

REPLY OF R. L. DABNEY, D. D.,

To the Letter of General Joseph E. Johnston, Criticising
Dr. Dabney's Narrative of the First Battle
of Manassas.

To the Editors of Richmond Dispatch, June 21, 1867.

Gentlemen: Accident recently brought to my attention the remarks published in your paper of March 24th by General Joseph E. Johnston upon the narration of the part borne by the Stonewall brigade in the battle of Manassas contained in my life of General T. J. Jackson. So far as these corrections have revealed error in my statements, I receive them thankfully, and shall not fail to employ them, as soon as it is in my power, for the perfecting of the accuracy of my narration. The high position and services of General Johnston, which none honor and appreciate more cordially than myself, do indeed render it almost a presumptuous attempt to question the correctness of any of his representations, especially when made by one in my obscure place. But even to such a one the reputation for integrity of purpose, at least, is very precious. I therefore beg leave to exhibit in your columns some of the testimonies by which I suppose myself to be sustained in the statements made. I hope every reader will be charitable enough, when he examines these witnesses, to conclude that, if I have been misled, it was without evil intentions, and was not unnatural with such guides before me. I shall take up the points which I purpose to notice mainly in the order of General Johnston's letter.

1. But first, I must endeavor to acquit myself of the charge of disparaging some of General Jackson's comrades, whom, if I knew my own thoughts, I was only seeking, in my bungling way, to honor. General Johnston says: "This account of the battle does great injustice to General Beauregard, and to Bee's and Early's brigades and their commanders. General Jackson's great fame is in no degree enhanced by such disparagements of his associates." The reader is requested to bear in mind the following general caution against such impressions contained

in my preface, page 6: "And especially would I declare that, in relating the share borne by General Jackson's *comrades* and *subordinates* in his campaigns, I have been actuated by a cordial and friendly desire to do justice to all. If I shall seem to any to have done less than this, it will be my misfortune, and not my intention." But it is more to the point to refer to my words on page 215 of the narrative: "The other two" (reserve brigades) "were *those of Generals Bee and Jackson, and the heroism of these two* was sufficient to reinstate the wavering fortunes of the day," etc. Bee is mentioned first, and with the same approbation as Jackson. Is this a disparagement? On page 218, I say of Bee and Evans: "For two hours these two officers, with five regiments and six guns, had breasted the Federal advances," etc. (I had before stated that this advance was of 20,000 men.) Does this disparage Bee? On page 222 I attempt in my poor way to describe Bee's heroic end, exactly as it was detailed to me by those who saw it, in the most honorable words I could find. General Early and his brigade are mentioned by name, but their exploits are not described fully, because they acted on another part of the field, and had no special connection, as Bee had, with the movements of my own subject, Jackson. And finally, on page 228, to guard against any possible apprehension unjust to others, these words are inserted: "The object of this narrative has been to give such a sketch of the whole battle as to make the part borne by the Stonewall brigade and its leader intelligible, and to give fuller details of the conduct of the General whose life is the subject of this work. The reader will not infer from this that all the stubborn and useful fighting was done by Jackson and his command. *Other officers and other brigades displayed equal heroism, and contributed essentially to the final result,*" etc.

2. General Johnston questions my correctness in the account I gave of the surrender of Colonel Jackson's command to him at Harper's Ferry. The point of difference between them was, that whereas General Johnston claimed to relieve Colonel J., at once, the latter refused to surrender his trust until authorized in some shape to do so by those who had committed it to him—his State authorities. And the point of difference between General Johnston and me now is that I say Colonel J. was inflexible, and actually continued to hold his power until,

opportunely, the authority to transfer it came in the shape of an endorsement of General Lee on a paper; while General Johnston says: "There was no display of inflexibility on Jackson's part," that he was enlightened by Major Whiting, and that my representation "does injustice to General Jackson's character." I did not conceive that it was my business as a historian to reflect whether the incident was favorable or unfavorable to General Jackson's character, but to tell the exact truth as it happened. That I did not misrepresent it is shown by the letter which General Johnston himself quotes, saying: "Until I receive further instructions from Governor Letcher or General Lee I do not feel at liberty to transfer my command to another, and must therefore decline publishing the order," etc. I have had the very letter containing General Lee's endorsement—which happily solves the difficulty—in my possession. (I returned it to Mrs. J., who doubtless has it now.) And if any one questions whether Colonel J. had receded from his position before receiving it, I would suggest that he ask the fact of his aid, Colonel James Massie, of Lexington, Va.

