Los Angeles Cala
936 Cottage Place Jany 25th/92

Hon A W Forgée
Dear Sir

I have been much interested in reading your "Story of the One Thousand" in the Cosmopolitan and your criticism of Gen Buell Being in his famous retreat from Ala- to Louisville and return thence to Nashville. I can fully appreciate the justice of your criticism

In all the multiplicity of literature which the War has produced in our magazines, your "Story of the One Thousand" contains the first mention that I have seen made on Buell's ability — or want of ability, which was so apparent to many of the officers of his Army: and being cognizant of a most emphatic expression made by a number of those officers on Buell's — to put it mildly — inefficiency - it has been more of a wonder to me why silence on his war career has been so long maintained when so much has been given to the public pertaining to army matters that go towards

making complete the history of the war. I deem it a duty we each of us who served in that struggle owe to posterity to leave a record of any and every item of importance or interest bearing on that event. We who are left will soon pass over to the majority and posterity will soon glean in vain for any new items of interest appertaining to our "late unpleasantness"

I was in one of the two Divisions (Jeff C Davis) that was ordered from Grant's army to reinforce Buell when he commenced to fall back from Huntsville Ala to Louisville Ky. Our Div was at Jacinto Miss and our march was via Iuka and joined his (Buell's) command at or near Florence on the Tennessee and throughout that memorable dusty march across the two States of Tenn and Ky the feeling among the Line officers my associates (my rank was but a Lieut) was one of great depression - that there was something radically

wrong somewhere - to withdraw our forces from such a distance in the Enemys country back to the Ohio river without striking a blow at the Enemy was to us inexplicable

At Louisville we met the new levies under the 30000 call and as soon as they could be assigned among the old troops (two days) we started on our counter march through Ky again in Bragg's wake - taking great care not to strike the Enemy although we had had these accessions to our force - We were not to bring on an Engagement - We were constrained to believe we were being commanded by one whose sympathies were with our enemy and I heard many of our men - with big round oaths swear they were ready to throw down their guns and go home - The depression that weighed upon our army passed belief - It was an entirely new phase that had taken possession of us - and I truly feared the result

At Perryville Gen'l Breckenridge turned back and struck Gen'l McCook's corps a heavy blow nearly annihilating one of his Regts - the 10th Ind. I believe - It was said there was not a Commissioned officer of the Regt left to command after the battle

vehement speech he ever heard - in which he said he had been compelled by orders from Genl Buell to stand by and see Genl McCook slaughtered and not give him a helping hand but that should it ever occur again he would disobey such an order if it cost him his commission - The result of the meeting was that a leave of Absence was to be got for Major ——— I have forgotten the name He to go to Washington with instructions to place the Resolutions passed at the meeting in Presdt Lincoln's own hands.

Some month or more after this Genl Buell was removed

Did you ever hear of this - most remarkable incident? ~~for a set of officers to do~~? I have never met any one who knew any thing of it Lieut Col McClelland died shortly after the war & Genl Steadman has been dead several years I think this incident of enough moment to go into the list of army episodes and would suggest to any officer who was present at that meeting to at least leave a note of it for history. If you knew any officer commanding Brigade or Regt of Genl Steadman command he could verify the foregoing - Please pardon this long communication - when I commenced this I intended to be brief - but you know an old

soldier is prone "to fight his battles o'er" when he meets an old comrade

Very truly yours
L. D. Penfield

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I was Adj^t at the time and tenting with our Lieut Col - J C McClelland - in command of our Regt - the 25th Ill Infty at this time

One night a week or ten days after the battle of Perryville I had been a bed and asleep in our tent sometime, when the Lieut Col stole very quietly into our tent - evidently not wishing to let me know of his presence. I spoke asking him where he had been - he declined at first to tell me, but upon urging him - he at last after exacting profound secrecy ~~exc~~ exclaimed - "hell is to pay Penfield!" and reiterated it several times. He told me he had that afternoon received a note from Genl Steadman asking his presence at his (Genl S-s) Headquarters that evening. He found assembled there a large number of officers - all in command of Brigade or Regts. Genl Steadman stated the object of the meeting - was to take measures to have Genl Buell removed from that command and made, the Lieut Col said, the most