SIMON CAMERON AT HOME.

A DAY AT THE DONEGAL FARM-HOUSE.

RECOLLECTIONS OF "THE OLD SENATOR."—SCRAPS OF UNPUBLISHED HISTORY—POLITICS IN THE OLDEN TIME—"YOU WILL VOTE FOR ME, MR. POOL"—LINCOLN AND THE BREAKING OUT OF THE WAR—WHAT JEFF DAVIS PREDICTED—CAMERON'S MEMORABLE ADVICE—"WE MUST ARM THE NEGROES"—ON THE FIELD OF GETTYSBURG—A TELEGRAM WHICH WAS NEVER SENT—SUMNER, GRANT, AND SCHURZ—A PLOT TO IMPEACH LINCOLN.

From our Special Correspondent.

DONEGAL FARM, Lancaster County, Penn.

In Harrisburg, the other day, I met Simon Cameron, the Nestor of Pennsylvania politics, "the old Senator." He was hale and hearty as ever, erect, handsome, keen-eyed, and quick-witted, in spite of his 79 years of active life and constant struggle. He had an engagement, as usual, and was in a hurry; but as we parted he turned and called after me in his own blunt yet withal kindly and courteous fashion: "Come down to Donegal Farm and spend a few days with me; I want to see you." Of course, I took him at his word; for those who know Simon Cameron need not be assured that he does not talk for talk's sake; that he means what he says.

He was at the station waiting for me when I arrived, and, seated in a plain farmer's wagon splashed with light mud from the wet roads, gave no outward sign of being the man who for years ruled the destinies of a great State, and took foremost part in the councils of the nation. "Jump in, jump in," he cried cheerily, "we have five miles to drive before we get to the farm." I did as I was directed, and in a moment we were going at a fine speed over the smooth country turnpike. "I'm sorry its not a brighter day," exclaimed the Senator, after we had gone a half mile or so; "I like the sunlight," and then he remained silent for a long time. Presently, however, as we approached a little cluster of low-roofed old stone houses, he looked up again and said quietly, "That's Maytown, one of the oldest villages in the State, and my birthplace. I used to go to school there nearly 70 years ago. Yes indeed," he continued laughing, "and a mighty hard time I had of it too; school-books were not so plenty then as they are now. In those days every boy had to pay for his own, and as my father died when I was very young you may be sure I was not particularly overburdened with money. I was anxious and ambitious, however, and managed to get along somehow. My geography was my chief trouble,' and for a moment the Senator stopped to laugh at the thought. "Yes, that geography book certainly was a great trouble. I was just about as anxious to know something of the world as a boy could be, and one day, much to my delight, my teacher told me that if I could get a geography he would promote me into a class where I could learn to my heart's content. Away I started to a shop where they had such books, and told the man who kept it what I wanted. 'How much money have you?' he asked. 'Three-quarters of a dollar, Sir,' said I, 'and I've been saving that up for a good many months.' 'Still it's not enough,' replied the shopkeeper, much to my dismay; 'the book costs a dollar.' 'Well, can't you take the three-quarters, and trust me the other one?' I asked, almost in desperation. 'Yes, Simon, yes, I will,' the old fellow replied; 'I'll trust you;' and he did," said the Senator, in conclusion, "he trusted me, and I paid him after six weeks' saving, which was doing mighty well in those days."

SIMON CAMERON BOUND A PRINTER.

This recollection of his first struggle and triumph seemed to please Mr. Cameron exceedingly, and, after laughing heartily over it, he turned to me, and in the quick, straightforward manner for which he is noted, said, "Now that reminds me of a thing I suppose you never heard."

"What is that?" I asked. "Oh, nothing much," he replied, smiling again, "only that I am somewhat of a newspaper man myself. I commenced life in a printing office. That was a long time ago," he continued, reflectively, "and yet I shall never forget it, and shall never cease to have a kindly feeling for the men who do that hardest of all hard work, the work of a newspaper."

"And yet," said I, "you are credited with disliking and speaking badly of people connected with the press."

"Of course I am, of course I am," the Senator went on; "but there is not a word of truth in it; that story they tell of me talking of 'them literary fellows' is made up out of the whole cloth, as are nearly all such yarns regarding our public men. I never used the expression, and I never disliked press men. On the contrary, I have always had a high regard for them. Of course, there are some black sheep in the flock—mean fellows—who disgrace themselves by abusing the most sacred confidences; but as a class I have always found them not only gifted and well informed, but conscientious, honest, and well-meaning. Of course they are a little thoughtless and inconsiderate at times, but then they have to do their work in such a hurry—and I suppose we all have our faults."