3. I now pass to another point. General Johnston, dissenting from any opinion that it would have been better to march the remainder of the Army of the Valley direct to the battlefield from Piedmont station, instead of waiting upon confused and dilatory trains of cars, says: "The fact that these troops were two days in marching twenty-three miles from (Winchester to Piedmont) shows that they could not have marched thirty-four miles, from Piedmont to the scene of action, in less than two days, and that the only hope of getting them into the battle was by the railroad."

I had spoken of Jackson as having made a forced march of *thirty* miles from Piedmont, which is charged as an error. But I expressly represented that march as beginning, not at Winchester, but north of Winchester (p. 211). But grant a slight error of miles here. From Piedmont to Gainsville is twenty-six miles, and by a map furnished me from the bureau of General Gilmer of the Engineers, Gainsville is four miles from Groveton by turnpike. So that the distance to be marched on foot, to get into action, was thirty miles, not thirty-four. Now, General Jackson, on that occasion, marched to Piedmont in one day. Why could not the rest of the troops do the same? They

left Winchester at 12 m. Thursday. The third day brought exactly mid-day of the great battle. The next March, in short days, General Jackson marched his army seventy-five miles in three days, and fought the battle of Kernstown besides. Why could not the remainder of the Army of the Valley march fifty-three miles (General Johnston's measure to Groveton) in three days, when there was no battle to fight by the way? My opinion was, obviously, not grounded on the supposition that the troops were to be allowed to dawdle along the road in a manner which General Jackson's brigade proved to be unnecessary. As to the destitution of food at Piedmont, those who question the fact are respectfully referred to the officers and men of the Thirty-eighth Virginia regiment (for instance). They will receive from them statements which will account very fully for my impression on that subject. No *explanation* of the fact was advanced by me.

4. The next point of General Johnston's criticism is my account of General Beauregard's first plan of action and its relinquishment. If the reader will collate the different paragraphs in which I state that matter (from pp. 213 to 217) he will find that my representation was substantially this: That General B.'s original plan had been to take the aggressive and attack at Centerville, but so few of the troops of General J. had arrived by Saturday night that he was compelled to postpone it; that when the enemy took the initiative, Sunday morning, General B. still recommended the carrying out of so much of that original plan as to advance our right and center on Centerville as soon as the enemy's purpose to direct his main attack on our extreme left was perceived, which suggestion General J. accepted; that corresponding orders for such a movement of the right and center were actually issued, and that they miscarried; that when the fact became apparent that those orders were not executed in sufficient time, the generals *necessarily* relinquished that excellent plan, and wisely contented themselves with bringing up everything within reach for the immediate support of the left. Let the reader now consider the following authorities by which I attempted to guide myself, and I think he will feel that I have committed no serious error, and certainly no intentional one:

General Ewell, then brigadier (whose letter I have before

me), says: "His (B.'s) plan for some time, as explained in frequent interviews with his brigade commanders, had been to move forward his right and center, and attack." Next General B., in his official report, says that at 4:30 a. m. of the 21st (Sunday) he ordered these troops to be in readiness. (Which order General Ewell states he received and observed.) Next, in another part of his report General B. states that he thought an attack by his right wing and center *was the best means of relieving his left*; and that the dispositions were submitted to General Johnston, and the orders issued. Next, a letter from General B. to General Ewell, July 26, 1861, has the following words: "I do not attach the slightest blame to you for the failure of the movement on Centerville, but to the guide, who did not deliver the order to move forward, sent at about 8 o'clock a. m. to General Holmes, and then to you—corresponding in every respect to the one sent to Generals Jones, Longstreet, and Bonham—only their movements were subordinate to yours." * * * "I am fully aware that you did all that could be expected of you or your command. I merely expressed my regret that my original plan could not be carried into effect, as it would have been a most complete victory with only half the trouble and fighting. The true cause of countermanding your forward movement after you had crossed was that it was *then* too late, as the enemy were about to annihilate our left flank, and had to be met and checked *there*, for otherwise he would have taken us on the flank and rear, and all would have been lost." "N. B.—The order sent you at about 8 a. m. to commence the movement on Centerville was addressed to General Holmes and yourself, as he was to support you; but being nearer Camp Pickens, the headquarters, than Union Mills, where you were, it was to be communicated to him first, and then to you; but he has informed me that it never reached him." Thus wrote General Beauregard to General Ewell five days after the battle. If I understand the points of General Johnston's objections to my rendering of the facts here given, they are these: First. That I err in representing *the giving* of the orders to advance the right and center as occurring when the Yankee attack on the left was developed; whereas, says General Johnston, they were then *countermanded*. (10:30 a. m. is the hour he gives.) And second. That I disparage General Beauregard by representing

