

office daily at eight o'clock, and rarely returned home until one or two. During this time, he was almost incessantly engaged in college matters, giving his personal attention to the minutest details, and always ready to receive visitors on college business. It has sometimes been sneeringly alleged that General Lee was only a *figure-head* at Washington College, kept there merely for the attraction of his splendid name. Never was slander more false; for it was a slander upon him, more even than a slur upon the College. Never was a college president more laborious than he. He gave all his great powers entirely to his work. Though ably assisted by subordinate officers, whom he well knew how to employ, he yet had an eye for the supervision of every detail. The buildings, the repairs, the college walks and grounds, the wood-yard, the mess-hall, all received his attention, and a large portion of his time was given to the purely business affairs of the College. His office was always open to students or professors, all of whose interests received his ready consideration. His correspondence meanwhile was very heavy, yet no letter that called for an answer was ever neglected. It has been recently stated by an editor that to a circular letter of general educational interest, addressed by him to a large number of college presidents, General Lee was the only one that replied; yet he was the greatest and perhaps the busiest of them all. In addition to the formal circulars, which he always revised and signed himself, his correspondence with the parents and guardians of students was intimate and explicit, on every occasion that required such correspondence. Many of these letters are models of beautiful composition and noble sentiment.

These varied duties grew upon him, year after year, with the expanding interests of the College; and year after year he seemed to become more devoted to them. Again and again did the Trustees and Faculty seek to lessen his labors; but his carefulness of duty and natural love of work seemed to render it impossible. The writer has heard the remark made, that General Lee gave himself to the duties of President of Washington College as though he had never known any other duties or any other ambition; and this was true. He himself writes to an old and famous comrade in arms, that he is "charmed with the duties of civil life." It can be truly said that he was wholly absorbed in his work, his noble conception of which made it great and worthy, even for him. This, we doubt not, is the explanation of the non-fulfilment of his purpose of writing the history of the Army of Northern Virginia. That he did entertain such a purpose, there can be no doubt; and he doubtless cherished the hope in accepting the presidency of Washington College, that he should there find leisure to complete the design. But once devoted to these duties, he found that they grew upon him, and he gave himself up to them more and more, doubtless finding in them also a more and more acceptable relief from the recollections of that stirring but painful history; until at last the purpose was overlaid, and, finally, we believe, abandoned. He felt, we would fain believe, that for him the past, at least, was secure, and that other hands would surely vindicate his fame and that of his beloved army; while for himself he found a more congenial task, and a more absorbing motive, in laboring for the living present and for the future on behalf of the sons and orphans of those who, in that army, had so often followed him to battle and victory. We may now the more rejoice, therefore, that this task of historic commemoration has been committed to so worthy a hand as that of Colonel Marshall, who has been selected by the family of General Lee, to write the sketch of his life for the MEMORIAL VOLUME, and then to prepare his full biography.

But General Lee was not only earnest and laborious, he was also *able* as a college president. He was perfectly master of the situation, and thoroughly wise and skilful in all its duties, of organization and of policy, as well as of detail. To this let the result of his administration bear testimony. He found the College practically bankrupt, disorganized, deserted: he left it rich, strong, and crowded with students. It was not merely numbers that he brought to it, for these his great fame alone would have attracted; he gave it organization, unity, energy, and practical success. In entering upon his presidency, he seemed at once fully to comprehend the wants of the College; and its history during the next five years was but the development of his plans and the reflection of his wise energy. And these plans were not fragmentary, nor was this energy merely an industrial zeal. He had from the beginning a distinct *policy*, which he had fully conceived, and to which he steadily adhered; so that all his particular measures of progress were but consistent steps in its development. His object was nothing less than to establish and perfect an institution which should meet the highest needs of education in every department. At once, and without waiting for the means to be provided in advance, he proceeded to develop this object. Under his advice new chairs were created, and professors called to fill them; so that, before the end of the first year, the Faculty was doubled in numbers. Still additional chairs were created, and finally a complete system of schools was established and brought into full operation. To these schools, or distinct departments, each one of which was complete in itself and under the individual control of its own professor, he gave a compact and unique organization into a system of complete Courses, with corresponding diplomas and degrees; which, while securing the per-

