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THE GREAT FIGHT OF THE REVOLUTION







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INCIDENTS  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES  
CHRISTIAN COMMISSION

BY  
REV. EDWARD P. SMITH  
FIELD SECRETARY OF THE COMMISSION

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PHILADELPHIA:  
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TO THE

CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS AND SAILORS

OF THE

UNION,

WHO, BY TOIL AND PIETY UNDER ARMS, IN LOYALTY TO COUNTRY  
AND TO CHRIST, ENDING OFTEN IN CHEERFUL  
DEATH, HAVE FURNISHED THE

INCIDENTS

WHICH ARE HERE GROUPED TOGETHER—IN JUST PRAISE OF THE  
SURVIVING AND IN LOVING MEMORY OF THE DEAD,

THIS BOOK

IS

GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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*By the vote of the U. S. Christian Commission, at its final meeting, five residuary Trustees were appointed, through whom the profits accruing from the sale of this book are to be expended for "the spiritual and temporal benefit of those who are, have been, or may be, soldiers or sailors in the service of the United States."*

## INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT.

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THIS volume has its origin in the peculiarity of the war in the United States against rebellion—not of the forces arrayed against each other, or of movements executed, or of victories wrought; but of the forces of Christianity developed and exemplified amid the carnage of battle and the more perilous tests of hospital and camp.

These religious forces were not begotten of the Christian Commission; they came with the army from the Christian homes of its citizen soldiery. The Commission was, rather, born of them. Certainly it began because of their existence and need of help, and became, at once, their helper and recorder.

The officers of the Commission felt that the five thousand Delegates, a majority of them ministers of the Gospel, who had gone to the field laden with good cheer and tokens of love for the soldiers, and had thus been enabled to come into the closest sympathy with them, and to bring back to the fireside fresh, truthful pictures of camp-life, must have witnessed scenes of faith and heroism, of conversion to the new life and dedication to Christ, and in chapel-tents and fever-wards and on bloody fields

have heard manly testimony for truth and taken messages from the lips of death, such as would make a record that ought not to be lost to the Republic or to the Christian Church, nor left in unwritten fragments to degenerate into army traditions. They, accordingly, not only provided for the permanent record of the Christian Commission, in its organization and work, by the Home Secretary, Rev. Lemuel Moss, but also instructed the Field Secretary "to prepare a volume of such Incidents as may be regarded by him as fully authentic, and the most valuable of those which have occurred during the work of the Commission."

Entire absorption by the secretary, thus instructed, in another labor growing out of the war, and unexpected difficulties in gathering and authenticating so many Incidents, have occasioned a much longer delay than was anticipated in the preparation of the volume.

For most of the Incidents names of the authors are given; and persons thus named, unless mentioned as belonging to some other relief organization, or as in the army for some other purpose, are Delegates of the Christian Commission.

Where an Incident is credited to a Delegate who is not named, the name of the person receiving it from the Delegate is given.

The few Incidents taken from the religious press generally bear the names of their authors. In the exceptions to this, the character of the periodical in which they originally appeared is offered in evidence of their authenticity.

The five hundred and more Incidents here gathered have been preferred out of over ten thousand that were in hand, on the principle of the largest variety of character in their subjects and of time and place in their occurrence.



No such collection of stories can be made without the peril of sameness, even to satiety; and the more perfect each sketch may be in itself the greater the peril. A relief has been attempted by marshalling the Incidents along the line of army operations in both place and time. Thus an Incident recorded for a given day becomes a part of the army history of that day—an illustration in the case of one man of what may have been transpiring with hundreds of others; and thus it receives an historical and topographical interest which may help carry the reader with less weariness towards the end.

The briefest possible sketch of army movements and results of great battles is all that could be allowed for such an historical line. The materials of this sketch, or skeleton record, and often the words in which it runs, have been freely taken from Mr. Greeley's "American Conflict."

In the Incidents furnished out of the author's own army experience it has seemed best, for securing authenticity with simplicity in the form of statement, that he should use the third person and speak of himself very much as of others.

Whatever excellence this book may possess is fairly to be credited to its friends, as follows:

To the Delegates and members of the Commission, who have responded so kindly and heartily to requests for Incidents occurring under their own observation; to the watchful care of the Committee of Publication, who have counselled at every chapter; especially, to Charles Demond, Esq., of Boston, who has patiently and with great profit to these pages read them all in proof; and, more than all, to Rev. John Irving Forbes, who, by his long and intimate connection with the work of the Christian Com-

mission at the Philadelphia office, was eminently fitted for a helper. In personal interviews with many Delegates in different parts of the country, he has taken from their lips not a few of the gems of this collection, and by his patience and skill and industry, amid other duties, has wrought most of the mechanical and intellectual labor of putting the volume to press.

When strong men are to be aroused to action, or youth are to be incited to deeds of valor and virtue, no portion of human history is more frequently used than words quoted out of the smoke of battle and from the lips of men dying for a principle. Most of the Incidents here gathered relate to memorable scenes, in which men, if ever, say and do what is worthy of mention and imitation. It is fondly hoped that they may be not without good to all who read them, and of special service to those who are to help and teach others to be truly noble.

EDWARD P. SMITH.

ROOMS OF AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION, }  
New York, Oct., 1868. }

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# CHRISTIAN COMMISSION INCIDENTS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### *THE EASTERN ARMIES.*

UNTIL THE RETREAT FROM THE PENINSULA.

*April 1861—July 1862.*

No attempt has been made to give a *representative* record of Incidents before the Commission began its active work. A very few such accounts are inserted,—here and in the chapters introducing the labors in other parts of the army,—but they will only serve to show that the necessities, before and after the origin of the Commission, were the same.

The Fulton Street Prayer Meeting in New York was the centre of a deep Christian interest for the soldiers. It, with the numerous meetings like it throughout the land, had some influence in leading men to feel the need of an agency such as the Commission. The *Sunday-School Times* of June 29, 1861, gives the report of a story told in that meeting, a few days before. A speaker rose and said:

A drummer-boy went from Brooklyn on shipboard to Fortress Monroe. He was a Sunday-school scholar. One evening, overcome with

fatigue, he had lain down upon the deck and fallen asleep. The dews were falling. The Colonel came along, shook him by the shoulder, told him he would take cold, and advised him to go below. As he was getting up, his Bible fell out of his pocket. He picked it up, replaced it, and went below to prepare himself for bed. When all ready, he knelt down—many loudly-talking men standing around—and putting his hands together in the attitude of prayer, poured out his heart silently to God. He heeded not the noise around him. In a moment all that noise was hushed: the company, awed by the conduct of a boy, reverently stood silent until he had finished.

After this pleasing account had been given, another in the meeting stated that this praying drummer-boy had been killed in a late battle. The news had just been received by his father. A thrill of tearful sympathy instantly passed through the meeting. A few days later, it was stated that the little boy had prayed every day up to the time that he was killed. He was also constantly reading his Bible, as he could snatch the opportunity. So anxious was he to read it, that he was known sometimes to rise in the night to do so.

Gen. McDowell's army began its advance into Virginia on Tuesday, July 16, 1861. On the following Sunday the first battle of "Bull Run" was fought, and the Union forces retreated to Washington. The *Sunday-School Times* of August 24, 1861, gives this account of a scene in that battle, related in the Fulton Street Meeting:

A clergyman stated that a soldier told him, that immediately after the first fire, in which many were killed and wounded, he heard a cry, which could only come from a man on the borders of eternity,  
*"God have Mercy."* "God have mercy on my soul." The cry soon became contagious; and he himself, though fighting with all his might, joined in repeating the words, "God have mercy on my soul." The soldier stated that he was not a pious man, yet the impression received from that cry on the battle-field had never left him; and for several nights after his return



to New York, he had not been able to sleep, but through all the silent hours he would hear that continual cry, made as none but the dying could make it, "God have mercy on my soul."

Mrs. E. N. Harris, of Philadelphia, who visited the hospitals in Washington, Georgetown and Alexandria, immediately after the battle, wrote to Rev. Dr. Taylor,<sup>1</sup> as follows:<sup>2</sup>

Another, whose benignant, placid expression told of great peace, to the remark, "You have been shielded in the day of battle,—perhaps in answer to a mother's prayers," replied—

"Yes, to those of a sainted mother; but especially to those of a praying wife, who, in a letter just received, says, 'I spent the whole of Sabbath in prayer for you,' not knowing I was in battle; but her Father and my Father knew it. That was enough. I went into the battle with prayer, and returned with thanksgiving for a spared life."

*Shielded by  
Prayer.*

I was about to pass on, when the position of his arm arrested me.

"You are wounded in the arm?"

"Yes."

"I hope not seriously."

"Yes, it was amputated at the elbow before I left the field."

Wholly unprepared for such an announcement, my feelings overpowered me. He soothingly said—

"It is only my *left* arm. That is not much to give my country. It *might have been* my life."

Another, a lovely youth, whose bright, restless eye and flushed cheek told of suffering, grasped my hand and gently pulled me towards him; I knelt beside him and said—

"My dear boy, what can I do for you? Shall I talk to you of Jesus?"

*Mother and  
Annie.*

"Oh yes," he said, "I am used to that. I have

<sup>1</sup> Then Pastor of a Reformed Protestant (Dutch) Church in Philadelphia. Now Secretary of the American Bible Society.

<sup>2</sup> *Annals, U. S. Christian Commission*, pp. 90-92.

loved Him, but not near enough, for two years; and now He is going to take me home."

"You are very young. Have you a mother?"

"Oh yes;" tears filled his eyes.

"It must have been a great trial to give you to your country."

"Yes, it was. When I first mentioned it, she would not hear me; but we both prayed over it, and at last she consented, saying—'My country deserves this sacrifice. I gave you to God at your birth, and this is His cause.'"

As I fanned the dear boy, brushing back the hair from his beautiful forehead, he fell into a sleep. When I withdrew my hand, he started and exclaimed—

"Oh, I dreamed that was Annie's hand. Won't you put it on my head again?"

"Who is Annie?"

"My twin sister. We were *seventeen* since I left home."

This dear youth is now with the Saviour. He died from his wounds the next day.

Gen. McClellan was called from Western Virginia to Washington, immediately after the battle of Bull Run; the command in his department devolving on Gen. Rosecrans. In September, there was some severe skirmishing at Cheat Mountain. The *New York Advocate and Journal* relates an incident of that battle:

A soldier, the night before the battle, received a letter from his mother which he opened and began to read. He had proceeded but a few lines, when scalding tears bedewed it, and prevented his reading further; he handed it to a comrade and requested him to read it for him, which he did, and had his own heart melted by the tender appeals of that mother to her boy—to come to Christ. The last words of the letter were, "O my son! my son! will you not take your mother's Saviour for your Saviour?"

He went into the battle and was killed. In the morning, as they

*The Last Letter.*

gathered the dead, he was found with one hand firmly grasping that letter baptized now in his own heart's blood, as well as his tears.

The members of the Commission, shortly after its organization in November, 1861, visited Washington, to survey the yet scarcely attempted work.

Passing near Fort Albany,<sup>1</sup> then occupied by the 14th Mass., one of the company asked a soldier—

“Have you any praying men in the regiment?”

“Oh yes, a great many,” he answered.

*Going Down  
to get Up.*

“And do you ever meet for prayer?”

“Every day.”

“Where do you meet?”

“Just come here.”

The party went inside the new and beautiful fort which the regiment had been building.

“I can see no place for prayer,” said one.

“Look down there,” said the soldier, raising a trap door as he spoke.

“What is down there?” for it was like looking into darkness itself.

“That's the bomb-proof, and down there is the place where we hold our daily prayer meetings.”

“That's going down to get up, isn't it?” was the questioner's reply.

The army defending Washington lay inactive during the autumn and winter. In April, 1862, it began the advance upon Richmond by the way of the Peninsula. A month's delay before Yorktown gave opportunity for several skirmishes; sickness set in; and by the time the army moved from Yorktown, there was a call upon the Christian benevolence and patriotism of the North, which could not be longer refused; very shortly afterwards, the long-delayed messengers of the Commission

<sup>1</sup> About a mile from Long Bridge, in Virginia.

came. Unknown as the organization was, it met at first with but a doubtful reception. Rev. Geo. J. Mingins,<sup>1</sup> one of the first seven Delegates sent out from Philadelphia to Fortress Monroe and Yorktown, in May, 1862, gives a graphic account of the advent at Old Point Comfort:<sup>2</sup>

I remember my introduction to the Medical Director at Fortress Monroe. We had then no printed commission. In Baltimore, we had had hard work to obtain a pass to the Fortress; and the moment we set foot on land there, we were marched, like a file of Indians, to the Provost-Marshal's office, and made to take the oath of allegiance, before they would permit us to open our mouths. I remember, after we had taken the oath, we found we could not go anywhere, but were bumping up against a sentry at almost every corner, and were asked, every hundred or thousand yards, for our passes. Well, we went back to the Provost-Marshal and told him—

“We can't go anywhere.”

And he replied, “I know it.”

We said, “We wanted to see the Medical Director, and tried to get into the Fortress and couldn't.”

“I know it.”

“But, sir, can't you give us a pass by which we may obtain an interview with the Director?”

“Who are you?” he asked.

“We are Delegates of the United States Christian Commission.”

And he said, “What's that?”

I doubt whether you could find a squad of soldiers to-day who would need to ask that question. But at last he gave us a pass, and we went into the Fortress. We felt very strange, but finally obtained an interview with the Director. We stood in his office. In a brusque manner he looked up and said—

---

<sup>1</sup> Then Pastor of (O. S.) Presbyterian Church, Huntingdon Valley, Pa. Now the Superintendent of City Missions in New York.

<sup>2</sup> From a public address.

"Well, gentlemen, what can I do for you?"

One of us became spokesman. I did not; I was afraid; I had had enough "bluffing off" already; from that day to this I have had a wholesome fear of a military man, when sitting in an office, with a quill behind his ear instead of a sword in his hand. I can face him with a sword, but I can't bear him with a quill. An Episcopalian minister stepped forward, and began to tell him that we were Delegates of the Christian Commission. I do not know whether he thought that he would astonish the Director—but I can testify that he did *not* astonish him.

"What's that?" was all his answer.

We told him then what it was. He replied—

"Gentlemen! Gentlemen! What do you want down here?"

Then this gentleman gave him a pretty good idea of what we wanted. He rose, put down his pen, and said—

"So, gentlemen, you have come down here to see what you can do for the sick and wounded?"

"Precisely so," I ventured to remark.

He said, "Aye. Well, who are you, in the first place?"

We told him that we were four clergymen and three laymen. When we talked of "clergymen," I noticed a smile lurking round the corners of his mouth. But he said, "And you want to do something?"

We said, "Yes."

"Then I will give you work in ten minutes. There are three hundred sick and wounded men lying on board one of the transports at the wharf. I want three men to accompany them to New York, Philadelphia or Baltimore—I don't know where they are going; you will get your orders when you are on board. Will you go?"

Three of us at once volunteered. He said—

"Gentlemen, do you know what you are going to do? You are not going to preach, *mind*. I tell you what—I want you as nurses."

He looked into their eyes, but they never flinched. Two of them were "clergymen." When they were gone, he gave us work also.

"But, mark me, gentlemen," he said, "I want men who will wash wounds, who will scrub floors, if necessary,—in fact, who will perform the duties of a hired nurse,—and then, after that, I have

no objection at all that you put into practice any higher mission you may have."

We separated and went to our work. A few days after, the same Director sent for us; this time there was deference in his manner, a kinder tone in his voice. He sent us to the three thousand wounded and sick at Yorktown. When we met him two or three weeks afterwards again, we found that the young Christian Commission had conquered a way to his heart.

Thus, the work, in spite of obstacles, was begun and prospered. The following bit of Rev. Mr. Mingins' experience will show how it gained favor with the men in the ranks, for whom it was especially intended. The scene is at Yorktown; the subject an Irishman:<sup>1</sup>

Well, this *was* a very tough Irishman I assure you. It was at a time when a great many were sick at Yorktown,—men who had marched and dug and delved, until they were completely broken down. A great many of them had no clean shirts on. I had got a large supply, and was going through the tent, giving them to the poor fellows.

*The Difficult  
Irishman.*

I came to this Irishman.

"My dear friend," said I, "how are you? You seem to be an old man."

"Shure an' I *am* an ould mon, sir."

"Well, how came you here in the army, old as you are?"

"Och, sir, I'm not only an ould mon, but an ould sojer too, I'd have ye know." He had been twenty years in the British service in the East Indies, and had fought America's foes in Mexico.

"Yes, *sir*," he continued, "I'm ould, an' I know it, but I'm not too ould to shoulther a musket, and hit a rap for the ould flag yit."

"You're a brave fellow," said I, "and I've brought these things to make you comfortable," as I held out to him a shirt and pair of drawers. He looked at me. Said he—

---

<sup>1</sup> Taken from an address at the Washington Anniversary of the Commission, February 2, 1864.



"*Is't thim things?*"

"Yes, I want to give them to you to wear."

"Well, I don't want thim."

"You *do* want them."

"Well I don't;" and he looked at me and then at the goods, and said somewhat sharply, as I urged him again, "Niver moind, sir; I don't want thim; and, I till ye, I won't have thim."

"Why?"

"Shure," said he, "d' ye take me for an objic uv charity?"

That was a kind of poser. I looked at him.

"No, sir," said I, "I do *not* take you for an object of charity, and I don't want you to look on me as a dispenser of charity, for I am not."

"Well, what are ye, thim?"

"I am a Delegate of the United States Christian Commission, bearing the thank-offerings of mothers and wives and sisters to you brave defenders of the Stars and Stripes." And I thought, surely, after such a speech as that, I would get hold of the old fellow's heart. But he looked at me and said—

"*Any how, I won't have thim.*"

I felt really hurt. I did not at all like it. I have told you, he was an Irishman, and I happened to be a Scotchman. I was determined not to be conquered. I meant to try further, and when a Scotchman means to try a thing, he will come very near doing it.

I didn't talk any further then, but determined to prove by my *acts* that I had come down to do this old man good. So day after day I went about my work, nursing, giving medicines, cleaning up the tent, and doing anything and everything I could.

One day, as I went in, a soldier said—

"There's good news to-day, Chaplain."<sup>1</sup>

"Ah, what is it?"

"Paymaster's come."

"Well that *is* good news."

"Yes, but not to me, Chaplain."

"How is that?"

*Descriptive  
Lists.*

---

<sup>1</sup> The soldiers, almost uniformly, styled the Christian Commission Delegates, "Chaplains."

"I've not got my descriptive list, and if a fellow's not got that, the Paymaster may come and go, and he's none the better off for it."

"Well, why don't you get it?"

"I can't write, Chaplain; I've got chronic rheumatism."

"Shall I write for you?"

"If you only would, Chaplain."

I hauled out paper and pencil, asked the number of his regiment, name of his Captain, company, &c., and sent a simple request that the descriptive list might be remitted to that point. When I had done this, I found a good many who wanted their lists, and I went on writing for them until I came to the cot next to the old Irishman's. It was occupied by another Irishman. I asked him if he had his descriptive list.

"No."

"Shall I write to your Captain for it?"

"Av ye plaze," and I began to write.

I noticed the old Irishman stretching over,—all attention. I spoke now and then a word meant for him, though I affected not to notice him. After I had written the request, I asked the young man if I should read it to him aloud. "Av ye plaze, sir," and I read him the simple note. When I had done, the old Irishman broke out with—

"Upon me sowl, sir, ye write the natest letther for a dishcriptive list, that I iver heerd in me loife. Shure an' a mon wud think ye'd been a sojer all yur days, ye do write so nate a letther."

I turned round and asked, "Have you got yours?"

"An' I haven't, sir."

"Do you want it?"

"An' to be shure I do," said he, flaring up; "an' thot's a quare quistyun to ax a man, av he wants his dishcriptive list—av he wants his pay to boy some dillicacies to sind home to the ould woman an' the chilther. I *do* want it, and av ye'll lind us the sthroke uv yur pin, Chaplain, ye'll oblige us."

I sat down and wrote the letter, and when I had done said, "Now, boys, give me your letters and I'll have them postpaid and sent for you."

When I returned, sad work awaited me. One of Massachusetts' sons lay in the tent, dying. I spoke to the dying boy of mother,



of Jesus, of home, of heaven. I believe it to be a great characteristic of the American heart, that it clings to home and mother. I remember passing over a battle-field and seeing a man just dying. His mind was wandering. His spirit was no longer on that bloody field; it was at his home far away. A smile passed over his face—a smile, oh of such sweetness, as looking up he said—

“O mother! O mother! I’m so glad you have come.”

And it seemed as if she was there by his side. By and bye he said again—

“Mother, it’s cold, it’s cold; won’t you pull the blanket over me?”

I stooped down and pulled the poor fellow’s ragged blanket closer to his shivering form. And he smiled again:

“That will do, mother, that will do!”

And so, turning over, he passed sweetly into rest, and was borne up to the presence of God on the wings of a pious mother’s prayers.<sup>1</sup>

But to come back to the case in the tent. After I had done all I could for the dying man, and had shaken his hand in farewell, I turned to leave the tent. Who should meet me at the door but the old Irishman? He looked very queerly. There was certainly something the matter with him. He was scratching his head, pulling at his beard, and otherwise acting very strangely; but I did not take much notice of him,

*The Irishman  
Conquered.*

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. E. P. Goodwin, Pastor of the Congregational Church, Columbus, Ohio, narrates a story related to him by Inspector Reed of the U. S. Sanitary Commission in the Western Department, which beautifully illustrates the law or characteristic of which Rev. Mr. Mings speaks:—“A number of wounded lay out at Elizabeth, Ky., literally in the mud, and utterly uncared for. The Sanitary Commission sent an agent down, with beds, clothing, &c. Among the neglected men was a sick youth, who, while he was being cared for, was entirely unconscious of it. In the morning, when the Surgeon came around, he found the sufferer very much brightened up. He spoke to him pleasantly. The little fellow was entirely bewildered. He had looked around, and found clean sheets and bedding, and something to read at the head of his cot. By and bye, after rubbing his eyes and getting the mist away, he spoke out in a kind of faint whisper: ‘Oh yes,—I guess—I’m better. Somehow it seems as if mother had been here.’”

as I had been so solemnly engaged. He came up to me and clasping my hands, said—

“Be me sowl, sir, ye’re no humbug, anyhow.”

“What do you mean?” I asked.

“Oh,” said he, “haven’t I watched ye ivery day, as ye’ve been goin’ through the tint, carin’ for the byes? An’ ye’ve been loike a mother to ivery wan uv thim. Thanks to ye, Chaplain, thanks to ye, and may God bliss ye,” he repeated, as he again wrung my hand. “And,” said he, “ye do all this for nothin’. The byes ’ve been tillin’ me about ye.”

“Oh,” said I, “that’s a mistake.”

“Well, now, how’s thot? They’ve been tillin’ me, ye wur a Prisytharian ministher, an’ thot ye came away from yere home down here, for the love ye had for the byes. But ye don’t do it for nothin’, eh? Who, thin, pays ye—the Guvermint?”

“No. If it had to pay me, it would take a great deal more money than it can spare.”

“Well, does the Commission pay ye?”

“No.”

“Well, thin, av the Guvermint doesn’t pay ye, nor the Commis-  
sion doesn’t, who *does* pay ye?”

I looked the man straight in the eyes and said—

“That honest, hearty grasp of the hand, and that hearty ‘God bless you,’ are ample reward for all that I have done for you. Remember, my brave fellow, that you have suffered and sacrificed for me, and I couldn’t do less for you now.”

He was broken down. He bowed his head and wept, and then taking me by the hand again, said, “Shure an’ av thot’s the pay ye take, why thin, *God bliss ye! God bliss ye!* Ye’ll be rich uv the coin uv me heart all yere days.” And then, after a few minutes’ pause, he added, “*An’ now, Chaplain, av ye’ll jist give us the shirt an’ the dra’rs, I’ll wear thim till there’s not a thrid uv thim left.*”

Rev. George Bringhurst of Philadelphia,<sup>1</sup> who still retains, as a precious memorial of the war, the simple papers which designate him the first Delegate of the

<sup>2</sup> Rector of All Saints’ Prot. Episc. Church, Moyamensing, Philadelphia.

Commission, narrates the series of incidents which follow,—beginning with this first trip to the army :

In how many instances was the precious Gospel brought to the soldiers, in the strains of music set to Psalms and Hymns. In camp and hospital, on march and field, the sweet songs of Zion wooed many a prodigal back to the Father's loving embrace. None possibly were more effectual than that familiar hymn, "Rock of Ages." We heard it sung for the first time in the army, on the beach at Fortress Monroe, by some Delegates of the Christian Commission, just beneath the "Lincoln Gun." Its grateful truth, borne by the winds, fell upon the ear of a soldier on the parapet; not only so, but touched his heart, and in time led him to build on the "Rock of Ages."

*Rock of Ages.*

Again, we heard the same hymn at Yorktown, sung by some of the same Delegates. After its singing, as we were returning to our quarters, one of the Delegates was overtaken by a soldier, who belonged to the "Lost Children."<sup>1</sup> He asked—

"Won't you please tell me how I may be built on the 'Rock' you sang about? I was thinking of it while on guard the other day." He told his story in brief: he was from New York City, had received his mother's dying blessing. Before she breathed her last, she sang this hymn, and said—

"George, my son, I would not feel so badly about your enlisting, if you were only built upon that 'Rock.'"

These sacred memories were revived by the singing of the hymn; and as the Delegate and soldier knelt on the dusty road-side, beneath the stars, the wanderer lost his weariness and thirst for sin, in the shadow of the "Rock of Ages."

Mr. Bringhurst continues,—for it is better to anticipate, than to break the unity of the series :

Eighteen months after this incident, the same Delegate, going to Fortress Monroe, on a boat which had as part of her passengers a gay and happy company of the Signal Corps, conversed, sang and

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<sup>1</sup> The name of a New York Regiment,—"*Enfants Perdus*."

prayed with them. He related to them the foregoing incidents, sang "Rock of Ages," and retired to his state-room. Soon after, a gentle tap called him to the door, where he found a tall, graceful Lieutenant, who, with tears streaming down his face, said—

"O sir! I could not let you go to bed to-night until I had told you what you have done. As I sat, with my head leaning against a spar, and listened to your words and to that hymn, you brought back my dead mother with all her prayers and love. I have been a wanderer until this night, and now by God's grace I want to hide myself in that 'Rock of Ages.'"<sup>1</sup>

In Rev. Mr. Bringhurst's experience at Mill Creek Hospital, near Fortress Monroe, occurred the two following incidents:

A dying soldier, placed, on account of the awful nature of his disease, in a tent far away from his comrades, when asked by me, if he was not lonely, replied, with his hand upon his Testament—

*Not Lonely.* "My companion is here; how can I be lonely?"

The same night he passed away into the country wherein there shall be neither sickness nor loneliness any more.

"I know not, oh! I know not  
 What social joys are there;  
 What pure, unfading glory;  
 What light beyond compare.  
 O Garden free from sorrow!  
 O Plains that fear no strife!  
 O princely Bowers, all blooming!  
 O Realm and Home of life!"<sup>2</sup>

As I was reading the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, audibly, one Sunday afternoon, in a ward of the hospital, I came to the words, "I will arise and go to my father."

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<sup>1</sup> None who were present will ever forget the tearful solemnity which fell upon the company, when these little stories were told by Mr. Bringhurst, in the hotel parlor, one evening at Washington, when the Commission was gathered in that city, for its last anniversary.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. Dr. Neale's translation of Bernard's "Celestial Country."

A soldier near me at once cried out, "That's me ;  
that's me." *"That's me."*

Going to his side, I found him very anxious. I pointed him to the Father, and very soon he gave his heart to Jesus.

Two years later, he laid down his life at Fredericksburg. His path meanwhile had been like that of the just, "shining more and more unto the perfect day."

The pursuit of the enemy retreating from Yorktown was prompt and energetic. On May 4th, the place was evacuated. On the next day, Hooker, Kearny and Hancock fought the battle of Williamsburg. The Union loss was nearly 2000 in killed and wounded. Nearly 800 Confederates, mostly severely wounded, were left in the hastily evacuated defences of Fort Magruder. The work of death had begun in earnest.

Several days after the battle, a soldier came hurriedly to a Chaplain's tent, with the message—

"Chaplain, one of our boys is badly wounded, and wants to see you right away."

Following the soldier, writes the Chaplain, I was taken to a cot on which lay a noble young man. He was pale and blood-stained from a terrible wound above the temple. I saw at a glance that he had but a short time to live. Taking his hand, I said to him—

*"Thank God for  
such a mother !"*

"Well, my brother, what can I do for you?"

The poor, dying soldier looked up in my face, and placing his finger where his hair was stained with blood, said—

"Chaplain, cut a big lock from here *for mother*,—mind, Chaplain, *for mother !*"

I hesitated to do it. He said—

"Don't be afraid, Chaplain, to disfigure my hair; it's for mother, and nobody will come to see me in the dead-house to-morrow."

I did as he requested me.

"Now, Chaplain," said the dying man, "I want you to kneel down by me and *return thanks* to God."

“For what?” I asked.

“For giving me such a mother. O Chaplain, she is a good mother. And thank God that by His grace I am a Christian. Oh, what would I do now if I wasn’t a Christian? ‘I know that my Redeemer liveth.’ I know that His finished work has saved me. And, Chaplain, thank God for giving me dying grace. He has made this dying bed ‘feel soft as downy pillows are.’ Thank Him for the promised home in glory. I’ll soon be there—where there is no war, nor sorrow, nor desolation, nor death—where I’ll see Jesus, and be ‘for ever with the Lord.’”

I knelt by the dying man, and thanked God for the blessings He had bestowed upon him—the blessings of a good mother, a Christian hope, and dying grace. Shortly after the prayer, he said—

“Good-bye, Chaplain; if you ever see mother, tell her it was all well.”<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Greene, in an address to a graduating class of Berkshire Medical College, Pittsfield, Mass., says:

Let me relate one incident that occurred while I was upon the Peninsula, during the bloody campaign of last summer. At the battle of Williamsburg, in the edge of the forest skirting the field, a soldier was struck by a bit of shell which severed the brachial artery. Faint from the profuse hemorrhage, he fell, just as a Surgeon was riding rapidly past towards the front to get orders for establishing a hospital at a certain point. The poor fellow had just strength to raise his bleeding arm and say—

“Doctor, your  
Name?”

“Doctor, please.” The Surgeon dismounted, and rapidly ligated the vessel, applied a compress and bandage, and administered a cordial. As he turned to go away the man asked—

“Doctor, what is your name?”

“No matter,” said the Surgeon, and leaping on his horse, dashed away.

“But, Doctor,” said the wounded man, “I want to tell my wife and children *who saved me.*”

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 95.



The march towards Richmond was a slow one. Rain fell frequently; the roads were horrible; so that Gen. McClellan's headquarters did not reach White House until May 16th, nor Cold Harbor until the 22d. The first collision between the hostile armies occurred May 24th, near New Bridge. On the 27th, the battle of Hanover Court House was fought by Fitz John Porter; and on the last day of the month occurred Fair Oaks, or Seven Pines.

Gen. Lee had now succeeded to the chief command of the Confederate forces in Virginia. The month of June passed almost to its close, and very little seemed to have been done. The sluggish Chickahominy with its miry swamp bottom was sending pestilence through the Union ranks. The Confederate commander determined to strike a decisive blow. The battles of Mechanicsville and Gaines' Mills followed each other in quick succession; Gen. McClellan decided to retreat. White Oak Swamp and Glendale closed the month. The struggle of Malvern Hills on July 1st, though resulting in the complete repulse of the enemy, was followed by the retreat of the Union Army to Harrison's Bar.

The Delegates of the Commission were as busy as possible with the limited means at their disposal, throughout these terrible scenes. Mr. Chas. Demond,<sup>1</sup> of Boston, relates the following:

A Delegate found sixty-five men, sick and wounded, lying on the second floor of a barn, just under the roof. The Virginia sun was pouring upon the building, but a few feet above their heads, with

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<sup>1</sup> One of the original members of the Commission, who throughout the war paid personal attention to its extensive and varied interests in New England. The extract is from Mr. Demond's *Williams College Alumni Address*, pp. 24, 25.

*Doing Nurse's Work.* July heat. They were suffering much. The Delegate gave them some delicacies, and then asked the soldier-nurse to wash their hands and feet.

"I did not enlist to wash men's feet," was the reply.

"Bring me the water, then, and I will do it." The water was brought, and the gentleman washed the heads and hands and feet of the sixty-five suffering men.

Mrs. Harris, who was freely helped from the Commission stores, during this campaign, writing from near Savage's Station, June 22d, says :

Passing a forlorn-looking house, we were told by a sentinel that a young officer of a Maine regiment <sup>1</sup> lay within, very sick. In a corner, on a stretcher, we found him, an elegant-looking youth, struggling with the last enemy. His mind wandered, and as we approached him, he exclaimed—

*In the Battle to the Last.*

"Is it not cruel to keep me here, when my mother and sister, whom I have not seen for a year, are in the next room? They *might* let me go in."

Once for a moment, he seemed to have a glimpse of his real condition. Drawing two rings from his finger, placed there by a loving mother and sister, he handed them to an attendant, saying—

"Carry them home." A moment more and he was amid battle scenes, calling out, "Deploy to the left." "Keep out of that ambuscade." "Now, go, my braves, double quick, and strike for your flag." "On, on," and he threw up his arms as if cheering them; "you'll win the day."

His very last words were about his men. A graduate of Waterville College, some twenty of his company were from the same institution; this, in a measure, accounted for his deep interest in his soldiers. He was an only son; the thought almost choked us, as we whispered a few sentences of God's Book into his ear. He looked up, smiling thankfully; but his manner betokened no understanding of the sacred words.

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<sup>1</sup> Lieut. Col. Wm. S. Heath.



Here is a memorial of Gaines' Mills :

Two wounded brothers were brought to Savage's Station and laid at the foot of a tree. When found by a friend, their arms were entwined about each other, and they were trying to administer mutual comfort. They talked of loved ones at home, of their longings to see mother; then of the service in which they had been engaged, and their love of country. They prayed for each other, and for their friends far away, and especially that *mother* might be comforted. In a little time the younger went up home; the survivor, blind from a shot in the face, knew it not, but continued to speak encouraging words to him. No response being made, he said in a pleased, gentle way—

*"Poor little  
Rob's asleep."*

"Poor little Rob's asleep."

In a few minutes more he too slept—and awoke with his brother.

The wounded were conveyed to White House, until that place was evacuated. Rev. Chas. H. Corey,<sup>1</sup> a Delegate here, writes :

I assisted in taking a young man on board one of the hospital steamers at White House. He was scarcely nineteen years old. I saw that he was dying, and watched him breathing his last. As I bathed his hands, the soldier reached up his arms, threw them round my neck, and drew my face close down to his own. There was more of gratitude and affection in the simple act than any words could ever have told. All that could be known of him was that his name was Watkins. Afterwards, amid the din, a low murmur of talk was heard from his dying lips; but the only intelligible words were something about "drill." Poor fellow, his drilling on earth was done. The next morning, I saw him lying in the dead-house. All unconscious as he may have been, there was a strangely true meaning in the soldier's words, if the "upper country" be indeed a place of growth and blessed toil.

*Drill.*

The following account was given by the soldier him-

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Baptist Church, Seabrook, N. H.

self to the German Agent of the Commission in the Army of the Potomac, some time subsequent to the occurrence :

George Greedy, of Co. C, 3d Pennsylvania Reserves, had received a pocket Testament from the ladies of Bucks county, when he took his departure from home. It had these inscriptions: Psalm xci. 11 :

*A Testament saves Life.* "He shall give His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways." 1 Timothy vi. 12: "Fight the good fight." This Testament he always carried in

his bosom pocket. In the battle of White Oak Swamp, a minie ball passed through his left arm, shattering the bone severely; then, through his coat into the Testament, splitting it from Revelation to St. John's Gospel, 11th chapter; passing out, the ball wounded him slightly in the stomach. But for his Testament, he would have been killed on the spot. I asked him to give me the book to show to the committee of the Commission. He willingly assented, but added—  
"I would never sell it, for it saved my life."

Mr. John Patterson's<sup>1</sup> graphic account of White House Christian Commission "Station," in June, just before the retirement from the Peninsula, will form a fitting close to the chapter :

We had two tents and a cook-shed; one tent for sleeping in, the other for storage. We were three Delegates of the Commission, assisted by a young convalescent soldier, and cooked for by a negro boy and woman, whose hoe-cakes were our great solace three times a day. We worked in pairs; two at the hospital, two at the store-tent, and two at the cook-shed. We tolerated no drones in our bee-hive.

When the negro boy was not employed in chopping wood and carrying water for Dinah, he was regaling himself and a circle of select admirers with a genuine Virginia "breakdown;" and when Dinah had

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<sup>1</sup> Of Philadelphia. An earnest and indefatigable Delegate of the Commission, from the beginning to the close of its work. The extract is from "Hospital Recollections," a series of papers published in the *Presbyterian*, of Philadelphia.

fixed up all the odds and ends about the tents, she began manufacturing corn-starch, in huge cauldrons-full, five or six times a day. The two *store-keepers* were kept busy from morning to night by a hungry-looking crowd, which we called the "*staff* brigade," who begged for themselves, and their comrades incapable of locomotion. Supplies were here dispensed in the shape of shirts, drawers, handkerchiefs, books, papers, combs, soap, pickles, sugar, tea, bread, and nearly everything eatable, wearable and usable to be found in a regular "Yankee-notion" country store.

But the two *itinerants* had the most exacting and delicate duties. It was theirs to visit the sick and dying, to bear them little comforts; to cheer the despondent; to soothe the agony of some, the last moments of others; to play, as occasion required, the parts of nurse, physician and clergyman. Evening brought no rest. The semi-secular employments of the day gave place to the religious labors of the night, and so pleasant and blessed were these, that we longed for the evening, when we could meet the eager congregations.

We began early, and ended late—so that more than once we paid the penalty of our protracted devotion, in arrest by the night guards, whose duty required them to stop all stragglers. But the young Delegates were well known and easily recognized, and no authority would cage them. Such meetings, too, as we enjoyed, would repay one for an occasional arrest, and for the dark and muddy walks by which they were reached.

After a short sermon, studied between our tent and the church, came a prayer and inquiry meeting. This was open to all. One after another would lead in prayer, testify to a newly-found faith, or make an exhortation to his comrades. Some were hoary-headed sinners; others mere boys. Some would flounder painfully as they tried to express their feelings, frequently bursting into tears; while others would charm with the simplicity and power of their native eloquence. From such men we had no difficulty in securing an effective corps of tract distributors. Every morning a number of bronzed faces would look in at our tent door, and then, supplied with loads of tracts, papers, hymn books, &c., the men betook themselves to the different houses and tents, and to the camp of the "Lost Children."

One day, the quiet was disturbed by the thunder of distant cannon. Soon after stragglers from the front came in; then a battery

of field artillery which had desolated the path of the advancing enemy. Then came the order to break up the hospital as soon as possible, which was interpreted to us to mean twelve hours. That evening, all who could walk or hobble to our tents were there. We distributed our entire remaining stock. Farewell addresses, delivered by two of us, were answered by the hearty cheers of our audience, and the whole was concluded with a hymn.

In the middle of July began the retreat from Harrison's Landing. The points of embarkation were Newport News, Fortress Monroe and Yorktown. Gen. McClellan reached Acquia Creek on the 24th. Thus ended the unfortunate campaign of the Peninsula.

## CHAPTER II.

### *THE EASTERN ARMIES.*

FROM POPE'S BATTLES UNTIL HOOKER TAKES COMMAND.

*July 1862—January 1863.*

WHILE McClellan was before Richmond, Major General Pope was assigned to the command of the three corps of McDowell, Banks and Sigel. The first intention had been to advance upon Richmond, while covering Washington and protecting Maryland; but the result of the Seven Days' Battles frustrated this design. To secure co-operation between the two armies, Major-General Halleck was called to Washington, as commander-in-chief. General Pope's object now was to effect a diversion in favor of the army retiring from the Peninsula. After some cavalry movements to sever communication between Richmond and the Shenandoah, Gen. Banks, early in August, occupied Culpepper. Pushing forward from that place, he was met at Slaughter's or Cedar Mountain, on August 9th, by a vastly superior force of the enemy under Jackson, and after a desperate encounter compelled to retreat with severe loss. On the 18th, Pope withdrew to the north side of the Rappahannock. Jackson soon after moved into the Shenandoah, and then through Thoroughfare Gap into Pope's rear. Some blind manœuvring followed in an attempt to cut

off his retreat, which brought on the second battle of Bull Run, August 29th. Gainesville and Chantilly were fought immediately afterwards. Pope's retreat to Centreville began on September 1st. As soon as the army had been drawn back within the Washington entrenchments, he resigned. The command again devolved on Gen. McClellan.

Rev. Chas. H. Corey,<sup>1</sup> after the evacuation of White House, had hastened to Warrenton, and, with several others, met there the wounded from Cedar Mountain, rendering them signal service.

During the final retreat he came upon four car-loads of wounded, who would have fallen into the enemy's hands, if he had not, with such assistance as the wounded could themselves render, rolled the four cars with their living freight of mangled men, over four miles, to a point where locomotives took them. In doing this he wore his shoes entirely off, and came afterwards into Fairfax C. H. barefoot.

*A Barefoot Delegate.*

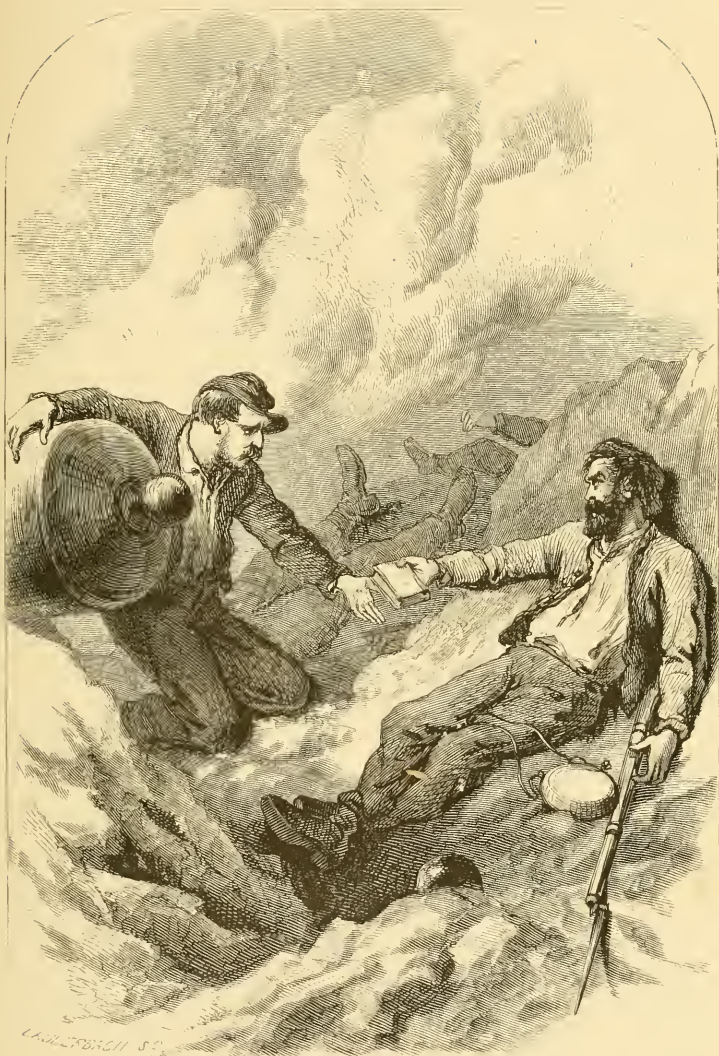
The scene at Fairfax Station was sorrowful indeed. There were literally "acres" of wounded men, many of whom had tasted neither food nor drink for one and two days. The Commission had not yet learnt how to equip its Delegates.<sup>2</sup> In Washington they could find no buckets, and were obliged to substitute butter-tubs. Having no lanterns, as they went over the doleful ground after nightfall, one hand must serve as candlestick, the other as ministrant. The Delegates filled their "tubs" with coffee, as fast as the "contraband" charged with its preparation could distill it, and, candle in hand, went from man to man, distributing the refreshing drink with soft crack-

*The Wounded at Fairfax Station.*

<sup>1</sup> See p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> The outfit of a Delegate, for any point whence he was liable to be called to the "front," afterwards consisted of rubber and woolen blankets, haversack, straps, canteen, two woolen shirts, blanks, badge and memorandum-book. The Base and Field Stations were kept supplied with other articles of service, which were not so easily carried.





NOT ENEMIES.





ers, until before the morning dawned all had been served. About seven hundred were lifted aboard the box-cars; the helpless carefully carried and laid inside on the floor spread with hay; while those who could walk were arranged on the car-roofs. So the wounded were borne on to Washington.

Mr. James Grant, of Philadelphia, who labored among the men at Fairfax Station, tells this story of a Testament:

I was busy removing the bloody garments from a wounded Union soldier. In his pocket I found a small book; taking it out to ascertain his name, I discovered that it was a Testament. On opening it, to my surprise, I found the name of a North Carolina soldier. I inquired how he came to have it. He told me that he was disabled at Hanover C. H., and lay on the field nearby a severely wounded Rebel, who was crying piteously for water. Desirous of relieving the poor fellow's thirst, he crawled to a stream, filled his canteen, and returning held it to the dying man's lips, while he greedily drained its contents. In return, the North Carolinian took out his Testament, and handing it to the Union soldier, said—

*“The Best  
Way to Thank  
You.”*

“I have no way to thank you for this, but to give you the thing I love best of all,—my precious Testament.”

In an hour afterwards, the grateful sufferer was silent and without thirst in death. The “precious Testament” will be an heirloom in the family of the Union soldier,—a sacred memento of Christian love in scenes of hate and carnage.

Col. James C. Rice, of New York, whose noble Christian death we shall hereafter be called to chronicle,<sup>1</sup> tells this story of his interview with a dying sergeant, in a Washington hospital, about ten days after the battle of Bull Run:

As I was passing through the numerous wards, viewing with feel-

<sup>1</sup> See p. 247.

ings of sympathy and pride, the mutilated but uncomplaining patriots, two strangers—a sister and an aunt of one of the young heroes—accosted me to ask if I would be so kind as to stand by the couch of their relative, while the Surgeon re-amputated his limb,—an operation on which his only chance for life depended. They were both weeping, but the wounded soldier, though suffering intensely, smiled as he gave me the military salute. I sat down by his couch, and took his hand in mine. He told me that he was a Sergeant in the 5th New York,—Duryea's Zouaves; that he was wounded late in the action, left upon the field, and remained where he fell from Saturday until the following Wednesday, "with no food save a few hard crackers left in my haversack, and with no water save that which God gave me from heaven, in rain and dew, and which I caught in my blanket."

*The Sergeant's  
Last Halt.*

After a paroxysm of suffering, the Sergeant continued :

"You know, Colonel, how God always remembers us wounded soldiers, with rain, after the battle is over, when our lips are parched and our tongues are burning with fever. On Wednesday, I was found by a Surgeon, who dressed my wound and sent me in an ambulance to Washington. I arrived there late on Thursday evening, my limb was amputated, and I—" The Sergeant again paused in his story, and I begged him not to go on. I noticed that his voice became weaker, and his face more pale and deathlike; a moment afterwards, blood began to trickle down upon the floor from the rubber poncho on which he was lying. I at once called the Surgeon. He examined the limb, and, after consulting with other Surgeons, said it was impossible to save his life; that re-amputation would be useless; that the soldier was fast sinking from exhaustion, and in all probability would not survive the hour. They desired me to make known their decision to the aunt and sister.

With such language as a soldier might command, I informed them that the Sergeant must soon rest. Tears filled their eyes, and they sobbed bitterly; but their grief was borne as Christian women alone can bear such sorrow—for they heard the voice of the "Elder Brother" speaking to them, as to Martha :

"I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

The sister, wiping away her tears and offering me a small prayer-

book, asked if I would tell her brother how soon he must go, and read to him "the prayer for the dying." I went again to the couch.

"Sergeant," said I, "we are going to halt soon—we shall not march much further to-day."

"Are we going to halt, Colonel, so early in the day? Are we going into bivouac before night?"

"Yes, Sergeant," I replied, "the march is nearly over—the bugle-call will soon sound 'the halt.'"

His mind wandered for a moment, but my tears interpreted my words.

"Ah, Colonel," he said, "do you mean that I am so soon to die?"

"Yes, Sergeant," I said, "you are soon to die."

"Well, Colonel, I am glad I am going to die—I want to rest—the march has not been so long, but I am weary—very weary—I want to halt—I want to be with Christ—I want to be with my Saviour."

I read "the prayer for the dying," most of which he repeated; then the sister knelt beside the couch of her brother, and offered up to God a prayer full of earnestness, love and faith. The life-blood of her dying brother trickled down the bedside and crimsoned her dress, while she besought the Father that his robes might be "washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb." The prayer was finished; the Sergeant said "Amen;" we stood again by the bed-side.

"Sister—aunt—do not weep: I am going to Christ; I am going to rest in heaven. Tell my mother, sister,—” and the soldier took from his finger a ring and kissed it—"tell my mother, sister, that this is for her, and that I remembered and loved her, dying."

He took another ring from his hand, kissed it and said—

"Sister, this is for her to whom my heart is pledged; tell her—tell her to come to me in heaven."

"Colonel," said he, turning to me, his face brightening with the words, "tell my comrades of the army—the noble Army of the Potomac—that I died bravely,—died for the good old flag."

His pulse beat feebler and feebler, the blood trickled faster and faster, the dew of death came and went, and rippling for a moment over the pallid face, at last rested,—rested for ever. The Sergeant had halted; his bivouac now is in heaven.

Chaplain Brown, of Douglas Hospital, Washington,

gives an illustration of the power of Christ's presence to make the soldier happy amidst pains :

"Chaplain," said Sergeant Mc——, "are you the Chaplain of this hospital?"

"Yes, sir," said I, "and shall be glad to serve you."

"Oh, I'm so glad we have a Chaplain here. I'm the happiest man you ever saw!" and his whole countenance was radiant with joy.

"How is that?" I replied. "You have lost a leg, and——"

"No matter about my leg," he quickly replied; "I shall have both legs in heaven; I tell you I'm the happiest man you ever saw," and his very heart seemed to leap with gladness.

"Well, what makes you so happy?" I inquired.

"I will tell you," he said. "As we were going into battle, I said to myself, 'this is serious work;' so I prayed God to spare my life and pardon my sins; or if I should be killed, to take me to heaven. Presently a shell struck my leg below the knee, and I *just lay still and prayed*. I was left on the battle-field all that night, but I lay still and prayed. O Chaplain, that was the happiest night of my life!" and again his countenance was lit up with inexpressible joy.

"How could you be happy under such circumstances?" I asked again.

"Oh, *I just prayed*, and Christ seemed to come and stand by my side all night, and He comforted me; I felt sure that my sins were all pardoned and washed away in His blood; and I do tell you, Chaplain, that I forgot all about my wounds for the moment: it was the happiest night of my life."

This conversation occurred twelve days after the battle; I said—

"And you feel as happy still?"

"Oh, yes, I'm the happiest man you ever saw."

And so indeed it seemed. He lingered several days, happy all the while; then sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.

Gen. Lee did not follow McClellan into the entrenchments surrounding Washington. Joined by D. H. Hill's fresh division from Richmond, he put it into his van at

Leesburg, thence crossed the Potomac and moved on Frederick, which was occupied Sept. 6th. McClellan brought his army hastily to the north of Washington, and on the 12th, after a brisk skirmish, entered Frederick; the main body of the Confederates, two days before, having gone west. On the 14th, the battle of South Mountain was fought with Longstreet, for the possession of Turner's Gap, and the enemy worsted. Jackson, meanwhile, recrossing the Potomac, had hastened to Harper's Ferry, which was surrendered to him, the day after South Mountain, with 12,000 prisoners. Gen. Lee took up a strong position along Antietam Creek in front of the village of Sharpsburg, and here, on the 17th, the victory of Antietam was gained, after one of the bloodiest days of the war. The official reports make the loss of killed and wounded between 11,000 and 12,000 on each side. On the morrow the shattered armies watched each other, and in the evening Lee quietly recrossed the Potomac.

Immediately after South Mountain, several Delegates, in charge of four ambulances, well filled with stores, left Washington. They reached Antietam in advance of other stores. Other Delegates followed, the next day, from Philadelphia and Baltimore *via* Hagerstown and Frederick; and soon, over seventy were at work in the hospitals and on the field. Several, at the "Stone Bridge," near McClellan's headquarters, were exposed, throughout the whole day of the battle, to the fire of the enemy's artillery. Rev. Archibald Beatty,<sup>1</sup> one of these, writes:

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<sup>1</sup> Rector of Cranmer (now Trinity) Prot. Epis. Chapel, Philadelphia. Afterwards Chaplain U. S. A.

After laboring all day among the wounded, amid the roar of cannon, with shells above and around us, at eleven o'clock, completely exhausted, I lay down on the ground among the wounded to rest. I

*Songs on the  
Battle-field.*

had just fallen asleep when I was aroused by the request to visit a dying soldier who desired to see me. I went and found him lying in a wagon, evidently near his end, and anxious to know the way to Christ. As briefly as I could I spoke of Jesus, His death, His love; and then raised my voice in prayer. As soon as that sound went out upon the night air over those thousands of wounded men, every moan and groan of the sufferers who could hear was hushed; and in the solemn stillness I prayed for him, so soon to meet the Judge, and for his comrades about us. After the prayer, a lady sang most sweetly:

"In the Christian's home in glory  
There remains a Land of Rest,  
There my Saviour's gone before me,  
To fulfill my soul's request."

And then Mrs. Harris stooped down and kissed him. We left him, and early in the morning, when we returned, we found a kind friend just closing his eyes,—his spirit having gone away to be with Him to whom the last, grand song of the redeemed shall be raised.

Mr. James Grant was also one of the Delegates on this field during the battle. He gives the following account of a life saved:

While moving around amongst the wounded of Gen. Sedgwick's Division, on the night after Antietam, my attention was called by a disabled officer to a friend of his, badly wounded in the face, and lying out somewhere without a covering. Following  
*A Life Saved.* his directions, and throwing the rays of my lantern towards the foot of a wooden fence, I soon discovered the object of my search.

He was a Lieutenant of a Pennsylvania Regiment.<sup>1</sup> The ball had entered one side of the cheek and passed out at the other, grazing

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<sup>1</sup> First Lieut. Anthony Morin, Co. D. 90th P. V. Afterwards Captain.



his tongue, and carrying away several of his teeth. His face was horribly swollen, and he could not speak. On asking him if he was Lieut. M., of Philadelphia, he assented by a nod of his head.

It was raining pretty heavily and he was quite wet; straw was procured, a bed made, and he was left for the night as comfortable as possible. During the next two days, the Surgeons were all so busy, that his wound, which had been hurriedly dressed on the field, remained untouched; yet he showed no signs of impatience. In the inflamed, wounded condition of his mouth, nothing could be passed down his throat. On the third day, as the Surgeons still had more to do than they could manage, we assisted them in washing and re-dressing wounds, most of which had remained untouched since the battle. With some hesitation, I took the Lieutenant's case in hand, and, after two hours' labor, succeeded in cutting away his whiskers and washing the wound pretty thoroughly, both inside and outside the mouth. This done, and all the clotted blood and matter cleared away, the swelling abated, and he began to articulate a little. A day or so afterward, he could swallow liquids; and being carefully washed daily, in less than a week he was able to travel to Philadelphia.

I saw him next in his own house. Tears of gratitude filled his eyes and those of his wife; and it amply repaid me to be introduced to Mrs. M. by the gallant soldier, as "the man who picked me up at midnight and dressed my wound, when I had given myself up to die."

Another of Mr. Grant's reminiscences shows the warm, unselfish heart so often belonging to our soldiers, and prompting them to so many kindnesses, even sacrifices, on behalf of enemies:

No one who traversed Antietam battle-ground, while the dead lay unburied, can ever forget the long, deep road or cut which ran along the edge of a corn-field, and formed a natural rifle-pit for the Rebels during the fight. The impetuous bravery of the Irish Brigade at last dispossessed them, though only after very severe loss,—the road for half a mile being literally covered with dead and wounded.

"Worse off  
nor I."

The disabled from this vicinity were mainly carried to a farm

house overlooking the bloody ground. We found them suffering and destitute. Our own supplies were at once exhausted, the stock of clothing being reduced to a single shirt. Looking round to discover the most needy, I observed an elderly soldier of a New York regiment, leaning against the barn-door. He was severely wounded in the breast, and appeared weak from the loss of blood. He had no shirt, but had substituted for it a few blood-soaked, weather-hardened fragments of an outer coat.

“You are the very man I am looking for,” said I; “nobody could need this ‘last shirt’ more than you.”

His reply thrilled me: “I’m much obleeged t’ ye, sir, but,—” and he pointed to a spot on the hill-side near by, “down yonder there’s a poor ‘Johnny’<sup>1</sup> far worse off nor I am, an’ av ye’ll plaze t’ give ’t till me, I’ll put it on him by-and-bye.”

I handed him the shirt, and its benevolent errand was soon accomplished.

Rev. Robert J. Parvin<sup>2</sup> had charge of an important part of the Commission’s operations at Antietam. The following incident occurred in his work:

Three or four days after the battle, he sent out Rev. S. W. Thomas<sup>3</sup> and another Delegate, to search for wounded men who might be lying neglected on the field. Walking a long distance over the bloody ground, thirst led them to a deserted farm-house for water. While drinking at the pump, they noticed lying in the barn-yard what seemed to them at first bundles of rags. Looking closer, they were found to be the bodies of two dead soldiers. Near by thirteen living men were discovered,—all badly wounded. Word was at once sent to Sharpsburg, the Commission headquarters, and an ambulance came down with Mr. Parvin and other Delegates, bringing a supply of needful things. It was a scene not easily forgotten. None of the wounded men could move. The Delegates carried out the dead from among the living,—

*The Scouting  
Party.*

<sup>1</sup> The general soubriquet in the army for a Confederate soldier.

<sup>2</sup> Rector of St Paul’s Prot. Episc. Church, Cheltenham, Pa. Now Secretary of the P. E. Evangelical Education Society.

<sup>3</sup> Of Philadelphia Conference, Meth. Episc. Church.



a poor Alabamian, one of whose legs was gone, all the while moaning out in a despairing voice, "Water! water! water!" A fire was kindled in the barn-yard; water boiled, and tea made. Every possible ministry of mercy was performed for the poor men, who were nearly all Confederates. Help was procured from a regiment near by, and all were moved to a Field Hospital on Michael Miller's farm, only three-quarters of a mile away. Had they remained unattended one night more, there would have been no survivors.

The help came from the regiment encamped near, in the following manner. A Captain riding by was attracted by the ambulance near the barn. Just as he came up, Mr. Parvin was kneeling in the cow-yard, praying with the dying Alabamian. The Captain reined in, uncovered his head, and listened reverently to the petition. In answer to a question, the dying soldier said—

*Happy as a  
Prince.*

"Yes, yes, my trust is in the Lord Jesus."

He moaned it out through grooves of pain; the whole scene was absolutely wretched with filth and mire and pale, pained faces; yet out of the midst of it went up the words of Christian victory:

"My trust is in Jesus. I'm as happy as a prince."

The Captain, awestruck by the scene, volunteered all the needed help, sending ambulances, and afterwards riding over again to see the dying man. In a conversation with Mr. Parvin, he confessed that he had been more touched by what he had beheld in that barn-yard, than by all the sermons he had heard in his lifetime.

Mr. Demond's Williams College Alumni Address<sup>1</sup> contains this incident:

After the battle of Antietam, a gentleman<sup>2</sup> passing over the field of blood, saw a man washing at a brook; as he came near he recognized a Doctor of Divinity, the Pastor of one of the largest Churches in Philadelphia, and a Delegate. Said he:

"Doctor, what are you doing?"

*A Divinity-  
Doctor Washing  
Suits.*

The Doctor straightened up, and pointing with his finger, said—

<sup>1</sup> See p. 24.

Rev. Geo. J. Mingins, a Delegate.

“Over yonder, are six hundred wounded men; most of them lying in the bloody shirts in which they were wounded. Our shirts are out, and we shall have none till to-morrow morning; so I thought I would take a few of the worst out here, and wash and dry them in the sun. Do you think there is any harm in it?”

Said the gentleman :

“Doctor, I know God has blessed you abundantly, in your work in Philadelphia, but I do not think the Master ever looked upon any act of your life with more pleasure than upon this.”

“I believe it,” said the Doctor, and turned to his washing.

The prospect of a battle often induced deep solemnity in the army. A reminiscence by Rev Geo. J. Mingins shows that the retrospect was sometimes very solemn also :

One day we were burying some poor fellows who had fallen in the battle, and a soldier was helping us. He told us how he had passed through the fierce conflict unharmed :

“*Not the Rebels’ Bad Shooting.*” “For which,” said he, “I thank God.”  
 “Thank the rebels for being such bad marksmen,”  
 said a man near us.

The soldier, looking him in the face, replied, “I ain’t no Christian, God knows; but after what we passed through, I ought to be a better man. You may think as you like; *I* think God saved me, not the rebels’ bad shooting.”

Hospitals for the Antietam wounded were scattered thickly over Western Maryland, the chief one remaining at Sharpsburg. They were visited, as long as they lasted, by the Commission Delegates. The Baltimore Committee, in whose field of work they lay, was very active in its exertions. The impressions made on the wounded rebels by the care taken of them were deep and lasting. Some learned to look upon the Southern sympathizers who visited them as not their truest friends.

In one instance, while members of the Committee were standing by, a lady approached a wounded Confederate, who was lying between two Union soldiers. One leg of each had been amputated. The lady said to her friend—

“Here, soldier, I have brought you some nice *Sharing Dainties.* things, and I want you to put them by your side; and don't let these men have any of them.”

“Madam,” replied the suffering man, “these men share everything they get with me, and if I cannot share what you give me with them, I cannot take it.”

Many wounded were taken to Baltimore after the battle. Rev. R. Spencer Vinton, Chaplain of McKim's Hospital in that city, relates the following incident:

Sylvester McKinley, of Clarion County, Pennsylvania, was a noble-looking youth, of fine figure and intelligent face. He had lost his left arm in the battle, and was very much reduced by his sufferings. When brought into the Hospital, he had neither coat, vest, nor hat. The Ladies of the North *The Dying Pillow.* Baltimore Union Relief Association took his case in hand, and spared neither means nor labors in his behalf. His condition was critical, and I began at once giving him religious instruction. I learned that he had been a Sunday-school scholar, and was quite familiar with the Bible. He received my assurances of Christ's interest in him with joy, and was made happy in the belief that his ransomed spirit would reach its rest in heaven. I visited him daily, and always found him with his Testament in hand or by his side. I prayed with him, and had the strongest assurance of his confidence in God. A faithful nurse was ever by his side.

Near the last, weakened by his sufferings and fainting from exhaustion, he asked the nurse to hand him his Testament. He read a brief passage, and closing it said in a feeble voice—

“Now, nurse, put it under my head.”

It was placed as he desired, and in a moment he was asleep in Jesus.

One of the most devoted and efficient Delegates of

the Commission was Rev. I. Oliver Sloan.<sup>1</sup> He was of the original party which went to Fortress Monroe in May, 1862, remaining on the Peninsula until McClellan's army was withdrawn. Among the first at Antietam, he continued several months in the Maryland hospitals. He writes :

Burnside was preparing to move on Fredericksburg, and all who could possibly go to the front were ordered from the hospitals. I had become very much interested in a soldier named Monroe, of Co. H, 12th Mass. Regiment, who had been left behind very sick when the army moved after Lee. Before the order came for all who were well enough to go to the front, the Surgeon had permitted Monroe, who was sufficiently recovered for such service, to assist me in my hospital work. He was only nineteen, but I found him a ready helper,—a faithful Christian in all his conduct. I was sorry to lose him, and especially to have him join his regiment for the duty of an able-bodied man. To many of the poor, half-recovered fellows who had been left behind after the battle, this order to the front was a very death knell, I was not sure how Monroe himself might receive the news. His answer was very calm :

*Christ, the Source of Courage.*  
 “Why should I be away from my regiment, when the other boys are there fighting? My life is no more valuable than theirs; and besides, God will be with me, and I needn't fear. I shall try to live near Christ. *He* will give me courage.”

Soon after joining his regiment, he wrote to tell me how glad he was to be at the post of duty. In the following summer he lost an arm at Gettysburg.

A long “quiet” followed Antietam. It was not until October 26th that the army crossed the Potomac. On November 7th Gen. McClellan was relieved, and Gen. A. E. Burnside assumed command. The army had by

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<sup>1</sup> Connected with the Fourth (N. S.) Presbytery of Philadelphia.

this time reached Warrenton. Gen. Burnside promptly moved his forces down the Rappahannock to Fredericksburg. Gen. Lee kept opposite to him on the south bank. Our army crossed on pontoons, and Dec. 13th, assaulted the Rebels in their entrenchments behind Fredericksburg. Our repulse was decisive and the slaughter terrible. The battle was not renewed, and on the night of the 15th the entire army was withdrawn north of the river. About January 20th, 1863, another movement was contemplated, but a storm prevented it, and on the 28th Gen. Burnside was relieved. Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker next assumed command.

A large party of "Minute men"<sup>1</sup> went to the front after the December battle, under the direction of Rev. Alexander Reed.<sup>2</sup> Scenes of distress met them on every hand. The wounded were carried in ambulances to Falmouth Station, to await transportation to Washington, *via* Acquia Creek. The delays at these points of transferring from one mode of conveyance to another were wearisome and most painful. Just here, the Commission work after this battle came in with most marked effect.

The New York *Observer*<sup>3</sup> gives the following incident of Fredericksburg, told in the Fulton Street Prayer meeting:

A speaker held up a Testament, stating that it was from the battle-field. On one of the fly-leaves was this record: "Found on the

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<sup>1</sup> "Minute men" were distinguished from the regular Delegates, by the facts of their going in emergencies, at very short notice, and for briefer terms of service.

<sup>2</sup> Then Pastor of (O. S.) Presbyterian Church, Parkesburg, Pa.—Now of the Central Church, Philadelphia.

<sup>3</sup> Of March 19th, 1863.

battle-field of Fredericksburg, December 16th, at 2. A. M., while covering the evacuation of that place, by P. H. B. *William Glover's Testament.* Taken from beside a dead body." There was evidence that the book had been read after the owner was wounded. It was found lying open. On the fly-leaf in front is this inscription :

"A present to William Glover, from his sister Maggy. Read this often."

It was a beautiful, gilt-edged Testament, clasped, and bearing the imprint of the American Bible Society in 1860.

The speaker said : " I find the Gospels show signs of much reading. I find two leaves turned down, evidently intended to mark these passages : ' And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

" Then I find another leaf turned to point to this passage in St. Luke : ' Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?'

" Who can estimate the value of this Testament to such a dying man? "

Surely no earthly arithmetic can calculate it. The Bible Society *Record* narrates a similar incident :

Among the articles returned from the battle-field with the dead body of a young soldier from one of the Connecticut regiments, was a Bible, which had been given him by a praying mother. On examining it a single leaf was found turned down and pointing to the following verse :

" There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

Revs. Christopher Cushing and F. N. Peloubet,<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pastors then respectively of Congregational Churches in N. Brookfield and Oakham, Mass. Rev. Mr. Cushing is now a Secretary of the Amer. Cong. Union.



among others, took care of the wounded in Washington, as they arrived from Fredericksburg. With all that the Government could do, the bitter weather and the immense number of disabled made cases of extreme destitution frequent. Mr. Cushing writes :

I found a man taking a rough and coarse shoe from his bosom, and requesting a comrade to put it on his foot. I inquired what it meant, and found that he had no means of warming his cold foot, save by heating the shoe in his bosom, and then putting it back on his foot. To relieve *such* suffering was indeed a blessed ministry. *The Cold Shoe.*

I asked one poor fellow, who had just been removed from the boat, why he did not complain. There was rare fortitude in his answer—

“We’ve been, sir, where it did no good to complain.” *“Why not Complain?”*

Sometimes, as we removed the men, we found them wounded in such a way as not to require a stretcher, and yet it helped them greatly to put their arms around us, or have ours round them. They said we were the best kind of crutches. *The Best Crutches.*

Rev. Mr. Peloubet writes of the same work :

The soldiers thought they must pay for the little delicacies given them.

