



The Last of the Confederacy

Sole Survivor of Confederate Congress, at 82, Is Still Young in Spirit and a Delightful Gentleman of Old School Who Believes in Woman Suffrage, Has Most Modern Ideas and Conducts a Large Law Practice

In a peaceful village slumbering among the picturesque highlands of Northern Mississippi, on an old Southern estate—a reminiscence of the manorial possessions of the cotton princes—lives a splendid, virile figure of old age who might fittingly be termed "The Last of the Confederacy."

Still potent among men at the age of 82, still fired by the true enthusiasm of living, this man, who is the last of the statesmen who ruled the destinies of the Confederacy, is an inspiration as tonic, as the golden juice of the Tokay of an emperor.

Judge Jchu A. Orr of Columbus, Miss., was a member of the Provisional Congress which held its sway in the beginning of the Confederacy, then later was elected a mem-

ber of the Confederate Congress. No other member of the latter body is now living, and only one of the former. All the rest have passed away, even as the soldiers who wore the gray are passing along with those who wore the blue. Naturally the lawmakers, as a body, were older than the soldiers, as they were less numerous, hence they have sooner passed off the stage of action.

Judge Orr is a figure of importance; one worthy of study and veneration. He is a link between history and action. Stored in his mind—still as bright and clear as it was in the days of his youth—are recollections of things of national and world-wide importance which no other living man knows except as he has read of them or had them handed down to him by men now dead.

He considered and commented on two striking issues of the day in no uncertain fashion. He is an ardent supporter of suffrage for women. He believes in the mental equality of the sexes, though each may lack the essential strength of the other.

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In the manner this wise old man deprecates the fact that the tendency of the times is toward deferring marriage on the part of men, for one reason and another, until middle life. He is very sweeping in his declarations on this point, insisting that the single state is most disastrous in its effects upon men than upon the gentler sex, notwithstanding the time honored witticism concerning old maids and their vagaries and eccentricities.

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nation on the American continent. Thus the wheat was winnowed from the chaff by a process that has never been approached in perfection by any legislative assembly on the American continent in the annals of the country's history.

Judge Orr served in the Provisional Congress of the Confederacy throughout the entire term of its authority from February, 1862, to February, 1862, then was commissioned by the Confederate Secretary of War, J. P. Buchanan, to recruit a regiment. He raised a cohort of 1400 men, and commanded them under the leadership of Gen. Van Dorn, Pemberton and Johnston.

In April, 1864, he resigned his command to take his seat in the second Confederate Congress. In that Congress he was an important member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and on Feb. 28, 1865, while officiating as chairman of the committee, he made the report which led to the celebrated Hampton Roads conference between President Lincoln, Secretary Seward, Vice-President Stephens, Senator Hunter and Judge J. A. Campbell.

In the summer of 1865, he personally participated in an important conference at the New York Hotel, in New York City, between Gov. Andrews of Massachusetts, Horace Greley, his brother, Senator Orr of South Carolina, and John W. Porney, in which the restoration of the Southern States to their former status was discussed. Mr. Greley and Gov. Andrews were in favor of this policy.

On his return to his home State, Judge Orr was indefatigable in urging upon his people the acceptance of timely compromises with the new order of things. His statesmanlike gift of foresight, never keener than at this juncture, clearly apprehended the horrors which must inevitably have followed the refusal of the populace of the conquered States to participate in and control the elections of the respective States, notwithstanding the grant of the negro suffrage.