him as doing a foolish and ruinous thing, which, had he done it, would have kept six brigades out of the fight, and surely lost the day. Now, the reader should note that it is not I, but General Johnston, who gives 10:30 a. m. as the earliest hour at which headquarters knew where the main Yankee attack was to be. (I, for my part, should not have dreamed of making so disparaging a statement.) I didn't presume to mention the hour. But I represented General B. as still entertaining the purpose of advancing his right and center after it was perceived our left was to be the main point of attack, and as the best means of relieving it. Does not General Beauregard's letter bear me out? General J. says General B. could not have listened for the thunder of his batteries on the heights of Centerville, for none was sent there. Does not General B.'s letter declare that *he thought* he had sent some there? Last, says General J., six brigades would have been kept out of the fight. These six were Holmes's, Ewell's, Early's, Jones's, Longstreet's, and Bonham's. I reply, (5) *five were kept out*. Early's was the only one of the six actually engaged on the left. Holmes's, the only one of the rest which reached the ground, was in position, but did not fire a musket. But take General Johnston's own figures, which show that at half-past 10 o'clock a. m. he learned, at once, that the orders for the advance of the right and center had miscarried, and that the main Yankee attack was on the left. Could not Generals Bonham, Longstreet, Jones, and Ewell, still have marched three miles and a half to Centerville, having been in readiness to do so since half-past 4 a. m.? Jackson held the key to the position on Young's branch until 3 p. m., and certainly received no aid from these brigades.

5. The next, and doubtless the main point with General Johnston, is the opinion advanced by General Jackson and defended by me—that the pursuit should have been pressed, and Washington threatened. General Johnston justifies his cavalry for not pursuing farther, because, says he, "it was *driven back* by the solid resistance of the United States infantry." In the same paragraph he says: "The infantry was not required to continue the pursuit, because it would have been harrassing it to no purpose. It is well known that infantry unencumbered by baggage trains can easily escape pursuing infantry." Thus we are told in the same breath that the Yankee infantry was

running so fast that it was useless for the conquering Confederate infantry to fatigue itself by trying to overtake it; and that the Yankee infantry was at the same time standing so staunchly as to beat off Radford's regiment of cavalry, and to make attack by all the Confederate cavalry (J. E. B. Stuart's regiment, etc.) improper. If the Yankees were making so hold a stand, was not that a place for the conquering infantry to strike?

But farther: The Yankee resistance by which Colonel Radford's onset was momentarily arrested (he being temporarily unsupported) was not solid, and should not have put an end to the pursuit. The evidence is in a letter from Colonel Delaware Kemper, of the artillery, now under my eye, which states that "immediately after the repulse of the enemy's final attack he accompanied Colonel Kershaw" (who then was followed by his own and Cash's South Carolina regiment) "in pursuit of the enemy along the turnpike. About dark we arrived within 300 or 400 yards of the suspension bridge over Cub Run, and found the fugitives along the turnpike crowding across the bridge, mingled with the Yankee troops who were retreating by the Sudley road, which intersects the turnpike just west of this bridge. I opened fire upon these masses and elicited no reply; but in a few minutes not a Yankee was within range, all having fled towards Centerville, leaving in our hands fifteen or sixteen pieces of artillery, many wagons, etc." Thus Captain Kemper, pursued beyond the point at which our cavalry was temporarily checked, showing that it should have gone on. With reference to the recalling of infantry from the pursuit to meet an imaginary advance of Yankees on our extreme right, General Johnston simply flouts the whole statement, and says:

"No troops were recalled from the chase, and sent seven or eight miles, by night or day, to meet an imaginary enemy." When the reader considers the following testimony his breath will probably be as nearly taken away by this as mine was. I have under my eye a letter from Colonel R. E. Withers, commanding the Eighteenth Virginia regiment, from which I extract the following words:

"The Eighteenth Virginia was the first regiment which crossed Bull Run in pursuit, Kershaw's Second South Carolina and Cash's Eighth South Carolina following almost immediately. The officers of these (3) three regiments had a rapid con-

sultation, and agreed upon the mode of advance, and speedily put the men in motion, moving by columns of companies on each side of the pike. Before proceeding very far, however, I received, through an officer of General Beauregard's staff, an order of recall, directing me to march my regiment back to the Stone bridge. About the time we reached the bridge another officer rode up, and inquired as to the condition of my regiment and its capacity for further service. My reply was that the men were wearied and hungry, but that the loss of the regiment in battle had not exceeded forty or fifty, and that we were ready to perform any duty which might be deemed necessary. He then told me that 'the General' had just received information that a heavy column of the enemy was advancing in the direction of Union Mills, threatening an attack on Manassas junction, and as all the troops had been withdrawn from that place, it was in great danger. This was just before sunset. We immediately started for Manassas, and pushed forward as rapidly as the exhausted condition of the men would permit. When we reached the 'McLean House,' near Manassas, we were met by orders directing us to go to Camp Walker, on Bull Run a short distance above Union Mills; which place we reached about midnight. The next morning we were ordered back to Manassas, and thence to our former position near Ball's ford, on Bull Run, where we bivouacked in the rain, and remained until Tuesday evening, or Wednesday morning. * * * I presumed that several other regiments received orders similar, as they also were marched back to Manassas, and one or two of them to Camp Walker." So far Colonel Withers. Colonel H. A. Carrington, then of the Eighteenth Virginia, says: "We, after sunset, marched *seven miles* in the direction of our lines on the right, when the rumored advance proved to be unfounded, and the regiment was permitted to rest for the night. The next day, in a drenching rain, we were marched back to the battlefield, and camped on the banks of Bull Run within one-quarter of a mile of the scene of conflict."

With reference to the question of pursuit and of threatening Washington City, let us first consider how far my position extends. On page 236 this is very distinctly defined in the following words: "They (the generals) are not to be condemned by history because they did not take Washington, but because

they didn't try." Even this qualified opinion I should never have presumed to advance before the public on my own judgment or on that of the *amateur* soldiers and newspaper critics, whom General Johnston so justly despises. It was only when I was confirmed in it by the great authority of General Jackson that I ventured to advance it; and my motive was only to defend his credit, after stating, as the truth of history compelled me to do, the fact of his expressing such opinions. It was in May or June, 1862, that, being alone with General Jackson in his quarters, I ventured to mention the general expectation and desire of our troops at Manassas to endeavor at once to improve our victory, and to ask him whether that desire was ignorant and foolish. His brow immediately knit, and striking his little writing table with his hand, he replied: "The neglect of the attempt was a deplorable blunder. Did you know, that on the morning after the battle 10,000 fresh troops reached Manassas, expecting nothing but to be led against the enemy?" I replied:

"I myself saw large arrivals, for I had gone with our wounded from the battlefield to the Junction, and witnessed the coming in of nearly a mile of cars clustered with soldiers like swarming bees, all cheering and shouting, but I did not know how many of them there were." General Jackson said: "Yes, sir, there were ten thousand of them." He then proceeded briefly, but emphatically, to state the leading ideas on which I grounded the discussion in my book. As my word may go for nothing in this matter, I may here say in passing that if any one doubts whether I represent General Jackson's opinion aright herein, he can satisfy himself by resorting to the Hon. Alexander Boteler, to whom General Jackson expressed substantially the same view in July, 1862, at Harrison's landing. General Johnston thinks that had Jackson estimated the policy at Manassas as I represent him, he *could not* have refrained from expostulating. All I can say is, that *I heard him say what I have above stated.* Four days after the battle (he being then under General Johnston's orders), I heard some one ask him the question why the enemy were not pressed? when he replied, with a quiet smile, and a caution which suppressed even the faintest intimation of his private opinion on his countenance, "You will have to ask that of General Johnston." But in 1862