“No pay,” said I—“free as the Gospel.”

“Soldiers don’t have much of that kind,” they answered. *No Pay.*

“Well, I hope you’ll like the Gospel as well as these little things.”

“Yes,” said some, doubtfully, “the Gospel’s good too.” But others said it earnestly, as if they had felt it deep down on the terrible day.

As I was giving some soft white bread to the hungry hospital men to-day, one of them laughed out.

“What are you laughing at?” I asked.

“Who wouldn’t laugh,” said he, “to see *such* bread.” *Such Bread!*

It was desirable that Mr. Peloubet and Mr. Cushing should go down the river ; but for several days, during the changes in front of Fredericksburg, no passes could be procured. Mr. Peloubet tells how they got off at last and what came of it :

We had tried "red tape" until we were tired ; and to-day, the Captain of a boat returning to Acquia Creek for more wounded, who had seen us working on the transports and wharves, invited us on board. We did not hesitate a moment. The boat was carrying down a large company of navvies to work for the Government. There were no accommodations on the boat for us. We had brought along bread and apple-sauce, whereof we eat only bread, keeping the sauce for the soldiers. The men on board passed their time in retailing stories and jokes. The placard, "Beware of pickpockets," elicited an amusing series of comments.

*The Restless  
Night.*

"It'll take two to pick my pockets," remarked one.

"What will the second man do?" asked another.

"Put something in to be picked," was the rejoinder.

We took turns in sleeping and watching ; no longer wondering that soldiers forget Sunday, for we already doubted about where and when we were.

About half-past two o'clock in the morning, the men began to wake up, hungry and noisy. We were taking down with us, among other stores, two bags of bread, which it required constant vigilance to protect. The noise and confusion continued to increase. At last I proposed some singing. So we began with "Shining Shore," and kept on with "Will you go?" "Star-Spangled Banner," "Red, White and Blue," "Coronation," &c. After I had read the fourth chapter of Second Corinthians, Rev. Mr. Cushing prayed, and made some excellent remarks. To our joy and astonishment, during the prayer, nearly all rose and uncovered their heads. The foreman, in charge of the party, came to us afterwards and told us that he was "Head-devil" among the men. I suggested to him that it would be better if he were Head-angel. He said he would try to be, and

*Peace after  
Prayer.*



asked for some singing books, which, he said, would be of special use to the men on Sundays. Nine of them wanted to buy Testaments. After singing a few more melodies we reached Acquia Creek, and had no difficulty at the Provost-Marshall's office in procuring passes over the Government road to the front.

Towards the close of the year, the chairman of the Commission, in one of his frequent army visits, came to Washington. In a public address<sup>1</sup> afterwards, he relates an incident of his Delegate's work, near the Capitol :

I have visited many hospitals and camps, and have distributed many of our Commission books; and I can testify that from the beginning until now I have never met a man who refused them, save one, and he was from my own city—Philadelphia.

I do not believe in being conquered. I never give up anything that is practicable. But here *was* a case for me! The man told me that he was an infidel—did not believe in my books—did not need them. Said he—

*The Greater  
Includes the  
Less.*

“I am from Philadelphia; I live at such a number, Callowhill street; if you go there you will find out my character, and that I am as good a man as you are.”

“I trust a great deal better,” said I.

“Stuart,” said a friend to whom I related the incident, “you are beaten for once.”

“No,” I replied, “I'm not done with that man yet.”

I approached him, shortly afterwards, again; said he—

“What was the book you wanted to give me the other day?”

I told him it was a selection from the Scriptures, called *Cromwell's Bible*.

“Oh,” said he, “I don't want your Bible; I've no need of it; I'm a good enough man without it,” and with a motion of supreme indifference he turned away his head.

“My friend,” said I, “I'm from Philadelphia, too; I know where you live,—can find the exact house. On next Sunday evening, if

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<sup>1</sup> A<sup>t</sup> the Washington Anniversary of the Commission, Feb. 2d, 1864.

God spares my life, I expect to speak for the Christian Commission in the Church of the Epiphany."

He looked at me inquisitively,—“And what are you going to say?”

“I am going to tell the people that I had been distributing tracts all day through the hospitals and camps, and that I found but one man who refused to take them, and he was from Philadelphia.”

“Well, what more are you going to say?” the man asked, with a steady, apparently defiant, gaze.

“I’ll tell them, I began my distribution in the morning at the White House, and the first gentleman to whom I offered one of the little books was one Abraham Lincoln; that he rose from his chair, read the title, expressed great pleasure at receiving it, and promised to read it; but that I came to one of his cooks, here in these quarters, who was so exceedingly good that he didn’t need a copy of God’s word, and wouldn’t have one.”

“Well,” said the man, reaching out his hand, “if the President can take one, I suppose I can.”

Rev. H. C. Henries, Chaplain of U. S. Gen. Hospital at Annapolis, had acted as the Commission’s Agent in Annapolis, and Parole Camp near by, from the time its active relief work was begun. His only compensation was the assistance afforded him by occasional Delegates, who labored under his direction throughout his immense parish of disabled men. The Holy Spirit was near to bless the work done. Rev. R. J. Parvin, who at one time labored thus with Chaplain Henries, communicates this incident:

One morning, towards the close of July, 1862, Chaplain Henries, passing through the rooms of the Hospital at the Navy Yard, placed on the vacant bed of a soldier a single-paged tract, entitled, *Will you go?* It was a copy of the hymn bearing that name. “*I will Try to go.*” Its first lines read:

“ We’re travelling home to heaven above;  
                                Will you go?  
To sing the Saviour’s dying love;  
                                Will you go?  
Millions have reached that blessed shore,  
Their trials and labors all are o’er,  
But still there’s room for millions more:  
                                Will you go?”

Other lines of it read :

“ The way to heaven is straight and plain;  
                                Will you go?  
Repent, believe, be born again;  
                                Will you go?  
The Saviour cries aloud to thee,  
‘ Take up thy cross and follow Me;  
And thou shalt My salvation see;  
                                Will you go?”

Soon after, the soldier came in and sat down on his bed. He picked up the hymn, looked at the title, read a few lines of the invitation, and threw it down. Again he picked it up and read a little, then threw it upon the floor. But the invitation he was so unwilling to hear had reached him, through this silent messenger of the Lord. Playing with the tract for a while with his foot, the soldier picked it up for the third time, and now read it carefully through. It was thrown down no more. The soldier read and re-read it, and then holding it a while thoughtfully in his hand, as if listening to the solemn voice speaking to *him*, “ *Will you go?*” he drew a pencil from his pocket, and deliberately traced round the margin of the tract, these words—

“ By the grace of God, I will try to go. John Waugh, Co. G, 10th Regt. P. R. V. C.”

A soldiers’ prayer meeting was held that night in the Hospital. Waugh came, and when opportunity was given,—with his wounded arm in a sling, and the little tract in his other hand,—he told his comrades of his conflict with that bit of paper. He read the promise which he had written on the margin, and asked all to pray that he might keep it and never be ashamed of his Saviour, adding—



sembled about fifty men around me, and began singing, "Say, brothers, will you meet us?" Hundreds replied practically, and soon I was surrounded by a large audience. After singing, we united in prayer, and then with earnestness they listened to my brief address,—the simple story of Jesus. Order was restored, not by the sword, but by the cross, which is "the power of God."

I was gratified to hear subsequently from the Colonel in command, that a quieter night had not been experienced in the camp, although it then contained seven thousand six hundred and sixty-two soldiers.

## CHAPTER III.

### *THE WESTERN ARMIES.*

UNTIL AFTER THE STONE RIVER BATTLES.

*April, 1861—January, 1863.*

THE first Delegation to the West, from the central office, was to the Cumberland Army, immediately after the Stone River battles, December 31st, 1862. Earlier in the war, much valuable work was done in the Western armies, upon every principal battle-field, by the various "Army Committees,"<sup>1</sup> organized in Chicago, Peoria, St. Louis, &c.

The war in Missouri was a succession of forced marches, toilsome retreats, and desperate battles between comparatively small armies. Gens. Frémont and Hunter were successively displaced from the chief command, and Gen. Halleck, in November, 1861, assumed charge of the Department.

Among the troops campaigning in Missouri was the famous "Normal School" regiment, the 33d Illinois. Mr. B. F. Jacobs,<sup>2</sup> of Chicago, gives the story of a

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<sup>1</sup> These "Army Committees" were appointed by the Young Men's Christian Associations of the places named. A particular account of their origin is given in the Annals of the U. S. Christian Commission, chap. vi.

<sup>2</sup> The faithful and devoted Secretary of the Chicago Army Committee, and of the Northwestern Branch of the Christian Commission, until the close of the war.

Friday evening prayer-meeting, held in the First Baptist Church of that city, in the Fall of 1861, which is connected with the history of the regiment:

Towards the close of the meeting, an officer rose and said—

“ I am a stranger to you, and in this city. My reason for speaking is that I have a trust to execute. Our regiment,—the 33d Illinois,—in the early part of its campaigns, at a town in Missouri, received a box containing a few hymn-books and Testaments, some papers, housewives, and other soldier comforts. A little ticket within the box informed us that it came from a lady of the First Baptist Church, Chicago. So anxious were the men for the hymn-books that on account of the short supply, they loaned the precious volumes to each other, and more than one hundred committed to memory the principal hymns, that they might be able to sing readily at the meetings. The books penetrated into the hospital. One of my men sent for me to visit a dying soldier there. His words were few but full and precious:

*A Hymn Leading to Christ.*

“ ‘ Captain, I am dying: I long to see my wife and children, but I know I shall die without that. I’ve been trying to think what I could send my wife. I have nothing except these books,’ and taking one of the Testaments and hymn books from under his head, he added ‘ Send these; and Captain, if you are ever in Chicago, I want you to go to the First Baptist Church, and tell the lady who sent those hymn books that the 27th hymn has led me to Jesus. I am going home to wait for her.’ ”

The story of the stranger Captain deeply impressed the audience. There was a pause in his talk for a moment, when he went on again:

“ Among others in the regiment, there was a little boy, the servant of one of the Captains, who on account of his known religious principles was nicknamed ‘ Little Piety.’ The Christian soldiers of the regiment organized a prayer meeting; and were holding it one evening in a tent, near the quarters of the officer of the day, a very profane man, who hearing the singing, started out, exclaiming with an oath, ‘ I’ll stop that noise.’ As he approached the tent, the fly-door was up; ‘ Little Piety’ was speaking, standing near the cracker-box which served as a desk, so



that the light of the only candle in the tent lit up his face. The little fellow was telling of his mother's last counsel to him as he went away from home: 'My son, there are a great many men who don't love Christ, and who will tempt you to swerve from your fidelity and purpose. You may be subjected to trials on account of your faith; but, my son, I want you to promise that whatever else you forget, you will not forget your mother's Saviour.' With tears in his eyes the little fellow told how he was trying not to forget Him. The sight of the boy and the tone of his voice stopped the Captain. He listened till the meeting closed, when the leader asked—

“ ‘Where shall we hold our next meeting?’

“Stepping forward out of the darkness, the Captain responded, ‘In my tent.’

“That Captain was afterwards converted to Christ, and since that time has been one of the most earnest Christians in the regiment.”

The stranger sat down; and we felt in our prayer meeting, that night, our hearts somehow knit closer to the men who had gone out from our midst, and that we owed them thenceforth more of prayer and more of work.

During the desultory operations in Missouri, Gen. Grant was in command at Cairo. He moved down the Mississippi, and, on Nov. 7th, fought the battle of Belmont, opposite Columbus, the Confederate General Polk's headquarters. The Chicago Army Committee sent a Delegate<sup>1</sup> to Cairo, to care for the wounded from the battle-field. Rev. G. S. F. Savage, District Secretary in Chicago of the American Tract Society, was at Cairo on a similar errand. He writes:

A Lieutenant in an Iowa regiment, wounded by a ball in the shoulder, was brought into the hospital. At first, it was thought that he would recover, but after a few days, he rapidly declined. Just

before his death a lady nurse said to him—  
“*Not a Cloud.*”

“Lieutenant, you have but a few moments to live;

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. D. L. Moody, of Chicago.



if you have any word to send to your wife and little one in Iowa, you must speak it very quickly."

He looked up at her, his face shining like an angel's, and said—  
 "Tell my wife, that there is not a cloud between me and Jesus."

The Rebels had constructed in Tennessee, a few miles south of the Kentucky line, and within about eleven miles of each other, two strong and extensive works, Forts Henry and Donelson, controlling respectively the passage up the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers. Gen. Grant, with the aid of Commodore Foote's powerful flotilla of gunboats, undertook the task of reducing them. On Feb. 6th, 1862, Fort Henry fell; and ten days afterwards, Fort Donelson, after a brilliant siege and some hard fighting.

Commodore Foote was a decided Christian. A correspondent of the *Boston Journal*,<sup>1</sup> writing at this time, says of him

He is not afraid to have all men know that he recognizes his obligation to his Divine Maker. A gentleman remarked to him, on the day after the capture of Fort Henry, that he was getting nervous, and was afraid he did not sleep well. The Commodore replied—

*Commodore  
Foote.*

"I never slept better in my life than night before last, and never prayed more fervently than on yesterday morning; but last night I couldn't sleep for thinking of those poor fellows on the 'Essex.'"

The "Essex," it will be remembered, was pierced, during the bombardment of Fort Henry, in an unguarded spot, its boiler penetrated, and the vessel instantly filled from stem to stern with burning steam. Capt. Porter and forty of his crew were severely scalded.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. C. C. Coffin; better known by his *nom de plume*, "Carleton."

<sup>2</sup> This incident recalls the Commodore's noble order, "Number Six," which

A beautiful little story connected with the siege, was related at a Western Sunday-school convention in 1863:

A young man was wounded, and left by his comrades, who pressed on in the battle. When they returned, they found him resting against a tree, dead, with a book open in his hand at this hymn:

“Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee;  
E'en though it be a cross  
That raiseth me;  
Still all my song shall be,  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee.”

*Nearer to Thee.*

Mr. B. F. Jacobs was one of the Chicago Army Committee Delegates to the wounded, after the surrender. From him we gather the incidents which follow:

A week after the surrender, our own men had all been cared for.

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he issued to his fleet; and which, while he commanded, was carefully enforced:

CAIRO, Dec. 17, 1861.

A strict observance of Sunday, so far as abstaining from all unnecessary work, and giving officers and men the opportunity of attending public worship on board, will be observed by all persons connected with the flotilla.

It is the wish of the commander-in-chief that on Sunday the public worship of Almighty God may be observed on board of all the vessels composing the flotilla; and that the respective commanders will, either themselves, or cause other persons to, pronounce prayers publicly on Sunday, when as many of the officers and men as can be spared from duty may attend the public worship of Almighty God.

Profane swearing being forbidden by the laws for the better government of the navy, all officers and men will strictly observe this law; and every officer who uses profane language towards the men, in carrying on duty, will be held amenable for such gross violation of law and order.

Discipline, to be permanent, must be based on moral grounds, and officers must in themselves show a good example in morals, order, and patriotism, to secure these qualities in the men.

ANDREW H. FOOTE, Flag Officer,  
Com'ding U. S. Naval Forces on the Western Waters.

That Sabbath evening we were to start down the river with the last of the wounded. Mr. Moody went with me to visit the Rebels, who crowded the twenty-three log-house hospitals at Dover. In one of them we found almost every inch of room occupied. In a kitchen corner, on some straw, there was an old, gray-haired man. I went up to him, knelt down by his side, and asked if I could do anything for him.

*Not Going Home.*

"No," said he; "you can't."

"Don't you want *anything*? is there nothing that might comfort you?"

"Oh yes," was his answer; "I want to go home. I have a wife and six children in Tennessee, and oh, how I want to go home and see them!"

"Well," said I; "'maybe you'll be exchanged."

He looked up at me with an expression of astonishment.

"Why," said he, "I'll never go home. I'm dying; don't you know it?"

"No, I didn't know it; but, my friend, if you *are* dying, are you not going *home*? Don't you know how Christ said He had gone to prepare a home for those who loved Him? Have you never thought of that home in heaven?"

He gazed at me with an expression of perfect despair.

"My wife has talked to me about this for thirty-five years; and God knows how I have treated her. I've rejected every invitation, and I'm dying here without Christ,—without Christ."

He kept groaning out for a long time, "I can't die: I can't die." And with no light to show him the heavenly way, he went alone into the darkness of death.

In another of the huts I found a man lying on the floor, who, as I went up to minister to him in his turn, was unable to speak. We carried him down to the hospital-boat that was going out, and nursed him during the trip. He had been shot through the lower jaw, and was too weak to stand. Wounded in the first day's fight, he had lain on the field for forty-eight hours before he was picked up. In the storm, his back froze fast to the ground where he lay, and both his feet were frozen also. After we had him on the boat a while, I learned that his name was Burgess, and that I had previously known him in Chicago.

*A Story of Hardships.*

At Cairo we put him into a hospital, exacting a promise from one of the nurses that he should receive special care. Six months afterwards the man walked into my store. He was on his way back to the army. He stopped to tell us that, under God, he owed his life to the care which had been taken of him on the boat; and that he intended to prove his gratitude to God who had given him back his life, by serving Him for evermore.

That night, as we steamed down the river, I had charge of the patients after ten o'clock. I found in a state-room a young fellow shot through the lungs. I asked him if there was anything he wanted.

*Living Waters.*

"I want a drink," was his answer.

I went to get him some water out of the Cumberland. He looked at it—so muddy and impure—for a minute, with an expression of intense desire and longing: "Oh, for one cupful of water out of my father's well."

I asked him if he had ever heard of the "Living waters."

He turned towards me a face of joy, as he answered "yes," and told me of the inner fountain of refreshment and cleansing.

We stopped for about half an hour at Paducah, and improved the time by distributing books in the hospitals. I gave one young soldier, whose appearance interested me, a little volume containing Scripture texts arranged for each day in the year.

*Only One Verse.*

Returning again from Fort Donelson, by the same route, a week later, I sought out my young friend.

With a countenance all aglow with joy, he answered my inquiries as to his health, by pulling out the little book, and opening it to point to a verse near the middle:

"That little verse has led me to the Saviour; and I have enjoyed Him—oh! how much."

That was all. Even the verse has gone from my memory; but that soldier's face, with its glance of transfiguration and peace, can never pass away.

Rev. Dr. Robert Patterson,<sup>1</sup> returning from work at Fort Donelson, stopped over at Paducah. He relates

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Reformed Presbyterian Church, Chicago.

an incident which is connected with one of the same little books :

In the corner of the room used as a hospital for the Rebels at the Campbell House, lay a young boy, John Posey, looking very weak and sick.

"How old are you, John?"

"Fourteen, sir."

*"Dew Drops"  
for Rations.*

"You have been very ill, I learn. How did you feel when you thought you might die?"

"I knew the Lord would take care of me."

"Why so; do you love the Lord Jesus?"

"Yes, sir, indeed I do."

"How long is it since you became a Christian?"

"About two years."

"How did you manage, John, to retain your love for Christ in the camp?"

He drew from under his pillow a diminutive volume, somewhat over an inch square, called "Dew Drops," issued by the Tract Society :

"Sir," said he, "I lived on that."

"Carleton" tells the story of Frankie Bragg, who died in a Paducah hospital:<sup>1</sup>

He was a brave and noble boy. There were several kind ladies taking care of the sick. Their presence was like sunshine. Wherever they walked, the eyes of the sufferers followed them. One of these ladies thus speaks of little Frankie Bragg :

"Many will remember him; the boy of fifteen, who fought valiantly at Donelson,—one of the bravest of Birge's sharpshooters, and whose answer to my questioning in regard to joining the army was so well worthy of record :

*I Joined be-  
cause so Young  
and Strong.*

"*I joined because I was so young and strong, and because life would be worth nothing to me unless I offered it for my country.*"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Days and Nights on the Battle-field*, pp. 277-280.

<sup>2</sup> *Hospital Incidents*, *New York Post*, Oct. 22d, 1863.

“I saw him die. I can never forget the pleading gaze of his violet eyes, the brow, from which ringlets of light-brown hair were swept by strange fingers, bathed in the death-dew, the desire for some one to love him in his last hours.

*Love makes  
Death Easy.*

““Oh, I am going to die, and there is no one to love me,” he said. “I didn’t think I was going to die till now; but it can’t last long. If my sisters were only here; but I have no friends near me now, and it is so hard!”

““Frankie,” I said, “I know it is hard to be away from your relatives, but you are not friendless; I am your friend. Mrs. S. and the kind Doctor are your friends, and we will all take care of you. More than this, God is your friend, and He is nearer to you now than either of us can get. Trust Him, my boy. He will help you.”

“A faint smile passed over the pale sufferer’s features.

““Oh, do you think He will?” he asked.

“Then, as he held my hands closer, he turned his face more fully towards me, and said—

““My mother taught me to pray when I was a very little boy, and I never forgot it. I have always said my prayers every day, and tried not to be bad. Do you think God heard me always?”

““Yes, most assuredly. Did He not promise in His good book, from which your mother taught you, that He would always hear the prayers of His children? Ask, and ye shall receive. Don’t you remember this? One of the worst things we can do is to doubt God’s truth. He has promised and He will fulfill. Don’t you feel so, Frankie?”

“He hesitated a moment, and then answered slowly—

““Yes, I *do* believe it. I am not afraid to die, but I want somebody to love me.”

“The old cry for love, the strong yearning for the sympathy of kindred hearts. It would not be put down. “Frankie, I love you. Poor boy, you shall not be left alone. Is not this some comfort to you?”

““Do you love me? Will you stay with me and not leave me?”

““I will not leave you. Be comforted. I will stay as long as you wish.”

“I kissed the pale forehead, as if it had been that of my own child. A glad light flashed over his face.



“Oh, kiss me again; that was given like my sister. Mrs. S., won't you kiss me too? I don't think it will be so hard to die, if you will both love me.’

“It did not last long. With his face nestled against mine, and his large blue eyes fixed in perfect composure upon me to the last moment, he breathed out his life.”

Camp Douglas, near Chicago, became the receptacle for the prisoners taken at Fort Donelson. Before we return to the operations of Gen. Grant's army, a few reminiscences of Rev. Dr. Patterson may be given, of the Army Committee work among the Confederates and others of this camp:

Perceiving the hospital flag flying over a cavalry stable in Camp Douglas, I directed my steps towards it, and was met at the door by one of our Chicago city physicians in charge—a volunteer. I asked him if the building was used as a hospital. He said it was, and told me of his connection with it. He said that a number of the men were in a dangerous condition, some of them dying; that no minister had yet called to see them.

*God have  
Mercy.*

The long building was filled with cots, most of which were occupied. In the furthest corner lay a man in the agonies of death. His voice was yet unimpaired, though the contracted lips, the pale, bloodless face and the glazing eye too plainly told that his hours were almost over. He was conscious of his situation, but utterly indifferent to the friends who stood around him and to anything that might be said by mortal man. One only prayer issued from his lips: “God have mercy on my soul,” uttered with all his dying energy. Fainter and fainter the cry became, till his voice ceased in death.

The solemn phrase and the sad departure of the man's spirit made a profound impression upon all in the hospital. As I turned my face away towards the other end of the room, a hand was raised from a cot away down the row, beckoning me to approach. I did so, and seated myself on an adjoining empty cot to listen to the soldier's request.

*“Won't you  
Teach me a  
Prayer?”*

“Stranger,” said the man, an East Tennessee Con-

federate, with feverish energy, "the man that lay on that cot was taken out this morning; and I have got the same sickness. I don't know how soon my turn may come. I want you to tell me what I ought to do."

I explained to him the way of salvation, as I supposed, with great simplicity. He looked me in the face with an earnestness which I can never forget, and said—

"Stranger, couldn't you make it very plain to a poor feller that never got no schoolin'?"

His words, jerked out in the energy of his fever, had a strangely intense force in them. I tried again, and endeavored to simplify and illustrate my instruction, succeeding, I hope, in bringing the atoning death of Christ before his mind. I concluded by saying—

"You must pray to God to forgive you your sins for Christ's sake."

"Preacher," said he, "I can't pray. Nobody never taught me nothing."

Said I, "Have you *never* prayed?"

His manner grew almost fierce as he ejaculated—

"I tell you I never got no schoolin';" and then, as if recollecting himself, he raised his head and added, "Stranger, couldn't you teach me a prayer? and if I said it, 'maybe the Lord would hear me."

I replied, "I will teach you a prayer and the Lord will hear you, if you say it sincerely."

I began to recite the 51st Psalm: "Have mercy upon me, O God, —according to Thy loving-kindness: According unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies—blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity,—and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions:—and my sin is ever before me."

"Yes," said he, raising his finger, "that's it, that's it, exactly. But, stranger," rubbing his hand across his fevered brow, and looking at me more piteously than ever out of the pain-encircled eyes—"stranger, my head's full of the fever, and I can't mind it. If it was writ down now, and I was to read it, don't you think the Lord would hear me. I could spell it out, preacher,—if you think He'd hear me."

"It is written down, my poor brother, and I'll get it for you, if there's a Bible in this hospital, and God will hear you."



I set out to find a Bible, and in that camp, containing hundreds of sick and dying men and some thousands of Rebel prisoners, there was not an accessible copy of the Word of God! I returned from my unsuccessful search, and told him—

“There is not a Bible I can lay my hands on in camp, but I will bring you one to-morrow, if God spares me.”

“Yes; but, stranger,” said he, wistfully, “what’s to become of a poor feller if I should die to night?”

It was a most serious question.

After our regular meetings in the Chapel at Camp Douglas were dismissed, a little band of Christians were wont to gather on the platform and have a season of conference and prayer. The lights in the hall were extinguished at such times—one or two

*Out of Dark-  
ness into Light.*

only being left burning, near the speaker’s stand. These cast little or no light into the large room, which looked then like a great, dark, forsaken cavern. One night, as the exercises of one of these supplemental meetings were about concluding, a tall, stalwart Sergeant stalked forth from the gloom into the uncertain light near us, and in a voice trembling with emotion, said—

“Friends, there is something in this religion after all. I wish I had it. Will you pray for me that I may become a Christian?”

Tears came into his eyes as we knelt down with him and prayed.

On one occasion a number of Delegates visited Camp Douglas and found a party of boys dancing round a fiddler. The visitors proposed a prayer meeting, very much to the disgust of a burly Corporal, the leader of the entertainment. However, after

*Instrumental  
Music.*

putting the matter to a vote of the company, in true democratic fashion, it was agreed by a large majority that we should have a meeting for a while. We asked the fiddler, who was accustomed to dispense the music of the place, to assist us in the line of his profession. He replied that he knew “nothing serious but ‘John Brown’s body lies a-mould’ring in the grave.’” But after tasking his memory somewhat he hunted up some other tunes, and quite acceptably led the music of the meeting.

At its conclusion, the Corporal who had opposed us, mounted a box, and alluding to some remarks we had made about card-playing, began a little speech which concluded thus—

*“Shying up Cards.”*      “Now all of you fellers what want to give up this business, jest do as I do and shy up your cards.”

He put his hand into his pocket as he spoke, pulled out a pack of cards and “shied” them right up into the air as high as he could. Immediately from all sides a shower went up and came down fluttering into the mud and were trampled under foot.

At one time we had in our Chicago Army Committee rooms a peach-basket full of cards which had been traded off for books.

“I am with you,” said an artillery officer, “in everything to promote instruction and good morals among the soldiers.”

Intimating the hope that he was a Christian himself, he replied—

*With us and Against us.*      “No, I am a ‘Tom Paine’ infidel, and don’t believe in the divine origin of religion, but if your tracts and preaching keep the men from gambling and drinking, I will help you;” and he did render me most efficient service.

The victory at Fort Donelson was followed up by important successes throughout Kentucky and Tennessee. Simultaneously with the fighting at Fort Donelson, Gen. Mitchell, with the van of the Army of the Ohio, now under Gen. Buell, entered Bowling Green; Sidney Johnston, the Confederate commander, retreating towards Nashville. On the 24th of February, that city surrendered. Gen. Buell’s army was afterwards quartered around it. Operations for opening up the Mississippi were undertaken. Columbus, Island “Number Ten,” Forts Pillow and Randolph, and the city of Memphis fell successively,—the last on June 5th.

In March, meanwhile, Gen. Grant’s army began a movement up the Tennessee river, which met its first resistance, from Johnston’s forces, at Pittsburg Landing. A desperate battle followed on Sunday, April 6th; Grant being forced back into a dangerous position. A part of Buell’s army arrived at night-fall, however;



GIVING UP THE BUSINESS



and on the next day the scale was turned against the enemy. Our troops followed the foe to Corinth, Miss. which was evacuated on the 29th.

The history of this battle is especially rich in incidents. Mr. Moody, who went, as usual, from the Chicago Branch, recalls two stories of his service :

A Surgeon going over the field to bandage bleeding wounds, came upon a soldier lying in his blood with his face to the ground. Seeing the horrible wound in his side and the death pallor on his face, he was passing on to attend to others, when the dying man called him with a moan to come just for a moment,—he wanted to be turned over. The Doctor lifting the mangled body as best he could, laid the poor fellow on his back. A few moments after, while dressing wounds near by, he heard him say—

*Dying with  
Face Upwards.*

“This is glory,—this is glory!”

Supposing it was the regret of a dying soldier, correcting, in this scene of carnage, his former estimate of the “pomp and circumstance of war,” the Surgeon put his lips to his ear and asked—

“What is glory, my dear fellow?”

“O Doctor, it’s glory to die with my face upward!” and moving his hand feebly, his forefinger set, as if he would point the heavenly way, he made his last earthly sign.

There was a man on one of the boat-loads of wounded from the field, who was very low and in a kind of stupor. He was entirely unknown. A little stimulant was poured down his throat, and Mr. Moody called him by different names, but could get no response. At last, at the name “William,” the man unclosed his eyes and looked up. Some more stimulant was given, when he revived. He was asked if he was a Christian. Though replying in the negative, he yet manifested great anxiety upon the subject :

*“Even So must  
He be Lifted up.”*

“But I am so great a sinner that I can’t be a Christian.”

Mr. Moody told him he would read what Christ said about that. So, turning to St. John’s third chapter, he read the 14th verse :

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so



must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"Stop," said the dying man; "read that over again, will you?"

It was read again.

"Is that there?"

"Yes," said Mr. Moody; "that's there just as I read it to you."

"And did Christ say that?"

"Yes."

The man began repeating the words, settling back upon his pillow as he did so, with a strange, solemn look of peace in his face. He took no further notice of what was going on about him, but continued murmuring the blessed words until Mr. Moody left him.

The next morning, when the soldier's place was visited, it was found empty. Mr. Moody asked if any one knew aught about him during the night. A nurse, who had spent the hours with him until he died, replied—

"All the time I was with him he was repeating something about Moses lifting up a serpent in the wilderness. I asked him if there was anything I could do for him, but he only answered what he had been muttering all along. Just before he died, about midnight, I saw his lips moving, though there was no sound escaping. I thought he might have some dying message for home, so I asked him for one. But the only answer was the whispered words; 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him'—and so on until his voice died away and his lips moved no longer."

Rev. Dr. Robert Patterson writes :

A brave and godly Captain in one of our Western regiments told one of us his story, as we were removing him to the hospital. He was shot through both thighs with a rifle bullet—a wound from which he could not recover. While lying on the field, he suffered intense agony from thirst. He supported his head upon his hand, while the rain from heaven was falling around him. In a little time, quite a pool of water

*Songs on the  
Battle-field.*

collected in the hole made by his elbow. If he could only get to that puddle he could quench his thirst. He tried to get into a position to suck up a mouthful of muddy water, but was unable to quite reach it. Said he, "I never felt such disappointment before,—so needy, so near, and yet so helpless. By-and-by night fell, and the stars shone out clear and beautiful above the dark field; and I began to think of the great God, who had given His Son to die a death of agony for me, and that He was up there—up above the scene of suffering, and above those glorious stars; and I felt that I was going home to meet Him, and praise Him there; and that I ought to praise Him, here in my wounds and in the rain; and I began to sing with my parched lips—

"When I can read my title clear  
To mansions in the skies,  
I bid farewell to every fear,  
And wipe my weeping eyes."

There was a Christian brother in the brush near me. I could not see him, but I could hear him. He took up the strain; and beyond him another and another caught it up, all over the battle-field of Shiloh; and long into the night the echo was resounding, as we made the field of battle ring with hymns of praise to God."<sup>1</sup>

It was a solemn place indeed, that interval on Sunday night between the two contending armies, which were to assail each other on the morrow. Mr. Demond<sup>2</sup> pre-

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<sup>1</sup> A Delegate writing in September, 1863, after the Chickamauga battle, says: "If anybody thinks that when our men are stricken upon the field, they fill the air with cries and groans, till it shivers with such evidence of agony, he greatly errs. An arm is shattered, a leg carried away, a bullet pierces the breast, and the soldier sinks down *silently* upon the ground, or creeps away, if he can, without a murmur or complaint—falls as the sparrow falls, speechlessly; and like that sparrow, I earnestly believe, falls not without the Father's care. The dying horse gives out his fearful utterance of almost human suffering, but the mangled rider is dumb. The crash of musketry, the crack of rifles, the roar of guns, the shriek of shells, the Rebel whoop, the Federal cheer, with an indescribable undertone of grinding, rumbling and splintering, make up the voices of the battle-field."

<sup>2</sup> Address at the Closing Exercises of the Commission at the Capitol.



serves an incident, showing how some men, who lay there, realized their position :

There was a man wounded in the first day's fight. He lay all Sunday night in a tent, held by the Rebels, on the ground, in the mud, uncared for. During the long and terrible night, amid the rain and roar of the artillery, there came vividly back to him the text and all the argument of a sermon he had heard twenty years before. The next day, when our troops succeeded, he was rescued and taken to St. Louis, where he was cared for by the members of the Army Committee. The Holy Spirit sent home the impression of that night, and the seed, twenty years buried, sprang up and brought forth fruit in his conversion. He lived six weeks to give testimony to God's goodness, and died in joy and hope, his last words being, "My God—my country—my mother!"

Mr. K. A. Burnell,<sup>1</sup> of Milwaukee, who accompanied the lamented Gov. Harvey<sup>2</sup> and others, on a State mission to look after Wisconsin sufferers, writes :

The morning before leaving for home, I visited the hospital tent of the 14th Wisconsin. As I entered the room, a pale-faced boy raised himself on his elbow and gazed eagerly at me. Addressing each man as I went along, I came at last to the youth's cot, and offered him my hand. He looked at me earnestly and said—

*Fruit after  
Many Days.*

"Don't you know me?"

I could not remember him.

"Why, don't you remember the boy you talked to and prayed with

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Field Agent of the St. Louis Committee on the Mississippi River.

<sup>2</sup> We have not room for an exceedingly interesting reminiscence by Mr. Burnell,—an account of the last religious service ever attended by Gov. Harvey,—a prayer meeting conducted by Mr. Burnell on the boat which bore the Governor's party of relief to Shiloh. It was held just about opposite Fort Henry. Gov. Harvey was drowned eight days after in the Tennessee.

at Milton, Wis., some three years ago, one Sabbath morning as you were going to a meeting? Don't you remember finding me by the roadside, and how you talked to me about breaking the Sabbath?"

The circumstances came back very freshly to my memory as the boy recalled them. When I told him that I did remember him, tears came into his eyes:

"From that time to this I have often thought of you and longed to see you. The moment you came in that door, I knew you. Oh! how glad I am to see you once more!"

Gov. Harvey was so much impressed by my account of one of his boys, that he went the next day to see the young soldier. It was a beautiful meeting between the weak youth, suffering for the flag, and the noble Governor who had done so much to vindicate its honor and purity.

"God bless you, young man from Wisconsin;" was the Governor's greeting, as he extended his hand and warmly grasped the soldier's. The boy, proud and glad and pale, responded in tears—

"I am glad to see you, Governor."

We talked about Jesus, and after prayer separated.

Some two years later, on a cotton plantation opposite Vicksburg, after an open-air service, while passing hurriedly away, a soldier came hastening after me, calling out; "Mister, Mister!" I turned and met my boy of the Shiloh tent, looking hearty and strong. He thanked me again for the "comfortable words" spoken to him two years before, and for the reproof addressed to him in Milton. After a few earnest words of encouragement we again bade each other good-bye.

Again on the Red river I met him, and once or twice still later in the war, as he bronzed into a "veteran." And it always did me special good to see him, for his words each time showed how faithfully he was walking in the upward way.

Mr. Burnell continues:

The "City of Memphis" arrived at Mound City, with over 750 wounded from the battle. Her lower, hurricane and upper decks were crowded full. Before sunlight on the morning of April 19th, with others, I began unloading the boat. Until seven o'clock

*"Let not your  
Heart be Trou-  
bled."*

in the evening we were kept busy, carrying the disabled on litters, assisting those who could walk and distributing the men through the various wards of hospitals.

About one hundred men had been comfortably lodged in tents on the hurricane deck. In one of these tents were six badly wounded men. As I entered, I noticed that one man lay very still. The others raised themselves on their elbows and asked eagerly when they were going to be taken ashore. The still man never moved. I asked his comrades why he was so still. With thoughtful and solemn faces, they said—

"He is dead."

I moved the blanket off his face—the men had already kindly straightened him out. My heart melted, thinking of loved ones at home. For some reason taking hold of his arm to move it, I discovered under it his pocket Testament. It was open. I looked into it as it lay, and my eye caught these words of eternal consolation to the Christian.

"Let not your heart be troubled."

Of course I could not be sure that the soldier had read these words last, and yet it was very beautiful to think so. His comrades told me how his life had been like a Sabbath psalm and his death like the entrance into the Kingdom of God.

As one by one the dead man's comrades were taken to the hospital, they left their earnest injunctions with me to see that he was decently and tenderly buried, for his mother's and sisters' sake—that the beautiful life might end in a beautiful grave.

Rev. E. P. Goodwin<sup>1</sup> went to Pittsburg Landing, from the State of Ohio, on an errand similar to that of Mr. Burnell. He says:

Inspector Reed, of the Sanitary Commission, told me this story of a hospital scene in Nashville a short time after the battle: "Private Andrew McGurk, of the 11th Illinois Regiment, was dying of typhoid

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Columbus, Ohio.

fever. He lay near a window of the hospital, and as he looked out, his eye always caught sight of the flag floating from the dome of the Capitol. His regiment had been fearfully cut up at Fort Donelson. And after Shiloh, they were almost wholly employed as orderlies and for special duty. In his delirium, the poor fellow seemed to get back into the fight again. He broke out into a kind of whisper—

*In the Battle  
to the Last.*

“Fought—till—almost—the—last—man—fell.”

“Then catching sight of the ever-waving banner on the dome, he articulated with difficulty again—

“Ah!—the—old—flag!—It—waves—still.”

“Very soon afterwards he expired.”

Returning from the Landing, two incidents occurred, which Rev. Mr. Goodwin records:

On the boat there was an intelligent German, very low with pneumonia; we worked with him a long time, trying to restore consciousness, but he was too far gone. The question had been raised as to who he was? Searching in his pockets, we found two or three letters; one was from his wife, in very broken English. It appeared that he had been only very recently married. She wrote without any knowledge of his sickness, and gave a simple, touching account of the death of their little child:

*The Tract  
among the Letters.*

“Dear Philip, do come home. If you can’t come, I want you to write something to put on baby’s tombstone.”

Right among the precious letters, was a little tract, like many afterwards circulated by the Christian Commission. It had on it the soldier’s name, Philip Schaub; and was endorsed, “Presented by Chaplain Chidlaw.”

We knew little of the dying man. But the discovery of the few pages wrapped up with the letters from home and lying so close to his heart, led us to hope that the father had gone to the baby’s home in the better land.

A number of the poor fellows we had on board died as we came down the river towards Fort Henry. I told Dr. Smith, our Surgeon-General, that we ought to pay some special attention to the last sad

rites of these. One of them was a German who had *Nameless Graves.* left among his memoranda some remarkable expressions of attachment to the country of his adoption. As we approached the shore, the steamer's head was put to, the bell tolled—and there, under the long ruins by the bank, close beside which were opened the fresh graves, we committed “dust to dust, ashes to ashes.” The silent company with uncovered heads bowed, while a brief prayer was offered and a few last words uttered. It was a simple scene—too simple to attract the notice of the hurrying world, but it was the burial of men who had died that we might live, and we could not tell, as we cast our last looks upon the silent, nameless graves, how many hearts would ache, how many lives be saddened, to hear of our mournful work.

Many of the wounded were brought to Cincinnati after the battle. Mr. A. E. Chamberlain,<sup>1</sup> of that city, visited them often, in the Fourth Street Hospital. Our reminiscences of Pittsburg Landing may close with his:

A poor fellow was brought in, whose right arm was almost shot into pieces. I found him a very bright Christian. The Surgeon told me he must die: “It is no use to take off his arm. It will not save him.” So his father was telegraphed. He came next morning and went in to see his boy. He stood up in our daily prayer meeting at noon, with this request—

*The Prayer of Faith.*

“Brethren, I have great faith in the power of prayer. I have a son in Fourth Street Hospital. The Surgeon says he must die. I believe if you will pray God to restore him to health, He will do it. Will you not pray?”

The request struck us as very strange; but prayer was offered as the old man had requested.

The next day, I went into the hospital. Surgeon Norton met me:

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<sup>1</sup> Afterwards the Chairman of the Cincinnati Branch; and until the close of the war, an earnest worker for the soldiers.

“Contrary to all our expectations, sir, that young man you are interested in is improving.”

He grew better every day. Once afterwards, I found the father sitting by his son’s cot. Dr. Norton came along.

“Tell me, Doctor,” said I, “how do you account for this? You physicians told me he was going to die; how do you explain his condition to-day?”

“Well, sir,” replied the Surgeon, “I can only say that I consider it a miracle. It is not anything we did.”

“Doctor,” said the old man, “I can explain it. God has heard the prayers of His people in behalf of this boy.”

The Surgeon passed on in silence.

A week or so after that, the soldier went home on a furlough, safe and sound.

The cot of one soldier whom I visited was in the upper ward of the hospital, at the very end of the room. He was a handsome, noble-looking boy. Indeed his appearance quite deceived me, he was so like a young man in perfect health. I said *Coming to Jesus.* as much to him, when he replied—

“I suppose I do look well, but the physician says I must die. My wound is a bad one; and I am only waiting here for my life to pass away.”

“Are you a Christian?” I asked.

“No, sir; but I want to be very much.”

I prayed with him and gave him Newman Hall’s little book, *Come to Jesus.*

“That’s just what I want to do, sir.”

“That little book will tell you how to come, I trust;” and after some further conversation I left him.

Next morning I thought a good deal about him, and finally went round to the hospital again. His bed was in such a position that he could see me as I came up the stairway, and I found that he was anxiously watching for me.

“I was so afraid you wouldn’t come in this morning,” was his greeting. “The Surgeon says I will probably die during the day; and I didn’t want to die until I saw you and thanked you for giving me that little book. Everything for the future is bright and pleasant now.”



The Surgeon's words were true. He died that day, "Coming to Jesus" indeed.

A month after Pittsburg Landing, I was getting on a train for the West at Seneca Falls, N. Y., when a Baptist Deacon of the village, whom I well knew, caught sight of me and shouted out that his son

*Thanking God  
for Wounds.*

George was in Fourth St. Hospital, Cincinnati, about to die and not a Christian. As soon as I reached home the next day I went to see him. His right arm had been taken off at the shoulder, and he felt very much dejected. I talked with him long and earnestly; and mentioning the case to Rev. Mr. Robinson, a Baptist clergyman of the city, the soldier received many visits from that gentleman. He became a Christian, Rev. Mr. Robinson told me afterwards.

I asked him just before he died, whether he did not think it hard to die in the hospital.

"No, sir," was his reply; "I thank God I ever entered the army, because if I had not, I would never have lost this arm; and if I hadn't lost that, I would never have been brought to this hospital; and if not brought here, I would probably never have found Christ."

Mr. Robinson was bidding him good-bye, when the man thanked him earnestly for his care and attention.

*Not long Parted.* "It will be but a very few days, sir, before we will be together again in the New Jerusalem. I shall wait for you there."

On the next day the soldier was buried. Only a few days had passed, when Rev. Mr. Robinson was himself taken down with typhoid fever and died. So that the convert had not long to wait for the coming of his guide and friend. The soldier's case, his dying words, and Rev. Mr. Robinson's sudden decease excited a profound interest throughout the city.

The Deacon's son was the last of a family of seven or eight children to find the Saviour. He entered the army from Hillsdale, Michigan.

Gen. Buell left Corinth in June, moving East towards Chattanooga. Bragg, the new Confederate commander, determined on a bold movement. In the close of August,



crossing the Tennessee a few miles above Chattanooga, he hastened northward into Kentucky. Meeting with no serious opposition, he soon succeeded in thoroughly alarming Louisville and Cincinnati. Buell, leaving Nashville as well garrisoned as he could, hastened to Louisville, and arrived only a few hours in advance of the enemy. Bragg retreated slowly; Buell following cautiously until October 8th, when the indecisive battle of Perryville was fought. Bragg continued his retreat, but moving more rapidly.

Rev. B. W. Chidlaw<sup>1</sup> was Chaplain of an Ohio regiment engaged in this battle, and afterwards worked untiringly among the wounded. He writes:

In making my way to the door, passing between two rows of sufferers, in one of the village meeting-houses, where over a hundred of the victims of the battle-field were lying, I felt some one pull at my coat. I turned round, and a poor fellow said—

“Preacher, are you in a hurry?”

*Into the Light.*

“No, my friend; what do you wish?”

“Well, I am not like John over there; he is ready to die, and knows what is to become of him after death. I am in the dark. I am not like him; tell me, oh tell me, what I must do to be saved?”

Poor man! he had neglected his soul's salvation and the Bible; deep darkness brooded over his awakened mind; but he was now honestly and earnestly inquiring the way to be saved. Blessed privilege to tell him of Jesus, the sinner's friend,—of the salvation of the dying thief on the cross, and of that comrade John on his cot, who knew the Lord and trusted in Him. The prayer of the publican, “God be merciful to me a sinner,” filled his soul, and found utterance from his lips, and who can doubt that it reached the ears

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<sup>1</sup> Of Cleves, Ohio,—the well-known Western Agent of the American Sunday-School Union. Later in the war he was connected with the Cincinnati Branch of the Commission, as General Agent.

of our merciful and faithful High Priest, "Who can have compassion on the ignorant and them that are out of the way?"

Mr. Chidlaw continues :

In an old tavern at Lebanon, Ky., used as a hospital for the wounded from Perryville, was a brave youth of an Ohio regiment, seriously wounded, yet cheerful, patient and happy. With the benefactions of kind friends at home, I was enabled to relieve his physical wants, adding greatly to his comfort while lying on his bed of straw. I found that though he had been a Sunday-school scholar, yet he had never professed his faith in Christ. He was anxious now to do so; and such was the clearness and fullness of the evidence which he gave me of his entire trust in Christ, that I baptized him as he lay among his comrades, who looked upon the ceremony with a mixture of awe and wonder and silence. After commending this dear brother in Christ, and all his companions, to the care and blessing of the God of all grace and consolation, I was about to leave the room, when another soldier, with a tremulous voice, said to me—

*A Deserter  
Mustered in.*

"O brother, I am a deserter."

"Why no, my friend, you are not a deserter; where did you lose your limb?"

"It was cut off the night after the battle, and I am willing to fight and to die for my country. But three years ago I joined the church at home in Indiana, but alas! I wandered from God, I left the ranks, and deserted to the enemy. Oh! how I have sinned against God and my own soul! Now, I want to re-enlist; will you muster me in?"

I soon was fully persuaded that the soldier's wish to be again mustered in was from a full and penitent heart. I gave him my hand, as he renewed his vows of fidelity, and welcomed him back to the Lord's ranks; bowed down with wonder at His mercy who could make even the room of pain in the old Lebanon tavern the very House of God and the Gate of Heaven.

Chaplain J. C. Thomas, afterwards General Reading Agent of the Army of the Cumberland, was at this battle with his regiment, the 83d Illinois. He says :

While the battle was in progress, I was at a house, ministering to the wounded. A soldier shot through the abdomen lay writhing on the floor. Stooping down by him, I asked—

“Do you love the Saviour?”

“*Happy in Jesus.*”

The lines of agony instantly disappeared and a smile of joy lighted up his countenance as he said—

“Oh, yes, and now He does not forsake me.”

The next morning, while passing near, a hand pressed my shoulder; I turned, and the soldier's comrade said eagerly—

“You remember the man who lay here in such pain?”

“Yes.”

“He is dead.”

“How did he die?”

“Happy in Jesus.”

In certain circumstances the simplest words in a soldier's mouth became pregnant with the real history of a soul:

One of the wounded at Perryville, when told by the Surgeon that he had just five minutes to live, replied—

“This is the best moment of my life. It grows *“Brighter and brighter.”* brighter and brighter.”

And then he went away into the country where light *dwells*.

When Buell started north after Bragg, Rosecrans was in command in Northern Mississippi and Alabama. Battles were fought and the Rebels defeated by him at Iuka and Corinth, in September and October. A few days after the last conflict he superseded Buell. The army had been much reduced by its hard battles and long marches; the enemy's raids too, were a source of continual impediment; so that a careful work of organization was now necessary. When this was completed, Rosecrans moved forward from Nashville against Bragg,

December 26th, 1862. On the last day of the year the terrible battles of Stone River began. On the first day of the New Year the armies watched each other. On the second, the Union forces had the advantage; and on the night of the third, the enemy evacuated Murfreesboro'. Colonel Granville Moody, better known in the Army of the Cumberland as the "Fighting Parson," relates an interesting piece of the history of the movements which preceded this battle:

The advance from Nashville began near the close of the week. Rain, mud and mist were the order of the day. The enemy's cavalry were harassing the front. The march under such difficulties made the troops unusually weary. Gen. Rosecrans called a council of war to ask his generals' opinions on several matters connected with the movement. The question was raised, Shall the army march or rest on Sunday? The decision was doubtful. Some thought that a day would be lost thus; others suggested that the troops needed rest. At last, after nearly all had given their opinion, Gen. Crittenden, who had been stalking back and forth under the trees during the discussion, was asked for his judgment. Turning round towards the group, and pointing his finger solemnly upward towards the wet sky, he said earnestly—

"Gentlemen, I don't know how you feel about *that*, but we are going into a battle in a day or two, and I always have thought it best to be on the right side of the Old Master. The army can wait."

*That* Sunday the soldiers rested.

At 11 P. M. of the first day of the battle, a party of thirty-two Delegates, well equipped and supplied, started from Philadelphia for the scene of slaughter. A company from the Chicago Army Committee, on the same errand, found them at Nashville. This was the herald of an organized and precious work, soon to be in-

augurated in the Cumberland Army. Rev. A. G. McAuley,<sup>1</sup> who headed the Philadelphia deputation, relates the following incident :

At this battle, Captain B. F. Haskett, Co. C, 51st Ohio Vols., was mortally wounded. He was carried to an old house near the field, which was used as a hospital. The Surgeon saw at once that his case was hopeless, and began to ask him his name, regiment, &c. The dying soldier was unable to speak and signed for writing materials. Paper and pencil were given him. With a tremulous hand he wrote:

*The Captain's  
Epitaph.*

“Take me to my home in Knox co., Ohio, and there let me be buried beside my wife. Let there be a monument erected, and on it let it be written: ‘All with me is well: I died in the cause of my country—a cause second to none, save the cause of my blessed Redeemer in whom I trusted in life, and who did not forsake me in death. Meet me in heaven.’”

Soon after the Christian soldier expired.

Sometimes the same blessed peace of God in the heart needed no words of the sufferer’s own to make it manifest. Again and again, in hospital and on the field, it shone into the very eyes of Death, imprinting upon the untenanted body some picture of the Everlasting Hope:

During one of the lulls of the terrible fight, a youthful voice was heard calling for aid. Soon it was drowned by the tumult of battle. After the fight was over, some soldiers went to look for the sufferer. On going through some high bushes, they saw a boy of about sixteen sitting up against a tree. As they came nearer, they found that both his feet had been carried away by a cannon ball. Upon his lap, above the bloody stumps, lay his open Bible. His eyes were raised to heaven. A look of joy was on his face, while his finger, stiff and cold in death, was laid upon this verse of the 23d Psalm:

*“Thou art with  
Me.”*

“Yea, though I walk through the valley and shadow of death, I

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of the Fifth Reformed Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia.

will fear no evil, for Thou art with me. Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."<sup>1</sup>

Chaplain C. C. McCabe,<sup>2</sup> afterwards a Christian Commission Agent, gives the story of one of the wounded at Stone River, who was taken to a hospital in Nashville:

A wounded hero was lying on the amputating table, under the influence of chloroform. They cut off his strong right arm and cast it all bleeding upon the pile of human limbs. They then laid him gently upon his couch. He awoke from his stupor and missed his arm. With his left hand he lifted the cloth, and there was nothing but the gory stump!

"Where's my arm?" he cried, "get my arm; I want to see it once more."

They brought it to him. He took hold of the cold, clammy fingers, and looking steadfastly at the poor dead member, thus addressed it, with tearful earnestness—

"Good-bye, old arm! We have been a long time together. We must part now. Good-bye, old arm! You'll never fire another carbine nor swing another sabre for the government," and the tears rolled down his cheeks.

Looking round on those standing by, he said—

"Understand, I don't regret its loss. It has been torn from my body, that not one State should be torn from this glorious Union."

Was not the poet speaking for him when he sung?—

"Some things are worthless, some others so good  
That nations that buy them pay only in blood;  
For Freedom and Union each man owes his part,  
And here I pay my share, all warm from my heart."

Mr. A. E. Chamberlain met some of the wounded from this field in the Cincinnati hospitals. He writes of an interview with one of them:

<sup>1</sup> Related by Chaplain Crozier, 37th Indiana Regiment.

<sup>2</sup> Of 121st Ohio. A member of Ohio Conference, M. E. Church.



I found a man from Stone River, near the door of Washington Park Hospital, just as I was going out. I handed him a little book. Without a word, he threw it on the stand by his bed. No soldier had ever done the like to me before. I stepped up closer to his cot. There was another little book in my hand, *The Sinner's Welcome to Come to Christ*. I noticed that the title immediately caught his eye. I thought I would hold it, while I talked with him, so that he could still see it. Not saying anything about the way in which he had acted, I told him that I felt interested in him and would like to know if he was a Christian.

"No, and I don't want to be."

"Can you give me a good reason for not being one?"

"No, and I don't care whether I can or not."

We talked on a little while, his answers being as curt and monosyllabic as possible. I found out that he had a wife and three children. His wife was a praying woman. Quite suddenly the thought came to me, he is a "backslider." I determined to test its truth by asking him a decisive question :

"My dear sir, haven't you been a praying man?"

I was entirely unprepared for the shock which at once seemed to convulse his whole frame :

"Yes, sir, I have; but I have departed further from God than any poor sinner ever did."

He was fairly broken down, and told me how happy he was when he had had a family altar :

"First of all, sir, I forgot to pray to God, myself, in secret. Then I threw my Bible away, and now I haven't read in one for months."

I observed that he still kept watching the little book I held in my hands, so I gave it to him.

"Do you suppose Jesus would receive such a backslider as I am?"

I told him about the "chief of sinners," and kneeling down, prayed with him. He was convalescent then, and was to go, the next morning, to his regiment. I gave him a Testament with the little books, and commending him to the care of the Shepherd who looks after His wandering sheep, left him. He gave me his promise, evidently one which he meant to keep, to read the Testament often and to be continually mindful of secret prayer.



Missouri had all along been much annoyed by guerillas and "bushwhackers," as well as by more formidable movements from Arkansas. In the summer of 1862, several new regiments were raised for State defence. Among these was the 33d Missouri, a St. Louis regiment, recruited by Clinton B. Fisk<sup>1</sup> of that city.

While the regiment was organizing at Benton Barracks, Col. Fisk was in the habit of conducting religious meetings with his men in the great amphitheatre of the St. Louis fair grounds. These meetings were of great interest. Thousands of citizens were regularly in attendance to join in the services, and some one of the loyal clergymen was present each Sabbath to preach. One Sabbath, Rev. Dr. Nelson, of the First Presbyterian Church, was preaching earnestly upon the necessity of a pure life, exhorting the men to beware of the vices incident to the camp, and especially warning them against profanity. The Doctor related the incident of the Commodore who, whenever recruits reported to his vessel for duty, was in the habit of entering into an agreement with them that he should do all the swearing for that vessel; and appealed to the thousand Missouri soldiers in Colonel Fisk's regiment to enter into a solemn covenant that day with the Colonel that he should do all the swearing for the Thirty-third Missouri. The regiment rose to their feet as one man and entered into the covenant. It was a grand spectacle.

For several months no swearing was heard in the regiment. Col. Fisk became a Brigadier, and followed Price into Arkansas. But one evening<sup>2</sup> as he sat in front of his headquarters at Helena, he heard some one down in the bottom-lands near the river, swearing in the most approved Flanders style. On taking observation he discovered that the swearer

*"It had to be  
done Right off."*

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<sup>1</sup> One of the original members of the Christian Commission, and a most active one throughout the war. His headquarters were always well stocked with the Scriptures, hymn books and religious newspapers. A card was prominently posted up—"SWEAR NOT AT ALL. Attention is called to the 3d Commandment, and the 3d Article of War."

<sup>2</sup> February, 1863.

was a teamster from his own headquarters, a member of his covenanting regiment, and a confidential old friend. He was hauling a heavy load of forage from the depôt to camp; his six mules had become rebellious with their overload, had run the wagon against a stump and snapped off the pole. The teamster opened his great batteries of wrath and profanity against the mules, the wagon, the Arkansas mud, the Rebels, and Jeff Davis. In the course of an hour afterwards, as the teamster was passing headquarters, the General called to him and said, "John, did I not hear some one swearing most terribly an hour ago down on the bottom?"

"I think you did, General."

"Do you know who it was?"

"Yes, sir; it was me, General."

"Do you not remember the covenant entered into at Benton Barracks, St. Louis, with Rev. Dr. Nelson, that I should do all the swearing for our old regiment?"

"To be sure I do, General," said John; "but then you were not there to do it, *and it had to be done right off!*"

Gen. Fisk related this story in January, 1865, in the hearing of President Lincoln, at the Anniversary Meeting of the Commission, in the Hall of the House of Representatives at Washington. The President, if one might judge from his demonstrations on the occasion, enjoyed the incident hugely.

*Abraham Lincoln's Heart.*

The next morning, Gen. Fisk was waiting in the ante-room at the White House to see Mr. Lincoln. A poor old man from Tennessee was moving about, among the large number in attendance, with a very sorrowful face. Sitting down beside him, the General inquired his errand, and learned that he had been waiting three or four days to get an audience. On seeing Mr. Lincoln probably depended the life of his son, who was under sentence of death at Nashville for some military offence. Gen. Fisk wrote his case in outline on a card, and sent it in with a special request that the President would see the man. In a moment the order came, and past Senators, Governors and Generals, waiting impatiently, the old man was ushered into the President's presence. He showed Mr. Lincoln his papers. He took them and said with great kindness that he would look into them, and give him an answer on the following

day. The old man, in an agony of apprehension, looked up into the President's sympathetic face, and cried aloud—

“To-morrow may be too late. My son is under sentence of death. The decision must be made right off.”

The tall form of Mr. Lincoln bent over the old man in an instant. “Come,” said he, “wait a bit; that ‘right off’ reminds me of a story.” And then he went on to relate the case of “John Todd,” which Gen. Fisk had told the evening before. As he told it, the old man became interested; for a moment he forgot his boy and sorrow, and President and listener laughed heartily together.

Mr. Lincoln took up the papers again, and bent over them a second to write a few magic words. The old man's eyes were filled with tears again when he read them; but now they were tears of joy, for the words had saved the life of his boy.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE WESTERN ARMIES.

FROM AFTER THE STONE RIVER BATTLES UNTIL THE SURRENDER OF  
VICKSBURG.

*January 1863—July 1863.*

THE Army of Gen. Rosecrans remained inactive at Murfreesboro' until midsummer of 1863. This period of comparative quiet afforded a rare opportunity for inaugurating more fully the work of the Commission. Rev. Edward P. Smith<sup>1</sup> was appointed the General Field Agent in the Army of the Cumberland, and entered the lines, with several Delegates, early in April. Organization was at once begun, and the work in the army, with Nashville as the centre of operations, became thenceforth rich in effort and in fruit.

The first Delegates carried, along with their other stores, some children's gifts and letters to soldiers. The history of one of these mementos has been accurately traced, and is of peculiar interest :

A little girl in Philadelphia, about seven years of age, sent, with a Testament, to "some sick soldier" in the hospitals at Nashville, the following letter :

PHILADELPHIA, *April 17, 1863.*

MY DEAR SOLDIER:—I send you a little Testament. I am a little girl seven years old. I want to do something for the soldiers who do so much for us ; so I have saved

*Little Lizzie's  
Letter.*

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 129.

my pocket money to send you this. Although I have never seen you, I intend to begin to pray that God will make and keep you good. Oh how sorry I am that you have to leave your dear mother! Did she cry when you bade her good-bye? Don't you often think of her at night when you are going to bed? Do you kneel down and say your prayers? If I were you, I wouldn't care if the other soldiers did laugh; God will smile upon you. I am sorry, very sorry that you are sick. I wish I could go to nurse you. I could bathe your head and read to you. Do you know the hymn—

“There is a happy land?”

I hope you will go to that land when you die. But, remember, I will pray that you will get well again. When you are able to sit up, I wish you to write to me, and tell me all your troubles. Enclosed you will find a postage stamp. I live at — North Ninth street, Philadelphia. Good-bye.

Your friend,

LIZZIE SCOTT.

Mr. Caleb J. Milne, a Delegate from Philadelphia, carried the Testament and letter to Nashville. Not knowing how better to fulfill Lizzie's trust, Mr. Milne determined, one evening at a prayer meeting in the convalescent ward of Hospital No. 8, to give it to the first man who should ask for prayers. When the invitation was given, the first man upon his feet was a Michigan cavalryman. He was in earnest about the great question of salvation, and, at the close of the meeting, Mr. Milne, after a few words of counsel, handed him the child's package,—with what effect the cavalryman's letter, written shortly afterwards, will tell:

NASHVILLE, TENN, *April 24, 1863.*

DEAR SISTER LIZZIE:—I received your kind letter from Mr. C. J. M. A beautiful present indeed, and I trust that it will be one of the means of converting others, as well as the receiver. May God bless the giver! You have done a good work. Continue to pray, dear sister, and God will answer you. He says so in His Word.

My dear mother is in the grave. It is nearly eleven years since she died; but she died happy, and I trust I shall meet her in heaven.

I will try and pray for myself. I have been in the hospital four months, but am now nearly well; will be able to join my regiment to face the enemy; and if I should fall on the battle-field, I may have the blessed assurance of meeting my Saviour in peace.

Yes, "there is a happy land." May we meet in that happy land. I do not think that my fellow-soldiers will deter me from serving my Master. There are many others here that His Spirit is striving with.

I expect to go home to see my dear friends once more. I am very thankful that the privilege is granted, and I trust we shall have a happy meeting. Dear Lizzie, I must close. May God bless you, is my prayer. Write me again. Address,

Your friend,

STANLEY NICHOLS,<sup>1</sup>

Co. F, 4th Mich. Cav., Nashville.

The Chaplains of the army worked most cordially with the Delegates, and, as they were able, undertook volunteer labor in the hospitals of Murfreesboro'. Chaplain Thomas<sup>2</sup> gives the following picture:

One Sunday, I distributed reading matter throughout the nine hospitals in Murfreesboro'. At the close of a short service in "No. 8,"

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. Thomas Atkinson gives the particulars of a very pleasant interview with Stanley Nichols, at No. 8 Hospital, Nashville, about Chickamauga time. His regiment had been at New Albany, Ind., and was going forward to the front. He stopped at his old hospital over night, to see some former friends. "When I saw him first, he was standing late at night beside a cot. A lamp overhead gave a feeble light. He was the very picture of everything manly and noble and Christian. I stepped forward and asked, 'Are you Stanley Nichols?' 'Yes, sir.' 'Are you a Christian?' 'Yes, thank God!' 'Have you the letter you got from little Lizzie?' 'Yes, sir,' said he, and he went on to tell me of the influence it had had upon his life." Mr. Atkinson's interview resulted in the publication, by the American Tract Society of New York, of the original correspondence, which excited such deep interest throughout the country.

Rev. C. S. Armstrong, Chaplain of Nichols' regiment, writes us that he ever found him, after the receipt of Lizzie's letter, a true Christian soldier, and of great service to him in his work among the men.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 82.



I glanced along a row of cots to see if there were any bad cases; one face arrested my attention. Approaching, I took  
*Ready to Die.* a youth's hand, and asked softly—

“My friend, are you a Christian?”

Opening his eyes, and gradually entering into the full meaning of my question, he answered—

“Oh, yes;” then pressing my hand, with increasing earnestness he added, “O sir, I'm so glad you've come in here.”

He was quiet a moment; then clasping his hands as though he were beholding the “beatific vision,” he exclaimed, “Glory to God!” His brother, much affected, was at his side.

Seeing a comrade standing near, the sick man called him to his cot. Taking his hand, the soldier looked up into his comrade's face and asked most pleadingly—

“Tom, won't you go with us to heaven?”

Tom began to melt, but not replying, the dying man urged the question with an intense, almost painful solicitude. I was moved to tears, and placing my hand gently on Tom's shoulder, said—

“Tom, won't you go with us?”

“I will, sir,” was the answer which had already found its way to his lips.

I called again in two days; the young soldier was with Jesus. I learned from his brother how they both had escaped from the Confederate army, and, after reaching Nashville, had enlisted on the Union side. The account given by the survivor of his brother's conversion was a symbol of his life. Sitting in his tent, a large “Sibley,” one evening, he was unusually thoughtful. The rest were playing cards; there came a lull in the game. He broke the silence:

“Boys, I've been thinking what kind of a life I've been leading, and I'm resolved to quit sinning and begin praying,  
*The Decision.* —to try and lead a Christian life.”

There were no taunts, for all respected him as a faithful soldier and kind messmate. He improved every opportunity of talking with his comrades, and so judicious and persevering was he, that in a few weeks all swearing and card-playing disappeared from the mess. Continuing to serve Christ, we have seen what he was at the gates of death.



Towards the close of April, Rev. Mr. Smith held a Sabbath service in the General Hospital just outside of Murfreesboro'. He writes of it:

After service, one of the nurses asked me to go down to Ward E. A sick man wanted a Chaplain. Dutton<sup>1</sup> and I went. We found him—an East Tennessean, prostrate with fever, a tall, athletic man of middle age, evidently wholly unused to sickness.

I approached him cautiously, saying to myself, this is one of those cases of religion sought, not so much because the man wishes for it, as because he feels that he must have it. He would not have God when he was well, and wants me to make it up for him in this last sickness. So I began a long way off:

"I am sorry to see you in this trouble."

He interrupted me—

"I'm sick, parson, but I'm not troubled; did the nurse tell you I was in trouble?"

His cheerful tone and sweet smile showed me my mistake; that was a Christian's voice; and I became as much interested to test his faith as I had been before distrustful of his sincerity.