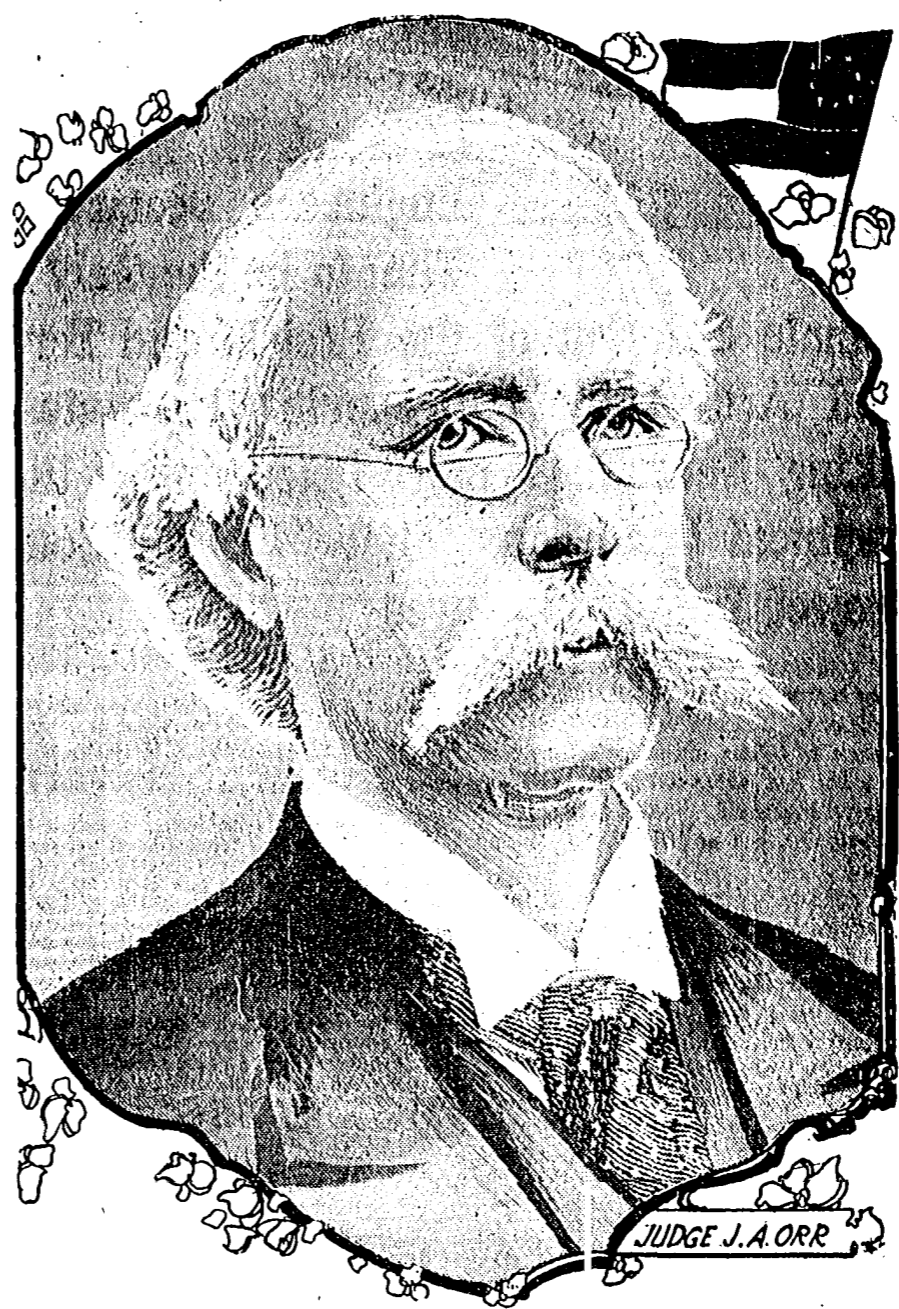
Judge Orr was one of the very few Southern statesmen at the time who perceived the fearful dangers that loomed in the pathway of the Southern States if the whites did not at once grasp the reliable potency of events which compelled the Southern people to vote at the polls with their former slaves, assert at once their political and social supremacy and dominion of the whites. Judge Orr made some brilliant speeches urging upon the people of his State participation in the elections after the war.

Apprehending the avalanche which must fall upon his helpless people and seeing that the whites would, in the end, have to snatch the government of the States away from the mad incense of the blacks, encouraged by the scum of the North which had never stood in the ranks of battle, Judge Orr retired temporarily from public life rather than be carried along in a current which he could not stem.