"But, about your experience as a printer?" I suggested. "Oh, yes," continued the Senator, "I must not forget about that. It's a short story, though an important one to me. When I was 17 years old," he went on—"that was 60 odd years ago—I was a sickly little chap, and very small for my age. So they bound me to a printer, and that reminds me that I happen to have my apprenticeship paper in my pocket. It was sent to me a few days ago by a lady, who found it among her grandfather's papers." Saying this the Senator produced a yellow and age-worn sheet of paper, of which the following is an exact copy:

THIS INDENTURE witnesseth that Simon Cameron, the son of Charles Cameron, deceased, of Pennsylvania, (by and with the advice and consent of his guardian, Collon Cameron, testified by their signing as witness' hereto,) hath bound and put himself, and by these presents doth bind and put himself apprentice to Andrew Kennedy, Printer, of the Town of Northumberland, after the manner of an apprentice, to dwell with and serve the said Andrew Kennedy, his executors, administrators, and assigns, from the day of the date hereof, for and during and until the full end and term of three years and ten months thence next ensuing, and fully to be complete and ended: During all which term the said apprentice his said master faithfully shall serve, and that honestly and obediently in all things as a dutiful apprentice ought to do; and the said Andrew Kennedy, his executors, administrators, or assigns shall teach or cause to be taught and instructed the said apprentice in the art, trade, and mystery of a Printer, and shall find and provide for the said apprentice sufficient meat, drink, washing, and lodging during the said term; and at the expiration of every year shall and will give his said apprentice twenty dollars to provide said apprentice with clothing.

In witness whereof,

SIMON CAMERON. [Seal.]
COLLON CAMERON. [Seal.]
ANDREW KENNEDY. [Seal.]

Bound before me, one of the Justices for the County of North'd, May 14, 1816.

J. SIGHOLZ.

"And how did you get along in your new trade?" I asked the Senator, after reading the above indenture. "Well, not very well at first," he replied. "Indeed, I had only been a short time in the employ of the man my guardian bound me to when he failed, and I was suddenly thrown upon my own resources. I at once determined to go to Harrisburg and try for fortune in a more extended field. With this object in view I procured passage on a flat-boat, the only means of conveyance then, and started down the river for the capital. It was a queer little place then, very unlike the city of to-day; but it seemed a mighty town to me, and I can well remember sitting under a willow tree the day I arrived and wondering in my own mind, alone and friendless as I was, what in the world I should do in so big a place. For some years before this—indeed, ever since I could remember—I had been a great reader of stray books, and somehow or other I had got the notion into my head that I could make a fortune in South America, and as I sat under that willow tree, which is standing yet, by the way, I thought more than over that it would be well for me to go there. Indeed, I had about made up my mind to set out on the trip when two boys of about my own age, one of whom I had known in my native place, came along and spoke to me. My old friend was a printer's apprentice and his companion was bound to a saddler." And here, by way of parenthesis, the Senator exclaimed with even more than his usual earnestness, "Every boy learned a trade then; it's a pity the old custom has been abolished." Then, after a moment's reflection, he continued. "But to return to my story. Both the boys heard my plans in regard to South America. My friend, the printer's apprentice, who was a sensible fellow, strongly advised against the project, and they both urged me to stay in Harrisburg. Well, the upshot of it all was that I took their advice, and, together with my friend the printer, went to a Mr. Peacock, the man who employed him, and asked for work. He took me in as an apprentice without more ado, and under him I progressed so well and learned so fast that at the end of two years I was given the position of assistant editor of what was, outside of Philadelphia, the leading Democratic paper of the State. So you see," said the Senator in conclusion, "that I was at one time as much a press man as any of you."

"But you left the business," I said. "Oh, yes," he replied laughing, "I fell from grace a generation ago, but nevertheless, you ought all to be good to me for the sake of auld lang syne."

AT THE DONEGAL FARM-HOUSE.

As the Senator thus jokingly finished his narration, the wagon turned out of the high-road, and going down a moss-grown private way, soon stopped at the Donegal farm-house. The structure is a substantial but unpretending one, of gray stone. It is situated pleasantly upon rising ground, and from the wide old-fashioned porch which surrounds it on one side, can be seen the little peak-roofed church in which Gen. Cameron's ancestors worshiped, and the graveyard in which his grandfather has found a last resting-place. To these facts, as I afterward discovered, are to be attributed his fondness for the old farm-house. It is an exceedingly commodious and comfortable place in addition to everything else, however, and well fitted to be the Summer home of the warm-hearted and hospitable "old Senator."