"You are very sick?"

"Yes, and a heap of men are dying in this hospital, but I am not troubled; it's all right, parson."

"You have a wife?"

"Yes."

"Children?"

"Six."

"Do they know at home how you are?"

"No, sir," said he, for the first time showing emotion, "and I don't know how they are, but I ain't troubled about 'em. You see, parson, when the Rebels run me off, my wife fed me in the bushes. One night she came to tell me the Rebels were getting hot after me, and I must go directly. We knelt down by a gum tree and prayed together. She gave me to God, and I gave her and the children to God; and then made for the Union lines and enlisted. I haven't heard from

them since; that was eight months ago. But I am not troubled about 'em. It's all right, parson—all right."

"Why did you send for me?" I asked.

"I wanted somebody to pray for me."

"What shall I pray for? You don't seem to want anything."

"Why, parson, can't a man pray without he's in trouble? My mind is mighty weak and scattered like, and I wanted somebody to come and help me thank God. You can pray for anything else you reckon I want, but thank Him first."

We knelt on the ground by the cot, and with tears and difficult utterance prayed with thanksgiving; the prostrate soldier occasionally breaking in—

"Yes, Lord; yes, thank God."<sup>1</sup>

Two weeks later, Rev. Mr. Smith made use of this wonderful instance of Divine help for a Christian disciple. He writes:

I had been preaching in the fortifications to Capt. Bridge's Battery, taking for my subject, "Our safety in God's care," as illustrated by Peter's deliverance from prison. As I walked out of camp, a batteryman joined me for a talk:

*"The Best kind  
of Breastwork."*

"That was a funny doctrine you preached this morning, Chaplain."

"It is a blessed doctrine," I replied, "and nobody ought to know it better than a soldier."

"I mean to say that it's a strange doctrine, and I don't see how it can be true. Don't you think a forty-pounder, striking a fellow fair, would kill him, whether he was religious or not?"

"Undoubtedly."

"Do you think if a Christian goes out on a skirmish line, a Rebel sharpshooter can't hit him?"

"No," said I; "I think the Christian would be rather more likely to be hit than a man who was not a Christian."

"Don't the Christians take sick and go to hospital; and don't the 'Chronic'<sup>2</sup> carry 'em off just like anybody else?"

<sup>1</sup> See p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> This was one of the soldiers' names for Chronic Diarrhœa; not unfrequently it was called "the Chronicle."

"Very often."

"Just so," he replied; "I said to myself while you were going on about being always just as safe as Peter was, 'I'll make the Chaplain take part of that back.'"

"But," I replied, "my doctrine is that a minie ball would not *hurt*, not that it would not *hit*."

"Well, now, Chaplain, I've had a little experience of minie balls, and I know they hurt."

"Are you a Christian?"

"I wish I was, but I have to confess I'm not."

"Suppose you were a Christian, ready to die; what would that forty-pounder do for you?"

"It would take me straight to heaven."

"Would that hurt you?"

"Not much."

"Neither would the minie balls nor the fever. Now, have you 'made the Chaplain take back' his sermon?"

"Well, but, Chaplain, suppose he should be taken sick, and go to the hospital, and not die after all?"

Then I told him of my East Tennessean, who was "all right," and only wanted help to "thank God;" and I asked whether the fever was hurting him. Before I had finished my story, the battery-man was in tears. Grasping my hand at his good-bye, he said—

"You are right, Chaplain; a man that is a real Christian can't be hurt; the religion in his soul makes the very best kind of a breast-work."

The Christian soldiers in the army found it necessary to meet together in voluntary societies, for various purposes of mutual edification and encouragement. Rev. Mr. Smith recalls his meeting with one of these organizations near Murfreesboro':

On a Sunday morning in May, I was on my way to fill an appointment for service with a regiment, when I came upon a group of soldiers, sitting on logs in a hollow square, under an oak tree. I found it was a Bible-class of the First Michigan Engineers, with a Corporal for teacher. I took my

*The Bible-Class.*

place as a scholar and went through with the morning's lesson,—the first chapter of St. James. There were no Commentaries in the soldiers' knapsacks; some of them had reference Bibles: the teachings of the hour were from the men's hearts, aided by such knowledge as they had stored away in early life. The question of sin, its origin and its use, was handled in a true soldier's way, and settled so as to be of practical use in his life, if not altogether according to theological terminologies and schools.

After the Bible-class came a meeting of the Christian Association of the regiment. Wanting a Chaplain, they had formed themselves into a society. The Articles of Faith to which a candidate for admission must assent were brief and comprehensive, including these three points: 1. Salvation through an Atoning Saviour; 2. Belief that this salvation had been personally experienced; and, 3. Proof of that experience, on the testimony of the regiment.

*The Church in  
the Woods.*

There were several candidates to be admitted this morning. Each stood up and gave his religious history. Then followed the proof from the regiment. The candidates were passed upon one by one. The opinions of comrades as to their fitness or unfitness were most freely and faithfully given. Few men enter a church at home under such genuine tests.

Sergeant J. desired to unite with the Association, as he said, not for its good, but for his own sake:

"I am not worthy, brothers; you know that very well. You know my life has not been what it ought to have been as a Christian man. But if you *can* take me and help me, I want to come. I mean to be true; if God and my comrades will help me, I shall be true. But if you think it will be dangerous to receive me, perhaps you had better let me wait and try to go alone; although I have not much hope, unless I have your assistance."

*Not Willing to  
go Alone.*

Remarks were called for and most freely given. Sergeant J.'s life will not probably pass such a severe ordeal again until the final review. Every word was kind as it was true, and every comrade closed with the wish that the Sergeant might be tried. He came in by a unanimous vote.

Corporal S. gave a good religious experience. His account made

his conversion clear, decided and rather remarkable. His Christian hopes were delightful. He spoke with deep emotion and moved me to tears. I supposed there would be no discussion in his case. But the third-article—proof before the regiment, was called for, and there were found to be decided objections to his admission. To the grief of many of his Christian comrades, he had persisted in a “gift enterprise,” receiving chances from a firm in New York, and selling them in the regiment. He insisted that it was not unchristian so to do—that he gave nearly, if not quite, the value of the money received, in addition to the chance of a large gain. His comrades, one after another, declared that they could not see it in that light, and called on Brother S. to renounce his practice. This he did. He was willing to quit it from that time forward, especially as it had been forbidden in the army by Gen. Rosecrans.

*The Theology  
of Repentance.*

Now arose the question, Shall the Corporal come in? One after another declared that he ought not only to *forsake* sin, but to *repent* of it:

“Say you are sorry for it, Corporal, and we will receive you.”

But the Corporal had taken a position, and could not see the way to retreat; nor could the brotherhood see the way open for his membership. Accordingly a committee was appointed to labor with him, and so wise and faithful was their work, that at the next meeting the Corporal came, through repentance and confession, into cordial fellowship with the Association.

Two soldiers were received who had never united with the church at home. They desired baptism by immersion. At the close of the afternoon service, we marched to the banks of Stone River, where we went down into the water. The comrades of the men stood near the side of the stream, singing—

*The Baptism.*

“Am I a soldier of the cross?”

It was a strange and beautiful scene. Those scarred veterans on the bank, cheering their two comrades who were dedicating themselves to God, in the very stream which, a few months before, had run red with the blood of their fellow-soldiers and enemies. Just above this point, in January, the Confederates had made their most furious charge, and were repulsed by Crittenden.

Rev. A. B. Dascomb<sup>1</sup> came to the army as Delegate early in May. Mr. D. L. Moody, of Chicago, who arrived about the same time, was successful in establishing a daily prayer meeting in the basement of the Second Presbyterian Church of Nashville, on May 10th—a meeting of remarkable character, which was continued until the work closed in the Summer of 1865. Mr. Dascomb gives an account of one of the first fruits of this meeting:

I shall never forget one soldier whom I met in Nashville. His name was J. Z—. I learned his story from his own lips after his conversion. His father was a Presbyterian elder; but the son, from his early youth, had been disobedient and wicked.

*The Changed  
Life.*

A little brother, who used to sleep with him, was in the habit, every night, of kneeling by the bedside to say his simple child's prayers. This so enraged Z— that sometimes he had been tempted to kill him. Once only he seems to have been convinced of his wickedness; this was when his sister died. She had called her wayward brother to her side, and tearfully prayed him to meet her in heaven. He gave the promise, but after her death, to escape the memory of her request and his parents' entreaties, he ran away. He was a boatman on the Ohio for some time after that, and plunged into every species of vice practised by the most abandoned of these men.

When the war broke out he enlisted in an Ohio regiment, and served at Shiloh, Perryville and Stone River. At the last battle he was wounded; and, unfitted for longer active service, was sent to the Barracks, opposite the Nashville Christian Commission rooms, to act as cook. Here he was drawn into the daily prayer meeting. The words which he heard brought back into vivid relief the thoughts he had had on the battle-field after he was wounded, his sister's and his parents' lessons and love, his child-brother's little prayers. He had neglected so many early advantages that he was very ignorant; but

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Woodstock, Vt.



he knew that there was a Deliverer; he cried mightily for His presence. The Lord heard the poor man's prayer, and in that strength the soldier renewed the vow made when his sister died. The change in his life was immediate and manifest. He attended the prayer meetings regularly, and became a kind of volunteer Delegate among his fellow-soldiers, carrying to them books and tracts, and praying with the sick and dying.

"I have served Satan diligently," he would say; "that's all past now, and can't be helped, God knows; but I want to serve Christ as diligently."

This was his life-purpose now. He was a lion that had become as a lamb. I confess I never before witnessed what was apparently so great a triumph of grace.

Mr. Dascomb gives in another incident a strange and vivid picture of the power of that Word that shall not return unto God void:

It was my custom daily while at Nashville to visit Hospital No. 20. During one of my calls there, I came upon a soldier evidently near death. I spoke to him earnestly and repeatedly, but received no satisfactory response. I was puzzled, for it was impossible to determine whether he was physically *The Last Prayer.* insensible, or indifferent to what I was saying. I urged him to pray; still no answer came. Bending down to him, I repeated my request, giving him these words of petition:

"God, be merciful to me a sinner; Saviour, pity; Jesus, save me."

There was no reply, and sorrowfully I turned to the next cot, tenanted by a bright and glowing Christian, in whose words of faith and hope the speechless sufferer near me was forgotten. A low murmur of words from his cot recalled him to my mind. In a clear, but very faint, struggling voice, the words I had said to him were repeated:

"God, be merciful to me a sinner; Saviour, pity; Jesus, save me."

A flickering glow glanced for a moment into the stony eyes, and wavered over the wan cheeks and lips, then went away for ever.



Mr. Thomas Atkinson<sup>1</sup> tells the story of his first experience as a Delegate in the Nashville hospitals :

The morning after Mr. Moody and I reached Nashville, we stood upon the hotel steps debating whither we should go. Thinking there was no time to be lost, we separated and went in different directions, —he going to Hospital No. 3, and I to No. 8. It was my first venture into army work. I scarcely knew what to say or do. Entering the first floor of the large ward, I stood irresolute. Surgeons and nurses were moving hither and thither. A half doubt came to me whether I could do this work which the Lord had put upon me. Suddenly I noticed a man observing me attentively from a distant cot; I turned my eyes away from his, and letting them wander about the room a while, looked at him again. He was watching me still. Putting up a silent prayer to God, I went to him. His name was John Hays. He had a wife and five children :

*"Saved for just  
Nothing at All."*

"You seem to be very low, John."

"Yes, sir, I am."

"Are you a Christian?"

"No, sir, I'm not, but my wife is. And I was just asking the Lord this morning, to send me some one to tell me how I could get to be like her. When I saw you standing over there, I thought, 'Maybe the Lord has heard me. 'Maybe this is the man He has sent to help me.'"

The soldier's earnestness, my former indecision, the blessed opening evident, made me strong in faith :

"Yes, John, I am the Lord's messenger; and, moreover, I have come to tell you that you are to become a child of Christ."

"Do you think so, sir? Then thank God for it!"

I told him of the only way by which he could come to the cross. He waited as if I were going to say more, but I only asked him if he would accept the offered Atonement.

"Why, sir," said he, "I didn't think that was the way. I thought

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<sup>1</sup> Of Chicago. Member afterwards of the Wittenberg Synod (Ohio) of the Lutheran Church.

I had to be sorry a long time, and—and—,” and here he stopped because he hardly knew what more to say.

“Listen,” said I—

“‘Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bid’st me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.’”

“And will He save me that way for just nothing at all?”

“Yes,—

“‘Nothing in my hands I bring,  
Simply to Thy cross I cling;  
Naked, come to Thee for dress;  
Helpless, cling to Thee for grace;  
Vile, I to the fountain fly;  
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.’”

“I never knew it before, sir. I never knew it was so easy. Thank God! Thank God!”

There was a nurse standing near by. The soldier turned to him and said—

“Nurse, when this gentleman goes away, I want you to write to my wife and tell her that I have found out how to trust Jesus. Thank God! Thank God!”

He never faltered for a moment, during the five days which intervened before his death, in his simple, childlike attachment to Christ.

At last the morning came when his cot was empty. I asked the nurse about him. Arrangements had been made by the dying man for the prompt transmission of his remains to his home. They were already upon the road. Then I discovered that the nurse had neglected the soldier’s request to send a letter. The first intimation to the wife, of her husband’s decease, would be the arrival of the mournful case which contained his body. It was a sad mistake, but could not be remedied. I wrote her a letter, giving full particulars of her husband’s triumphant departure. The answer was one of very precious interest:

“O sir, I didn’t think there were any earthly words which could comfort me as did those in your letter. I am afraid I sinned against

*Sorrow Turned  
into Joy.*

God yesterday, as I stood by my husband's grave. I know I had hard, rebellious thoughts. No one knew about them but myself and God. As the minister said, 'Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust,' I almost thought I could stand it no longer. It was hard to be separated from him thus, and to know so little—nothing about how he died. When I got back to the house, your letter was lying on the table. In it I learned that John had found Jesus, and I cried for joy.

"'Children,' I said, 'dry up your tears. Your father is not dead. He is alive in Heaven. Thank God!'

"At the grave, the war had seemed to me very cruel and wicked. It is all changed now. I shall meet John again; that is enough. Thank God who saved my husband."

In November, 1862, Gen. Grant, having completed his preparations, advanced into Mississippi. In the close of December, Gen. Sherman, with 30,000 men transported down the Mississippi and up the Yazoo in boats, made an assault upon Vicksburg, continued for several days, but entirely unsuccessful. Arkansas Post on the White River was reduced in January, and in the same month work was begun on a canal which was intended to render Vicksburg useless. March rains paralyzed this effort to flank the Mississippi. Various plans were devised to render the reduction of the Rebel stronghold easier. All were more or less failures. Grand Gulf, below Vicksburg, was reduced early in May, after Sherman's victory of Port Gibson. Our army now slowly approached Vicksburg from the south-east, and on May 18th crossed the Big Black, after the victories of Raymond, Jackson and Champion Hills. The grand assault on the city, May 22d, taught Grant that it could not be stormed. So he sat down to dig his way into it. On July 4th the city surrendered.

General Fisk's<sup>1</sup> command, after one of the fruitless expeditions "to climb up some other way" into Vicksburg, was stationed at Helena, Arkansas. The General relates an incident which occurred here about February 1st 1863.<sup>2</sup>

We had been removed for a month from our lines of communication and had received no letters from home. Of course, when the way was re-opened, our first thought was of the mail. I went to the post-office tent and received my precious budget from home—from wife and children, pastor and Sunday-school children—for I had been *reduced* from the rank of Superintendent of the Sunday-school to become a General in the army. I sat down on a log by my tent to peruse the messages of love. I had read them through and through, and was about to rise, when an old soldier, seated near me on the same log, accosted me with—

*John Shearer's  
Letter.*

"Old fellow, I want you to read my letter for me."

I had nothing on to indicate my rank. I turned and looked at the man, and then reached for the letter. It was directed to "John Shearer, Helena, Arkansas." The address began at the top of the envelope and ran diagonally across to the lower corner.

"Can't you read it yourself, John?"

"No."

"Then I will, of course; but why don't you know how to read? The fellows that don't know how to read ought by rights to be found only on Jeff Davis' side."

I learned that he had been born in a slave State, though he was an Iowa soldier, and that might have helped to excuse him. The letter was from John's wife. After speaking of the gathering in of the crops, and entering into all the little affairs of home—mentioning even Susy's new dress, the new boots for Johnny, and the cunningest wee bits of socks for the baby—the faithful wife began to read John a sermon on this wise:

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> Told at Anniversary of the Commission, Philadelphia, Jan. 31st, 1865.

"John, it was quarterly meeting last Saturday, and the Presiding Elder stopped at our house. He told me that a great many men who went into the army Christians, came back very wicked; that they learned to swear and gamble and drink. Now, John, I want you to remember the promise you made, as you were leaving me and the children, that you would be a good man."

Ah! the soldier wept as he listened, and when we came to the dear name that closed the precious letter, he raised the sleeve of his old coat, brushed away the great swelling tears, and said with a full heart, "*Bully for her!*"

It was the soldier's *Amen*, eloquent and expressive.

"Well, *have* you been 'a good man,' John?"

Then came the sad, sad story of drunkenness and gambling and profanity, into which John had been led, and the humble confession that he had forgotten his vow, but would renew it, and, with God's help, try to keep it.

I then discovered my rank to him, which disconcerted him at first, but he soon got over it. I invited him to my tent, and he came to all our meetings afterwards.

Weeks passed by, and the horrors of the grave-digging on the Mississippi, where thousands of brave men were laid low in the swamps, passed over us, sweeping away six hundred of my own men. Low with the fever, one day, I found John Shearer. I received his words of faith in the home beyond, his last messages to wife and children, and then sang by his side the sweet hymn, beginning—

"Jesus can make a dying bed  
Feel soft as downy pillows are."

The soldier's eyes were soon closed in death.

Gen. Fisk kept up constant communication with the Western Army Committees and with the Central Commission, doing all in his power to promote the value of Delegate work in the army.

The St. Louis Committee sent to Memphis, as their

first agent, Mr. K. A. Burnell,<sup>1</sup> who, early in the Spring of 1863, opened a reading-room in Memphis. He writes:

Four weeks of February and March I spent with the army before Vicksburg. Coming back to Memphis, I had an interesting conversation with an aged soldier. He said—

“I entered the army as a Christian, fully expecting to stand up for Jesus. I tried hard; but with no regular Sunday service, no prayer meeting, no closet even for my own prayers, I think I fell back instead of advancing. When I found that out for certain—it was just before the fight of Arkansas Post—I went to Christ and told Him all about it; and He came back to me, brother, and was with me in the midst of that fight. I can never forget it.” The old soldier mused a while and then went on: “It was peace—peace in the midst of the battle. Indeed it passed all understanding.”

*How to Fight  
Best.*

His countenance glowed as he proceeded :

“It seemed as if I wanted to go home in the midst of the fight. I think I prayed that I might. I felt strong and courageous; loading and firing with the calmness of a man alone in a dense forest. Since that fight I’ve had no doubts; and I feel, more and more every day, that we boys, to know how to fight best, must know how to love the Lord Jesus with all our hearts.”

In one of the Memphis prayer meetings, a man rose and said—

“Two weeks ago I was one of the wickedest men in the army; nothing was too bad for me to do or say; but now, by the grace of God, I can say I am ‘a sinner saved.’ This morning, on guard, I forgot my watchword. I was troubled; but, as I was thinking of it, this thought came to me: ‘I have another countersign,—Christ,—and with that there is no guarded line in earth or heaven which I cannot pass.’ When I had thought of that a little while, my other countersign came to mind, and all was right.”

*The Countersign.*

The soldiers, as in the instance last described, often took the nearest and aptest illustrations of their spiritual

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 74.



condition from the commonest incidents of their daily military life. Mr. Wm. Reynolds,<sup>1</sup> who visited the Army of the Mississippi in April and May, held a prayer meeting one evening at Milliken's Bend, and writes of it:

At the close of the meeting, many asked me to pray for them, saying they wished to be Christians for the rest of their lives. As I left them, promising to be down on Sunday, I noticed a man following

me. Stopping me, he began—  
*"I want a Dis-charge."* "My friend, I want a discharge."

Supposing he meant a discharge from the army, I said I was afraid that would be hard to obtain, as he appeared to be recovering.

"Oh," said he, "that's not what I mean; I want a discharge from the *devil's army*. I've been fighting and serving in his ranks for twenty-five years, and I'm tired and sick of the service. I want to leave his ranks and enlist under the banner of the cross, and fight for Jesus the balance of my life."

I told him he could have that discharge by *deserting* the devil's ranks, and coming over to the Lord Jesus. I talked and prayed with him, leaving with him some suitable reading. On Sunday, at the close of the evening meeting, he told me he had come over and was a "Soldier of the Cross."

Mr. Reynolds visited Helena, where Gen. Fisk's command was, in April. He gives several reminiscences of his work there:

I visited an Iowa regiment, and was told that no religious service had been held in it for over nine months. Gathering the men together, I told them of salvation through Christ. At the close of the

meeting, all Christians were requested to remain.  
*"It would Break my Heart."* Nine tarried. I asked them if they were willing to live, in the future as in the past, without any relig-

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<sup>1</sup> President of the Army Committee, and later of the Christian Commission Branch of Peoria, Ill.



ious services whatever, reminding them of the command, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." Deep feeling was manifested by the little company, with real penitence for past neglect of duty. At the close of my remarks they all resolved that, with God's help, they would be more fully consecrated to their Saviour, whom for so many months they had "followed afar off."

In the evening a prayer meeting was held in a deserted plantation house near by. At the hour the expected nine appeared, and with them two or three hundred fellow-soldiers. As the meeting progressed, many, unused to weeping, were bathed in tears; sobs and crying were heard in every part of the large congregation. A fine-looking officer rose and said—

"Soldiers, you are no doubt surprised at seeing me here this evening, and you will be more surprised when I tell you that I was once a Christian, and have now a Christian wife and three children in Iowa. Before leaving home, my wife made me promise to maintain my Christian character in the army unsullied. But I soon forgot that promise. On entering this regiment, I had not moral courage enough to tell any one I was a Christian. Ashamed to pray, I soon found Christ was ashamed of me. I fell fast into profanity, intemperance and gambling. As most of you know, I am now addicted to all these vices. Do you think I am happy? Oh, no; I have been miserable. That faithful wife writes me each week a long letter, and at the close often says—

"O George, if we are never permitted to meet on earth again, how it comforts me to know we shall meet on the other side of Jordan, where there are no wars and no partings."

"O soldiers, how these letters burn my heart! How that wife is deceived! Many a night I have lain awake, thinking over my fallen condition, and then have drowned my thoughts in the morning with liquor. The day before yesterday, I received another letter from her, in which she said—

"George, in looking over your letters I am surprised you say nothing about your religious condition. O George, can it be possible you have turned your back upon your Saviour, and that you are no longer living as a Christian? If I thought for a moment you would fall in this war, and I should never see you again in this world, and that we would never meet in the next, *it would break my heart.*"

The strong man was broken down. After becoming more calm, he proceeded again :

“ Now, soldiers, as for me, like the Prodigal Son, I am determined to return to my Father. From this time I am determined to stand up for Christ as valiantly as for my country.”

His after life proved the strength and sincerity of his purpose.

A dying man was brought into the Hindman Hospital at Helena by two soldiers. As soon as he was set down, he reached out his hand to the matron and asked her to shake hands with him :

“ I am going home to my mansion on high. I love everybody,—but, oh, how I love my Saviour.”

He died in a few minutes, with a smile of peace upon his countenance.

On examining his knapsack, we found a very touching letter from his wife. It told how she had just received a letter from him enclosing a little book for George, their young son ; how little George had put the book into the cupboard, and had said—

“ It must stay here till pa comes home.”

I took and cut a lock of his hair, gathered up some trinkets from his knapsack and sent them to his wife in Iowa, with the dying words of her husband. After my return home I received a letter from her in which she told me that she could not express her gratitude for the little things I had sent,—for the lock of hair, and above all for the precious dying words. Her husband had been converted in the army, and the assurance she had of meeting him in the world beyond was of inexpressible comfort in her bereavement.

We went down from Helena to Milliken's Bend, on a boat crowded to its utmost capacity with soldiers and a wicked set of officers, returning to the army. They spent their time in drinking and gambling. Mr. Burnell and I, as we found, were the only Christians on the boat. We felt as if somehow we must plant the cross right in the midst of the scene.

Immediately after supper, the tables were cleared away and nearly all began playing cards. We went into our state-room and knelt down to ask God's help, for it seemed to me at least that anything we could do was useless. Coming out, we stationed ourselves in the centre of the room ; all around us were men intent upon their games, cursing bitterly at losses, laughing loudly over success, and relating

abominable stories. It seemed the very mouth of hell. I began by singing the hymn—

“All hail the power of Jesus’ name.”

If a thunderbolt had fallen into their midst, the astonishment could not have been greater. For a moment every man stopped and looked at us in perfect amazement. After singing two verses alone, Mr. Burnell stated that we were Delegates of the Christian Commission on our way to the army at Milliken’s Bend for the purpose of preaching Christ and ministering to soldiers in distress. He then addressed a few earnest words to the officers, reminding them of the influence of their example on their commands,—how demoralizing it sometimes was, and beseeching them to care more for their men’s eternal welfare. He reminded them how many sons, given to the army by devoted Christian mothers, had been ruined through the example of wicked officers. For a moment it seemed to make an impression, but all were soon again engaged in their gambling games. The tide seemed to have rolled back and covered up what we had said for ever.

The service had been so short, that we had little time to notice the effects, such as they were. At a table just by where we stood, one man attempted thrice during Mr. Burnell’s talk to resume the game, but he failed. His muttered curses and jeers did not prevail till we had finished. One of the men at this table looked at us when we began, then dropped his eyes and sat with bowed head even after we had concluded; another rose and left the room.

In the morning, a gentleman came up to Mr. Burnell, and said—

“You ought to be a General, sir.”

“I know nothing of military affairs,” was the reply.

“Ah, sir,” said he, “but you have moral courage. Any man who could stand up amidst such iniquity and preach Christ, as you did last night, is a hero. I was a professor of religion before I came into the army, but through bad associates and a want of moral courage to meet my fellow-officers as a Christian, I soon fell into profanity, gambling and drunkenness.”

He seemed deeply affected and promised, God helping him, he would show his colors thenceforth and stand up for Jesus.

While at Milliken’s Bend, I was holding a meeting in an Indiana

regiment. At the close a man came forward and asked me if I had been on a certain boat two days before. I told him, yes. He asked me if I was one of two who had sung and preached one evening. I told him I had helped in such a service.

"Our First Lieutenant," said he, "has been a very wicked man, but he has just returned from a furlough home and seems to be entirely different. He says that while he and others were playing cards a few nights ago on board the boat, two men came out of their state-room, sung a hymn and said some earnest words about the influence officers had over the morals of their men, and about Jesus. He tried to play after they had gone, but it was no use. He lay awake all night. It revived the memories of childhood, bringing back a mother's admonitions and prayers. He there resolved, God being his helper, never to play again, and that his influence in the future should be different from what it had been in the past. And indeed, sir, so it has been since he came back."

So God taught me how much might be done even in the midst of sin; and how a little faith is the conqueror of the adversary.<sup>1</sup>

Just after arriving at Milliken's Bend, we held a meeting in an Iowa regiment. At the close, a man came up to me and said—

"Stranger, would you like to come to a little prayer meeting, out here in the woods?"

*The Hidden  
Prayer Meeting.*

"Certainly," said I.

It was about nine o'clock at night. We went half

<sup>1</sup> Rev. R. Brown, Pastor of First Congregational Church of Oswego, Ill., a Delegate in the Mississippi field, July, 1864, relates a similar incident which occurred as he was returning home. He was on board the steamer *T. S. Arthur*, with Gen. McArthur and staff and the First Kansas Regiment. The boat had been fired into from the shore, where Marmaduke had extemporized batteries to impede the navigation of the stream. Danger past, the cabin was given up to gambling. With much fear and trembling, Rev. Mr. Brown proposed to organize a meeting right in the midst of the players. The General consented to preside, and a precious service followed. Many Christians on board made themselves known to Mr. Brown, and others with earnestness promised to change their course of life. "The success of the meeting," he writes, "was a most signal rebuke to our cowardice. For two days we had waited for the devil to give place, and because he did not, we were almost willing to smother our convictions of duty and allow wickedness to go unrebuked."

a mile back of the encampments, and there, under the trees, the moonbeams glancing down through the silent leaves, was a band of about forty men. As we came up, some one was praying. We listened until the fervent "Amen" had sounded throughout the group, and then, without any introduction, I stepped forward and began addressing them. They were amazed at the unlooked-for appearance of a civilian among them, but seemed deeply interested. At the close, they came around me to express their gratitude and pleasure. Said one—

"Stranger, where did you come from? did you drop down from heaven or from where?"

I told them my Delegate's errand,—that I had come from their Northern homes to tell them they were not forgotten, and to encourage them to be soldiers of the cross as they were of the country. They appeared much affected. To my inquiry why they were meeting thus out in the woods, they told me that they belonged to regiments of which nearly all, officers as well as men, were opposed to Christianity, and had interfered with their worship. They had gathered together thus in this secret place of prayer that they might come in quiet to Him who hears and answers all human petitions.

I called upon their commanders, and, getting their assurances that these men should be protected afterwards in their common devotional exercises, organized a Christian association in each regiment.

Gen. Fisk, in his address at the Anniversary of the American Bible Society, in May, 1866, relates an incident of this campaign :

More than 25,000 Bibles and Testaments have been given to soldiers and sailors from my own headquarters. I believed in putting them beside the Tactics and Army Regulations. Let me tell you a little incident connected with the distribution. There was a brave soldier from Iowa, Col. Samuel Rice,— *Gen. Fisk's "Tactics."* a name now honored in the army by the death of that Christian soldier, who died at Spottsylvania<sup>1</sup> with his face to the foe. Col. Rice commanded a brigade of my division in the Army

<sup>1</sup> See p. 248.



of the Mississippi. In the summer of 1863, the War Department advised us that a new edition of Army Tactics, prepared by Gen. Casey, would soon be issued. We were eager to receive the book, and inquiries at headquarters were frequently made after the new Tactics.

One morning I received a package of a thousand Testaments printed by the American Bible Society. They were put up at my headquarters, in a nice little case, showing the backs with the titles in gilt letters. Soon afterwards Col. Rice came in, and seeing books in the case, said—

“So the Tactics have come; I am glad of it.”

“Yes, Colonel,” said I, “the Tactics have come.”

“Can I make my requisition for them this morning?”

I replied affirmatively.

“General,” said he, “have you read these new Tactics?”

“Yes, sir, I have; I have studied them, and I mean to study them morning and evening while I live.”

He made his requisition for “forty-two Casey’s Tactics,” through his Adjutant General. When it was presented, I tied up a package of forty-two *Testaments* and sent them out to his headquarters. His officers all gathered round to get the new book. As they opened the package, out came the Testaments. Of course, there was a momentary disappointment in the group, but it was the human means of leading more than one of them to a saving knowledge of these Tactics.

Col. Rice, for a long time, had been seriously inclined. He had been to our meetings and had talked to me on the great subject. He began reading the Bible from that very day, earnestly and prayerfully. A few months afterwards, while leading his courageous boys against the bayonets of General Price, he received a serious wound. I visited him as he passed up the Mississippi river to his home to die, and found him rejoicing in hope, clinging to the “sure word of prophecy” contained in the Blessed Book, and looking forward to the time when he should join the great army above. I sat down with him, and we sang together—

“Jesus can make a dying bed  
Feel soft as downy pillows are,

As on His breast I lean my head,  
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

A few days ago I received from his Chaplain a long epistle, telling me how triumphantly and gloriously this soldier left earth for heaven.

Mr. S. E. Bridgman<sup>1</sup> preserves a story of the operations of the fleet against Vicksburg, told by Surgeon Hopkins,<sup>2</sup> in a letter to his mother :

You ask for a story, mother ; shall I give you one sad or glad ? You remember the sad loss of the *Cincinnati* late in May. In the afternoon the wounded were brought in. I will give you the story of one of them. His name was David Hans. He *Asleep.* was a handsome, finely-developed young man of twenty-three or twenty-five years. His left leg was shot off just above the knee, but left hanging by a few shreds of muscles.

In this condition he swam ashore, refusing to be assisted. Pale, haggard, bloodless, he was brought aboard. Not a murmur, not a groan, but such a weary, weary aspect. Presently he said—

"Can you put me to sleep ? I am in great pain."

"Yes, yes, we will put you to sleep right away."

His eyes were large, clear and blue, full of an unutterable soul. They continued their wonderful silent eloquence—noiseless, alternate light and shade—till the chloroform closed them.

Another patient was brought in, also severely wounded, making the same request—

"Can you put me to sleep ?"

So I left the first before the amputation was begun, to give relief to the second. He was of a different temperament from the other and more clamorous, but after a little while I had him very quiet. Then I said to the sister—

"Watch him for a few moments ; if he stops breathing, call me ; I must see the other man."

<sup>1</sup> Of Northampton, Mass.

<sup>2</sup> U. S. N. Now resident at Newburg, N. Y.



I went. The operation was nearly completed. Soon the dressings were all applied, and we laid him on a bed. After another amputation, I went to him again. He was awake, and again in pain:

“I want to go to sleep; will you put me to sleep?”

O poor, pale face! I see it now. Even the tongue was white. I almost wept. Could I hope? But I could not hesitate what to do. That meek “Will you put me to sleep?” brave, yet bordering on the plaintive; having the slightest possible touch of piteousness, yet so quiet and so grand! He was teaching me the sublimity of un murmuring suffering.

“Yes, yes, we will put you to sleep.”

His eyes opened and closed so wearily, so wearily! They were wonderful eyes, clear as two perfect stars, and over them the fine smooth brow and wavy hair, abundant and beautiful.

“Will you give me some water?”

He drank and lay still again. Presently a little stimulant was brought him. He swallowed it indifferently:

“Will that help me sleep?”

“Yes, you will sleep now.”

Previously a small anodyne powder had been given him. Then he was quiet for a little.

I had a hope for him, but with an awful sense that it had no foundation. Very soon he grew restless, a restlessness hard for words to picture,—peculiar, and such as I, poor yearling doctor, had already learned to dread. The restlessness became extreme. I left him for a while, then returned. Will he be asleep? He is quiet now.

O beautiful eyes!—beautiful no longer! It was the soul that gave them beauty. Then the soul must be very beautiful. Everything is calm now. Is he asleep? Yes, thank God, asleep now; and an angel will waken him soon.

The *Congregationalist* of August 14th, 1863, contained a short memoir<sup>1</sup> of Capt. Henry M. Kellogg, Co. C, 33d Ill. Inf., who was killed May 20th, in the charge upon the Rebel works. We make a few extracts:

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<sup>1</sup> Prepared by C. A. Richardson, Esq., one of the editors.

He had a strong anticipation of his death, and the event did not find him unprepared. Says the Lieutenant-Colonel of his regiment—

“I saw him when he marched to his death, with a clear presentiment of his fate, calm and resolute. When upon the ground he pointed to a little eminence in front, saying—

*The Soldier's  
Presentiment.*

“‘I shall fall about that spot.’

“Then, as they went forward to the attack, he being in advance of his company, waved his sword above his head, calling out to his men—

“‘Follow me to victory or death.’”

He fell within ten feet of the spot he had pointed out, and when removed a few minutes after, his sword was held so firmly as to require some force in unclasping his hand from the hilt.

A brief letter, written only four days before he fell, discloses his yearnings for the dear objects of his love, and his entire reliance upon the Divine will:

SATURDAY MORNING, 2 O'CLOCK.

MY DARLING AMA AND HARRY:—One more word before I engage in a deadly conflict with the enemy. This may be my last message to you,—God knows and will do right. Our heavenly Father has permitted us to spend many happy days together. We shall have more in heaven.

*“My Body is  
Not Me.”*

If I fall, Ama, live and be happy for Harry's sake. Remember I am not dead, but have only put off the body to take a crown of glory. I shall be just as much with you as ever. Try to think so. See me not dead but ever at your side. Harry, my precious boy, you know not how your father's heart yearns for you; meet me, my boy, in heaven. There we will pluck flowers that never fade.

I love you both, my treasures—God knows how well, but if it is best, I can cheerfully die for my country. Ama, let this thought console you, when you think of me. I do not dread to die. I do not dread to suffer with wounds, for *my body is not me*, and its pains shall not disturb the peace of my soul. I am ready for God's will.

Good-bye, my Ama and my Harry, my wife and my boy, my father and my mother, my brothers and my sisters. Your

HENRY.

Mr. F. G. Ensign<sup>1</sup> about this time was commissioned by the St. Louis Committee for the work on the Mississippi, with which he was afterwards so long connected. He writes:

In June, when we were trying to get into the rear of Vicksburg, we stopped one day by a little spring to get a drink. A soldier came down who had a cup in his hand; he gave it to us to drink from. We

*"I will."* thanked him for his kindness, and asked if he had drunk of that water of which the Saviour spoke.

"No," said he, "I have not."

"Well, then, you don't *love* the Saviour. Why can't you begin now?"

"I've been thinking of it, sir, a great deal, and know I ought to."

"Why not decide it now?" I asked.

"I don't know," said he;—"I can't."

"But God thinks you can, and is ready for you now."

He thought a moment, and then his reply came firm and clear—

"I will."

Just then some others came to the spring. I gave the soldier a little book, and commending him to Christ, we separated.

After the surrender, I was back at Memphis in the Soldiers' Lodge, visiting and ministering to all there as I could. I came to an emaciated-looking young man, who seemed to have gone through very much suffering. Bending over him, I asked what I should do for him. He opened his eyes and throwing his arms round my neck, said—

"Can it be possible this is you?"

'I did not remember his face, and so I told him:

"You don't know me? Don't you remember the soldier you met on Chickasaw Bayou, near the spring? Don't you remember a little book you gave me?"

I said that I did remember the circumstances.

"Well," said he, "I gave my heart to Jesus. I am not going to live long. I am going to die. But I know, when I die I shall go up home."

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<sup>1</sup> Student in Chicago (Congregational) Theological Seminary. Since the close of the war, Western Secretary of the American Christian Commission.

Rev. Edward P. Smith, under instructions from the Central Office, left his own field temporarily to visit the army before Vicksburg, in June. In connection with the Delegates from Peoria, Chicago and St. Louis, an earnest work of religious ministration was kept up during his stay, and until the surrender of the city. Mr. Smith's health gave way however under the climate. He writes of his sickness and recovery :

I had been in the army but a few days when I was taken sick with the malarial fever, and carried to a division hospital. It was my first experience of sickness in camp. I said to myself, when they had carried me into the tent and left me alone, without even a sick comrade—

*The Bright Side  
where Jesus is.*

"Now you will have an opportunity to try the efficacy of the counsels you have so often given to soldiers in like circumstances,"—for many a time, by the cot of a sick soldier longing for home, I had said—

"Only trust in Jesus, and He will take care of you here, just as well as if you were at home."

But I found it far easier to preach than to practice. I knew that God does all things right and well, but I could not help the feeling that a change in my present prospects would be an improvement.

I passed a sleepless night—alone, and without a light. The more I tried to settle into the conviction that God would provide, and make it good for me, the more I was longing for a change. My theology said, "It is right and well for me to be sick among strangers, if God wills;" and my heart always added, "Yes, but it would be better to be sick at home." While I lay thus thinking and tossing on my blanket, just at the gray of the dawn in the morning, the fold of my tent parted, and a black face peered through. It was "Old Nanny," a colored woman who had taken my washing the day before. I could hear no one else moving about the hospital; what had sent her there at that hour? Looking tenderly at me, she said—

"Massa, does ye see de bright side, dis mornin'?"

"No, Nanny," said I, "it isn't so bright as I wish it was."

"Well, massa, I allus sees de bright side."

"You do," said I; "'maybe you haven't had much trouble?"

"'Maybe not," she said; and then went on to tell me, in her simple, broken way, of her life in Virginia, of the selling of her children one by one, of the auction sale of her husband, and then of herself. She was alone now in the camp, without having heard from one of her kindred for years:

"'Maybe I ain't seen no trouble, massa?"

"But, Nanny," said I, "have you seen the bright side all the time?"

"Allus, massa, allus."

"Well, how did you do it?"

"Dis is de way, massa. When I see de great brack cloud comin' over"—and she waved her dark hand inside the tent, as though one might be settling down there; "an' 'pears like it's comin' crushin' down on me, den I jist whips aroun' on de oder side, an' I find de Lord Jesus dar; an' den it's all bright an' cl'ar. De bright side's allus whar Jesus is, massa."

"Well, Nanny," said I, "if you can do that, I think I ought to?"

"'Pears like ye ought to, massa, an' you's a preacher of de Word of Jesus."

She went away. I turned myself on my blanket and said in my heart, "'The Lord is my Shepherd.' It *is* all right and well. Now, come fever or health, come death or life, come burial on the Yazoo Bluff or in the churchyard at home,—'the Lord *is* my Shepherd.'"

With this sweet peace of rest, God's care and love became very precious to me. I fell asleep. When I woke I was in a perspiration; my fever was broken. "Old Nanny's" faith had made me whole.

The following incident, illustrating the true manliness of a Christian soldier, the power of right early training, the constant solicitude of friends at home, and the way in which the Commission was, not unfrequently, the direct channel of good news, has been preserved by an agent of the Commission, who was for a short time on duty before Vicksburg:

The night scenes were sometimes grand indeed; shells discharged

from the land batteries traced their beautiful, fiery paths high into the air above the beleagured city, and meeting there the missiles ascending on the same errand from Commodore Porter's fleet, crossed them in brilliant curves, making the beholder almost forgetful of the mission on which the monsters were sent. On one of these brilliant nights, I came upon a regimental prayer meeting, under a bluff within short musket range of the enemy's works. Whenever there was a discharge from our batteries, the Rebel sharpshooters along their lines would reply by a shower of minie balls, which cut the leaves over our heads, and occasionally glanced down to the ground at our feet. By order of the Brigade commander, to prevent drawing the attention, and perhaps the fire of the enemy, the hymns were sung in a low, muffled voice, but loud enough to "make melody in our hearts." The meeting was led by one of the Captains of the regiment. There was something genuine and manly in the piety of the leader, which seemed to win the affection and attention of the soldiers. I was so much struck with it that I could not forbear seeking his acquaintance; and, on invitation, meeting him the next day, we walked over to the Colonel's tent.

As the custom was, we were courteously offered a drink from the ubiquitous bottle. As the single glass passed round the circle, nearing me every moment, I questioned in my own mind what terms I should use in declining; but I was yet more interested to see what course my Christian Captain would take. When the Colonel called upon him, he declined; was invited again, and again declined; and the third time did it so decidedly, and yet respectfully, as not to give offence, nor to be further importuned. I said to him afterwards—

"Captain, do you always do that?"

"Yes," said he.

"Do you mean that you have never taken any intoxicating liquor?"

"Yes, just that."

"What, not even to 'correct' this Yazoo water?"

"Never."

"You must have belonged to the cold water army in your boyhood?"

"Yes; but I learned something better than that; my mother taught me this one thing,—'what is right, is right,' and coming to Mississippi don't make any difference. It would not be right for me to



accept an invitation to drink at home ; I don't believe it's right here,—therefore I don't drink."

A few weeks afterwards, passing up the Mississippi river, I addressed a Sabbath evening congregation. After the service, a lady came to inquire about her boy,—“foolishly,” she said, for it was not likely that in an army of 40,000 men I had seen her boy ; but still she wanted to ask me if I had met him. She told me of her anxiety for his welfare,—how she feared that the bad influences of the camp would lead him astray.

“He promised me that he would do well,” said she, “and I have no reason to think he doesn't do well ; but if I could only see somebody who could tell me from actual knowledge how he is doing, it would be such a relief.”

She told me his name and regiment. I assured her that there was hardly ground for all the fear mothers were exercising for their absent boys ; that very many soldiers were actually becoming better men, growing strong under trial. And then, to illustrate I told her, without mentioning names, of my Captain, of the prayer meeting, and of the scene in the Colonel's tent.

“Oh,” said she, “that's beautiful,—that's beautiful. His mother must be proud of him.”

“Yes,” said I, “that she is,—and *you are the proud mother !*”

I never shall forget the joy that shone in her face, and how she sprang across the carpet, and catching my hand in both hers, wet it with grateful tears :

“Is that my boy,—is that Will ? It's just like him ; I knew he would do so. He always was a good boy ; he told me he always would be,—and I knew he would.”

Some instances of the heroism and trust of our soldiers and sailors before Vicksburg will fitly close this chapter :

In the terrible charge of May 22d, Sergeant Falmer, of the 18th Illinois, was mortally wounded. As he lay bleeding to death, he called two of his comrades to his side. They took his last message home :



"I die in peace; they must meet me in heaven."

He called for the flag; they brought it. He looked at the torn banner with all a soldier's love and devotion:

*Dying Beneath  
the Stars and  
Stripes.*

"Say to the boys that I am gone; but tell them never to give up the contest until Vicksburg falls."

His voice grew fainter; comrades bent over to get his last words; they could only hear a murmured request that the flag should be waved over him. Silently and solemnly it swayed above the soldier's head until he was at rest.

Rev. W. C. Van Meter,<sup>1</sup> a Delegate of the Chicago Committee, relates the following incident:

On my way from Vicksburg, I met A. M. Shipman, an Ohio volunteer, who was confined for eight months as a hostage in the Vicksburg jail, but was released at the surrender. A fellow-prisoner, who had been forced into the Rebel army and had deserted to ours, was recaptured and shot by the enemy. He succeeded in getting into Mr. Shipman's hands before the execution the following note:

*"I am to be  
Shot for Defend-  
ing my Country."*

"Kind friend, if ever you reach our happy lines, have this put in the Northern papers, that my father, the Rev. Leonard Marsh, who resides in Maine, may know what has become of me, and what I was shot for. I am to be shot for defending my country; I love her and am willing to die for her. Tell my parents I am also happy in the Lord. My future is bright. I hope to speak to you as I pass out to die.

JOHN B. MARSH."

One of the guards said to Mr. Shipman that when young Marsh was placed by his coffin and ready to receive the fire of his executioners, he was told he could speak a word if he desired to. Stepping upon his coffin and looking round on that fierce crowd of Union-haters, he cried out—

*"Three cheers for the Old Flag and the Union!"*

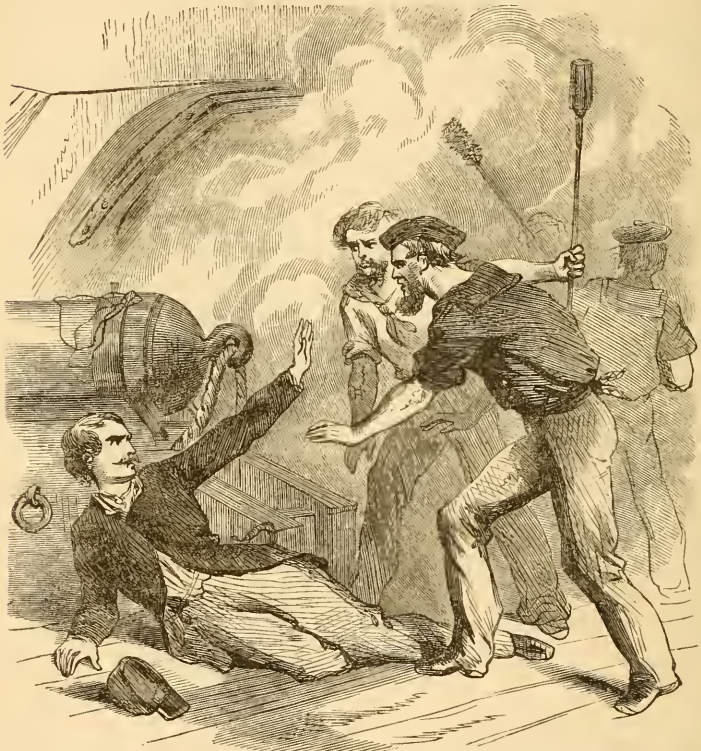
Of course the patriotic sentiment met no response from that audi-

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<sup>1</sup> Of the Howard Mission, New York city.

ence. Then, with his hands pinioned behind and his eye lifted as if the flag were in view, he shouted forth his own three cheers, "Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!"

The clear, ringing voice had scarcely died away, when the sharp crack of musketry added another name to the long roll of the martyrs to the dear "Old Flag."



"GET THE SHIP BY, BOYS."

The heroes were not in the army alone:

As Farragut swept up the Mississippi, past the Vicksburg batteries, Lieut. Cummings had a leg shot away by a Rebel ball. Refusing to go below, he shouted out to his brave tars—

*"Get the Ship  
by, Boys."*

"Get the ship by the batteries,—get the ship by, boys. and they may have the other leg."

## CHAPTER V.

### *THE EASTERN ARMIES.*

FROM THE BEGINNING OF 1863 UNTIL LEE'S SECOND INVASION.

*January 1863—July 1863.*

AT the beginning of 1863 the Commission had two stations in the Army of the Potomac; one at the village of Acquia, the other at the railroad terminus at Fal-mouth, opposite Fredericksburg. Burnside's second attempt to cross the Rappahannock, frustrated by rain, sleet, mud and cold, put thousands of veterans under the Surgeon's care in the field hospital at Windmill Point, on the Potomac, a few miles below Acquia Creek. A station of the Commission was continued here until the hospital was suddenly broken up, and the patients removed elsewhere.

Mr. T. O. Crawford, of Philadelphia, relates two incidents which occurred at this hospital in February and March :

John B. Mitchell, of Mercer, Pa., was dying of typhoid fever. His tongue was so parched that he could not speak. I thought a lemon might slake his thirst and enable him to converse. Getting the Surgeon's consent, I gave him one. The poor fellow tried vainly to thank me. When he had eaten it, he could talk quite easily. I found that though he had been a Sabbath-school scholar, he had no sense of the

*The Soldier's  
Amen.*

comforting nearness of Christ. Earnestly I told him the story of Jesus crucified for him; of the agony of that hour of the world's redemption; of the dying thief who, even so late, could yet enter paradise. My heart yearned for the poor fellow, looking up at me out of his sore need for help. I asked him if he could not adopt these words as *his* prayer:

"Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."

Hope came into the flushed face, as he answered that he could. I spent a long time at his side, explaining to him the meaning of Christ's atonement and sacrifice. I never had such a listener. At last I turned to go away, saying—

"I'll pray for you, my dear brother, that God, for Christ's sake, may take you to Himself."

He looked after me imploringly:

"Don't go; don't go; I want to talk more about Jesus."

I returned to his side and stayed with him some time longer. It seemed to comfort him very much. Again, when I tried to leave him, he fixed his large, blue eyes on me, exclaiming—

"O sir, don't leave me! Can't you stay with me longer? Please, do stay."

I told him about others who might need me, as he did. At once he was quiet about his wants. Christ's story had taught him already the lesson of sacrifice. Telling him I would come again in the morning and write his friends, I bade him good-bye—my last.

Early the next day I hastened to the tent. The soldier's place was vacant. The nurse told me how he had gone away home:

"After you left he began praying, and kept on a long time. About six o'clock he looked around and asked for you. We didn't know where you were, or we would have gone for you. Then he asked the other boys in the tent to pray for him; but they were too sick, or couldn't. Then he began praying again, and at eight o'clock he spoke out, so that we could all hear him—

"'Amen, it's all right now: I am ready to die.'

"In ten minutes he was dead. I've been a nurse seventeen months, Chaplain, but that was the happiest death I ever saw."

I was sent for by a Drum Major of the 147th N. Y. Regt. The conversation which followed the meeting was intensely interesting; the soldier opening up to me all the hidden strifes and troubles of his

heart, and yearning so earnestly for some relief and peace. His parents were Christians; his father, who had been a Deacon, died when he was fifteen. After that he had taken no counsel but his own. When twenty-five years old, he went into a liquor store, and there became a habitual drunkard. Through all, however, he managed to make money rapidly. Warnings of severe sickness were unheeded. Once he told his mother-in-law, that if he were to meet God after death, he would laugh to think what a jolly life he had led. Soon he became so much a slave to rum that he could not do without it. In the Autumn of 1862, he enlisted, thinking that his accumulations would do him little good if the Rebels were victors. He began to try to get along without his stimulant, but became weak—almost helpless—and so took to the canteen again. A Lieutenant came to his tent every morning for his “bitters,” and the drunkards of the company generally regarded him as their leader. On the march to Falmouth, in a drunken spree, he injured himself severely, and was compelled to go to Windmill Point Hospital.

*A Conflict and  
A Victory.*

Now began a terrible mental conflict. At one time he would resolve, after reading, that the Bible was “all trash;” at another, its deep spiritual power would scatter his vain objections, and make him almost insane with desire for deliverance either from its judgments or his own sins. He feebly strove to stop his drinking habits; at one time he would swear that he would not owe his life to brandy, even if it could save him; again, he would take it when the Surgeon prescribed it. At last the meaning of his conflict with himself began to dawn upon him. There were more than temptations assailing him—there was a Tempter. There were more than the words of a book condemning, yet helping him—there was a Deliverer. He saw that the Tempter had so environed him with the toils of a habit that these must be broken ere he could gain the victory. So he called on the unknown Deliverer for help.

It was at this stage I found him. He was told of Jesus, of the “faithful saying,” of the agony and bloody sweat, of the cross and passion, of the glorious resurrection and ascension. A substitute for the brandy which had been prescribed was found, and the poor, weak, erring man began to retrace the way of his lost life. Next to the Bible, the book which seemed to meet most his inner needs was



James' *Anxious Inquirer Directed*. Slowly strength returned, and the iron bands of habit relaxed. He stood up a new man. He spoke earnestly to his former comrades—to the Lieutenant who had been his boon companion; and in spite of opposition and ridicule proved by every day's life, until the regiment marched to the battle-field, that he had really found the Deliverer, and how in His assisting love there was freedom and peace indeed.

Rev. Hervey D. Ganse,<sup>1</sup> in an address at the organization of the New York Branch of the Commission, tells a story of his experience at Windmill Point Hospital:

Just after my arrival at Windmill Point, I learned that there was present, in a neighboring tent, a mother, who had come from a western county of New York to carry home her sick son. He had died about twelve hours before her arrival. She had cast one look upon his features, wasted to a shadow by the nature of his disease, and declaring that she could not recognize him, had refused to look again. I went with others to her tent to offer her sympathy, if not consolation. We found her swaying back and forth in her chair, in the peculiar gesture of distracting grief. There were some Christian ladies in the company, and they joined their voices in singing tenderly—

“Jesus, lover of my soul.”

But it was easy to see that her heart was sealed against comfort. We offered to pray with her, but she had not come to the attitude of prayer. She spoke of nothing but her child's sufferings. She was sure that he had lacked the most necessary attention. Oh that she had been with him! I strove to console her by appealing to her Christian faith. But she turned upon me fiercely and demanded—

“Why did you not give your attention to *him*?”

I explained that I had just arrived, but that others who were present had cared for his comfort. At length, in a quieter frame she

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Northwest Reformed Protestant (Dutch) Church, New York city.



kneeled, while we prayed for her. And when we left her she grasped my hand, and looking eagerly in my face said—

*“Take care of the rest.”*

I met her again in Washington, and her last words to me again were—

*“Take care of the rest.”*

Rev. Edward P. Smith,<sup>1</sup> afterwards the General Field Agent in the Western Army, had his first experience of work among the soldiers in the Potomac Army during February and March. From his reminiscences we gather the following incidents

At Belle Plain, passing over from the First Division Hospital, where I had spent the night with some dying men, I met a young soldier detailed to fatigue duty in the hospital. Giving him some reading-matter from my haversack, I asked him about his personal salvation. He gave me an interesting account of his early life and orphanage, of his education in the family of a kind Christian man, who had given him a home, and of the subsequent death of his foster-father. He told me of an only surviving friend, his Sabbath-school teacher, who occasionally had remembered his pupil in the army by a letter. He showed me one of these letters, full of kindness and tender solicitude for his conversion. I said—

*“Yes, Sir, I  
Did it.”*

*“Then you are not a Christian?”*

*“No, but I wish I was. I have been thinking and talking about it so long.”*

*“Do you know that you can become a Christian to-day?”*

*“You don’t mean so soon as that?”*

*“Yes; I mean that you can begin a new life and a true life,—and that’s a Christian life, to-day. Wouldn’t you like to try?”*

*“Yes, I would.”*

*“Well, just over that hill, near the run, is a place where you will be entirely by yourself. Go and kneel down by that tree and tell*

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Pepperell, Mass.

your Saviour that you want to be a Christian *now*, and are going from this time to try and do His will; then write to your Sabbath-school teacher what you have done, and find a man in your company you know to be a Christian. Is there such an one?"

"Yes," said he, "there is;" and he told me his name. "He is a Christian, I know."

"Well, find that man to-day; tell him what you have done, and ask him to pray for you. Will you do it? I don't mean, 'Will you *think* about it?' but, 'Will you *do* it,' and begin now over by the tree?"

"I will try, sir."

I was in haste, and bade him good-bye; but there was something in that farewell grasp of the hand, in the manly sincerity with which he said, "I will try," that made me feel that the issue was already made.

Three days after, just as I was leaving that army, in a battalion drill, I saw my soldier on the extreme left. As the line swung past me, I had only time to step alongside and ask, "Did you do it?" and to get the answer, quick and firm—

"Yes, sir, I did it."

During the interesting revival meetings, held at Acquia Creek, in an unfinished hospital building, a Michigan soldier stood up one evening to give his experience. He had enlisted a year before, leaving Katy, his wife, and a little babe of one year in her arms. Katy had written him regularly and often. She was a Christian, and never failed to ask him the great question, when he too would be a Christian. He had replied to her letters as often as he could, but never said anything about becoming a follower of Jesus.

"Where's Pa-pa?"

"Two nights ago," said he, "I got this letter. It has made me a Christian, and I want to read it to you."

He read it as best he could, stopping now and then to wipe his eyes and choke back his sobs. The letter announced most tenderly and Christianly the death of "Little Henry," told the mother's sorrow and hope, and closed saying—

"Now, Henry,"—that was the father's name, too,— "I believe I shall not live long, and I expect when I die to go straight to our dear little boy, and he will ask me the first thing, 'Where's papa?'"

Say, Henry, what shall I tell him? Won't you go with me to see our boy again, that we may have our home together in heaven?"

"When I got that letter," continued the soldier, "I could not speak. I read it twice, and put it in my knapsack, and laid down to sleep. But somehow I couldn't sleep. I kept thinking all the time what my little boy would say,—'Where's papa, where's papa?' I got up, stirred the fire, read the letter again, and then lay down; but I could not sleep yet. It seemed as if I must see my boy once more. I knelt on my blanket and prayed this prayer,—'O Lord, take me to heaven to see Henry; do let me see Henry once more.' I lay down again, but couldn't sleep. Then I prayed once more, and while I was praying, all at once it came over me, Suppose I should go to heaven, Henry wouldn't want to see me. He is an angel now, and I am a poor, drinking, swearing, miserable man. He would not know his father, and if he did he could not love him. Then I began to pray that Jesus would forgive all my sins and make me fit to go to heaven. Somehow while I was praying I began to believe and to hope. I laid down on my blanket and dreamed of dying, and of seeing my boy and Katy and my Saviour; and that's the way I became a Christian. It was Katy's letter that did it."

One stormy March evening the New York troops, who had been doing fatigue duty at the Acquia Creek wharf, were relieved by a new regiment, which was not yet accustomed to our meetings. We adjourned the small gathering at the hospital building to our own quarters, a little building where the Delegates lived, slept, wrote and prayed. There were some ten or fifteen soldiers present. The leader of the meeting asked that each one should say a word out of his own experience. We had passed thus round the room; the Delegates and all the soldiers save two had spoken. One of the silent ones rose and, pointing to his throat, made signs that he wanted to speak, but could not; he was suffering from acute aphonia. He laid his hands on his breast and then upon his lips, signifying a full heart that could find no utterance. Then, as if he could not be satisfied without some word spoken for Christ, he motioned to a comrade to stand up beside him, and by signs,—now of approval, and again of dissent, when his proxy was speaking beyond the record,—he gave us a very interesting outline of a soldier's trials and triumphs in the army.

*Testimony by  
Proxy.*

When he sat down, there was but one left in the room who had not borne testimony. He was a young man who had come late into the meeting. When he saw the eyes of us all fixed upon him, after a long pause, he rose with deep emotion :

*“Doubting, I Stopped Praying.”* “This is a very strange meeting for me. I came in to bring back a magazine and get some more reading, not knowing that you had a meeting here to-night. I couldn’t very well go back after I got in, and so I have kept my seat—and such a meeting as it has been ; such memories as have come to me ! I have been living over my life at home while these comrades have been telling their stories,—and my soldier life,—how strange and wicked it seems to me to-night ! When I enlisted, I promised myself and mother and my Sabbath-school teacher that I would be true to my Christian profession. When we went into camp, I found but one other Christian in all my company. He was our Lieutenant. We soon became fast friends, talked, prayed and read the Bible together. But in the fight of Antietam and the pursuit of Lee, somehow we became separated. After we got back on the banks of the Rappahannock, one evening at dress parade, I heard the Lieutenant swearing fearfully. I spoke right out to him, without remembering that he was an officer and I a private :

“‘Why, Lieutenant, is that you ?’

“Then he swore at me to ‘hush my impudence and keep my place.’ His oath and angry look stunned me. It seemed as if it could not be that that Christian man was swearing, and I began to doubt whether I or anybody else was a Christian, and in my doubting I stopped praying. Then my doubts grew thick and strong, and it was not long before I too began to swear, and if you come over to the regiment you will find no man who can curse harder than I. But I have done with it now. Brothers, God helping me, I begin a Christian life again to-night.

“This is my story. All of my comrades have asked for prayers. There is not one who needs them as much as I. I know you will pray for me.”

We saw him frequently after this, before the army moved. He always seemed to be holding on to the true way.

Visiting through the wards of the desolate hospital at Windmill Point, I came upon a man, who, without claiming to be a Christian.

professed great admiration for the Christian religion, declaring himself a patron of Christianity,—a fit representative of no small class of such patrons. He spoke in glowing terms of the Bible,—what a source of intellectual enjoyment it was to him. He referred to its poetry with special enthusiasm. His wife, he said, was an earnest Christian woman. I asked him if he would like me to read him a little from the Bible. He assented gladly, and saying that he always liked to read best from the copy which was his wife's farewell gift, he asked me to get it from his knapsack. Opening the book before him, I found a letter addressed to himself. He started when he saw the handwriting.

*The Wife's Letter in the Unread Bible.*

"Why," said he, in some confusion, "that's from my wife."

He asked me to read it for him. *It was the parting letter of his wife, given him ten months before, and this was its first discovery and reading* by this patron of his wife's piety, who had left thus her loving words to lie so securely between the leaves of the unread Bible.

I found at the same hospital a Massachusetts soldier, once a Sabbath scholar, who was in the last stages of disease. He held in his pale, thin fingers a letter, written apparently by an aged and trembling hand. I read the address,—*"My dear Son."* It looked worn, as if it had been read many times.

*"Too Late!"*

Evidently he had just been over it again, and as he lay back on his knapsack pillow there was something inexpressibly solemn and sad in his countenance; added to this, the death shadow was evidently stealing upon him. I passed my hand softly over his forehead, parting back the hair from as noble a brow as I have ever seen. He looked at me and his eyes filled with tears,—a rare occurrence when life is just ebbing. It was a stranger's hand, but laid on his head in kindness; perhaps it reminded him of a mother's gentle stroke.

I said in a low voice, after other conversation—

"You are almost through with this world."

"Am I?" said he.

"Yes, and I hope you are ready for the next."

"No, I am not,—not ready, not ready!"

"Well, my dear friend, Jesus is all ready, and waiting right here. Come now. Shall I pray?"



“Oh no, no; it is too late, too late! I ought to have come long ago.”

And then he told me, as calmly as he could, of the time when he was “almost a Christian,” and decided to let it pass till another winter.

“That was the time,—I might have come then; why didn’t I? why didn’t I?” and pulling the blanket over his face, he sobbed aloud.

I tried to show him Jesus, waiting *now* to save him; but he cried out—

“Don’t talk to me any more—it’s too late; I can’t bear it!” and he motioned me away.

The next morning, bed No. 8 was empty, and in the military mail-bag was a letter, full of sorrow, on its way to a Christian home in Massachusetts. The old father was expecting an answer to his last letter. This was it. Oh, how that voice, between those sobs from under that soldier’s blanket, falls upon my ears and rings through my soul to this day!

“Too late,—too late! Why didn’t I? why didn’t I?”

As I lifted the blanket from his face and took for that father the last look of the manly form on the stretcher, laid out for burial, I said to myself—

“I will tell all my young friends, it is not enough to belong to the Sunday-school; you must belong to Jesus.”

The following story of the way by which a soldier came to Jesus, is from the same pen, and connects itself with the narrative of this winter on the Rappahannock:

A recruiting officer in a country town in Massachusetts in 1861, learned that a young man, a farmer’s son, was ready to enlist. He was about eighteen years of age, of frank, open-hearted and generous

*Preparing to Enlist.* mind, but, under the teaching and example of his father, profane and wicked. None in the village school which he attended could equal him in cursing.

He had no taste for a soldier’s life, but his sense of duty led him to say that some one in his father’s family should go to war, and he being the only one who could go, must go. However, when the



recruiting officer came to the door, he told him he was not ready to enlist yet,—to come again in a few days. The officer came several times and was put off, much to his annoyance and to the astonishment of the friends of the young man, whose apparent vacillation was entirely opposed to all their former estimate of his downright, straightforward character.

But his conduct had its explanation. The boy had a praying sister; from whom, in the midst of all his waywardness, he had been receiving unconscious impressions concerning a better life. He afterwards confessed, in giving his religious experience, that he felt that he could not enlist until he became a Christian,—on the ground that he was not ready to die, and he would not put himself into peril from which he was sure to run, until he was ready. In his own words, “I am not a coward, but I can’t go to hell, and so I know I should run in battle.” From this low idea of a Christian life he started.

Not liking to borrow his sister’s Bible, he walked four miles to a neighboring town after night, and purchased one for himself. He began to read with this purpose only,—to get ready to enlist by getting ready to die.

“I began to read the Bible,” said he, “as I would any other book, at the beginning. It was a very interesting story about the Creation and Abraham and Moses and the rest; but somehow it didn’t help me to get ready to enlist. I came in due time in my reading to the 20th chapter of Exodus. I thought, ‘Now I have it sure. I’ve got to keep these Commandments, then I can go to war.’ I gave two days to learn them perfectly; then came the keeping of them. There was only one of the ten of whose violation I was very conscious. I knew what it was to take God’s name in vain,—that was the sin which I was to overcome. But the more I tried, the more I swore. I never swore so hard in my life as in that week in which I was trying to keep the third Commandment. I tried and tried again. Every morning I said to myself, ‘I will not swear to-day,’ but I never got to breakfast without it. My great trouble was a vicious, brindled cow, who always kicked when she was milked, and put her foot into the pail,—and then I kicked and cust *her*, and somehow, I *had* to do it.