I heard General Jackson, when no longer under his orders, express the strong dissent stated above. I suppose the explanation is to be found in his well known subordination, silence, and modesty towards superiors. And if I have been in error as to the number of fresh troops, the mistake was General Jackson's, and not mine. The same fact may account, in part, for the statement, on page 239, that the Confederate forces had grown in autumn to an aggregate of 60,000. Has General Johnston, after all, denied this? It is not my purpose so much to *argue* the policy of pursuing our victory at first Manassas as to exhibit the supposed evidences of facts claimed in my narrative. But it may be said that if the opinion supported in my book is erroneous, it is an error which is found in very large and very good company. It finds plausibility in the exalted authority of General Jackson. I have never conversed with more than one intelligent Southerner who did not share it with me. It receives countenance from many of high authority among our conquerors. Many readers will recall, for example, the admission of the Yankee Brigadier-General Prentice, captured by General Beauregard at Shiloh, who frankly declared that in failing to improve our victory at Manassas we had lost our opportunity; that the United States had just then reached the temporary limit of their existing munitions and means; that the temper of the nation would probably not have endured farther disaster; but that now all was changed, and our chance had passed away. The common sense of the people, North and South, reasoned that if the Confederates could not (for some reason, whatever it might be) so improve the hour of most brilliant success as to cripple the powers of their adversary for future aggression, then obviously their gallantry must be vain in the end, and must fail before superior numbers. It was this thought which encouraged the North as they recovered from their fright. It was this which filled thoughtful men with foreboding among us. General Johnston points to the failure of the invasions of 1862 and 1863 as proofs that he judged wisely. I point to the fact that Generals Lee and Jackson and the Government judged successes should thus be followed up as proof that the same opinion was not absurd in 1861. I point also to the fact that the invasions of 1862 and 1863 both came very near being successful. The former, ac-

ording to the best officers, was only defeated by the straggling of our soldiers. The latter brought the Yankee empire to the verge of ruin, as they very plainly felt at the time. But my chief answer here is that the case of 1861 was wholly different from the two subsequent, and the reasoning from them to it is very much as though one should argue that because in two cases corn planted in November did not thrive, therefore he did right to neglect planting in April. In 1862 and 1863 the Yankees had had time to prepare and to equalize their inferior material to arms by drill and experience. In 1861, when both were inexperienced, was the time for us to employ our superior *morale*. General Johnston, referring to our victories at second Manassas, Frederickshurg, and Chancellorsville, says: "On these occasions the forces defeated were ten times as numerous as those repulsed on the 21st of July, 1861, and their losses twenty times as great." He has told us that McDowell brought 40,000 against him. Does he mean to say that Burnside or Hooker had, either of them, 400,000? McDowell's loss was estimated by General Beauregard at some 4,000. Was Hooker's 80,000? He doubtless uses the words "*defeated*" and "*repulsed*" intentionally. Did Hooker or Burnside retire across the Rappahannock in so much *greater* disorder than McDowell fled to the Potomac? But to the facts: General Johnston declared that the troops could not have been subsisted on the country of the vicinage in an advance on Alexandria, because the army of McDowell, passing over it twice, had doubtless stripped it bare. He forgets that this army was commanded by General Scott, who, recreant as he was to his native land, did not conduct war on savage methods; that he sent out his troops fully supplied for the march; and that their flight was too frightened and rapid for foraging. The fact is, that they left the resources of the vicinage untouched. It was *on my return to Centerville after the battle* that I found a herd of sixty beeves on a farm a mile from the village, which had been precluded from their intended market in Alexandria by the hostilities. And I have the testimony of Colonel Mosby that the neighborhood would then have abundantly supplied a marching army. As to distance, the engineers of the Orange and Alexandria railroad state that Manassas junction is twenty-seven miles from Alexandria. The distance by turnpike is not much dif-

