



*William A. Hammond*

DOCTOR WILLIAM A. HAMMOND.

Assistant Surgeon U. S. A., on the western frontier, 1849-'60; Surgeon General 1862-'64; founder of the Army Medical Museum, Washington, D. C. He planned "The Medical and Surgical History of the Rebellion," and was the author of many works in medicine and surgery. He also wrote several popular novels.

## RECOLLECTIONS OF GEN. NATHANIEL LYON.

BY THE LATE DR. HAMMOND,\* BRIG. GEN. U. S. ARMY (RETIRED.)

Among those who did good work for their country during the civil war, and who gave promise of rising to the very top in the military service, no one stands higher than Nathaniel Lyon, captain in the Second United States Infantry and brigadier general in the Volunteer Army. In quickness of perception, indomitable energy, and the most unflinching courage, no man living or dead has ever surpassed him. So rapidly did his mind act, apparently influenced by that little-understood faculty that we call "intuition"—as apt to guide us wrong as right—that he was often forced into acts which his more mature judgment condemned, until, with his keen sense of justice and of the fitness of things, his mental faculties had time to act, when they invariably brought him to see his errors and to do all in his power to rectify them. When, after due reflection, he had determined on a course of action he was firm to the point of obstinacy. It often happened during the period of my friendship with him that he was so palpably wrong that not one man in a hundred would have thought him right. Nevertheless, he

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\*William Alexander Hammond was born at Annapolis, Md., August 28, 1828. Graduating from the Medical Department of the University of New York, he entered the U. S. army in 1849, as an assistant surgeon with the rank of first lieutenant. He served on the frontier eleven years, a portion of the time at Fort Riley, Kansas, at Abiquiu, N. M., and elsewhere. He was in two fights with the Indians, in one of which he was shot in the leg and carried the bullet to his grave. Resigning in 1860, he re-entered the service in 1861, to be soon after appointed surgeon-general of the U. S. army. His labors now became simply herculean. In the "old army" it was seldom that our forces had risen above 15,000; but now Dr. Hammond had to provide for the medical and surgical needs of 1,000,000 men. Great exigencies confronted him in every direction, but he met them all with rare ability and success, giving to sick and wounded soldiers care and treatment which had never been equalled in any preceding war. He established the army medical museum and planned "the Medical and Surgical History of the Rebellion." Everything went well with him until he had serious differences with Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War. This led to his trial by court martial and dismissal from the service. By authority of Congress—with only a single dissenting vote—President Hayes, upon the advice of George W. McCrary (of Iowa), Secretary of War, reinstated him as surgeon-general and brigadier-general on the retired list. Doctor Hammond was a well-known writer, some of his medical works having been translated and published in foreign languages. He also wrote several novels which had an extensive circulation. The accompanying paper on Gen. Nathaniel Lyon was one of the last things from his prolific pen. It was read by Col. Thomas Wilson, formerly of this State, at the meeting of the Washington Commandery of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion, March 8, 1900. Gen. William A. Hammond died suddenly at his home in Washington, D. C., on the evening of January 5, 1900.

saw only the one side—that to which he had given his adhesion—and no entreaties, no arguments could change him. Once only did he act against his honest and life-long convictions, and then public opinion was so overwhelmingly against him, and the consequences of his obstinacy would have been so frightful, that he did what he was convinced was wrong, but which every officer of the garrison believed to be right. Though he and I differed on many points, we were more intimate than any other two officers of the large garrison of Fort Riley. In some respects it was a most remarkable friendship; we had been differently educated and there was scarcely a subject in politics, science, religion, or social matters, upon which differences existed, that we did not differ. He was intolerant of opposition, unmindful of the many obligatory courtesies of life, prone to inject the most unpopular opinions at times and places when he knew they would be unwelcome, and enforcing them with all the bitterness and vehemence of which he was capable; easily aroused to a degree of anger that was almost insane in its manifestations; narrow-minded; prejudiced, mentally unbalanced, and yet with all this, honest to the core, truthful under all circumstances, intelligent, generous to a fault with those he liked, well-read in science and literature and popular theology, absolutely moral, temperate in the pleasures of the table, kind and considerate with his friends, attentive to his duties, a strict disciplinarian—though sometimes on the spur of the moment perpetrating the most outrageous acts against his subordinates and repenting in sack-cloth and ashes an hour afterwards—and altogether a man, one of the most remarkable of his day, who commanded the respect of his enemies and awakened their fears, and who gained the love of those who knew his virtues and his faults, and that he was one to trust in emergencies and dangers with absolute confidence that he would always do what he had said he would do, even though he gave up his life for his constancy. Intolerant as he ordinarily was to the criticisms of others on his opinions,