From 1869 to 1876 he served as Judge of the Sixth Judicial District of Mississippi. His greatest service to his State as a member of the Legislature has been performed in the cause of education. Firm in his conviction that the education of the masses is one of the bulwarks of progress and the State, he has been the foremost champion of education in the State of Mississippi. Thousands of dollars have been saved to the children of the State through the ministry of Judge Orr in the Legislature, where he fought many a hard and noble fight against the land thieves who had selected the public school lands for their prey.

Judge Orr, at the advanced age of 82, is still in active practice of law. His magnificent physical and mental powers are still manifested in the ripe vigor of an intellect that has garnered the wisdom of the years. He is one of the most remarkable personalities in all the South, even apart from the singular distinction of being the sole survivor of that brilliant concourse of men that goes down in the pages of history as the Congress of the Confederacy.

In passing, it is of interest to note the singular fact that in Mississippi there still lives one other survivor of the Provisional Congress, namely, Judge Campbell, but of the real Confederate Government of the Bonnie Blue Flag, Judge Orr is now all that remains to the South.



JUDGE J. A. ORR

BY FLORENCE FORD.

ASOCIATE and colleague of Jefferson Davis, Alexander H. Stephens, Judah P. Benjamin, Judge Reagan, Ben Hill and their fellows, Judge Orr was also a companion in the trials and hardships of camp and field of such men as Robert E. Lee, Joe Johnston, Joseph W. Wheeler, Stonewall Jackson and the great military leaders of the South.

For between the time of his service as a member of the Provisional Congress and his later election to the Second Congress he raised a regiment, was unanimously elected its Colonel and commanded it during the campaigns of '62-'3. Later, also, he commanded a brigade; although never commissioned as a Brigadier-General.

But it is because of his services in the Confederate Congress that Judge Orr occupies now an unique place in present day life. Many veterans of the battlefields are still living; of the law makers and statesmen Judge Orr is almost the sole survivor, of the membership of the Confederate Congress he is the only one living.

There is another phase of ante-bellum life of which Judge Orr's friends are proud to find him distinctive, too, even though not alone. This is his fine spirit of chivalry, courtesy and those qualities which went to make up the old school Southern gentleman of the "before-the-war" days. Not so important to history, perhaps, but something the passing of which brings regret.

As one enters the office of Orr & Harris an elderly gentleman, who does not look within 20 years of his actual age, rises to greet the caller—a man of something over medium height, with broad shoulders and deep chest, evincing the superb vitality that withstood the onslaughts of the years. He stands erect with firm carriage and the vigorous air of the man of affairs. Though the hands are slightly withered and the features somewhat sunken in profile, no devastating touch of senility appears to mark the advance of age.

His dress is a reminiscence of the older period to which the prime of his manhood belonged. A loose-fitting Prince Albert, which has somehow shags through long association, brought to mind pictures of Calhoun, Lincoln, Douglas and the men of their day and their characteristic garb. A large neckcloth of heavy black silk and a collar that encircles the neck in the oldest o. curves still further increase the resemblance to these characters of history. The Judge received a lady representative of the Post-Dispatch with a gentle and charming courtesy which was truly of the old school. The embodiment of the chivalric traditions of the most courtly period of American life since the old colonial days, there was yet no trace of anything over medium height, gallantry and labored compliment which number the attempts of some present day courtiers to emulate the graces of the old regime. His courtesy toward all womankind is something very real and vital, which has its roots deep in an abiding faith in the potent force of woman's heart and mind and her constant need for protection against the "rule of the world."

Judge Orr's recollections are of great value and interest, for he was brought into the closest political and personal intercourse with some of the greatest figures of the rebellion. He was a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and was thereafter pushed into the great current of events through the position and influence of his older brother, Gov. Orr of South Carolina, who was a Confederate Senator and one of the most distinguished men of the day.

