

Outside they stood, men and women, dazed for a moment in the great porch, in the gay light of the sun. The street was filling with people, people in the green, climbing Capitol Square. It climbed to the building Jefferson had planned, to the great white pillars, beyond and between which showed the azure spring sky. The eyes of the people sought their capitol. They rested, too, on the great bronze Washington, riding his horse against the blue sky, with Marshall and Henry and Jefferson and Mason and Lewis and Nelson about him. Across from the church was a public building in which there were Government offices. Before this building, out in the street, a great heap of papers was burning with a light, crackling flame. "Government papers," said some one, then raised his eyes to the stars and bars above the white capitol and took off his hat.

All day the fevered city watched the trains depart, all day wagons and horsemen passed through the streets, all day there was a saying farewell, farewell — farewell to many things! All day the sun shone, all day men and women were conscious of a strange shock and dizziness, as of a violent physical impact. There was not much, perhaps, of conscious thought. People acted instinctively, automatically. Now and then weeping was heard, but it was soon controlled and it was not frequent. This was shipwreck after four years of storm, after gulfs of despair and shining shores of hope. It was taken quietly, as are many shipwrecks.

Night came. Custis Lee's troops at Chaffin's Bluff, eight miles below the city, began to withdraw, crossing the river by pontoons. There was now between Richmond and Manchester only Mayo's Bridge, guarded by a company or two of the Local Brigade. People were down by the river, many people. It seemed to give them company, swollen like their own hearts, rushing between its rocky islets, on and down to the boundless sea. Others wandered through the streets, or sat silent in the Capitol Square. Between two and three o'clock began the ordered blowing-up of powder magazines and arsenals and of the gunboats down the river. Explosion after explosion shook the night, terrific to the ear, crushing the heart. Up rushed the smoke, the water reddened, the earth trembled, shells from the arsenals burst high in air, lighting the doomed city. They wrought a further horror, for falling fragments or brands set afire first this building and then that. In a short while the whole lower part of the