*“Sin Known by  
the Law.”*

“It was getting serious. I had told the officer that I would

be ready for him the next week without fail,—and I could not fool with him any more. Then I thought, ‘I will enlist now, and the first night in camp I will begin a Christian life, and pray before my comrades.’ This decision reached, I was feeling quite assured; and if the officer had come that day I should have enlisted. Then it occurred to me that I had better try the praying business in somebody’s presence before going into camp. My father’s hired man used to go through my room to enter his own. In the

*Learning to Pray.*

evening, just as I had dropped upon my knees to try praying, the Irishman opened the door. I jumped up ashamed, as if I had been caught stealing. Then I thought to myself, ‘Scared out of your senses by an Irishman! a pretty mess you’d make praying in camp!’ So my troubles were only increased; I was swearing every day; the recruiting officer was coming,—something must be done; I must pray somehow, Irishman or no Irishman. I rose in the night and knelt by my bedside; perspiration started from my hands and face; I clutched the bed-clothes and could only articulate, ‘Lord, help—help.’ As I lay down that night there was a strange feeling of relief, as if something had really been done. In the morning I felt strong for my struggle with ‘Old Brindle.’ Getting up early, I prayed again, asking God to help me milk that cow without swearing. When I sat down my pail, I put both lips between my teeth and said to myself, ‘Now, old feller, if you’ve any cussin’ to do, you’ve got to do it all inside.’ The cow kicked the pail as usual, but I didn’t swear that morning; and the next morning it was not so hard, and lately ‘Old Brindle’ has grown quite gentle.

“From that time I learned to tell God all my troubles, and to ask for help. I began to find out that there were a good many things besides swearing for me to learn not to do. When the officer next came I put down my name. Now I am ready to face anything—rebels, or death; I know I shall never run.”

This was the story of a soul struggling into light, told to his pastor in what was probably the first serious religious conversation he ever held with any one. Afterwards, when he came to unite with the church, and told his experience before the committee, the pastor said—

*The Forgiveness of Sins.*

“You have given us a very remarkable experience, but I have noticed that in it all, you have not once mentioned

the name of Jesus. You say you hope your sins are forgiven,—how do you know God can forgive sins?"

"I don't know," was his answer, "but I have heard if a fellow wants to do right, and is sorry he has done wrong, and tells God so, God will forgive him anyhow. I believe God has forgiven me; but I don't know how He did it."

"But, haven't you heard about Jesus?"

"Yes, I've heard of Him; but to tell you the truth I haven't got to Him yet in my Bible. I've only got as far as the Psalms. I was thinking the other day I must begin at the other end, and read a little about Jesus."

He united with the church, and the next day went into camp.

His regiment joined the Army of the Potomac, and spent the winter of 1862-3 on the Rappahannock. It was there visited by the pastor of the church in which the young man had enrolled himself before leaving home. On entering the camp, and inquiring for the soldier, a comrade said, "He means the happy boy." "He is looking for the whistling Christian," said another.

*The Whistling  
Christian.*

"Yes," said the pastor, "he is all that."

And so he was found to be, in his little shelter-tent, on fatigue duty, on drill, in daily camp-life, singing, whistling, praying,—Christian and happy through it all.

After Chancellorsville, in the Summer of 1863, while his regiment was following up Lee through Maryland, weakened by chronic illness, he fell behind, but would not go to the hospital, though so ordered by the Surgeon. Every day he made his march, living on the rations which the army scattered in its path, dragging his musket after him when he was too weak to carry it, and inquiring eagerly of every one he met

*The March to  
Gettysburg.*

how soon there would be a fight. As the prospect of a battle grew imminent his strength seemed to revive, and pressing forward he actually overtook his comrades and fell into line, as they were coming into position at Gettysburg. That day he fought bravely enough and long enough to claim a hero's share in the great victory, but before the evening came a minie ball struck his right leg. He was treated with amputation and re-amputation, and suffered long in hospital, lingering close down at death's door. From thence he wrote to his

mother that he was never happier in his life,—and to his father, who had steadily opposed his going to war, “I am not sorry for anything, unless it is for the poor sneaks who stay at home and wait for the ‘draft.’”

He survived, and is making an honest living on his wooden leg,—a most consistent, devoted Christian. When asked one day how he was cured of the bad habit of swearing, he replied—

“By the grace of God, and the help of ‘Old Brindle.’”

Mr. John A. Cole,<sup>1</sup> who had already served as Delegate for nearly six months, was early in the year appointed General Field Agent of the district comprising the Army of the Potomac, and the hospitals and camps of Washington, Maryland and Western Virginia. A work of organization was at once vigorously undertaken. Its first fruit was the plan, successfully carried out, of supplying every regiment in the army with Testaments. Delegates and stores in greater abundance were asked for and received, and until May 3d, six stations were kept in successful operation. Very interesting were some of the scenes of Testament and Bible distribution. Rev. E. P. Smith writes:

I found one regiment in which there were thirty Germans in a single company, who had left their homes without the Word of God, and who had become hungry for it. A squad of these men promised the Chaplain that they would give him their cards and play no more, if he would give them Testaments.

*Cards and Testaments.*

In another company of this regiment, a single English Testament had circulated among thirty soldiers, in five different tents, during the entire winter, and it had *seldom lain an hour by daylight unused.*

*One Testament for Thirty Men.*

How often on inquiring—

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<sup>1</sup> Of Medway, Mass.

“Would you like a Testament?” the answer comes—

“Yes, I would, very much. I lost mine at Antietam, at South Mountain, or at Fredericksburg.”

Our prayer meetings are full and solemn. This *The Coming Battle.* is a serious time with these armed hosts. They know from the antecedents of “Fighting Joe,” that there is sharp work before them; and these warm days and Spring voices are perpetual reminders of coming battle, wounds and death. They feel that something must be done to get ready for these realities, and therefore they long for the Bible.

A Lieutenant related to the Chaplain of the 1st Conn. Cavalry an incident which illustrates—what these pages so often evidence—the potency of appeals from home upon the soldier’s heart:

A young man in the regiment openly embraced religion, to the surprise of all his comrades. One day he happened in my tent, and I asked how his mind was awakened so suddenly. He took out of his pocket a letter from his mother:

“There is something in that letter which affected *The Mother’s Letter.* me as nothing ever did before.”

The letter said,—“We have sent you a box of nice clothes, some fine cakes and fruits, and other luxuries and comforts; and many good times we hope you will have, enjoying them and sharing with your friends.”

Near the letter’s close were these words—

“*We are all praying for you, Charlie, that you may be a Christian.*”

“That’s the sentence,” said the grateful boy, the tears gushing from his eyes; “When I was eating the dainties, I thought, ‘Mother is praying for me. I know where she goes to pray, and I can almost hear the words she says.’ All the time I was wearing the clothes I could not help thinking of the words,—‘We are all praying for you, Charlie, that you may be a Christian.’ How I thank God for such a mother! Her prayer is answered and I am happy.”

A work of revival began at several of the stations of the Commission. Earnest prayer meetings, in which the

soldiers took the most prominent part, were a main feature of this, as of every succeeding manifestation of the Spirit's power. Rev. Wm. Barrows,<sup>1</sup> in a letter to the *Boston Recorder*, gives a graphic account of one of these soldiers' meetings :

A Sibley tent, warmed by an army cooking-stove, lighted by three candles and furnished with a long mess-table, was the "upper-room." One real chair and several real boxes, chests, etc. furnished seats for twenty or more of the soldiers.

*An Army Prayer Meeting.* A stranger minister, fresh from home, had the meeting in charge. When a hymn was called for, some one began the service with no ado about agreeing on the tune and "pitching" it, by striking up the words—

"Nearer, my God, to Thee."

Then the minister prayed, and before he could turn to his Scripture lesson for the morning, they started off with—

"My days are gliding swiftly by,"

singing two stanzas. Then was read the account of the blind beggar Bartimeus, and how Jesus healed him, and how he followed the Master afterwards. A few words were spoken, showing how poor our estate is by nature, sitting by the wayside of life, and how blind we are to our own good and God's glory, till we call on Jesus. Then somebody began to sing—

"I love to steal a while away,"

and almost all joined, singing but one verse. This was followed by a prayer, short and fervent. Then came an exhortation from a weather-worn soldier of the cross and the government.

"Jesus, lover of my soul,"

next filled the tent and died away on the hill-side and among the pines in which the regiment has so charming a location.

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Reading, Mass.



Here one rose simply to testify, as he said, that he loved Jesus. He did not use five sentences, but it was all testimony. Then came a prayer for loved ones at home, the family, the church, the Sabbath-school, and prayer meeting; and so still were all, that you would have supposed the praying man to have been alone in the tent. His voice trembled somewhat, and if we wiped away a tear or two when he said amen, we were not ashamed to be seen doing it, for some others did so. Our thoughts went home also; how could we help the tear?

And then, as if some of them in the chances of battle might miss the earthly home, a verse was sung, beginning—

“Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood.”

Next came a practical talk about following Christ in the army. The good ideas were briefly, bluntly put, and full of the love of the Lord Jesus. Then a single stanza went swelling out among the pines again—

“Come ye that love the Lord.”

An exhortation was now addressed to any who had not enlisted under the Captain of our salvation, and it was pressed home by the sweet words and familiar air—

“O happy day that fixed my choice!”

Now one kneels down on the clay floor and prays in the first person singular. It was a short, broken prayer, probably by the brother who, they said, had lately learned to pray, and in that tent. We have all heard such prayers, and none ever affect us so much. An exhortation followed, by a sailor on the difficulties of being a Christian in the army. He showed how they tried to do that at sea, and illustrated it by an incident.

Then came the hymn—

“Thus far the Lord hath led me on.”

The minister here remarked that if we would follow Christ successfully, we must keep in the ranks, and own to everybody at proper times that Christ is our Captain. Following Him by side marches and obscure paths exposes us to the lurking enemy.

Now the hour was almost gone, and so followed the doxology—

“Praise God from whom all blessings flow,”

and the benediction.

We thought it worth a trip to the Army of the Potomac to learn from the soldiers how to have a good prayer meeting. No one was called on to pray or speak and no hymn was given out; no one said he had nothing to say, and then talked long enough to prove it; not one excused his inability to “edify.”

The work of distributing the Scriptures to the army was the one which, more than any other, introduced the Commission to all the men. It was so extensive and thorough, and came at such a time, as to command attention, inquiry and boundless gratitude. Rev. E. F. Williams<sup>1</sup> gives the following account of this work, on Sabbath, April 12th, at Fairfax Court House, where three brigades of cavalry and several artillery companies were stationed :

Before morning service, of which due notice had been given by written “posters” stuck up at the village street-corners and in the different camps, we walk out to the grounds of the jail kept by Jackson, brother of the murderer of Ellsworth, now used for a guard-house. Two or three Rebels, accused of having been guerrillas, ask for reading. It is granted :

*Testament Distribution.*

“Will you give us a Testament?”

One is put into their hands, a few words in regard to the necessity of trust in Christ are spoken, and we pass on. Outside of the jail we meet a man who does not care for our papers, but who would like a Testament. His has been wet,—the leaves are coming out, the cover is worthless. He will surely read it. Another lost his at Bull Run; another would not have lost his for a hundred dollars,—but it went with his knapsack on one of his raids. It was his mother's

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<sup>1</sup> Then Pastor of Congregational Church, Whitinsville, Mass.

parting gift,—one of ours takes its place, though it will not *fill* it. Another had given his Bible to his sister, expecting to die in the army, and is glad to get a Testament, which he will read. In this way two dozen copies are distributed to the few men around the guard-house and the Post Commissary's quarters. All these men will attend church. They want to know when they can talk with the Delegates about home.

At one of the regimental hospitals visited, there is a man so sick with inflammation of the bowels that we do not venture to speak to him. After talking, and giving something to each patient, we turn to leave. As we go, this sickest man of all motions to his attendant to get a Testament for him. This *The Unread Testament.* done, a sign of assent given to the question if he has hope in Christ, he becomes quiet again. In this state, with the Testament under his pillow, he remains till the third or fourth day, when his spirit takes its flight home.

Another scene at Fairfax Station, on April 30th, after the arrival of a large box of Testaments, Mr. Williams thus describes :

On inquiry we learn that three or four regiments of Pennsylvania troops have not had their share of attention. We load up with reading-matter, and get to the top of a hill, where the men are policing and burning brush. They run to meet us :

“What have you to sell?”

“Nothing,—nothing but Testaments.”

“What do you ask for them?”

“Only that you read them.”

“Bully for you!” “Give me one,”—“and me one,”—“and me,”—“and me.”

*Eager for God's Word.*

A ring is formed. Hands press forward for the book. The haversack is emptied in less time than it takes to read this account. A second, third, fourth load goes in the same way. The men had been in so many fights that scarce one of them had a Testament or anything they had brought from home. The regiment contained very many Christians; the privilege of obtaining so much of the Scriptures as a Testament was eagerly embraced.

The same day a number of teamsters,—some of them belonging to regiments stationed at Wolf Run Shoals and Union Mills, and some to the 5th Mich. Cavalry at Fairfax Court House,—seeing the Testaments, begged to be allowed to take twenty or more apiece to “the boys.” It was a new thing to constitute a dozen swearing teamsters “Bible distributors,” but it was done; and their part of the work was faithfully executed. In some of the companies, a religious interest was the result.

Rev. John O. Barrows,<sup>1</sup> spent a few days of his term of service with the 18th Maine Regiment, in camp a little above the old village of Falmouth. He writes of a visit to a Rhode Island Battery near by :

I had noticed these artillerymen, as they galloped their horses each day, past my tent door to the brook below. So, one afternoon, filling my haversack, I paid them a visit. I found them ready to tell me much of hard fighting, deep mud, long marches and lonely days, but none could tell me of Jesus’ love.

*“I am Praying  
for You.”*

This was very unusual; never before had I turned away from a company of men with so sad a heart. Suddenly some one called after me. It was a young soldier, and his first words, as he came up a little out of breath, were—

“Do you belong to the Christian Commission?”

Almost before I could answer, he went on—

“I saw some of your men at Stoneman’s the other day, and I got a book of them.”

That was all the introduction; with trustful simplicity, he began to open to me the story of his heart:

“I was as hard as any of them when I came out, but I had a praying mother. It most broke her heart when I left home, for she knew I was wild and reckless. But she kept praying for me. Every letter she sent me, whatever else was said, she always told me that. But I didn’t trouble myself much about it, till, one day, a letter came to me when we were at Poolesville. It wasn’t very long, but it took a long time to read it, for mother was dead. I could see her after that; see the

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Northampton, N. H.

tears on her cheeks, and hear her say the old words, over and over again—‘I’m praying for you.’ All through the Peninsula, it was still the same; she was right before my eyes continually. But I didn’t give in till it came to Fair Oaks. I had worked hard all day at our gun; and when the firing stopped, I sat down on a log by the road, alone. They were taking away the dead and wounded near me. I thought how I had been preserved; and then the question came, ‘What has God spared me for?’ and then another, ‘Had my mother’s prayers anything to do with it?’ They were solemn questions, Chaplain. Across the road there was sitting the only Christian in our battery. He saw I was thinking seriously; so he came over and asked me what it was. I told him. He was quiet for a little, then he asked me to go with him to a still place and pray. I went with him, and, on my knees, gave my heart to Jesus; you don’t know how I love Him, Chaplain. My friend has been with me ever since; he’s been a great comfort when the boys laughed; and ridicule isn’t much anyways, if I can keep remembering how my mother’s prayers saved me.”

He led me to the friend who had prayed with him at Fair Oaks. Their hearts seemed knit together, like the heart of one man. But it was indeed “rivers in a dry place, and to a thirsty land streams of water,” to find another to whom they could tell a little of their Christian fellowship. Tears came into their eyes and mine, as they told me how it seemed as if I must have come to the army especially to meet *them*, and to hear their story.

Somehow, as I went back to my tent, my sorrow and sighing had fled away.

Rev. Franklin Tuxbury,<sup>1</sup> writing in April, narrates another soldier’s history, given at the close of a meeting in Washington:

A Lieutenant-Colonel came to me with his story. He had a Christian mother and a praying wife; though he himself had been, as he said, “a very bad man.” His narrow escapes in battle had awakened him. While going into the thickest of the fight at Antietam, he had been appalled by

*Unconscious  
Influence.*

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<sup>1</sup> Congregational Minister, residing in Exeter, N. H.

the thought of death without Christ. He had resolved to seek and find Him; but, the hour of danger past, his impressions had vanished. At Fredericksburg, in greater danger than ever, his feelings of conviction returned. This time they were deepened by noticing the peculiar firmness and steadiness of several Christian men under fire. Especially was he struck by the noble courage of a Corporal, who, after several standard-bearers had been shot down, in turn seized the flag-staff, and as he bravely bore it to immediate death, calmly said to a comrade—

“If I fall, tell my dear wife that I die with a good hope in Christ, and that I am glad to give my life for the country.”

“I cannot forget that,” said the Colonel, “and I want to become a Christian, for I know there is a reality in religion.”

Near Washington at this time, a work of grace was going on at Camp Convalescent. The scenes at some of the meetings were thrilling with the emphasis of pathos, conviction, repentance and gratitude. No pen can ever adequately tell their story. Rev. Geo. J. Mingins<sup>1</sup> details an account given by a soldier at one of the gatherings:

One evening those who had seen the Commission's work and had been benefited by it, were invited to rise and say so. One after another delivered his testimony in the straightforward, manly, candid style, so much a trait of the soldier. The first

*“Heaven Down  
my Throat.”* man who got up, said—

“I hear say, Chaplain, that you are going East to Massachusetts. Well, tell them there that a Yankee of the Yankees, who never prayed at home, has learned to ask God morning and night to ‘bless the Christian Commission!’”

He sat down. The next that stood up was a young man, with his hand in a sling and his face pale from long-continued illness from a wound. He was touched deeply and could hardly speak. At last he said—

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 18.



“Chaplain, you will know what I think of the Christian Commission when I tell you my simple story. I love it, and there is a dear old mother out in the West who loves it, and I know she prays night and morning for God to bless it, because it saved her boy’s life. After I was wounded, I lay all night on the battle-field. I shall never forget that night. Oh, what a long, terrible night it was! The stars were out shining brightly, but I could not enjoy them. I was dying of thirst. Oh, how I prayed that somebody would come near me,—that God would send me relief! How my mind went home to my dear old mother! O Chaplain, I thought it was hard to die when I knew I might live if I could only get somebody to help me. But nobody came near me. I prayed that God would shut out the stars and let the sun come once more, bringing light and morning and relief. After a while I saw a light glimmering on the field. I wondered what it could be. At last I saw the shadow of a man carrying a lantern in his hand. By and bye I saw him stoop down, then get up, move along a little and stoop down in another place; and I knew he was lifting wounded men up and giving them something to drink. Then I began to pray with all my might that he would come near me and give me a mouthful of water. I tried to cry out, but could not; my tongue stuck to the roof of my mouth. The man came nearer and nearer. At one time I thought that he did not see me, and was turning off another way. Oh, how my heart was sickening! but he came nearer, and I threw my arm about so that he heard and came to me. In a moment more he was kneeling by my side and pouring *what, I thought, was heaven, down my throat!* It was cool lemonade. The very moment my tongue was loosed, I exclaimed, ‘God bless you! God bless you! Who are you, sir?’ He lifted my head, and on the lappel of his coat, flashing in the light of the lantern, I saw the badge of the Christian Commission. And I could not help it, but cried out, ‘Hurrah, boys! the Christian Commission has come! We are all right now!’ ‘Thank God! thank God!’ the men answered back. Ah, Chaplain, the Christian Commission saved my life that time, and it has saved many and many a life.” And he sat down amid a tearful audience.

Rev. Mr. Mingins began a series of services in June, at the camp chapel. About three hundred men attended

the first of these, and about five hundred the second. On a third evening the chapel was crowded. It could not be used afterwards, because entirely too small. The meetings were held outside,—the nightly attendance reaching two thousand and upwards :

One evening, after a hard day's work, preaching and talking privately to the men, I retired at a late hour. Some one came to the tent door, wanting admittance. I asked who was there. A voice replied—

*The Lord Rising up to Judge.*

“Open the door, won't you, Chaplain?”

I did as requested, and three men stood before me.

One of them, a young soldier, spoke up and said—

“Chaplain, it's a shame to come at this time of night, but I couldn't help telling you how happy I am ; O Chaplain, I've found Jesus.”

I invited them in. The young man spoke again—

“To-night, while sitting by the cook-house door, I heard your voice as you were speaking ; I said to a comrade, ‘That fellow has a loud voice ; let's go and hear him, and have some fun at the meeting.’ We came to the meeting, Chaplain, to make fun. The first words I heard you say were, ‘When the Lord riseth up, what will you do ? when God visiteth, what will you answer ?’ These words rang in my heart. I couldn't make any fun ; I was thinking all the time of God and judgment, and what I should do to answer God for my wickedness. When the meeting was over, I was so miserable I did not know what to do. I tried to go to the tent ; I tried to come and see you. I was afraid to do either. So I went into the woods and began to pray. My good old mother long ago taught me what I must do to be saved. So I cried like the Publican, and like him was accepted. After a while I heard other men praying near me, and found these two. Speak to them, Chaplain ; they want Jesus.”

I spoke to them of Jesus ; and before I left the camp they had found Him precious.

Gen. Hooker's arrangements for crossing the Rappahannock were carried out successfully in the close of

April. On May 1st began the disastrous battle of Chancellorsville, ending, on the evening of the 4th, in the hasty retreat of our left wing across the Rappahannock, with heavy loss. On May 6th the entire army had fallen back to the old position. Field hospitals for the various corps were at once established. They were immense and widely scattered, so that new Commission stations were called for. These were located at Potomac Creek, Howard and Brooks' Stations. A relief work of great extent and variety was immediately begun.

Rev. W. H. Eaton<sup>1</sup> gives many interesting reminiscences of his hospital work after the battle. He was especially struck with the unfaltering courage of the men :

About fifteen hundred of our wounded were left on the battle-field over the river. For *twelve days or more* they had little or no attention. Their wounds were in many cases dressed but once, and there was no shelter from the rain and sun, save such as the scattered trees afforded. When brought to the hospital they were in a pitiable condition. Many died very soon after. Others had their wounds filled with loathsome worms.

*Chancellorsville  
Heroes.*

"I don't expect to live," said a New Hampshire man, who was in this condition; "all I ask is to be kept clean while I do live."

Rev. John M. Durgan, a Free-will Baptist Minister, who was Lieutenant of Co. B, 12th N. H. Regt., was severely wounded just below the heart. On the twelfth day after, he was brought over with the rest. It was feared that he would not live to reach the hospital. But when they proposed to take him from the ambulance on a stretcher, the brave man utterly refused all assistance, and getting out alone walked into the ward to his bed. He is still alive, and able to preach the gospel.

Another, who had lost both legs by amputation, I saw the next

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of First Baptist Church, Nashua, N. H.

day nonchalantly leaning upon one arm, perusing the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Another had been very severely wounded, but had succeeded after his fall in crawling in under some trees.

*The Blessed Book.* His was a golden testimony—

“Those twelve days were among the happiest of my life. I had my Testament with me. All the strength I had was devoted to prayer and the reading of the Blessed Book. Oh, never before did the Saviour seem so precious, or His Word so sweet. I would not part with this little book, which was my light and joy in those days of darkness and loneliness, for any earthly consideration.”

Major Whittlesey, of Gen. Howard's staff, told us of a Chaplain who had been very attentive to a wounded soldier for several days, trying if possible to save his limb. It was decided that the leg must be taken off. The soldier was anxious that his Chaplain should be present during the operation, but he felt as if he could not bear the sight. So, when the suffering man was put upon a stretcher and borne to the amputating-table, the Chaplain remained behind. How was he surprised and electrified, as he waited sadly for the result, to hear the voice of his friend sounding forth from the room of pain, singing those precious lines!—

*The Sweetest Name.* “How sweet the name of Jesus sounds  
In a believer's ear!  
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,  
And drives away his fear.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. I. O. Sloan relates an incident very similar to this which occurred in his Delegate's experience at one of the hospitals after Antietam. A young Massachusetts soldier, Charles Warren, had been led by unremitting care and faithful admonition to give himself up to Jesus. His leg, it was found, must be amputated to save his life. Mr. Sloan, unwilling to witness the scene, turned away as they carried the soldier to the operating-table. He had not walked far, before he heard Warren's cheerful voice, singing—

“There'll be no more sorrow there;  
In heaven above, where all is love,  
There'll be no more sorrow there.”

He turned back and found the soldier drowsy from the chloroform administered. Thus he remained, for the operation proved useless, until he passed away.

Rev. E. F. Williams tells the story of the death of Capt. Isaac R. Bronson,<sup>1</sup> shot in the shoulder on the 3d, and who lingered until the 20th :

Death had no terrors for him, but there was a struggle which only a parent's heart can know, when he said—

“Oh, if I could only get inside the old homestead and look on the faces of my little ones and my parents and George and Lottie, I should be satisfied.”

*Death Swallowed  
up in Victory.*

I replied, “We shall come pretty soon.”

He answered with a smile as he pointed upward, “Yes, only a little further on.”

Shortly before he breathed his last, he said, “Sing me one of the songs of Zion.”

His wife who had come, asked, “What shall we sing? ‘Rock of Ages?’”

“Yes, ‘Rock of Ages.’”

That, and “Come sing to me of heaven,” were sung.

Bending over him as he lay with closed eyes, as if for a moment asleep, my ear caught the word “Glory,” quickly followed by the expression in a loud, distinct voice—

“Death is nothing to the glory beyond.”

I asked, “Is death swallowed up in victory?” The answered words came back from the threshold of the heavenly door—

“Death is swallowed up in victory.”

The incident which follows, related by the chairman of the Commission, is a strange sequence of events leading a soldier to Jesus :

After the battle Private D——, of the 68th Penna. Regiment, a type-setter from Philadelphia, was detailed for service with the Ambulance Corps. Passing over the bloody field covered with all the valuable wreck of battle, he saw a little torn book lying on the ground. Picking it up unthinkingly, he put it into his pocket, and soon forgot that he had it.

*The Torn Prayer  
Book.*

<sup>1</sup> Of Co. I, 14th Conn. Regt.



Soon after, as he was removing a wounded soldier to the stretcher on which he was to be carried to the hospital, the man exclaimed—

“Don’t move me; I’m dying. My name is Jesse Stevens, of the 1st Mass. Regiment. I want you to pray for me.”

Private D—— did not know how to pray, but it suddenly occurred to him to look at the little book he had picked up; to his astonishment he found on the outside page a prayer, entitled “After sudden visitation.” He at once knelt down, and read in the ear of the dying man the words of the petition :

“O most gracious Father, we fly unto Thee for mercy in behalf of this Thy servant, here lying under the sudden visitation of Thy hand. If it be Thy will, preserve his life, that there may be place for repentance: but, if Thou hast otherwise appointed, let Thy mercy supply to him the want of the usual opportunity for the trimming of his lamp. Stir up in him such sorrow for sin and such fervent love to Thee, as may in a short time do the work of many days; that among the praises which Thy Saints and Holy Angels shall sing to the honor of Thy mercy through eternal ages, it may be to Thy unspeakable glory that Thou hast redeemed the soul of this Thy servant from eternal death, and made him partaker of the everlasting life, which is through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”<sup>1</sup>

During the prayer the Confederates had been posting themselves in the immediate neighborhood, and D—— was made a prisoner. During his confinement in Libby, the words of the dying man kept ringing in his ear,—“I am dying; pray for me.” His sins came up before him, but he found no peace. Subsequently arriving at Camp Distribution, and hearing of a prayer meeting, he resolved to attend it. He was one of more than a hundred and twenty, who that evening rose to be prayed for. His anxiety was increased after hearing from his wife, who had become a Christian since he had left home, and who, in all her letters, was urging him to give his heart to Christ. He was not long in following her advice and example. Mr. Stuart bore the message of the soldier’s decision to his happy wife, and still keeps, as a memento of solemn interest, the tattered leaves of the torn Prayer Book.

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<sup>1</sup> Written by the late Rt. Rev. Bishop Potter of the Diocese of Pennsylvania. *Soldiers’ Prayer Book*, p. 10.



The work of holding prayer meetings among the men was recommenced as soon as possible after the battle. Rev. W. H. Eaton gives a graphic account of meetings at Potomac Creek Station :

Our station was on the thoroughfare between the hospitals of the 3d and 6th Corps, one mile from Potomac Creek. We had three large wall-tents, put up in such order as to make but one spacious room. On one side we kept our books, papers and hospital stores ; the other was occupied as a parlor by day, a chapel in the evening, and a sleeping room at night. For our parlor chairs we had rows of planks, five deep, resting on empty boxes. These answered in the evening for chapel settees, and at night for spring beds. A small tent close by contained our kitchen, in charge of Joseph Jones, of the 84th Penna. Vols., detailed for us by Col. Bowman. Joseph was an earnest Christian. During the previous winter he had been converted at one of our stations, and was a decidedly happy man in his post as cook to the Christian Commission.

*Potomac Creek  
Station.*

Our prayer meetings began at early candle-lighting, although some of the soldiers used to come in a half hour or so before sunset ; some with crutches and others with canes ; some with bandages about their heads and others with their arms slung,—all sore and lame from recent wounds, but able to move about. They fill up our chapel to the number of one hundred or more. At twilight, one of us takes half-a-dozen candles from the box, and, as candlesticks are lacking, we put one into a potato prepared for the purpose, and suspended from the roof by a wire ; another into a piece of board ; two or three into small boxes, filled so as to keep the candles upright. Then the meeting begins.

*A Meeting of  
the Maimed and  
Halt.*

How the men turn back to their homes !

“When I left home,” says one, “my father took me by the hand and told me, ‘It would not be half so hard to part with you if I knew you were a Christian.’ I made up my mind to seek Christ then, and I think I have found Him.”

Another said, “I once had a hope, but I have gone astray. The

dangers of war did not awaken me. I have been in the habit of gambling since I was wounded. To-day I got a letter from home with the sad news of the death of a dear sister, who was baptized on the same day with myself. Ever since I have been in the army, she has written to me and has prayed for me, that I might not injure Christ's cause. She has gone to heaven now. I mean to forsake my sins and to lead a Christian life. Will you not all pray for me?"

"I was wounded on the field," said another. "As I staggered off to the rear, the bullets kept singing past me and burying themselves in the ground all about. I expected immediate death. When I got beyond the hill, nearly out of danger, I fell on my knees and gave thanks to God. And now I mean to be His for ever."

The two simply-told incidents which follow, occurring at different stations at about the same time in the month of June, show alike how the soldiers were met and touched by little kindnesses,—their very lives sometimes turned Christward by them. The first is related by Rev. Geo. N. Marden,<sup>1</sup> a Delegate at the Acquia Creek Station :

A vigorous-looking soldier came in, asking whether we had any little bags with needles, buttons, &c.

Said he, "I belong to Co. B, 78th N. Y., and lost everything in the battle of Chancellorsville. I was lying down when a piece of shell struck me on the cartilage of the nose; it's all healed now, but 'twas a close hit. I was very near death then, but I thought of God all the time, and prayed and trusted Him as never before. A man lying three feet from me was killed by the same shell. Oh, I hope I love the Lord. I try to serve Him. He seemed near me all that dreadful day."

I handed him a comfort-bag, saying it was from a little motherless boy in my own Sabbath-school

"And could you let me have one for McClusky, my tent-mate?"

"Oh yes, with pleasure."

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Boxboro', Mass.

“Well, sir, we’ll write to these little boys. It’s about all we can do in return for their kindness.”

I asked whether McClusky was a Christian :

“He is leaning that way, since the last battle. I have persuaded him to try to be one. He and I go a little way from camp and pray together. One of the little books may help him.”

I gave the veteran a book for his comrade, entitled “*Come to Jesus,*” with papers for himself. He departed after bestowing upon me the warmest, solidest clasp of the hand I had yet received in Virginia, with an earnest “God bless you!”

The second story is from the pen of Rev. Geo. H. Morss,<sup>1</sup> who, at the time was laboring at the Division Hospital of the 2d and 5th Corps, near Falmouth :

We were visited one morning by an old soldier from Connecticut, who was acting as orderly for his Colonel. Our breakfast was ready, and we invited him to stay and eat with us. He at first objected because he had not been much accustomed to eat with others. However, he did join us at last, and seemed to enjoy it exceedingly. He said he had not sat down to eat at a table with any one since he had been in the service.

*The Soldier's  
Breakfast.*

“I have three sons,” said he, “in the army. When the third one enlisted, I felt that I could not remain alone, but must come myself. I have been a very hard man, and much given to swearing,”—indeed, we had to reprove him mildly for it once, as he was talking about it.

He seemed touched and melted by our kindness. After breakfast I told him that we were accustomed to have our devotions then, and asked him to remain. He did so. After reading a portion of Scripture, we sang a hymn. I then offered prayer, commending the soldier and his sons to the Lord. He came to me afterwards, took me by the hand, and with the tear glistening in his eye, said—

“You are the first man that ever prayed for me in my presence, and I thank you for it. I am determined now to live a different life.

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Abington, Conn.

Old John Perkins shall be a better John from this time. I will never swear again."

As he left our tent, our hearts rejoiced before God that He had made use of our simple acts of kindness to reach the heart of the old man.

The work of quieter Christian effort was soon brought to an abrupt close. Lee, strengthened by Longstreet's Division, called from the siege of Suffolk by the crisis on the Rappahannock, early in June concentrated his army at Culpepper, preparatory to another invasion of Maryland. His troops passed rapidly up the Shenandoah, scattering Milroy's army before them. General Ewell's Corps crossed the Potomac at Williamsport on June 16th, only three days after Hooker had started from his lines in front of Fredericksburg. It soon became evident that the enemy did not intend to assail Washington, but was entering Pennsylvania. Hooker crossed the Potomac on June 26th. On the 28th he was relieved, and Gen. George G. Meade placed in command.

When Hooker's movement began, the Commission stores were safely removed to Washington from the old stations. Messengers found the army at Fairfax Court House, where a station was already in operation. It did not long remain, but a vigorous work was entered on, both there and at Fairfax Station, especially among the cavalry wounded in the skirmishes and battles, so frequent at this juncture. Field Agent E. F. Williams narrates an incident of this crisis, peculiarly characteristic of an American army:

In the midst of our work, two soldiers of Co. I, 2d Pennsylvania Cavalry, came into our room in the old church at Fairfax C. H., with a library of a hundred volumes on their shoulders, which, neatly

packed in a box, they have carried eighteen months. The boys have read it again and again, yet it is still in good order. Hardly a book has been lost. They cannot bear to throw it away; but they have no means of transporting it now. It was given them while on their way to the front, by ladies in Philadelphia.

*A Library at  
the Front.*

“Will the Christian Commission take it and get it to Washington? After the present movement is over, perhaps some regiment can be found which would like the library. There is not much use in thinking we shall see it again. It is the destiny of the cavalry this Summer to be pretty busy. Better give the books to a regiment of infantry.”

“And here is my singing book,” adds one of the soldiers; “I have carried it ever since I came into the service. I must give it up now. Will you take it, and give it to somebody to whom it will do some good? I can’t throw it away.”

We receive the gift, mark the box, assure the soldiers that we will get the books to Washington, and if possible return them in more favorable times.

Mr. Williams adds other interesting reminiscences of this movement. We have only room for the following, which occurred at Fairfax C. H. :

On June 23d, two hundred men, who have been driven in ambulances over the roughest of roads from the skirmish-field all along the Blue Ridge, pass our doors for the railroad station. They have four miles of terrible “corduroy” before them, and have had no food nor drink since they were wounded. They cannot stop now for us to prepare them anything. A Commission Agent rides rapidly to the station, has fires kindled, coffee prepared, and bread cut in slices, buttered and spread with jelly, water brought, tin cups and sponges made ready, and the Delegates prepared to give aid and comfort to the men as they are taken from the ambulances and placed upon the cars for Washington. The work continues all the afternoon and far into the night, for the train is delayed. Rebel prisoners are not overlooked.

*Getting Ahead  
of the Wounded.*

“Is this for me?” said one of their Colonels, to whom a cup of coffee was handed.

“Yes, sir. Will you please drink it?”

*Coals of Fire  
on the Head.*

“Well, this beats me. We don’t treat our prisoners so.”

“We make no distinctions,” is our only answer.

The Colonel drinks his coffee and eats his bread in silence, but with tears in his eyes and wonder in his heart.

One man who had been a disbeliever in the Sanitary and Christian Commissions, considering them as humbugs, began to change his mind somewhat. It was wonderful to see how the logic of events

*The Gospel of  
Bread and Coffee.*

gradually conquered him, until at last he said, with tears—

“That’s what I call the gospel. God bless you! I mean to tell them at home to do all they can for you.” .



## CHAPTER VI.

### *THE EASTERN ARMIES.*

GETTYSBURG.

*July 1863.*

THE great battle began on the first day of July, Ewell and Hill's Corps of the Confederate Army forcing back our 1st and 11th Corps. The greater part of the second day was consumed by each side waiting for its absent divisions. The evening's fighting was to the advantage of the enemy, though it welded our line together for the struggle of the next day. The story of Round Top, the Peach Orchard, and Cemetery and Culp's Hills is too well known to need repetition. The sun of July 3d went down upon a decisive Union victory. Gen. Lee began his retreat on the following day. Gen. French captured and destroyed the bridge over the Potomac at Williamsport. It was some time before the enemy could rebuild it, but on the 13th this was accomplished, and in the night the swollen river was safely crossed.

Before the battle closed, the Delegates of the Commission were on the ground. At once began the most successful and extensive work which had yet been attempted,—a work rich in incidents of sacrifice, devotion and Christian ministrations. A supply station was established in the village. Thither stores were pushed

forward from the Commission offices and from the whole surrounding country. Over three hundred Delegates, of all ranks and occupations, were sent as the almoners of the gathered bounty. Before they had concluded their work, stores to the value of \$80,000 had been distributed. Too much cannot be said of the kindness of the people of Gettysburg to the Delegates, whose accommodations at first were very limited. Nor was it confined to them; until the hospitals were withdrawn from the neighborhood, the residents were untiring in their efforts to alleviate the wants of the wounded and dying.

Mr. Enoch K. Miller, a private of Co. F, 108th N. Y. Vols., who afterwards became a Chaplain in the army,<sup>1</sup> relates, in a letter addressed to Rev. R. J. Parvin,<sup>2</sup> how his life was saved at this battle. We make extracts from the letter, and this single relation must stand for the many others left untold:

“It was dark when they laid me under a tree, surrounded by hundreds of my comrades who were wounded and dying, and as my Chaplain, Rev. Thomas Grassie, bent over me and asked where my trust was placed, the Psalmist’s words came involuntarily to my lips: ‘Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.’ A minie ball had pierced my breast, passing through my left lung and coming out a little under my shoulder blade. The Surgeon of our regiment made an examination of my wound, but as I supposed that at that time the ball was in me, he only looked at my breast. He gave me a sleeping powder, and throwing his rubber blanket over me, left me as he supposed, to die. During the next three or four days, without a pillow or sufficient covering, my clothes saturated with my own

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<sup>1</sup> Of 25th U. S. C. T.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 44.

blood, with no proper food, attended by a faithful comrade, Sergeant John O'Connell, I lay scarcely daring to hope for life.

"About noon one day I saw in the distance the silver badge of the Christian Commission, and sending my comrade, I soon had its Delegate by my side. In that Delegate I recognized Brother Stillson.<sup>1</sup> He was an old friend, and we had been co-laborers in the Sunday-school work before the war commenced. He knew me in an instant, and without waiting to waste words, supplied me with a feather pillow,—the first I had had in a year,—a quilt, a draught of wine, some nice soft crackers and a cup of warm tea. After offering up an earnest prayer by my side, he hastened away to secure some clean clothes. He then removed my filthy garments, and in doing that it was found that the ball had passed through me.

"After all this had been done, I felt as though I was at home; for, my dear sir, the Delegate of the Commission acts the part of a tender, loving mother, a willing father, an affectionate sister, a sympathizing brother and a beloved pastor.

"I lay on the field until July 15th, and received everything that could enhance my comfort in such a situation. The greatest share came from the Christian Commission. For a few days I was cared for by a Surgeon connected with your society. Without these comforts and necessaries I must have died, but as your agents were on the ground to care personally for just such cases as mine, and as a great Providence ordered it, I survived."

The soldier's words of gratitude to the Commission, and to Rev. Mr. Parvin, who had written the orders for the stores which relieved him, need not be added.

Mr. Demond<sup>2</sup> relates two stories of relief work performed by Mr. John C. Chamberlain,<sup>3</sup> illustrative of the spirit animating the Delegates, and of the good which even a very slight service could effect:

He heard just at nightfall of a hospital, some miles away, that

<sup>1</sup> J. B. Stillson, Esq., of Rochester, N. Y.

<sup>2</sup> In his address at the last Anniversary of the Commission.

<sup>3</sup> Student of Bangor (Me.) Theological Seminary, and brother of the gallant Gen. Chamberlain.

had not been visited. Though wearied with the labors of the day, he went to it at once on foot. He found the Surgeon in charge sick, the assistant overwhelmed with the care of some two hundred wounded, and no stores or comforts. He told the Doctor that there was a station of the Sanitary Commission within a mile, and asked why he had not got stores. The Doctor said he did not know how to get them. Mr. Chamberlain wrote an order on the Sanitary Commission, the Doctor signed it, and the Delegate went to the station and found that the Sanitary Commission had gone away. What was to be done? It was late; he was very weary; it was nearly five miles to Gettysburg, where the station of the Christian Commission was, the road was hard, and the streams all high and swollen. But the men were suffering, and there was no one but him to help. He took the long and lonely walk, and very early the next morning the wagon of the Christian Commission was at that hospital, laden with stores and comforts for the heroic sufferers.

The same Delegate came one day upon an out-of-doors hospital, where the men were lying in the July sun, with no shelter. After looking a moment, he took a stone and stick, and arranged the blanket of a soldier so as to shield his face. Others caught the idea, and soon every one in the hospital was sheltered from the burning and torturing blaze of the sun.

Rev. Geo. Bringhurst<sup>1</sup> tells a little incident of one of these slight services :

One very dark night I met a soldier whose arms had both been shot away. He was getting to his tent, and I asked what I could do for him.

*Tying a Soldier's Shoes.*

“Oh, nothing, Chaplain,” said he, cheerfully; “unless you would tie my shoes for me. They have been bothering me a good deal.”

I thought, as I stooped down, of the latchet which the Forerunner was not worthy to loose, and the little deed became a joy.

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 24.

Rev. E. F. Williams<sup>1</sup> tells a story of faith and its result :

Our store-keeper, an Englishman, earnest, hard-working, patriotic, and a Christian, was asked one day, when our supply of provisions was getting very low, to cut the slices of bread which he gave the boys a little thinner.

“Oh, no,” said he, “I can’t,—the poor fellows are *Faith.*  
so hungry.”

“But our bread will soon be gone.”

“Well, I have faith that the Lord will send us more before we are quite out.”

He was allowed to take his own course, though advised to be as sparing as possible. The day wore away, and still the crowd of hungry soldiers pressed around our doors. The last loaf was taken from the shelf. A hundred Delegates were yet to have their supper. But there were no crackers, no meat, no bread for them, or for the still unfed soldiers, who, weary with wounds and a long, limping march from the field hospital, lingered at our rooms for a morsel of food, a cup of coffee and a word of direction about the trains for Baltimore and Philadelphia.

Just at the last moment, when our faith was almost exhausted, an immense load of provisions stopped before our quarters, and the drivers asked for the agents of the Commission :

“We have brought bread, lint, bandages, jellies and wines; we don’t know just who are most needy, but we have confidence in you. Will you distribute these things for us?”

The stores had come a hundred and three miles. Two ministers, German Reformed and Lutheran, were with them. Our thanks can better be imagined than told. Never again did we chide the store-keeper’s faith, who knew that the Lord would send just what we wanted. Nor did our stock of provisions ever again give out while we remained at Gettysburg.

An incident of noble Christian fortitude and heroism

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 142.

is related of Chaplain Eastman, son of Rev. Dr. Eastman, Secretary of the American Tract Society:<sup>1</sup>

His horse plunging during the battle, struck him on the knee-pan. His leg swelled and stiffened until the pain became almost unendurable. When he could no longer stand, he gave his horse to a servant and laid himself down on the ground. He had to take a wounded soldier's place alone that night. As he lay suffering and thinking, he heard a voice; "O my God!" He thought, Can anybody be swearing in such a place as this? He listened again, and a prayer began; it was from a wounded soldier. How can I get at him? was his first impulse. He tried to draw up his stiffened limb, but he could not rise. He put his arm round a sapling, drew up his well foot, and tried to extend the other without bending, that he might walk; but he fell back in the effort, jarred through as if he had been stabbed. He then thought, I can roll. And over and over he rolled in pain and blood, and by dead bodies, until he fell against the dying man, and there he preached Christ and prayed. At length one of the line officers came up and said—

"Where's the Chaplain? One of the staff officers is dying."

"Here he is, here he is," cried out the sufferer.

"Can you come and see a dying officer?"

"I cannot move. I had to roll myself to this dying man to talk to him."

"If I detail two men to carry you, can you go?"

"Yes."

They took him gently up and carried him. And that live-long night the two men bore him over the field, and laid him down beside bleeding, dying men, while he preached Christ and prayed. Lying thus on his back, the wounded Chaplain could not even see his audience, but must look always heavenward into the eyes of the peaceful stars,—emblems of God's love, which even that day of blood had not soiled nor made dim.

Mr. J. B. Stillson gives a detailed account of the

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<sup>1</sup> Told by Rev. Jos. T. Duryea, D.D., Pastor of Collegiate Reformed (Dutch) Church, New York.



adventures and escapes of John Burns, of Gettysburg, who acted as a volunteer soldier through part of the battle :

He was within two months of his seventieth year when he offered himself, dressed in the Continental coat, vest and corduroys which he had worn in the war of 1812, to Gen. Wister, who commanded what was known as the "Iron Brigade." Approaching that officer, he said—

*Old John  
Burns.*

"General, I fought for my country in 1812, and I want to fight for it again to-day."

The officer looked at him keenly from head to foot, and seeing he was in earnest, extended his hand :

"God bless the old soldier ; he shall have a chance."

Joining the 7th Wisconsin, he performed a brave man's duty until the close of the first day's battle, when, after being four times hit, he fell into the enemy's hands. His escape with life had been truly marvellous. The first ball struck his side, and was turned away from his body by the intervention of a pair of old-fashioned spectacles in his vest pocket. The second struck a truss worn for an abdominal injury, and glanced off, cutting away the flesh from his thigh about two inches below the top of the hip-bone. The third ball passed through his leg, between the large and small bones, without injuring either them or the arteries. The fourth went through the fleshy part of the left arm below the elbow, also without breaking bones or rupturing arteries.

He lay on the field during the night, and was removed next morning, through a neighbor's kindness, to his own house in the town. A Rebel officer, accompanied by a soldier, visited him there, and questioned him closely about the part he had taken in the fight, but Burns made no replies. The window of the room looked out towards a house at some distance, occupied by Rebel sharpshooters ; the old man's bed was within range, and shortly after the officer and soldier left, a ball from the house entered his window, and grazing his breast buried itself in the partition wall. Only a moment before, the wounded man, weary of lying on his side, had turned upon his bed. In the former position the minie ball would have passed directly through him.

The most precious reward to the Delegate was the privilege of turning a wandering soul to Jesus. It was God's will that this result should be often reached in the Gettysburg hospitals. Rev. Mr. Parvin narrates one such incident among others :

I found on the field a Michigan soldier named David Laird, and visited him regularly while I was at Gettysburg. One day, after writing home at his request, he told me of his early training, of his wandering from it, of his longing to return. We *David Laird.* prayed, read and talked together, until at last the Spirit took possession of his heart. At first he was very much troubled because his wound—a serious one received while the regiment was falling back under orders—was in the *back*. I reassured him, and explained all the circumstances to his parents in my letter. I received answers from each of them, thanking me for my little ministries. But the mother's letter to her boy was perfect tenderness and love :

“DAVID, MY DARLING BOY :—What can I say to you, my son ! my son ? Oh, that I could see you ! that I could minister to you ! I think father will probably be with you soon. My dear one, you have done what you could to suppress this cruel rebellion. May God comfort you ! You are still serving the country so dear to your heart. You have been for thirty months an *active* volunteer ; now you are a *suffering* one. Still there is an army in which you may enlist,—the army of the Lord. All—all are welcome there. You will find kind friends who will keep us advised ; and please request them to give us *all* the particulars of your situation. God comfort and sustain you, dear one, is your mother's prayer !”

His father wrote about the wound :

“As to David's wound in his back, it need give him no uneasiness. None who know him will suppose it to be there on account of cowardice.”

The weeks passed on ; the pleasant September days came, but David was worse. His father came in time to see him die. When

it was all over, I tried to comfort him for his loss, but he put the words kindly aside :

“I don’t need any comfort from man, for God has given me so much, in seeing the happy death of my boy, that I am perfectly content.”

Prof. M. L. Stoever,<sup>1</sup> of Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, remained in the town throughout the terrible days. At much personal risk, he, with other citizens, strove to do what he could for the many wounded sufferers. His reminiscences of the battle are exceedingly rich and valuable. We present a few, each of which illustrates some aspect of the Christian soldier’s peace in the hour of deepest trial :

One of the most touching scenes I remember was in attending upon a man who became a Christian as he lay wounded in the college edifice. I read to him the precious promises of God’s Word ; his joy seemed unspeakable ; his countenance beamed with delight as the hour of his departure drew near. *The Postscript.*

While sending to his family his dying messages, he spoke with strong confidence of his acceptance of the Saviour’s love. After I had closed the letter, he said—

“Please add a postscript. Tell mother to urge my brothers to serve the Lord.”

His earnestness with regard to this, in the midst of his sufferings, was deeply impressive.

Captain Griffeth, of Gen. Howard’s staff, was mortally wounded in the battle. Amid army associations and perils, a warm personal attachment had grown up between the General and his Adjutant ; and when the command came to pursue the retreating foe, the General hastened to take his last farewell. The door was closed ; words of sympathy were necessarily brief,—than Christ’s own, none were better ; Gen. Howard read the fourteenth chapter of St. John— *Farewell on the Battle-field.*

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<sup>1</sup> Afterwards a member of the General Commission, and a frequent and efficient Delegate.

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

Then bowing upon the floor, the General commended his wounded friend to the compassionate God and Father of all those who trust in Him, and rising from his knees clasped him in one long, fond, weeping embrace. Thus the heroes parted. One to pursue the Rebellion to its death; the other, within a few days, to enter into the rest of God.

In the school-house Prof. Stoever found together two interesting and intelligent young men, who had just had amputation performed. They were Confederates, and both from Lutheran colleges,—one from Roanoke College, Va., the other from Newberry College, S. C. Their teachers had been students in the college at Gettysburg, and were well known to the Professor. One of them was already a Christian; the other had found Christ, he trusted, on that battle-field.

*Messages for Home.*

“Tell my father,” said the first, “if you can get a letter to him, that I am leaning on the strong arm of Jesus; He comforts me; all my hope is in Him.”

Said the other, “Write to my mother that I have found the Saviour; He is precious to my soul. And say to her,—‘If I meet you, mother, no more on earth, I hope to meet you in heaven.’”

Prof. Stoever narrates a striking instance of the way in which, through Christ Jesus, all Christians are made one:

The Sabbath after the battle my attention was directed to the destitution of a hospital in the Roman Catholic church of Gettysburg. On entering the building, filled with wounded and dying, I was met by a Roman Catholic lady, well known to me as a good woman, but a very rigid religionist. She said at once—

*The Unity of the Church.*

“Do come and speak to this man. The Surgeon says he will die, and he is unconverted.”

I followed her to the chancel within which he was lying. She introduced me as a Protestant, connected with the college, and then left him to my attention. I presented to him the only way opened for his return to God, and kneeling by his side, prayed with him,—the first prayer doubtless ever offered by a Protestant in that church, and that at the request of one of its members. The man died shortly afterwards most peacefully, trusting in Christ and with the hope of eternal life. He was the son of a pious mother; although he had never made a profession of religion, the early instructions had prepared his mind to lay hold of the cross and to embrace the Saviour.

Near the altar of the same church, Mr. Stuart, the chairman of the Commission, ministered to another soldier, who was led to find Christ Jesus precious. He writes:

As I was passing, a man near the altar looked up at me imploringly and asked, "Ain't you going to stop and talk to me?" I went to him and ascertained that his name was Wm. O. Doubleday. His wife was a Christian. She had taught each one of his children to pray as soon as they could lisp the words. He had never made a profession of religion himself, but was not what is called a "wicked man."

*A Scene by a  
Roman Catholic  
Altar.*

"When I enlisted," said he, "which I did because I considered it a disgrace to be drafted, just as I was leaving for the war, my wife said, 'I hope you will come back all right, and a good Christian.' It touched my heart. We went into the room with the family, and there she prayed for me, and then asked me to pray. I tried to offer a few broken petitions. My little boy, only thirteen years old, then offered a most earnest prayer for me and for our distressed country. I don't know where he learned to pray like that, unless it was in the Sabbath-school."

When he learned how I was connected with the Commission, and saw the badge, tears came to his eyes. When I spoke to him of Jesus, he pressed my hands, and the tears came fast as rain. I prayed with him, and then he asked me to bend down and kiss him. He died soon after from the effects of an amputation.

I received a letter from his wife, who came to him before his death.

She was very earnest in her expressions of thankfulness, and told me with loving sorrow and joy how her husband's peaceful death had answered her prayers.

Mr. Stuart also visited in a private house of the town, Lieut. William Henry Walcott<sup>1</sup> of Providence, R. I., who told him how he had been supported amidst pains:

The Lieutenant had heard me through his window, addressing a large congregation in the "Diamond" or public square of the town, and thinking I was a clergyman, sent for me. His story was as follows:

*Christ's Drink and Mine.* "My wife died a month before the war began, and since leaving home my little child has died also. I took thirty-nine men into the battle in my company; twenty-nine of them are either killed or wounded. I fell on Thursday near Round Top, on a spot much exposed and alternately lost and won by our troops. My own men could not carry me off the field, so I signalled to the Colonel by waving my handkerchief, and was sent for. In carrying me to a place of safety my wounds and pain were aggravated. I had been lying across two men, one dead and the other dying, but was unable to move. The dying man was one of the best soldiers in my company. I had often taken the men to church, and now amid the din and danger I prayed with him. Very soon he was gone.

"I was carried to the regimental hospital, but they could do nothing for me; then to the division hospital, where the wound was examined and my foot amputated. On Friday the Rebels shelled the hospital. I was taken away a long distance into the woods; the bearers thoughtlessly placed me near the foot of a little hill, so that when the rain came on, streams of water poured along the ground under the shelter tent which had been pitched over me. On the battle-field I thought I could not endure my sufferings, but then I called to mind what Jesus had endured; and how that, while I had water to drink, He had vinegar and gall offered Him."

With this constantly recurring reflection, the soldier kept up his drooping spirits until relief came.

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<sup>1</sup> 17th Reg't., U. S. Inf., afterwards Bvt. Major.



Rev. Mr. Parvin chronicles the testimony of Captain Billings of the 20th Maine Regiment. The story's close tells of one of the hardest tasks of the Delegate:

A Captain was brought into the old barn, where lay sixty-five of the worst cases in the Fifth Corps. The brave fellow had some of his own men lying on the floor not far from him. He loved them with a father's love. As one after another they died before his eyes, it worked so upon his mind that he became delirious, until it took four or five men to hold him. With great difficulty we got him away from his men into a room by himself, where he rallied and became a little better.

*Captain Billings in his Place.*

Once as I was passing into his tent, the Surgeon came out; he told me that the Captain must die. I entered and took him by the hand. His first words were—

“Chaplain, what did the Surgeon say?”

“Why, Captain, you are in a critical case.”

“I know that, Chaplain, but does he think I can live?”

“He thinks it hardly possible that you will.”

“Have you heard from my wife, Chaplain, since your message yesterday?”

“No; the telegraph lines are in the hands of the Government, but I hope she will be here.”

“Does the Surgeon say I cannot live long, Chaplain?”

“Yes,—but then you are a Christian, Captain.”

“Yes, Chaplain, I have no fears. *I left my place in the Sabbath-school for my place in the army.* My hope is in the Lord Jesus. I have tried to serve Him in the army, and He will not forsake me now;—but I would like to see my wife.”

“Well, Captain, if you have anything to say to her, will you send the message by me?”

He asked me to give her his haversack, sword and some other little things, with a message. Dismissing then all earthly things from his mind, he said to me—

“Don't stay any longer with me, Chaplain; go and help the boys, and run in here as you can to read a few words from the Bible.”

Once afterwards he asked me to have his body embalmed and sent

home. I promised to do so. He did not even refer to it again, but passed away in triumph.

It was in the morning at eleven o'clock that he died. At five in the afternoon his body was sent to the embalmers. Late that night, as I was busy writing letters from memoranda taken through the day, there was a knock at the door. In stepped a man inquiring for Captain Billings. What a question for us to meet! I thought of the home link.

"Who are you?" I asked.

"*I am his brother; I have his wife with me!* I have kept her up all the way with the hope that we would find the Captain in good condition. Where is he, sir?"

"You have not brought the Captain's wife out here to-night?" The Corps hospital was four miles from Gettysburg.

"No, I left her in town until the morning."

"That was well. The body of your brother was sent to the embalmers this afternoon."

"Oh," said he, "I cannot tell her. I cannot trust myself to try to tell her, or even to see her again to-night;"—the poor man broke down in his grief,—“I have brought her on all the way to Gettysburg for this, and now you must—you must tell her all.”

And so our duty was to see the bereaved wife, and deliver to her the messages and tokens of the dying love of her husband, and to speak to her words of comfort in the name of the Lord.

Rev. W. T. Eva<sup>1</sup> tells the story of two soldiers who seemed to have entered into the meaning of the Father's promises of eternal care :

Away in the corner of a shed crowded with wounded, I found a dying man. His limbs were already cold and the death-damp was upon his brow. Fellow-sufferers were thick enough about him, yet  
*"Happy Day!"* he was dying alone. He was still conscious when I came to him,—not only conscious, but happy in the love of God. I can truly say that nowhere have I witnessed a more triumphant peace than his. We prayed by his side, and then sang—

<sup>1</sup> Pastor of (N. S.) Presbyterian Church, Kensington, Philadelphia.

“Just as I am, without one plea,”

with the chorus—

“Happy day! happy day!  
When Jesus washed my sins away.”

As we prayed and sang, the Holy Spirit seemed to come down not only upon the dying man, but on all in that dolorous place; and here and there, from among the wounded braves as they lay upon the floor, was uttered aloud the earnest cry, “God have mercy on my soul!”

In a barn, lying upon a slab floor, with nothing under him but a little wet hay, and with scarce a rag to cover him, I found a middle-aged man shot through the body, and so paralyzed by the shock of an exploding shell that he was entirely unable to move,—the most abject picture of utter wretchedness I ever beheld. He was quite sensible however, and having done what I could to make him comfortable, I spoke of his heroic devotion to the flag, of the love of God and of the Saviour’s death. A flood of tears welled up in his eyes and rolled down over the bronzed face. He was too full to speak; but it was evident that even in that forlorn man I had found not only a true patriot, but also a lover of Jesus and a blessed witness to the triumph of the grace of God.

*Victory amidst  
Wretchedness.*

A few short reminiscences by Mr. Parvin tell their own story of sacrifice and Christian victory:

After the battle in the heavy showers, many of the wounded on the bank of a brook were in danger of drowning from the rapid rise of the water. There were no stretchers, and some of the badly wounded could not be carried in the arms of the men without great pain.

*A New Stretcher.*

“Lay them on my back,” said a Delegate, going into the water on his hands and knees, and thus, bent with his face to the ground, he conveyed them tenderly out of the reach of danger.

The store-house was at some distance, and I had but one bottle of blackberry cordial left, so I called out—

“Boys, I’ve got one bottle of nice cordial here; who wants it?”

“Keep it for Them.” A brave fellow near me replied, “You’ll find others not far off who need it more than we do, Chaplain; keep it for them.”

I can never forget how the heroes greeted me that morning, as I passed along a line of shelter tents, which were flooded with the last night’s rain:

“We don’t Mind our Soaking.” “Never mind, Chaplain; we don’t care for our soaking, if the Potomac’s only full, so that Lee can’t cross.”

This was the last message of a Maine soldier,—“Charley” his comrades called him:

*A Given Life.* “Tell mother I received my wound on my twentieth birthday. I give my life for my country; if I had another, I would give it too.”

A soldier, only seventeen years old, who had run away from his employer in Camden, N. J., to join a Philadelphia regiment, was found on the field with seven bullet holes in his body, and having

“Our Father.” but a little while to live. I knelt down on the ground by him and asked for his mother’s name and residence:

“I have no mother, Chaplain.”

“Have you a father?”

“No.”

“Any brothers or sisters?”

“No relatives in the world.”

Poor fellow! he seemed alone indeed. I took his hand in mine:

“Martin, you’ve been at Sunday-school?”

“Yes, sir.”

“You have forgotten *one* relative, then.”

He looked at me inquiringly, when I added, pointing upwards—

“‘Our Father, who art in heaven;’ there is a Father and a home for you up *there*.”

Doubtfully at first, then with slowly increasing assurance, the precious truth was received. In a broken, childlike way he learned to pray to this only relative in earth or heaven. Soon the face grew bright and glad, and the answer of the once restless, homeless eyes, was one of trusting peace.

A great favorite among his comrades was M——, a soldier from

Massachusetts. After his death his mother wrote me, begging for "only one lock of his hair." A comrade of the dead soldier went down into the last resting-place, and severing a damp lock, it was sent on its mournful errand

*The Lock of  
Hair.*

Perhaps no incident of the war became so widely known and excited such deep sympathy as the story of the Humiston children. The main facts of the narrative are these:



"THE HUMISTON CHILDREN."

(An exact copy of the original picture.)

Dr. J. Francis Bourns, of Philadelphia, was crossing the mountains on his way to Gettysburg, as a volunteer Surgeon and Delegate of the Commission. An accident to his vehicle forced him, with three fellow-travellers on the same errand, to halt at Graefenberg Springs. Mr. Schriver, the proprietor, exhibited to them a beautiful ferrotype of three lovely children, which had been found clasped in the hands of a soldier dead on the battle-field. The picture was so held that it must

*A Father's  
Last Look.*



have met his dying gaze. No other memoranda, relics, or even equipments were found on the body, so that identification was impossible. Dr. Bourns obtained the ferrotype, with the intention, when his Delegate work was over, of using it to discover the little fatherless ones. He persevered until all the obstacles in the way of obtaining a salable picture were overcome by some Philadelphia artists; and then furnished to the press all he knew of the story, simultaneously with the publication of the photograph, since so well known. Week after week passed; still the mystery of the dead soldier was unsolved; inquiries poured in, but there was no identification. Dr. Bourns began to despair. A copy of the *American Presbyterian*, containing a description of the picture, found its way to a little town on the Alleghany river, in Western New York. The affecting tale was rehearsed through the village for several days, exciting the warmest sympathy. A lady carried the paper to a friend who had not heard from her husband since the battle. The narrative recalled, with dread accuracy, a picture which the wife had sent her husband just before Gettysburg. The fact was communicated to Dr. Bourns, who sent a copy of the picture in reply. It was the first news that she had that her children were fatherless, and she a widow. The name of the unknown soldier was thus found to be Amos Humiston, Sergeant, 154th N. Y. S. Vols., of Portville, N. Y. The sale of copies of the picture was afterwards made the means of great good.<sup>1</sup>

No result of the ministrations after this battle was more marked than that manifested in the altered feeling among the Rebel prisoners. The Delegates allude to this constantly in their reports. We can present but

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Bourns informs us (March 1868), that "The founding of the 'National Orphan Homestead' at Gettysburg, is the sequel to the story of the Humiston children. About seventy soldiers' orphans have been received into the institution, and there are many more fatherless little ones who are awaiting its enlargement of accommodations." The Humiston children are living at the "Homestead" with their mother, who is an under-matron. The morning after the children came to the institution, it was found that they had gone out quietly and decked their father's grave with beautiful flowers.



a few of the numerous instances at command. Mr. De-  
mond says :<sup>1</sup>

A Delegate passing around among the wounded, giving sympathy and aid, came to an officer from South Carolina. Said he—

“Colonel, can I do anything for you?”

“No,” was the reply, with stubborn defiance. *“Devils” and*

He passed on. By and bye he came round again, *“Angels.”*  
made a similar inquiry, and was again refused. Yet  
he came again the third time. The air had become offensive from  
heat and wounds; he was putting cologne on the handkerchiefs of  
one and another as he passed:

“Colonel, let me put some of this on your handkerchief?”

The wounded and suffering man burst into tears, and said, “I have  
no handkerchief.”

“Well, you shall have one,” and wetting his own with cologne, he  
gave it to him. The Colonel was now ready to talk:

“I can’t understand you Yankees; you fight us like devils, and  
then you treat us like angels. I am sorry I entered this war.”

Mr. John Patterson<sup>2</sup> tells the following rather amusing  
little colloquy between some soldiers, Union and Con-  
federate, and himself:

Quite a number of us had been busy aiding the Surgeons, who  
had attended to about two hundred cases of amputation during the  
day. When the men were washed and dressed, at supper they began  
bragging about our good butter.

“Let us see, boys,” said I, “which of you can *A Trio of*  
make the best wish for the old lady who made the *Good Wishes.*  
butter.”

“An’ shure,” replied an Irishman, “may iv’ry hair of her hid be a  
wax candle to loight her into glory,”—a kind of beatified Gorgon, one  
would say. Then came another Irishman’s wish:

“May she be in hivin two wakes before the divil knows she’s did.”

The third and last was from a son of the Emerald Isle likewise; it  
was addressed to myself:

<sup>1</sup> *Williams College Alumni Address*, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 32.

“An’ troth, sir, I hope God ’ll take a loikin’ to yursilf.”

The letter which follows was written in answer to a note in a comfort-bag, sent from a town in Massachusetts by a little girl:

GETTYSBURG, August 7th, 1863.

MY DEAR LITTLE FRIEND:—I received your present, the comfort-bag, and it is thrice welcome, although it was intended for Union defenders. It was given to me by a Christian woman, who lost her holy anger against Rebels—for such am I—in her bounteous sympathy with the unfortunate. My little friend can imagine my thankfulness for the favor, when I inform her that I have no friends this side of heaven—all gone, father, mother, sister and brother, and I am all alone.

*The Rebel's  
Comfort-bag.*

The dear comfort-bag I shall always keep as a memento of true sympathy from a generous heart in the loyal State of Massachusetts. I hope you will not be disappointed by this, coming as it does from a Rebel; for I was forced into the ranks at the point of the bayonet, for I would not go willingly to fight against the dear old flag, whose ample folds have always shielded the orphan and made glad the oppressed.

I have read your note very many times over, and have wished it could rightfully be mine. “Do they think of me at home?” Silence—all is silence! Not so with the Union soldier; a thousand tokens tell him yes.

I was wounded in the second day’s fight, and am now packing up my all to be exchanged or sent’ back a cripple for life. I am seventeen years old, and now am turned out with one arm to carve my way through the world; but my trust is in my heavenly Father, who will forgive and bless. Hoping that God may in mercy reunite us all again as brothers and sisters, I am your unworthy friend,

E— A—,

Co. —, Miss. Volunteers

P. S.—May God guard and bless you!

Mr. J. B. Stillson writes:

The morning was always hailed with peculiar satisfaction by the

sufferers. The badly wounded would often ask during the weary night hours, "How long before the morning will be here?" as if thinking that with its beams would come deliverance.

Very early one morning, an old Confederate, suffering from two flesh wounds, beckoned to me as though he would ask, "Watchman, what of the night?" I had often already ministered to his wants, and been impressed with his venerable look, betokening as it did, a peaceful and trusting heart. With voice subdued and gentle as a child's, he spoke of his only son Thomas, who had been in the fight and was either killed or wounded, he feared. Learning the boy's company and regiment, I made inquiry, and soon found him very close by, and mortally wounded. The son in turn was very anxious about his father. When told how near he was, he said quickly, "Oh, I wish I could see him once more." Procuring assistance, I bore him to his father's side.

As they were brought face to face, tears flowed freely ere a word was spoken. The old man's greeting was simply, "Thomas, my son,"—he could say no more. The boy's first question was, "My father, are you badly wounded?" When told that his father's wounds were not serious, a thankful smile lit up his face, until the father recovered from the first effects of his emotion, and inquired—

"Thomas, are your wounds bad?"