"Come in, come in," he cried cheerily, as he jumped nimbly out of the wagon. "We can be at our ease here, and have nobody to find fault with us." So saying, he led the way into a lofty sitting-room furnished in the solid fashion of 50 years ago, and motioned me to a great arm-chair, in which two ordinary-sized people could comfortably have found accommodation. There was a blazing log fire in the immense grate, and the morning being a cold and damp one, it gave out a heat which was most grateful after our long ride. After warming his hands over the blaze for a moment, the General was soon again in a talking humor, and, turning to me, said abruptly, "It's a wonderful thing how fast we travel in these days. A boy of your age can't understand what I mean, but the old people do. Why," he continued, with increasing animation, "I can remember when it took days to go from this place to Harrisburg, and now you can come and go in a few hours. A few years ago the most enlightened men would have laughed at the very idea of such a thing. I well remember," he went on, "when the Pennsylvania Railroad was first projected. I was always interested in it, and from the first was exceedingly sanguine that it would be a great success. I used to tell all my friends and neighbors so, and one day when the undertaking was fairly under way I was invited to address a large town meeting in regard to it. I did so, urging the people to subscribe to the stock of the road, and representing to them what advantages they would derive from its completion. Among other things, I said that I had no doubt when the railway was finished a man could go from Harrisburg to Philadelphia, transact his business, and return home the same day. They were all very much surprised at this, and one old farmer, a friend of mine, came to me after the meeting was over, and, winking slyly, said, 'That there was a good speech, Simon, a mighty good speech, and I'm glad you made it; but, about goin' from Harrisburg to Philadelphia in one day, of course you don't expect old stagers like me to believe that yarn,' and," concluded the Senator laughing, "the old fellow went off highly pleased with what he thought to be the good joke he had on me."

"Did he live to discover his mistake?" I asked. "Oh, yes," Mr. Cameron replied. "He afterward took many a railroad ride from Harrisburg to Philadelphia."

AN OLD STATE BANK.

"How did you contrive to get out of the newspaper business?" I asked the General, after we had talked about indifferent matters for some time. "Oh, I drifted out of it," was his reply; "drifted out of it and became a contractor, and finally a banker. In those days," he continued, "banking was not what it is now. All the financial institutions of Pennsylvania were then conducted under the old State law, which provided that after the amount of the capital of the bank had been paid up in gold or its equivalent, it should be allowed to issue notes representing three dollars for every one dollar of such capital, and to take as many deposits as it could get. This, however, was with the understanding that the amount of the capital, whatever it was, should always be on deposit or invested in some way that would make it absolutely secure from loss. Of course, under such a system the people had to trust largely to the honor of the individual conducting the banking business, and, strange as it may seem, they were seldom deceived. Indeed, the confidence of the public was almost unbounded, and well established and wisely conducted institutions could issue almost any amount of notes they desired. For instance, the capital of my bank—(it was situated at Middletown, a few miles down the river)—was $100,000, but our issue of notes, currency, or bills, as they are now called, frequently amounted to $700,000, and sometimes to as much as $800,000."

"And how did you succeed as a banker?" I asked. "Very well; very well, indeed," Mr. Cameron replied, thoughtfully. "I commenced the business in 1832; it was a very profitable one in those days, and I made a great deal of money. So much money that had I continued as I began, and never gone into politics, I might now have been the richest man in Pennsylvania. To be sure, the old bank is running still, and I am still connected with it, but not actively since I got into politics, and, say what they will," the old Senator continued, laughing, "politics is not a money-making business."

"Would you object to telling me your first experience in it?" I asked. "Not at all," he replied, "not at all, for it's rather an amusing story, and can hurt nobody. It was some years after I started the bank at Middletown, and I was even then fairly prosperous. I had just returned from a trip to Washington, where I had been on private business, and had hardly settled down to my every-day work again, when I was informed of some unkind things that our member of Congress had been saying about me; and just here I might as well tell you, my boy, that a man is always sure to hear all the unkind things, and very few of the good ones, which men say about him. But to my story: I was told that while I was in the capital some one had said to our member: 'I see Cameron's in the city. What's he doing; looking after politics?' 'No, of course not,' was the Congressman's answer, as reported to me; 'what does he know about politics? He couldn't run for Town Constable.

"Now, this story annoyed me," the Senator continued, "I was a young man then and, of course, a foolish one. At all events, the story annoyed me more than I cared to tell, and there and then I determined to show the people that my good friend, the Congressman, was mistaken, not only about my political knowledge, but about my political influence. The first thing I did was to go into that part of the bank building which I used as a dwelling, and finding my wife there I said to her, I am going to run for Congress. She laughed, thinking it was a joke, but a lady who was visiting her took the matter more seriously and said, 'How do you know you can get the nomination?'