For Lincoln, Judge Orr has the deepest admiration, believing that history will accord him the greatest place in American history next to Washington, and affirming that his assassination was a most overwhelming catastrophe to the South, which precipitated and made possible the horrors of reconstruction.

"He was one of those supreme masters of men," says Judge Orr, "who gleam through the pages of history at long intervals. He was endowed with an almost supernatural gift of reading character, combined with a Napoleonic genius for executive direction and control of detail."

For Lee he has a veneration touched with something deeply tender, for few of this generation know, as the Judge knows, the real pathos and tragedy of the great chieftain's life. Abraham Lincoln, to his mind, was not the only martyr of the war. From the very moment of those wonderful battles of the Wilderness, Judge Orr says, Lee knew that final disaster to the Confederate arms was inevitable unless the Confederate Congress would adopt certain plans which he proposed.

Grant had been defeated and Lee wore the laurel of victory, but the conquering general knew that his opponent had still unlimited resources to draw upon, while he faced the future with a half-starved, half-armed and utterly depleted army with no pillars of national strength to lean upon. At the end of the struggle in the Wilderness, Lee knew that it was the last great effort of the Confederacy unless the most extraordinary measures were taken to avert the final victory of the Union arms.

At this time 100,000 men had deserted from the Confederate army and the men in the field had not had meat rations for six months. The last conscription of the Government had gathered in the boys of 17 to do guard duty, and the Ordnance Department had on hand in the arsenals only the necessary equipment for one regiment. On the demand of the commander-in-chief for recruits the Confederate Secretary of War made answer that the utmost number the department could raise would be 6000 men.

At this juncture a message from Gen. Lee was sent to the Confederate Congress and read in secret session of the House to the effect that the smallest number of reinforcements with which the Southern commander could take the field in the spring with any hope of success would be 50,000 men. Otherwise the cause of the Confederacy was lost.

To meet the dire condition of affairs, as given out by the War Department and known only to the Government at Richmond, Judge Orr says, Lee proposed that the Confederacy should arm 50,000 slaves, to be sent into the field under their masters. To insure their loyalty to the cause of the masters, Lee advised that the promise of freedom to themselves and their families should be made to these slaves by the Government. When the bravery and devotion of the body servants who fought in the field beside their masters is recalled, none can say that Lee's plan did not offer some foundation for hope of saving the Confederacy. The slight plight of the Confederate army was freely rectified by Lee in this message.

Judge Orr was present when this letter from the Commanding General was read in the secret session and still believes that Lee's scheme offered the only possible triumph for the ultimate triumph of the Confederate cause. The plan was rejected and without a murmur then or thereafter Lee, even greater in defeat than in victory obeyed his country's behest and "went down with his ship," surrendering his sword to an opponent whom history can never place above him.

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ice, the Judge considered and commented on two striking issues of the day in no uncertain fashion. He is an ardent supporter of suffrage for women. He believes in the mental equality of the sexes, though each may lack the essential strength of the other.

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attention, and to spring to her side to open a door, to move some obstacle to her progress, or to wrestle with some recalcitrant household problem. The lady herself is a fitting object of the devotion. Sweet and finely poised, she impressed one as mistress of herself at all times, and in greater stresses than the "fall of China."

Highly educated, endowed with the love of

John A. Orr is a son of South Carolina. His grandfather was a captain of dragoons during the Revolutionary war. His parents were Christopher and Martha (McCann) Orr. The Orrs are of Irish origin. The McCanns were Scotch, and lineal descendants of the Royal Stuarts.

Judge Orr received the first educational advantages of his day. He graduated at Erskine College, South Carolina, and then entered Princeton University and secured the Master's Degree.

At 22 he became secretary of the Mississippi State Senate, remaining an incumbent for two years. At 24 he was elected to the Legislature from Chickasaw County. During this first term, he became identified with the educational interests of the State which he was to make a special field for his labors as a legislator in after years.