"Yes, I fear they are mortal," and so the sad story of the coming parting was told.

The son was pointed to the cross; every temporal want was supplied, but before midnight he died.

The old man, bereft of wife and children, mourned as did Jacob of old for his Joseph, and prayed that he too might depart. I comforted him with precious Gospel assurances, and told him how "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." A few days afterwards the cloud, which had seemed so impenetrable, was scattered before the brightness of the rising "Sun of Righteousness," and the old man rejoiced in confiding faith that "He doeth *all* things well."

Laboring on the field, in connection with Mrs. Harris and the Commission, was Rev. Geo. Duffield,

Jr.,<sup>1</sup> who spent a large part of his time in looking especially after the Confederate wounded in our hands :

“Oh, come, mister, and see them in the cow-stable,” said a poor woman whom the neighbors called “the faithful creature;” “they are some of them worse off than these.”

• Sure enough, it was even so. There they were, *The Penalty of Rebellion.* not any worse wounded or more utterly helpless and destitute of decent clothing,—for in these respects all were upon a common level. But there was at least this difference in favor of those in the wagon-shed; theirs was comparatively clean dirt. In the cow-stable the filthy water of the dung-heap had dammed up and backed in upon them, saturating straw, blankets, and everything else within its reach. There was still another and more painful difference. On account of the water most of the scanty hay had floated away, and left the poor sufferers lying upon the bare rails, sometimes without so much as the thickness of a single blanket between their emaciated bodies and the sharp, knotty wood. And these men were the *élite* of the Southern army,—lawyers, planters, men of wealth, intelligence and refinement,—some of them, as I was afterwards informed, had been Ruling Elders in the Presbyterian Church, and members of its General Assemblies.

At first the distribution of the bread was in solemn silence, reminding me strangely enough of distributing on a communion-day the emblems of Christ's body and blood, as well as of the command, “If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink.” But misery soon found a tongue. The first man who spoke to me was from Georgia, apparently about twenty-five years of age, and whose language and whole bearing impressed me with the belief that he had known what home and generous hospitality were. In the course of a twenty years' ministry—ten of it in the city of Philadelphia, in times of cholera and famine, in the most obscure alleys, in the court within the court, in the Penitentiary, in the incurable wards of the Blockley Almshouse Hospital, in Bedlam—I have often looked on sad and

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor then of (N. S.) Presbyterian Church, Adrian, Mich.; now, of that in Galesburg, Ill. Mr. Duffield's observations were published in letters to his brother, in the *Detroit Advertiser and Tribune*.

despairing faces; but never, in any man who yet retained reason, on such a face of blank hopelessness as this.

"O sir," said he, with an accent of agony that thrilled me through and through, "much as I thank you for this bread, which is the first mouthful of anything I could eat since I was wounded, I would rather do without it and starve outright, than remain any longer in my present position. Just look at me; I am shot through the lungs and spine, and cannot move myself a hair's breadth, and here I am bent across this rail as if on a rack,—not a handful of hay, or even the thickness of a blanket under me. I shall die if I do not gain relief—immediate relief, sir,—from this insupportable torture."

To help the wretched sufferer was no very easy matter; on one side, almost touching him, was a man who had his right leg off; on the other, one who had lost his left; and any one who, in passing through a hospital, has ever touched the blanket of such a man and heard his piteous exclamations, will be careful ever after how he does so again. Finding at length a resting-place for my feet, one on each side of him, and reaching over to the trough for support, I managed, with one of his arms round my neck, partially to raise him up, and was beginning to push a little hay under him, when a feeble, pettish voice exclaimed—

"Don't you steal my hay;" answered by the man on the other side in a similar tone—

"And don't you steal any of mine."

A bale of such hay could not have been bought with all the gold in California. With great difficulty I gathered up the little portion properly belonging to him, and added some of the reeking straw, adjusting his blanket so as to envelop his whole body. With an air of inexpressible satisfaction he laid himself back in his new position, and a gleam of hope once more lit up his face, as if the sun should dawn at midnight. Seizing my hand with passionate gratitude, he was about to cover it with kisses.

"No, sir," said I, pushing back his head with gentle violence, "if you have any thanks to give for so small a favor, give it to God and not to me."

In an instant he took me at my word. His short, but earnest ejaculatory prayer for himself I could not help taking up for all his suffering comrades. The Master prayed for His enemies, "Father,

forgive them." Why should not I, a poor sinner myself, offer a similar petition for mine?

These men, although in such sad plight, were outspoken in expressing their attachment to the South. Indeed the ministry of kindness, while it affected the political tendencies of the privates, touched the officers much less. Rev. Mr. Duffield adds that after hearing them talk, he could hardly keep from telling them this very recent experience of his:

The day before, near Dillstown, on my way from Carlisle, while stopping at noon to bait our horses, away off in a far corner of the porch, sitting very quiet, and apparently very tired and hungry, I discovered two colored men, one of whom, especially, by the name of Harrison Ash, was a splendidly proportioned man, about six feet two inches in height, and who must have been a very valuable chattel to his master, a Mississippi Colonel, when human flesh was at a premium like gold.

*"A Freeman  
Indeed."*

His story was as follows:

"I came here wid de Southern army, an' I've been wid it ever since de war begun. Friday we had a big fight, de biggest fight yit, an' we git an awful big lickin'. Friday night we had a 'treat. Me and Druro here was 'sleep under a tree; rain poured down powerful, an' dey lef' us. So in de mornin', when we woke up, dey was done gone."

"Why don't you follow them?"

"Followed dem long 'nuff; besides, dey trabbel too fast, an' we can't cotch up."

"That is, you didn't want to follow them?"

"No, sah."

"Wasn't your master kind to you?"

"Yes, mos' times; though de hardest lickin' he ever guv me was for what he did hisself."

"You would rather stay in Pennsylvania, then?"

"Yes, sah; dey tell us dere in Mississippi, dat at the Norf dere's



nuffin' but snow and ice all de year roun', but dis don't look much like it, I reckon, an' I'd as lief lib here as dar, I'm tinkin'."

"You've been thinking of a good many things to-day, I suspect, Harrison. Let me see that big hand of yours, and feel the grit of it. Who owned that hand yesterday?"

"Massa did."

"He made it work for him. Who owns it to-day?"

"Reckon Harrison does hisself."

"Stand up, Harrison; do you know it,—you are a freeman, both by the laws of God and man. What work you do, you will be paid for; what pay you get, you can put in your own pocket instead of into your master's."

Like one awaking from a dream, or like the man in the "Christus Consolator," long shackled and lying in a dungeon, just beginning to move his unfettered limbs and to look upon the light of day, so was it with poor Harrison.

Supposing, from an incidental remark, that he was not altogether destitute of God's grace, I asked—

"What do you know about religion, Harrison?"

"I know dat Jesus come to save sinners."

"What did He do to save them?"

"He died for them."

"Did He die for you?"

"Yes, He died for me as for any sinner."

"Did you ever feel that you were a sinner?"

"Oh, yes; one time very much, when I was 'bout sixteen years old."

"How long did you feel this so much?"

"Till I 'sperienced de new change."

"What change?"

"Why, de change in de heart, you know, when we begin to love de Lord Jesus, who died for us."

There was religion in its real essence. The work of Christ *for* us on the cross; the work of the Holy Spirit *in* us; a change of state and a change of nature both; the prisoner not only pardoned, but the jail fever arrested and put in process of cure. Surely, if these things are hid from the worldly-wise and prudent, who through their own pride and folly will not stoop to even pick them up when they

lie at their feet, yet, blessed be the name of the Lord! they are still revealed unto babes.

Further on, in a barn, more Confederates were found:

Some of the poor wretches were not only in great bodily distress, crying continually, "O Lord, bless my wounds!" but also in still greater mental distress. One fatally wounded man said to Mrs.

Harris, who was attracted to him by his heavy groaning—  
*"Knuckling to the Lord."*

"O ma'am, if I was only sure that my sins could be pardoned, so that if I died I might go to heaven, I would be more reconciled."

Pointing him to the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, she recommended him to seek it in prayer; and strange enough was the petition of this poor Publican:

"O Lord, save my body! O Lord, save my soul! and if You do, O Lord, I'll knuckle to You to all eternity."

One extract more,—a picture and an outlook:

"The fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the birds of the heaven were still." Whether it was owing to the noise, the smoke, the universal presence of the soldiers, or the noisome and pestilential

atmosphere, I do not know, but certain it is, that the orioles, robins, and other birds, so plentiful about the

cemetery before the battle, had entirely disappeared from it. Singularly enough, the very first, and indeed the only bird I saw on the battle-field, and that at the extreme verge of it, was a solitary turtle-dove, sitting in perfect silence, with its head turned towards the path of strife, one might believe in mute contemplation of the scene of carnage.

"Surely that bird is strangely out of place, and has no business here," said one.

"Not so," was the reply; "may we not accept it as a happy omen, and see in it the joyful harbinger of the return of peace,—a peace on the sure foundations of truth and righteousness?"

We cannot close the record of Gettysburg better than

by the following story of an East Tennessee loyalist. At the request of the lady who furnishes the narrative, and who was not connected with the Commission, names are withheld :

A lady from Philadelphia, moving through one of the field hospitals a few days after the battle, had her attention drawn to a young Confederate asleep and dreaming. He was talking aloud. Going to his cot-side, she gently fanned away some flies which were buzzing about a bandage concealing the lower part of his face. One hand was pressed tightly against his breast. A kindly but rough Irish nurse coming by, the lady inquired about the wounded man :

*The Loyal East  
Tennessean.*

“Indade, mum, he bates me intoirely. His clapper’s half shot out, mum; but he’s furivir gossipin’ wid himsilf, and the Vargin only knows what he’s sayin’; an’ it’s all ’bout a bit book wid a rag roun’ it, an’ not wan he’ll let touch it, mum. He’s the strange craythur, mum, that’s shure.”

No one knew his name, and the lady discovered that his wounds were pretty certain to prove fatal. Unwilling to disturb him in his troubled sleep, she passed on.

The next morning a Surgeon stood by the soldier’s bed. The poor, unknown boy was dying. Two weak, sad, wandering eyes were opening and closing restlessly. It seemed very mournful that one so young, nameless and alone should die thus among strangers. The Irish nurse was much affected :

“An’ shure, now, av we only had the bit book, it wud have the poor craythur’s name intil it;” but no coaxing or efforts could get the book away from him. The Surgeon said he would wake from his long stupor before death,—indeed, he was already beginning to do so. The lady sat down, fanned him and paid him what gentle attentions she could. By and bye he began muttering to himself, but his utterance was so indistinct that nothing could be gathered from it. Suddenly turning his head a little, he spied an old Union flag which hung temporarily at one end of the ward. He gazed at it a moment earnestly, the lady watching him meanwhile with intense interest; a great change came over his face; the dull, unconscious look passed

away. Pointing to the flag, he turned painfully, and asked with much clearer utterance—

“What do they let it stay there for?”

The question was not a pleasant one for the lady to answer,—for several reasons; but she replied—

“Because Gen. Lee was beaten the other day, and has retreated. Don’t you remember?”

The answer seemed to confuse him. He looked back and forth from the lady’s face to the flag, murmuring—

“Beaten?—Gen. Lee?—retreated?”

All at once the meaning appeared to grow plain; a look of joy covered his face; he turned to the old stripes and stars,—tears meanwhile coming out of the poor, sunken eyes, and said fervently—

“Thank God! thank God!”

The lady thought this strange for a Confederate soldier; supposing he had misunderstood her, she explained her meaning again; but the poor fellow’s eyes closed; the old, hopeless blank settled upon his face; he seemed more puzzling and strange than ever.

He began to dream now; his face grew bright, and the old, muttering noise was resumed, only much more distinctly. He seemed to be back again at his home. He talked first of some one whom he called “Mamma Tilly,”—his mother she was found to be afterwards; then, about “Nettie,” his wife. The soldier’s face became positively beautiful soon, for he thought Nettie had come and was with him! He told her how glad and happy he was to see her, and asked about Harry, their little boy. The invisible Nettie seemed to be answering his questions, for he would look up now and then and laugh,—sadly it sounded, too, from his wounded mouth. In the dream still, he opened his shirt, brought out the precious book with the “bit rag” about it, and then, looking up again into the eyes “so near, and yet so far,” laughed a low, happy laugh, saying—

“Nettie, darling, there it is yet,—good Minister ——’s Testament, with the old flag round it still.”

The lady bent forward eagerly and saw a little well-worn and well-marked Testament, and wrapped around it very carefully a torn bit of the *Union* flag.

The dream of Nettie seemed to be lost for a while, and another replaced it. The soldier’s mutterings were still indistinct, but they

were made out to be a kind of history of the flag-shred;—how the Rebels had come into the village, pulled down the Union flag, and torn it into hundreds of fragments, then trampled these in the dust; how he had gone out in the night at peril of his life, had picked up a piece of the dishonored banner, had taken it home and cherished it; how he was driven from his home and forced into the Confederate army; but how he had clung silently, through all the months of drill and march and battle, to the old symbol which he loved. It was a thrilling story, as the lady gathered the facts, one by one, from the lips unconscious of the tale they were telling. She understood now the noble soldier's unexplained conduct and words.

The musing reminiscence of the flag was done, and Nettie came back again,—only for a few moments, however, little more than for a kiss and a farewell,—a kiss given by no human lips, a farewell uttered to no visible, human presence. Yet it could not have been unconscious pantomime; mere shadows could not have cheated that dying man; it must have been real, not the less so, if St. Paul's experience was true, because invisible. And then came another, brighter vision,—a vision which none may smile at, thank God, or call untrue,—seen by too many glad eyes during eighteen hundred years, for men to be deceived by it now,—a vision of the Crucified. Only two words were uttered, but who can measure them?—"Jesus—dear."

And so the soldier went away to be for ever with the Lord.

The little Testament told the whole story in a few simple dates. The date of his confirmation was given, with the name of the loved clergyman who had given him the Testament, and had written in front the words of the Collect for the second Sunday in Lent:

"Almighty God, who seest that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves; keep us both outwardly in our bodies and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

The sentences had been written two years before the war; it would have been hard, however, to have chosen more appropriate ones for all the unforeseen conflict and toil between.

The date of the soldier's marriage was recorded,—a month or two only before the war began. On one of the fly-leaves these words of

Isaiah were written : " Is not this the fast that I have chosen ? to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free ; and that ye break every yoke ? " Close after these words was the date of the firing on Fort Sumter. This, with other plentiful marks, showed that the brave Tennessean had entered into the full meaning of the struggle. The birth of little Harry was chronicled ; and dates attached to passages all through the book showed how the noble loyalist had followed amidst enemies the varying fortunes of the war. Towards the close of 1862, the Rebels had entered the village in East Tennessee which had been his home ; here was begun the romance of the flag. He had fled with Nettie and Harry into Northern Alabama ; there he was forced into the Rebel army. The date of separation from his family was appended to these words of St. Luke—

" Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do."

Several letters from his wife, who found her way back to the wrecked and ruined home in Tennessee, were tucked away carefully at the close of the book. After reading them, one might doubt which of the two had the firmest faith in Christ and in the final triumph of right in the war.

The relics of the dead were gathered and kept, and when East Tennessee was opened, they were sent safely to Nettie. Little Harry was dead, but a sweet little girl had come in his place. Nettie wrote a touching letter of thanks for what had been done for her husband :

" It had been such a long time since I got a letter from him that I had given him up entirely, even before your good, kind letter came. I am glad that I know now just how he went away. I want to live long enough to tell little Alice all about it, when she can understand better than she does now."

She did not live long enough for this, however. A few months only intervened, and Nettie went to be with her husband. Their bodies rest now, side by side with little Harry's, after their weariness and separation, amidst the sunny golden-rod on the banks of the Clinch. Little Alice has been brought to the home of the lady who was at her father's bed-side in the Gettysburg hospital. She has a middle name now, which her friends love to call her,—it is " Loyal."



The lady who tells this story was herself neither loyal nor a Christian when she was at Gettysburg. The East Tennessean's death taught her to be both an earnest lover of her country, and Christ's child also. So she feels that she can never repay little Alice for the lessons she has been taught.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *THE EASTERN ARMIES.*

FROM GETTYSBURG UNTIL GRANT'S ADVANCE ON RICHMOND.

*July 1863—May 1864.*

THE movements of the armies in Virginia for several months after Gettysburg need no chronicling here. Commission stations were established at Germantown, Warrenton, among the First Corps hospitals on the Rappahannock, at Bealeton, and in the Third Army Corps. The sick were promptly taken to Washington; so that the main work for some time was among the well. In September occurred the strange retreat of the entire army to Centreville Heights. Tedious days of slow advance followed. A station was put up at Gainesville in October, moved thence to Manassas Junction, and in November transferred to Warrenton Junction.

Mr. A. D. Matthews, of Brooklyn, a Delegate in October at Winchester Seminary Hospital, Frederick, Md., relates an affecting story of a mother's courage and of a soldier's faith :

After service on Sunday morning, I found Henry M—— in the hospital, dreadfully wounded in the breast. He was one of three brothers,—all Sunday-school scholars at the time of their enlistment.

*The Mother  
and her Sons.*

Two or three weeks before, Henry's mother had been called from her home in Northern New York to Washington, to see Willie, one of the brothers,

who was at the point of death. He lingered but a few days after her arrival, then sweetly fell asleep in Jesus. Efforts to embalm the body failed, and the broken-hearted mother had just followed it to the grave, so far from home, when she was summoned in haste to Henry's cot in Frederick. The Surgeon cautioned her not to mention the fact of Willie's death, as the soldier's wound in the breast was liable to open during any fit of sobbing or crying, and death might be the result. Of course, one of Henry's first questions was about his brother. The mother replied—

“Don't be troubled about him, my son; keep perfectly quiet; Willie is in good hands, and well cared for.”

With heroic fortitude for several days she kept the mournful news pent up in her breast, until some one, not knowing the restriction, alluded to Willie's death. Henry looked into his mother's face: “Mother, is Willie dead?” Concealment was no longer possible; and telling the sad story, she realized the Surgeon's fears. The wound re-opened, and for several days life hung by a slender thread. The Sunday morning I visited him he had begun to mend. There was a smile on his face as he told me of his once feeble hope, of his present gladsome prospect:

“Since I have lain here the old lessons have come fresh and new to mind; I am now sure that Jesus is my all.”

The mother's heart was spared the loss of her second son, though, before Henry had entirely recovered, she was made anxious again by news from the third, who was wounded in battle, but soon able to return to his regiment.

Rev. Luther Keene,<sup>1</sup> a Delegate to the forces about Washington in October and November, furnishes the following sketches of hospital work:

A young German, afterwards baptized by Rev. Mr. Coit, of S. Brookfield, Mass., came to talk to me about himself:

“There are two voices within me; one voice tells me to play cards and swear: the other to go to the meeting.” He described with vividness and minuteness his last

*The Two Voices.*

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, N. Brookfield, Mass.

conflict; it was as much a real one to him as if voices were actually audible,—indeed was it not *more* real? I asked him which voice he was going to obey. With decision in his animated face he replied, “The good voice.” I showed him St. Paul’s words in the seventh chapter of Romans, and how he had been unconsciously quoting them.

After his baptism, he gave one evening a precious sign of his love for Christ and souls. Going to a comrade at the meeting’s close, he led him forward to where the men were kneeling to be prayed for. It

*Guiding into the Kingdom.* was a beautiful sight to see him make room among the company for the unresisting soldier, and then help him down upon his knees. Coming to where I stood, he told me that the man was almost deaf. By putting my mouth close to his ear I prayed with him. The last I saw of them, they were leaving the meeting together,—the deaf soldier leaning on the German’s arm, who seemed to be tenderly and solicitously helping him into the kingdom of God.

Those letters written for soldiers,—how precious they were sometimes! I met one poor little English boy in the hospital. His face was piteous with homelessness and waiting. “I would give all I have in the world,” he said, “if I could only hear from home.” For some reason his letters had been long unanswered. I wrote to England for him, and there was at least one happy heart in the army a few weeks afterwards, when the answer came.

I had visited a dying soldier named Hill, and written home for him. One morning I found a young stranger kneeling at the cot-side. He was Hill’s brother. Shall I ever forget the grasp of that man’s hand and the light in his eyes, as he told me about those letters home, narrating so simply the story of a soldier’s endurance and victory over sin? Or, shall I ever forget another scene,—over which there was joy elsewhere, if not there, when the brother, maimed in the service of the Government, followed the dead soldier to the grave, and wept with me there? We were the only mourners, and yet many of the poor boys had fewer still.

The army in November moved against Lee. The Rappahannock was brilliantly crossed on the 7th; and

after bridges were rebuilt and communications opened, the Rapidan was passed on the 26th. The armies faced each other along Mine Run for several days. On December 1st and 2d our forces were withdrawn, and the campaign of 1863 was ended.

A few days before the advance to Mine Run, Brandy Station became the grand centre of supply and communication. Thither, with such instructions as the Field Agent could give, went Rev. E. F. Williams with six Delegates. The first Sunday's service was an earnest of the great winter harvest to be gathered there. Several weeks before, an interesting work of grace had begun among the unorganized recruits at Warrenton Junction.

Chaplain Norman Fox, of the 77th N. Y. Regiment, sent to the New York *Examiner* a story of the evening after the battle of Rappahannock Station :

I found a young man of the 10th Mass. Regiment, with his leg crushed and mangled by a piece of shell. The shock had been so severe that amputation was useless, and he was sinking rapidly. I inquired concerning his religious history. It was the old story,—a bright hope, active church membership, army life and irregularities, and the abandonment of his profession. *The Brothers.* “And now,” said he, “if there can be forgiveness for such a wanderer, pray for me.”

I confess I felt more backwardness than was right. There stood a circle of rough soldiers surveying the solemn scene with mere morbid curiosity. There stood another group, more educated and refined,—a knot of Surgeons, some of whom, I knew, had no belief in God or eternity, and considered my interview with the dying man as at best but amiable uselessness. But there lay the sinking sufferer, and I wore the uniform of a minister of Christ. Bending over the table where he lay, I asked the Good Shepherd to pardon the returning wanderer. Murmured responses throughout the prayer disclosed his own earnestness in the petition; the smothered hope revived again;

and faint at first, but growing brighter and brighter, there finally beamed on him the full radiance of that faith which supports in the stern hour.

Meanwhile, there stood by the table a noble-looking soldier, a little older than the dying man, moistening the lips of the latter, and affectionately smoothing his hair, but so perfectly calm and collected that I supposed he was only a hospital attendant. A casual remark started my suspicion, and I asked him—

“Is this a friend of yours?”

“It is my younger brother.”

Stooping over him, the brother said, “S——, what shall I tell mother for you?”

“Tell her I died for my country,” was the prompt, cheery reply.

“Give me a kiss for her,” said the other; and the bronzed face bowed down to the pale lips as tenderly as if they had been an infant’s. More than one turned to hide his tears; the brothers seemed least moved of all.

The dying boy sank rapidly, but all clouds vanished, and faith grew bright and strong. I repeated, “I know that my Redeemer liveth,” “The Lord is my Shepherd,” “In My Father’s house are many mansions,” the beautiful hymn—

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,”

and those lines, especially dear when the couch of dissolution was a rough board table in a dark, cold tent, with only a knapsack to rest the head upon—

“Jesus can make a dying bed  
Feel soft as downy pillows are.”

He tried to repeat, “Jesus, lover of my soul;” I finished it for him. This seemed to strengthen him even more than the others. But his voice was already beginning to fail. Said he,—

“There’s—a—silver—pencil—in—pocket—”

It was with the deepest sorrow we saw that he could not speak friendship’s last message. There was but one Friend of whom he could speak now. We watched him silently, while he lay for some minutes motionless; I thought all was over; but rousing suddenly, he said—



“‘Jesus, lover of my soul;’—oh, repeat that again!”

My voice choked up so that I could hardly speak. I know not if he heard me, for before I reached the last verse, “the storm of life” was over, “the haven” was reached, and “the billows” had died away in the eternal peace.

Rev. Amos H. Coolidge,<sup>1</sup> a Delegate about Mine Run time, gives an interesting narrative of a Sunday’s work :

I started out after breakfast, my horse making what time he could in the deep, sticky mud. Spending a short time in the Contraband camp, helping the eager scholars in their efforts to read, I hastened to my first preaching service among several detached companies of artillery. Then followed a *One Sunday’s Preaching.* long ride, and a second appointment with a regiment.

It was drawn up in line; leave was given any to retire from the ranks and the sermon if they wished; only two left. On my return, at a little picket-station, the men begged for a service; so again the word was preached. At another picket-station on the way, another service was held. Without dismounting this time, hymns and prayer and the proclamation of the blessed Gospel succeeded each other, for the fourth time. The men were hungry and grateful for the truth. Further on was a wood-station, where were several hundred men; night was coming on, but meeting a friend, arrangements were made for my fifth preaching service.

“All hail the power of Jesus’ name”

was given out as the “church-call.” Instantly the men came crowding from every direction. Fuel was added to an already immense fire; a great army of flames sprang up skyward, sending a rich tinge over the darkening woods and ground. Forth over the multitude the old Good News went on its heavenly errand once more. It was indeed a solemn assembly; and many days afterwards I heard of some who there gave themselves up to Jesus.

As I rode away into the night, and looked back upon the everlessening blaze, I thought of the “City” where “there shall be no

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Leicester, Mass.

night ;” where “they need no candle, neither light of the sun.” I was more glad than tired as I came to the Commission quarters, and prayed that the five services might be blessed of God, though the congregations had not sat in cushioned pews and I had preached from strange pulpits,—three stumps, an old Virginia harrow, and a tired horse’s back.

The Commission’s work during January, 1864, was chiefly of an organizing, preparatory character. The troops were in what proved to be “winter quarters,” but the men did not know it, nor had the Commission tents and Delegates for its fifteen army stations till the month had nearly passed. Yet everywhere the soldiers welcomed the agents, and came to the depôt at Brandy Station, begging for brigade and division chapels in which to hold preaching services. During the Winter, not less than sixty canvas coverings were issued. Under these the Chaplains held their Sabbath services and nightly meetings. Without them, there could have been but little opportunity for religious gatherings in the army during this Winter.

The great work of revival began at once; meetings at the stations and in the chapels were soon crowded; the men were again furnished with Testaments and Hymn books; Bible-classes were formed, sometimes taught by Delegates, sometimes by Chaplains, sometimes by the soldiers themselves. For very many wanderers, whose number can only be known when the books are opened, the Winter camps became the “gate of heaven.”

Rev. J. B. Davis<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Johnston Calhoun,<sup>2</sup> in February,

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of (O. S.) Presbyterian Church, Bridesburg, Philadelphia.

<sup>2</sup> Of Hookstown, Beaver Co., Penna.

organized a Bible-class in the 1st Brigade, Horse Artillery, encamped not far from Brandy Station. It met at the Commission "Artillery Reserve Station, No. 2," and numbered forty-six private soldiers. The work among these men and in the chapel meetings was especially blessed of God.<sup>1</sup>

*Artillery Reserve  
Bible-Class.*

Rev. Mr. Davis' first sermon here was preached to about seventy-five listeners standing in the mud. The soldiers brought boughs of evergreen from the river-bank to serve as a carpet, and lumber for the seats,—after which the chapel was comfortable. Night after night the meetings were crowded, until many were converted.

The artillery, having no Chaplains assigned them, stood in special need of spiritual ministrations and effort. A special effort was therefore made throughout the Winter to reach the men in this arm of the service. The Bible-class scholars sent to the Central Office for books to aid them in a critical study of God's Word. Their requisition was met, and the meetings of the earnest Bible-students became a source of great delight to themselves, and of much encouragement to the Delegates. Several of them were college graduates. A number decided to prepare for the ministry when their army service was over.

Rev. E. F. Williams, writing from Brandy Station in February, says :

A sutler told me to-day that a member of his regiment, who could not read, but had recently been converted at one of the soldiers' chapels, was so anxious to hear the Saviour's words, that day after day he had hired his comrades to read to him ; and only yesterday had given a swearing acquaintance ten cents—all the money he had—to read to him the fifth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel. He would ask for the reading of passages which he had heard in the meetings, and was continually on the alert to discover the names and numbers of chapters which had impressed any of his comrades, or of which he in some way had incidentally heard.

*Paying for  
Bible-Reading.*

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\* Rev. G. S. Stockwell, a Baptist clergyman from Springfield, Mass., was associated with Messrs. Davis and Calhoun in this work.

A German was converted here, who seemed utterly surprised at the goodness of God to him. He was overheard one day praying,

*The Goodness  
of Jesus.*

“O Lord Jesus, I didn't know You were so good.”

And yet, happy as he was, he was anxious for more of Christ's presence, and kept praying that God would add as much to his present joy as He had given at his conversion.

In the Second Division of the First Corps, on Sperryville Pike, a station manned by two Delegates was established. The usual scenes at other stations were witnessed here. Rev. Mr. Williams writes of the circumstances attending the conversion of a soldier named Charles Rockwell, at this place :

Born in the State of New York of pious parents, he spent his early boyhood in Connecticut in every kind of wickedness. At one time his parents thought him converted, and forced him to join the

*The Trans-  
formed Life.*

church contrary to his will. But his vows were never kept. A most injudicious and sinful prayer for his “damnation,” by an officer of the church, on

an occasion when he had been disturbing a meeting, had thoroughly hardened him. Ever afterwards he supposed himself condemned to hell, and met every effort for his reformation with the unwavering statement of his doom.

During a long, perilous whaling voyage he had a very narrow escape from immediate death, but the warning was without any effect upon him whatever. Some homely remarks of another officer of the church with which he had been connected, set him thinking seriously; soon after he married a gentle, loving Christian woman, and settled in Pennsylvania. His wife would go away alone day after day to read the Bible and pray; her husband followed her once to listen; she was praying for him. He was deeply affected, and with difficulty avoided discovering himself.

When she came into the other room again, he asked why she had gone away by herself. She hesitated, in some confusion about answering, when her husband said—

“Well, never mind; I know; I followed you up-stairs to-day. If

you want to pray, you may do it down here before me, and not go up there into the cold."

Ever afterwards the wife maintained family prayers, but the husband continued intemperate and profane.

When the war broke out he enlisted as a cavalryman. He was soon made Orderly Sergeant for his skill and capacity, but was reduced to the ranks again for his crimes. It was his ambition to drink more whisky and play a better game of cards than any other man in the regiment,—the 17th Penna.

In January a Delegate was sent from Culpepper to preach to the regiment. The sermon—on small sins—was a feeble one, Charley thought, and only fit to ridicule. Later in the day he heard another sermon in a neighboring regiment, which had the effect of driving home to his conscience the words of the morning's discourse. He went to his tent with little peace. Some days before two pious soldiers, hungry for a prayer meeting, had begun one in their own tents.<sup>1</sup> It had grown until some twenty men attended it. To escape the thought of the sermon, Rockwell wandered round after excitement. Hearing singing, he stumbled upon the little Christian company, and before the meeting closed rose for prayers. It was not God's time yet, however. Regretting what he had done, he became drunk, and remained so several days. Coming to himself, he recalled a scene at home during his last furlough. He had been urging his wife to go to a ball. Putting her arms around him, with tears pouring down, she said—

"Charley, I'm trying to live as a Christian. I wish you were one. But I can't be a Christian and a ball-dancer too."

In great agony of mind he sought the prayer meeting again. The struggle was a fearful one, but at last God's peace came. Describing the close of the strife, he afterwards said—

"I had been praying all night until about two o'clock, when I began to feel strange. I kindled a fire, not sure whether I was alive

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<sup>1</sup> The regiment had no Chaplain, and this little soldiers' meeting grew so large that the Colonel gave them a tent which held about thirty. As many more used to crowd about the entrance, until the men petitioned for a Christian Commission "fly." This was given them, as well as occasional help from Delegates working at the nearest station.

or dead. Then I lay down, slept soundly and woke early. First of all I prayed, and then went out to attend to my horse,—usually a vicious animal. This morning he was kind and gentle. I put my arms about his neck and said, “Well, old horse, have you got religion too?”

At roll-call in the evening, Charley stepped forward from the ranks, and asked leave to say a few words. Judge of his comrades’ surprise when they heard his simple, brave speech :

“Comrades, you know how wicked I have been,—what a life I have led in this regiment. With God’s help, this day Charley Rockwell turns over a new leaf, and begins to live as a Christian. He wants your forgiveness for the wrongs he has done, and asks you to join him in trying to serve Christ.”

Ever afterwards he was an earnest Christian, cheerfully giving up his wicked companions, and restoring, as far as it was in his power, his gambling gains. He used to tell me sadly of his past life.

“I fully expected,” he once said, “to go to hell; I meant to go there. I used to think I would get Satan to make me his prime minister,—and then, what fun I would have in raking up the coals, and heaping them on the heads of old religious hypocrites!”

His faith in the power of God’s grace was boundless. Becoming anxious to study for the ministry, he was furnished with books which he diligently conned. But *the* book of delight to him was the Bible; every spare moment was spent in its perusal. He continued steadfast as long as I knew him,—until the Wilderness campaign began.

Rev. Mr. Williams writes from Culpepper Station, the headquarters for work in the First Corps, of which he had general charge :

A Pennsylvania soldier came two miles regularly every night to the meeting at Culpepper. Storms, mud, swollen streams could not keep him away. When his turn came to go on picket, he paid a companion to stand two hours for him, rather than

*Longing for  
the Meetings.* lose his favorite meeting. He could not read, so he must have spiritual food; he could only find this at the evening services and in Christian conversation.



Rev. Wm. M. Taylor<sup>1</sup> writes in March :

Towards the close of my labors at Vermont Station, near Culpeper, I administered the Lord's Supper, assisted by Rev. Mr. Smith.<sup>4</sup> One thing, most worthy of note in connection with the service, was this,—though the administration was to members of eight different denominations, not one communicant belonged to the (O. S.) Presbyterian Church, of which I was a member. The Commission has been a mighty power in breaking down sectarian prejudices and barriers.

*Communion.*

Rev. Benj. Waddle,<sup>3</sup> a Delegate during February among the men of the Fifth Corps at Nelson Station, Warrenton Junction, writes :

The corps of drummer-boys at the station numbered ten. One became deeply convicted of sin. Ashamed to let the fact be known, he sought retirement and secrecy in the woods for prayer. He found Jesus. An elder brother imitated his example. One after another followed, until the whole ten "rejoiced in hope of the glory of God," and began sounding out to all around them a new martial call,—“To arms for Jesus!”

*A Praying  
Drum-Corps.*

The influence of this Warrenton Junction Station may be estimated from Rev. Mr. Williams' report of the soldiers' own statements :

“Before the meetings opened,” said one, “all my comrades were profane and gamblers ; but now not an oath can be heard, nor a card seen in our camp.”

In one of the meetings a soldier rose and said—

“The sectarian jealousies of denominations at home have been a stumbling-block in my way ; but here in the army, in your Commission meetings, the corners have been rubbed

*Influence of  
the Meetings.*

<sup>1</sup> Pastor of (O. S.) Presbyterian Church, Mount Jackson, Penna.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. Geo. Mure Smith, Pastor of Congregational Church, Rocky Hill, Conn.

<sup>3</sup> Of Kenton, Ohio.

off. There is no excuse left for me. I mean, with God's help, at once to begin living a Christian life."

Rev. J. B. Pearson<sup>1</sup> relates an incident which came to his knowledge at this station during March :

A mother and sister, on parting with a son and brother who was soon to lead his company into battle, said to him, "We shall pray for you every night at seven o'clock." The Captain was not a Christian; yet in our meeting he rose and told us—

*"We shall Pray  
for you at Seven."*

"Not a night goes by but at the hour of seven I remember my praying mother and sister. Once during a severe skirmish, lasting into the evening, for some reason I looked at my watch; it was nearly seven. Though I had no claims on God's favor and had never sought His care, yet it seemed to me that I was girdled by the prayers of my mother and sister, and that in answer to them He would bring me safely through the fight."

He told his story with deep feeling, and, I trust, soon found Christ.

At Warrenton a station was established in February. Rev. Mr. Williams writes of its beginning :

A Delegate preached on the Sabbath, and was invited by a Captain to share his tent at night. Before retiring the Delegate learned that the Captain was a backslider, but obtained his promise that he would

*An Entire Com-  
pany for Jesus.*

be henceforth faithful in secret prayer and correct in outward life. I can never forget the depth of feeling with which the Captain, in one of the meetings at Warrenton, gave thanks for the good which that Delegate had done him. Through the Divine blessing on his amended life and renewed efforts for Christ, every member of his company had then become a child of God.

Perhaps the most marked work of the Spirit during this Winter and Spring was that begun in March at Bristow Station in the 11th Penna. Reserve Regiment. Rev. Mr. Williams gives the following account of it :

<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Plymouth Hollow, Conn.

Its origin, under God, was in the prayers and efforts of a private of the regiment. Day after day he went alone into the woods to pray. His comrades scoffed, but he persevered. At last one friend found him. This man had been converted by the memory of a conversation with a pious mother on a Sunday long previous. His mother's sudden death had brought into relief the almost forgotten words. The two pious men together felt strong; in faith they waited for a blessing. Others joined them, and when the Commission chapel was set up, "It seemed," said the Chaplain of the regiment, "as if God's Spirit descended at once." Prior to the opening of the tent there were seven hoping in Christ; within four weeks there were sixty-one.

*How a Great  
Work Began.*

A German, deeply interested in religion, went home on a furlough. His chief regret when returning was the thought that he could enjoy no more meetings for prayer. Some of his companions, converted during his absence, surprised him as he came into camp with the inquiry—

"Are you going to the meetings?"

*A German's  
Joy.*

"What meetings?"

"Why, at the Christian Commission,—two every day. Will you come?"

The German's heart was too full for speech. Describing the effect of their words upon him, he afterwards said—

"I shoost cried for glad. I could shoost see Jesus in ter poys' faces."

Another soldier was greatly interested in reading from an old paper which his Chaplain gave him, a story of some poor children in Germany, who, while eating the bread of charity, denied themselves their evening meal, which they sold and gave the proceeds to the missionary cause. He was so much moved by the account that he came at once to the Chaplain, and told him of a vow made during the battle of Gaines' Mills,—that if the Lord would spare his life, he would give a certain amount of money to some benevolent object. He paid the vow with a hundred per cent. interest, and lived afterwards a devoted Christian life.

*German Chil-  
dren Preaching  
in America.*

Many who hoped that they were converted here wrote at once to their friends of the change experienced; as the result of these letters,

several revivals began in different parts of Pennsylvania. One soldier wrote to his betrothed, telling her of his conversion, and praying her to give herself to Christ; *Reflex Work.* but his letter met one from her, telling of her conversion, and begging him to live for Christ. The man was so overjoyed that he came and called up a Delegate from his bed to hear the story.

A similar incident came to our knowledge in the case of a husband and wife, whose letters, passing each other in the mails, each contained an account of the writer's conversion, with a prayer that the other might find peace in Jesus.

At Bristow, the result of the work in six weeks was the formation of a "Christian Union," numbering more than one hundred and twenty members. Mr. Williams' narrative explains its origin:

A Missionary concert, held the first Sunday in April, gave the soldiers zeal and more enlarged views of working for the salvation of others. They rejoiced in giving up for a time one of our limited number of helpers, to look after destitute regiments. *"Monthly-Concert" in Camp.* The subsequent reports from these were listened to with intense interest. Through constant attendance on the means of grace and zealous work, the young brethren were built up in a wonderful manner, and thus drawn together into a precious Christian communion. All this prepared for the formation, on April 18th, of a "Christian Union" for the regiment. The harmony with which believers from eleven different denominations, without a dissenting voice, could form such a brotherhood, was a delightful testimony to the oneness and strength of Christ's religion.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> There were two original hymns, among several others, composed by soldiers in honor of the formation of the "Union," which are worth preserving:

A PRAYER FOR BLESSING.

We come to Thee, our God and King,—	Before Thy mercy-seat we bow
By Jesus' blood, redeemed, released;	And plead our ransom,—Thy Dear Son,
Accept the sacrifice we bring,	In humble confidence that Thou
For sake of our Eternal Priest.	Wilt finish what Thou hast begun.

Mr. J. H. Morley,<sup>1</sup> during his term of service, labored at Sperryville Pike Station; from his report we select the following incident:

One of the most interesting cases of conversion I met with was that of a German named Bolick, of the 17th Penna. Cavalry. Seven years before he thought that he was a Christian, but although the son of pious parents, he took no definite stand. So he got into the dark, and soon gave up his hope, becoming, as he himself said, "a drunkard, a gambler and as bad as a man could get." He came to a chapel meeting one evening, but made up his mind that it was no place for him:

*The Strife of  
the Spirit.*

"I concluded that I must get out of that, or else come back to Christ."

For several evenings he stayed in his tent gambling. One day a petition of the soldiers for a Chaplain was handed him for his signa-

And Thou, our Saviour, God Most High,	And oh, when Thou dost gather thine
Our "Union" bless, and grant, we pray,	Into their sinless, blest abode,
To be in times of trial nigh,	May we meet there by grace divine
To guide us in Thy perfect way.	In one unbroken "Brotherhood."

#### CONQUERORS THROUGH HIM.

Now for holiest warfare marshalled,	March we onward, bravely faithful,
Let the song of gladness swell	By no sordid ease beguiled,
To the praise of Him who leads us,—	Like the few of ancient Sardis
Him who doeth all things well;	Ours be garments undefiled:
"Christian Union;	Then in holier,
Christ, our Captain,"	Sweeter "Union,"
Be our strength and battle-cry.	We shall walk with Him above.

In the cause of Him who loved us,	Now let lips and hearts united
Comes there suffering or shame,	In the glow of zealous youth,
Though we dwell where Satan's seat is,	Bless the name of God our Saviour,
We will not deny His name;	Praise His goodness, love and truth:
In our sacred	And His favor,
"Christian Union,"	May it ever
We will conquer, led by Him.	Bless our "Christian Brotherhood."

<sup>1</sup> Of Andover Theological Seminary, Mass.

ture. He was gambling at the time, but signed his name, and then began to think upon the incongruity of a *gambler's* petition for a Chaplain. He was troubled, and determined to go to meeting, but for some time was kept back by his companions. At last he came, and for two successive evenings asked us to pray for him, in terms which convinced all that he was in earnest. On the third evening he told us in broken English that he had found the Saviour, and must forsake his old habits. His comrades hearing of it abused him, but he stood firm, and asked our prayers for them. While I was with the regiment he stood well, and was always ready to take up his cross and follow Christ.

It was of course the Delegate's duty to minister to and labor with men of every rank. Mr. H. Morey<sup>1</sup> writes of an interview near Warrenton, with a Captain and Surgeon returning from their leaves of absence :

The Surgeon's appearance indicated refinement and education ; but I noticed that the Captain and he frequently swore as they talked. I reproved them both, somewhat to their astonishment. The Surgeon said he meant nothing by it ; it was a habit,—he didn't even know when he was doing it. I asked him if he was satisfied with such an apology ; if he was, I was not :

*Swearing, in  
its Theory and  
Practice.*

“Oh, I'm going to stop and be good one of these days.”

“That's all very well ; but you have confessed that the habit is so deep that you don't know when you are indulging in it. It will be harder to break when you 'stop' and 'get good.'”

He told me of his father, who was a clergyman, and of his Christian mother. I told him of the love of another Father whom he was offending. He was touched and thanked me ; while I prayed inwardly that the words said might indeed profit him.

The Captain said he had been a “professor of religion” before entering the army, but had found that swearing was necessary to govern his men, so his “profession had been relieved from duty.” I told him that I had often seen people swearing at horses and mules,

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<sup>1</sup> City Missionary, Brooklyn, N. Y.



but I had never noticed either party improved by the operation, and was certain the users of the language had not been.

We parted, and months afterwards I met him near the Weldon railroad. He introduced himself by asking if I remembered the talk near Warrenton. I told him, I did.

"I am the Captain you spoke to," was his reply; "your words were not forgotten, and I have come to think as you did then, about swearing at men and mules too."

Before entering upon the story of the "Wilderness," we shall glance backward upon the Commission's work in the vicinity of Washington. At Camp Convalescent there seems to have been a continuous revival. Agents might be called to other fields; new Delegates might come in place of older ones; still the precious work went on. Rev. Mr. Williams, who visited the camp in January of this Winter, gives the story of one of the nightly gatherings:

The bell was ringing for meeting, as we were getting a hasty supper. Entering the chapel, we found it filled by an audience of at least eight hundred persons. Within an hour forty-three had spoken, ten or twelve hymns were sung, and several prayers offered. It was a memorable meeting. The soldiers' expressions were peculiar and striking.

*Camp Convalescent Testimonies.*

"Brethren," said one, "I *know* I have passed from death unto life, for I love the brethren. I feel to pray,—'Create ever within me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me.'"

"One year ago," said another, "I could drink as much whisky and swear as much as any one in my company; now I trust I am a Christian."

In a like, straight-out soldier's way they spoke on till the hour had passed. At the close of the exercises very many came forward, shaking hands with us, as if they had always known us, and telling us more of their religious experience. Among these was a man whom we had known a year before, in the hospital of the First Corps near Acquia Creek. Then he was an infidel, awfully profane, un-

willing to attend any meeting, or to converse upon religious subjects. Now he was a believer, ready to testify for Christ, and anxious by earnest labor to atone for past neglect and sin.

Rev. F. N. Peloubet,<sup>1</sup> gives a graphic account of work at the Deserters' Barracks, at Camp Convalescent, during February and March. It shows the varied work of the Delegate, and the difficulties and temptations of the soldier :

I went as usual to the Deserters' Barracks on the morning of March 2d. I took out a little tract—*Will You Enlist?*—to read ; some objected :

*Testaments vs. Tracts.*      " We've heard it before ; we can read that any day ; let's hear the Testament."

" Why, you can read *that* any day," said I.

" Yes, but we want it explained ; we've read it, but don't understand it. The other things are made up ; we want something we know is true."

So I read two chapters in St. John's First Epistle,—standing the while on a board between two bunks. Before long a young man named Isaac Free objected—

" Seems to me a man must be perfect, else he can't go to heaven."

" That can't be," said I ; " for then none would go there, since none are perfect."

*The Doctrine of Perfection.*      " Well, you said so Sabbath last, anyhow."  
I read the 8th and 10th verses of the 1st chapter, and then the 6th verse of chapter 3d,—comparing them.

" Well, they contradict, don't they ?" Isaac asked.

As familiarly as I could I showed that they did not ; and also how Peter and David, though sinners, went to heaven.

" But it says there, ' The soul that sinneth, it shall die.' How's that ?"

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 50.

I told him about Christ's salvation, and how pardoning a criminal did not make a judge a liar. Isaac came back to the strife within his own heart:

"I've tried to be good, and I can't. I've suffered a good deal, and sin don't give any peace. That's all the hell I believe in."

"Isn't that enough to make you want freedom from it?"

I told him my own experience; how once, the more I had tried to be good, the worse it had seemed.

"That's it," said he; "who can live like a Christian here?"

"But you *can*; only you must find the Way,—Christ, whose blood cleanses from all sin. Do you really want to be a Christian? Do you ever pray?"

"No."

"And you expect to become a Christian without asking?"

Here our conversation rested; but he came to me before I left the barracks, and told me his story. Born in New York, his parents, who were both Christians, had died when he was quite young. He went to live with an uncle, who put no restraint upon his actions. Enlisting in the regular army in 1859, *The Confession.* he met much hard company. During the New York riots his regiment was sent there, and stationed at the Battery. A comrade persuaded him to run the guard at night; they passed the hours in sin. While drunk for the first time in his life, his false friend induced him to go to Philadelphia. He did not dare to return, but found work, and was soon arrested.

"I haven't known an hour's peace since I deserted," said the poor fellow.

"Is the punishment hard here?"

"Oh, it isn't that; it's the disgrace, *the disgrace!* after fighting well, to come to this!"

He had sworn already never to touch drink again. I strove hard to persuade him to pray:

"It won't do for me,—a deserter a Christian! They'd always throw it in my face."

"But Christ knows all better than 'they;' He will forgive and befriend you."

Eight days later I saw him again. He had been praying all night, but there was no answer. I told him to keep praying, and the light

would come. He pressed my hand and asked me to add my petitions to his own.

Rev. Edward Hawes<sup>1</sup> preached at the Barracks one Sunday morning in March. After service we distributed one hundred *Black Valley Railroad Guides*,—a vivid picture tract, illustrating the evils of intemperance. It took amazingly. A deserter, who  
*The Two Roads.* had been an engineer once, said they were asking him to run on the *B. V. R. R.*, at good pay; but he thought he wouldn't get his wages, and would have to go on the train; so he was holding on to the other road. Pointing upwards, I asked if the road he had chosen ended *there*; he answered, "Yes."

A short time since a soldier at the barracks in a drunken fit got a comrade to write to his betrothed that he was dead! Letters of  
*Dead.* grief and inquiry came at once. He replied himself that he had only been dead-drunk! and in a few days learned to his horror, that the girl was dead, from the shock which the first letter gave!

While laboring at Camp Convalescent, Mr. Peloubet met a Pennsylvania cavalryman from Carbon County, named Sergeant Marcy, who told him his story:

He had once joined the church, but was only half persuaded at the time, and afterwards opposed religion in numerous ways. His wife, an earnest Christian, vainly strove to restore him. Shocked  
*The Little Child in the Kingdom.* deeply by much of the wickedness in the army, he and a comrade mutually agreed to mark down the number of times they swore during each day. The result appalled him, and he determined to stop. His wife's letters made him uneasy; so one Monday evening he went to the prayer meeting. The sermon made no particular impression, but some remarks following it affected him deeply. He determined to attend the meeting every night that week, and, though once or twice regretting his resolve, carried it through. His mental agony and darkness were increased by certain morbid reflections about committing the

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor then of Congregational Church, Waterville, Me.; now of Central Church, Philadelphia.

sin against the Holy Ghost. A pious bunk-mate was much distressed on his account. At last the Lord's words about no man entering the Kingdom of Heaven unless he was a little child, brought him to see that *he* was helpless as a child—that he could only put his hand into that of Christ, and say trustfully, "Lead Thou me on."<sup>1</sup> At once his whole life was illuminated. One day, while repairing and cleaning the stables, some of his comrades were swearing and finding fault at the dirty work. He did not like the task, but suddenly it occurred to him that Jesus was born in a manger, and his work at once grew bright and glad.

Possibly the Lord's words about children only entering the Kingdom of God were never more clearly illustrated than sometimes in the hour of the soldier's death:

In Camp Stoneman Hospital during March, a soldier lay dying. He was from Michigan, and but eighteen years old. Mr. C——, a Delegate, learning that he would not recover, hastened to his side.

"I am very sick; pray for me," said the soldier.

"Have you a Christian mother?"

*The Child's  
Prayer.*

"Oh, yes; my father and mother are both Christians, and so are my sisters. My brother is a minister. I wish I was a Christian, but I'm afraid I'm not."

I prayed with him, after which he himself offered a most fervent petition. As I read St. John's 14th chapter, he anticipated me, showing his knowledge of the Bible. I stayed with him a long time; together we sang—

"There is a fountain filled with blood,"

and

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me."

Just before he died he called the ward-master to him, and lifting

<sup>1</sup> "Lead, kindly light, amid th' encircling gloom,

Lead Thou me on;

The night is dark, and I am far from home;

Lead Thou me on."—*John Henry Newman.*

his weak arms put them round the man's neck, and kissed him. Looking up, he said, "I love everybody." He prayed again, and afterwards felt much exhausted. The nurse told him to try and sleep a little. They lifted him gently upon his left side; his thoughts went back to her whose memory lingers longest upon earth; like as a child might have done, he folded his arms across his breast, and in a very low voice repeated distinctly—

"Now I lay me down to sleep;  
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;  
If I should die before I wake,  
I pray the Lord my soul to take."

The light went out of the dying eyes; the pale lips moved never again;—the answer to the simple petition had come quickly indeed. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of God."

Some extracts from the experience of Rev. Edward Hawes, at Camp Convalescent, may close the present chapter:

Many hearts were made glad one evening, by seeing Sergeant Morrison kneeling for prayers. He was well known throughout the camp as a wild, reckless man; his Christian wife omitted no opportunity of writing to him about coming to Jesus. In answer to her entreaties he had determined to attend regularly the evening meetings at the chapel. To many of us his unexpected act was surprising. He said to me afterwards—

*Hiding behind  
Christ.*

"I had more feeling than many supposed, for I knew that I was a sinner who needed a Saviour. While you were preaching that night, until near the close of the sermon, I was continually thinking, 'Well, I stand that pretty well;' but at last you said you wanted to hide yourself behind Christ, and let Him speak through you;—and He did speak, and I couldn't stand under it."

At another time, referring to his conviction, he told me—

"I was trying to do something myself; but it is good to become a little child, and cry for one's own helplessness."



He was so strong, stalwart and large that the words seemed to have an added meaning in his case. He came often to converse with me; I always enjoyed the interviews. He told me at our good-bye—

“I shall never, never forget the time when you ‘hid’ yourself behind Jesus.”

Some of the expressions of the men in the meetings were wonderful for their concentration of feeling and power. A soldier rises to speak only these solemn words—

“I left a gray-haired mother at home praying for me; she said to me as I came away, ‘You have enlisted in the service of your country, now I beg you to enlist for Christ.’ All her letters asked this question, ‘Have you enlisted for Christ yet?’ I thank God, Jesus has found the way to my poor heart.”

*Enlisting for Christ.*

At a meeting in the Cavalry Camp a new convert rises to say—

“I rejoice that I have found the Saviour, but my wife is not a Christian—” and then broke down.

A comrade is up instantly, with the words—

*The Remedy.*

“Boys, let’s get right down here, and pray for his wife,” and kneel they did, while an earnest prayer ascended.

A Maine soldier in the hospital says to us—

“If I had been impenitent since being a soldier, I don’t think I would have been alive; I would have been so impatient and restless. I have tried to give up all to God, and, even when sickest, to trust Him.”

*Trust.*

At one of the meetings a soldier prays in his mother-tongue,—German,—and then tells his experience:

“Brethren, I shall try to say a few words; the English goes rather hard with me,—but I want you to understand that I love Jesus. I was once very wicked; God took away a child; I promised to reform, but didn’t; then He took away another; then my stubborn heart was broken, and I found Jesus.”

*“Hard on Sinners.”*

He told us of a sermon preached by a minister, who was “hard on sinners,” and whose house, for some time after, he was afraid to pass, lest he should come out to talk with him. After his change he tried

successfully to awaken his wife and children ; before leaving for the war he sat down with them at the table of the Lord.

At the prayer meeting at Cavalry Camp the night before some of the men were to join Kilpatrick, they put their arms around each other's necks, and sang with deep feeling—

*The Country  
Above.*

“Shall we know each other *there*?”

## CHAPTER VII

### *THE WESTERN ARMIES.*

THE CAMPAIGNS IN TENNESSEE AND GEORGIA.

*July 1863—December 1863.*

GEN. ROSECRANS' long delay at Murfreesboro' after Stone River had been dictated by the necessities of his position and communications. In June, 1863, he found Bragg's army entrenched in front of him at Shelbyville and Tullahoma, and towards the close of the month began a movement for his dislodgment. In spite of a continuous rain-storm, which materially delayed the advancing columns, within nine days Middle Tennessee was cleared of the Confederate army, and Shelbyville and Tullahoma occupied without any serious engagement. Rosecrans pushed forward his light troops to Stevenson, Ala., on his right, and began repairing the railroad to that place and to Bridgeport. It was not until the middle of August that our army again moved forward in force.

The General Field Agent returned from his visit to the forces operating against Vicksburg in July, and writes from Murfreesboro', the grand army centre before Rosecrans' movement upon Tullahoma :

A soldier from the Anderson Troop (15th Penna. Cav.) was

brought late one afternoon to the General Hospital outside of this place. It was his first experience of this kind; more desolate by far

to him than any picture of ours can make it, taken, *“Coming to the Waters.”* weak and desponding as he was, from among comrades who enlisted with him in Philadelphia, into the company of strangers. As the nurse, who has lifted him from the ambulance and has laid him on his cot, is helping him undress, the cavalryman asks, with a hesitating voice—

“Nurse, do you ever read in the wards?”

The nurse replied in the affirmative.

“Well, nurse, I wish you would read a bit for me this evening.”

“What shall I read?”

The soldier asks him to take a Bible from his knapsack: “Find that chapter about ‘Coming to the waters.’”

The nurse was a Christian, and turned readily to the 55th chapter of Isaiah, reading through the first verse: “Ho, every one that thirsteth,—come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money,—come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk—without money and without price.”

“That’s it,” says the sick man; “that’s it—‘come to the waters.’”

As the nurse was continuing to read through the chapter, the cavalryman stopped him, and said—

“Read that verse again, nurse:—‘Ho, every one that thirsteth.’”

He read it again, and then again at the man’s earnest request.

“Now, that ’ll do, nurse; do you ever pray?”

“Yes, I can pray.”

“Will you offer a little prayer for me?”

The nurse knelt by his cot and offered the request which the soldier dictated. The next morning he asked again for the reading of Scripture; the nurse asked, what he should read:

“I want to hear again about that ‘Coming to the waters.’”

He read it to him twice that morning, and twice in the evening, and prayed with him. The next morning he read it again.

“I must pray for myself, nurse,” the cavalryman said; and he asked to be placed in the attitude of prayer on his cot; he would not be denied the privilege. They placed him on his knees with his hand on the head of his iron cot. He began praying for himself in the words of the petition of Our Lord;—and so the Messenger found

him, and taking him up home, "showed" him "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."

A week or two before I had met in Louisville a relative of this cavalryman, who was vainly trying to get through the lines to minister to him. I took the soldier's address, and very soon after visited the Murfreesboro' Hospital. The nurse related the affecting story, which was at once communicated to the soldier's mother in Philadelphia. She would never have learned in any other way, most probably, how her boy died. Certainly in the last great day there will be many surprises to mothers and fathers and friends, from the unveiling of histories told to no human ears; which He only noted, who "shall bring into judgment every secret thing."

The same month Rev. Mr. Smith wrote to the *Bible Society Record* about the distribution of the Scriptures at various points throughout the army. He mentioned this incident, which occurred at a meeting in Convalescent Camp, Nashville :

A middle-aged man rose in the crowd and held up a little book :

"Soldiers, I have a book here which I suspect none of you have money enough to buy. I never read it; I don't know how to read; but I couldn't let this book go. They tell me it is God's Word; that this is where we find what Jesus says: and I love to feel it in my hands and press it to my bosom, and put it under my head at night. It reads of Jesus! What could I do without Jesus, and how should I know about Him, if it was not for this book, which somebody can read? Sometimes I find a good friend and take him by the arm and say, 'Come, go with me a little way;' and when we get by ourselves, I pull out my little book and say, 'I have here a nice book: I want you to read a little with me.' He says, 'Where shall I read?' I say, 'The 7th of Matthew.' Then, when he has read that, I say, 'Just a little more,—the 1st chapter of James.' I have almost learned these two chapters, and then I am going to take another. I advise you all to get a Testament from the Christian Commission."

*"It Reads of  
Jesus."*

He spoke modestly, but with deep feeling; and when he held up his book and pressed it to his heart, the tears dropping down his cheeks told how deep was his love for the Book that "reads of Jesus."

In the hospital at Tullahoma Mr. Smith found a Confederate prisoner, whose story illustrates the influence of God's Word over angry passions and a wandering heart:

He was lying side by side with our own soldiers, and I should not have known, from his treatment and appearance, but that he belonged to them. When he learned that I was engaged in the Christian Commission, he pressed my hand very earnestly, saying he was glad to see me. Turning to the nurse, he asked—

*Forgiveness.*

"Nurse, has my bundle come yet?"

"It will be here shortly," was the reply; "don't you worry about it; it is all safe."

"I suppose it is, but I wish it was here." Turning to me, he added, "When they brought me here I felt scattered like, and left behind me my bundle of things, and my Hymn-book and Testament are tied up in it. I have been looking and waiting for 'em, and 'pears like I was lost when they don't come. One of your Commission gentlemen brought 'em to me when I was under guard; and I have read 'em over a heap of times, and 'pears like I wasn't the same sort of man now. I wouldn't have believed last month that I should lie in my bed and pray for D——. He is a very bad man, and it's because he has told false on me that your soldiers had me arrested. But I have been praying for him; and just now when you came to the door I was asking God to forgive old man D——, and bless him like He does me. Y' see I've been reading that whar it says, Love your enemies and pray for them that is spiteful 'gin you. My wife's been a praying Presbyterian ever since I knew her. I want to see her now more than ever. I 'lowed she'd set a heap on that Testament, and I'll take it home with me."

I took the address of his wife, and by means of our lines of couriers, sent a letter with the glad news of her husband's conversion, direct to her own door.



Rev. Benj. Parsons,<sup>1</sup> who was put in charge of the field work at the front in the temporary absence of the General Agent, went forward with the forces following up Bragg's retreat, from Tullahoma to Cowan and Stevenson. He relates a soldier's testimony in a meeting at Tullahoma in August:

"I am glad, my comrades, to be here. When I enlisted I had many companions whom I well knew, but they are gone. Several of us entered into a covenant to hold together in the Christian life while in the army, and especially to hold on to Christ. Nearly all of them are gone. Some lie at Shiloh; some fell at Perryville,—and some are sleeping their last sleep at Stone River. I feel quite alone,—and that I too shall soon go to join my companions, who are now where war and bloodshed are for ever unknown; where there shall be no broken bonds, no partings, no more death. Comrades, pray for me, that I may hold on and hold out faithful to Christ even to the last."

*"Holding on  
to Christ."*

Sometimes there were sad testimonies to hear:

I was holding the chilling hands of a soldier of the 75th Indiana Regiment, in the Tullahoma hospital. I bade him instantly cast himself into Jesus' arms, telling him that He was near to receive him. "Trust yourself," said I, "my dear boy, to Jesus."

*"He is not  
Here."*

He opened his eyes wearily, and looked at me:

"He is not here! He is not here!"

"Yes, yes, He is here; believe in Him, and thou shalt be saved."

Once more he articulated, "Not here! not here!" and with the hopeless words upon his lips he died.

A little incident of Rev. Mr. Parsons' experience at Winchester is a picture of touching loneliness and a simple remedy for it:

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of First Congregational Church, Windsor, Conn.

A drummer-boy came into our office and told us he had received no letter for two years. He was an orphan and had lived in Brooklyn.

"Wouldn't you like to get a letter?" we asked.

*The Orphan.* "Oh, yes, indeed I would."

"Well, well, my son," said Rev. Mr. Cushing,<sup>1</sup> "I think I have one for you."

Opening a comfort-bag, he took out a letter written by a Sabbath-school pupil in the North, and gave it to the lad. As he received this token that even he had been remembered by somebody, he wept freely.

August 2d, Mr. Parsons writes from Cowan Station :

This afternoon several officers called on Col. Scribner,<sup>2</sup> with whom I was stopping. In the midst of a varied and interesting conversation, Col. Scribner rallied Brig.-Gen. Beattie<sup>3</sup> of Ohio, respecting a Bible given him by his wife, saying—

*A Bible-Loving General.* "It's just as fresh and clean as when you received it from her hands."

"Colonel," replied the General, "I can say what I fear you cannot,—I have not let pass a single day since I entered the service without reading it."

"Upon your honor?"

"Upon my honor, sir."

"What,—in those fighting days at Stone River?"

"Yes, sir; in those fights I did not fail to read my daily chapter; and if you'll examine my Bible, you will find every chapter marked in daily order."

The answer was so calm and serious, that no one present could doubt the words of the speaker.

Just here the reminiscences of this army are rich with Bible incidents, on account of the constant work of

<sup>1</sup> Rev. S. A. Cushing, Shrewsbury, Mass.; member of N. E. Conference, Meth. Episcopial Church.

<sup>2</sup> Commanding First Brigade, Gen. Rousseau's Division.

<sup>3</sup> Recently elected to Congress from the 8th District of Ohio.

Scripture distribution. Rev. Mr. Smith, writing to the *Bible Society Record*, relates the following :

In Louisville, last Sabbath, I found in the barracks a German Orderly, who replied to my question, "Would you like a *Testament*?" with a very doubtful query—

"You have no *Bible*, I suppose?"

*The Whole Bible sought for.*

"No, I have only the *Testament*."

"I *have* that," said he; "I want a German Bible.

I would give my next month's pay, when I get him, for a Bible in my pocket."

I told him to call at the Bible Depository in the morning, and I would give him one. Early the next day, while I was at breakfast, there was a call for me; it proved to be from the Orderly, who had come for his Bible. I gave him his choice out of the stock, and a happier man I have not seen for months. He had brought along with him a brother Orderly, once a preacher, who, while on duty at a hospital in Louisville, had loaned his Bible—the only one there—till it was so worn that with his poor eyesight he could no longer read it. The convalescents, he told me, used to take turns with his Bible, and sometimes *five or six applicants would put down their names for the next reading*. I gave this man also a Bible of his own selection.

On August 16th, the advance from Stevenson upon Chattanooga began. Movements were so prompt and well arranged that when Bragg saw the last corps of Rosecrans' army crossing the Tennessee, he abandoned his stronghold on September 8th, and retired southward into Georgia. Rosecrans, following too hastily, soon found out that the Confederate army was being increased by reinforcements from all directions: Buckner had been called from East Tennessee; Walker's Division from Johnson's army in Mississippi, and Longstreet's veterans from the Army of Northern Virginia. The Union forces were rapidly concentrated along Chickamauga Creek, and here on September 19th the battle was

begun. On the evening of the 20th, the enemy conclusively having the advantage, Rosecrans withdrew within the Chattanooga entrenchments. Bragg followed, but finding the works too strong, attempted to starve our army out. In October Rosecrans was relieved by Gen. Thomas; and shortly after the Armies of the Cumberland, Tennessee and Ohio were made into the Military Division of the Mississippi,—all under the command of General U. S. Grant. Two corps from the Potomac had in the meantime reinforced the Army of the Cumberland.

Early in October, Rev. B. W. Chidlaw, writing from Stevenson, tells a story of the value of some little hospital comforts :

One Hoosier boy, not over twenty years old, lay sick with a touch of the fever and ague, an affliction from which I had myself sometimes suffered at home :

*The Soldiers' Tea-party.*                   “ What did mother do for you when you had these spells at home ?”  
 “ Oh, she used to make me a good cup of tea, and such nice toast.”

“ Why, that's just what *my* mother used to give *me*. And didn't it help you ?”

“ Yes, almost always.”

“ Why, don't you get tea and toast here ?”

“ Oh, the tea isn't what mother used to give me, and the toast isn't the same at all.”

“ Well,” thought I, “ you shall have some that's good, if it's to be had.”

So, going to the Commission's quarters, I soon found myself dipping into a chest of real, genuine black tea, and a cask of sweetest loaf sugar by its side, and a box of condensed milk. Then, repairing to the government bakery, I secured a nice loaf of bread, and took it to the establishment in the rear, where the cook was. I began telling

him what I wanted, and asking for the privilege of his fire and utensils to do my work, when he interrupted me with—

“In dis kitchen I cooks and you talks.”

So he took the knife, sliced the bread and toasted it, while we talked of Jesus and His religion. The tea and toast were at last made; the condensed milk was used instead of butter, and there was a delicious-looking article to carry to the hospital.

“My friend,” said I to the Indiana boy, “wake up, I have something nice for you.”

“Why, preacher, ain’t there milk in that tea?”

“Certainly.”

“Why,” he asked in astonishment, “*does the Christian Commission keep cows down here?*”

“Better than that, my boy; they have gone all the way to the old cow at home, and it’s all right. Now sit up and eat and drink.”

And he did to his heart’s content—indeed, I am afraid he ate too much. A soldier close by said—

“Chaplain, can you give me a little tea and toast, too?” “And me, too?” said another, and another, until it was like a chorus all through the room.

