chanics in the Tredegar Works, and other rolling mills.

The second group included the Yankee traders caught in
Richmond by the war, and Polish Jews and a few southern Europeans
who had come to Richmond to take advantage of the war and make great
wealth. When foreigners were drafted for the army, they used every
means in their power to evade it. Many escaped through the lines to
the North; others were captured when trying to flee and imprisoned
in Castle Thunder, making a greater number of mouths for the city to
feed; still others, by fair means or foul, continued to ply their
trade. These, with representatives from every class of society,
formed the great body of extortionists of "vultures." The amateur
speculator could make quick profits by quick sales; while the pro-
fessionals could afford to hold their goods until they could get an

7. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 237
exorbitant price.

In A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, J. B. Jones wrote on December 11, 1862, "God speed the day of peace! Our patriotism is mainly in the army and among the ladies of the South. The avarice and cupidity of the men at home, could only be excelled by the ravenous wolves; and most of our sufferings are fully deserved. Where a people will not have mercy on one another, how can they expect mercy? They deprecate the Confederate notes by charging from $20 to $40 per barrel for flour; $3.50 per bushel for meal; $2 per pound for butter; $20 per cord for wood, etc. When we shall have peace, let the extortionist be remembered; let an indelible stigma be branded upon them.

A portion of the people look like vagabonds. We see men and women and children in the streets in dingy and dilapidated clothes; and some seem gaunt and pale with hunger - the speculators, and thieving quartermasters and commissaries only, looking sleek and comfortable."

Foodstuffs and necessities such as medicine were the principal objects in control of the speculators. The rise in prices caused by the speculators and the deflation of the currency was shown by the fact that the price of flour in 1860 was listed at eight fifty a barrel and in 1864 at five hundred dollars. The price of apple brandy rose from one dollar a gallon to eighty five dollars. The cost of

woolen undershirts was so high that many were glad to buy second-hand shirts at fifteen dollars, (a new one cost fifty dollars). The extortioners would bring food into the markets, and if they could not get the prices they asked they would not sell anything.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1860</th>
<th>1864</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bacon</td>
<td>$0.12 lb.</td>
<td>$8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flour</td>
<td>$0.05 lb. or $8.50 bbl.</td>
<td>$500.00 (bbl)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coffee</td>
<td>$0.12 1/2 lb.</td>
<td>12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>butter</td>
<td>$0.25 lb.</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beef</td>
<td>$0.98</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eggs</td>
<td>$0.05 to .10 doz.</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>turkey</td>
<td>6.00 pair</td>
<td>23.00 (wild)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The high prices of other articles were:

- thin slippers: $125.00 to $150.00
- 6 spools thread: 30.00
- uniform (after bargaining): $2000.00 (C.O.D.)
- felt hat: 100.00
- American pens (per pkg.): 9.25
- carriage - per hour: 25.00

10. Food was plentiful outside of the city in the sections so far untouched by war. Many wished to send food to the sick and army but freight rates were too high. Daily Dispatch, July 26, 1862.
The City Council, and later the Confederate government and private citizens tried to break up the extortioners' "racket." The city bought quantities of salt and sold it to everyone, as long as it lasted, for ten cents a pound. Privately owned flour mills and industries sold flour for forty dollars a barrel. The speculator beat both of these efforts as he employed men to buy for him and again cornered the market. The Council established a Board of Supplies to buy food in the country and to sell it in the city at cost. The Central Railroad offered box cars and engine to transport the supplies. The government never allowed the railroad cars to be used.

Finally the legislature and the City Council and the Confederate Government agreed to fix, by law, maximum prices of food, cloth, iron, hay, shoes, mules, labor, teams, wagons, and drivers. It did very little good. A person was fortunate if he obtained a barrel of flour under $500, (official maximum price designated twenty-three dollars).

The government was more successful in blocking speculators in real estate. This was controlled by raising taxes. J. B. Jones says in his A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, "Congress struck the speculators a hard blow. One man, eager to invest his money gave $100,000

11. Sentinel (Daily), February 14, 1864
12. Sentinel (Daily), October 8, 1864
for a house and lot, and now he pays $5,000 tax on it; the interest is $6,000 more - $11,000 total. His next door neighbor, who bought his house in 1860 for $10,000, similar in every respect, pays $500 tax (valued at date of sale), interest $600; total $1,000 per annum. The speculator pays $10,000 per annum more than his patriotic neighbor, who refused to sell his house for $100,000."

As it can be easily seen, very few people could afford to buy. A meal, consisting of one egg, a loaf (small) of bread, and four small onions cost $3.50. Mrs. Burton Harrison describes her meals for one day.

Breakfast
- corn bread with drippings
- coffee - made from peanuts, or beans, or corn

Lunch
- bacon
- dried peas
- rice
- dried apples with sorghum

Evening meal
- cakes made of corn meal and water
- "more unspeakable coffee"
- fruit cake (of sorghum, apples for raisins
- orange peel for citron) (oranges were $5 each)

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15. "drippings" was the grease scraped from the floors of the smoke houses. Mrs. Harrison was wealthy in comparison with the majority of the citizens.
Many of the women and children plaited their own hats of straw, made their shapeless gloves, and shoes. If they could afford to buy cloth, it was of domestic manufacture much rougher than that formerly made in the north. Pins were very scarce. Ladies who had worn jewelry, had auctioned it and were reduced to the use of locust and honeyshuck tree thorns. Buttons were replaced by seeds and acorns. One of the most valued presents a soldier could bring a lady was a sewing kit that he had gotten from a federal soldier's knapsack.