while exercising the most decided and outspoken judgment on the views of those who differed from him, he was remarkably considerate in his discussions with people he liked; listening to arguments with attention, and replying with a courtesy and gentleness which, while not lacking positiveness of statement, were in striking contrast with his bearing when disputing with others for whom he entertained no feelings of friendship. Taken all in all he was a wonderful compound of antagonistic elements; the sort of man of which heroes and geniuses come; bordering closely on the insane temperament and yet when occasion required, and he had time for reflection, invariably doing the right thing at the right time and place and with a degree of sanity in his movements, mental and physical, that could not have been excelled by the most self-possessed and intellectual man I have ever known.

The following incident illustrates some of the points that I have mentioned.

One night as we were sitting in his quarters at Fort Riley a corporal of his company came to him with a complaint against some act of the first sergeant. Something in the man's words or manner—though so far as I could see he was perfectly respectful and within his rights—roused Lyon to furious anger. He abused him in the most violent and irrational language, rushing excitedly at him and with blows and kicks ejecting him from the room. Then he walked the floor, still uttering invectives against the unlucky corporal. I said nothing, though he saw clearly from my manner that I thought his conduct unjustifiable. Presently he sat down. He was silent though his red face was still greatly heightened in color and his small, keen, blue eyes flashed with the anger that was not yet entirely subdued. We sat for full half an hour without a word passing between us. Then he said:

“You don't like my conduct?”

“No,” I answered.

"You think I have acted wrongly?"

"Yes."

"So I have," he admitted. "I have behaved like a brute. There is a good deal of the theological devil in me. I ought to be placed in arrest, tried by court martial and dismissed from the service for conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman."

"I entirely agree with you," I replied.

"You also ought to have charges preferred against you," he rejoined.

"Why?"

"Do you remember the twenty-fourth article of war? As you seem to have forgotten its provisions I will read it to you." He took the "Army Regulations" from the table and read:

"All officers of what condition soever have power to part and quell all quarrels, frays, and disorders whether among persons belonging to his own, or to another corps, regiment, troop, battery or company, and to order officers into arrest."

He looked at me fixedly for a moment and smiled as though he had got me into a tight place.

"Yes," I answered, "I had power to arrest you, I know, but I did not choose to exercise that power. You abused and struck a man whom you knew could not defend himself, and that man was a non-commissioned officer of your company, who was entitled to consideration from you as well as from the men under him and who had addressed you in perfectly respectful language and manner. The affair was certainly not a 'quarrel' nor an 'affray,' for it was entirely one-sided. It was a 'disorder,' but as it took place in your own quarters it created no general scandal or disturbance. Still, I am not quite sure that I should not have ordered you into arrest."

"You have clearly violated your duty," he answered. "My conduct was unmilitary and utterly contemptible and inexcusable, and—"

My first meeting with Lyon was on June 20th, 1854, the day that I reported for duty at Fort Riley, Kansas, and the circumstances attending it were not such as to warrant a belief in our future intimacy. He came to call and we were sitting together on the veranda at my quarters. The conversation was led by Lyon to religious matters and I well remember the horror I experienced when he deliberately and almost offensively—considering that among his audience were several Christian ladies—announced that he was an infidel, and perhaps even an atheist, and that Socrates was a nobler man than Jesus. This was over forty-five years ago, when the mode of thought of educated people was very different from what it is now, and when speeches such as that of Captain Lyon were regarded as rank blasphemy. At this day such declarations would not only not excite astonishment or disgust, but would, at least, be received with kind attention by almost any half dozen men or women that could be brought together, and would be almost certain to meet with sympathy and approval from one or more of those that might hear them.

Not satisfied with the assertion of his belief and disbelief, he went on to give his reasons and he did this without the slightest evidence of regard for the religious feelings or prejudices of his listeners. Finally, not to be outdone in the making of dogmatic statements, I enunciated the proposition that there was no morality in the world outside of the Christian religion.

“Will you say that again, please?” said Lyon.

I repeated the remark with additional emphasis.

“Is that your deliberate opinion?” he inquired angrily.

“Yes, it is,” I answered just as hotly.