When but 26 years old, he was appointed United States District Attorney for the Northern District of Mississippi. In his twenty-eighth year he was a delegate to the convention that nominated Buchanan and Breckenridge. In 1861 he was elected a delegate to the Mississippi State Convention that passed the ordinance of secession. By this convention he was elected one of the State delegates to the Provisional Congress of the Confederacy, an office carrying with it such grave obligations to country and people that no man dared to whisper that he was a candidate for this high place in the honor of the people of the South.

No similar body of popular representatives has ever been elected in America, either before or since. The very flower of statesmanship was chosen without regard to place or party. The two subsequent Confederate Congresses were elected according to the constitutional vote prescribed by the organic law of the United States before secession, but the Provisional Congress of the Confederacy was composed of men chosen by State conventions, whose members had been selected from among the foremost men which each county in every State had to offer.

These men, many of whom had served in the State governments, and who understood as import of the duties to be performed by the first government of the Confederacy, elected with the utmost deliberation the men who were judged fittest to take part in the Titanic task of forming a new government for a new Anglo-Saxon



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old manorial life of the ancient regime. Here the cotton princes of the vicinity had their town homes and maintained something of feudal state, surrounded by the retainers of the immediate household whose numbers were augmented by perhaps several hundred slaves on the plantations.

Judge Orr experienced to the full the vicissitudes of the war, for he was a large slave owner, and after Appomattox he found the value of his paternal acres diminished almost by two-thirds through the loss of the slaves. The home he occupies now is a delightful rambling old structure of unpretentious exterior, but exalting from every nook and cranny the charm of the older days in the air of peace, plentiful ease and great-hearted hospitality that reigns over all.

When one enters the home tales of the old Southern life are recalled, for the servants address the host and hostess as "ole marse" and "ole miss," just as they do in the novels of Winston Churchill. The graceful courtesy of the welcome, the studied thoughtfulness for every comfort of the guest is something that has no counterpart in the hospitality of this hurried generation. All the house breathes an air of reverent home—home as it ought to be, for the dominant note of all the grace of welcome is sincerity, revealed through the beautiful solitude of every member of the family or each other, and the flawless example of all is the knightly tenderness with which the Judge waits on every movement of the lady mother, still the lover and the cavalier after the lapse of 50 years and the passing of the golden wedding anniversary.

No matter what the absorption in work, or conversation, he never failed to see her need of

books and oratory, in which she has trained her grandson, with a calm, deliberate judgment and a keen insight into tangled situations, Madam Orr is one of those women who make an ideal helpmate to a public man, her intellect bearing the gift of companionship for the strenuous interests of his career and her sweet composure and domesticity the balm for a wearied spirit. The example of the heads of the household has borne fruit, for these charming traits are repeated in the younger generation.

One of the proudest things in the world to witness in the Judge's gallantry toward his young granddaughter-in-law. Her behests are paramount with him as might be those of a little queen. When the guest was leaving and had already entered the carriage with the Judge, who drove himself, it was found that a volume of private records, a heavy tome, had been left behind. Immediately this cavalier of 82, leaped lightly from the vehicle and secured the book with the same matter-of-fact air as might have been expected from a young escort.

Yet, with all his old-time chivalry, the Judge believes in the modern womanhood. "There is nothing that gives me more pleasure," he said, "than to forward the progress of some woman who is trying to do something useful in the world." His own unmarried daughter, who was educated abroad in Switzerland, is one of the foremost women educators in the South, and her father's encouragement and pride in her achievements give signal proof of the fact that he is as much a man of this modern life as of the old days.

Now, to go back over the pages of the past and picture the man in his earlier life. Judge

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The total number of patents recorded in the various countries of the world from the time when patents were first issued up to Dec. 1, 1909, were 2,999,433.

A St. Louis man wants a divorce because he says that he was in a subconscious condition when he was married. If he gets out on these grounds it will form a terrible precedent.



"Still the lover and cavalier after 50 years of married life."