It is no wonder that the citizens despised the speculators.

One of the ministers of the city announced in church that he could not bring himself to pray for the extortionist.16 J. B. Jones said: "A Jew store, in Main Street, was robbed of $8,000 worth of goods on Saturday night. They were carted away. This is significant. The prejudice is very strong against the extortionist, and I apprehend there will be many scenes of violence this winter. And our own people, who ask four prices for wood and coal, may contribute to produce a new Reign of Terror. The supplies necessary for existence should not be withheld from a suffering people. It is dangerous."17

The Commissary Department which should have seen that the city (and the army) was supplied with food was inefficient. The

16. Daily Dispatch, August 18, 1862

17. Jones, J. B. A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, p. 164
blockade runners, 18 of the government who brought goods to the city easily in the first years of the war, supplied the city with luxuries rather than necessities regardless of laws and ordinances that were made to regulate their business for the good of the masses.

The inland blockaders who were in contact with northern sources of supplies were very good spies 19 but very poor when they were ordered to bring in medicines and opiates.

Such conditions resulted in much disorder and demoralization in the city. Probably the most serious was the "Bread Riot" 20 in April 1863. One morning several hundred men, women and half grown boys gathered in the Capitol Square, saying they were hungry. They left the Square in a quiet and orderly manner for the Commissary depots and the stores of the speculators. As they moved their number was increased with a rough and sullen element bearing hatchets, axes and long knives. They first broke in stores containing food, then any store, smashing plate glass windows. Walthall said, "they were coming out (of Farr and Keeeses) with hams and other eatibles (sic). There was a hatchet in someone's hands, from which flowed the blood of Mr. Tyler." They took flour, bacon, other foods, and millinery,

18. Richmond Examiner, August 27, 1864. The monthly profits of the blockaders was $91,785.

19. Inland blockaders used "greenbacks" the last year of the war. This caused greater depreciation in the Confederate currency.

jewelry, shoes, clothing and bolts of cloth. They impressed all wagons and carts they passed to carry off the booty.

They would not disperse. The Mayor read the riot act on the order of Governor Letcher. No results were noticeable. He ordered Captain Gay with the Public Guard to fire "two balls and buck-shot" into the mob. The women fell back but would not disperse. At this point, the President appeared. He stood on a wagon and spoke to the people. He explained to them that such acts would bring greater privation to them, as the few who brought supplies to the city would be afraid to enter where violence reigned. He urged them to return to their homes. He said he was willing to share his last loaf with the suffering people. He begged them to continue to help the South against the Northern invaders, who were the authors of all "our" suffering. He was deeply moved. While he talked the mob changed from a menacing, rowdy group to a quiet one. Rations of rice were promised to all.

They dispersed. Some of the more disorderly were followed to their homes by troops. Some were found not to be in need of food; others were aliens exempt from military duty by Judge Campbell, Assistant Secretary of War, in contravention of Judge Meredith's decision. A careful investigation of those who participated in the "Bread Riot" showed that a very small minority were actually in want of bread.

The newspapers never printed an account of the "Bread Riot."
The authorities did not want the enemy to discover how near the Southern Capital was to starvation, nor the disaffection of its citizens. In late May and June the newspaper accounts of the court records carried such items as "John Doe," arrested for participating in the so-called bread riot on April 2, 1863. In spite of this care articles appeared in the Northern cities telling of the affair. (There were other riots in the city, but none of such magnitude.)

Intemperance was responsible for much of the disorder in Richmond. In spite of the law, advice, and efforts to stop, drunkenness increased alarmingly. Soldiers and civilians, men and women, were encountered at nearly every street corner in different stages of intoxication. Sometimes well-dressed men were prostrate on the pavement. This led to fights, small riots, and often to drawn weapons.

The presence of many Unionists caused fear among the citizens that they might be traitors or spies, and betray the city. After the Confederate defeat at Roanoke Island, Donaldson, and the fall of Nashville, "signs appeared on street corners and on walls of buildings, 'Union Men to the Rescue'; 'Now is the time to rally around the Old Flag'; 'God bless the Stars and Stripes!'; . . ." These caused great excitement. Many arrests of Unionists were made from time to time.

21. Sentinel (Daily), May and June 1863

22. Sentinel (Semi-Weekly) February 16, 1865

23. Putnam, Sallie A. Richmond During the War, p. 101
Conditions in the city caused many thefts. Not only were necessities scarce and high, but the opportunity to sell stolen goods was always present. Men and women of both races, stole on opportunity and sold quickly at a huge profit. Market men feared to bring their foods into the city, as they were apt to be robbed before reaching the markets. (Hucksters would buy all their wares and sell them to the citizens at five hundred percent profit.)

