

the darkness over roads, in comparison with which some of the worst in our back woods are excellent—and then we began to understand what that Virginian mud is which puts such an effectual drag upon all military operations on the Potomac during the winter time. The buss at one moment plunged into a rut, from which it was dragged with a leap, only to heave over so far on one side or the other as to endanger its equilibrium. And when we reached the Hotel our prospect looked as desperate as when we left the station, for a throng of people crowded the hall, and all approach to the office was barred by an impenetrable mass of selfish travellers, who had outstripped us in the race, and were now bent on the same object as ourselves.

That evening a *Bulletin* announced that a great battle had raged all day from dawn to sunset, that the army had been victorious and gained the ridge, and that to-morrow the crest would surely be theirs. The message was self-contradictory, but people seemed hardly interested enough to call its veracity in question. The indifference which was to all appearance felt in the issue of a battle fought almost within hearing of the city was surprising. The long continuance of the war, and the frequency of large battles has engendered this apathy throughout the country, while in Washington the conflicting interests which are at work, involving so little patriotism and so much selfishness, increase this apparent carelessness. The old established Washingtonians have not unnaturally strong Southern proclivities. The city is indebted for what little it can boast of to Southern gentlemen, who were, previous to the outbreak of the rebellion generally in office. They did not at the seat of government restrain that open handed liberality and aristocratic mode of life which characterised them, and which have tended to excite so much sympathy abroad through the unfortunate comparison which people could not help drawing between them and the vulgar money-made man of the North—that swarm upon the continent, and are accepted as the type of the thorough-bred Yankee. The old servants of the government—those who have not been replaced by the present administration—owe their posts to Southern statesmen, and though, as they are anxious to assure you, they have taken the oath of allegiance, and are faithful in their official capacity to the Lincoln Government, they do not attempt to conceal their contempt, and their fear, when a safe opportunity of expressing their feelings occurs, for the hungry wolves who have swept down from the West and are devouring the good of the Capitol, and for the fanatic New Englanders, who in their frantic efforts to abolish the sacred institution of slavery have overturned the Constitution. They cannot therefore be expected to feel much concern for a northern defeat, and it would be imprudent to rejoice over a southern victory. The horde of sutlers and the crowds of speculators, drawn towards the