ferent; and the Stone bridge is by that road nearer Alexandria than is the junction. My estimate of the disorganized condition of the Yankee troops after the battle is denied on the authority of the reports of their general officers; and we are told of three divisions unscathed of battle. Let the reader consider if my impressions were not excusable in view of the following facts: First. The public has not yet forgotten the lively descriptions of Mr. Russel, the correspondent of the London *Times*, by whose truthful pictures the Yankees were so intensely mortified. He was surely not a mere heedless, unprofessional relator like me. He had carefully studied, as an eyewitness, the great operations of the Crimean war. Next, I will give some facts which will show the real condition of the Yankee reserves, and of those bodies of their troops which are reported as having retired in so steady and orderly a manner. In a letter from Colonel Del. Kemper, relating to his pursuit above mentioned, are the following words: "I subsequently learned that these troops were under General Burnside, who claimed that they were retiring in good order until the artillery fire above spoken of created the *stampede*, which he did not pretend to deny. Their failure to respond to my fire makes me doubt their previous good order." A mile south of Centerville lived (and I hope still lives) an excellent gentleman named Thomas Stuart, whose Christian hospitalities many a sick and hungry Confederate blessed. He remained on his own premises the whole of Sunday, the 21st. He told me that when the stream of fugitives and vehicles came back, a reserve division of Federal infantry was drawn up across his fields; that as the confusion increased they began to waver; that they were then broken merely by the influence of their own comrades' flight, and about sunset they joined their rout, flying so precipitately as to leave his fields scattered over with knapsacks, etc., in such quantity that on the morrow, he and his servants turning out in the rain, hauled in a granary full of them for the Confederate officers. Yet no armed Confederate had come within cannon shot of these brave reserves. Mr. Stuart was visited by numerous Confederate officers on Monday, and in fact arrested by one of them in a moment of misunderstanding, and rudely carried to the guard-house at Manassas. Is it said such facts were not known at headquarters? I reply by the question:

Ought not headquarters to have been better informed than an obscure person like me? Do not commanders employ efficient scouts? Again, General McDowell, on his return to Centerville, called together his general officers and advised with them. After debate, it was resolved to fall back on the lines of Arlington. But when the generals separated, and went to the places where their several divisions had been ordered to bivouack, they found them all silent and vacant—their troops had come to the same conclusion much more promptly. Again, there was a reserved division advanced to the little village of Germantown, six miles back of Centerville. This body broke at the sight of their fugitive comrades, and concluding that the Confederates, with bloody bayonets, were close behind the crowd, wisely took the road ahead of their brethren, instead of letting them pass and covering their retreat. I quote again from Colonel Kemper: "Soon after the close of the war, I returned to my home in Alexandria, Va., and learned from gentlemen, residents of that city, that no considerable body of men returned to Alexandria from Manassas in a state of organization; and that the garrisons of at least *some* of the forts covering Alexandria and Washington *spiked* their guns in expectation of the coming of the Confederates."

I trust that, with such statements before me, I may be pardoned for believing notwithstanding Yankee assertions, that their army was disorganized.

With reference to the fortifications at Washington, the navigable river, and the ships-of-war, I presume that the expectation entertained by sensible men, who hoped that an attempt would be made to improve our success, was that so lucidly explained as his own by Colonel Mosby. It was, not that we should sit down in Alexandria, to be pelted out by ships-of-war, nor that we should stupidly besiege forts without a siege *apparatus*, but that, remembering the Potomac ceases to be a navigable river *at Washington*, and that the forts on the north and east sides of the city had no existence until afterwards, under McClellan, we should do what Lee and Jackson did in 1862—promptly cross above Washington, avail ourselves of our superiority of cavalry (McDowell had but six companies, almost totally disorganized, at the first collision, July 18th), place ourselves between the city and the routed army and General Pat-

terson, and effectually interrupt the railroad lines to Washington, while we put ourselves in communication with the Southern party in Baltimore. *It was this* which we hoped to see *attempted*; and we thought that there was enough reason to hope that it would result in the hurried evacuation of Washington, and so, in great political and moral results, to indicate the policy of a prompt and vigorous experiment.

This leads to the question of fact as to the expectation actually prevalent in the army. General Johnston does not "believe that this bombast was really uttered in the army." (The allusion is to the passage on p. 233. The rhetoric I relinquish undefended, as he comes a decorous author at the bar of criticism; and the more cheerfully as it is not my own. The fact is, that *I heard this very simile uttered* by one of the ablest and most enlightened men in Virginia, and connected with the army. It so struck my uncultivated taste that when, long after, the narrative was written it ran off the end of my pen spontaneously.) He was led to believe that our troops thought the war finished, and so went home without leave in crowds. My impression was that the men wished to pursue their success; that the desire to go home was a consequence and not a cause of the inaction which followed. Let the reader see if this impression was not natural, with such testimonies as the following. Colonel Kemper: "In regard to the sentiment of the army on the subject of the failure to pursue our routed enemy, I can speak positively only of my own deep disappointment, but will add my relief that the disappointment was shared by all my acquaintances, and prevailed entirely throughout the army. We had not then learned that the whole duty of an army is to obey orders and ask no questions. The widely-extended disposition to go home, so justly represented by our generals, was, I believe, developed by the conviction which necessarily soon became prevalent that the campaign was ended."