The city officials and the Provost Marshal tried to enforce order. The city, state and Confederate courts were kept busy by the number of arrests. For the month of January 1865, the Dispatch showed the following cases called before the courts:

- Arson - 1
- Forgery - 2
- Shooting, stabbing and murder - 9
- Drunkenness - 8 men, 3 women
- Stealing, burglary and garroting - 76
- Assault and beating - 12
- Poisoning - 7
- Aiding negroes to escape - 23
- Gambling - 2
- Grand larceny - 2
- Receiving stolen goods - 16
- Buying to resell - 8
- Abusive language - 6
- Permitting slaves to go at large - 8
- Keeping houses of "ill fame" - 5
- Trespassing - 3
- Disloyalty - 4
- Not having a pass - 3
- Selling liquor after 10 P.M. - 1
- Spy - 1
- Obtaining salt from two stores - 5
- Trading in greenbacks - 4

There were many "confidence" men in the city, ready to prey on the trusting. There was dishonesty in the government departments, clerks absconded with specie, stole and forged Confederate notes, and

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24. Daily Dispatch, May 23, 1864
sold forged passports at exorbitant prices. The moral standards of
the people were low. Some white men associated with Negro women,
not only in the trading centers of the slave dealers and Dublin, but
also walked with them on the city streets. 25

"And with the feeling how valueless was money, came another
epidemic - not so widespread, perhaps, as the speculation fever; but
equally fatal to those who caught it - the rage for gambling!

Impulsive by nature, living in an atmosphere of constant
and increasing artificial excitement, . . . the men of the South
gambled heavily, recklessly and openly. There was no shame - little
concealment about it. . . . And really to the camp-wearyed and battle
worn officer, the saloon of the fashionable Richmond 'hell' was a
thing of beauty:" 26

The saloons, Faro Banks, were luxurious, with soft lights,
heavy carpets, and comfortable chairs. Here the soldiers, statesmen,
professional and business man rubbed shoulders, smoked ten dollar
Havanas, and drank the best imported liquors at five dollars a drink.
Men who were calm on the battlefields, stacked small white chips reck-
lessly.

The gambling rage spread from the wealthy to every class of
society. The citizens felt that it was one of the greatest causes of

25. Daily Dispatch, November 8, 1861
26. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 238
poverty. Laws of the city made Faro Banks illegal, and the Mayor organised a war on them. Raids were made on the gambling houses around the Square and Dublin. The chips, tables, etc., were publicly burned, before the City Hall. The Dispatch commented on the fact that the city did not raid the large prosperous Faro saloons. Only once, did the Dispatch carry record of a raid on a gambling house as large and prosperous as Worsham's. Worsham took the case to court and it dragged on for more than a year. Worsham continued to conduct his saloon. 27

The city was infested with stray dogs. They growled and scratched. They destroyed the food intended for hogs. They congregated in the markets ready to snatch anything within reach. The Council ordered that all stray dogs be caught in nets; taken to the outskirts of the city, killed, and placed on the nitre beds. This was all very well but there were no nets in the city and the use of firearms in the markets was forbidden. Finally, the nets were made, and the "dog war" began. 28 After two days of continuous dog catching the Dispatch remarked that the city might be able to notice an improvement in a few months.

Besides these, there were other misdemeanors which the people wanted the police to correct. Market men were smoking vile

27. Daily Dispatch, November 27, 1861
28. Daily Dispatch, May - August 1863
pipes at the stalls which made the air offensive. Young men and boys were bathing in the canal without clothes regardless of the lady passengers on the canal packets and the lady pedestrians, calling for attention in a most vulgar manner. Women and children were not only robbing the cemeteries of cut flowers but also digging up shrubs and plants; and men were stealing locks from the vaults. Boys were throwing rocks, gambling in the favorite secluded promenades of society, and shouting in obscene language at those who passed. There were also many duels.

The neighborhood of 17th and Gary Streets became so disorderly that it was unsafe for citizens to pass there without being insulted or their senses shocked by obscene conduct produced by intemperance and harbor "rats" or fugitives. Assistant Provost Marshal Alexander, on being informed of conditions, took a detachment of soldiers and surrounded the area. He systematically searched every house; all males were arrested; all whiskey was seized and either emptied into the gutters or stored in warehouses. All the deserters were sent to their regiment for punishment. The "bad" characters were confined in the city jail.

29. *Daily Dispatch*, August 13, 1864
30. *Daily Dispatch*, March 30, 1864
31. *Sentinel* (daily), August 22, 1864; Christian, W. Asbury. Richmond, Her Past and Present; Jones, J. B. A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, p. 298
Besides these disorders, the city suffered from a series of catastrophes. Twice the river and Shockoe Creek rose so high that they drove the inhabitants of "Butcher Town Flats" from their homes and destroyed supplies at the wharf and in one of the Commissary depots. It made the water supply unfit to drink and the citizens dependent on the city's two wells and a few springs.