fect distinctness and responsibility of each school, gave a perfect unity to them all. These courses were so adapted and mutually arranged, under their common organization and his general control, as to escape alike the errors of the purely elective system on the one hand and of the close curriculum on the other, and to secure, by a happy compromise, the best advantages of both. So admirably was this plan conceived and administered by General Lee that, heterogeneous as were the students, especially in the earlier years, each one found at once his proper place, and all were kept in the line of complete and systematic study. Under this organization, and especially under the inspiration of his central influence, the utmost harmony and the utmost energy pervaded all the departments of the College. The highest powers of both professors and students were called forth, under the fullest responsibility. The standards of scholarship were rapidly advanced; and soon the graduates of Washington College were the acknowledged equals of those from the best institutions elsewhere, and were eagerly sought after for the highest positions as teachers in the best schools. These results, which even in the few years of his administration had become universally acknowledged throughout the South, were due directly and immediately, more than to all other causes, to the personal ability and influence of General Lee as President of the College.

General Lee's plans for the development of Washington College were not simply progressive; they were distinct and definite. He aimed to make this College represent at once the wants and the genius of the country. He fully realized the needs of the present age, and he desired to adapt the education of the people to their condition and their destiny. He was the ardent advocate of complete classical and literary culture. Under his influence, the classical and literary schools of the College were fully sustained. Yet he recognized the fact that material well-being is, for a people, a condition of all high civilization, and therefore, though utterly out of sympathy with the modern advocates of materialistic education, he sought to provide all the means for the development of science, and for its practical applications. He thought, indeed, that the best antidote to the materialistic tendencies of a purely scientific training was to be found in the liberalizing influences of literary culture, and that scientific and professional schools could best be taught when surrounded by the associations of a literary institution. He sought, therefore, to establish this mutual connection, and to consolidate all the departments of literary, scientific and professional education under a common organization. Hence, at an early day, he called into existence the schools of Applied Mathematics and of Engineering, and of Law, as part of the collegiate organization; and later, he submitted to the Trustees a plan for the complete development of the scientific and professional departments of the College, which will ever remain as an example of his enlarged wisdom, and which has anticipated, by many years we fear, the practical attainments of any school in this country. In addition to all the other reasons for mourning the death of Lee, it is to be deeply regretted, not only for Washington College, but for the sake of the education of the country, that he did not live to complete his great designs. Had he done so, he would probably have left behind him an institution of learning which would have been a not less illustrious monument of his character than his most brilliant military achievements. As it is, Washington College, henceforth forever associated with his name, will also be inseparably associated with the memory of his noble influence and of his wise and far-sighted plans. Had this been the profession of his life, General Lee would have been not less famous, relatively, among college presidents than he is now among soldiers. Now, after having won, in other fields, a world-wide fame, he has, in this last labor of his life, displayed an ability and developed a power for the highest achievements, such as form no small part of the fame, even of his distinguished career.

Such, briefly and imperfectly sketched, was General Lee as a College President. And surely this part of his life deserves to be remembered and commemorated by those who hold his memory dear. In it he exhibited all those great qualities of character which had made his name already so illustrious; while, in addition, he sustained trials and sorrows without which the highest perfections of that character could never have been so signally displayed. This life at Washington College, so devoted, so earnest, so laborious, so full of far-reaching plans and of wise and successful effort, was begun under the weight of a disappointment which might have broken any ordinary strength, and was maintained, in the midst of public and private misfortune, with a serene patience, and a mingled firmness and sweetness of temper, that give additional brilliancy even to the glory of his former fame. It was his high privilege to meet alike the temptations and perils of the highest stations before the eyes of the world, and the cares and labors of the most responsible duties of private life under the most trying circumstances, and to exhibit in all alike the qualities of a great and consistent character, founded in the noblest endowments, and sustained by the loftiest principles of virtue and religion. It is a principle henceforth for the teachers of our country that their profession, in its humblest yet arduous labors, its great and its petty cares, has been illustrated by the devotion of such a man. It is an honor for all our Colleges that one of them is henceforth identified with the memory of his name and of his work. It