“Certainly, certainly, we’ll have a general tea-party.”

And we did. The old cook was notified; he did the toast up brown, and the hot, smoking tea was delicious. We had a glorious tea-party there!

Rev. Mr. Smith relates a Nashville story of this time:

Standing on Fort Negley once, I noticed a squad of soldiers following an ambulance to the grave of a comrade. Two of the artillerymen belonging to the fort were remarking upon the burial.

“There’s another poor fellow got his discharge,”

said one.

“*Not Discharged.*”

“Not that,” replied his comrade.

“Well, if not discharged, I’d like to know what he is?”

“Only transferred.”

“Transferred—where?”

“To the other department.”

“What for?”

“For duty.”

“What duty?”

“Don’t know; that depends on what he’s fit for.”

Mr. Thos. Atkinson<sup>1</sup> tells an incident of his service in the Nashville hospitals, after some of the wounded had come in from Chickamauga:

I found a young man dying in the upper end of the long first ward of Hospital No. 19. Putting my mouth near his ear, I whispered to him until the spirit passed away in peace; then gathering about sixty of the convalescents about the cot, I preached to them Jesus. Down in the middle and lower end of the long ward were many who could not stir from their beds; I told them, as I went along among them of the soldier who had gone up from their midst into the City of God. It was time for our daily prayer meeting, but before I went away I thought there might be some of the maimed company whom it would comfort to know that God’s people were praying for them somewhere: so I said—

*Halt and Armless.* “Boys, I’m going to the prayer meeting now, and I would like to know if any of you are anxious to be saved. If you are, please hold up your right hands.”

Hands went up all round; here and there a stump was raised; one man had neither hand remaining, so he raised *two* poor stumps in token of his desire for Christ; another had no stumps even to raise,—he could only turn his head and say with difficult earnestness, “Me—me.”

Rev. Edward Hawes<sup>2</sup> recalls these scenes of his service as Delegate at Chattanooga after Chickamauga:

Pushing aside the canvas, I enter a hospital tent. In one corner lies a wounded man:

“Can I do anything for you, my friend?”

<sup>1</sup> See p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 210. From his address at the Philadelphia Anniversary of the Commission, Jan. 31st, 1865.



“Yes, sir, if you please. I have lost my Testament, and would like to get one.” I give him one.

*A Lost Testament.*

On the next cot is a man who lies quiet, seemingly without pain. All save his face is covered :

“You are not much injured, I suppose, my dear fellow?”

He looks up with a faint smile,—“Not much, sir,”—but he has been hit in *nine* places by a bursting shell!

*“Not Much, Sir.”*

I pass along and the steward says—

“Chaplain, won’t you come here? We think this man is dying. Can’t you say something to him?”

I bend over him; the cold sweat is already upon his brow; his eyes are fixed, fastening themselves in death, but they grow brilliant, and he mutters something :

“See! a star! there’s a star! oh, how bright! It’s the star—,” and his voice dies away in death. Perhaps he is thinking of the Star of Bethlehem. We hope so, and that it will light him through the dark valley.

*The Star of Bethlehem.*

I go to another man in the next tent, and with the Surgeon’s permission give him a single swallow of wine; he looks such a beam of gratitude from those brightened eyes!

*“What is Your Name?”*

“O sir, that’s good. What is your name? I shall *always* remember you.”

“How are you getting along, my brother?” I say to the next.

“Oh, very well, thank you.”

“Have you a family?”

“Yes, a wife and two little children in Ohio.”

“Have you written to them since the battle?”—  
It is a foolish question, for I see in a moment that his right arm is shattered; “Sha’u’t I write for you?”

*No Charge for Letters.*

He hesitated; why don’t he say gladly, “Oh, yes, sir, if you please?” I repeat, perhaps he does not understand. He looks at me with a queer air:

*“How much do you charge, sir?”*

Oh, how that cuts the Delegate’s sensitive heart:—“My dear brother soldier, that is what I am here for,—to write for you, or to do anything for you. I will thank you for the privilege.”

“Oh, thank you! thank you! I will be so glad.”

We get paper and pen ready: “What shall I write?”

He begins with expressions of Christian trust, and then briefly describes his condition. We read what is written, but the man is not there,—his eyes are shut, the big tears are rolling down from beneath the closed lids, and he makes no effort to wipe them away,—ah! the shattered arm, perhaps; but no, that is not the reason; he is in Ohio, with his dear wife and children; we will not disturb his dreams. After a pause he opens his eyes, and we tell him the letter is finished,—“Will it do?” With a look of overflowing gratitude he answers—

“Oh, yes, sir; yes, sir; thank you!”

In the corner lies a man burdened with a sense of his guilt. After talking some time, I ask him—

“My dear friend, can’t you trust Jesus now?”

“Oh! if I only could! It would be the happiest day of my life. Won’t you pray for me?”

“*Can You Trust Jesus?*”

I kneel at his side;—there may be card-playing in the opposite corner,—no matter, God’s Spirit is with us, and prayer ascends, and God hears us, for I leave the soldier with a trembling hope in Jesus.

Passing out, I come to a little shelter-tent, under which a man is lying. I bend over him and ask—

“You have the Christian’s hope, I trust?”

“Oh, yes, sir.”

“*I Cannot Read, Sir.*”

I see no Testament by him,—“Have you no Testament?”

“No, sir.”

“Well, you must have one,” and I begin opening my haversack; but he tells me he cannot read:

“You cannot read? then I shall read for you.”

We begin at the precious words, “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” We read through the chapter, and then leave him peering up through the rent in the canvas covering into the deep blue beyond, longing after the country above, where his spirit must soon be with the multitude of the redeemed.

Rev. Wm. M. Taylor<sup>1</sup> tells the story of Johnny Mitch, of the 4th Kentucky Regiment:

I met him at General Hospital No. 3, in Chattanooga, and became very much interested in him. Left fatherless and motherless at his home in Ohio, before he was eight years old, he had but little direction into the right way. The war broke out when he was fifteen. Too young to enlist, a Captain of cavalry offered to take him with him to care for his horses. The two started, but when Johnny reached Cincinnati, he saw so many very young-looking boys enlisting, that he concluded to do the same. He passed safely through the fights at Rolling Fork, Hoover's Gap and Tullahoma, but at Chickamauga he was thrice wounded,—in the side of his head, the right hand, and—more seriously—in the mouth,—the ball lodging at the back part of his neck. He lay for five days on the field near an old log-house, receiving scarcely any food from the enemy. "Five days," said the little fellow afterwards to me, "they fed me on nothing." After a while he was brought under flag of truce within our lines. The Surgeon told him he must die; and for four weeks this decision was unchanged.

*The Child-Soldier's Faith.*

"But," said he, "I kept up good spirits. I *did* sometimes think I would die, but it was no use to be disheartened about it."

Who shall say that this child's faith did not save him? Speaking of these long days of suspense, he told me—

"In the mornings when I woke, I would read a chapter in my Testament, and pray the Lord to help me up; and it always seemed to me that I began to get better right away, and I always felt mighty thankful."

He was such a youth,—only seventeen, and two years a soldier, the lip bequeathed him by the wound in his mouth made his yet unchanged voice so girlish and sweet, his eventful little history was so interesting and affecting, that I became very much attached to him. I asked him once what he was going to do?

"I want to go home till I get well," said he, "then come back, and go in again. I'm more anxious to try the Rebels now than I ever was."

<sup>2</sup> See p. 201.

The days after Chickamauga were the gloomiest in the history of the Army of the Cumberland, and nowhere was this felt more than in the vicinity of Chattanooga. Rev. Mr. Smith writes :

During the gloomy time of the siege of Chattanooga, I was riding down Waldon's Ridge, on my way to Bridgeport. The day was cold and wet,—everything was disheartening. It seemed probable that we were about to abandon Chattanooga, and that this would be my last trip over the mountains. Depressed with these thoughts and chilled with the rain, I jogged along alone, until I overtook a cavalryman riding solitarily, and seemingly as low in spirits as myself. As I came abreast of him, so as to look into his face, I saw his eyes full of tears. In our conversation I let fall a word of Christian experience, when he turned to me in an earnest way, and said—

“Then you are a Christian. Perhaps you can help me out of my difficulty?”

I expressed my readiness to do anything I could :

“I was just trying to repeat the first verse of a blessed old hymn which I have been singing for years, but somehow that fourth line I can't get hold of this morning :

“Sweet was the time when first I felt  
The Saviour's pardoning blood  
Applied to cleanse my soul from guilt,—

now, there's where I'm stopped ; what's the next line?”

I finished it up for him,—

“And bring me home to God.”

“That's it; thank you,” said he; “that's it. I wonder I could have forgotten it.”

“You looked troubled,” said I, “when I first saw you; your tears couldn't have been over the loss of that fourth line?”

“Oh, no,” he replied; “it was the other three lines that brought the tears. I was thinking of the time of my conversion, and of the many, many times when I have ‘felt the pardoning blood’ since that day.”

The General Field Hospital was two miles out of Chattanooga, on the opposite side of the Tennessee. Here the wounded were loaded into mule wagons for transportation seventy miles to Bridgeport. The story of those long trains of agony and death can never be written, yet even these wagons afforded a place of song and prayer :

The road lay over precipices so steep and rocky, that the wagons were often let down by ropes from one rock to another, amid the groans and shrieks of tortured men. So excruciatingly painful was the descent of Waldon's Ridge, that some of the sufferers begged the privilege of crawling down the rocks and dragging their wounded limbs after them.

*The Wagon  
Prayer Meeting.*

There has been in the war no more touching scene than was presented one morning among these wagons, just loaded with wounded, and about to start on their perilous journey to Bridgeport. Lying on the wagon bottoms, without straw to break the rough jolting, and many without the canvas covering to protect from the rain and sun, each man was experimenting to find a comfortable position, and resorting to all expedients to provide himself for the way with a canteen of water, and a few hard crackers in his haversack. All were thoughtful and anxious; Chickamauga was a defeat, and the gloom of an army strikes first and deepest upon its hospitals. The Delegates were busy attending, as far as possible, to the personal wants of the men in the different wagons. When the train was ready and waiting the order to move, Mr. Burnell, standing on a driver's seat, proposed a prayer meeting.

"Yes, yes, give us a prayer meeting," came from a hundred voices.

The hymn, "When I can read my title clear;" a few words of the Saviour's love and cheer; a prayer for the sufferers,—some of whom would die on their way, and for their country and the friends far away,—perhaps even now praying for them; the benediction of peace, and the fervent, responding "Amen," were all the services of this wagon prayer meeting;—to not a few of the worshipers their last earthly scene of song and prayer.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Annals, U. S. Christian Commission*, pp. 466, 467.

The Baptist Church in Chattanooga, which had been assigned for a Commission chapel, and afterwards taken for hospital purposes, was restored early in November. Field Agent Smith gives an account<sup>1</sup> of a remarkable series of nightly meetings which began at once:

The first half hour of the evening was given to prayer and relation of religious experience; then came the sermon by a Delegate or Chaplain, followed by a special service for those who desired to become Christians. The experiences were not the repetitious accounts often given on such occasions. Nearly all the worshipers had been on the Chickamauga field. They had been saved from capture and death, while many comrades had fallen. They crowded to the chapel with thanksgivings and confessions, and with importunities for their unconverted comrades to come to the Saviour. A half hour before the time for service the chapel was often so crowded as to make it difficult to go through the aisle to the pulpit. Twenty, forty, and one night more than one hundred, asked for prayers.

One evening, when room could not be found to invite forward those who desired prayers, and an expression of feeling by the uplifted hand was called for, all were deeply affected by seeing a hand thrust in through the window; an anxious soul standing without desired to see Jesus.

At another meeting, when opportunity was given for any to express their feelings, an Illinois soldier arose in the audience, and with a decided manner and tone, said—

“*Convinced.*” “My fellow-soldiers, I am not excited; I am *convinced*,—that’s all. I feel that I ought to be a Christian,—that I ought to say so,—to tell you so, and to ask you to come with me; and now, if there is a call for sinners seeking Christ to come forward, I for one shall go,—not on account of excitement, for I tell you my heart never beat steadier in my life,—not to make a show, for I have nothing but sin to show; I do not go because I want to,—I would rather keep my seat,—but going will be telling the truth; I ought to be a Christian,—I want to be a Christian,—and

<sup>1</sup> *Annals, U. S. Christian Commission*, pp. 468, 469.



going forward for prayers is just telling the truth about it. Say, comrades, won't you go with me?"

And without waiting for their answer, or for a formal invitation from the preacher, he strode down the aisle and knelt at the altar, with more than a score of his comrades following and kneeling around him. It scarcely need be added that salvation came that night to that sincere seeker.

Gen. Grant's first movements were for the opening up of a better line of communication. This was soon accomplished. In the mean time Sherman was marching from Mississippi to re-enforce him. On Nov. 23d, the assault on Bragg's entrenchments began. On the next day Hooker carried Lookout Mountain, and on the 25th, the whole of the rest of the enemy's strong position in Chattanooga Valley and on Mission Ridge was in our possession. Bragg was pursued beyond Ringgold, and made no further offensive movements during the Winter.

Mr. Smith gives the following narrative of the battle of Mission Ridge :

Gen. Sherman now began to strike heavy blows for the railroad communication through the tunnel. Twice we saw his long blue line move over a corn-field up to the skirts of the woods, and fall rapidly back. The third time they marched up and held their ground. We knew that many men must have gone down under that terrible fire at short range, and that the corn-field must be full of sufferers. A party of Delegates started on foot, to carry such relief as they could, with coffee-kettles, stimulants and bandages. As we were passing along the line of Gen. Wood's Division, Colonel Stanley called out to us, and pointing up the ridge, said—

“There will be work enough for you right here in a few minutes.”

While he was speaking a line of blue coats went over our first line of works, and a little further on a line of gray coats left theirs; both lines swept up the hill. The Rebels massed their standards and ral-

*The Struggle for the Ridge.* lied their forces at the point of the ridge directly in front of our climbing columns, or rather climbing mass, for every man was stretching away for himself, fired with the single purpose of gaining the top. Under this musketry in front and the enfilading fire of forty cannon trained on them from either side of the ridge, they went on and up, till the field was ours, the siege of Chattanooga was raised, and the Rebels had abandoned their last stronghold along the line of the Tennessee River.

While Gen. Thomas' men were scaling the ridge the Delegates' work commenced. The wounded began to fall back, supporting a disabled arm or limping on a musket, or borne on a blanket by their comrades. Taking possession of an abandoned farmhouse at the foot of the ridge, we opened a hospital for those who were not able to make their way to town. A half dozen cotton bales, ripped open and spread upon the floors, made good beds and pillows for the wounded. Some of the captured Rebels had corn meal in their haversacks. This made a large kettle of mush, and, with the coffee and soup we had brought along, furnished an excellent supper, which was taken with special relish by the wounded Rebels. One of them, a Tennessee Major, whose side (struck with a shell) we had bound up, followed with an eager eye, as he lay before the fire, our operations of making beds, preparing supper, tying up wounds, and cutting out minie balls. At last, his curiosity and astonishment getting the mastery, he said—

*"I like your Name."*

"Pardon me, gentlemen, but I would like to know your rank?"

When told that we were Delegates of the Christian Commission, he said—

"I am not acquainted with your organization, but I like your name;" and drawing a heavy gold watch from his pocket, he placed it in the hands of a Delegate for safe-keeping.<sup>1</sup>

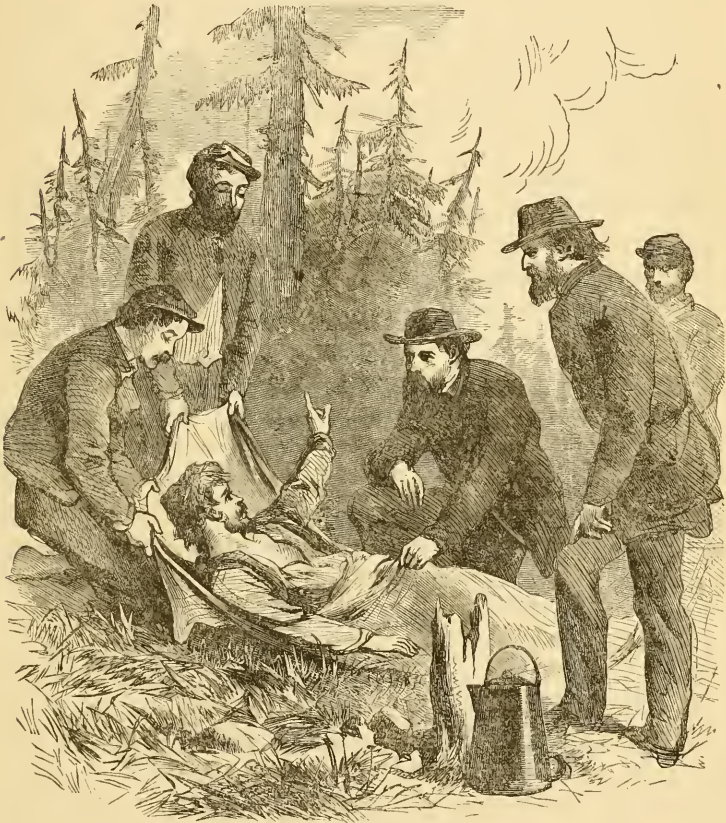
The enthusiasm of the men over their victory was unbounded.

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<sup>1</sup> The Major died suddenly a few days after, and so unexpectedly that he left no directions respecting his property. After long inquiry the agent found his mother's name and residence, in Middle Tennessee, and at the close of the war had the pleasure of putting her son's watch in her hand.

The soldier forgot he was wounded while telling of the fight, and while a ball was being cut out of an arm or leg with a Delegate's pocket-knife, would occupy the time telling how he came to be hit, or "pegged," as they called it. During the charge up the ridge, four soldiers were seen bearing back a comrade on a blanket. His story is thus told by one of the Delegates who met him :

*Dying Without the Sight.*



"ALMOST UP."

The men halted when they saw us, and laid down their burden, asking if we would see whether the Color-sergeant was badly wounded. I knelt down by him and said—

"Sergeant, where did they hit you?"

"Most up the ridge, sir."

"I mean, Sergeant, where did the ball strike you?"

"Within twenty yards of the top,—almost up."

"No, no, Sergeant; think of yourself for a moment; tell me where you are wounded;" and throwing back the blanket, I found his upper arm and shoulder mashed and mangled with a shell. Turning his eye to look for the first time upon his wound, the Sergeant said—

"That is what did it. I was hugging the standard to my blouse, and making for the top. I was almost up when that ugly shell knocked me over. If they had let me alone a little longer,—two minutes longer,—I should have planted the colors on the top. Almost up; almost up!"

We could not get the dying soldier's attention to himself. The fight and the flag held all his thoughts; and while his ear was growing heavy in death, with a flushed face and look of ineffable regret, he was repeating, "Almost up; almost up!" The brigade to which he belonged had carried the ridge, and his own regiment, rallying under the colors which had dropped from his shattered arm, was shouting the victory for which the poor Sergeant had given his young life, but of which he was dying without the sight.

An Ohio soldier, of Turchin's Brigade, came into the yard of the farm-house, his blood smearing his face and clothes, and hanging in clotted masses on his long beard. A buck shot had passed through his nose, and was lodged under the skin on the other side, close by his eye. He wanted it cut out, and was with difficulty persuaded that it was dangerous

*A Wounded  
Latin Scholar.*

for an unskilled hand to operate with a pocket-knife so near his eye. While we were bringing water he sat down on the ground, and pulled from his bosom a copy of *Andrews' Latin Grammar*. It was covered thick with his blood. He turned to the fifth declension and began with *res, rei*. He said that he was at an academy in Ohio, preparing for college, when the call came for recruits, and he had left his Latin at this point. As his regiment was passing a house that afternoon, which some "bummer" had plundered, he found this book, and had carried it under his blouse in the fight, thinking that if he was wounded or taken prisoner he would be able to go on with his Latin.



When at midnight we had given a supper to the men, and had searched the fields around with the stretcher-bearers, and seen nearly all the wounded at this flying hospital started in ambulances for town, we loaded ourselves with crackers, kettles of soup and canteens of stimulants, and went to the top of the ridge. Here we came upon one of the dreadful scenes of war. A one-story log-house was filled with Union and Rebel wounded. The floors of the two rooms and of the wide, open hall and the piazza across the front of the house were covered with men, lying so thick as to make walking among them perilous to limb, if not to life. The night was frosty; there had been no fire or supper. There was no Surgeon or nurse, and the men were lying in clothes stiff with blood from undressed wounds. The ambulances had ceased running for the night. The stretcher-bearers had gone to sleep on their stretchers. In the yard, for fifty feet around, the Rebel dead were lying. They had died in the house before the ridge was carried, and had been brought out by our men to make room for the living. Underneath these floors, in a cellar lately dug, were the children and women of the house. They had remained safe from the shot and shell that had poured around them, and were sitting in the door of their cellar, smoking pipes and eating snuff, without the slightest possible concern or interest in the dreadful scenes about them. During all the afternoon and night, with their house and yard full of suffering men, many of them Rebels dying in their cause, the mother, her sister and two grown-up daughters had not so much as offered to tie a bandage, or kindle a fire upon the hearth, or bring a cup of water, or speak a gentle word. I asked if they would not assist in preparing supper for the men. The mother, taking her pipe from her mouth, said—

*The Hospital  
at the top of the  
Ridge.*

*How we built  
a Fire.*

“You’uns brought ’em all here, and you’uns mought take care on ’em;” and putting back her pipe, she swung one foot over the other, and smoked away in the most listless manner:

“But, madam, these are, many of them, Confederate soldiers, dying away from home. Can’t you do something for them?”

It was the same answer, this time without removing the pipe—

“You’uns brought ’em all here, and you’uns mought take care on ’em.”

I asked for meal,—she had none; for a kettle to make coffee,—she had none; for an axe to cut fire-wood,—she had none. As I passed out a colored boy, about a dozen years old, whispered to me—

“Missus done hid the axe.”

I went back and asked again for it,—she had none, and the “nigger lied.” I said—

“The men must have a fire, and if there is no axe I must take your shingles;” and suiting the action to the word, I laid hold of the roof of the piazza, and had already filled my arms, when she brought out her axe from between the beds.

We spent the night dressing wounds, feeding with coffee and soup, administering stimulants, and taking memoranda for home letters.

For a mile along the top of the ridge we found soldiers grouped

*The Night on  
the Ridge.*

around their fires, discussing till morning light the scenes of the previous day, and telling of their missing comrades, when and how they fell. Within

nearly all these groups we found wounded men, and sometimes, outside the group, the corpse of a soldier who had been removed from the fire after death had ensued. By our stimulants and hot soup we helped these soldiers keep their comrades alive till morning. The wounded Confederates were as hearty in their gratitude for our relief, as they were unanimous in their opinion that the Yankees made their soup too salt. We were able to fill out many home letters, by the memoranda gathered during the night from the lips of the dying and from the letters and diaries found on the dead. Ordinarily, unless the body had been robbed, in the inside breast-pocket of the blouse there would be a letter from friends, a photograph, a Christian Commission Testament or Hymn-book, with the name and regiment and home address;—or a diary without a name,—for singularly enough, those records of daily marches and battles and camps almost invariably gave no clue to the name of the writer. Keeping it merely for his own eye, the soldier had found no occasion to mention his name or regiment. When the morning broke we had passed twice along the ridge where the fiercest fight occurred, and had given a midnight supper and a breakfast to the wounded in the log-house. The stretcher-bearers then resumed their work of bringing in the wounded, and the ambulances loaded up for town.

At daylight Gen. Turchin's Brigade, directly before us, halfway



down the ridge, had gathered up their dead and laid them in the long trench, with a dirge from the band and the farewell musketry of their comrades. They were under marching orders, with Granger's and Howard's Corps and Sherman's army, to raise the siege with which Longstreet was closely pressing Burnside at Knoxville. Before the sun was fairly up their camp-ground was silent. Passing through it on our way back to town, we found no signs of its previous occupation, save smouldering fires and the trench of graves, set with pieces of cracker-boxes, bearing the names of the dead, cut in with the pocket-knives of their comrades. This, we thought, is a day in a soldier's life, more crowded with events than a whole common life at home;—to fight in the evening and carry the enemy's strongest position; divide the night between sleep, the stories of the day, and the gathering in of their dead; in the morning bury their comrades, and sling knapsacks for a march more perilous than the fight had been.

At noon we were startled by heavy cannonading from Fort Wood and other forts around Chattanooga. What could it mean? It was not possible that the enemy had rallied and were upon us again? To those who had seen the complete rout down the slope of Mission Ridge such a thought was absurd; but what could this heavy, rapid firing mean? It was November 26th, the day set apart nearly two months before by President Lincoln for National Thanksgiving, and never were thanks given by cannonading more appropriately than by the national salute of that noon.<sup>1</sup>

Chaplain Thomas,<sup>2</sup> in visiting Sheridan's Division Hospital No. 2, after the battles before Chattanooga, found a rare example of faithful Bible reading:

A soldier wounded in the leg was sitting on his cot tailor-fashion, reading an octavo book open before him. Approaching, I saw it was in German. Wondering how so large a book could be carried by a man in the ranks, I asked—

<sup>1</sup> *Annals U. S. Christian Commission*, pp. 471-476.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 82.

*A German Bible Reader.*

“How do you manage with that on the march?”

“You see that?” said he in broken English, pointing to a rude case by his cot; “I got the leather of the Quartermaster, and cutting off strips for threads, made a rough thing as you see. When we strike tents I put my Bible in that case, and throw it into one of the wagons; sometimes it goes in with picks and spades,—no matter, it don’t hurt; when we get to camp again I go and get my Bible and have the best kind of reading. The print is large enough to read by fire-light when we don’t draw candles.”

“How many times have you read the Bible through?”

“Twelve times, I think; twice since entering the service.”

“How long have you been in the army?”

“Twenty-eight months.”

He was not a Christian when he enlisted, and I asked what led him to seek the Saviour:

“The hardships,—the hardships, sir.”

Curious to know what he had learned from his reading, I asked—

“What must a man do to be saved?”

“He must believe Christ, he must love Christ; he must obey Christ; he is dead,—he must be united to Christ and made alive.” Then followed an earnest denunciation of camp-vices, and simple, noble views of Christian character. He had been brought up a Roman Catholic, and had not wholly escaped from some of the errors of that system.

I asked a Lieutenant, whose cot was near the German’s, what he thought of the man:

“He is the strangest person I have ever met. He rises with the dawn, kneels beside that post, and all we hear is the low murmur, but we know the man is talking with his God. Again at night, and occasionally in the daytime, at the conclusion of hours of Bible reading, he does the same thing. Sometimes he hobbles along from cot to cot, and urges the men to quit their sins and come to Christ, and he does it in such a way as not to offend. Every one knows he is a Christian.”

For weeks, while I visited that hospital, the German unweariedly perused his Bible, and labored, as was his wont, among his sick and dying comrades.

Mr. Thos. Atkinson, shortly after the battle of Lookout Mountain, was left in temporary charge as Chaplain of Hospitals Nos. 14 and 15, Nashville. One morning in visiting Ward No. 6 of the latter, the following incidents occurred :

The first fifteen minutes I spent with an infidel, very badly wounded, just in from Lookout Mountain. He was a refined and educated man, received me with entire politeness, and was glad to have a little conversation. But the moment I approached the "Great Question," he said, pleasantly—

*A Lesson on  
Plain English.*

"You understand the English language, sir?"

I nodded assent with a half premonition of what was coming: "Then I respectfully but emphatically request you not to open your lips to me about religion. I have 'paddled my own canoe,' as they say, thus far; and I don't want any help in that direction."

I was at a loss what to do; he quickly discovered my plans to come at the subject indirectly as we talked, and firmly forbade my "preaching" to him.

Within hearing was a very sick man, who had been listening eagerly; he beckoned to me, so I went over to him:

"Will you tell me about Jesus? That man won't hear you, but I will."

I was deeply touched with his earnest, entreating manner after my late repulse, and promised to tell him about Jesus. His name was Jesse Doherty; he had a wife and two children at home, and had been in the army three years.

*The Waters at  
Home and Above.*

"When did you hear from home, Jesse?"

"Six weeks ago, sir; it's a long time since;—won't you tell me about Jesus?"

I began answering the longing of his heart. I told him of Christ lifted up to draw all men unto him, of how he had to look—only look—upon Him who was crucified. Jesse put his hands together and prayed that he too, like so many before him, might look and live. So, I believe, the Spirit found him, and accomplished His own precious work.

As I went away at the end of a long interview, he asked me to

come often again; the infidel's face, as I passed his cot, showed no sign that he was moved by the conversation, which he must have heard.

Next Monday morning Jesse met me with a very happy smile.

"I have such good news," said he; "I'll be going home this week, sir,—on Wednesday morning. My papers are all made out,—oh! how glad I am!"

Poor fellow, I knew he never would leave his cot until carried to the last resting-place:

"Jesse, you can't go home on Wednesday."

"Why not, sir?" said he, hastily.

"You are too feeble; the boys might carry you to the cars, but you could not stand the long ride."

"But what shall I do here, sir? Look at that water,—how can I drink it?"—it was a mixture of mud and water, resembling what coffee-drinkers call "grounds"—"how can I drink it when I think of the old well at home in Pleasant Valley? Oh, how I long for a draught from that old well! And this bed's so hard, and the one at home so soft! And there are the children, too, and wife,—and you don't know what nice things she'd cook for me! I could eat *them*, but not what I get here. If I was only home, I think I could get well."

"Well, Jesse, I'll tell you what I think about it. The first pure draught you will get will be from the 'river of water of life, clear as crystal,' above; when you have that you will long no more for draughts from the home well. And, Jesse, the first time you will see your wife, will be at the right hand with the heavenly family of God."

"Do you think so, sir?" and his eye brightened up; "well, then, welcome be the will of God. How glad I am that Jesus is precious to me now!"

On Wednesday I saw him again:

"You were right, sir; I am much worse; I couldn't bear to be carried to the cars even."

As I entered the ward on Sunday morning, five or six soldiers surrounded his cot. His feet were gathered up, and the men were doing what little they could for him:

"It's no use, sir; you can't speak with him."

Going within the sad circle, I put my mouth to his ear :

“Jesse, do you know me?”

He could not move his head, but there was an answer, very faint, but audible,—not words, only a sound. I put my hand under the cover and pressed his; the pressure was returned :

“It's little matter whether you know me or not; but do you know the Lord Jesus, Jesse?”

Gathering up his remaining energies, the soldier tried to speak. He could not articulate, but we heard the same sound he had uttered before,—only louder and more earnestly spoken. He never moaned or spoke again.

The hospital work became quieter in character until the army moved once more. Rev. Henry D. Lathrop,<sup>1</sup> visiting Hospital No. 4, Murfreesboro', in December, writes :

I found a poor Norwegian, weak and wasting rapidly away. I tried to talk with him; he wanted me to send a little devotional book, his constant companion, to a sister in Minnesota;—but after repeated trials I found intelligible conversation impossible.

He had a Testament, given him previously by a Del- *Speaking with  
Tongues.*  
egate, with *Danish* and English in parallel columns.

I took my pencil and marked in the Danish column, “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Never shall I forget the eagerness with which he seized the book, and ran his finger along the lines, as he read half audibly in his own language the gracious invitation. A smile lighted up his features, while tears were running down his cheeks. Again I took the book and marked, “I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.” The same scene as before was repeated. Thus I—no, not I, but the Lord—spoke to him.

I found at last a countryman of his in another hospital, and had the two brought together. Through this man all the wishes of the first could be understood and attended to.

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<sup>1</sup> Rector of St. John's Prot. Epis. Church, Lancaster, Ohio.

The story of the year in the Cumberland Army may be closed with an incident related by the General Field Agent :

While searching, in answer to a home letter, for a grave in the Soldiers' Cemetery in Nashville, I noticed a man in citizen's dress kneeling by a grave, and evidently writing upon the painted head-board. When I came to the spot he was standing in front of the board, his arms folded, his face bathed in tears. He was an Illinois farmer, and this was the grave of an Illinois soldier.

"Is that your boy, sir?" I asked.

"No, he lived in our town, and I've come to find his grave."

"Perhaps, you represent his father, who couldn't come?"

"Yes, my neighbor was glad to have me come, but I came for myself. You see, I have seven children, all of them small, and my wife is sickly. I was drafted. There was nobody to carry on the farm, and I couldn't hire a substitute. My thirteen dollars a month wouldn't feed the family. It seemed as though I must go and they must suffer. When we were in our greatest trouble about it, just the morning I was to report at camp, my neighbor's son came over to the house, and offered to go to war for me. He said he had nobody depending on him and could go better than I. He went, and was wounded at Chickamauga, brought to a Nashville hospital, and this is his grave."

The stranger sobbed aloud. I read the words which he had traced with his pencil in large, awkward letters under the private's name,—  
"DIED FOR ME." He had come all the way from his prairie home, at a great cost to himself, to put this grateful mark upon the grave of his substitute.



## CHAPTER IX.

### *THE EASTERN ARMIES.*

GENERAL GRANT'S ADVANCE UPON RICHMOND.

*May and June, 1864.*

GEN. GRANT having completed his preparations, on May 4th the Army of the Potomac crossed the Rapidan and pushed forward into the "Wilderness,"—a tract of broken table-land stretching southward from the Rapidan nearly to Spottsylvania Court House, seamed with ravines and densely covered with a labyrinth of dwarf timber and bushes. Fighting began early on the morning of the 5th, and was continued throughout that and the next day with no decisive result, though the slaughter was terrible. On Friday evening, May 6th, our line was substantially the same as at the beginning of the struggle. Early on the 7th, Lee was found to have entrenched his whole front; Grant, not choosing to attack him thus fortified, resumed his march out of the Wilderness, from which his advance emerged on Sunday, and the whole force on the following day. The army was now concentrated at Spottsylvania C. H. On the morning of the 12th, Hancock captured a strong point of the enemy's entrenched line, with many cannon and prisoners. Lee was unable to retake it, nor yet could our line advance, as the murderous day sorely

proved. After several days' manœuvring in quest of weak points, not to be found, on the night of the 20th the flanking advance on Richmond was resumed. Gen. Meade reports his losses up to this time at 39,791 men.

Rev. E. F. Williams writes of the last Sabbath in April at Culpepper :

To-day the Delegates preached twenty-three times to the regiments in and about the town. Everywhere the men listened as if they were anticipating the baptism of blood which awaited them, and were

*The Last Sunday at Culpepper.* anxious to prepare for the march to death which so many were to make.

A few days more and the Commission tents were struck ; cooking utensils, station furniture, books, and all heavy articles were sent back to Washington ; heavy army-wagons were brought into use ; the Delegates, divided into companies, were placed under command of experienced agents, to each of whom a corps was assigned ; and all, with mingled calmness and dread, awaited the forward movement.

Rev. Chas. P. Lyford<sup>1</sup> tells the story of one of the last services before the Wilderness :

The day before the advance I had an engagement to preach to a brigade of the Fifth Corps. Just before the hour for service it received marching orders. As the men passed our tent, the Colonel of a Pennsylvania regiment called out to me—

*"In Season and out of Season."*

"Young man, you won't keep your appointment to-night."

They were a noble body of men, marching so gayly and gladly to the grave. My heart went out after them in silent resolve to preach to them if it were possible, that night.

I mounted a horse and quietly followed them. After night, as they approached Culpepper, they halted and prepared to bivouac. Supper over, I rode up to the Colonel, who had hailed me in passing

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<sup>1</sup> Member of Black River Conference, Meth. Epis. Church.

our quarters, and reported myself ready to fill my appointment. With his whole heart he entered into the minutiae of preparation.

“I believe you fellows would come with us to the cannon’s mouth to preach the Gospel,” said he.

The drums beat “church-call;” a dozen good singers were selected for a choir—and yet the Colonel was not a Christian. The service was in front of his headquarters. I never attended one like it before; it was pitch dark; I could not see the men’s faces, nor could they see mine,—but they were there, hundreds of them,—and the Kind Heart on high alone knew where they would be to-morrow night. How they crowded about me when the meeting was over to send last words home. Some of them spoke of Warrenton Junction, and of the meetings at which they had found the Lord. “Tell my friends,” said a Captain to me, “if anything happens, that I am ready to live or die,—and that whether I live or die, I am the Lord’s.”

On the 5th the brigade was in the thickest of the battle, and my brave Colonel fell at the head of his column.

When the wounded began to come in, the saddest cases were those of men who, for various reasons, could not be relieved. Rev. Mr. Lyford writes:

A poor German saw the badge and called me to his side. He had stuck some bayonets into the ground and stretched a blanket upon their points to try and ward off the rays of the sun. His side was sadly torn by a shell, but his great need was water for a raging thirst. I put my canteen to his lips. Never have I seen such agony and disappointment on a human countenance as on his when he found that he *could not swallow*. He tried again and again, then sank back upon the ground and articulated—

*Unquenchable  
Thirst.*

“Pray for me, pray for me; it’ll be all over soon.”

I did pray for him that he might have that water of which he who drinks never thirsts again.

During the night of the second day our extreme right was assailed fiercely and driven back upon the field hospital. Such a scene as there was then! Ambulances and wagons went tearing along, filled

*Saving a Life.* with wounded who had been hastily gathered in; Orderlies swept past on horseback, and close in front the men were fighting and yelling as they fought. Suddenly I heard a voice out of the darkness at my feet:

“Don’t ride over me,—please don’t; I’m wounded and can’t stir.”

Poor fellow, he had been carried to an ambulance, but it was full and drove away without him. The bearers set him down by the roadside to wait for the next that came along, but nobody had time to pick him up, and it was now too dark to see him. His head was within a few inches of the wheel-track. I stood by and protected him from an almost certain death, until he was properly removed and cared for.

It was President Lincoln who told the members of the Commission calling on him in Washington after the Anniversary meeting in January, 1865:—“We have been only doing our duty, my friends, whatever we have been able to do together. You owe me no thanks for what I have done for the country, whatever that may be,—and I owe none to you. We cannot repay the soldiers.” And yet, poor fellows, they were always grateful for the smallest kindnesses, and “magnified the office” of the Commission. Rev. F. P. Monfort<sup>1</sup> preserves the testimony of a German, wounded in the Wilderness:

“Ah, das ish te Christian Commission. He’s te pesht man in te army. Him safes my life. He comes rount when we lays in te Wilderness, all two tays and two nights, unt no preat unt no vater, unt no Doctor, unt shust pick up all uv um, unt give um preat unt vater, unt nurse um. Oh, him so many, too,—plenty of um—unt him Doctor heself, unt bring him to White House, unt bring um up here to te hospital. Oh, he so goot! He’s te pesht man in te army. Him work shust like a nigger.”

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<sup>1</sup> Member of Whitewater (O. S.) Presbytery, Indiana.

After the first fighting at Spottsylvania C. H., Rev. Mr. Williams writes :

Going through the wards of the hospital at Laurel Hill, my attention was called to some members of the 14th N. Y. Regiment, who were weeping over a body carefully wrapped in an army blanket and laid on the ground in a corner of the tent.

“Didn’t we used to see you at Culpepper?” said one of them. *“A Short Cut to Glory.”*

“Yes, probably.”

“Well, the man who has just died used to attend the meetings there. He was a Christian; his death was glorious,—so peaceful. Any one would be willing to die if they could die like him.”

The blanket was carefully turned down; we recognized the soldier’s features, and remembered our last conversation with him in his tent near Culpepper. He had been very happy at the prospect of soon returning home, as the term of service of his regiment was nearly out; he had told us how glad he would be at again meeting wife and child, and going once more to church and Sabbath-school.

“But then, you may fall; there is death ahead,” we had said.

“I know it; if I fall, the battle-field will only be a short cut to glory.”

Thither he had indeed gone. His comrades admired his life, saw that his body was buried with more than the usual care, and told over to themselves their willingness to depart, if they could die as he had died.

In another division of the hospital my attention was directed to a group of soldiers crowding around a fly, under which were several wounded officers. The interest of all seemed to centre upon the slight form of one of the sufferers. The star upon his shoulders discovered his rank. The day was intensely hot and sultry, and the sides of the fly were raised a few feet from the ground. The General’s head was towards the centre, and his feet towards the outer edge of the tent; a few pine boughs were his only couch; one of his legs had been amputated. Members of his staff stood weeping about him, or stooped fondly down to catch his last whispered words. From his moving lips it was surmised that he wished to be turned over. *“Towards the Enemy.”*

“Which way?” asked a Lieutenant.

“Towards the enemy,” was the indistinct response, and he was carefully and lovingly turned towards the foe, whose booming guns were even then telling of fearful carnage along the lines. A moment later a Delegate bent over and whispering gently, said—

“How does Christ seem to you now, General?”

“Near by,” was the quickly but faintly spoken answer, and with these words upon his lips, the spirit of Gen. Rice passed into the better land.

All the Winter the General had been greatly interested in religion. He had aided the Chaplain of one of his regiments in every possible way,—going into the prayer meetings regularly, and taking part in them with his men. So that death did not take him by surprise. Quietly he sent his messages of affection to his mother, and then calmly and without a fear, like a Christian hero, met the King of Terrors.

As the army moved towards the left in its attempt to flank Lee, Fredericksburg became no longer a suitable point of communication with Washington. The wounded therefore were all sent to the old base, and Port Royal became the new one. The Commission Delegates and Agents for the most part returned with the wounded, though quite a number continued with the advance. Before we go forward with the latter, we must retrace our steps to the city which shall ever be remembered as one of sorrow and of death.

“Carleton,” the correspondent of the *Boston Journal*, narrates the story of two scenes dissimilar outwardly,—yet part of the same Gospel, which every Delegate, whether by ministrations to the body or soul, was alike illustrating:

Go into the hospitals; armless, legless men, wounds of every description. Men on the hard floor, on the bare seats of church pews, lying in one position all day, unable to stir till the nurse, going the



rounds, comes to their aid. They must wait till their food comes. Some must be fed with a spoon, as if they were little children. *Getting Straw for the Wounded.*

“Oh, that we could get some straw for the brave fellows!” said Rev. Mr. Kimball,<sup>1</sup> of the Christian Commission. He had wandered about town, searching for the article. “There is none to be had. We shall have to send to Washington for it.”

“Straw? I remember two stacks, four miles out on the Spottsylvania road. I saw them last night, as I galloped from the front.”

Armed with a requisition from the Provost Marshal to seize two stacks of straw, with two wagons, driven by intelligent contrabands, and four Christian Commission Delegates, away we went across the battle-field of December, fording Hazel Run, gained the heights and reached the straw stacks, owned by Rev. Mr. Owen :

“By what authority do you take my property?”

“The Provost Marshal’s, sir.”

Rev. Mr. Kimball was on the stack, pitching it down. I was pitching it in, and the young men were stowing it away:

“Are you going to pay me for it?”

“You must see the Provost Marshal, sir. If you are a loyal man, and will take the oath of allegiance, doubtless you will get your pay.”

“It is pretty hard. My children are just ready to starve. I have nothing for them to eat, and you come to take my property, without paying for it.”

“Yes, sir, war is hard. You must remember, sir, that there are thousands of wounded men,—your wounded as well as ours. If your children are on the point of starving, those men are on the point of dying. We must have the straw for them. What we don’t take to-night, we will get in the morning. Meanwhile, sir, if anybody attempts to take it, please say to them that it is for the hospital, and they can’t have it.”

Thus, with wagons stuffed, we leave Rev. Mr. Owen, and return to make glad the hearts of several thousand men. Oh, how they thank us!

“Did you get it for me? God bless you, sir.”

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. James P. Kimball, Pastor of Congregational Church, Falmouth, Mass.

It is evening. Thousands of soldiers, just arrived from Washington, have passed through the town to take their places at the front. The hills all around us are white with innumerable tents and thousands of wagons. A band is playing lively airs to cheer the wounded in the hospitals. I have been looking in to see the sufferers. Two or three have gone. They will need no more attention. A Surgeon is at work upon a ghastly wound, taking up the arteries. An attendant is pouring cold water upon a swollen limb. In the Episcopal church, a nurse is bolstering up a wounded officer in the area behind the altar. Men are lying in the pews, on the seats, on the floor, on boards on top of the pews. Two candles in the spacious building throw their feeble rays into the dark recesses, faintly disclosing the recumbent forms. There is heavy, stifled breathing, as of constant effort to suppress involuntary cries extorted by acutest pain. Hard it is to see them suffer, and not be able to relieve them.

*Evening Scenes.*

Passing into the street, you see a group of women, talking about our wounded,—Rebel wounded, who are receiving their especial attention. The Provost Marshal's patrol is going its rounds to preserve order.

Starting down the street, you reach the rooms of the Christian Commission. Some of the men are writing, some eating their rations, some dispensing supplies. Passing through the rooms, you gain the grounds in the rear—a beautiful garden once, not unattractive now. The air is redolent with honey-suckle and locust blossoms. The pennifolia is unfolding its delicate milk-white petals; roses are opening their tinted leaves.

*The Delegates' Prayer Meeting.*

Fifty men are gathered round a summer-house,—warm-hearted men, who have been all day in the hospital. Their hearts have been wrung by the scenes of suffering, in the exercise of Christian charity imitating the example of the Redeemer of men. They have given bread for the body and food for the soul. They have given cups of cold water in the name of Jesus, and prayed with those departing to the silent land. The moonlight shimmers through the leaves of the locust.

The little congregation breaks into singing—

“Come, Thou fount of every blessing.”

After the hymn, a Chaplain says—

“Brethren, I had service this afternoon in the First Division Hospital of the Second Corps. The Surgeon in charge, before prayer, asked all who desired to be prayed for, to raise their hands, and nearly every man who had a hand, raised it. Let us remember them in our prayers to-night.”

A man in the summer-house,—so far off, that I cannot distinguish him in the shadow,—says—

“There is manifestly a spirit of prayer among the soldiers in the Second Division of the Sixth Corps Hospital. Every man there raised his hand for prayers!”

Similar remarks are made by others, and then there are earnest prayers offered that God will bless them, relieve their sufferings, give them patience, restore them to health; that He will remember the widow and fatherless far away—that Jesus may be their Friend.

Ah! this night scene! There was an allusion, by one who prayed, to the garden scene of Gethsemane, to the blood of the Son of God, and, in connection therewith, to the blood shed for our country.

The report of Delegate S. J. Parker, a Surgeon from Ithaca, N. Y., may represent the extent and value of the work effected by the Commission volunteers who were of his profession :

I arrived at Belle Plain about 5 P. M. on the 13th, and found in tents, ambulances and wagons, about four hundred wounded men. I spent about five hours in aiding in the care of wounds, and returned at about 11 or 12 o'clock, leaving another Delegate, Dr. Reed, of Philadelphia, in charge. At 3 o'clock *A Volunteer Surgeon's Work.* A. M., I again took charge of them, and continued on duty till 10 A. M., when the day-Surgeons came. I left, and with a party of other Delegates went on foot to Fredericksburg.

On my arrival there I proceeded, after an hour's rest, to the hospitals, which had just received newly-wounded men, and dressed wounds until midnight, by which time all were made comfortable and I returned to rest at the Commission rooms. Next morning I re-

ported early to Medical Director Dalton, and, with Dr. Reed, was temporarily put in charge of Hospital D, Second Division, Sixth Corps. The two warehouses were but partially cleared, when an ambulance train with 303 wounded arrived. It took us from 9 A. M. till 3 P. M. to unload the train, and get the men comfortably arranged. At 3 P. M. we began dressing wounds. After a few hours my right hand became poisoned from fœtid discharges, and at 11 P. M. was disabled, and my arm excessively painful. I called in an old army nurse—a good, faithful man, and kept on dressing till about two o'clock the next morning, when I left Dr. Reed on duty.

The number of wounded I aided directly was 703, besides casual calls for aid upon one or two hundred more. I made with my hands at least *three thousand dressings of wounds*. I had charge of the North tobacco and wheat warehouse. We had a daily prayer meeting in the hospital.

The story of Geo. W. Miller, as gathered from himself and his two Commission friends,<sup>1</sup> is remarkable for its exhibition of earnest hope and faith:

Enlisting early in the war, Miller's regiment had been detailed for detached service, and had not joined the Army of the Potomac until late in the Summer of 1863. When he enlisted he was not a Christian, though from early childhood he had entertained a strong desire to become a minister of the Gospel. The abundant period for reflection afforded by the duty his regiment was engaged in, set him thinking upon his past life and upon the possible dangers of the future. His youthful yearning to be a minister came back also. Unaided by any special religious influences, save the encouragement and faithful Christian life of a comrade, he decided to become a Christian. During the Winter at Brandy Station, Miller attended the Commission chapel and renewed his vows. He became much attached to Rev. Mr. Whitney, one of the Delegates, and during several months aided him in his labors among the soldiers.

*Man Immortal  
till his Work is  
Done.*

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. Nelson Whitney, Minister of the Meth. Episc. Church, Sebec, Maine, and Wm. Ballantyne, Esq., President of the Washington Branch Christian Commission.

He was severely wounded on the second day's fighting of the Wilderness battles. For twenty-four hours he remained on the field. The Surgeon who examined his wound refused to operate, because death was *inevitable*. Then followed a sixty hours' ambulance ride to Fredericksburg. Here again a Surgeon examined him, and again his wound was pronounced fatal.

Three or four days of intense suffering were passed in the hospital at Fredericksburg, until at last Rev. Mr. Whitney found him out. Miller had never for a moment allowed himself to think that his recovery was hopeless. His firm faith found vent in memorable words:

"Mr. Whitney, the Surgeon says I must die; but I do not feel that my work is done yet. When I gave myself to God, last Winter, I promised Him that I would labor for His cause in the Gospel ministry. I feel that He has a work for me to do; and I believe that *man is immortal till his work is done*. Can't you do something for me?"

Mr. Whitney did his best, procuring straw and a blanket,—the half of one belonging to Mr. Cole, the Potomac Army Field Agent,—and laying the soldier upon a bed which seemed to him then the softest he had ever known. A few days passed, and a third surgical consultation was held. The decision was in these words—

"You will recover, but it is the most miraculous escape we have ever seen."

He was transferred to Armory Square Hospital, Washington, on May 26th; here again the wound was pronounced mortal. Mr. Ballantyne, who visited him at this time, bears testimony to his cheerful, unwavering confidence. There was no fear, no concern about his life; that was not in danger. His desire was to do His Master's will. On the 6th of June the ball was extracted. But it was not until very many months had passed that the soldier could leave the hospital. In accordance with his early determination, he is preparing to preach the Gospel of Peace.

Mr. E. M. Heydrick, of Brooklyn, with a party of about forty Delegates, left Belle Plain for Fredericksburg, on May 15th. He relates an incident of the road:

Our wagons got behind, and we took occasion to eat a lunch. While standing alone, making away with the small portion that had been handed me, a tall, noble-looking soldier approached and said—

*Helpless and Hungry.* “Friend, can you spare a little of that,—I am so hungry? I have not tasted food for two days.”

“Certainly,” I replied; and as I handed him what I had, I noticed for the first time that his arms were both disabled:

“I have no hands to feed myself with. Will you please put it to my mouth?”

As I did so, his tears of gratitude fell on my hand. “God bless you, my friend!” said he, and the way in which he uttered the words was worth a dozen dinners.

The instances of the strength of the willingness of the soldier and his friends to submit to sacrifice are numberless. Rev. Mr. Williams records these two:

*Willing to Give up all.* An old man who had come to visit his two sons in the army, found them both wounded. When asked, as he sat between his maimed boys, if he regretted the sacrifice, he raised his hands and exclaimed most earnestly—

“No; if I had twenty sons, I would give them all to save this Union!”

In a Delegate’s diary I found this entry: A private of the 11th Maine was mortally wounded a few days since. As his companions started to carry him to the rear, he looked up to his regimental commander, and said, in generous thoughtfulness of others—

*Noble to the Last.* “Don’t trouble the boys to carry me back, Colonel; it will only tire them. I can live but a few minutes, and can just as well die here.”

Rev. Dr. J. Wheaton Smith<sup>1</sup> finds the same exhibition of sacrifice:

One poor fellow, taking me for a Surgeon, said,—

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Spruce St. Baptist Church, Philadelphia. The incidents were related at the Washington Anniversary of the Commission, January, 1865.



“Sir, will you dress my wound?”

I am not a doctor, but I did my best. I took off the bandage, sponged away the hard incrustation that had gathered upon the wound, and found that his sight was entirely gone; he had been shot through the eyes and the bridge of the nose.

*Going Through  
it Again.*

“Poor fellow!” I said to him, “this is hard.”

“Yes, it is hard; but I would go through it again for my country,”

Right beside him there lay a man upon a stretcher, strong and noble-looking, but he was shot through the head. His eyes were closed; he knew no one; could answer to no voice, and yet he still breathed. I never shall forget how that massive chest heaved up and down. We watched him for hours, thinking every hour would be his last. All night he lay there motionless save that heaving bosom. In the morning he was no better, but he began to move his feet. Evidently he thought he was marching, and he marched till he died—tramp, tramp, tramp—dead, but marching on!

*Marching On.*

From the reminiscences of Rev. Herrick Johnson<sup>1</sup> we extract the incidents which follow:

I remember Aaron Lamb, a soldier from Maine, who had lost his left leg. The little delicacies and attentions had opened his heart. He had told me of his widowed mother and loving sisters, and I had written his message home, and back came their noble answer, saying—

*The Rest of God.*

“We cannot, as a family, both brothers and sisters, express our gratitude enough to Him who ruleth all things, if from the glorious Army of the Potomac He give us back our darling with only the loss of one leg.”

And from that couch of suffering was sent up a message to heaven also. And that, I believe, found answer—more blessed even than the message home. For hours and days he had been lying on the hard floor with nothing but a blanket under him, restless and sleep-

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of (N. S.)-Presbyterian Church, Pittsburg, Pa. The incidents are from his address at the Closing Exercises of the Commission at the Capitol.

less from the shock his nervous system had received. There in the dusk of evening, with his hand close clasped in mine, the patient hero breathed his low prayer—

“O Father, God, be pitiful—be merciful—give me rest—rest of body and of soul—oh, give me rest.”

And the hard floor seemed to grow woolly soft, as if Jesus had pillowed it, and rest, “of rest God’s rest the best,” came to that tired heart. “He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust.”

I saw another with both legs off close to the thigh. When I spoke to him of the sacrifice he had made for his country, he answered—

“My country demands it and my Saviour demands it. I believe that the kingdom of Christ will be advanced by this war.”

*Compensation.*

Another said, “I am ready to go home to my parents, home to Christ, or back to the war.”

This is the spirit of the army,—of Christian, patient endurance. Down from the throne of the Highest, through the lifted clouds whose bosom had been charged with thunderbolts of wrath, come these gleams of light, in waves of life and immortality, telling to the people that God is not forgetting to be gracious.

I recall another, a young Sergeant, one of whose limbs had been sadly shattered. He was a brave, patient boy, but remarkably reticent, resolutely maintaining a cold reserve. For days he was proof against all kindness, but at last I found the way down into his heart’s secret place of tenderness and tears, and the great drops wet his cheeks as he told me how he had run away from home and almost broken his mother’s heart. He said his own pain was nothing to the trouble he had given her.

*Going up among the Stars.*

“Shall I write to your mother,” I asked, “and tell her how and where you are?”

“Oh, yes,” said he; “but break the news *gently*, break it gently; and oh, tell her how sorry I am for having laid such a burden on her loving heart.”

And then we talked of another home he had wandered from and another heart he had grieved, and I asked him if he had not a penitent message to send home to God. Ere long I believe there was joy

in the presence of the angels over the return of one more prodigal. The Surgeons at last decided that his leg must be amputated, and very soon it became manifest that even this would not save him, and we told him he must die. He was ready; arms, haversack, canteen, blanket,—all had been lost on the battle-field, but he had clung to the flag he bore, and he lay there with the stars and stripes wrapped about him. Just as he was dying his lips moved. We stooped to listen. He was making his last charge:

“Come on, boys! our country and our flag for ever!”

We asked him, “Is the Saviour with you?”

He whispered, “Do you think He would pass by and not take me? I go, I go.” And wrapped in stars he went up among the stars.

There lies a young soldier wounded unto death:

“What can I do for you, my brave fellow?”

“Speak to me of Jesus;” and the words that suggest themselves are—

“Jesus, lover of my soul,  
Let me to Thy bosom fly.”

*“Speak to me  
of Jesus.”*

“Oh, won’t you sing them, sir?” And another wounded soldier lying near, takes up the words and sings.

And then the dying drummer-boy repeats the prayer, and even while the words are on his lips the prayer is answered, and his soul is away on its flight to the bosom of Jesus.

Rev. Horace C. Hovey<sup>1</sup> writes of the power of the  
“Precious Name:”

A brave cavalry officer was dying of his wounds. He was delirious when I approached him. He thought himself on the field at the head of his gallant men, and fancied that a heavy gun was just in front of them, ready to be fired. His distress was great. At length he thought the gun had been discharged, and his men, badly cut up, were retreating. Here I interposed, saying—

*The Father’s  
Rest.*

“There is no gun there; you are safe among friends here in Fredericksburg.”

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Florence, Mass.

“Let me alone,” he sternly replied; “I must recover my command and renew the attack.”

“No,” said I, “let us not talk of battle-scenes. You are soon to die. Let us talk of Jesus.”

The mention of that name seemed to exert the powerful influence I had often heard ascribed to it. His agitation ceased at once; his delirium passed away; a smile lit up his pallid features. After a moment’s silence he said, in a low, sweet voice—

“Jesus! Jesus! It is He who said, ‘Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’ I want rest; I am weary; can you sing, ‘There is rest for the weary?’”

I complied with his wishes, and with failing, faltering tongue, he tried to join in the song,—

“In the Christian’s home of glory  
There remains a land of rest.”

We sang the hymn entirely through, and when we closed there was not a dry eye in all that ward. He died soon after this, saying for his last words—

“I have no Father here but my Heavenly Father.”

Rev. Geo. Bringhurst tells the story of another hymn:

Passing through the woolen factory at Fredericksburg,—my immense parish of wounded, dying men, I heard a low, mournful voice singing—

*Hidden with  
Christ in God.*

“While I draw this fleeting breath;  
When mine eyelids close in death;  
When I rise to worlds unknown,  
And behold Thee on Thy throne,—  
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.”

There were some pauses in the verse, as if strength were failing the singer. A look, as I passed on my errand, told me that the soldier was dying. Next morning, the last “fleeting breath” had been

drawn, the eyelids were "closed in death," and the life that had gone was hid with Christ in God.<sup>1</sup>

In the same woolen-factory hospital, Mr. Stuart<sup>2</sup> found a Massachusetts soldier, who seemed to be the happiest man in Fredericksburg :

I found 550 patients, suffering from every variety of wounds and injuries. As I passed one cot, my eye was caught by a happy and contented face. I stopped and spoke to the soldier :

"You seem happy, my friend. I trust it is because your faith in Christ is firm."

*Peace past all  
Understanding.*

"Yes," he answered, "I took Him with me to the army."

"I trust you are not much hurt?" I continued, deceived by his pleasant face. He rolled down the coverlet and showed me that both legs were gone:

"You have made a noble contribution to your country."

"I have given all but my life, and am ready to give that if she needs it."

His name was D. N——, of Boston,—22d Mass. Regt. I learned afterwards that, while being removed from the town, he died in the same peace in the strength of which he had suffered.

Mr. Isaac Baker, of Philadelphia, upon reaching Fredericksburg as a Delegate, was told that his son, who

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. S. E. Bridgman, of Northampton, Mass., relates an incident very similar to the above: "Afar off, under the machinery of a mill, I heard the 'voice of singing.' It reminded me of Paul and Silas singing their praises in the guarded dungeon. I walk over and lean upon the ponderous wheel. Near me, rises a voice, sweet and clear, and the holy strains are—

"While I draw this fleeting breath."

But soon the earth receded from the eyes of the soldier-boy, and the lips that gave forth so sweet a strain were still; while the spirit of the man walked in the light of the angels over the crystal pavement of the New Jerusalem."

<sup>2</sup> Who at this time accompanied Rt. Rev. Bishop McIlvaine, of Ohio, on a memorable visit to the army.

had been engaged in the battles, was wounded. The sight of the misery he had come to relieve was too terrible to allow him to leave his post and search for his boy. In the trust that he would find kind care, wherever he was, he faithfully fulfilled his allotted work. From his report we make these extracts :

On the first morning I held a little service of singing and prayer in my division, with the common consent of the men, and told them the simple and touching story of a little girl who had lost her father, but did not understand the dread nature of death and the grave. Her mother explained through tears, that God had sent for father, and that by and bye He would send for them, and there was no telling how soon. The artless child on this exclaimed—

*Beginning to  
Pack up.*

“Well, then, mother, if God is going to send for us soon, and we don’t know just when, hadn’t we better *begin to pack up* and get ready to go?”

This incident seemed to take hold of the men, it could so well be applied to their present needs.

“Ah, Chaplain,” said one to me afterwards, “I’m glad you told us that story about *packing up*; it made the thing so plain to me. I haven’t much learning, and I haven’t tried to understand these things much, but now I see through it all. I want you to help me *pack up*. Will you pray with me, Chaplain?”

I knelt by his side. While speaking with God, the earnest heart cried out, “Oh do, Lord, help me, help me.” It was a solemn season. The Holy Spirit was there. “This poor man cried and the Lord heard him.” I was about to go to another who had beckoned to me, when the dear boy said—

“Oh, I thank you, Chaplain; I am happy now; I have found Jesus!”

*Peace Within.*

He was radiant with joy, so that I wondered. I said to him—

“But what of your body?” He had been shot through the right shoulder and left leg, and had an arm taken off. “Do you suffer much now?”



“Oh,” said he, “my wounds are nothing now. I can bear them all—I have peace within.”

At his request I sat down with a full heart and wrote to his wife, informing her of his condition of body, but with particular emphasis, as he urged, of the blessed change that had come over his soul. Indeed it was wonderful to see the forgetfulness of bodily suffering in the new-found joy which filled this wounded soldier’s heart.

We sang “Rest for the weary,” and one man, whose whole thigh had been shattered by a shell, lay there perfectly calm, patient, even happy. He smiled as I came to him, and said—

“Oh, how that hymn cheered me! I forgot my pains whilst I listened to it; and I know it cheered many of the boys.”

*Rest for the  
Weary.*

One group of sufferers claimed my deepest sympathy. Four Indians from Wisconsin lay together, bleeding for the country that had once been the wide domain of their fathers. I lay down close to one and spoke of Jesus and His salvation.

His eye brightened. He had heard that blessed name before, and in his broken way said—

*The Shining  
Shore.*

“I love Him, I love Him!”

I commended his spirit to God, and then sang him to sleep—for he died while we were singing that sweet chorus—

“For, oh, we stand on Jordan’s strand,  
Our friends are passing over,  
And just before, the shining shore  
We may almost discover.

The other three Indians were unable to speak. May God help them. I gave them some refreshment and left them.

Mr. E. M. Heydrick relates an incident showing how valuable at times were Bible words to soothe and calm men agonized with pain :

A young soldier, John Wagner, of the 60th Ohio Regt., was brought in; he had been shot through the stomach. So great was his agony that he filled the building with cries. He could not lie in

*"I can Pray That."* one position, but kept two or three turning him from side to side. Famishing with hunger, he would eat all that was given him, but it would come out through the bullet-holes. He kept begging that we would send to the front for his brother, but this was impossible. We asked him—

"Have you never heard of that 'Friend that sticketh closer than a brother?' He alone can help you; you have but to ask Him in prayer, and He will help you."

"I do not know how to pray," was his answer.

I took a little card containing Scripture texts, and read the motto, "Ask, and it shall be given you," and the prayer, "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved." Out of his agony, he exclaimed—

"Please read the prayer again." I did so.

"I can pray that;" and he kept repeating it aloud, over and over again. That night the bullet-holes in his stomach closed, and for the first time he became quiet enough to sleep.

One incident related by Mr. S. E. Bridgman will serve to show the reflex influence which was exerted upon the soldiers' friends at home:

One night, after evening prayers, a man came to our tent and with tears asked the Delegates to pray for him:

"I have navigated every channel to perdition, but now I want to lead a different life."

*A Gladdened Home.* He was pointed to Jesus. He looked and lived.

"Oh," said he the next day, "how easy it is to be a Christian! I did not suppose it was so easy. I thought it was a long and very troublesome way; I just asked with all my heart, and I hadn't to wait for the answer;—I just prayed to God and light came in at once. How glorious everything is! Even this Virginia mud now seems to have become beautiful."

A week after, with a bright and joyous smile, he came to our quarters with an open letter just received from his wife, describing the scene at home on the reception of the news of his conversion. She had begun the letter aloud, but when she found how her prayers had been answered, she could read no more. Her mother took the letter

and tried to read, with the same result. There were present with the family four boarders, former boon-companions in sin of the infidel husband. One of these volunteered to read the letter, and that very night at a prayer meeting they all rose for prayers. All were converted, and sent word to their friend in the army that they would meet him in heaven.

Mr. E. M. Heydrick, on the way from Belle Plain to Fredericksburg, met with an instance of a life saved by a Bible :

Mr. Beach<sup>1</sup> and myself came to a stream where we met a group of soldiers crossing on a log. While waiting, I noticed one of them,<sup>2</sup> of noble form and countenance, looking rather sad. I approached, saying—

“I trust you love Jesus,—do you not?”

*God's Word a  
Defence.*

“Do you not think,” he replied, “I ought to love Him? See what His word did for me.”

Opening his coat and blouse, he drew from a shirt-pocket over his heart a small Bible. In battle, two days before, a minie ball from the enemy had entered it on the front side, and coming out at the edge, had passed around his side, laying open the flesh to the bone. The blood was still on his shirt.

“Were you a Christian,” I asked, “before entering the service?”

“Yes, sir; only a short time previous I became a Christian; the day before I left home my sister came to me and said, ‘Harlem, will you take this and carry it near your heart for my sake?’”

Gen. Grant's flanking advance from Spottsylvania C. H. was towards the North Anna. He found Lee admirably posted to dispute the passage of the river, and although the crossing was successfully begun, yet the enemy's lines were so strong that Grant decided not to attack them. The river was recrossed; another short

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Lewis Beach, of Brooklyn.

<sup>2</sup> Harlem T. Garnett, 20th Mich. Inf.

march to the east, and again the long columns turned southward. On May 28th the Pamunkey was passed and the new base at White House established. Again the Confederate army, moving along the chord of the circle, was able to face Grant at Cold Harbor with strong fortifications. Here on June 1st, began another engagement. The grand assault was made on the 3d; in it our army was signally repulsed. Several days of delay were spent before the hostile, frowning works. Finally, on June 14th and 15th, the Army of the Potomac was transferred to the south side of the James, to operate henceforth against the southern approaches to the Confederate capital.

The following account of an ordinary experience, detailed by Rev. Horace C. Hovey, shows how the hardships of the journeys of this campaign weighed upon men unused to the service—exhibiting by contrast the soldier's sufferings and endurance:

The hardships endured while Grant was effecting his famous flank movements from Spottsylvania to City Point will never be forgotten nor adequately described. Our little company of seven, selected to go with the Fifth Army Corps, was made up of men  
*A Toilsome*  
*March.* not inured to hardships. For three days and three nights we did not unharness our horses, or take what, even in army life, would be called a regular meal. Most of us meanwhile had been marching on foot, and were thoroughly jaded by our double duty of keeping up with the army and doing good as we advanced. The third night found us on the edge of an immense forest. Of necessity we proceeded slowly amid the sturdy trunks of giant pines. Through their branches the night wind sighed and moaned, while the warm Spring rain fell in torrents. The darkness was Egyptian; the road grew worse and worse. By accident we had become separated from our wagon-train. Only two Delegates with strength enough to work remained with the wagon, and the driver

was worn out and surly. To complete our dismay, we were passing through a swamp about midnight when our wagon sank to the axles in mud, with one fore-wheel planted square against a tree. Our only source of appeal was to mule-drivers who now and then passed by. But they, like ourselves, had lost their train, and with curses, all undeserved, told us to get out as best we could. With rails we pried the wheel from the tree, but our exhausted animals refused to pull. Neither caresses nor blows would avail; these stores gathered by Christian love, we could not abandon to the guerillas; so in the pitchy darkness, we two unloaded the wagon of every box, barrel and bundle; with spades we dug away the clay that had packed itself about the wheels, and then pushing the empty vehicle by main force against the heels of the horses, compelled them to go forward. The wagon once more on solid ground, we reloaded our stores, and soon emerged from the forest. Now we realized that we were alone in an enemy's country; not a sound was to be heard in that dead of night, save the rumble of our wagon-wheels. Ignorant of the lay of the land, we drove into a field, built a fire of rails, spread our blankets in the open air and lay down to a rest, never before so quiet and so sweet.