The penitentiary caught fire in July 1861. The workshops that contained machines for spinning and weaving were destroyed as well as the material for uniforms which was being made. The machinery could not be replaced. Other fires menaced the city - most of them of incendiary origin. Sometimes there were weeks with two or more fires a day. In 1864, the Confederate Coffee Factory burned, the fire spreading to consume two city squares. This fire was so close to the military prisons, that the walls of Castle Thunder, Castle Lightening and Libby Prison were scorched. The prisoners were terrified and the citizens were equally terrified at thought of having to release them. A portion of the Tredgar Works was burned in 1863, destroying the machine shop in which gun carriages were constructed.

A smallpox epidemic swept the city the winter of 1862-63.

32. Daily Dispatch, July 1, 1864
34. Sentinel, (daily) May 16, 1863
Both citizens and soldiers suffered. Houses, in which there was smallpox, were designated by a white flag. The mortality rate was not high considering the conditions in the city.

An unseasonable snow\(^{35}\) in 1864 destroyed the prospective gardens in and around the city. Many of the poor were without any fuel and suffered or died from exposure.

The deaths of many well known people brought sorrow. Two of the South's outstanding chemists, Dr. Joseph Laidley and Edward Finch were killed while trying to prepare a better detonation powder. Galt, the sculptor, was a victim of smallpox. The city mourned the deaths of Bishop Meade, Stonewall Jackson, J. E. B. Stuart, and of little Joe Davis, the President's son. Reports of the defeats in the south and west shocked the citizens, but the news of the defeat at Gettysburg, which had been reported a victory, caused more sorrow and suffering than any event of the war. The city's own Company F was almost destroyed. The city was filled with the "cries of Rachaeles weeping for their children.\(^{36}\)

In spite of the confusion and sorrow caused by being a wartime capital, civic affairs went on as usual. The street railway was completed and Richmond could boast of two horse-drawn cars. Streets were paved with granite blocks. A chain gang was put to

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35. Richmond Whig, March 23, 1864
36. Clay, Mrs. Clement C. A Belle of the Fifties, p. 243
work filling the disgusting gully on 9th Street between Clay and Leigh. Four public wells were dug so that citizens and transient soldiers might get cool, clear water in place of the amber colored water from the reservoir. The sanitary commission was busy trying to keep the streets cleaned, and alleys free of all debris that might breed germs and disease. A steam fire engine was given to the city by the insurance companies. The "Niagara," a street sprinkler of which the city was very proud, kept down the dust in the city until it was loaned to Camp Lee for use on the parade grounds. The City Council appropriated money for their six free schools, orphanages, and almshouse. They raised taxes, the pay of city officials, and the price of gas. The City Gas Works was wholly inadequate to supply the city after the influx of population. Several retorts wore out and it was six or eight months before they could be replaced. The street lights were left unused so that private consumers could light their homes. By the time the new retorts were supplied, the price of gas was so high that only a few used it.

The Council helped the families of volunteers and the city poor. They divided the city into districts with an agent at the head of each to investigate cases of poverty and to supervise the deliveries of foods, fuel and clothes. Many objected to the agents' manners, but they did efficient work. When there were supplies to be had, they were distributed as justly as possible.
Chapter VII.

Evacuation.

Richmond was in a state of siege the last year of the war. Early in February the bell in the Capitol Square rang out the alarm. The enemy was approaching along Brook Road. All business stopped. Every man and boy capable of bearing arms went out with General Wilcox to defend the city. General Lee, hearing the news, sent a detachment of cavalry under General Wade Hampton to the rescue; Kilpatrick was turned back.

Colonel Dahlgreen, with Kilpatrick's second command approached down the Three Notch Road. They halted at Colonel Benjamin Green's plantation for refreshments. Here Dahlgreen was routed by a detachment of old men and boys of the Home Guard and fled to King and Queen County where he was killed. The papers, reported to have been found on his body, caused all Richmonders to hate him more than "Beast" Butler. These papers concerned the capture of Richmond and, it was alleged, closed with an order; to release the prisoners on Belle Isle; to release other prisoners; to destroy and burn the city; to destroy and burn everything that could be used by the rebels; to shoot horses and cattle; to destroy railroads, and canals; to leave only the

1. The Green plantation included the present University of Richmond Campus. His home was the large brick house near the college. He was one of the wealthy slave traders of this section.
hospitals; and to kill "Jeff" Davis and his cabinet. 2

Dahlgreen's crutch was brought to Richmond and exhibited in the office of one of the newspapers. Its construction was so much better than any the city artisans had been able to make that it became the pattern for crutches for the Confederate cripples.

In May, General Grant started "On to Richmond," determined to capture the city by autumn. He sent General Sheridan, around Lee's army toward the city. Stuart and his cavalry met Sheridan at Yellow Tavern, six miles from the city. Again Stuart saved Richmond but this time at the expense of his life. He was mortally wounded and brought to the city to die. The citizens had felt that as long as Lee had Jackson and Stuart to aid him, nothing could possibly hurt the Capital. Jackson's death, the year before had brought great sorrow to the citizens. The death of Stuart seemed to seal their doom. Stuart was carried to Dr. Brewer's house, the home of his sister-in-law, on east Grace Street. Outside, on the streets, the "night of the eleventh of May, and through the hot hours of the twelfth, a crowd gathers, sobbing women, and men with stricken faces, and in the ears of all of them

2. It never has been proved whether the papers were authentic. Lieutenant Pollard of Norfolk was accused of forging them. Dahlgreen was buried in Richmond. His father sent money for shipment of the body north. On opening the grave it was found empty. Miss E. Van Lew and some Unionist had removed the body for fear the accumulated hatred in the city would cause mutilation of corpse, and buried it secretly. After the war it was sent home.
rolls the sound of battle."