“Then, I’ve only to say,” he rejoined, “that you don’t know what you’re talking about and that I have never in all my life heard a speech expressive of so much ignorance as the one you’ve just made. I can have no further argument,” he continued, his small, light-blue eyes flashing with anger,



“with such a—such a—Good evening,” and he darted from the porch without supplying verbally the epithet that was in his mind. Some time afterwards, when we had become friends, I asked him what he would have said if he had spoken without restraint? “I should have called you a narrow-minded, bigoted and fanatical ass,” he answered with a hearty laugh. “But I should have been wrong, as I generally am,” he added after a moment’s pause, “when I jump at conclusions hastily; for you were only ignorant and hide-bound by the influence of the early education to which you have been subjected and by which you were led to accept as truths doctrines that have not a shred of proof to support them. You believed because some one in whom you had confidence told you they were true. You are exactly like the great mass of mankind, and I was just like you twenty years ago. If men and women could get rid of their early prejudices, and would look at scripture exactly as they would at any other collection of stories, the Christian religion would not stand a day.”

At a future time he spoke more deliberately relative to his religious belief. It was on the occasion of the trial of Colonel Montgomery against whom Lyon had given some very damaging testimony. I quote the following from the record of the trial in the judge-advocate general’s office:

Ques. by Accd.:

“Do you believe in the existence of a God?”

The witness objects to answering the question on the ground that he does not consider the inquiry into his religious beliefs pertinent, and would submit the law of Missouri, which he believes to be the law of Kansas also, upon the subject.

(The paper referred to by the witness appended and marked Court Paper No. 8.)

The court was then closed and decided that the question should not be put; but that the accused may ask this question:

“Is the oath which the witness has taken before this court binding upon his conscience?”

The court was then opened and the decision made known.

Ques. by Accd.:

“Do you believe in the obligations of an oath and a future state of re-

wards and punishments, or do you believe in a God who will punish falsehood either in this world or the next?"

A member objected to the second part of the question as having already been decided by the court as rejected.

The court was then closed and decided that the question should be put.

The court was opened and the decision made known.

Answer:

"I do believe in the obligations of an oath, and in the existence of an over-ruling power that will punish falsehood. With respect to a future state of rewards and punishments I must say I have no positive conviction or reasons for belief."

Clearly, therefore, Lyon was not an atheist as has been frequently charged. I am very sure that he did not believe the Scriptures to be the word of God. If he were alive now, he would be in full sympathy with that "higher criticism" of which we hear so much.

I mention the foregoing incident for the reason that it affords an excellent example of Lyon's independence of character which he was constantly exhibiting in all the relations in which he might be placed, even at the risk of making himself personally disagreeable. Indeed his intensesness and desire to inculcate his views on others made him utterly regardless of the effect of his speeches and conduct, so far as concerned the wounding of the feelings of those with whom he was thrown. At the same time he was, as I shall have occasion to show, a man in whom the principles of abstract justice were deeply implanted, and they always influenced his conduct wherever he gave himself the opportunity of acting with deliberation. Often, however, his natural impetuosity would get the better of him and he would perpetrate some outrageously unjust act for which he was afterwards forced by his own imperative convictions, to make all possible atonement.

On the day following his first visit to me before I had returned his call, we again met and this time on the prairie. We passed each other with the most formal and even frigid salutes for I had imbibed as great a prejudice against him as he had



conceived against me. I regarded him not only as a bigoted ignoramus, but as one whose eccentricity was as near insanity as it ever is and as one therefore whose acquaintance was not desirable. We had not, however, gone more than a few paces apart when I heard him approaching me, and turning around almost expecting an attack of some kind, I found him at my side with a pleasant smile on his face and with outstretched hand.

"Doctor," he said, "it won't do for us to be enemies. All the officers here but you and I are pro-slavery men, and there's a time coming when all friends of the right will have to stand together. Come, let us take a walk."

I was glad to meet his advance half way. I was only twenty-six years old then and must plead the "baby act" in extenuation of the remark that had excited his anger. He was nine years older besides being my superior in rank, so we went up to the top of the high bluff that overlooked the plain on which the Fort stood. He talked all the time, never giving me a chance to get in a word even if I had been ever so anxious to express my views. In fact, he was always ready to do all the talking; liking, apparently, nothing so much as a good listener. Although he halted at times a little in his speech as though trying to find the exact word with which to express his meaning, he was extremely voluble, his ideas flowing with surprising rapidity and his words being uttered at a rate of speed that would have kept the most skillful stenographer in full action.