"'I don't know about that, Madam,' I replied 'but I do know that people in this world can get most things which they try hard for, and I am going to try very hard.' Well, that night I got a carriage and went to Harrisburg. The Congressional Convention was to be held a day or two after, and all the delegates had been appointed. In the city I saw some of them, and they promised they would support me. My position in the bank gave me a great deal of influence in the district, and as this was the first time I had ever tried to use it, I found nearly everybody willing to help me. In short, it was not long before I had promises from most of the delegates. I was only afraid of one of them, an old fellow named Pool. He was against me tooth and nail, and for the life of me I could not see how I was to get over his opposition. At last, on the very morning of the convention, I got up unusually early, and who should I see coming down the road but my old friend Pool. He was about to pass me by when I stopped him with a pleasant 'Good morning, Mr. Pool.' 'Mornin', Mr. Cameron,' he replied, and I went on:

"'Mr. Pool, you are going to vote for me in to-day's convention?'

"'No, I'm not,' he answered in about as decided a tone as any one could have wished. 'Oh, yes, but you are,' I persisted.

"'If I do I'll be darned,' said he, and then I began to argue with him. I told him what was the truth, that there was no reason why we should not be friends, and that as we had both succeeded in the world because of our own exertions, we should help instead of being opposed to each other. To this he only replied, 'Oh, that's all nonsense, Simon Cameron; there's no use talking about helping one another, you can't do nothin' for me nor against me.'

"Maybe not,' said I, getting just a little annoyed; 'but you have a son, a young man just coming on in the world, and just as you act by me in this matter, I promise you I shall act by him. If you help me, I'll help him, but if you are against me I will be against your boy as long as we both live.' Of course, I was only half in earnest," the General continued, "but the old man became very much alarmed at what I said, and the next day voted for me in the convention. There were 33 delegates; I had all but three of them, and, of course, got the nomination."

"And were you elected?" I asked. "Oh, no," the General replied, "I had no intention of leaving my business to go into the canvass, and I went out of the contest a few days after the convention. I only wanted the nomination to show my friend, the Congressman, that he made a slight mistake when he said I could not run for Town Constable."

A UNITED STATES SENATOR.

"The fact of the matter is," the General continued, "that, whether right or wrong, I have always been very much, perhaps unduly, influenced by unkind or unjust remarks made about me by my enemies. Whenever they tried to cry me down, I always determined to succeed. So in 1845," he went on, "I went to the United States Senate for the first time; not that I wanted the place so much, but because I was determined that a number of persons who then spoke disparagingly of me should be obliged to acknowledge their error. It was a hard fight that," and the General laughed at the thought, "but I won after all. In those days," he continued, "Judge Woodward was a great man in Pennsylvania, and deservedly so; but, like a number of men who are both good and great, he was impracticable, and, unfortunately for himself, was bitten with free-trade notions, which were then, as now, unpopular in this State. In spite of all this, however, he received, in the year I have named, the nomination of the Democratic caucus for United States Senator, to serve in place of Buchanan. The morning after this action had been taken, and when the result had become generally known, the leading tariff men throughout the State, particularly the iron and other heavy manufacturers, were exceedingly indignant, and began to look about them for some candidate who could prevent Woodward's election. At last a number of them, knowing that I had always been a strong tariff man, came to my bank at Middletown and asked if I would go into a contest for the place. At first I would not hear of such a thing, but they insisted that I should at least do what I could to help them, and at last I consented to go up to Harrisburg and see what

could be done. When I arrived in the Capitol I really had no more intention of going into the fight than I had of flying. After I had been there a few hours, however, I found that I was very generally talked of as a candidate, and that a number of people were laughing at the idea of such a thing, while my enemies were reporting all over town that I could not get a dozen votes. This annoyed me, and I told my friends that in spite of the advantage which Woodward had in being the caucus nominee, I would be a candidate against him. Of course, the moment I made up my mind to do this I went to work with all my might, and the result was that when the Legislature came together in joint session, I was elected by a majority of just one vote. After the fight was all over, however, and I began to reflect, I could not for the life of me see how I was going to be benefited by being a United States Senator, and to tell the truth I did not think myself fit for so high a position. Another thing was that I did not want to leave my bank, but after consulting with the Attorney-General of the State, I found that there was no law which prevented me from being both a bank cashier and United States Senator, and then for the first time I fully made up my mind to go to Washington, I did so, and served for four years.

"And that reminds me," the Senator continued, laughing, "that just before I left for the capital, Buchanan came to me and said, 'Cameron, I suppose you are quite a rich man.'

"'Yes, I am at least comfortably well off,' I replied, and then, with much significance, he remarked, 'Well, I am glad of that, for no man should go to Congress whose fortune is not already made; the temptations are too great.'"