The President visited Stuart. The people made way for him, finding little comfort from his saddened face.

Funeral services were held at St. James Episcopal Church. The President, legislature, cabinet, general staff, soldiers, and citizens followed the body to Hollywood for a second short service. The death of no leader since "Stonewall" Jackson had produced such sorrow. Stuart had been the favorite and ideal of all types of citizens. The city council passed resolutions that the city had lost a great soldier and gentleman; and that a suitable monument be erected with Mrs. Stuart's approval.

Grant focused his attentions on Petersburg but that did not relieve Richmond. General Butler was trying to dig a canal through Dutch Gap, just beside Drewry's Bluff so that the federal gunboats might proceed up the river. The batteries from the Bluff peppered the Yankees as they worked. For six months they toiled. As men were killed, they were replaced by an inexhaustible supply. Finally the only thing left for the completion of the canal was the blowing up of the barrier at the northern end. The city was shaken by the explosion. Communications were so poor that the people did not know of their imminent danger, until Butler, discouraged by the failure of the explosion and a freshet that piled up debris in the entrance of

3. Thomason, John W., Jr. Jeb Stuart, p. 500

4. Daily Dispatch, May 16, 1864
the gap, had withdrawn down the river.

Fort Harrison was taken in October, and the Confederates struggled to retake it as Drewry's Bluff was left exposed to attacks by land. Toward the end of the month they were successful and the enemy withdrew to Williamsburg, only to return later. There were three raids in December, one on the northwest, and two by way of the Darby Town Road. The Home Guard helped to defend the city. (There was dissatisfaction in the ranks of the Reserves. The Italians of the 19th Regiment threw down their arms and refused to fight.)

The siege was not lifted. The Federal Armies were so close to the city that the hucksters refused to bring food. The months of 1864-65 really meant starving times to the city. The markets were practically depleted, offering for sale only the poorest beef, small white potatoes, and a few vegetables at exorbitant prices. In the winter the vegetables were replaced by dried corn field peas. The supply of fish was cut off by the operations at Dutch Gap.

The meals of the fairly prosperous consisted of corn bread, dried peas, rice, salt bacon, sometimes varied with a dessert of sorghum syrup. Mrs. Burton Harrison said that the ladies tried more than

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5. When General Lee was asked who was the best friend of the Confederacy, he answered with a twinkle in his eye, "The only unfailing friend the Confederacy ever had was corn field peas." Wise, John S. The End of an Era, p. 592-593.

6. Those of the citizens who had private gardens and were able to keep them cultivated, had their suffering reduced. Those who had "pull" with the blockade runners had wines, and sugar, etc. throughout the war.
a hundred different ways of cooking pork, potatoes and bread. 7

Some of the citizens were so near starvation, that the ladies organized "The Richmond Soup Association." The soup was made from potatoes at forty-eight dollars a bushel. The salaried class suffered more than any group, because salaries never rose in proportion to inflation. Eighty dollars would not cover living expenses when board was thirty dollars a week and more, not to mention other necessities. Mr. Wise said: The "poorer classes were scantily clad in every kind of makeshift garment, oftentimes rags. People without overcoats met one another upon the streets, and talked over the prospects of peace with their teeth chattering, their garments buttoned over their chests...their gloveless hands deep into their pockets for warmth." The pauper class, before the war, known as the poor of the city, were reduced to dreadful misery by the scarcity of food and fuel. On the whole, they fared better than the salaried classes since the Common Council provided them with food and fuel when there was any to be had.

Prices were very high, not only for foods and fuel, but also for clothing. The price of ordinary calico rose from twelve and one-half cents in 1861 to thirty-five dollars a yard, inferior cotton cloth sold at thirty to fifty dollars a yard; coats of fine cloth one thousand

8. Wise, John S. The End of an Era, p. 392-393
to fifteen hundred dollars; hats, according to material, were priced from six hundred to fifteen hundred dollars. "The Mechanics and Working Men of Richmond" held a meeting to protest against such extortion. They passed a resolution against speculation and appointed a committee to go before the legislature and ask for aid. They pledged themselves to defend the Confederate States of America and the city. A special vote of thanks was sent to the soldiers defending the city. 9

The citizens had by the winter of 1864-65 no respect for the currency. Everyone was confident that the government would have to repudiate it sooner or later and this would result in bankruptcy and ruin. There was a reckless expenditure by those who had money. Luxuries were bought regardless of cost. This was a definite change in attitude from that of 1863.