Colonel Robert E. Withers, of the Eighteenth Virginia, writes: "I can only say that so far as I was cognizant of the wishes and expectations of the troops, they certainly anticipated and desired a speedy advance on Washington; and it was only after the lapse of some days, when it was evident that no such advance was contemplated, that the demoralizations and desertions became so troublesome. Such was certainly the case

in our brigade, and I have good reason to believe that the same condition of things existed in other portions of the army. In this connection I will state that I have just had a conversation with Colonel Mosby on this subject, who coincides fully in my opinion, and states that when the cavalry was advanced to Fairfax Courthouse on Tuesday (the second day after the battle), General Elzey's brigade accompanied the cavalry advance, and were in an efficient and serviceable condition, apparently anxious for a rapid advance on Washington. Colonel Mosby also believes that if the entrenchments in front of Washington should have proven too formidable to encounter, no difficulty would have been experienced in compelling the evacuation of the city by a flank movement, crossing the Potomac above Washington, thus interposing our army between Patterson and the city, and with our cavalry occupying the line of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, our great superiority in that arm of the service would have rendered this movement almost certainly successful."

Colonel Carrington says: "My firm conviction is that our army generally favored a prompt and energetic pursuit and improvement of our victory." * * * "The disposition of officers and men to return home was very strong *after* they became satisfied that there would be no onward movement," etc. Thus, also, testifies a letter from Dr. Richard P. Walton, then a surgeon in the field.

One more point remains to be noticed. General Johnston says: "No troops were then encamped in the valley of Bull Run, or nearer to the battlefield than four or five miles. The dead had been buried, so that ladies visited the field without inconvenience."

If the "then" relates to the date of greatest mortality, this may be true. But I was possessed of testimonies which I thought justified me in believing that the opposite was true long enough to do the mischief to the health of the troops. The dead *men* had been buried, but the *horses* had not. The animal remains of Yankee camps, as well as slain men and animals, infected the country for miles.

Then as to the facts: We have seen that Colonel Carrington states the Eighteenth Virginia encamped until Tuesday evening "within quarter of a mile of the scene of the conflict."

Then Cocke's whole brigade was encamped for more than a week at Cub Run bridge, just where the battle ended, in the midst of a painful effluvia. Colonel Carrington says: "Several other brigades besides Cocke's were encamped in the immediate vicinity of the battlefield."

It is perfectly true that after the health of the regiments was infected, many of them were removed to healthier spots. But both the sickness and the mortality continued great. Let such facts as these show the condition of at least a part of the army. The lamented General Charles S. Winder told me in May or June, 1862, that he came to the lines of General Johnston after the battle as Colonel commanding a South Carolina regiment 900 strong. He was directed to stop at Bristoe and encamp at Broad Run. He staid there until the fever had made such ravages that the most he could parade were 300. In the same brigade with the Thirty-eighth Virginia was a North Carolina regiment. In this there were not enough well men to nurse the sick, and details were made from other regiments to help them. The Eighteenth Virginia went to Manassas with 700 bayonets. In August, according to report of the surgeon, it was reduced to ——. It was only once under fire, and the maximum of its loss at that time has been already given in the citation from Colonel Withers.

But it is time that this communication was closed, and I end it with repetitions of respectful consideration for the eminent services, virtues, and position of General J. Two reasons alone have induced me to break that silence in reply to which is usually the most decorous for an author whose published works are subjected to criticism. One is the interest of truth; the other is the interest of the widow and orphan of General Jackson; for I might well fear that the adverse opinion of so eminent an authority as General Joseph E. Johnston would limit, if not wholly arrest, the sale of the work which is designed to aid in relieving these defenseless persons. While, on the one hand, it would be unprincipled in me to seek their pecuniary advantage at the expense of the just fame of General Johnston, or any other; on the other hand, I am sure that he would regret any unintentional injury to the prospects which was not necessary to the defense of truth.

R. L. DABNEY.