"And did you find this statement to be a correct one?" I asked. "Well, no and yes," Mr. Cameron replied, with much seriousness. "Of course, there must be many and great temptations to men who serve in Congress, but as far as I am personally concerned I know nothing of them. I have heard of corrupt means being used to pass bills, but no man during all my public life ever approached me with any proposition which could be regarded as a dishonorable one. Whatever else they may say of me, there can at least be no charge that I was ever induced by corrupt means to be false to my constituents."

SUMNER'S REMOVAL FROM THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE.

For some time after he had related the manner in which he was first elected to the Senate, Gen. Cameron remained silent, evidently thinking deeply over the many shifting scenes in his busy life. Then, looking up suddenly, he said: "Yes, yes, that spirit of opposition to disparagement and detraction has done much toward shaping my life. I'll tell you another instance of it," and then without further introduction he related the following bit of important and hitherto unpublished political history:

"You remember, of course, what a fuss there was about the proposition to remove Senator Sumner from the Chairmanship of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, but you do not know that I was from the first very much opposed to that action; yet such was the case. I never regarded the position as being so very important a one, and as I had for a long time served second on the committee, I think I know something about its duties. I was in Washington when it was first proposed to remove Mr. Sumner, and as soon as I heard of the plan I at once protested against it. I saw President Grant, among others, and urged upon him that it would be unwise to make the proposed change, and to all the Senators of influence with whom I came in contact I made the same representations. Shortly after this, and before anything had been done in the matter, I returned to my home in Harrisburg. I had only been there a day or two, however, when I was informed by telegraph that Sumner was to be removed, and that I, being second on the committee, was to be substituted in his place. Without waiting to pack my bag, I took the next train for Washington, and arriving while the Senate was yet in session, I went at once to the Chamber, fully determined to decline serving as Chairman of the committee and to do all in my power to secure the retention of Mr. Sumner. Just as I came in from the lobby, however, I found that Senator Schurz was making a speech, and as he was always a good talker, I stopped to listen to him, when what was my surprise to hear that he was speaking on the proposed removal of Sumner, protesting against it, and declaring with more venom and vehemence than was at all necessary under the circumstances, that Simon Cameron, of all men in the world, was the one least fitted to fill the chair of the Committee on Foreign Relations. Indignant, and under the circumstances, I think naturally so, I left the Chamber, took no part in the debate, and allowing things to shape themselves, was made Chairman of the committee, a position which I never sought and never desired."

JEFF DAVIS AND SIMON CAMERON.

After the recital of this incident the conversation turned upon the late war and the events just preceding, and in his own modest, but none the less direct and entertaining style, the General told me story after story regarding those exciting times. At length, in reply to a question regarding Jeff Davis, he said: "Oh! yes, I knew him very well, and for a long time boarded in the same house with him. During the session of 1859, however, I changed my quarters, and did not see so much of him. Indeed, I had not met him, socially, for a long time, when one day I met Mrs. Davis on Pennsylvania-avenue, and she said:

"'Why don't you come and see Jeff?'

"'Oh! I will, one of these days,' I replied. But this indirect answer did not please her, and as we parted I promised that I would come and take breakfast with him the next day. I did so, and after the meal was over we went to Mr. Davis' library and talked for a long time about the condition of the country and the political situation. Even then," (this was in 1859 it will be remembered,) "the Southern Senator seemed to be assured that a war was soon to follow. He talked freely on the subject, and commenting, in connection with it, upon the action of the North in regard to the question of slavery and fugitive slaves, he said, almost in anger: 'You are stealing our negroes; yes, Sir, stealing them.' I did not like this expression," continued Gen. Cameron, "and, becoming somewhat heated myself, I resented it in words hardly more conciliatory than were Mr. Davis'. For a few minutes we were about as excited as two men having such different views could be; but after a little we became calmer, and discussed other topics. I well remember, however, that before the dispute closed I said, with as much earnestness as I could command: 'You may talk as you please, Davis, but I tell you that the moment you fire on the flag, you will be lost forever; even your own slaves will turn upon, and help to destroy you.' 'No, Sir, no. A thousand times, no!' was his reply. 'We are much more sure of our negroes than you can be of your Army. They will stay upon the plantations, raising corn and meal for our families, while we are in the field fighting with you for our rights.' From that time on," said Mr. Cameron, in conclusion, "I was convinced that war, and a desperate war at that, was not to be avoided."

LINCOLN'S FIRST SECRETARY OF WAR.

"I little thought, however," he continued, after a short pause, "how soon it was to come, nor had I the least idea that I was to play any part in it."

"You certainly had no idea of being President Lincoln's first Secretary of War?" I said.