Upon the present occasion he spoke at length on the slavery issue that was then before the country and especially as it concerned the two new territories, Kansas and Nebraska. He was especially unmeasured in his denunciations of President Pierce, congress, and above all of Mr. Douglas, whom he always designated as Stephen Arnold Douglas with a strong accent on *Arnold*, accusing them of subserviency to the slave interest and treason to the Democratic party, and predicting that the time was not far distant when

they would be held up to the execration of all lovers of freedom. In the course of his tirade—for it was scarcely anything else—he drew from his pocket a copy of the *New York Evening Post*, the gospel by which he swore, and read a long article from it that, he said, exactly expressed his views. He lauded William Cullen Bryant for his independence and courage, and declared that the *Post* was the most honest and fearless newspaper published in America. He had for many years been a subscriber to the semi-weekly or tri-weekly edition and was always on the watch, when the mail was expected, for his favorite journal.

Though opposed to the extension of slavery I had always been a moderate supporter of it as it existed, having been born in Maryland, though brought up in Pennsylvania, and I was at the time from necessity, a slaveholder as were other officers stationed at the post. Lyon recognized the constitutional obligation to refrain from interfering with slavery where it existed; but he was violently opposed to its extension beyond the limits established by the "Missouri Compromise," the repeal of which he considered a wanton outrage. There was a strong Free-State party in that part of the territory and meetings had been held at many of which Lyon had spoken. We returned from the long walk with, I think, greatly increased respect for each other. After that our friendship deepened and there was not a day that we were not together for hours at a time.

I have never in the whole course of my life met with a man as fearless and uncompromising in the expression of his opinions and at the same time so intolerant of the views of others as he was. If he had lived four hundred years ago he would have been burned at the stake as a pestilent and altogether incorrigible person, whose removal was demanded in the interests of the peace of society. His frankness and honesty were of such a character that they made him enemies on all sides, and yet there were very few, even among those who disliked him, who did not at the same time, re-

spect him. His word was inviolable. Hypocrisy and humbug of all kinds were so distasteful to him that those in whom he detected them became the objects of his keenest animosity, and above all other things slavery met with his most thorough detestation, and he did not hesitate to say so in all collections of officers although nearly every one at the post was a southerner and a sympathizer with slavery.

Upon one occasion Captain Anderson, of the Second Dragoons, afterward a major-general in the Confederate service, gave a dinner party, at which were present several of the officers of the garrison as well as the members of the general court-martial that was then in session at the post. Captain Lyon and myself were among the number.

Although Captain Anderson was a citizen of South Carolina and his host, Lyon plunged as soon as he could get the opportunity into a harangue against the South and its peculiar institution, in which he used all the powers of invective that he possessed in so great a degree. Among the guests were General Mansfield, killed at Antietam; General Ramsey, chief of ordnance during the war; Col. C. F. Smith, who, if he had lived, would certainly have given a good account of himself on the side of the Union, and Gen. Casey, who so highly distinguished himself at the battle of Fair Oaks. All of these were northern men who had no liking for slavery, but they were all dumbfounded at the violence and virulence of Lyon's attack. As for the southerners, they looked indignant, of course, all but the host, Captain Anderson, who sat at the head of his table, smiling serenely at Lyon's abuse, and by occasionally addressing a word or two to those nearest to him trying to make the occasion pass as pleasantly as was possible under the circumstances. But that evening, while several of us, including Captain Lyon, were sitting in Major Merrill's quarters, Anderson entered the room. He looked around him, and his eyes at once lighted on the man of whom he was evidently in search, and whom he had not found in his own quarters.



"Captain Lyon," he said, approaching his antagonist, "you took occasion to-day, when I from my position was helpless to repel your insults, to commit an outrage, for which I am now going to punish you. I do not mean to heap personal abuse on you, for every one here present knows what I think of you, and that kind of retaliation would do you very little harm; I am going to thrash you."

He took a step toward Lyon, who, hearing this speech, had remained quietly in his chair glaring at his adversary, and evidently worked up to the point of doing mischief. As Anderson came nearer, Lyon, still without moving a limb, said, with as much composure as he could command:

"Captain Anderson, if you come a step nearer I'll kill you."

Instantly several of us rushed between the two, and Anderson, without a word further withdrew.

About an hour afterward I was aroused from bed by some one at the door, and on going down stairs found Captain Lyon. I at once suspected what had happened, but I was not allowed to remain long in a state of uncertainty. "Anderson has challenged me," he said.

