

THE
CAPTURE OF RICHMOND
(1864—1865)

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HISTORY OF GRANT'S CAMPAIGN

FOR THE
CAPTURE OF RICHMOND

(1864-1865)

WITH AN OUTLINE OF THE
PREVIOUS COURSE OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR.



BY

JOHN CANNON.



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P R E F A C E .



IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES I have sought to give an accurate, clear, and impartial narrative of the campaign which brought to an end the American Civil War, by subduing Richmond, and the great general and brave army defending it; thereby crushing the rebellion, preserving the Union of the States, and accomplishing the abolition of slavery.

To explain the state of affairs when General Grant, placed at the head of the whole army of the United States, began the final advance on Richmond, two or three introductory chapters seemed necessary. These I have endeavoured so to write that the reader, if he has not already consulted any history of the war, may yet comprehend the outline of its course during the years 1861, 1862, and 1863.

It is hard to say that any one out of the four years of fighting surpasses the other in interest or importance. If the first is distinguished by the battle of Bull Run, and by the novelty of war operations to both sides, the second comprises half-a-dozen battles of huge slaughter, the first trial in fight of iron-clad vessels, and the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation by President Lincoln. And if the third can exhibit the thrilling spectacles of

Jackson's death at Chancellorsville, the all-important battle of Gettysburg, and the reduction of Vicksburg, and the course of the Mississippi, the fourth unfolds events which, after all, seem to be of supreme grandeur—Spottsylvania (the greatest battle of the war), Sherman's march (the greatest war operation), the capture of Richmond, the close of all resistance by the South, and the tragic assassination of President Lincoln.

Almost all who study the great conflict will concur in the remark made by General Grant himself to an English visitor:—‘ Say what they will, this war has been the *biggest* job of its sort that has been done in this world—nothing like it has gone before.’* It must indeed be incorporated into our history; and since the Americans dwell with fondness on old English glory as in part theirs by descent, so may we consider with pride the manly bearing of the nation *we* founded, whilst we pray that their great strife may be the last ever to arise in any portion of the Anglo-Saxon race.

To sketch the whole in detail, and to combine a careful equal review of the simultaneous labours of statesmanship, and the solutions effected of moral and material problems, I considered, after brief reflection, to be a task too voluminous and varied for me to venture upon unsupported and uncriticised. I resolved, therefore, to write the history of the fourth and last year of the war, conducted, and triumphantly concluded, by General Grant.

The opening pages of this work were written when Grant's campaign was but two months old; when the

* Dr. Vaughan, ‘Notes on the United States since the War,’ *British Quarterly Review*, October 2, 1865.