"No, indeed," he replied, smiling; "nothing was further from my thoughts, and yet the thing came about very naturally. It was a short time after the election. Lincoln had been successful, and I, tired out from the work and excitement of the campaign, was at my Lochiel farm near Harrisburg, when I was visited by Mr. ———, a well-known citizen of Illinois, and a personal friend of the President, who said that Mr. Lincoln intended to give Pennsylvania a place in the Cabinet, and that he was anxious I should accept it. At that time I was still in the Senate, and not particularly anxious to leave it. I informed my visitor of this fact, but still he persisted, urging me to go to Springfield to see Lincoln about it. I refused to do this, however, and he then asked me the direct question: 'Mr. Cameron, is there no place in the Cabinet that you will accept?' 'Well,' I replied, 'if you are authorized to come to me on this matter I will be frank with you. If the Treasury Department was offered to me, I think I would take it.' 'Why, that's the very place the President intended for you,' the gentleman replied. "Upon this assurance," Mr. Cameron continued, "I went to Springfield and saw Mr. Lincoln. He offered me the Treasury Department. I accepted, and so the matter was apparently arranged, when suddenly he said, 'But now I don't know what to do with Chase.'

"'Why not put him into the War Department,' said I; 'that will be the place for an ambitious man, or I'm very much mistaken.'

"'Well, if you think so well of it, why not take it yourself?' said Mr. Lincoln. I laughed at the notion, but he persisted, saying two or three times, 'Yes, yes, I'll make you Secretary of War.' Still I laughed, thinking he was half in jest, and so the matter ended. When Mr. Lincoln arrived in Washington, however, he sent for me again. By this time the political situation had become very serious, and the President, like everybody else, was a little excited, but even, after making due allowance for all this, I am still at a loss to understand why he should have offered me the Attorney-Generalship; and yet that was the very thing he did almost immediately after I arrived in the White House. Of course I declined," continued Mr. Cameron, and for the very good reason that I was not a lawyer. I told the President this, and then he said: 'Well, will you take the War Department?' 'Yes, I will,' was my reply, and without any further talk I was appointed."

THE FIRST DAYS OF THE REBELLION.

"How difficult it was to fill the position," Gen. Cameron went on, "none but myself can ever know. A few weeks after I had been appointed the war broke out, and from my intimate acquaintance and frequent conversation with Mr. Davis and other Southern Senators, I was convinced that the struggle was to be a long and determined one. Neither President Lincoln nor Mr. Seward shared that opinion, however. If I am not greatly mistaken they both thought that 'the disturbance,' as the rebellion was at first called, would soon blow over. Nearly all the people were of the same opinion. Indeed, it was almost impossible to find a man who had any intelligent idea of the magnitude of the struggle which was then begun. Oh, it was a terrible time," Gen. Cameron continued, with increasing warmth and earnestness, "a terrible time. We were entirely unprepared for such a conflict, and for the moment, at least, absolutely without even the simplest instruments with which to engage in war. We had no guns, and even if we had, they would have been of but little use, for we had no ammunition to put in them—no powder, no saltpetre, no bullets, no anything that was needed. I did the best I could under the circumstances, working day and night, to be ready for the great fights which I knew must come. But still there were very few persons who believed that the war would last for more than a few weeks, or months at the most. I clung to my original opinion however, and advised that 500,000 men be raised to put down the rebellion. People laughed at me, thought I was mad. Even Mr. Seward, keen-witted and far-sighted as he was, still believed that the trouble was to be short-lived, and mentioned 75,000 men as an army sufficient for all the needs of the nation. After a time, however, both he and the leading members of Congress began to see their error, and the Government was given authority to raise 500,000 men, the number which I at first suggested.

"As the struggle progressed," continued Mr. Cameron, "the War Department became more and more distasteful to me. Indeed, my position was a most disagreeable one. At first having no means at my command; then laughed at for predicting that the war would be a long and bloody one; and all the time harassed by contractors and others who were bent on making all they could out of the crisis, I was certainly not in a place to be envied. Still, I held on, doing what I could, until, sincerely believing that it would be for the best, I recommended that the negroes of the South be armed and employed in the service of the Union. That idea was a trifle too advanced for the time, and the end of it was that I went out of the Cabinet."