From the narrative of E. A. Rand the following two reminiscences are taken :

On June 9th, while assisting to move the wounded to the boats at White House Landing, I met my friend Capt. Wm. Fitz Williams, of the 2d N. Y. Mounted Rifles. In the battle at Cold Harbor he had received a wound, from which he had partially recovered. Anxious to be at his post, he was returning to his regiment against the advice of his Surgeon. I invited him to the evening meeting in our chapel. He told us there the story of his conversion. With a depth of feeling which brought tears to every eye, he described the last interview with his mother. As he parted from her, she threw her arms about his neck, and bursting into tears, exclaimed—

*A Mother's  
Trust; and a  
Son's.*

“O my son, I could give you up cheerfully, if you were only a child of God.”

This outburst of a devoted Christian mother's love melted his

heart, and he there promised her that his future life should be given to God. He had striven, he said, to keep this pledge; had been greatly helped by the Commission, and had found the Lord's service most pleasant and easy:

"I expect to-morrow morning to return to the field, and think it doubtful whether I shall ever see my loved ones again. But I am resolved to stand firm in God, and to meet them in heaven."

The meeting closed. I bade him farewell, to see his face again no more. In a fight near Petersburg on June 18th, while bending over to staunch the flowing blood of a companion, he received his mortal wound, and died with a shout of praise.

A young lady came in search of her brother, wounded at Cold Harbor. She had looked for him in vain through all the Washington hospitals. With the greatest difficulty, procuring a pass from the War Department to White House Landing, she here learned that he was dead and buried. One wish only remained,—to find the grave, recover the body, and bear it with her to her distant home. But even in this she was doomed to disappointment. The grave could not be identified. Suddenly, amid her grief and despair, the Holy Spirit revealed to her the fact that, through all this pathway of trial she had been led that she might find the Lord. Her brother had been a Christian; she herself was not; she had failed to find him; she could only find him in Christ Jesus, in the Resurrection, in Eternal Life. Giving herself away to the Lord, she determined to wait patiently until He called her home.

Mr. John Patterson writes of an experience about this time on board a government steamer, bound for White House from Washington:

Gen. Baker with his corps of detectives was on board. They had with them several fine horses, well supplied with what I wanted badly for the Commission horses on board,—fodder. But this was unpurchaseable; so I resorted to a little ruse, which I hope the circumstances will justify. I became attentive to the horses of the detective officers, watering them occasionally during the warm day. My

*"Shorter Catechism" vs. Swearing.*



hungry animals were soon munching government fodder, and I was myself on very excellent terms with the quick-witted members of the force.

After dinner, while standing on the deck, my attention, I regret to say, was called to a young preacher aboard, who was en route to Cold Harbor, to recover the dead body of his brother. The fare of the boat was not according to his taste, and he rated boat and government in no very polite terms. This excited the ire of the detectives, and especially of an officer with whom I had just formed a pleasant acquaintance, who swore, were it not for the respect he had for the man's profession, he would put him under arrest at once. He gave vent to his wrath in language shockingly profane; wrongly, I confess, I feared to rebuke him, as well on account of his kindness to me, as of his laudable zeal for the good name of the government. Without venturing upon him directly, I tried a chance shot. Leaning upon a box of goods, my chin resting on my hands, as he concluded a volley of terribly wild expletives at the offending divine, and without looking at him, as if in meditation, I said—

“However the breakers of this commandment may escape punishment from man, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape His righteous judgment.”<sup>1</sup>

A slap on the back from my profane friend brought to a sudden end my pious soliloquy.

“My man,” said he, “I know that book as well as you do, from beginning to end. I have the most profound respect for truly religious men, but as profound a contempt for canting hypocrites. I was baptized, by Dr. McLeod, of New York, in my father's arms. Father and pastor, I believe, are now in heaven.”

“What would you give,” said I, “for a picture of your father with you in his arms, your mother standing by, and the old Doctor dripping the water upon your face, and saying, ‘Grant, Heavenly Father, that this child's name may be written in the Lamb's Book of Life?’”

The blow struck home; the wary look of the detective faded from his face; the thick mail in which a life of cunning and danger had

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<sup>1</sup> The answer to Question 56 of Westminster Assembly's “Shorter Catechism.”

encased him was penetrated by that simple thought of childhood and home, and welling tears moistened the bronzed cheeks.

The scene made a deep impression on those present. We had no more swearing that afternoon; as our boat glided softly over the winding waters of the York and Pamunkey after its cargo of wounded braves.

## CHAPTER X.

### *THE WESTERN ARMIES.*

FROM THE BEGINNING OF 1864 TO THE FALL OF ATLANTA.

*Jan. 1864—Sept. 1864.*

THE first four months of the year were spent in comparative quiet by both armies. In March Gen. Grant was called to Washington, and Gen. Sherman succeeded him in the command of the Military Division of the Mississippi, embracing the four great departments of the Ohio, the Cumberland, the Tennessee, and the Arkansas. In anticipation of simultaneous campaigns on the Rapidan and the Tennessee, the armies were prepared for the grand Spring movements.

In January, Mr. Wm. Lawrence<sup>1</sup> and Rev. J. F. Loyd,<sup>2</sup> took charge of the work at Chattanooga, around which place the bulk of the army was in winter quarters. Nightly meetings were re-opened in the Baptist Church, which had for some time been a hospital :

The evening meeting was very reluctantly omitted one night, on request from headquarters of the Post Commander, to allow the use of the chapel for public readings by Murdoch. The next night

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<sup>1</sup> Of Union Theological Seminary ; now a Congregational Minister, and Secretary of the Brooklyn Children's Aid Society.

<sup>2</sup> A Methodist Clergyman of Xenia, Ohio.

*“Not the Prayer Meeting, but Jesus.”*

a battery-man stood up in the congregation and gave his experience as follows :

“This is the third night I have been at these meetings. The first time I went away saying, ‘Religion is a good thing; I must have it; I’ll come again.’ The next night I went away, saying to myself, ‘You are wicked enough without being a miserable coward; why didn’t you get up and say you wanted to be a Christian?’ That was night before last. I didn’t sleep much. In the morning I was in a hurry for night to come. I wanted to become a Christian, and thought this meeting was the only place to do it. All day long I counted the hours when I should come. To make sure of it, I got my pass from the Adjutant before dinner, and came early last night to the chapel. A guard halted me at the door. He said his instructions were to admit only officers and such men as had tickets. I told him I had no ticket, but I must go into the meeting; I needed it more than any officer. He pushed me back with his bayonet, and I gave up, and called the Christians hard names for shutting me out because I was a private. Then my sins came crushing down on me again, and I went back and begged the guard to pass me in; but he cursed me, and ordered me away. I started for camp. When I was passing the railroad track I said to myself, ‘It is Jesus you want, not the meeting;’ and I knelt down in a cut of the road and told Jesus just what I was going to say to my comrades if I had got into the meeting. I had hardly begun to tell Him before I felt relieved. When I got up from my knees I couldn’t help singing. I went to camp singing, and kept singing after I turned in, till the Colonel’s Orderly hushed me up. These are good meetings, but if I could find such a meeting as that one on the railroad track, I wouldn’t mind if the guard ordered me off every night.”<sup>1</sup>

From the reminiscences of Rev. Jno. L. Landis,<sup>2</sup> a Delegate at Chattanooga in the early part of the year, the two following incidents are taken :

<sup>1</sup> *Annals, U. S. Christian Commission*, pp. 477, 478.

<sup>2</sup> Licentiate of (N. S.) Presbytery of Harrisburg, Penna.

I was very much interested in two Confederate soldiers who lay side by side in the same ward of one of the hospitals,—private J. P. Thompson, whose leg had been amputated, and Lieut. Baker, who had a lung wound. Thompson sent for me one day ;

I found the artery sloughed off and his stump bleeding. It was soon evident that he must die, and he became very much excited. I endeavored to calm him, and at last succeeded. He expressed a most earnest wish to be with Christ, preferring it to any earthly consolations or prospects of life and health. He told me about his little sister in heaven ; and prayed that he might be permitted to meet her there. As I was about leaving him, his comrade, Lieut. Baker, who had been intently observing the scene, spoke to me. He talked as a little child in Christ's Kingdom might about his wish to go and be with Jesus. I sang with him—

*Together.*

“I'm a pilgrim, and I'm a stranger ;”

and after that—

“Let us walk in the light of God.”

He was delighted, so I sang again—

“There is rest for the weary.”

Said he, “That is *the* rest ; I want all others to enjoy it with me. I don't want to enjoy it by myself ; would you ?”

The next time I came into the ward the two beds had been drawn close together. The two, who had fought together in life and been wounded together, were to enter the dark valley thus also. In sweet intercommunion and converse they passed the short time until one took his departure, only a few hours in advance of his companion.

Willie Snyder, of Cincinnati, was one of the most interesting and lovely characters I ever met. Enlisting at the age of fifteen, he had seen two years' service. At Mission Ridge he was so severely wounded as to require the amputation of one leg. He used to love to have me sit down on his cot and talk to him of Jesus. The last time I saw him, he got very close to me, and putting one arm around me, took my left hand in his. Laying his warm face upon it and kissing it, he looked up into mine and said, sweetly—

*The Longed-for  
Country.*

"I wish I was in heaven."

"Why, Willie?"

"Because I feel it in my heart."

He had not long to wait for the fulfillment of his desire.

In January a great many regiments re-enlisted for three years or the war, and went home on veteran furlough. This crowded the quarters in Nashville for weeks with soldiers coming and departing. While in the city, the men were kept under guard, but the Commission had free access to them at all times. Rev. E. P. Smith writes :

These homeward-bound men were found more thoughtful than had been anticipated. In many instances the thought of home so near at hand had recalled the fair promises of two years before, and broken vows came to stare them in the face. One young soldier, for whom a furlough had been procured at his request, declined to use it, asking that it might be postponed a month. At the end of two weeks he came to say that he was ready for his furlough, and, when pressed to give a reason for his strange delay, replied—

"I promised my mother that I would be a Christian in the army. I have neglected it up to this time, and I could not go home until I could answer my mother's first question." <sup>1</sup>

This furlough of veterans has involved us in a new expenditure. They return from their homes with fewer Testaments than from the battle-field. The accounts run all pretty much alike :

"Mother"—or sister, or my little boy, as the case might be—"wanted it, because, you see, I had carried it so long, and it had been in the fight ; so I left it home, for I knew I could get another."

At first I thought they had presumed too far upon our free-giving ; but I am satisfied now that they have done right. That copy of God's Truth will be treasured and read in the soldier's absence. The very

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<sup>1</sup> *Annals, U. S. Christian Commission*, p. 482.



form of the well-thumbed, worn book will stir up and make mellow the depths of the home hearts. Henceforth the Word is doubly sacred.

I met on the boat from Chattanooga, a short time since, an Irish woman, who had come from Pennsylvania to see her brother in hospital. He had been carried to the grave the day before she reached Chattanooga. She had gathered up his few effects, and was taking them home. Unrolling his knapsack upon the deck, she took from it a book,—the only one it contained, and read. The tears streamed down her cheeks as she slowly spelled out the words, and with her fingers traced the lines on the first page. I looked over her shoulder. It was an old school-book on Physical Geography, and she was reading the introduction.

“Is that an interesting book?” I asked.

“Indade, sir, it’s me brother’s book—an’ he used to rade it. He’s did now;—d’ye see his name there—the darlint? He wuz a great scholar, me brother, an’ I know he used to rade it. Niver a word did I git from him in hospittle, an’ niver a word can they spake to me uv him—only jist he died on sich a bed an’ wuz buried intoirely when I came. He wuz a great scholar, me brother wuz, an’ I wuz sthrivin’ to git a bit uv comfort fur me poor sowl out of his book.”

Would that it had been the book of the God of all comfort!

The following incident of work in Nashville in March is from the same pen:

A young man lingered one day after our daily prayer meeting. Mr. Atkinson took him aside; I stood near, but did not interrupt. The young man began—

“I’m afraid I offended you this morning.”

“Why, no; that can’t be,” said Mr. Atkinson; *What can I Do?*

“I never saw you before that I know.”

“Never saw me? You were looking straight at me all the time you were talking in the barracks this morning; and every time you cut me to pieces; I couldn’t stand it, so I got up and went out.”

“Was that you? I thought it was some careless, ungodly fellow.”

“Ungodly enough, but not careless. I couldn’t have lived there

any longer. You made me think of what I had done. Oh! I am an awful sinner. Can I be saved?"

"You *can* be saved. The blood of Jesus cleanseth from *all* sin."

"I think I could, if I hadn't done *that*."

"Done what?"

"I have killed my mother."

"Killed your mother! when? how?"

"Last night I had a letter from her. She said she was almost gone, and the writing was all trembling like,—she is very low with consumption. She talked to me, as she always did, about being a Christian, and left me her dying prayer that I would leave my wicked life and come with her to heaven. When I got that letter I made fun of it with my comrades, and sat down and wrote her she needn't worry about my soul; that I would take care of that, and that I meant to live just as I had, and get all there was in this world now, and look after the next when I got there. O sir, you don't know how that will make my poor old mother feel! It will kill her outright, I know it will," and the strong young cavalryman bent his face to the railing and made the pew shake in his agony:

"What *can* I do! what *can* I do! Is there mercy for me

"Yes, for *you*. Jesus saves to the uttermost."

"What can I *do*?"

"Kneel down here with me and give yourself to God. Tell Him you are a sinner, and cry for mercy. Then write to your mother and ask her forgiveness."

"It is too late for that; mother will be dead before another letter can reach her;—when she reads that wicked letter of mine, she will lay it down and die. Oh! what *can* I do?"

"Kneel down and cry for mercy. God will hear you and forgive; then when your mother, in earth or heaven, hears that God for Christ's sake has forgiven you, she will remember your cruelty no more."

Prayer was offered in the vestry that day, but relief was not then obtained; for several days the soldier seemed not far from suicide. He wrote the next mail to his dying mother; confessed his guilt to his scoffing comrades, and prayed. Prayer was made for him in our meetings, but his remorse was fearful and all-absorbing. It seemed

as though God's condemnation of him that curseth father or mother had already descended upon him.

At last he seemed to find the Saviour and His forgiveness, and went home with his regiment; but whether to his mother's bedside or her new grave, I never learned.

A sketch by Mr. J. E. Wright,<sup>1</sup> of Nashville hospital service in April illustrates the Delegate's relief work:

A brother Delegate asked me to go for him to Hospital No. 3, and see a man very low with erysipelas. I was to carry him an orange. I saw at once that the disease had a firm grasp of the soldier. His face was terribly swollen; one eye was closed entirely, the other partially; every feature was distorted, as well as discolored by an application of bromine or iodine; and his limbs were terribly emaciated. I sat down by the cot and talked with him, read some precious Scripture promises, and at his request wrote to his father. In the afternoon I saw the poor fellow again. He was worse; mortification had set in; it was difficult for him to hear or speak, and all his faculties were yielding to the disease. He asked me if I had written a letter for him in the morning and what I had written, saying with touching emphasis, as he marked with his right hand a finger's length upon his left—

*The Unwritten  
Letter.*

"I can't remember so long."

I told him I had written, and asked if I should send a letter to his wife. He hesitated, and then answered, feebly—

"Not now, I can't hear—I can't think,—to-morrow perhaps."

As I bade him good-bye, the poor fellow seemed to gather up his little remaining strength. Looking after me, he said clearly and earnestly, "God bless you!"

The emphasis with which the simple words were spoken shall remain with me as long as I live. Poor boy! his "to-morrow" never came; and the letter which was to have been written to his wife, told in a stranger's words the sad story of a husband's death.

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<sup>1</sup> Of Andover Theological Seminary, Mass.

Mr. Arthur Lawrence<sup>1</sup> tells a suggestive story, related to him by a soldier in Bragg's Hospital, Chattanooga, not long before the Spring movements :

A soldier told me what had led him to seek and find the Saviour. Some time before, a Christian on the next cot to his had been dying. Just before he passed away, he called the nurse to bring him a cup of water :

*An Angel Un-  
awares.* "Bring two, nurse; I want one for my friend here; he has come a long distance, and must be tired."

"I don't see anybody here," said the nurse, somewhat puzzled.

"Don't you see him?" said the soldier, pointing into what, for every one else in the room, was only tenanted by the vacant air. They assured him that there was no one there, but the soldier could not be convinced :

"There *is* some one standing by the bed-side," he said.

And so doubtless there was for *him*.

"I didn't see what *he* saw," said the soldier who told me the story; but the long, last look of the dying man, turned towards the attendant "Friend," awed him deeply; "For," said he, "it must have been an angel."

"Thither we hasten through these regions dim,  
But lo! the wide wings of the Seraphim  
Shine in the sunset! On that joyous shore  
Our lightened hearts shall know  
The life of long-ago:  
The sorrow-burdened past shall fade  
For evermore."

Gen. Sherman's mustering of his hosts for advance into Georgia gave the work a new impulse in April. At Ringgold and Cleveland very remarkable revivals began among the veteran troops. The General Field Agent writes of that at Ringgold:<sup>2</sup>

The crowded church every night, the full morning meetings for

<sup>1</sup> Of Boston.

<sup>2</sup> *Annals, U. S. Christian Commission*, pp. 490-491.

inquirers of the way of life, the prayer meetings established in the soldiers' huts and even out on the picket-post, testify to such grace and power of God as is rarely exhibited. A Kentucky soldier, one of the most ungodly men in his regiment, had spent the night in prayer and found no relief. In the morning he met his Chaplain on his horse, and asked him to pray for him. The Chaplain promised, but said the man—

“I mean now.”

“What, here in the road?”

“Yes, *here*, Chaplain, *now*.”

They knelt and prayed, and others who were passing came and knelt, till there were more than two or three agreeing in the petition that the sinful one should be forgiven; and the answer came. The soldier went down to his tent-house, and carried the word of life to his comrades. They could not resist the claims of religion, when pressed upon them so earnestly and persistently by their fellow-soldier. He told of his trials with his profane tent-mates, and of the agreement he had made, that, if they persisted in calling in their comrades for cards, he should have the tent every other night for a prayer meeting. The result was, the prayer meeting supplanted the cards altogether, and all in the tent and many men in the company came with the new disciple to his Master.

Mr. William Reynolds continues the account :

Words are inadequate to describe the glorious work of grace. We found about ten thousand troops encamped here and but three Chaplains. In our labors with these Chaplains, we experienced in full the sweetness of the truth, “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.” We made arrangements for holding two daily meetings, at one and seven o'clock, P. M. At the night meeting the church was crowded to overflowing,—not a foot of standing-room unoccupied. The doors and windows were filled, and the crowds extended out into the street, straining their ears to catch the words of Jesus. Sometimes hundreds of persons would go away unable to get within hearing distance. Day after day the interest

*The Depth of  
the Revival.*

deepened, and large numbers came forward nightly for prayer. Scores of men long hardened in sin cried out, "What shall we do?"

A number of the converts had never been baptized, and as they expressed a desire to remember this command of Christ, we invited all candidates for baptism to meet at the church on Sabbath afternoon, April 10th. Forty-four presented themselves.

*The Baptism  
and the Commu-  
nion.*

In the number several denominations were represented, and were of course allowed to select the mode of baptism they preferred. Twenty-four chose immersion, eighteen sprinkling, and two pouring. We marched in solemn procession to the tune and hymn—

"There is a fountain filled with blood,"

down to the Chickamauga Creek. The soldiers stood on the banks, joining hands and continuing the hymn, while their comrades went down into the water,—some for immersion, some for sprinkling, and others for pouring, but all for baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. After administering the ordinance we returned to the church, singing—

"Jesus, I my cross have taken,"

and then sat down, about four hundred in number, at the table of our common Lord. Commissary bread, currant wine, tin plates and tin cups,—these were the circumstances of the Lord's supper in the army; but they did not keep the Master from the feast of love, nor hinder the baptism of the Spirit upon these men, whom God was making ready for four months of march and battle. It was a blessed communion,—to many of the soldiers the first they had enjoyed for two years, and to many men the last, until that day when they shall "drink it new in the Father's Kingdom." The following Sabbath forty-eight were baptized,—twenty-seven by immersion, and twenty-one by sprinkling; and on the Sabbath succeeding this, the ordinance was administered to fifty-seven more, and four hundred *new converts* sat down at the communion table.

As I was leaving Ringgold, some of the soldiers came to me and said they had had a little discussion about my church connection. I



asked the leader of the company what church he thought I belonged to.

“Well,” said he, “I think you are a Methodist.” *A Latitudinarian.*

“Why, so?” I asked.

“Because you ask people to come to the ‘anxious bench.’”

I asked another what he thought:

“I think you are a Baptist, because you are so intimate with Chaplain Nash. I’ve noticed you around with him a good deal.”

The third I asked, answered—

“I think you are a Presbyterian, because you stand up when you pray.”

I happened to be a Presbyterian; but it was a curious and striking instance of how men put off their signs of division in the presence of the great work of the Lord.

Rev. Mr. Smith writes of a like pouring forth of the Holy Spirit at Cleveland, Tenn.:

The Fourth Army Corps lay here, waiting for marching orders. A marvellous revival began just before these orders came. At one Sabbath service Chaplain Raymond, alluding to the terrible scenes just before the army, and the need of a better Christian life, said— *Re-consecration.*

“I want to be a better Christian; all in this congregation, who will join me in this solemn re-dedication, rise.”

The first man on his feet was Maj. Gen. Howard, commander of the Corps; his staff stood up around him, and were soon followed by all in the house who loved the Saviour.

From that hour, the solemnity of our meetings deepened, and the work grew until hundreds were converted. At the service that night an invitation was given to all who were ready to become Christians *there and then*, to raise the hand. The hand of a fine-faced Wisconsin soldier near the pulpit went up *“Cleveland—Jesus,”* so promptly,—before the invitation was fairly given—and so vigorously, as to attract attention. This was his last meeting at Cleveland. He was called off on duty, and could not again attend before the grand move began.

In the Autumn, four months after the Cleveland meetings, when

"Atlanta was ours, and fairly won," a ward-master came hastily into our quarters at Nashville, asking for a minister to come at once to Hospital No. 12. I followed him back. He showed me a cot, on which one of his men lay dying. It was the Cleveland, Wisconsin boy. He wanted some Christian friend to come and take his last words of holy trust, for his parents in Milwaukee:

"It'll be such a comfort to them, you know, sir."

It was hard to look at that face and head, and feel that the boy must die; eighteen years of age, an only child, as fine an eye and form as you would find in a brigade of men. I turned involuntarily to the nurse, to ask if there was no hope:

"None at all, sir; the Doctors have all given him up."

Then, I turn again to the dying man and lose all my regrets. His large hazel eye swims in tears, as he smiles and replies to my question—

"Yes, I am ready; my papers are made out, and I shall be discharged to-night."

Then he told me of his conversion; how he went out of that Cleveland meeting dedicated to God, and how God had kept and blest him, all through the marches and fights to Atlanta, till at last, in the siege of that city, he was wounded and his leg amputated. Since then he had been thinking what he could do as a one-legged Christian, till, within a few days, he had learned that he could never get well, and had come to be perfectly willing to die in that hospital ward. Reference to his home in Wisconsin, to his father's plans for him, and to how his mother had been counting the days till his term should expire, made the tears come afresh; but he dashed them away and said—

"It's all right,—all right; ever since that meeting, it's all right."

When I was about to pray, he said—

"Don't forget to thank God for Cleveland."

He did not die that night; but when two days after I found his cot empty, I inquired of the nurse how he died:

"Oh, very happy, sir; he prayed and sang, and said the Bible all to himself. His last words we didn't understand; 'maybe he was getting flighty in his mind."

"What were they?"

"Cleveland—Jesus; Cleveland—Jesus."

Mr. Reynolds tells of a conversation with a Brigade Surgeon during the same revival :

“Surgeons, anyhow, ought to be Christians,” said he to me ; “I never felt the necessity of being one so much as at the battle of Chickamauga. A number of men were brought into a tent where we were amputating limbs and probing wounds. Examining the hurts of one poor fellow, I was obliged to tell him he could live but a few minutes. He turned and looked at me :

*The First Prayer.*

“ ‘ Surgeon, are you a Christian ?’

“ I had to confess I was not.

“ ‘ Is there no Christian here ?’—no one responded.

“ ‘ I want some Christian to pray with me before I die.’

“ ‘ Are *you* a Christian ?’ I inquired.

“ ‘ Oh, yes, sir, I am a Christian ; but I would so like to have some one pray with me, before I go away to be with Jesus. O Surgeon, won’t *you* pray ?’

“ The pleading of the dying man was more than I could resist. I knelt down beside him and offered up a heartfelt prayer to God. I don’t know much about such things,” added the Surgeon, musingly, “but that prayer has had a most marked influence on my life ever since. The soldier died within a few minutes after its close.”

Just on the eve of the advance, this incident, told by the General Field Agent, occurred at Ringgold :

In the midst of one of our soldiers’ prayer meetings, the Adjutant of a Kentucky regiment came in and told the leader that he was ordered to pick eleven men and a Sergeant from the regiment, to go on special and perilous duty in Nickajack Gap.

“ They must be the best men in the regiment,” said the Adjutant, looking over the congregation.

*“At the Front”  
in the Prayer  
Meeting.*

His eye finally rested upon the front seat. *There* were the men he was looking for. All of them Christians, and close to the “front” in the prayer meeting,—they were the soldiers for special and perilous service.

Gen. Sherman, on May 6th, left his Winter encampments about Chattanooga, at the head of an army of 100,000 men. Dalton, the first position of Johnston, the Confederate commander, was turned by a flank movement, and the enemy forced to fall back rapidly to Resaca. After some severe fighting this place was also evacuated on May 16th. Johnston's retreat, with a temporary halt at Cassville, was kept up until he reached the shelter of the Allatoona Mountain. Continual skirmishing consumed the time until June 1st, when Sherman made another flank movement to the left, compelling the enemy once more to leave their strong position, only to take up a new and formidable line along Kenesaw, Pine and Lost Mountains. After incessant fighting the two latter were abandoned; but a direct and fierce assault upon Kenesaw on June 27th, failed. But the inevitable flank movement compelled its evacuation on July 2d. About a week later, Johnston, his army safely within the strong entrenchments of Atlanta, was superseded by Gen. J. B. Hood. This officer's first movements were fierce attacks, on July 20th and 22d, upon the left of our too confidently advancing forces. These attacks, though repulsed, showed that Atlanta was not to be easily won. A week later, Hood struck out upon our right, and was again signally repelled. Unable to keep quiet, he sent nearly all his cavalry under Wheeler into Sherman's rear, which only gave the latter opportunity to push forward Kilpatrick to destroy temporarily the enemy's communications, and then, on August 25th and the succeeding days, to raise the siege and throw his entire army, except the Twentieth Corps, into the rear of Atlanta. Hood, completely outgeneraled, abandoned

his stronghold about the 1st of September. Here our army rested after their nobly-earned victory.

Rev. Dr. J. P. Thompson,<sup>1</sup> writing to the *Boston Congregationalist*, tells the story of work before Resaca :

About three A. M. of Sabbath the 15th, we came upon the camp-fires of our forces, gloomily lighting the forests. An hour's nap upon the ground, and I was awakened by the sound of cannon. Before the tent a soldier, just brought in, lay stretched in death. Around were tents filled with wounded and dying men. Already the hospital tents of the several army corps were arranged at intervals over a circuit of six miles. Mounting our wagons we drove from corps to corps, depositing at each hospital timely stores, ministering with our hands to the comfort of the wounded, and speaking words of Christian consolation. What scenes of horror and anguish did that day reveal! Men lying in scores, upon their hurried beds of straw, with bleeding or ghastly wounds, awaiting the Surgeon's care; others brought in at intervals upon stretchers from the field; here a group of six corpses ready for burial, there a heap of limbs and members marking the operating tent, where the knife of the Surgeon was always busy.

Strange sights and scenes and labors for the Sabbath; yet somehow the Master seemed nearer than ever before; the Conqueror of death; the sympathizing Saviour; the all-present, the all-sufficing Friend. And to do some little kindness in His name, to give the cup of cold water, the timely nutriment, the fragrant orange; to adjust a bandage, to soothe a weary head, to write a message for the loved ones at the soldier's home, to speak some brief word of hope and cheer—was not this doing *His* work?

“How kind you Northern people are!” said a tall, stalwart Tennessean, as I stooped to comfort him; “I used to have a prejudice against you; but since I have been in the army, and have seen what you do for the soldiers, I think you are a wonderful people.”

*“Hard Wading  
through Mother's  
Prayers.”*

He had been shot through the cheek, and the

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Broadway Tabernacle Congregational Church, New York City.

blood oozed from his mouth and nostrils at every effort to speak.

"You Tennesseans," said I, "deserve all we can do for you."

"As for that, I made up my mind that people who wanted protection must first protect themselves."

I spoke to him of Christ.

"Ah," said he, "I have been a wicked man, a very wicked man; but it has been hard for me to wade through my mother's prayers." And when I showed him the freeness of salvation, he pressed my hand, and thanked me again and again.

A young Kentuckian beckoned me to his side, and welcoming me with a sweet smile, said—

"I professed Christ before I entered the army, and I have tried to live near Him; I feel Him near me now."

*A Good Cause  
to be Wounded  
in.*

"Are you much wounded?"

"Seriously, in the thigh. I hope not mortally, but *it is a good cause to be wounded in.*"

A young man whose arm had been amputated at the shoulder, asked Mr. Holmes<sup>1</sup> to write to his friends "to keep up *their* spirits;" he, brave fellow, had no want or care for himself.

*Self-forgetful-  
ness.*

I went among a company of wounded men, all lying on the floor, in pain, and told them the news of Grant's first successes in Virginia. "Good," said they, with one voice; "that pays for all we've suffered."

Brother Holmes and I ventured down to the very front, where the strife was raging. We sat down near the line of battle, with a group of men who were presently to go in for their turn at the fight, and had some earnest, manly, faithful talk about the one thing needful:

"Boys, you believe in Sherman, down here, don't you?"

"*That's* so; that's what's the matter."

"You believe in Grant, too, don't you?"

"Yes, indeed; anything for Grant."

*Faith in  
Christ.*

"Well, that is faith; and we want you to feel just so towards the Lord Jesus Christ, and put your whole soul into His hands, and go into this battle loving and trusting Him."

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. Jno. M. Holmes, Pastor of Congregational Church, Jersey City, N. J.



“Well, now’s a time for the soldier to feel pretty solemn,” said one; and so we talked on to men who in the next hour might look death in the face.

Returning, we saw a newly-opened grave. It was for a Michigan boy of eighteen; he had been shot down at the side of his father who was a private in the same company. The father sat beside the grave, carving his boy’s name upon a rude head-board. It was his first-born. I took him by the hand, and gave him all my heart, then offered a prayer, which Brother Holmes followed with appropriate words. There was no coffin, but a few pieces of board were laid in the bottom of the grave, between the body and the bare ground.

*Buried in his  
Blanket.*

“Wrap him in this blanket,” said the father; “it is one his sister sent him. Ah, me, how will they bear it at home! What will his poor mother do! She must have a lock of his hair.”

I stooped to cut the lock with my penknife, when a soldier came forward with a pair of scissors from his little “housewife.” My heart blessed the Sabbath-school child who had made that timely gift. And so, having rendered the last offices of faith and affection, we laid the brave boy in his grave, while the cannon were still roaring the doom of others, young and brave, whom we had just left on the field.

An incident of the fighting before Resaca, told by Mr. Arthur Lawrence, seems to us worthy to take a place high in history:

Two of us picked up a man in our arms to carry him off the field. A shell had struck him in the mouth, tearing an awful wound, which was bleeding profusely. I offered the poor fellow a drink from my tin-cup,—a bright, new one, which I had brought from Chattanooga. One would not have guessed, in looking at him, that he could have at the time any thoughts beyond his pain and what would help it. The first sensation after such a wound is well known to be one of intense thirst; yet the soldier refused the proffered draught. I asked him why:

*An American  
Bayard.*

“My mouth’s all bloody, sir; and it might make the tin-cup bad for the others.”

He was "only a private," rough and dusty with the battle; but the answer was one which the Chevalier Bayard, the knight *sans peur et sans reproche*, or Sir Philip Sydney at Zutphen, had not equalled, when they gave utterance to the words which have made their names immortal.

The army halted one Sabbath day in Kingston, after Resaca had been gained. The General Field Agent gives the following narrative of it:<sup>1</sup>

When we found that the army was to be at rest over the Sabbath, appointments were made in the different brigades for two or three services to each preaching Delegate. I had an appointment in the

*An Involuntary Interview with Gen. Sherman.*

Baptist church in the morning, and at General Howard's headquarters, in the woods, in the afternoon. The church had not been cleaned since its occupation as a Rebel hospital. The sexton, who agreed to put the house in order on Saturday afternoon, failed me, and only an hour before the time for service I discovered that another man, engaged and paid for doing the same work on Sabbath morning, had served me in the same way. It was too late now to look for help. I took off my ministerial coat, and for one hour, with the mercury at ninety degrees, worked with might and main. When I had swept out the straw, cleared the rubbish from the pulpit, thrown the bunks out the window, pitched the old seats down from the loft, arranged them in order on the floor, and dusted the whole house over twice, it was time for service. I sprang up into the belfry (the rope had been cut away), and, with some pretty vigorous strokes by the bell tongue, told the people around that the hour for worship had arrived. Dropping down again through the scuttle upon the vestibule floor, a treacherous nail carried away an important part of one leg of my pantaloons. It was my only suit at the front, and while I was pondering how I should present myself before the congregation, a Corporal and two bayonets from General Sherman's headquarters, not twenty yards away, came to help me in the decision:

"Did you ring the bell?"

"I did."

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<sup>1</sup> *Annals U. S. Christian Commission*, pp. 498-501.

"I am ordered to arrest you."

"For what?"

"To bring you to General Sherman's headquarters."

"But, Corporal, I can't see the General in this plight. I am an Agent of the Christian Commission, and am to preach here this morning, and was ringing the bell for service. If you will tell the General how it is, it will be all right."

"That's not the order, sir."

"Well, Corporal, send a guard with me to my quarters, till I can wash up and pin together this rent."

"That's not the order, sir;—fall in."

Without hat or coat, and with gaping wardrobe, preceded by the Corporal and followed by the bayonets, I called at headquarters. General Corse, Chief of staff, standing by the side of General Sherman, received me. Without waiting for charges or questions, I said—

"General, I belong to the Christian Commission. We are to have service in the church across the way, and I was ringing the bell."

"Is this Sunday? Some mischievous soldiers alarmed the people by ringing the bell, and an order was issued against it; but we were not aware this was Sunday. There is no harm done. At what hour is the service?"—and, bowing me out, he discharged my guard.

As I entered, General Sherman was drumming with thumb and finger on the window-sill; when the Corporal announced his prisoner, he fixed his cold gray eye on me for a moment, motioned to his Chief to attend to the case, and, without moving a muscle of his face, resumed his drumming and his Sabbath problem,—how to flank Johnston out of the Allatoona Mountains.

This extra duty as sexton, and obedience to the Corporal's "order," made it necessary to procure a pulpit substitute for the morning. The Delegate who preached reported an interested congregation, and among them representatives from headquarters.

In the afternoon I rode over to the Fourth Corps, four miles away. General Howard had notified the regiments around of the service. Two of his Division commanders were present, with Brigadier-General Harker, whose promotion was so recent that the star had not yet supplanted the eagle on his shoulder. This was the last Sabbath service which this manly, modest, gallant officer attended. Five weeks later,

*Service at  
Headquarters in  
the Woods.*

in the charge at Kenesaw Mountain, he was shot dead. That Sabbath in the woods I shall never forget; the earnest attention of all to the theme,—“The safety of those who do their duty, trusting in God,”—the hearty responses of the Christian men, and the full chorus in the closing hymn,

“When I can read my title clear.”

The most effective sermon of the day, however, was by the General commanding the Corps, given upon the piazza of his headquarters, surrounded by his staff, his Division commanders and other general officers. Nothing could be more natural than the turn of the conversation upon religious topics. *A Maj. General Preaching Christ.* The General spoke of the Saviour, his love for Him and his peace in His service, as freely and simply as he could have spoken in his own family circle. He related instances of Christian trust, devotion and triumph. Speaking of the high calling of Chaplains, and the importance that they should always be with their regiments at the front, he told us of his visit to Newton’s Division Hospital the night after the battle of Resaca, where he found a fair-faced boy who could not live till morning. He knelt down on his blanket and asked if there was anything he wanted done for him:

“Yes; I want somebody to tell me how to find the Saviour.”

“I never felt my ignorance so much before,” said the General. “Here was a mind ready now to hear and act on the truth. What if I should give him wrong directions? How I wished I had a minister’s training.”

And then he told us what directions he gave, and of the prayer, and of the boy’s smile and peace,—appealing now to me and then to his generals, if it was not right and beautiful; and so, under the pressure unconsciously applied by their superior officer, with lips all unused to such confession, his Division commanders acknowledged the power and grace of God.

Rev. Mr. Smith adds a story of hospital work in Kingston:

The wounded and sick were crowding the town full. The men came in in the most deplorable condition. Shelter-tents were hastily

erected for their accommodation. Late one afternoon I was summoned to see an officer who was supposed to be mortally wounded. It was Capt. Burke, of the 37th Indiana Regt. It did not take long to discover that he was a devout Christian. He asked me to telegraph to his wife of his condition, praying me however to break the news to her gently,—not to say that his wound was mortal. He spoke to me freely of his past life, and of the slight hope there was that he would survive his wound. I asked—

“Christ,—All  
I Want.”

“Captain, how does it seem to you to be thus stricken down, with all your prospects and hopes cut short here in Georgia? Isn’t it hard for you to give up life and leave your family at your age?”

“It *has* come suddenly upon me,” was his answer; “but I feel prepared for it. I have lived close to my Saviour in the army, and tried to keep my accounts square every night.”

He did not die so soon as we at first expected, but lived to get as far towards home as Nashville, whither his wife came to nurse him. The few months during which he lingered confirmed my first impressions at Kingston. He had indeed lived close to Christ and kept his accounts square. As he grew weak his mind sometimes wavered; he would call for his comrades, and seemed determined to go to them; but his wife could always calm him by saying—

“My dear, Jesus is here; that is all you want.”

His sweet, assured reply was always—

“You are right, wife; that is all I want,—all I want.”

When the army moved from Kingston, and a general hospital had been established further on, the men who were too badly wounded to be taken to the rear remained at Kingston,—many of them to die there. Rev. Mr. Smith, returning to Chattanooga a little later, gives an account of a day’s work among them:<sup>1</sup>

Coming back from the front, I learned that the Delegates had left Kingston, and that there was no Chaplain in either of the two hospitals.

<sup>1</sup> *Annals, U. S. Christian Commission*, pp. 501-503.

It was two weeks after the hard fight on the right by the Fourth and Twentieth Corps, and I knew it must be the time for many of the wounded to die; and they must not die alone. I determined to forego business at Chattanooga and stop over. There were many low cases. Four or five, I was sure, would not live twenty-four hours. One was too far gone to converse. Nothing could be done but to write to his little daughter, the only surviving member of his family, as one of his comrades said. Another could speak only by nods and the pressure of the hand. By this means of communication I learned that he was peacefully waiting to die. As I prayed at his cot his "amen" was given by the pressure on my hand, and when the petition rose for wife and children the responses came thick and fervent. He slept in the night, and never woke. Another was seeking the Saviour, and ventured to trust before he died.

Another, an Indiana soldier, sent for me in the night. He was dying,—a fair-faced boy of eighteen years. His leg had been cut off by a shell, and amputation had prostrated him beyond recovery.

He was a Sabbath-school boy. He wanted me to take his last words home to his mother and sister:

"Poor mother, how she will take on! Tell her not to cry for me. I love Jesus. I put all my trust in Him. When you prayed with me this afternoon I felt my soul going right out to Him. Tell my sister not to fret after me. I have done the best I could for my country, and now I want them to meet me in heaven. Tell my sister to be sure and hold out faithful."

He gave me his memorandum and pocket-book and a number of keepsakes;—asked me to pull the two rings from his hand and send to his sister, and tell her that they were taken off after his hand was getting cold. After prayer we sang—

"There is a fountain filled with blood."

He joined in, breaking the tune now and then with—

"Yes, yes; if *he* could trust Him, I can." "Yes, *when* I die." "That *will* be sweeter." "Power to save; power to save; I used to sing that hymn at home, but it was never so good as this;—power to save."

I gave him my hand for good-bye. He drew me down for a kiss,





"AN UCCON SWISS."

DYING IN GEORGIA



and Mrs. George<sup>1</sup> must have one also, and the nurse; and then we left him. Before I had passed through the ward the nurse called me back:—"He wants to speak to you."

When I reached the cot he asked to see the daguerreotype pictures in his memorandum-book. I took out three and held them up one by one. Mother came first.

"Dear mother," he said, as he took it in his trembling fingers; "good-bye; I wish I could see you, but I am going to die in Georgia." In tears and sobbing he pressed the ambrotype to his lips;—"Good-bye; good-bye." He takes the next:

"Sister, dear sister; don't fret for me; I'll see you again; only be faithful; good-bye, dear sister, good-bye;" and he prints on the glass his dying kiss.

The next one he gazes upon with unutterable longing. His lips quiver, and his whole frame shakes. He calls no name. He kisses it over and over, and holds it under his hand on his breast. I put my mouth close to his ear and whispered, "This is hard."

"Yes, it is hard; I would like to go home; but I am content."

"You are dying now, before you are twenty years old. Are you not sorry you enlisted?"

He looked at me steadily. His sobbing ceased, and with a firm, deliberate tone he said—

"Not a bit; I was glad when I enlisted, and I am glad now. I am willing to die for my country."

That midnight scene cannot be described. The patients in the ward, who could walk, gathering round; others in their beds, rising up on elbow; the nurses standing about,—one of them holding, at the head of the cot, the single candle of the ward; the prayer, the hymn, the last message, the good-bye, the family leave-takings, and the consecration unto death on the altar of country;—they fill a blessed page in my memory, but I cannot transfer it to you.

Rev. H. McLeod<sup>2</sup> recalls an incident of his work after Johnston was driven from the Allatoona Mountains:

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<sup>1</sup> This lady volunteered as nurse to the Indiana soldiers during the war. When Gen. Sherman reached the coast she met "her boys" again at Wilmington, N. C., and there, prostrated with toil and fever, died in one of their hospitals.

<sup>2</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Brentwood, N. H.

Captain B., of an Ohio regiment, was brought in fatally wounded; yet he did not so think. He was a rare man, and inspired peculiar respect in all who came into his presence. Every one who approached his part of the ward stepped lightly and spoke low. With his consent I read the twenty-third Psalm and offered a brief prayer. At parting he took my hand and pressed it very warmly; the movement told me that he was either already a Christian, or at least wished to lean upon Christ. A Surgeon told me that he was not a Christian, he thought, though strictly correct in all his outward life.

*The Three  
Letters.*

I saw him several times until I had a reasonable assurance that the grace of God had brought him to know the Saviour. He still expected to recover. One evening the Doctor called me hurriedly, saying the Captain wanted at once to see me. I was soon at his side; the Surgeon had told him that he would scarcely live until morning; he wanted me to write three letters for him. His had been a severe struggle,—that of giving up life with all its prospects, but he could already say, “Thy will be done.” The first letter was to an elder brother; its burden was that, though both had neglected the Christian teachings of their revered grandfather and precious mother, still there was forgiveness with Christ; he hoped that he himself had obtained that forgiveness, and expected soon to meet his loved teachers in heaven. Then came a letter of counsel to a younger brother. I doubt not the “Dear Charlie” will prize it, coming as it did from a dying brother’s heart, as more precious than gold.

Then, with some hesitation, as if too sacred to speak, he gave me the name of her whom he loved above all on earth. He was too weak to dictate now; the tender duty had been put off too long; I must do it for him, as best I could:

“Tell her how much I miss her sweet voice and presence; give my love to her excellent father and mother, and ask her to say that it seems presumption in me to try to comfort such mature and earnest Christians.”

I wrote the letter and read it to him; he was satisfied, adding a wish that he had known me sooner. I read to him the description of heaven in the 7th chapter of the Revelation.

“Yes, that is beautiful,” said he,—“Washed and made white in

the blood of the Lamb.' If it was God's will," he solemnly added, "I would like to live longer,—but His will be done."

Rev. G. C. Noyes<sup>1</sup> adds another incident :

Passing from one cot to another, I came to a man whose hair and beard were gray. I spoke to him, cheerfully :

"Your gray hairs show that you ought to be a soldier of Jesus, but not a soldier of the Government."

He caught first at the imputation in the last part *Complete in* of my remark : *Christ Jesus.*

"I don't think, sir, any man in my regiment has done the Government more faithful service than I. I never lost a day by sickness."

"How old are you?"

"Fifty-two; and my term of three years expires Sept. 12th."

"What is the matter with you now?"

Turning down the counterpane, I saw that his right arm was amputated close to the shoulder, and his right leg close to the knee. He had been shot in the leg before Atlanta on August 7th, and as he was being borne from the field, another ball struck him in the arm.

"Giving an arm and a leg for the country," said he, "is no great gift for one to whom Jesus has given all things. It is a free offering. He will accept the sacrifice; and all the more bless the cause for which it was offered up."

He had walked with the Saviour for many years; and I have never seen such exalted patriotism in combination with such victorious faith in Jesus. Physically a mutilated man, he was yet "complete in Christ Jesus." He was "mustered out" by the death angel on Sept. 7th, five days before his term of service would have expired; and, I doubt not, with all wounds and hurts healed, is now resting at home.

Two incidents from the reminiscences of the General Field Agent may close this chapter and the record of the Atlanta campaign :

A soldier came into our rooms in Nashville to get an envelope.

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of (N. S.) Presbyterian Church, Laporte, Ind.



He said he had a letter to send home for one of his comrades. He drew from his blouse a small package, carefully wrapped, and opening it, held up the scrap of a leaf from a memorandum-book. It had bloody fingerprints on it, and a few words hastily written with a pencil. The writer

*"Father, Meet  
Me in Heaven."*



THE LAST LETTER.

said he was the soldier's "partner." In the charge on Kenesaw Mountain he found him staggering back from the line, the blood streaming from his mouth, and covering his hands and clothes. A minie ball had cut off his tongue at the root. He tried to speak, but could not. Finally, by motions, he made his partner understand his



want,—paper and pencil. A scrap was torn from the diary; and on it the boy, held up by his comrade, with fingers dripping in blood, and trembling in death, wrote—

“Father, meet me in heaven.”

He tried to write his name, but it was too late; life had fled; where the name should have been was a faint, irregular, vanishing line. Thus do the thoughts of our soldiers, waking, dreaming, dying, turn ever homeward.

After we had occupied Atlanta, a Delegate was sent for by a nurse to see a man who was about to die in one of the warehouse hospitals. He found him a young man of Christian education, but struggling with painful doubts as to the truth of the Bible and the way of salvation through Christ. He wanted to believe, but could not. The Delegate had frequent interviews with him, but seemed to make no progress in the attempt to lead him to the Saviour. One night the soldier called the nurse and asked him to set a candle at the foot of the bed, so that the light might strike upon a “Silent Comforter” hanging upon the wall. The leaf that had been turned over for that day bore the verse: “Whoso cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.” In the morning early the soldier again sent for the Delegate and asked him to feel under his pillow for a letter from his mother. It was an affectionate entreaty to her son to accept Christ. As the Delegate read, he came to the words, “Whoso cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.”

“There,” said the sick man, “that’s what I want. I thought mother said that. Read it again.” It was read:

“Mother says that, does she?”

“Yes.”

“And it’s in the Bible too?”

“Yes.”

“Then it must be true. Jesus will receive me. I will come to Him. Here, Lord, I give myself up.”

So far as could be determined from the few days of remaining earthly experience, it was a genuine surrender of the will to its Lord.

## CHAPTER XI.

### *THE EASTERN ARMIES.*

FROM THE INVESTMENT OF PETERSBURG, UNTIL THE CLOSE OF THE WAR.

*June 1864—April 1865.*

THE movements to get into Petersburg before the main body of Lee's army could arrive to defend it, were unsuccessful. Two assaults, on June 16th and 18th, were repulsed with heavy loss; and the most that could be done was to extend the flanks of the army,—on the north, along the James, towards Richmond, and on the south, towards the Weldon railroad. Towards the close of July advantage was taken of Lee's withdrawal of five divisions of his army to the north of the James to meet demonstrations against Fort Darling, to explode a mine in front of Burnside's Corps. A Rebel fort was blown up, but the succeeding assault was a failure. A fortnight later both flanks were again extended. This time Warren took and held the Weldon road. In the close of September and beginning of October, Warren's lines were again extended at the south, and Fort Harrison, an important Confederate defence to the north of the James, was captured by Gen. Butler. This sanguinary campaign closed with the movement of October 27th, in which all the forces that could be spared from the trenches were thrown against the enemy's works cover-

ing Hatcher's Run and the Boydton plank-road. Our forces had the advantage in the fighting, but prudence decided against holding the long, thin line, and by November 1st the army was again about in the position held before the movement.

There was comparative quiet after this, except a permanent extension of the flank to Hatcher's Run in February, 1865, until Lee's attempt in March to cut our army in twain by a well-planned but poorly executed assault on Fort Steedman. Immediately after this began the final movements of Gen. Grant, which resulted, on Sunday, April 2d, in the evacuation of Petersburg and Richmond. One week later the Confederate "Army of Northern Virginia" surrendered.

The incidents of the period covered by these events are of such a character that we shall group them with less regard to the order of their occurrence than we have done in the other chapters. From the account of Rev. E. F. Williams, we take the history of the beginning of the Commission work in its new circumstances:

A station had been established very early in May at Bermuda Hundred, by Mr. J. R. Miller, with a large corps of Delegates. This was for work in Gen. Butler's army. There were two hospitals here, and a number of batteries without Chaplains. At Point of Rocks, four miles up the Appomattox, a hospital was established which remained throughout the war. From Bermuda Hundred, the wounded of Sheridan's cavalry were visited, and large quantities of stores distributed to them. When the Eighteenth Corps went to White House Landing, Mr. Miller and his corps of Delegates accompanied them, establishing there the station which did so much to relieve the wounded.

Delegates and stores reached City Point, June 15th. A station was at once established which existed for more than a year. Here

Delegates reported as they entered the army, and stores were received. Supply-wagons for the front were almost always waiting in front of the warehouse;—in short, this was the Commission's business centre, and so continued until the fall of Richmond. It was a religious centre as well. Chaplains, officers, Surgeons, Stewards, gun-boat Commandants,—all gathered here to ask and to receive.

We shall begin with incidents connected with physical relief. Mr. Ludlow Thomas, of New York City, writing in July from the General Hospital at City Point, says:

I found the boys very anxious to write home. Some had paid as high as *forty cents for a sheet of paper and envelope*. Pens, ink and pencils were scarce, so I cut pencils into halves, and distributed these, telling the boys to write their letters in pencil, and I would ink the directions for them. The first day I directed and mailed over eighty letters. For many of the poor fellows, too badly wounded to hold a pencil, I wrote letters, sitting alongside of them on the ground. Many of the epistles proved to be the last. At first they wanted me to compose the letters for them; but I told them it would be much better to dictate, that such a letter would please their families far more than a stranger's. They knew that everything said would be sacred with me, and most touching were some of those messages home. Not a few of the letter sheets were wet with the tears of the amanuensis.

Where it was possible I always had them sign their own names, and often held up the poor fellows to do it. Once I gave a pencil to a man to sign his name, and seeing that he was rather long about it, I turned to talk to another soldier, so as not to embarrass him. When I came back I saw that the grateful boy's delay was caused by his adding, in a trembling hand—

“This letter was written for me by an angel of the Christian Commission.”

Mr. Walter S. Carter<sup>1</sup> gives an account of relief work

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<sup>1</sup> Of Milwaukee, Wis.

on the extreme right, just after the taking of Fort Harrison :

In company with Rev. Dr. Philip Schaff, <sup>1</sup>Rev. L. E. Charpiot<sup>2</sup> and several others, I left Point of Rocks Hospital on the afternoon of September 30th, for the front of the Army of the James. A large four-horse Commission wagon, loaded down with supplies, accompanied us.

Emerging from the woods into an open field near the James, the rapid discharge of artillery, intermingled with the continuous crash of musketry, apprised us of a renewal of the contest of the day before. We hurried on, arriving at Aiken's Landing about five, crossing the river on the muffled pontoon thrown over by the Eighteenth Corps on Wednesday evening. Pushing on up the Varina road, we soon came across the skirmish line held by the enemy when our forces advanced; and a little further on, another and stronger line, not yet completed. Entering a thick pine wood, night and rain overtook us; ahead of us was a long train of army wagons; behind us the ambulance train; past us every moment dashed horsemen,—some towards the front, others towards the rear; in the woods on either hand our men were kindling fires to dry their clothes and make their coffee. Still along we went, until turning to the right we entered the ample grounds of the Cox mansion, where we found the flying hospital already established. *A Field Hospital.* The yard was full of tents filled with wounded men, —officers of all grades, and privates, Union and Rebel, white and black soldiers. Hundreds had already arrived and more were constantly coming. From every quarter moans of agony and cries for help could be heard, but there were none to answer them. Every soldier who had gone through the two days' terrible conflict unharmed, was standing, that dark, rainy Autumn night, without food or drink, with his face to the foe, in the trenches a mile in advance of us. The Surgeons had prepared their operating-tables, and were already at their awful work.

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<sup>1</sup> Of the German Reformed Church; Secretary of the N. Y. Sabbath Committee.

<sup>2</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Stratford, Conn.

Getting permission of Dr. Richardson, Surgeon in charge, we immediately pitched our tent for work. An adjoining house was sought, a fire built, a large kettle of water put over, and coffee made by the gallon. Condensed milk and sugar were added. With pails filled, and provided with tin cups and lanterns, our seven Delegates went forth on their errand into every tent, until there was not a wounded man who was not abundantly supplied. Boxes were then filled with fresh, soft crackers, and again the circuit of the tents was made, and the men helped to all they would have. Next more coffee was carried round, and after that, in cases where it was thought necessary, Jamaica ginger or brandy was given to the men. Then another visit was made with a supply of shirts and drawers for such as needed them.

"We never expected such treatment as this," said a wounded Rebel to a Delegate.

"Give me your name, so that when the war is over I can come to see you, and thank you better than I can now," said another.

Engaged in such a work, the hours went by unnoticed,—seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve and one were gone before we even tried to sleep. Going into the house, we wrapped our blankets about us, and were scarcely on the floor, when word came that twenty more ambulances loaded with wounded had arrived. We rose at once, and again made all the former rounds of distribution to the sufferers. Making a second attempt to get a little rest, we were hardly asleep when the Surgeon came to inform us that the enemy would probably renew the attack at daylight, and that we were within range of their shells. Immediately we struck our tent, loaded up our supplies again, and by the time the army train was ready to move, our wagon was ready for its place in the line.

The ways in which the men might be helped were almost numberless. Rev. J. Gordon Carnachan,<sup>1</sup> writing in October, tells of one:

Bill D—— was a private in the 91st P. V., a young lad about

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of (O. S.) Presbyterian Church, Troy, Bradford co., Penna.



seventeen, somewhat thoughtless, and, I regret to say, given to card-playing, for which I had several times remonstrated with him, once even threatening to report him if I caught him at it again; for it was an amusement particularly forbidden in the wards of the Fifth Corps Hospital. One day he accosted me—

*A Hundred Dollars for Mother.*

“Say, Chaplain, could you get this changed for me?” handing me a hundred dollar Treasury note with coupons attached.

“Oh yes,” I answered, taking it; “but what do you want change for, Bill?”

“Well, you know a fellow wants something to spend, and *that* is of no use to me as it is.”

“Well, I can get it changed for you,” I said; but his card-playing propensities recurred to me, and willing to have a short talk with him, I sat down on the bed close by. In a roundabout way I got him to talk about his mother, about his younger brother and sisters, about the Sabbath-school he had attended, and about home affairs generally, till I saw he was in a very softened mood. He said at last—

“Well, read that, Chaplain, and tell me if you think there is a better mother in the world than mine.” And he handed me a letter he had but a short time previously received from home. I had Bill just where I wanted him, and handing him back the letter, said—

“I tell you what, Bill, the very best thing you can do with this note” (I had held it in my hand all the time), “is to send it unchanged to this good mother of yours.”

He paused a moment, then slapping his thigh, as if it were a most wonderful, novel idea, exclaimed—

“By thunder, Chaplain, it’s a good thought; send her the note.”

I walked off with Bill’s Treasury note in triumph, satisfied that I had made a hundred dollars for his widowed mother; and with the conviction that Bill, with all his harum-scarum habits, had a streak of real goodness in him.”

Rev. J. M. Lowrie, D. D.,<sup>1</sup> in a narrative of his march in December with the Fifth Corps and the First Divis-

<sup>1</sup> Pastor of First (O. S.) Presbyterian Church, Fort Wayne, Ind.

ion of the Second and Gregg's cavalry, along the line of the Weldon railroad, gives a picture of the Delegates' willingness to share the soldier's hardest lot for the sake of ministering to his comfort :

Denied the privilege of taking wagons, Corps Agent Chase asked for volunteers to go on foot. Mr. E. W. Metcalf,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Lewis Morris,<sup>2</sup> Rev. S. T. Livermore,<sup>3</sup> Rev. I. S. Schilling<sup>4</sup> and myself volunteered.

*A Long March in the Ranks.* We had to carry our own rations and blankets, and march with the men. We were up at three o'clock on the morning of December 7th, and after stowing away our five days' supply of "hard-tack," coffee and bread, were ready to start at five for the headquarters of the 3d division of the ambulance train, with which we were to go forward. The march began along the Jerusalem plank-road, in the midst of a drizzling, cold rain,—only a foretaste however of what was to come. Fifteen miles from camp we reached the Nottaway, where we were detained until dark laying a pontoon bridge. We crossed at last with the first division, and went on five miles further, almost to Sussex C. H., where we camped for the night. We had no tents; so all we could do was to spread some flat fence-rails in front of our fire, put our blankets on top and try to sleep. But to us uninitiated, the soft side of fence-rails was not conducive to rest. At two o'clock in the morning a sudden dash of rain in our faces caused a hasty resurrection from our couch of rails, and before three the bugle note of preparation for the march was sounded. Ere it was light we joined the forward-moving columns. Passing Sussex C. H., we turned to the right, and struck the Weldon road at Jarrett's Station. The work of destruction here began without any serious opposition from the enemy. By the light of the burning railroad we spent our second night, encamped on high ground and exposed to the cold winds. We shivered through the few hours allotted for sleep.

Before light next morning we were again in motion. The troops tore up the track, burned the ties and bent the rails along nearly

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<sup>1</sup> Of Bangor, Me.

<sup>2</sup> Of Brooklyn.

<sup>3</sup> Of Lowville, N. Y.

<sup>4</sup> Of Clarksburg, Va.

twenty miles, to the bridge at Hicksford. Three miles from that place at noon, the main army halted, while the cavalry and one infantry division finished the work of destruction, repelling repeated attacks of the Confederates. By the burning road we camped again on the third night. We put pine brush this time under our blankets to protect ourselves from the wet ground; but soon after we lay down it began to rain. After a while this was turned to sleeting and freezing, so that in the morning we were stiff with ice. We renewed our fire, but it was scarcely any protection against the pitiless storm.

With daylight came the order for our return march. The expedition had been a complete success, and we could at least thoroughly sympathize with the joy and alacrity wherewith the men prepared for the homeward tramp to the comparative comfort of their camps. All day till ten o'clock at night we waded through the mud and wet, making a Sabbath day's journey of twenty-five miles. One of our party gave out on the morning of the last day; another could scarcely drag himself into camp,—where our brethren warmly welcomed us, and were untiring in ministering to our wants.

There were but few men wounded in the expedition, so there was little opportunity for our anticipated work. Yet we had numberless little proofs that our weary mission had not been in vain. Many a word of comfort to tired and desponding men it had been our privilege to drop as we went along at their side. Many we were able to aid materially in other ways. But it was the sight of our sharing with them the dangers and toils of the way which most affected both officers and men, strengthening their confidence in the reality of our ministry, and giving us an authority when we spoke to them again. We had but done our duty, yet the brave boys thought we had done much more.

It is impossible to measure the value of the little words of sympathy which the Delegate could drop as he labored. Rev. N. M. Bailey,<sup>1</sup> writing from New Market Roads in the Army of the James in January, 1865, says:

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of the Meth. Epis. Church, Henniker, N. H.

One day a soldier came into our tent and sat down; said he had come for a little talk. He was in trouble. He went through all the particulars of his case. I said to him at the end—

*A Word of Sympathy.* “My dear fellow, I am very sorry, but we can do nothing for you.”

“I know that;—I know you can’t,” he rejoined; “but I thought a word or two from a Christian man would help me a good deal, even if he told me he couldn’t do anything.”

Rev. H. J. Patrick,<sup>1</sup> ministering to the wounded in February after the extension of our left wing to Hatcher’s Run, tells the story of a hospital quilt:

I came to one bright countenance, that of Jonas Hefele, Co. G., 94th N. Y. He looked up at me smilingly, from beneath a very neat bed quilt. I asked him if he had slept well.

“Oh, yes,” he answered very cheerfully. My eye just then caught sight of a motto on the quilt. I read it and showed it to him: “‘He giveth His beloved sleep.’ Kennebunk, Me., Soldiers’ Aid Society.” What a smile went over his happy face, as he read and re-read it.

“You *must* sleep well with that motto near you,” said I.

“Yes,” said he, “do you know who wrote it?”

It was in a lady’s hand. I told him I did not, but that I knew who wrote the first words; and then I spoke to him of who “the beloved” were, and who it was that gave them sleep. And I could see that he was listening earnestly to every word I said.

How cheerful the brave boys were,—all of them. One I saw looking comically at the bullet-hole through his leg.

“Well,” said he, “that’s a fancy hole. Now,” he continued argumentatively, “that’ll get me a furlough, just what *Cheerfulness.* my wife wants.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, W. Newton, Mass.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. C. E. Bolton, a Delegate in August, 1864, writes: “One day while attending to the wants of wounded Union and Rebel soldiers, huddled together on board the boat ‘*Ida*,’ which stopped at City Point on its way to Fortress Monroe, I listened to the following conversation between two soldiers,—one Union, th :

Another looked up at me, with tears coming out of such glad eyes: "God has been very good to me; I've been thinking of His preserving care."

Rev. Thos. H. Pearne<sup>1</sup> writes of the same battles:

During the night and through the next day we worked, helping the men from and into ambulances, giving them coffee, farina, cordials and words of comfort and cheer. The night was bitterly cold. Some of the wounded remained in the ambulances for ten hours, scantily covered,—some of them with only a single blanket. Three poor fellows died thus, whose wounds were not necessarily fatal. There were about eight hundred in all to be attended to. The men were very demonstrative in their gratitude.

*"God Bliss the  
Likes of Yees."*

An Irishman, whom I had several times assisted, and who was shivering in the bitter cold, inquired of me—

"Are ye a Chaplain?"

"No."

"A Surgeon?"

"No."

"And what be yees, thin?"

"A Delegate of the Christian Commission."

"I don't know much about thin; but I say, God bliss all the likes of yees."

Rev. J. H. Moore<sup>2</sup> illustrates further the ministry of sympathy, in a letter from City Point, in March:

I have no doubt many sick and wounded die in the hospitals from

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other a Rebel. Both had undergone amputation, and the nurses were trying to place the Union soldier on a stretcher; his leg was in such a condition that they were afraid to touch it. The brave fellow laid hold of the stump himself and steadied it, then told them to put him on. The Rebel admiring the courage displayed, said, 'Well, Yank, you're full of pluck, anyhow.' 'Yes, Johnny,' was the Union boy's answer, 'and I calculate to keep full of pluck as long as my leg is four inches longer than yours.'

<sup>1</sup> Member of Portland (Oregon) Quarterly Conference, Meth. Episc. Church.

<sup>2</sup> Minister of Farm Ridge (O. S.) Presbyterian Church, Ill.

sheer want of sympathy. I called one day, for the first time, on a soldier who had been sick for several weeks with chronic diarrhoea.

*Making him Smile.* He did not know that he was any better; had not written to his friends, indeed was not able to write himself; did not want any one to write for him; did not care even that his friends should know he was in the hospital. He had scarcely any appetite; did not get anything he cared to eat. All this I drew from him by point blank questions, for he was too despondent even to converse. I asked him to think of something he would like to eat:

"I don't know of anything," was the lugubrious answer. I tempted him with the Commission "bill of fare," dwelling in a luscious, cookery-book kind of way, over the several articles. A smile,—very awkward it was, for the requisite muscles were indignant with disuse,—came into his face at last:

"I think I could eat some canned peaches, if I had them."

How the poor boy relished them, when they were brought! Afterwards, as often as I entered the tent, he always greeted me with a smile, and was very ready to converse.

The army was pretty generally paid towards the close of February. Access to the express offices was almost impossible for the immense majority of the men. The Commission undertook to carry to the offices what the soldiers wished to send home, and return express receipts to the men.<sup>1</sup> In the middle of March, when marching orders were received, another service, it was found, could be rendered to the men; this was expressing home the

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<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to give full statistics of this work. It was very tiresome while it lasted, often keeping a "receiver" at each station busy from early morning until eight o'clock in the evening; after this the invoices had all to be made out. An idea of the magnitude of the transactions may be got from the reports of several stations;—At City Point Hospital during seven weeks of March and April, \$288,000 were thus received. From Sheridan's Cavalry, in one day, at Hancock Station, \$30,000. In a division of the Fifth Corps, over \$55,000. The amounts were mostly small, ranging usually from \$10 to \$50, though there were many sums exceeding these.



Winter and extra clothing, &c., which they would not need in the prospective campaign.<sup>1</sup> Rev. Dr. Robert Patterson recalls an incident connected with this work :

Riding up to a prominent pine tree pole from which the stars and stripes swung out, I discovered a large chapel and tent. I should have supposed myself at an express office, if there had not been evidence to the contrary. Scores of soldiers, with all manner of bundles, gum blankets and other gear, packed up in candle and cracker boxes, in old shirts, handkerchiefs and towels—in everything capable of containing clothing, were crowding round the door of a large square tent with marquee roof, bearing a flag marked "Quinnipiac Tabernacle."<sup>2</sup> It was seated with rough lumber, church-fashion, and contained several wagon loads of parcels like those which were being received outside. Light marching orders had come; the men must leave behind overcoats, blankets, and all surplus baggage. Where should they leave them? The government made no provision for taking them to the rear; in a few hours out of all that camp there would not be even a guard left. They knew that the Christian Commission could do almost anything, so they came and asked if it would not express their clothing home to their families. Gen. Warren was anxious that this disposition of the articles might be made if possible. So from this one station went over \$40,000 worth of clothing. Remarking to one of the men who was waiting his turn, that I didn't hear as much swearing as formerly :

"No, Chaplain," said he, "there ain't half the cussin' there was. But if you were down at our camp when the boys was packing up, you'd have heard a power of God blessin' the Christian Commission for this here job."

