

CHAPTER IX.

For some time prior to General Early's return from his invasion of Maryland the wanton destruction of private residences by General David Hunter in Virginia had aroused the indignation of the people of the South and the Confederate Government had been appealed to to resort to retaliatory measures to put a stop to it, but as yet no steps had been taken in that direction, and General Early determined to take the matter into his own hands, and have the responsibility rest upon his shoulders.

Accordingly, General Early, on the twenty-ninth day of July, started the cavalry brigades of Generals McCausland and Bradley T. Johnson across the Potomac above Williamsport with directions to proceed to Chambersburg, in Pennsylvania, and demand an indemnity of \$100,000 in gold from its citizens, otherwise the town would be burned. The people of Chambersburg, as were the people of the towns passed through by General Lee's army of invasion the year before, had been treated with so much consideration that they not only refused to raise the money, but laughed at the threat to burn their town, whereupon General McCausland proceeded to execute General Early's orders, and the greater part of Chambersburg was laid in ashes.

But of this expedition let General Early speak for himself, as he does in his "Memoirs of the Last Year of the War for Independence" :

On the 26th of July, we moved to Martinsburg, the cavalry going to the Potomac. The 27th and 28th were employed in destroying the railroad, it having been repaired since we passed over it at the beginning of the month. While at Martinsburg it was ascertained, beyond all doubt, that Hunter had been again indulging in his favorite mode of warfare, and that, after his return to the Valley, while we were near Washington, among other outrages, the private residences of Mr. Andrew Hunter, a member of the Virginia Senate, Mr. Alexander R. Boteler, an ex-member of the Confederate Congress, as well as of the United States Congress, and Edmund J. Lee, a distant relative of General Lee, all in Jefferson County, with their contents, had been burned by his orders, only time enough being given for the ladies to get out of the houses. A number of towns in the South, as well as private country houses, had been burned by the Federal troops, and the accounts had been heralded forth in some of the Northern papers in terms of exultation, and gloated over by their readers, while they were received with apathy by others.

I now came to the conclusion that we had stood this mode of warfare long enough, and that it was time to open the eyes of the people of the North to its enormity by an example in the way of retaliation. I did not select the cases mentioned as having more merit or greater