A SECRET EFFORT TO IMPEACH PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

"But you did not retire into private life?" I asked. "No, no," Mr. Cameron replied. "Soon after the occurrence I have related to you I was appointed Minister to Russia, and I spent some months in St. Petersburg. I was not satisfied, there, however; nearly every day I heard of some misfortune which had befallen our Army, and at last, more alarmed than I cared to admit to even my my most intimate friends, I determined to return home. I reached Washington toward the close of 1862, and found that I was not mistaken in the belief that it would require extraordinary effort to get us out of our difficulty. And just here," continued Mr. Cameron, "I will tell you of a secret effort which was made to unseat President Lincoln, an effort which was even then known to but few people. It was shortly after I came back to America," he went on, "and while I was resting at my home in Pennsylvania, that I received from a number of most prominent gentlemen an invitation to visit Washington and attend a consultation which was to be held in regard to national affairs. I afterward discovered that this invitation was extended to me because it was believed that my somewhat unpleasant exit from the War Department had rendered me hostile to Mr. Lincoln and his Administration. Knowing nothing of this at the time, however, I went to the capital and found assembled there a number of most influential gentlemen, who had come together ostensibly for the purpose of advising together regarding the condition of the country. This, I say, was their ostensible purpose for calling the meeting, but I soon found that their real object was to find means by which the President could be impeached and turned out of his office. The complaint against Mr. Lincoln was that he lacked ability and energy, and that he was not pushing the war with sufficient vigor. These reasons, and the plan of attack, if I may use the expression, were all made known to me, and I was asked for my advice. I gave it at once, stating with as much earnestness as I could command that the movement proposed would be a disastrous one, and strongly urging that it would be little short of madness to interfere with Mr. Lincoln's Administration. Then I left Washington and returned to my home a firmer friend of the President than I had ever been before. And as you know," the Senator said, in conclusion, "the impeachment scheme never amounted to anything. Indeed, it was soon afterward utterly abandoned."

"GETTYSBURG SHOULD HAVE CLOSED THE WAR."

For a few moments after he had related the above striking incident of the days of the rebellion, Mr. Cameron remained silent and evidently in deep thought. Then suddenly looking up again, he exclaimed, with more than his usual animation: "Do you know I have always been of the opinion that Gettysburg should have closed the war?" To this somewhat startling proposition he gave me no opportunity to make any reply, but went on to relate the following interesting recollections of the great battle: "When the fight occurred," he said, "I was on my farm near Harrisburg, and only about 30 miles from the field. The day afterward, burning with impatience to hear the details of the result, I joined a number of gentlemen who were going over to Gen. Meade's headquarters. Arriving there, I found the rebels in retreat, and our troops completely victorious. Being informed, as I soon was, that the Potomac was flooded, that the enemy were almost certain to be destroyed if compelled to cross; knowing also that they were without ammunition or provisions, and believing, as I did, that they were completely at the mercy of our forces, I could not, and cannot to this day, understand why it was that Meade did not force the fighting and make Gettysburg a second Waterloo. For nearly a week I continued to follow our Army, and becoming each day more and more convinced that the commanding officer was not fully alive to the situation, I at last determined to telegraph my opinions to President Lincoln, and ask him to order a general attack on the retreating and demoralized Confederates. For this purpose I looked all about for a telegraph station. After a time I found one, and had the operator pointed out to me. I recall the circumstances most distinctly," the Senator continued. "The operator was quite a young man, and was lying at full length under a tree. I went up to him and said, 'I want to send a telegram,' to which he replied rudely:

"'Well, you can't send one unless you have an order from head-quarters.'

"'What,' said I, 'will you refuse to send a dispatch to the President of the United States?' He was silent for a moment, and then, jumping to his feet, answered, very respectfully, 'Oh, no, Sir, if it's to the President, of course I'll send it.'

"Upon this," Mr. Cameron continued, "I was about to send to Mr. Lincoln the ideas I had regarding the opportunity of our Army and the duty of its commander. Indeed, I had commenced to write when it occurred to me that, after all, I was perhaps not fully informed of the situation, and that I might be doing Meade a great injustice. For that reason I did not send the dispatch. Subsequently, however, while I was in Washington, I saw the President and told him just what I thought about the battle, the great opportunity which I believed had been lost, and the fact that I had been on the point of telegraphing him. In reply, he assured me that under the circumstances, had he received my telegram, he would have ordered a general and immediate battle; but, referring to Meade, he said most justly, and I shall never forget his words, 'We cannot blame him, Mr. Cameron; we cannot censure a man who has done so much because he did not do more.'

"That same evening," the Senator continued, "I met Mr. Stanton, who was then Secretary of War, had a long talk with him regarding the matter, and found that our views as to the battle agreed exactly; indeed, the Secretary declared with much emphasis that 'Gettysburg should have been, and could have been made, the last great battle of the war.' And just here," exclaimed Mr. Cameron, "I want to express to you the great admiration which I have always had for Stanton. He was a great, big, brave, loyal man; perhaps too harsh and quick-tempered in his treatment of those around him, but nevertheless a thoroughly good and well-meaning man. He had terrible responsibilities, which at times caused him to be exacting almost to the verge of injustice, but I am sure that he always intended to do right, and there is no doubt that he was in every way the man best fitted for the place in the Government which he was called upon to fill. He was a man of wonderful strength, not only of mind but of body, yet even he gave way under the constant, the never-ending, strain which was put upon all his faculties. His death was hastened by, if it was not the direct result of, overwork in the War Department."