Early in 1865, a letter to Mrs. Clay from Colonel Clay told of the indebtedness of the government and conditions in the city. "Don't come to Richmond! If you think it necessary to come on, do so at once; don't delay. Leave sister; don't undertake to bring her in the present uncertain conditions of the railroad connections between here and the Georgia line... Our armies have been dwindling, until none is large enough to withstand an attack in the open field. There is a collapse in every department, and, worse than all, there is an utter lack of confidence by the people, in the administration,

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9. The Daily Dispatch, September 21, 1864
in Congress, and in the success of the cause itself. . . . Campbell will go out. He cannot see any benefit to be derived from his longer continuance in office as the drudge of the War Department, especially when the treasury is bankrupt, and Congress cannot devise a new scheme for re-establishing faith in the currency. That Department is $400,000,000 in arrears, it is said. I know it is enormously in debt to the War Department ($32,000,000) and that the Quartermaster General and the Commissary General cannot obtain the means to pay current expenses. If we cannot have transportation and bread for the soldiers in the field, to say nothing of clothing and pay, . . . what becomes of our army? . . . As I see the present and argue thence what the future has in store for us, . . . I see nothing but defeat and disaster and ruin."10

The Confederate Government inspired little respect. When congress convened it showed very clearly that it was no longer the "rubber stamp" of the Executive. The President continued to issue the proclamations of a "Dictator," as the Richmond Examiner spoke of them. Congress objected. All affairs of state were at a "stand still." The members of the government were losing faith in their previous policies. One congressman attempted to escape through the lines to Washington only to be brought back and made the object of ridicule. They

10. Clay, Mrs. Clement C. A Belle of the Fifties, p. 243
began to believe that their derision of Alexander H. Stephens' ill views of civil liberty and democratic government was an error. Davis' mismanagement and favoritism had proved it. They called Stephens to Richmond to address Congress in a secret session. He also addressed the people at a mass meeting. They listened with new respect.

Both the North and the South wanted peace. They were exhausted and tired of the long drawn out war. Early in the summer a peace conference was held at Niagara, but neither side could reach satisfactory terms. Just after this failure, it was widely rumored that the government was planning to evacuate the city. There was ample cause for such a rumor as the Treasury Department had moved to South Carolina. The archives of the various departments were being packed so they could be moved quickly. The citizens had great fear of occupation because of the accounts of the ruthless destruction of Atlanta by Sherman, and of Butler's policy in New Orleans and Columbia.

Peace negotiations were tried again the last of January.

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11. Stephens, the Vice-President, had discovered in the early days of the Confederacy, that his policies and beliefs were diametrically opposed to those held by Congress and the President so he ceased to attend Congress, after the establishment of martial law and the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus without the consent of the people. He was a critic of the administration.

12. The women (more than 300), who worked in the department, did not want to move and they and their friends had petitioned that the department remain in Richmond.
The public, knowing nothing of the powers of the commissioners, speculated on the probable outcome of the conference. Opinion was divided. About half thought some good would result, the others, expected failure. To encourage the people, a war meeting was held. Thomas S. Flournoy, John Goode, Thomas S. Bocock, John B. Baldwin of Virginia, and Col. Lester of Georgia addressed a large and enthusiastic audience in the Hall of the House of Delegates. They advocated a vigorous persecution of war as the only certain method of an honorable peace.

The return of the peace commissioners seemed to prove this point. Because of Northern victories in the South and the West, the United States Government was no longer anxious to carry on negotiations, with the South which was insisting on a conditional peace. The commissioners never got to Washington but had to confer with lesser officials at Fortress Monroe. After a report to the Congress and legislature, Mr. Stephens and other members of the Commission, R. M. T. Hunter, and Secretary Benjamin addressed the public in the African Church. (No place in the city was large enough to accommodate the numbers who wished to hear Lincoln's terms of peace.) The church was crowded. So many were in the gallery that there was fear of its collapse. Thousands stood in the streets in hope of hearing something of the speeches. Upon hearing the report of the Commissioners, the public was filled with indignation and passed resolutions to continue the war as an "only means of honorable peace," pledging their fortunes,
lives and sacred honor. Several such meetings were held. The flagging spirit of the city was awakened to fight, and fight as long as possible. To swell the ranks of the dwindling Confederate army, slaves were impressed for service in the militia. Many watched them drill in the Capitol Square each afternoon feeling that they learned the routine quickly and did well.

Early in 1865, the rumor of evacuation by the government became a fact; and the move was expected some time in late April or May. The families of the President and Cabinet left the city. Most of the archives and many supplies in the Commissary stores were moved. The citizens said little but hope had left them. Only the "vultures" (speculators and exploiters) showed outward signs of fear. Many left the city. People made preparations as best they could to meet the enemy.

In spite of the feeling of impending disaster, the social life of the city was almost feverishly gay. The New Year opened with a belated Christmas dinner given by the ladies for soldiers who

13. Lincoln had stated that he would not treat with Confederate States or State separately. The Confederacy must suffer the consequences of its own folly. Unconditional surrender was the only term he would accept.

14. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 353-354

15. Christmas had been a very distressing holiday for the city. Many had attempted the usual festivities with evergreens, holly and gifts, but too many homes had "vacant chairs" to make the festi- val a happy occasion. Wishing to express their appreciation to those who were gallantly defending the city, they planned a Christmas Dinner. The first week in January seemed a better date because Christmas week would be a difficult one as it was the slave holiday.
were defending the city. Hidden treasures of sugar and spices were made into cakes and pies. These and other supplies for the dinner were assembled at the Ballard House to be prepared and dispensed. From January 2nd to 4th, the long line of soldiers around Richmond were given the first "square" meal they had had for many a day.16

The four theatres producing plays, operas, and concerts were well attended. Fishing parties to Drewry's Bluff and excursions to Ashland were advertised in the newspapers. John W. Davis & Sons had an exhibition of painting: "The Fall of Fort Sumter," "The Interior View of the Ruins" (of Sumter), and the "Fort of Charleston" attracted the attention of the public. The same firm printed music. They advertised the current favorites, the "Lee Schottische," "Just Before the Battle Mother," "The Vacant Chair," "La Serenade" and others. The advertisement spoke disparagingly of former publications of Northerners saying that the series of sheet music was well worth a place in a lady's music book, not of the vulgar many-colored and highly ornamented character such as was "forced upon us before the war." 17

For the first time since the war the papers advertised balls with admission fees. "The Virginia Pleasure Club" sponsored many. The announcement always closed with this statement, "Posi-

16. The poor of the city shared the dinner.
17. The Daily Dispatch, February 14, 1865
tively no ladies admitted except those who have received invitations." Other balls were the "Grand Select Ball" at the Exchange and the "Grand Concert and Ball" at the Monticello. The admission was ten dollars for a gentleman and lady, and five dollars for an extra lady.18

Of the many private balls, and receptions that took place in the city, the Tabb-Rutherford wedding reception was the event of the winter. John S. Wise, a guest, gives a vivid description of it in his book, The End of an Era. The coat of his uniform was unfit to wear. He secured the city for cloth and tailor but not even several hundred dollars of borrowed money could produce a new coat. A friend in his artillery company lent him a practically new one. Armed with a new pair of boots and a coat whose waist button constrained his hips and coat tail almost to his ankles, sleeves to his finger tips, and white knit gloves, he attended the wedding and the reception. Other men wore misfits and some uniforms displayed patches. The ladies were wonderful to behold. They had ransacked every garret in the city. Some had utilized the lace and damask window curtains. Everybody was there, executives, staff members, soldiers, John H. Daniels of the Examiner, the "White House Set" and ladies of the city. The hostess presented Mr. Wise with a partner for the dance. She was of great breadth and wore a dress that had been used by an ancestress when Lafayette visited the city in the first part of the century. The

18. The Daily Dispatch, January 13, 1865
dress was ludicrously unbecoming. When Mr. Wise saw the two of them reflected in a mirror, he could not help but laugh. His partner was grievously insulted and asked to be taken to her seat.

The guests who ran the blockade or came in contact with the federal brought champagne. A highly prized wedding gift of real coffee was also served. The table was set with pyramids of butter balls, delicious bread, turkey, ham, and sausage, a great pile of apples, and "unsurpassed" domestic pickle. Great bowls of apple toddy, both hot and cold, furnished warmth and cheer. 19 Needless to say the Tabb and Rutherford families were among the most wealthy of the city. Many, who in the first years of the war, had entertained lavishly were now ashamed to ask guests to partake of their very simple fare.

Judging by the editorials, news from the front, and advertisements in the papers for the first of April, the city had no idea that the evacuation of the Capital was so near. News came slowly and Richmond did not know the extent of the disastrous losses of the Confederacy before Petersburg. The death of General A. P. Hill caused much sorrow.

April the second was a warm clear Sunday. The people had gone to church in their shabby clothes. During Dr. Minnegerode's prayer, a message from Lee advising evacuation was brought to Presi-

dent Davis. He left St. Paul's quietly. His leaving caused little
stir as messages had been frequently brought to him in church. By
two o'clock, the city was officially informed of immediate evacua-
tion. The President, the cabinet, the archives and specie of the
Confederacy left the city on the Danville Railroad (the only line
intact that evening). Many citizens also left the city.

The Council met at four. Orders were given to destroy all
liquor in the city. Mayor Mayo, Judges Lyon and Meredith were to go
as commissioners to surrender the city as soon as the last Confedera-
tate troops had withdrawn from the lines and safely crossed to the
south side of the river. A committee was sent to General Ewell, who
was in charge of evacuation, to protest against the order to destroy
by fire all cotton and tobacco stored in the city.

General Ewell said that the orders must be carried out. How-
ever, two caddies of tobacco were stored in each house (as far as time
would allow) for the double purpose of keeping it from the federals
and having it to use as money in barter, as Confederate currency would
then be useless. That evening the Commissary stores were opened and
their contents distributed among the people. Excitement increased,
Women hid their silver and jewelry. The Negroes stood about silently,
making no demonstrations of joy.

The orders to destroy whiskey had been but partially obeyed.
Crowds of half-drunken men and women from Rocketts, Butcher Town, Dub-
lin, and other sections of the city, gathered near the Commissary
stores. When liquor kegs were broken open and poured into the streets, the crowd became an uncontrollable swarm. Some lay down and lapped up whiskey that was ankle deep in the gutters. They seemed to be touched with madness. They fought each other for supplies which were no longer distributed but taken. Not being satisfied with supplies from the Commissary, they broke into privately owned stores and factories, becoming more and more crazed as the evening lengthened. To the turmoil and fury of the mob was added the roaring and crackling of flames as the cotton and tobacco factories were fired by the authorities. A strong wind swept the blaze from the ignited warehouses to private homes, and to the factories along the Basin and river. Explosion after explosion rent the air as the Confederate Laboratory and Armory burned.

