

the railway torn up and had to take a steamer and go via Annapolis, taking the railway from there to Washington. As we attempted to take the steamer we were told that we could not go on board without a pass, and that no one could be carried without an order from General Ben Butler. Butler had charge of the town and he was allowing only Unionists to go through. As I heard this I said: "Well, Major Kearney, that's your business." Kearney said all right and, leaving me in charge of the baggage, he went up town and soon returned with passes for Major Kearney and friend. My name was not mentioned. With these passes we easily got through to Washington. I went at once to the War department and reported and was told that there were orders there for me. These directed me to go to my regiment; but I said in reply that my regiment was in Texas. I was informed that it was not, and that it had just arrived at Carlisle, Pa.

"Now, but for one reason I would have resigned at once," continued Mr. Lee. "I had, however, an army saddle in Philadelphia, which I was very anxious to get. I was something of a horseman, and I wished to use this saddle during my service in the south. When I received the orders it seemed to me that I might go to Carlisle and march back to Washington with my regiment. I would be able to pass through Philadelphia and could bring my saddle with me, and then resign, thus saving the saddle. It was a foolish idea, but I carried it out. I said nothing to any one about my intended resignation. I merely saluted, took my orders and left for Carlisle. I got the saddle at Philadelphia and carried it with me to my regiment. I found that a number of the officers had already resigned. General Stoneman was in Philadelphia, and he made me one of his adjutants. He told me we would leave at once for Washington, and shortly after this we marched to the capital and encamped just outside the city on the edge of the 7th street road. The first thing I did was to ask leave to go into the city. This was granted, and I was ordered to get forage and food for the soldiers. Before leaving I gave directions to an orderly to take my trunk to the National hotel and tell the clerk to have it kept there until called for. I then took my horse, with my saddle on it, and rode down into the city. I first delivered the orders for the forage and food, and then went to the hotel. Here I took the saddle from my horse and sent it upstairs, directing the orderly to take the horse back to the camp. I followed the saddle, had my trunk sent up to my room and at once changed my clothes, putting on citizen's dress and packing my uniform and saddle in my trunk. I then went down and paid my bill and bargained with a cabman to take me ten miles into Virginia. He charged me ten dollars, I remember. My trunk was put on the back of the cab, and we drove out over the Long bridge to Berks station, whence I went on to Richmond. Soon after this Long bridge and all of the other avenues out of the capital were guarded, I got away just in time, and soon after sent in my resignation. I then entered the southern army and remained in it until the war closed."

"You were at the head of the cavalry of the southern army, General Lee. How did your troops compare with ours?"

"I think our cavalry at the beginning of the war was better than that of the north," replied General Lee. "Each man had, you know, his own horse, and in most cases a horse which he had been accustomed to riding. He brought his horse from his home to the field, the government paying him for its use and keep. The result was that we had better horses than the north. Then the rank and file of the cavalry were made up of men of good education and standing, and in most cases of men of some means."

"Did you yourself think at the start, generally, that the south could succeed?"

"Yes, I believed and nearly all the southerners believed that we were almost sure of eventually succeeding. This was the case at the battle of Gettysburg. After that we changed our minds and gradually came to see that the northern forces were so superior that they could beat us in the end."

"Suppose the war were to be fought over again, would the result be the same?"

"No one can tell," replied General Lee. "Had we the same forces now that we had then and added to this the benefit of our experience, the result might be different. But still, what the south could have done might have been counterbalanced by other actions on the part of the north, and no one can tell what the result would have been. The war is, however, over for good between the north and the south. The sections are united, and not divided."

"Suppose, general, the south had succeeded?"

"In that case there would have been another great republic south of Mason and Dixon's line. The country would probably have developed rapidly. Charleston, Savannah, New Orleans and Mobile would have been great cities, to a large extent monopolizing the trade of the south and having in all probability a great trade with Europe."

"How about the solid south, general? Many Republicans believe it will be borken during the coming campaign."

"I think it very doubtful," replied General Lee. "Our people are too much afraid of the re-enactment in some form of a measure like the force bill to vote the Republican ticket."

"How about the negro question? What is going to become of the negro, anyhow?"

"I believe that the whites are always going to control the states. They cannot do otherwise. Our people will never submit to the rule of the negroes. As they are at present there is no danger, but to give them the power and opportunities for mis-government and corruption such as existed in the days of so-called reconstruction would be, to say the least, a condition which the people of the south could not endure."

"You were close to General Lee during the war, were you not?"

"Yes," replied Fitzhugh Lee. "I was his nephew, and we were naturally intimate friends."

"You were with him at the battle of Appomattox. Did the surrender take place as it has been described, under that apple tree?"

"No," said General Lee; "the apple tree story arose from the fact that General Robert E. Lee was lying under an apple tree upon a blanket near the Appomattox court house when a messenger came to him bearing General

Grant's last note as to the surrender. In this note Grant asked Lee at what place he wished to have the interview take place. General Lee thereupon left the apple tree and secured a room in Mr. Wilmer McLean's house in Appomattox. This was a two-story brick, with a porch running along in front of it. General Grant arrived at this house about 1 o'clock that day, and the surrender took place in that room. Grant sat at a marble top table in the center of the room and Lee at a small oval table near the window. They had met once eighteen years before, during the Mexican war, when Lee was an engineer officer on the staff of General Scott and Grant was a lieutenant of infantry. Their Mexican meeting was first referred to, and then they discussed the terms of surrender, which, at General Lee's request, were reduced to writing."

"General Grant did not take General Lee's sword?"

"No," was the reply. "He did not demand it, as is customary, but he actually apologized to Lee for not having his own sword on at the time. Grant was dressed at the time of the surrender in a very ordinary uniform. He wore a dark-blue flannel blouse and ordinary top boots, with his trousers inside. He wore neither spurs nor sword, and had no marks of rank, except his shoulder straps. Lee, on the other hand, wore a handsome uniform of confederate gray, fine top boots, with handsome spurs, elegant gloves and a splendid sword. The handle of the sword was white, with a lion's head at the top. Its scabbard was of blue steel, with gilt trimming, and the handle was wrapped with gilt wire. The sword is now in the possession of General Lee's son, who is President of Washington and Lee University. Lee was very much pleased with Grant's treatment of him at the surrender, and he afterward said to a friend in Richmond:

"No man could have behaved better than General Grant did under the circumstances. He did not touch my sword. The usual custom is for the sword to be received when tendered, and then handed back, but Grant did not even touch mine."

"What became of General Lee's papers?" I asked.

"Many of them were lost on the way from Richmond to Appomattox," replied Fitzhugh Lee, "and these were never recovered. His letters to his wife, however, were full of details and descriptions, and I had the advantage of these in writing my life of him."

"What kind of a writer was Robert E. Lee?"

"Very clear and lucid," was the reply. "He was a man of the highest character and his soul was a most beautiful one. He was pure in thought and word and nearly everything which he wrote could be published without change, even to the dotting of an 'i' and the crossing of a 't.'"

"I suppose he was very poor when the war closed, was he not?"

"No," said the general. "Robert E. Lee came out of the war without great financial loss. He had quite a lot of money which he had invested in stocks and bonds before the war began. He kept these, and they had risen in value. He lost something of course, but nothing in comparison with many other well-to-do men of the south. The most of our people turned their stocks into