JACKSON AND LINCOLN.

With that rapidity of thought, distinctness, and directness of expression which have always been characteristic of him, Gen. Cameron continued for a time to talk of the war and incidents connected with it, until, again referring to politics, he said abruptly, "And even Lincoln, great a man as he grew to be, was at one time exceedingly doubtful as to his hold upon the party." Then, without waiting for any comment upon this statement, he continued reflectively, "Yes, yes, I remember distinctly that he was not a little troubled about the matter. It was in 1863, and the talk of his renomination had begun. Of course, he was exceedingly anxious for success, and he was very much disturbed at what he called the hostility of Chase and Weed, referring, of course, to Mr. Thurlow Weed, of New-York. Regarding the position of those gentlemen, he said to me one day,

"'Cameron, I don't like the idea of having Chase and Weed against me. I'm afraid I can't be nominated if they continue to oppose me.'

"'Give yourself no uneasiness on that score,' was my reply; 'the people are with you, and the leaders, even if they desire to do so, will be powerless to prevent your return to the White House,' and then still further to reassure him, I continued: 'The position of Gen. Jackson just before his first term expired was an exceedingly critical one, which yours is not, and still he was renominated.' 'How was that?' he asked; and I went on to tell him of the fact that Jackson was under what was substantially a pledge not to run for a second term.

"'And how did he get out of it, Cameron; how did he get out of it?' he asked, repeating the question a second time. 'Oh,' I replied, laughing, 'the Legislature of Pennsylvania sent him a letter representing that until his warfare on the United States Bank had been successfully concluded it would be against the best interests of the country for him to retire, and on that account strongly urging him to accept a second term.' 'Ah, yes,' said the President, 'I see,' and then, looking at me sharply, he asked: 'Cameron, could you get me a letter like that?'

"'Yes, I think I might,' was my reply. 'Do, do,' he said, very earnestly, and then, after a few more words on unimportant topics, we separated. I went to Harrisburg almost immediately, found the Legislature in session, and calling a few of our party friends together, I represented to them the political situation, and advised that such a letter as we had years before sent to Jackson, should then be forwarded to Lincoln. They all agreed with me, and shortly afterward the letter was prepared and forwarded on behalf of all the Republican Senators and Representatives of our State. And singularly enough," continued the General, "it was modeled almost exactly after the Jackson letter, the only substantial difference being that the war of the rebellion instead of the United States Bank was refered to as the evil which the President was relied upon to crush out."

"And did Lincoln ever acknowledge what you had done for him in the matter?"

"Well, not directly," Mr. Cameron replied, "but some time after my visit to Harrisburg I was at a reception—it was in the White House, if I remember correctly—and as I was standing talking to a number of gentlemen Mr. Lincoln approached me, smiling, and holding out one of his great big hands, covered with a white cotton glove, said:

"'It's all right, Cameron; two more States heard from to-day.'

"'If I am not mistaken, that was the only reference to the letter which he ever made in my presence.'"

GRANT'S LAST SECRETARY OF WAR.

"But all that is over now," "the old Senator" continued, after a pause. "Poor Lincoln is gone, and I have left Washington to raise turnips and radishes."

"Still you are well represented at the capital," I suggested. "Yes," he replied; "my son is there, and, strange as it may seem to most people, I had nothing to do with introducing him to public position. Indeed, I knew nothing of his appointment to the War Department until after it had been made. The night before his name was sent to the Senate I had dined with President Grant, but he told me not one word of what he intended to do. The next day, however, as I was sitting quietly in my place in the Senate, one of the President's sons came over to me and said, laughing:

"'I suppose the appointment that has just been sent in is satisfactory to you, Mr. Cameron.'

"'What appointment?' I asked, somewhat surprised; and then he told me that my son had been named for the War Department. That was really the first word I had heard about the matter, and yet at the time I suppose most people thought that I had asked for the appointment."

Night began to fall as the General concluded this last incident of his public life; dinner was served soon afterward, and in the enjoyment of the bountiful hospitality of Donegal Farm, war and politics, appointments and confirmations, conventions and caucuses were for the time forgotten. And so ended my day with "the old Senator," the loyal statesman, the faithful friend, the honest, outspoken enemy, the Cameron of the Camerons. H. C.