

Cavalry raids, destructive as they are, never conquer a country. Rather, indeed, they help to make it unconquerable; and that in several ways: In the first place, they greatly tend to destroy that sneaking "Unionism," not yet quite extinct in some regions of our country, which is willing to take the oath "to save its property." Creatures of this crawling sort meet no favours from the Yankee raider: his business is to rob and devastate—to carry away what is portable and destroy what he cannot carry, in order to starve out the "rebellion;" and he has no notion of being cheated by these "Union" poor devils with their free and easy oaths. When they protest that they have always been "Union men," that they will take the oath, and all that, raiders reply indignantly (as described by a letter from Roanoke county) that they are "d—d liars," and thereupon proceed to rob their premises. It would be a good idea, truly, if a wealthy farmer of Western Virginia, with his barns and meat-houses full, gold in his desk and silver in his pantry, could turn away a regiment of famishing horses and their hungry and greedy riders by merely proclaiming "loyalty" and tendering an oath. Can Federal soldiers eat and drink oaths? Are oaths good in a horse's rack and manger? The Yankee gallant who has vowed to carry to Massachusetts some trophy (all stolen articles they call "trophies") of his Southern campaign, can he bring home to the miscegenitrix he loves a planter's oath, when she expects his daughter's jewels or his wife's forks and spoons? It is therefore with sincere pleasure, almost with a sense of obligation to the very raiders, that one hears of their contemptuous inattention to professions of base "loyalty," and the impartiality with which they rob all round. Thus, every district of country which has been harried by a Yankee raid or two, becomes a more staunch Confederate country thereafter.

There is another way, too, in which raids bring with them a certain compensation, at least in Western Virginia: they discover and bring to light unexpected granaries and stores of provision hidden in caves, literally in caves of the earth, with which that limestone country abounds. The prudent farmers had hidden away those stores to save them, not from Yankee marauders, but from their own government and their own fellow-citizens. These are the suffering farmers who never had anything when Confederate quartermasters, impressing officers or purchasers on government account, came round: they had nothing to sell for Confederate money: so far from that, they were always in distress, almost starving, and anxious delegations used to come down to Richmond, on their part, to plead that flour should be sent up to the Valley to sustain life; and especially that if the Government should require from them a loan of their surplus labour, or indeed make any claim or demand upon them whatever in the common cause, then all was lost. This sort of persons have probably helped more to depreciate our Treasury bills than all other classes together: to sustain the credit of that paper was to sustain the Government and the cause, and the freedom and honour of their own children. But touch Confederate money they would not; only the glitter of gold and silver could draw forth some of their hoards from the caverns:—and behold! many of those secret granaries have now been opened and their contents carried off, without money and without price. Yankees have good noses: they are also accomplished geologists; and know what deposits may be expected to crop out in calcareous formations; indeed, the very negroes who had helped to stow away the produce went to the raiders and told them where to find it. And so the prudent farmer finds that he has been too cunning for himself after all; he has cheated himself lamentably; finds that he might as well have taken the Government price and helped to feed his friends, as fed his enemies for no price at all; wishes that his last year's crop had been put, not into a cave, but into four per cent. bonds; finds that, after all, it is worth while to make some sacrifices to keep those Yankees out of the country, and when the raid has passed away, it leaves our farmer a sadder and a wiser man, and we trust a much better Confederate citizen.

In short, the various "raids" of Yankee brigands this year will have done some good to make up for the severe losses and the intolerable

ble outrages they inflict along their line of march. They will have proved to the population that the Yankee cavalry are simply mounted banditti, to whom "restoring the Union" is a pretence for pillage—that neither oaths nor caves are any protection whatever against such gangs, and that the best thing our people can do is to make all needful sacrifices in money as well as in blood, to sustain the army in which rests our only hope to free our soil from these bands of thieves.