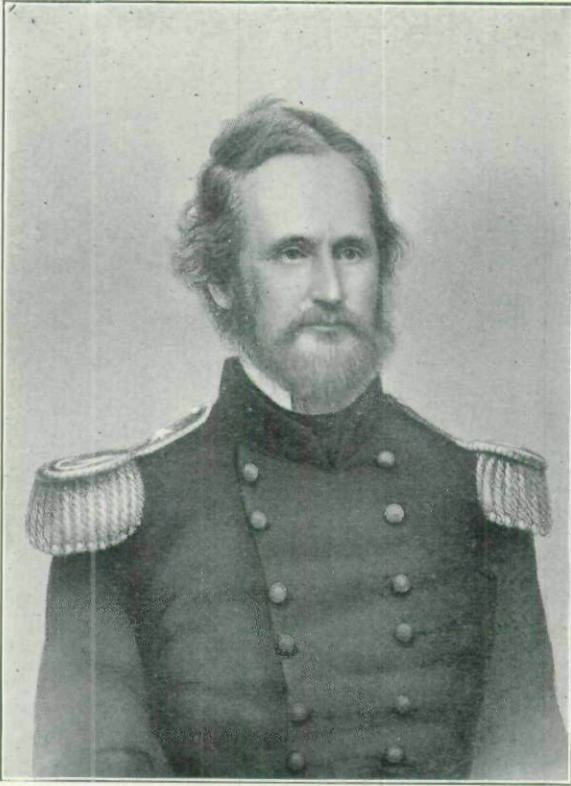
"You will have to accept," I answered.

"No, I shall not accept; I have conscientious scruples against duelling, and besides it is contrary to law, and I am a law-abiding man."

"Then you will be sent to Coventry without delay. You have grossly insulted Anderson in his own house, and you must give him satisfaction, or you will be run out of the army."

"I don't care, I am willing to endure persecution for the sake of my convictions. I shall not fight him. If he attacks me, I shall kill him as I would a dog."

I argued the matter with him—I was many years younger than I am now—and the result was that he finally consented to meet Anderson, provided I would act as his second, and that the duel should take place with pistols across a table.



*N. Lyon.*

NATHANIEL LYON, BRIGADIER GENERAL U. S. VOLUNTEERS.

I remonstrated with him on this latter point, and told him that I was quite sure Major Sibley, Anderson's second, would peremptorily refuse to allow his principal to fight after such a murderous fashion.

He was firm, however, so I had a conference early the following morning with Major Sibley, and, as I had expected, Lyon's terms were regarded by him as altogether outside the pale of the laws of duelling, and as being barbarous, murderous, unusual and ungentlemanly.

There was nothing left for Anderson to do but to horse-whip Lyon or inflict some other gross indignity on him, and this he would certainly have attempted but for the fact that Sibley and I got him and Lyon to agree that the matter should be referred to a council of officers whose decision should be binding. This body, after due deliberation, decided that Captain Lyon had been guilty of a grave offense, and that he should apologize to Captain Anderson in the presence of every officer in the post.

This was a bitter dose for Lyon to swallow, but there was no escape. He declared to me that he would rather cut off his right hand than do what it had been decreed he must do. He fumed and fretted over the matter until he worked himself up to such a state of excitement as made me fear for the strength of his mind to resist it, but he finally cooled down and began to look at the matter philosophically.

Mrs. Hammond and I were to have a reception that evening for the members of the court-martial, and they and all the officers of the garrison and their wives would accordingly be together at my quarters. It was decided that at nine o'clock Captain Lyon should tender his apology in their presence. Every one was there, and at nine o'clock Captain Anderson stationed himself at one end of the drawing-room. The last beat of the drums sounding the tattoo had hardly died away when Captain Lyon in full uniform, entered the apartment. He looked neither to the right nor to the left, but with me at his side, as his escort and host, he walked



through the long line of officers—all in full uniform—and ladies, till he came within four or five feet of Captain Anderson who, grave and dignified, with Sibley by his side, awaited his arrival. "Captain Anderson," he said, without a tremor in his voice, "I have come to express my regret for having used language at your table which, however much I may believe it to be true, was out of place at the time, and was such as I, your guest, should not have spoken. Its employment was, under the circumstances, more injurious to me than it was to you." Anderson bowed without a word, Lyon bowed, and then, without tendering his hand, turned and strode out of the room. Anderson and he never spoke to each other afterward except when their official relations required them to do so.

Lyon had the utmost regard for law as distinguished from regulations or orders from the commanding officer, and frequently declared that he would disobey any order that was illegal. The then commanding officer was of a very unfortunate mental organization and greatly disposed to assume powers that did not belong to him. Finally Lyon had an opportunity of setting up his judgment in opposition to a military order, and he did not hesitate a moment as to the course to be pursued.