The Surry Light Artillery was the last group of soldiers to pass through the city. E. W. Jones, a member, described their march,

"We dashed forward on through Rocketts, where the wildest confusion prevails — on along Main Street where numberless women, reckless of personal danger, are tugging and pulling at parcels and goods thrown out from the depots where supplies had been stored — on by the Government shoe factory, just in time to secure a supply of new shoes — on toward the Capitol, winding in and out from street to street, to avoid the fast encroaching fires. It is difficult to make our way at all through the crowds of excited humanity that throng the streets, and hinder travel with their burdens and loads of goods. An officer has to get in front of the Battery with a drawn sword to make way for us to pass along."
By this time, an ocean of flame is dashing, as a tidal wave of destruction, from side to side, and roaring, raging, hissing about us, and leaping on from house to house, and from street to street, in very wantonness of wrath. ... As the fire spreads, buildings are deserted, the helpless occupants dragging with them whatever they could of clothes or household goods.

Consternation and confusion prevailed on all sides. No one seemed capable of sober reasoning or calm reflection. ... The Government officials, and all in authority, civil or military, seemed to be absent." 20

The artillery finding the canal bridge afire, crossed on the span of the Danville Railroad, and thence across Mayo's Bridge.

In the morning occurred the locally famous "shirt-tail truce." The Commissioners left the burning city for Fort Harrison. As they approached they were met by a volley of musketry. Having nothing white to serve as a flag of truce, the gentlemen raised their torn off shirt-tails. Mayor John Mayo surrendered the city and respectfully requested that the federal army take possession to preserve order and protect women, children and property. 21

The federals entered Richmond in a compact group, cavalry, artillery and infantry, with the Negro troops well to the front. They marched straight to the Capitol Square and replaced the Stars and Bars by the Stars and Stripes. A detachment was ordered to stack arms and join the Fire Brigade, another was to preserve order. The soldiers

20. Jones, B. W. Under Stars and Bars, p. 251-252

21. The lawlessness of the night before had not abated.
helped the citizens move their household goods from doomed houses and placed them under guard in the Square. At last the fire was controlled by blowing up buildings in its path. In the evening, the danger was over. Nine hundred houses (mills, factories, stores, a church and dwellings, including four-fifths of all the supplies in the city) were destroyed, a smoldering ruin. The troops of General Weitzel were for the most part very courteous and helped the people in their distress. General Weitzel assured the terrified citizens that a white brigade would picket the city that night and assured the ladies that there would be no danger of being molested. After nine o'clock all were required to remain indoors. Soldiers and citizens out after that hour were arrested. Quiet was established after two days of wild confusion and fear, but many hid great fear under a calm countenance.

The once famed Capital of the Confederacy was gone and Richmond was left to rebuild from ruin and desolation a new city to take its place among the important cities of the South.

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22. The burned area extended from Main Street including the north side and a few houses on Franklin Street to the river, from 8th to 15th and from 20th to 23rd Streets.

23. In the following week, General Weitzel obtained permission to issue rations to the starving white families of the city. (He already had authority to issue them to the Negroes.)
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The writings of John M. Daniel, editor of the Examiner, with a memoir of his life, printed by his brother.


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Brief descriptions of the ladies and gentlemen who dominated the social life of Richmond in 1861-'65.

Description of conditions, social, political, and economic in the Confederate Capital.


Recollections of the civil war and other events of interest in the life of Mrs. Burton Harrison, whose husband was a close friend and the private secretary of Jefferson Davis.


Recollections of a private soldier in the Surry Light Artillery 1861-'65 including revivals and camp life on the outskirts of the city.


Mr. Jones as a clerk in the war office criticises the administration of the Confederate States of America. He also gives a picture of the social life and customs.


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Macon, a member of the First Company of Richmond Howitzers, tells of camp life and a soldier's visits to Richmond.


The diary is a daily record of her life in Richmond and other cities written for the members of her family who were too young to remember.


Morgan's description of a meeting of the Senate in 1864 gives a vivid picture of the demoralization of the group.


Sidelights on food, fashion, and social problems 1861-'65.


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Shows interesting criticism of the Davises.


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Dr. Jeter was pastor of Grace Street Baptist Church during the war. Several letters were used as reference, particularly those written from Richmond to Mrs. Archibald Thomas and her family who were refugees in Pittsylvania County, having closed their home at 2nd East Marshall Streets.


The book shows the part that war psychosis played in the indictment of both Northern and Southern prisons. The author used official documents and letters as source material.


The book traces the old road, locating passed buildings with the events concerning each.


Includes editorials from the Richmond Examiner and Enquirer from 1861-1865.

This life of Alexander Stephens tells very clearly of his opposition to the policies of the Confederate States government, his unpopularity, and his final recall to address the Congress.


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