One of the officers brought out with him from the East with his family a good-looking servant-maid who at once began to receive the attentions of the enlisted men. The one she especially favored was the Corporal Allender the incident of assault upon whom by Lyon I have already related, and straightway the corporal applied to his commanding officer for authority to marry and that his wife might be rated as a company laundress. Lyon accorded his permission, and then the girl announced to her employers that she was about to enter upon the marital relation, and that they would not in future receive the benefit of her services.

The officer went at once to the commanding officer of the post, a man, who, as I have already said, was disposed to be

arbitrary and tyrannical; and obtained an order from him prohibiting Corporal Allender marrying Sarah Ahren. This order was sent to Captain Lyon with instructions to see that it was obeyed.

I was present in Lyon's quarters when he received the order, and I have rarely seen a more striking instance of intense rage than he exhibited. He fairly foamed at the mouth as he walked up and down the floor gesticulating violently and stammering over his words in a way that rendered them almost incoherent. It was very clear that he intended to disobey the order, and that, too, in a way that should leave no doubt relative to the motives by which he was actuated. After he became a little calmer, I understood that he regarded the order as illegal, and as an attempt to interfere most unwarrantably with the rights of a soldier of his company.

There is no law or regulation prohibiting officers or men from marrying, but there was a regulation to the effect that soldiers' wives should not be allowed with the troops without the consent of the company commander and the commanding officer of the post. The only object that the corporal had in getting his captain's consent to his marriage was that his wife might be made a laundress, receive a ration, and be the recipient of quite a snug little sum monthly for washing the clothes of such of the men as chose to employ her. There was no power in the United States to prevent the man and woman marrying, but there was power to keep her out of the garrison. The commanding officer's order was therefore manifestly illegal. This was the ground that Lyon took, and I thought he was right, and still think so.

"Corporal Allender shall marry the girl if he wants to, and no illegal order like that shall prevent him!" he exclaimed, as he paced the floor. "Orderly," he continued, opening the door, and calling the soldier who stood in the passage-way, "tell Corporal Allender to come here."

In a few minutes the corporal made his appearance and, making the proper salute, stood at attention.



"Do you want to marry Sarah Ahren?" enquired Lyon, his small eyes sparkling with excitement.

"Yes, Captain," answered the man, saluting.

"And she wants to marry you?"

"Yes, Captain," with another salute.

"Then come here tonight at eight o'clock, both of you, and I'll perform the marriage ceremony."

"Yes, Captain," and again saluting, the man turned on his heel and marched off.

"I want you to be present as a witness," continued Lyon, addressing me. "I'll show old —— that he can't issue illegal orders to me with impunity."

"Yes, I'll come," I assented, laughing; "but we shall both be arrested and tried and Corporal Allender will be reduced to the ranks."

"I'd like nothing better than to be tried on the charge of disobeying such an order as that," he exclaimed excitedly.

"All right," I replied, "I'll aid and abet you to the extent of my power. The order is illegal certainly, but you don't propose to marry those people?"

"Yes, sir, marriage is a civil contract. I shall read them a chapter from Blackstone, make them a short address, ask them some proper questions and pronounce them man and wife. Then we'll see what old —— will do."

At eight o'clock I was in Lyon's quarter's again, and shortly afterward Corporal Allender and his pretty sweetheart, accompanied by two soldiers as witnesses, entered the room. The happy couple stood up in front of Captain Lyon while he read an extract from Blackstone in regard to the nature of marriage. Then he made some excellent remarks on the duties of husband and wife one to the other, and finally asked them whether they took each other for husband and wife, and intended to live together in the bonds of wedlock so long as they both should live? The answers being satisfactory, he pronounced them man and wife and forthwith made out a certificate to that effect, which I and others



Robert Allender and Sarah A. Iron.

wishing to enter upon the marriage relation  
I have duly pronounced to them the solemn  
obligations thereof which they have assumed  
in the presence of the accompanying witnesses

St. Riley Mo-haws.

April 23<sup>d</sup> 1855

witnesses.

William Hammond

Charles C. Hammond

John Freeman

Robert Long.

N. Lyon.

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

Given by Capt. Nathaniel Lyon, to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Allender, at Fort Riley, Kansas, April 23, 1855. A facsimile from the original  
in The Aldrich Collection, State Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

witnessed. Many years ago Mrs. Allender, in order to recall herself to my recollection for a purpose that she had in view sent me this certificate and it remained in my possession till I gave it, a few years since, to my friend Charles Aldrich, for the Historical Museum of Iowa, of which he is the founder and curator. It reads as follows:

Robert Allender and Sarah Ahren wishing to enter upon the marriage relation, I have duly pronounced to them the solemn obligations thereof, which they have assumed in the presence of the accompanying witnesses.

Fort Riley, Kansas, April 23d, 1855.

N. LYON.

Witnesses: William A. Hammond, Charles E. Hammond, John Trueman, Robert Long.

That night the commanding officer heard of Lyon's contempt of his order and my countenance, and before we went to bed we were visited by the adjutant and placed in arrest. I was released the next morning in order that I might attend to my duties, but Lyon was kept confined to his quarters for several days. In the meantime the commanding officer awoke to the conception of the fact that he had made an ass of himself, and Lyon also was released. No charges were preferred.

It is not to be supposed from this account that Lyon was an insubordinate officer. No one could have been more scrupulous than he in obeying to the letter every legitimate order that he received. No one in the army is required to obey an illegal order. He may, it is true, be compelled by physical force to do what he is told to do, whether the order is or is not in accordance with law, but he has a clear right to refuse obedience to any command that is manifestly contrary to law, and the officer giving such an order would probably be punished for his assumption of authority were the case brought to the notice of his military superiors. Any one, however, who, on the ground of its being contrary to law, refuses obedience to the order of his commanding officer does so at his peril.

An incident that occurred soon after the one I have mentioned gave Lyon an opportunity of showing the dis-

inction that existed in his mind between an unjust and an illegal order. Two settlers named Dixon and their families had settled upon land outside of the military reservation, as they had a clear right to do. For purposes of his own, of a highly dishonorable character, the commanding officer wanted them to move off, but they declined to do so. Determined to compel them to go, he extended the military reservation so as to include their settlement, and then ordered Lyon with his company to go and pull down the Dixons' houses, and put them and their families off the reservation. Lyon was, doubtless, selected for this work because he had stated as his belief that the action of the commanding officer was wrong, and that the men had a right to the land upon which they had settled, and further with the expectation that he would disobey this order as he had a previous one. As I was considered to be Lyon's aider and abettor, I was ordered to accompany, as medical officer, this expedition of a company of infantry against two men, and some women and children.

But Lyon knew the difference between an outrage and a violation of law. He had been informed by his military superiors that the land upon which the Dixons had settled was a part of the military reservation. Whether it was or was not was none of his business. That was a matter that specially concerned the Dixons, and that might safely be left for them to bring to the notice of the highest authority. So he and his command proceeded to obey the order. The Dixons were at first a little disposed to resist, but Lyon told them that if they fired on his men he would return the fire, and that as to the ultimate result there would be no doubt. So they submitted. They went off, and Lyon with yokes of oxen tore down the houses and effectually demolished them. Then after his bloodless victory he marched back, and set himself to work preparing charges against the commanding officer of corruption and other crimes upon which he was not long afterward tried and dismissed from the service. It was



at this trial that he made the statements relative to his religious beliefs that I have quoted.

Lyon was possessed of a great love for science, and was especially interested in natural history, though he knew little of it beyond its familiar every-day features. He was a staunch believer in the doctrine of evolution before Darwin published his views. He had read something of Lamarck's ideas and had full faith in their correctness. Upon one occasion I was performing some experiments with black snakes, during which I daily subjected them to the influence of an atmosphere of oxygen. While they were inhaling the stimulating gas the animals displayed a degree of activity altogether in excess of that that was natural to them; darting here and there about the glass case in which they were confined, and coiling and uncoiling themselves with lightning-like rapidity. Lyon used to come and watch them, and showed the greatest interest in their actions. When I had finished my investigations I let them go, and when Lyon came the next morning to see them, as he expected, under the influence of oxygen, he was much disappointed to find the cage empty. "I was performing experiments of my own with the snakes," he said. "If you had kept them here a little longer I am very sure legs would have grown out of their bellies just as wings have developed on fishes that through the course of ages have been stranded on the shore and that are now birds."

I laughed at this theory, but he stuck to it, and argued with considerable force and intelligence in support of the doctrine that organic beings owned their forms to the circumstances in which they were placed and the demands made upon them by the conditions of their existence. And this was several years before Darwin published his views on the subject though of course many years after Lamarck gave expression to his theory. Lyon was familiar with Lamarck's ideas and had besides a good practical acquaintance with geology.

He was especially kind to children and animals. I have often witnessed him get intensely angry at some teamster who was maltreating a horse or mule. On one occasion he took from the hand of a man the whip with which he was belaboring a mule about the head and laid it over the fellow's shoulders till he shrieked for mercy. Upon another occasion he made a man employed in the quartermaster's department go down on his knees to a dog he had been unmercifully beating, humbly beg the dog's pardon and promise never to do so again.

As I have said, the chief mental characteristics of Lyon as I knew him a few years before the civil war, in which he lost his life, were intensity and conscientiousness. Whatever he felt, he felt with a force that carried everything before it. There was no middle ground with him in any matter that engaged his attention, and he conceived that it was his duty to enforce his doctrines or his ideas upon all with whom he came in contact, even to the extent of being offensive. At the same time he was possessed of as tender a heart as ever beat in a man's breast. He always expressed the utmost respect for women, though probably he would never have married. He was as strong in his friendships as he was in his enmities. He was one to be trusted implicitly to any extent. He was truth personified.

But there was with all his kindness of heart, a vein of cruelty in his disposition so far as those were concerned whom he thought had behaved badly. I am quite sure that if he had possessed the power he would have killed every northern upholder of what he called the "slave power" upon whom he could have laid his hands. Indeed, I have often heard him exclaim that they had equitably forfeited their lives and that they were outlaws whom any one ought to be empowered to destroy. Douglas, Pierce, Buchanan, and all the advocates of the "Kansas-Nebraska Bill" met with his scorn and contempt, and no words short of oaths—for he never swore—were too strong for him to use to express his condemnation

of what he conceived was their treason to the cause of freedom.

Nevertheless, though a most pronounced opponent of slavery he recognized the fact that it had a legal and constitutional existence in certain sections of the Union. From a publication of his faith in a newspaper, *The Manhattan Express*, soon after the election of Mr. Lincoln, I quote the following explicit statement of his views:

*Slavery*—not to be disturbed where it now exists, nor to be abolished in the District of Columbia without the wishes of the people, and then by moderate degrees.

The Fugitive Slave Law to be enforced in good faith; the present law should not be changed to impair its efficiency.

Slavery is *not* extended by our constitution over the Territories. On the contrary, they are free in the absence of law establishing slavery, and no such law should be made till a Territory become a State, when she can, if it be the unbiased will of her people, that will being expressed without force or fraud, provide for slavery, and should not be refused admission to the Union on this account. Such we believe to be our true policy, and, so far as we understand, the views of our president elect.

He frequently lamented the violence of his temper, that so often led him into the perpetration of unreasonable and unjust acts, and he was always ready to make all the amends in his power for any outrages into which it might have betrayed him. During the few years that we were associated at Fort Riley he certainly succeeded in overcoming, to a great extent, his natural tendency to break into explosions of rage.

We know how, by his energetic and far-seeing conduct in the early period of the war, he prevented the secession of Missouri. We know too how at Wilson's Creek where he was in command of the Federal forces that after he had had several horses shot under him and had received two severe wounds he led the First Iowa Regiment to the charge and how, almost at the very beginning of its advance he was killed by a rifle bullet that, passing near his heart, severed the aorta, the chief artery of the body. Here he gained a victory over an army threefold greater than his own.



Had he lived there can be no doubt that he would have come to the very top of the pyramid of those gallant commanders who were most successful in the field. And he would have reached the apex, not because of any very great military skill that he possessed—though he was an educated soldier—but mainly because he had in him those qualities without which military science plays a small part in war; an indomitable spirit that was always awake, a fixity of purpose that never faltered, and a courage that was never for an instant dampened by the slightest feeling of fear. He did not know what fear was.

Here I might stop with this imperfect delineation of Lyon as I knew him. But there is one point which, I think, requires special notice. There are monuments in Washington to many distinguished soldiers whose services were invaluable; but there is none to Lyon, among the bravest of the brave and whose deeds were such as to cause his memory to be kept forever green by his fellow countrymen. Yes, among all the statues of heroes that adorn the public places of this city there is but one in honor of a general killed in battle. This, it seems to me, is a reproach which should not rest upon us forever.

WASHINGTON, D. C., October, 1899.

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GOVERNOR CHAMBERS arrived last evening, about six o'clock, after our paper was ready for press. He was welcomed on the part of the citizens and committee by James W. Grimes, Esq., in a very appropriate address. Governor Chambers replied in a happy manner, and was then escorted to the National by a large crowd, where he will be happy to meet his fellow citizens to-day.—*The Burlington Hawk-Eye*, May 13, 1841.

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