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<sup>1</sup> At City Point Hospital, during March and part of April, 3204 packages of various kinds were thus forwarded. At a station in the Fifth Corps, the value of the clothing committed to the Commission was nearly \$90,000. This property would have been almost certainly a dead loss to the men, if it had not been thus collected ere their march began.

<sup>2</sup> "Quinnipiac" was the old Indian name of New Haven, Conn. The chapel was purchased with funds from friends of the Commission in that city.

The value of the work of temporal relief was most obvious during the hot months of 1864, among the men *in the trenches*. Not only was there great liability to casualty here, but the extraordinary hardships brought on sickness. The dreary sameness of the service also did much to dispirit the troops assigned to it. The Commission labored hard to supply the men with proper diet,—especially fresh vegetables, and took care of very many wounded. The materials for letter writing were distributed extensively.

The graphic narrative of “Carleton,”<sup>1</sup> concerning this work at the extreme front, presents a fair picture of what was to be done and how it was done :

The day was hot, dry, dusty and sultry. The sun shone from a brazen sky. The grass and shrubs were scorched and withered and powdered with the dust, which rose in clouds from every passing wagon. There was not air enough to stir the aspens, *At the Front.* or shake the long, lithe spires of the pines. The birds of the forest sought the deepest shade, and lolled and panted in the heat. It was hard even for men in robust health to breathe. They picked out the coolest places and gave themselves up to the languor of the hour. It required an earnest effort to do anything. And yet through this blazing day men sat crouched in the trenches from morning till night, or lay in their shallow rifle pits, watching the enemy, parched, broiled, burned, not daring to raise their heads or lift their hands. To do so was death.

The hospital tents, though pitched in the woods, were like ovens, absorbing and holding the heat poured from a cloudless sky. Then, upon the ground lay the sick and wounded, fevered and sore, with life at ebb tide, with energies exhausted, perspiration oozing from the faces, nerves quivering and trembling with fever, pulses faint and feeble. Their beds were boughs of pine. They lay as they came

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<sup>1</sup> In a letter to the *Congregationalist*, July 29th, 1864.

from the battle-field, wearing their soiled, torn and bloody garments of army blue. Millions of flies buzzed around.

The Surgeons in charge were kind-hearted and attentive. They used all means in their power to make the patients comfortable. This was the place where the sick were to regain health, or from which they were to be removed to the General Hospital. They were far from home and friends. There was nothing to cheer them—nothing to stimulate. Hope was dying out, and despondency setting in, with memory summoning the dear old times, and revealing by contrast a dark and gloomy future.

It was the Sabbath day, and there were many among the suffering hundreds who had revered the day at home. It was a day of rest—of cessation from toil and care. Its return recalled their former Sabbaths—the still hours, the pealing of church bells, the grand and solemn music of the organ, or the hum of children's voices in the Sabbath-school. Is it a wonder that they had longings for home, or that the future was gloomy?

The day was wearing away. There was no cloud curtain in the sky to shut out the sun, but the brazen dome glowed with steady heat. The Christian Commission tent had been besieged all day by parched and fevered soldiers, who wanted onions, pickles, lemons, oranges—anything sour—anything to tempt the taste. There was a box of oranges which had been brought from City Point the night before. It was suggested that they be distributed at once to the sick and wounded. "Certainly, by all means," was the unanimous voice of the Commission. I volunteered to be the distributor.

Go with me through the tents where the sufferers are. Some are lying down, with closed eyes, with pale faces and sunken cheeks. The paleness underlies the bronze which the sun has cast upon them. They breathe languidly. Some are half reclined, leaning on their elbows, bolstered by their knapsacks, looking into vacancy—seeing, perhaps, the old home, and wondering if they will ever again cross its threshold. Some are reading the papers which the Delegates of the Commission have distributed. There are some who have but one leg. There is the stump of a thigh, or an arm, with the lightest possible dressing to keep down the fever. Yesterday those men stood in the trenches confronting the enemy, in the full tide of life. Now

they are wrecks, floating out into the unknown future, with wife and children, or parents dependent on them.

As we enter the tent they catch a sight of the golden fruit. There is a commotion. Those half asleep rub their eyes. Those half reclining sit up straight. Those lying with their backs towards us turn over to see what is going on. Those so feeble that they cannot turn ask what is the matter. They gaze at the apples of Paradise. How their eyes gleam! Not one of them asks for an orange! They wait. Through military discipline, through unparalleled suffering, they have learned to be patient—to wait—to endure—to remain in suspense—to stand still and be torn to pieces! They are heroes!

“Would you like an orange, sir?”

“Thank you.”

It is all he can say. He is lying upon his back. A minie bullet has passed through his body, and he cannot be moved. He has a noble brow—a manly countenance. Tears moisten his eyes and roll down his sunken cheeks, as he takes the orange from my hand:

“It is a gift of the Christian Commission, and I accept your thanks for those who made the contribution.”

“Bully for the Christian Commission!” shouted a wide-awake, jolly soldier near by, with an ugly wound in his left arm.

“Thank you,” “God bless the Commission,” “I say, Bill, arn’t they bully?” are the expressions which I hear behind me.

In one of the wards I came upon a soldier who had lost his leg the day before. He was lying upon his side. He was robust, healthy, strong and brave. The hours dragged heavily. He did not see me till I stood before him—and not even then. He was stabbing his knife into a chip with a nervous energy, as if he was in imagination bayoneting a Rebel—trying to forget the pain—trying to bridge over the lonely hours and shut the gloom out of the future. I touched his elbow. He looked up:

“Would you like an orange?”

“By jingo! that is worth a hundred dollars!”

He grasped it as a drowning man clutches a chip, as if to lose a thousandth part of a second he would miss the prize.

“Where did this come from?”

“The Christian Commission had a box arrive last night.”





“THAT’S WORTH A HUNDRED DOLLARS.” Page 310.





"The Christian Commission? My wife belongs to that. She wrote to me about it last week, that they met to make shirts for it."

"Then you have a wife?"

"Yes, sir, and three children."

His voice faltered. Ah! the soldier never forgets his home. He dashed away a tear, took in a long breath, and was strong again.

"Where do you hail from, soldier?"

"From old Massachusetts. I had a snug little home upon the banks of the Connecticut, but I told my wife that I didn't feel just right to stay there when I was needed out here, and so I came, and here I am. I shall write home and tell Mary about the Christian Commission. I have been wishing all day that I had an orange; I knew it was no use to wish. I didn't suppose there was one in camp; besides, here I am, not able to move a peg. I thank you, sir, for bringing it. I shall tell my wife all about it."

It was worth a hundred dollars to see him suck the juice—every drop, as if it was as precious as life itself. But enough. It was one of the happiest hours of my life—that passed in the distribution of those oranges—not that I was the almoner, but because of the exhibition of spontaneous, unmixed, heartfelt gratitude, not towards me, but to the friends far away.

Another narrative, from the pen of Delegate C. H. Richards,<sup>1</sup> continues the story of the same work:

We pass by regiments and batteries, by sentinels who look curiously at us, by the headquarters of officers of all grades and ranks, through field and grove, till we come to the covered wagon-road leading to the outer lines. Through this passage-way, which was channeled out that ammunition and supplies might be safely taken to the batteries in front, *Getting to the Fort.* we may pass without risk of life or limb. Following the devious windings, we find ourselves suddenly in a fort or earthwork, made of gabions and fascines, strengthened and cemented by an abundance of the "sacred soil," while numerous sand-bags crown the parapet. If you will look out through this embrasure you will see that we have

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<sup>1</sup> Of Andover Theological Seminary, Mass. The narrative is from letters published in the *Sunday School Times*.

no further to go. For just beyond are our abattis, and then a thin picket line, and then the disputed territory into which a man may not advance a rod without paying dearly for it. But somebody is plucking you by the sleeve. Looking round, you find that several soldiers have gathered about you :

"Can you spare me one of those papers?"

"Of course I can, my good fellow; I brought them down on purpose for you."

*Distributing Reading.* "And I should like one too," says another. "And I." "And I," echo all the rest.

By this time they have discovered to the right and left of you along the lines that something is going on up in the fort. They look, and wonder what it can be.

"I guess it's the Christian Commission man," says one, and straightway they begin to troop towards us. They cluster about us like bees about a honey pot. Their faces are eager, and their hands are stretched out towards you like a unanimous vote of welcome:

"Something good to read? Well, that's just what we want! I'll take a paper if you can spare it."

"There's the dear old *Messenger!* That looks like home. I'd like one of those."

"A *Flag* paper for me," says another.

"Can you give me a Baptist paper? I used to be a Baptist when I was at home," says a gray-headed man, looking at the *Examiner* through his iron-bound spectacles.

"I'll take one of those *Methodists,*" says another.

"Well, I don't care what kind you give me, provided I can only get *something* good to read," responded still another. And so they clamor pleasantly about you, and stretch out their hands so eagerly for your papers and little books, that you are almost bewildered in your endeavors to satisfy them all. The men are hungry, positively hungry, for reading. We make our way gradually to the edge of the group, sending out a word of cheer and encouragement here and there, thinking to pass further down the lines, towards the Ninth Corps. But before we are fairly out of the circle, a soldier says—

"You haven't got a Testament to give away, have you? I lost mine in the fight at Cold Harbor, and I haven't had one since. I

can't stand it much longer without one, for a soldier ain't more than half equipped without a Testament."

"Of course you shall have one, my dear sir, and may God help you to live by its teachings."

"I should like one, too; mine was lost at Spottsylvania," says another.

"One for me, too," echoes a third, till half of them are crowding about again, all wanting Testaments. Perhaps my experience is unusual, but it is noteworthy that I have hardly ever met a private soldier in the army, whatever his character might be, who, if he had no Testament, did not want one. It is a striking evidence of the strength of religious conviction, even in the hearts of those who are apparently thoughtless and careless about their most important interests, and is another proof that the deepest instincts of man's nature crave comfort and strength from above.

Once more we make an attempt to pass down the lines, when we are again arrested by a voice :

"Chaplain, have you any letter paper and envelopes? I haven't been able to write home for a long time, because I haven't had anything to write with. If you could only give me a little, they will bless you for it up there."

"Here it is, and now write a good, sweet letter to *Writing Home.*  
the wife and little ones."

"That's what I'll do," he says, and his eyes grow misty as he takes it gratefully. Again the crowd gathers around us, and every one must have a sheet of paper and an envelope. We are linking the chain that binds the soldier to his home.

Again we start, and this time we are fairly off. We must stoop low and walk cautiously now, or we shall get a headache from over the way. There are not so many men to be seen as in the fort yonder, and those that we see are snugly ensconced in little pits, which they have scooped out for themselves, and from which it would not be safe to venture far. A head or a hand exposed above the ramparts here is a mark for a dozen sharpshooters in the works opposite. They cannot well flock to us, but we will creep carefully to them. Here is a good-natured-looking boy beckoning for a paper. Of course he gets it. "Zip" goes a minie ball over our heads, and buries itself with a "thug" in a bank near by.

“Chaplain,” says the soldier, “did you ever play a game of base ball when you were a boy?”

“Yes, to be sure; but what of that?”

*Playing Base Ball.* “Well, you know when you catch the ball, then you’re in. But when you catch one of these fellows, you’re out,” and he smiled at his own grim joke. But such a joke serves a good purpose as a text to preach from. He readily tells us of the deaths that occur here day after day, of the friends and messmates he has lost while he has escaped their fate, of the peril he daily passes through. He tells you frankly, of the solemn thoughts of death and eternity that fill his mind in these scenes, of the need he feels of having some firm, sure hope on which to rely, of the longing he has felt to be a Christian. And then how precious is the privilege, and how easy and delightful the task to direct him to the Saviour, who is reaching out His arms of welcome to him.

It is hard to select the few incidents which must serve as representatives of the soldier’s courage and sacrifice during the period covered by the chapter. Rev. Geo. Duffield, Jr.,<sup>1</sup> a Delegate during June and July, 1864, tells the following:

W. F. Clark, a private in Kautz’s Cavalry Brigade, was taken prisoner, with two others, on July 2d. While the Rebels were scouring the woods for other prisoners, the guards who had Clark and his companions in charge, without a word of previous explanation, ordered them to march in front of them. They blew out the brains of the first one; then of the second; and then poured a volley into Clark, leaving him as good as dead, with one bullet and nine buckshot in him. He remained where he fell until about four o’clock the next morning, when, coming to himself, his first thought was of a stream of water he had passed on the other side of the field. Crawling as best he could to the stream, he rolled into it to conceal himself, covering every

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 180. The two incidents were originally published in the *Detroit Advertiser and Tribune*.

part of him but his nostrils when he heard any one approaching. That night a poor old worn-out horse came down to the stream to get a drink. By this time having rallied a little strength, he got up and caught the horse, made a bridle for him out of a pair of suspenders, and in that condition rode eight miles before daylight into our lines. There they put him into an ambulance and brought him to the Post Hospital at Bermuda Hundred, where Dr. Spees, of Dayton, Ohio, and I, saw him and heard his story from his own lips. When I last saw him, seven of the shot had been extracted; the three others he did not think would give him much trouble. He had no idea, he said, of dying after being shot in such a mean way. He wasn't much in the Rebels' debt, anyhow, and once he was able to get on his horse again, he would soon wipe out old scores.

On the steamboat from Detroit to Cleveland, I noticed an officer whose straps indicated him to be a Colonel.<sup>1</sup> Evidently he was suffering from a severe wound, but of its nature I had little conception until I met him a second time, on the steamer going down the Potomac, and at his request, by virtue of *The Shortened Leave of Absence.* my Christian Commission badge, dressed it for him.

It was received in one of the battles of the Wilderness. The ball striking him sideways, had entered and passed through the neck and shoulder, carrying away some very decided splinters from the vertebral column. At first the shock was so great that he was completely paralyzed—and when he received his leave, it was with very little hope of ever again being able to return to the field. But the nervous shock proved only temporary; his vigorous constitution speedily began to rally, and his heart to fret at the thought of his men not having any officer higher than Second Lieutenant (if I remember rightly) to look after them, and care for their wants. He thought he could more easily bear the pain and distress of the wound on the field than the worry at home about his men, and so off he started to the front, where the weather was the hottest, with a leave of absence of thirty days in his pocket, and a wound that was good on presentation to a Surgeon for thirty days more.

Rev. E. F. Williams tells an incident of the attack upon the Weldon road in October:

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<sup>1</sup> Col. Pulford, commanding the 5th Michigan Regiment.

All the officers of a company engaged in the fighting had been either killed or wounded. The Sergeant, upon whom devolved the command, was frightened, and the line began to waver. A Corporal instantly snatched the colors, stepped to the front and led the men to victory. A Brigadier near by noticed the occurrence and sent for the Corporal after the fight, to learn his name,—much to the brave man's discomposure, for he was afraid he had somehow subjected himself to military discipline. The officer took him to the Major-General commanding the Corps, and related the circumstances, the poor Corporal meanwhile wishing himself well out of the scrape. After a little private conference, the two Generals came forward and pinned a Captain's straps upon the Corporal's shoulders, sending him back to command the company. Before night there was another charge upon the enemy's position: the newly-made Captain, while gallantly leading his men, was shot through the heart.

Rev. J. H. Knowles<sup>1</sup> was just leaving the army before Petersburg in June, 1864, at the close of his term of service, when this incident occurred:

A soldier had been brought in on a stretcher and placed under the shade of a green tree. He was shot through the mouth; his tongue was cut and he could not speak; the Surgeon said he must die. On a card he wrote his desire to see a Delegate of the Christian Commission; they summoned me. As I approached him, he again made signs for pencil and paper and wrote—

*"Rally Round  
the Flag, Boys."*

On a card he wrote his desire to see a Delegate of the Christian Commission; they summoned me. As I approached him, he again made signs for pencil and paper and wrote—

"I am a Christian, prepared to die;" then after looking about him upon the soldiers near, he added another line:

"Rally round the flag, boys, rally round the flag."

I took the paper, and with such composure as I could command, read it aloud to his comrades. As I read, the dying man, speaking only with his animated face, raised his bloody hand over his head and waved it, as Marmion shook his sword, with all the enthusiasm of the charge; and then quietly, while every eye brimmed with

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<sup>1</sup> Member of Genesee Conference, Meth. Epis. Church.



quickly-gathered tears, went away out of the midst of the company into the City of Peace.

Rev. F. P. Monfort writes from City Point Hospital in June :

Daniel McKenna, an Indian chief of the Atawa tribe, from Bear Creek, Mich., a sharpshooter of the 1st Mich. Regiment, lay in one of our wards mortally wounded. While life was ebbing away, I questioned him through an interpreter, but could get no reply till I inquired if he had ever seen a missionary. At this he opened his eyes, and smilingly nodded assent, saying in his broken way—

*The Dying  
Indian Chief.*

“Mishnare—mishnare—umph—good.”

He seldom spoke or noticed anything, but now he seemed to be pleased, and roused up :

“Ask him,” said I, “if he likes the missionaries?”

The interpreter did so, and communicated the reply :

“He says, ‘Yes, he likes them first-rate; they are very good men; they teach schools and preach. I am the chief, and I am the man that sees to the house, and makes the appointments for them.’”

“Does he know Jesus Christ is a Saviour?”

“He says ‘Yes; Jesus Christ is his Saviour.’”

“Does he love Christ?”

“He says ‘Yes, he loves Him with all his heart.’”

“Does he ever pray?”

“Yes, he has been praying to God through Jesus Christ ever since he was wounded.”

“Ask him if he is prepared to die?”

“He says ‘Yes, if God calls him to heaven he will go with Him over there.’”

“Carleton”<sup>1</sup> tells the story of the last hours of Edward M. Schneider,<sup>2</sup> of the 57th Mass. :

He was slightly wounded on the North Anna, and was sent to

<sup>1</sup> In a letter to the *Boston Journal*, in June.

<sup>2</sup> Son of Rev. Dr. Benjamin Schneider, Missionary of the American Board at Aintab, Central Turkey.

Port Royal for transportation to Washington, but, of his own accord, returned to his regiment, joining it at Cold Harbor. While preparing for the charge upon the enemy's works on the 17th, beyond the Dunn House, he said to the Chaplain, "I intend to be the first one to enter their works."

*"Stand by the  
Flag and the  
Cross."*

The charge was made. How grandly they moved through the woods! How quickly they swept up to the Rebel line of defensive works, like an ocean billow upon a breakwater, rolling over it, engulfing all beyond! The brave young soldier tried to make good his words. With eager feet he led the advance, breaking out from the line and keeping a rod or two in front.

He was almost there—not quite—almost near enough to feel the hot flash of the Rebel musketry in his face—near enough to be covered with the sulphurous cloud from the cannon—when he fell, shot through the body.

He was carried to the hospital, with six hundred and fifty of his division comrades. He lay all night with his wounds undressed, waiting his turn. There was not a murmur from his lips. The Chaplain looked at his wound:

"What do you think of it?"

Seeing that it was mortal, he could not articulate a reply; neither could he restrain his tears. He remembered the last injunction of the young soldier's older sister—"I commit him to your care." The young hero interpreted the meaning of the tear—that his wound was mortal.

"Do not weep," he said; "it is God's will. I wish you to write to my father and tell him that *I have tried to do my duty to my country and to God.*"

He disposed of his effects, giving \$10 to the Christian Commission, \$20 to the American Board, and trifles to his friends. Then, in the simplicity of his heart, he said—

"I have a good many friends, schoolmates and companions. They will want to know where I am—how I am getting on. You can let them know I am gone, and that I die content. And, Chaplain, the boys in the regiment—I want you to tell them *to stand by the dear old flag!* And there is my brother in the navy—write to him and tell him to *stand by the flag and cling to the cross of Christ!*"

The Surgeon came and examined the wound.

"It is my duty to tell you that you will soon go home," he said.

"Yes, Doctor, I am going home. I am not afraid to die. I don't know how the valley will be when I get to it, but it is all bright now." Then gathering up his waning strength, he repeated the verse often sung by the soldiers, who, amid all the whirl and excitement of the camp and battle-field, never forget those whom they have left behind them—mother, sister, father, brother. Calmly, clearly, distinctly, he repeated the lines,—the chorus of the song—

"Soon with angels I'll be marching,  
With bright laurels on my brow ;  
I have for my country fallen :  
Who will care for sister now ?"

The night wore away. Death came on apace. He suffered intense pain, but not a murmur escaped his lips. Sabbath morning came, and with the coming of the light he passed away.

From a public address by Rev. Robt. J. Parvin we take an incident illustrating the Christian loyalty and sacrifice which could fill a mother's heart when she heard of the death of her only son :

In June, while the stores were being opened at our base of supplies, City Point, a small square box was found to contain such a variety of very nice delicacies that I inferred they were not intended for general distribution. My suspicion was confirmed when we reached the bottom and found that the box had been opened at the wrong end. Pinned on the top of a large cake was a note—

*A Mother's  
Faith.*

"If any one opens this box, except the person it is intended for, will they please regard the wish and anxiety of a mother, who greatly desires to comfort and help her dear child, and close it again, and send it to him if possible? She has done a great deal for others during the war ; she wants also to relieve her own son. His address is Maj. C. E. P——, 118th N. Y. Regt., 2d Brig., 1st Div., Eighteenth Corps."

Grieved at our mistake, I undertook to remedy it as well as I

could. Carefully returning the articles to the box, I wrote to Major P——, telling him where to send for it. In the course of an hour, the messenger returned with the Chaplain of the 118th, who, on entering the tent, said—

“Major P—— was shot dead at the head of his regiment a few days ago.”

The date of his death was that of his mother's letter. The contents of the box were handed to the Chaplain. I wrote to Mrs. P——, stating the sad intelligence, telling about the box, and asking permission to retain the letter written to her son. Here are some of the words of it :

“I have always, as you know, my dear son, felt that you were in the right place, and been thankful that you felt it your duty to serve your country; but, I confess, my patriotism is sometimes scarcely equal to this long—long trial. Your danger is now quite as great from another source as from the war. O Charley dear, seek God's counsel, and if He makes you feel it *duty* to remain, then He will take care of you, or prepare you for His will.”

Within a few days came the mother's answer to my letter, granting my wish to keep the communication found in the box, and breathing throughout a spirit of noblest Christian heroism :

“A——, *July 8th, 1864.*

“REV. ROBERT J. PARVIN : DEAR SIR :—Your kind letter is received, and opens anew the floodgates of a sorrow so deep that only He who permitted it to fall can give me strength and composure to reply. \* \* \* \* I had come, almost insensibly to myself, to feel a sort of security that God would not take my precious child from me, but would permit him to return and be my staff and comfort in the later days of my weary pilgrimage. But Infinite Wisdom saw that this was not best, either for him or his mother. God had prepared some better thing for him than the comforts and luxuries and affections of our earthly home. ‘Even so, Father, for thus it seemeth good in Thy sight.’ \* \* \* \*”

“I had sent a box previously, which, owing to purely providential circumstances, was lost in the multitude. Then I thought, God will use that to comfort some other poor sufferer, and has intended it as a test of my trust in Him. So I prepared and sent a second, to prove

to my own heart that I *would* trust, though God did see fit to disappoint me. That second box was sent the day after my darling child passed away into eternity. \* \* \* \* \* And, now, what can I say to this? Is God untrue, and is my faith vain, and shall I cease to trust Him? Oh, blessed be His name. He does not permit my mind to indulge such thoughts! No, though the clouds that gather around Him be as dark as midnight,—though not one ray of light can be seen, I will cling to Him still, I will trust Him yet. He is His own interpreter, and in His own time and way will make it all plain. While He gives me the confidence that my child is safe in glory, where he shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more, where the sun shall not light on him nor any heat,—I am satisfied. I will be patient; and I will now give all that earnest desire I had for the temporal and spiritual good of my own dear child, to *all* the poor sufferers, many of whom have no mother to bleed and labor for them. I will see a son or a brother in every noble defender of my home and of my country's honor. \* \* \* \* \*

MARY P——.”

And most thoroughly was the resolve carried out.

Rev. W. G. Taylor,<sup>1</sup> writing in July, tells a story of Christ's nearness to His children :

I went into a tent at the General Hospital, and there lay a beautiful drummer-boy, sixteen years old, burning up with fever. I asked him where his home was :

“In Massachusetts, sir.”

“*Jesus is*

“Are you not lonely here, far from father and mother and friends, and so sick?”

*Here.*”

“Oh, no,” was his answer; “how could I be lonely, *when Jesus is here?*”

The smile that lit his deep blue eye, and played for a moment over his fevered lips, as he uttered the words, will never cease to be the sweetest and freshest picture in my memory. My companion asked him—

“How long is it since you loved Jesus?”

“So long that I cannot remember when I did not love Him.”

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Mount Carmel (O. S.) Presbyterian Church, Penna.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE EASTERN ARMIES.

FROM THE INVESTMENT OF PETERSBURG UNTIL THE CLOSE OF THE WAR.

(Continued.)

June 1864—April 1865.

It was the soldier's deep trust in God which best prepared him for sacrifice. Rev. Abel Wood<sup>1</sup> writes of an interview between Henry C. Smith, 8th Mich. Regiment, and his Chaplain :

The soldier had had his left arm amputated, but his life could not be saved. Towards evening of July 30th he sent for his Chaplain and asked him to pray once more with him. The Chaplain inquired as to his trust in Jesus. The man answered clearly and earnestly.

*Dying that the  
Land might be  
Righteous.*

"Have you no home messages?" the Chaplain asked.

"No, that's all done."

"You have been a brave soldier and done your duty; now if you can trust the Great Captain of your salvation, all is well."

"All is well, Chaplain," the soldier answered. Prayer was offered, after which the two bade each other farewell.

A little after midnight, as the Sabbath began, the man commenced praying in a clear, strong voice; first fervently committing his own soul to Christ, then offering a petition for the President and the country, and finally asking that his own death might contribute something to the establishment of a righteous peace. With this prayer, scarce escaped from his lips, he expired.

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<sup>1</sup> Professor in Kimball Union Academy, Meriden, N. H.



In August Mr. C. H. Richards relates an incident which shows the power for good of a consistent, manly life before God :

An interesting boy from one of the Middle States joined the army in Virginia. He soon fell in with the most wicked man of the regiment, who seemed to make it his chief delight to lead the youth into lower and lower depths of vice. Fascinated by his companion, the young soldier went to such extremes of wickedness as would have shocked him beyond measure before leaving home. At last his attention was drawn to a pious German in the regiment. He had never spoken with him about religion, but he saw him constantly reading his Bible with apparent pleasure; he heard his voice often in prayer; there was a cheerfulness in his face, the index of an abiding joy in his heart; his faithfulness in every duty was manifest, and his courage was calm and deep in the face of danger. Somehow he could not keep from watching the old man, and believing that there was a reality about this religion, which made the Christian the happiest man in the regiment. Each day the new fascination grew. At length, after a campaign of more than ordinary peril, he went to the old German and asked him how it was that he was always so happy. He was told that trust in Christ was the secret, and assured that if he would but give himself away to Him, the same joy would fill his soul. At once deserting his profligate companion, he determined to follow the advice of his new friend. God gave him His promised faith and joy, and he too began to live his religion in his life; so there were two lights in that one regiment, shining before men; others were attracted as the youth had been; and so the influence went out and on, until God only can tell the blessed result. It was not the "tongues of men or of angels" that preached Christ here, but the devoted and surrendered lives of humble followers of Him who came to do, not His own will, but the will of the Father that sent Him.

*Living it into  
Them.*

On the night of August 17th there had been some fighting with the Rebel cavalry on the left. Some of our men were surrounded and had to cut their way back

with severe loss. Among the wounded was Sergeant W. H. Boston, of St. Albans, Vt. Rev. Chas. L. Nichols,<sup>1</sup> who ministered to him, writes :

I went through the little flying hospital, and found one man deeply anxious about a comrade whom he had seen fall from his horse. I went as soon as I could to the scene of action to search for the missing soldier, whose name was Boston. I found that he had crawled a short distance from where he fell. He was shot through the lungs, and death was approaching. "Water," was his first word. I gave him a taste of punch, but he wanted water; finding a cup lost by a soldier in the fray, I gave him a drink. When I had washed his face and wounds he desired me to turn him. I did so. He smiled and asked me to sit down :

"Sha'n't I go first and get some help to remove you?"

He smiled again, and answered—

"Before you could come back I should be removed up there," pointing upwards with his finger. He dictated a most loving letter to his wife, and another to his mother. We talked a few minutes, when he asked me to raise him up. I did so. Without a groan or struggle he almost immediately passed away.

Contrasting sadly with this triumphant death-record, is an incident related by Rev. Chas. Cutler :<sup>2</sup>

While I was working at Cavalry Hospital, City Point, in September, a young man was brought in, who was shot in the neck and completely paralyzed. I spoke to him of preparation for death.

"I might as well own up," said he; "I'm not prepared; I've lived a bad life and been a great trouble to my mother. I've got no religion, and I don't want any. I won't burn out my candle now, and throw the snuff in God Almighty's face. I'll die as I've lived. It's honest."

I argued with him, plead the promises, entreated him,—but all to no purpose :

<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Princeton, Me.

<sup>2</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Frankestown, N. H.

“I deserve no mercy; I sha’n’t ask for any. I’ve never prayed; I’m not going to do so now,”

Shortly he began to recover the use of his limbs, and it seemed likely that he would get better. But he always turned away when I approached, and was unwilling to converse. I was obliged to leave the army without seeing any impression made upon him.

Rev. Frank F. Jewell<sup>1</sup> writes in October :

In one ward of the General Hospital at City Point there were three conversions. One of these was that of a member of the 111th N. Y., who, before his entrance into the army, had been a great wanderer. Disabled in the Wilderness, he was permitted to go home on a furlough of a few weeks. When about to return, his little boy of seven years caught him by the knee, and said—

*“Who’ll be my Pa?”*

“Pa, when will you come back?”

The father replied, “I don’t know, my son, whether I shall ever come back.”

“Well,” said the child, “who will be my pa if you don’t come back?”

The question rooted itself in that father’s mind; amid the excitement of battle-scenes he had not forgotten the parting words of his little boy. And when I came to sit down by his side, and urge him to attend to his salvation, the work seemed to be already begun. He at once made up his mind to seek Christ. The next time I met him, he was writing a letter to his wife, in which he said to her—

“I know now how to answer little Henry’s question. Tell him the Saviour will be his pa, if I don’t come back.”

Here is a sad little picture of disappointment, from the pen of Rev. D. Hoyt Blake:<sup>2</sup>

“George” was a fine-appearing soldier from Jersey City. Before I left, I was called to accompany him to the last resting place; and then into my hands were put his letters and two well-worn pictures

<sup>1</sup> Pastor Meth. Epis. Church, Adams, N. Y.

<sup>2</sup> Of Brooklyn, N. Y.

*George's Fur-  
lough.*

of his wife and mother. Looking over his wife's last letter, to find an address to which to forward the relics, I came upon these words—

“Willie and I, Mary and the baby, will be standing at the corner of — street, looking for you, when the cars come in. Do come soon, George; it does seem as if I could not wait.”

Poor, loving, anxious one! What if my letter with the death news should find her waiting with Willie and Mary and baby at the corner!

Mr. John Patterson recalls an incident of his experience during several visits to the hospital at Point of Rocks:

“Point of Rocks” is a very appropriate name for a place on the Appomattox, a little above Bermuda Hundred. For miles around there are no “rocks” worthy of the name; but here two or three enormous boulders stick in the face of a precipice, which rises two or three hundred feet above the river. Near by, on the table above the rocks, is a famous oak, said to be the very tree under which Pocahontas saved the life of Captain Smith. Far to the south-west are the spires of Petersburg; to the south-east is City Point; to the north, Richmond. Three hundred yards from the tree is the Military Hospital, and not far off, the cheerless cemetery. Below, across the sluggish stream, stretches the pontoon bridge, crowded at both ends with soldiers passing from right to left of the grand army. There was enough within sight to meditate upon; more than enough to make one sad, and blot the view on every hand with gathering tears.

It was here I met my soldier-friend, James Anderson, a youth of twenty years. His eyes still retained more than a memory of their once cheerful glance; but the fallen cheeks and the hectic flush marked a sure decline. There was so much that was manly and beautiful about him that his condition excited my deepest sympathy. I found him, one October evening, resting on the grass by the old oak, enjoying the cool, grateful air after the heat of the day. The sun was sinking into the west, bequeathing a glory as it departed to every exposed leaf of the sleepy trees, to the sails and masts and

cordage of the transports that lay upon the James, and cast their shadowy arms far away into the distance, where there was no day. The steamboat bells and the softened noise of the whistles came to us over the long water-reach between, to mingle with the nearer music of the regimental bands. It would have been pleasant to have given oneself up to the scene, but the spell was ever broken by the far-off booming of the Union guns, untiringly pouring their shot into the Confederate defences of Petersburg, and one shuddered as the dim outline of the cemetery and hospital could be still discerned. I turned to the soldier, and asked him if he was sick or wounded :

“I am both sick and wounded, sir.”

“Hard enough,” said I, taking my seat beside him.

“A ball passed through my body near my left lung. My Doctor thinks I will recover.”

“That’s encouraging ; it’s a great mercy you escaped so.”

“Yes,” said he, musingly. “The mercy of the Lord is new every morning, and fresh every evening.”

His manner was very retiring, and he seemed a little unwilling to talk. But he was a Scotchman, and I must know something more of him :

“You know something, then, of this Mercy of God?”

“Oh, yes ; ‘As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.’”

Every word he uttered thrilled me with pleasure, his manner was so chaste and elegant ; and he seemed so to know whereof he was speaking.

“You are Scotch?”

“Yes,” said he, and told me his name. When he heard mine, he added—

“O sir, I suppose you are pretty nearly a Scotchman yourself?”

“Yes,” said I, “but not altogether.”

We belonged to the same visible Church, and the ancestors of each name had witnessed for the truth on the same fields in the mother land.

“I would rather be born,” he smilingly said, “of such parents, than be the child of kings and princes.”

I promised, as I was leaving, to bring him some reading matter ; but his Bible and Catechism were enough, he said.

Through the night and during the next day, I thought much of my new friend, waiting impatiently for the evening, when I should see him again. He told me then something of his history. He was born near Bothwell Bridge, in Scotland. Near by was a little valley between two hills, and the tear came down his cheek as he told of it. It was beautiful to see how he turned at once his earthly grief into blessed consolation :

“ But there is a land where ‘ the Lamb shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters ; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.’ ”

Tenderly and lovingly he went into all the particulars about his old home, even to the honeysuckle and sweet-brier around the walls and the hum of the morning bees. And then again, as his sweet half talk, half reverie journeyed on, he went up from the earthly to the heavenly, and told how in the “ auld house ” he had learned of what was “ sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” And then he told of the mountain near, and of the brook that clambered down its sides and ran near the home door, of the trees in their winter diamonds and summer green, and of the pasture-valley where he watched his father’s flock.

What a precious story too was his account of the training he had received ! Six farmers’ families, near together, used to gather their sheep on Saturday evening to the most convenient pasture, so as to have little trouble on the morrow. It seemed to him the sheep knew when Sabbath came ; they were so much quieter. Three miles off was the new Free Church ; and thither all went on the Lord’s Day ; only one being left behind to care for the flock,—a duty which the knowing dog took most charge of, for he knew how to gather the sheep together on that day without even a bark. The quaint, beautiful words of the old Scotch version of the Psalms told how he thought of the “ House of Prayer : ”

“ I joyed when, to the House of God  
Go up, they said to me ;  
Jerusalem, within thy gates  
Our feet shall standing be.”

Thus was the Sabbath indeed a day of blessed rest, free from all vain talk and worldly enjoyment, “ a delight—the holy of the Lord,



honorable," not a weariness, but a deep foretaste of the Eternal Sabbath of joy. At the close of the service all gathered together; remarks were made upon the sermon; the elder "bairns" catechised; and then some extract read from Boston, Willison or Baxter, before all returned to their homes. His intention to study theology had been frustrated by his father's death, after his graduation at a Scotch university. Removing to this country, he had found the war-fever so high that he enlisted.

His story made a deep impression upon me,—so deep that I determined to visit him upon my return to the army, which was not until the following March.

I found him amid the old surroundings, trustful and quiet and beautiful in his talk as ever, and very glad to see me; all the restraint which at first marked his manner had disappeared; but it was sadly evident, as I looked at him, that he was nearing his end. I made him lean on my shoulder as we walked together along the river's bank. Said he—

"I imagine my case is like that of one of my own countrymen,—poor Michael Bruce. But he did some good to the world; his poems will never be forgotten. He intended to study for the ministry, but was early called to the Church above."

He went on to repeat some stanzas from "Lochleven," one of Michael Bruce's poems:

"Thus sung the youth, amid unfertile wilds  
And nameless deserts' unpoetic ground:  
Far from his friends he strayed, recording thus  
The dear remembrance of his native fields,—  
To cheer the tedious night, while slow disease  
Prey'd on his pining vitals, and the blasts  
Of dark December shook his humble cot."

"I feel like him in many ways; far from the friends I love, I need remembrance to cheer away the gloom."

Once again, and for the last time, I met him. His old cheerfulness remained, but the nearness of the end made the interview more solemn. Again he recurred to his favorite poet, and quoted from that pathetic "Elegy," which seemed to have been written for Anderson himself:

“Now Spring returns; but not to me returns  
 The vernal joy my better years have known:  
 Dim in my breast life's dying taper burns,  
 And all the joys of life with health are flown.

“Starting and shivering in the inconstant wind,  
 Meagre and pale, the ghost of what I was,  
 Beneath some blasted tree I lie reclined,  
 And count the silent moments as they pass;—

“The wingéd moments, whose unstaying speed  
 No art can stop or in their course arrest,  
 Whose flight shall shortly count me with the dead,  
 And lay me down in peace with them that rest.

“Oft morning dreams presage approaching fate,  
 And morning dreams, as poets tell, are true;—  
 Led by pale ghosts I enter Death's dark gate,  
 And bid the realms of light and life adieu.

“I hear the helpless wail, the shriek of woe,  
 I see the muddy wave, the dreary shore,  
 The sluggish streams that slowly creep below,  
 Which mortals visit and return no more.

“Farewell, ye blooming fields, ye cheerful plains;  
 Enough for me the churchyard's lonely mound  
 Where Melancholy, with still Silence reigns,  
 And th' rank grass waves o'er cheerless ground.

“There let me wander at the close of eve,  
 When sleep sits dewy on the laborer's eyes;  
 The world and all its busy follies leave,  
 And talk with wisdom where my Daphnis lies.

“There let me sleep, forgotten in the clay,  
 When death shall shut these weary, aching eyes,—  
 Rest in the hope of an Eternal Day,  
 Till the long night is gone and the last morn arise.”

Surely here was the very scene before us: the Spring returning,—but not for him; the old oak under which he stood; the winged moments soon to lay him with the dead; the pale ghosts on every bed of that hospital of sorrow near; the muddy, dreary, sluggish Appomattox, and the waiting crowd visiting it now, perhaps to return no

more; the remembered story of his home; the graves near by; and the Hope that turned the whole to gladness,—and would yet make the long night flee away.

But a few days more of life were left him. About the 25th of March the weary, aching eyes were shut, and he rested in hope.

Mr. J. H. Morley relates an incident of the result of courage in facing the consequences of doing duty :

A young man, trying to lead a Christian life, was persecuted by his tent-mates. When he knelt down to pray at night they hurled boots and sticks of wood at him. In great trouble he went to ask advice of his Chaplain, who for some reason counselled him to say his prayers secretly, and thus escape persecution. The young man tried to do so for a short time, but at last returned to the old way. His Chaplain met him soon afterwards and inquired how he was getting along.

*Confessing with  
the Mouth.*

“ Nicely,” was the answer.

“ Did you follow my advice?” continued the Chaplain.

“ I did for a little while,” said the soldier, “ but have changed back to the old way now.”

“ And what is the result?”

“ All my companions,” (ten or a dozen in number) “ kneel down every night with me. Isn’t it better, Chaplain, to keep the colors flying?”

Mr. H. L. Porter<sup>1</sup> shows how a blessed work of God’s grace may come from an act of kindly relief :

One evening in August I was returning to my quarters at City Point Hospital, when I saw a soldier ahead leaning against a tree. I went and spoke to him; found him very weak. It took us together a long time to reach the hospital. I visited him afterwards occasionally. He attended our meetings and became a disciple of Christ. The evening before leaving for the front he asked our prayers. There was not a Christian man known to him in his regiment, and some officers did

*What one Sol-  
dier could Do.*

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<sup>1</sup> Of Haverhill, Mass.

not like to hear anything about religion. He returned to *work*, however. A prayer meeting was started in the woods; he told his story; several were converted. In November he wrote me a letter, containing an account of progress:

“We have now twenty-five members, and, by God’s assistance, we shall have a still larger increase. Now we have a tent to ourselves, which we were permitted to use by our Colonel. Last night, being Sabbath evening, it was full. It is a hospital tent and pretty large: but I don’t think it will be large enough for us in a short time. We have prayer meetings on Wednesday evening and Sabbath morning and evening; on Friday evening there is a class-meeting, and on Sabbath afternoon a Bible-class. So we are not altogether idle. We have organized a society, adopted a constitution, and taken a name; ‘Young Men’s Christian Association of the 9th N. J. Regiment.’ God has been with us everywhere we have been.” He goes on to recall the prayer meetings at the hospital, and to thank the Commission, and then concludes: “The more I pray the better I love the cause of Christ. I am just beginning to realize His religion, for I am a young beginner, but trust that I may be always faithful in well-doing.

“JOHN GERRIGAN.”

Rev. E. F. Williams, telling the history of New Market Station in the Army of the James, in December, relates the following incident:

When the rebellion broke out, J—— was a citizen of Virginia, belonging to a company of volunteer militia. He voted against secession, but when this was forced upon his State and his regiment

was to be called soon into the field, he left Virginia and, with his family, secretly moved to Maryland.

Here during Lee’s invasion he was recognized by an old neighbor, and arrested as a deserter. He

was hurried to Carlisle, Pa., as a prisoner, thence to Gettysburg, where under guard he witnessed the terrific battle. In the confusion of retreat he escaped to the Union camp. Here, mistaken for a Rebel prisoner, he was sent to Fort Delaware, whence, after vexatious delays, he was at last released. Getting his family together again,

*The Right  
Name among the  
People of God.*

he removed to Pennsylvania. In July, 1864, he enlisted in the Union army, with the stipulation that he should only be called to do duty where he would not be exposed to capture by the Confederates,—an arrangement which was overlooked by his officers. He was present at the dedication of our chapel on the New Market Road. God met him and convinced him of sin, giving him faith and repentance unto life. When those who desired to enroll themselves on the Lord's side came forward to give in their names, he said, as he handed in his, that he had enlisted under a fictitious name, fearing to fall into Rebel hands; but he added most earnestly—

“I want my right name taken among the people of God.”

During the Winter he was full of hope. It was a treat to hear his testimony to God's grace, spoken with his strong German accent:

“I used to laugh at dese tings, unt find fault mit de breacher; some vas too long unt some too short, some vas too pig unt some too little,—but now dey shoost suits me. *“Old Things become New.”* I lofe dem all; I lofe dis house; I lofe de wort of Gott, unt I mean to serfe Him all my life. My bredren, be firm, be faithful; stant up for Jesus, unt notings vill harm you. I vas afraid at first, myself, but I to my duty. I read my Bible, unt though my wicked frients shake head and laugh, I know ven dey see me in earnest, dey vill soon quit dis foolishness.”

He was afterwards transferred to the North-west, to serve against the Indians.

Rev. Edward P. Smith, called from Nashville to the Central office, visited the Potomac Army in December. He writes from City Point:

After a preaching service in the crowded chapel tent, those desiring instruction upon the subject of religion were asked to remain. Among some thirty who accepted this invitation, I noticed a young lad, apparently fifteen years of age, who remained by himself in a corner of the tent. I went to him at once and asked why he had stayed:

*Reported for  
Duty and under  
Orders.*

“Because you told me to.”

“Then you want to be a Christian?”

“Yes, sir, I do that.”

“What is your name?”

“Tom Brown, sir.”

“You are a New York soldier?”

“Yes.”

“Did you ever go to Sabbath-school?”

“Yes, always.”

“Have you a mother?”

“She was a Christian; she has gone to heaven a long time ago.”

“Well, why are you not a Christian, Tom?”

“That’s what’s the matter; that’s just what I stopped for,—to find out how to become one.”

“Well, don’t you know how? What did Paul say to the jailer, when he wanted to know what to do to be saved?”

“I have heard that a great many times, but somehow I don’t do it, and I don’t know how to do it.”

I explained to him then as well as I could the nature of faith,—what it is to give oneself to Christ and leave all with Him, and accept of Him as the Saviour. But Tom seemed to get no relief. I then tried a new form of illustration:

“Who is your commanding officer, Tom?”

“Lieutenant ——.”

“Suppose the Lieutenant should send to-night for you to report to him; what would you do?”

“I’d report, sir.”

“Right off?”

“Certainly, sir; I obey orders.”

“When you came to his quarters, what would you say?”

“I’d give him the salute, and say, ‘Lieutenant, what’s the orders?’”

“And when you got the orders—?”

“Then I would do ’em, sir.”

“Well, now, Tom, the Lord Jesus has sent me to you to-night, and orders you to report to Him at once.”

“I’ll do it; I’ll do it, sir,” and the little fellow looked round for his hat as if he were going.

“Wait,” said I, “Tom, till I have told you all. The Lord Jesus is here, listening to you and me; knows your words and your thoughts and all you mean to do. Now if you get His orders, will you do them?”



“Yes, sir, right away.’

I asked him of his companions. He told me of an irreligious bunk-mate:

“Tom, if you are going to be a Christian, don’t you think Jesus will want you to talk and pray with that bunk-mate to-night?”

“Yes, if a fellow’s going to serve Jesus, he must take hold of it.”

“Well, exactly what Jesus wants you to do,—that’s the order. And don’t you think, too, that He wants you to write your sister in the morning, and tell her how you feel and what you are going to do?”

“Certainly.”

“Well, that’s the order, Tom; and so you’ll find it all along in life; just what Jesus wants you to do,—that’s the order. Now, are you ready for duty?”

“Yes, all ready.”

‘To take all the orders He’ll give you as long as you live?’

“Yes.”

“Well, Tom, let us kneel down here and ‘report’ to Jesus.”

We knelt; I prayed for him and he prayed for himself, keeping up the figure with which he had been led to the Saviour:

“Here I am, Jesus; I report for duty. All You order me to-night and to-morrow and as long as I live I am going to do—”and with this prayer he went away. As he was passing out at the chapel door, Brother Blake, not knowing what had transpired, stopped him and asked if he was not going to be a Christian.

“Yes,” said Tom, “I’m under orders.”

The next morning he came to our quarters, his face lit up with the joy of newly-found peace and hope. During the few days in which he remained at the hospital, his testimony for Christ was beautifully clear.

A story related by Mr. H. V. Noyes,<sup>1</sup> in a letter from Point of Rocks, dated January 23d, shows the soldier’s yearning for love:

As I passed, one forenoon, along my accustomed rounds, a dying boy far as he could reach, stretched out his wasted hand, asking me

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<sup>1</sup> Of Western Theological Seminary (O. S. Presbyterian), Allegheny, Pa.

to come that way. I went to his side. He put his cold arm round my neck, and drew my face down to his.

*“Let me Call you, Father.”* “You make me think of father,” said he. “Let me call you father; you won’t laugh at me, will you, if I call you father?”

“No, my dear boy, call me father, if it will be any comfort to you.”

“Last night,” he continued, with broken utterance, “last night,—when—you—prayed,—I—wanted—you—to—come—nearer; I was—so—sick. I couldn’t—hear.”

I asked him of his dying hopes:

“I can’t—read—much—now; but,—thank—God—” It was too much, he could say no more; and the sentence remains for ever unfinished. I suppose he was thinking of reading in his Testament.

Again, he spoke: “You’ll—let—me—kiss—you—now,—won’t—you?” And then he pressed his lips to my cheek and gave his farewell sign. I put my mouth to his ear, and offered a fervent petition, that God, for Christ’s sake, would receive him to Himself. The cold sweat was already gathering, and the darkness of death was about him:

“You’ll—stay—with—me—all—*night*,—won’t you?”

I told him I would come back, after I had gone on a little further up the row of cots. Gently,—oh, how gently, I removed his arm from my neck, and bade him good-bye.

A few minutes later, I heard them saying, “Thompson is dead.” I hastened back; the cot was already empty. It only remained for me to find him again, and cut two locks of hair,—one for the mother in Vermont, the other to be kept in sacred remembrance of the soldier who, in his dying breath, desired to call me “Father.”

Rev. N. M. Bailey<sup>1</sup> writes from New Market Roads in January:

One noble old soldier from Michigan, named Peter Whitmore, said to me—

“I had a pleasant home; a dear family of children and grandchild-

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<sup>1</sup> Minister of Meth. Episc. Church, Henniker, N. H.

dren; a good farm and all that,—but I wanted to do something to help put down this rebellion, and destroy slavery. I believe the Lord is on our side, and will soon give us the victory. I didn't suppose I could go through so much as I have,—but the Lord has helped me. I have prayed to Him every day, and I trust He will take me back home again, safe; but if not, it is His will,—and it's all right.”

*The Source of  
Courage.*

To faith such as this, God's sending was ever the best. Rev. A. L. Pratt<sup>1</sup> writes:

I found a Maine soldier, about twenty-four years of age, in one of the hospitals at City Point. His good right arm would not again bear a weapon against his country's enemies. It was amputated just below the shoulder-joint. He was an earnest Christian, and grateful for our slightest favor. One day he looked up into my face with a cheerful smile, and said—

*Entering into  
Life, maimed.*

“It seems to me I can't be grateful enough for losing my arm. It made me thoughtful, and opened the way for your Delegates to visit me, and ended in my finding Christ. ‘It is better,’ I think, ‘to enter into Life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet. to be cast into everlasting fire.’”

The following narrative is from the pen of Rev. J. K. McLean.<sup>2</sup> It is such a vivid picture of a fair and open conflict with the Adversary, and illustrates so many points of the Delegate's work, that it is given entire:

With Brother George W. Bigelow, a member of my own church, I was deputed to establish a Commission station at the Cavalry Depôt of the Army of the Potomac, then—from January to March, 1865—located two miles below City Point, on the same side of the James. It was a camp of dis-

*Cavalry-Depôt.*

<sup>1</sup> Minister of Meth. Episc. Church, Bradford, Vt.

<sup>2</sup> Pastor of the Hollis Congregational Church, Framingham, Mass.

cents on their way back from hospital; a corral of horses; an armory, smith shops, saddle shops, depôt of clothing, equipments, &c.

Previous to our coming, little Commission work had been done for the camp. An occasional Sunday service and an irregular distribution of papers was all. On Monday, January 16th, Brother Bigelow and myself, both entirely new to the service, filled our haversacks with Commission ammunition, and started on foot through the intervening two miles of mud and camp offal, for our scene of operations.

Our first duty was reconnoitring. We discovered the case to stand about as follows: Here were some 500 men, and more daily arriving, with nothing to do, under lax discipline and few restrictions, stop-

*A Reconnoissance in Force.*

ping here for a few days on their way to the front to take part in the Spring movements of the army, which for the cavalry would be especially hazardous.

Many of them were sure to be shortly either maimed or killed. What was to be done must be done quickly.

The material of the camp was peculiar. The old men, those who had been dismounted or wounded, had nearly all been engaged in the constant raiding of the last campaigns; stopping nowhere beyond a few hours, with few or no Chaplains, they had attended no Divine service for months; some of them had not for two years. "Camp Stoneman," during the Winter of 1863, on the Rappahannock, was the last place in which many of them had heard anything of "religion." There were large squads of raw recruits also constantly coming in; many of whom were at this time about the worst class of men probably ever sent into any army,—professional "bounty-jumpers," thieves—given their choice between entering the army or the penitentiary, and other refuse matter from the large cities.

The very atmosphere of that fine January morning was reeking with profanity and fetid with vulgarity and obscenity. Some of the men, when they came to know who we were, restrained themselves a little in our presence; but as yet we were unknown, and the foul thoughts came out in foulest words. It was a discouraging prospect to human view,—two men drawn up before this stronghold of Satan, with, so far as we knew, not a single Christian in it; sin rampant; blasphemy-stalking unrebuked; our only arms the little tracts and books we held,—light artillery indeed against such walls of sin—yet we were there to carry that camp for Jesus. We seemed to ourselves

like two men who should march with pickaxe and barrow against a huge mountain to remove and cast it into the sea. But remembering that faith *can* remove mountains, we began our work, and, with God's blessing, at least made some impression.

We visited every tent; told who we were, what we had come for; gave out needles, thread, paper, envelopes, newspapers and books; invited every man to come to our chapel meetings, when we should get the chapel up. We were in every instance kindly received,—even cordially. We found some Christians; and almost all of the better sort said—

*Profanity, at  
Home and in the  
Army.*

“Oh, yes, of course we'll come to meeting—always used to go at home!”

“But, boys, did you swear so at home?”

“No, we didn't; that's a fact.”

“Do you expect to keep it up after your return?”

“No.”

“Won't it be rather hard to break off all at once?”

“That's so; just the reason we swear so now; got used to it with the horses, and now don't think.”

The horses, according to a cavalryman, are responsible for a great deal of swearing. Many acknowledged the foolishness of the habit, and more than one was pledged that first day to give it up. Such efforts, with a public talk on the subject on Sunday, went far to cleanse the air of the vice. Doubtless it still existed, but was far less obtrusive; oaths were probably discharged in private, but they rattled less furiously about our ears.

Our main business was to get a chapel built, and in it to hold religious services. In this we encountered most vexatious delays. We had promise from the officer commanding the post, of men, and lumber from adjoining Secesh estates, for a stockade chapel roofed with boards, the Commission at this time having no canvas cover to give us. Every day

*Chapel Build-  
ing.*

for a week, this promise was renewed. A few logs were cut, but that was all. One freezing morning, after waiting eight days, we took off our coats, borrowed some pickaxes, and set at work to dig a trench for our stockade. This brought out both the Captain of the Dis-mounted Camp, and the officer commanding the post. The picks were at once taken out of our hands; a strong detail of men put on;

and we rejoiced at the near prospect of having a sanctuary. From stormy weather however, from failure in getting boards,—the hope of which we finally abandoned and roofed our building with canvas taken from a chapel elsewhere—and from other causes, it was not until February 12th that our tabernacle could be dedicated.

Meantime, we had been holding meetings at the Convalescent Camp, a half mile distant, in a tent or hut whence rations were dealt out. Into this we gathered one night four or five men who could

*The Work Begins.*

sing, and struck up some of the stirring soldiers' hymns. Within a half hour over forty had come in.

We held a brief service, then asked any who were Christians, and not afraid to own it, to rise. Four stood up instantly. This was our nucleus. The next night, five asked for prayers, and, from that time until the meetings were transferred to the large chapel, hardly a night passed without some new cases presenting themselves. Thus by the time our chapel was finished we had gathered a goodly number ready to take hold and help on the meetings.

It really seemed as if the powers of evil had combined against our chapel. We had to build by the help of bounty-jumpers, who would work only as one of us stood by and watched. The building was

*Hindrances.*

fairly plastered and shingled with oaths; for never did a wickeder set of men build a House for the

Lord. Then, during the dedication, a gale of wind blew, which first so flapped our canvas roof about the long stove-pipe that it was pulled apart and almost shed its lengths down upon us; that secured, the roof itself, all along one side, loosened with a crack, and would have gone, had not one of the men, just in time, caught the flying canvas, and, though repeatedly lifted from his feet, held on until help came and it was secured. That same evening a large squad of recruits came. It was very cold; there were no quarters for them,—not even shelter-tents; we cheerfully opened our chapel to them for the night. The next morning a heavy rain came on, and continued throughout a week. No quarters could be built; more men were daily arriving; so that soon two hundred were quartered in our chapel. And such a place as it became! The mud was almost as deep within as without; water continually poured through the roof; refuse pork, coffee grounds, tobacco quids and all manner of filth were trodden



into the miry floor; the air reeked with tobacco smoke and was fetid with foul breath; some of the men grew sick, many of them became troublesome and quarrelsome; it was only by frequent interference on our part and threats of turning all out into the storm, that we could keep them in control. The Prince of Darkness had apparently gained a final triumph. It was with the utmost difficulty that we could hold our meetings in the rank and noisome place. But we did hold one every evening in spite of the surroundings, and with most blessed results.

Every evening, I think without exception, some rose for prayers or spoke of a newly-found hope in Jesus. Our meetings were crowded; sometimes as many as fifty or sixty would rise, and as many as twenty speak. It was no carnal battle-ground. The Holy Spirit and Satan there contended mightily. During the day card-playing, profanity and ribald songs were the order. At evening these gave place to prayer, preaching and praise. One night, after one of our best meetings, the chapel had become quiet. The lights were out and, save an occasional snore, all was silent,—when we were startled by the cry of “Murder—murder.” The guard rushed to the spot; we came with our lantern; and such a scene as we saw would be hard to describe. It afterwards appeared that some evil-minded persons, whether of those belonging within or without the building we never discovered, had set about picking pockets. The alarm given, at once in the darkness there ensued a promiscuous knock-down fight, which was ended only by the arrival of the guard and lanterns. After that we kept a lantern burning in the chapel, and a guard detailed for the door. Through such scenes the perennial strife between good and evil went on.

It was a full week ere the chapel was cleared. Then it took a detail of men a whole day to clean it. By scraping the seats, newly sanding the floor and trimming the rough walls with cedar boughs, it was made a very pleasant and really attractive place. With this our troubles ended; and during the rest of our stay we had clear sailing. A Bible-class and inquiry meeting were held every afternoon, and a fully-attended service every evening. There were daily conversions. Among the converts was a man who had enlisted in a Pennsylvania village which contained seven churches, but for fifteen

*Brought to  
Christ by a  
Storm.*

years he had never been in one of them, and had never intended to go again. Coming in with the recruits who were quartered in our chapel, the first night or two he went out into the storm and waited until the meetings closed. He took cold and resolved to stay in, the next night. He did so, became interested, and finally determined to live a Christian life.

Another soldier, named McF——, an iron-roller, from Pittsburg, a fine-looking, stalwart man of thirty-five, came to the tent-door one morning to ask if we could not put a stop to the gambling going on in the chapel. He thought it out of place and sure to provoke a quarrel. I went in with him, and, after stopping the card-playing, had a talk with him.

*In Church in  
Spite of Himself.*

He told me this story: He had been accustomed to make good wages in the iron-mills. With the other men he would quit work Saturday noon, dress up, and in the evening go to the theatre or "spree it." He would come home at midnight or later and go to bed drunk. His patient wife, a Christian,—a member of the Episcopal Church,—would sit up for him, help him to bed, take his muddy boots, dry, clean and polish them, and in the morning beg him to go with her to church. He would refuse and she would cry. This had happened, for a year or two, forty Sabbaths out of the fifty-two. He felt his degradation and the wrong he was doing his family, but had not the moral strength to break away from his associations and do better, until at last in a kind of desperation he enlisted, as much as anything else to be free from his wife's importunities towards a better life. He arrived at City Point the day our chapel was dedicated, and was one of the squad quartered in it. What was his dismay at finding himself in the midst of preparation for a religious service! He had left home to get rid of these; here he was suddenly among them again. He rolled himself in his blanket, and lying down in an obscure corner, tried to sleep, but could not. He heard little that was said, but could not shake off the feelings which his church-quarters had awakened. He slept little that night, thinking of his patient, uncomplaining wife, his children and his own past conduct. At last, for the first time in years, he was driven to pray. A few nights later he rose for prayers. I felt very hopeful about him. But old propensities proved very strong. One day he was greatly provoked, got into a fight, and came near being put under arrest.

After this he avoided us and left the meetings entirely, until I met him one morning in the swampy woods back of our camp, and accosted him. He tried at first to get away, but finally sat down. I told him I was sorry about the fight and could hardly blame him, his provocation had been so great. I still had confidence in him, and expected he would do well. It seemed to do him a world of good. That night he was again at meeting, and every following night while we remained. I know not whether he became a Christian. "The Commission," he used to say, "has done more for me than all Pittsburg could."

It was surprising to see how soon the men came to put confidence in us. They would come and tell us about their wives, children and sweethearts, and show us their pictures. One poor fellow received a letter containing news of his aged mother's death. He came with it, though a perfect stranger to us, and saying no word, with falling tears handed it to us to read. He wanted sympathy, and instinctively felt that representatives of Christ could best afford it. Boys brought us their wallets to keep. One offered us five dollars for having kept his over night. Men put into our hands money to express home, and watches to carry when we returned North. With no knowledge of our personal character, with only the endorsement which the Commission gave, the men reposed unlimited confidence in us.

It was, I think, the second day our flag had been displayed, that Brother Bigelow, returning from a tour through the camp, found a man waiting at the door to see us. He was a member of the mounted squad at headquarters; came from Jersey City; was the son of pious parents; had at home a pious wife, but had himself resisted all religious impressions.

*The Spirit's  
Secret Work.*

He had been a member of a convivial club in Jersey City, where he had been hurrying to ruin. He enlisted, came to City Point, and there, apart from any external religious influences whatever, became thoughtful, penitent, and finally a child of Christ. During the two months since his conversion, he had seen but one person with whom he could converse on the subject of religion. Passing our station the day before, he saw the sign "Christian Commission," and, though knowing nothing of us, the name "Christian" attracted him. In his own words, "I thought that there I should find some one with

whom I could *talk*." As soon as he was off duty he came over to our tent, and finding no one in, patiently waited our return. Thus Brother Bigelow found him. With moistened eye and quivering lip he related his story. We saw him often during our stay, and were convinced that he was indeed a changed man.

Our last service at the camp was deeply affecting. The chapel was crowded. Rev. S. L. Bowler<sup>1</sup> preached that evening, and after some remarks we bade the men good-bye. Even in the short time we had been with them we had come to love them, for we had found noble, manly hearts among them. As we left the pulpit after the benediction, they stood in double line all the way down to the door. As from one after another we received a hearty grasp of the hand and heard their "God bless you, Chaplain!" we thanked the Lord that He had placed before us such an open door.

I have narrated these things thus fully, for the reason that the experience at this station was measurably unique. It was a definite effort, made in circumstances favorable to show the working power of the Commission. We found a camp wholly given up to godlessness, the good which was in it buried out of sight—almost smothered in superabounding evil. By a moderate effort, through God's blessing, and that in a short time, this state of things was almost wholly reversed, so that the good was uppermost and the evil forced to skulk. Large numbers of men, just on the eve of the sanguinary battles which terminated the war, were brought under Christian influences, whereto many of them yielded, and rode on to death prepared to meet it.

After we left, the meetings were continued under the efficient charge of Mr. D. C. H. Whitney, of Fitchburg, Mass. The station was one of the last broken up; our stockade chapel had to be abandoned, as the weather grew warm, for a larger; and night after night many souls, almost a "multitude," heard and "received with meekness the engrafted word" to their salvation.

The work in connection with the numerous chapels erected over the entire army was one of exceeding interest. In many of them revivals were begun. In all

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<sup>1</sup> Of Orono, Me. Long the Agent of the Commission at the Washington Office.

there were deeply fervent and prayerful meetings. Rev. E. F. Williams writes of Henry Station Chapel in the Third Division of the Twenty-fourth Corps:<sup>1</sup>

One evening a man belonging to a battery, three-fourths of a mile from our chapel, strayed over to the meeting. He became greatly interested in the service. When about half-way home he kneeled by a stump and prayed. The next night, with a companion, he sought the meeting again. The stump *The Leaven of Prayer.* saw two praying souls that night, and upon their return to camp they began to work for Christ, and in a few weeks forty men out of that battery alone found peace in believing.

Rev. Wm. A. Mandell<sup>2</sup> relates two soldiers' experiences, told in the chapel at City Point Hospital:

Amos L. Ham, of Co. B, 18th N. H., told us how he was arrested by a message from his little daughter. He labored under deep emotion as he spoke. His wife had written him a letter. Before sealing it she turned to her little daughter and asked—

“What shall I write father for you?”

*How to Come Home Safe.*

“Tell him,” said little Nellie, “to look to God and trust Him, and then he will come home safe.”

The message went to the father's heart, humbling him at the foot of the cross, as a “little child.”

Corporal Matthias had become a Christian. Before the Hatcher's Run battle he said to a comrade—

“You are detailed to go front, while I am to remain with the baggage. Let us change places. I'll go front; you remain in camp.”

*Going into Battle.*

“What for?” asked his bunk-mate.

“Because I'm prepared to die, I think; but you are not.”

The exchange was made. The Christian soldier was hit three times by spent balls, and very little hurt. The Corporal's friend rose in our meeting, and related the circumstance.

<sup>1</sup> *Annals, U. S. Christian Commission*, p. 449.

<sup>2</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Lunenburg, Mass.

“I want to tell you, brother soldiers,” he added, “that this brought me to Jesus, and He has made me a very different man. Some of you claim to be as happy in your pleasures as Christians are. If so, why do you strew the way with cards when you are going into battle? Why are you afraid to die on the field with these in your pockets? Why do you reprove each other for profane words while you are getting into line of battle?”

The narrative and the argument made a deep impression upon all present.

Rev. H. J. Patrick continues the reminiscences of the same chapel :

A messenger, just in from the front, came into the meeting, and told how he had resolved, the last time he was there, to stand up the next night. Before that night came, he was ordered to the front :

*How to Become a Christian.* “I was very much troubled. I thought my ‘day of grace’ was passed. I was put out on picket, and got more and more depressed. At last I determined I would be a Christian. I didn’t know how to do it. I thought I must do something or other. The only thing I could think of was to work with my companions, and get them to do as I did. I went to one and asked him if he loved Jesus. He said he didn’t. I talked and prayed with him,—spent most of a night praying. He became a Christian. And now I have come back to tell you how precious the service of Christ is.”

In the just-completed chapel at the Cumming’s House Station, during the first meeting, two soldiers spoke, whose stories Rev. Mr. Patrick relates :

About two hundred came in at our first meeting. We had no benches for them ; as they sat *à la Turk*, Rev. Asa Bullard, of the Massachusetts Sabbath-school Society, gave them a talk, and found out that nineteen-twentieths of those present had been connected with Sabbath-schools. *A Consecration.* A soldier of the 1st Maryland Regt. told how, six months before, he had scarcely known what the Bible was. Once he had deserted. His punishment when captured, and a letter from his wife, urging him to better



things, had made him think. So one day, as he was returning from carrying rations out to the pickets, he came upon a soldier's grave. Humbled and penitent, he there determined to consecrate himself to Jesus. He told us, with faltering, earnest words, how he was trying to keep near to Christ.

At the same meeting, Lieutenant Loomis, of the 146th N. Y. Regt., told us that on the 19th of August, the day of the Weldon railroad fight, as his men were advancing to the charge, he saw a Bible on the ground at the side of a dead Confederate soldier.

Picking it up, stained with blood, he found afterwards the dead soldier's name printed on the cover.<sup>1</sup>

*The Dead Confederate's Bible.*

"Now," said the Lieutenant, "I am using that Bible myself, and—what I never did before—I am praying. I shall keep the Bible for the owner's friends, if they can be found."

An incident, somewhat like the last, is related by Rev. Lyman Bartlett:<sup>2</sup>

In visiting a small battery directly in front of Fort Morton, I became acquainted with the Captain of a heavy battery of the 8th N. Y. Artillery. Until within a few weeks he had been a thoughtless, wild young man. His wife was a Christian; and she, with a pious brother, had often written, urging him to come to Christ. One day he found on the ground near his quarters a soiled Testament, which he picked up and began to read. He became interested as he had never been before, and in a few days read it through. Going through it over and over again, he found new meaning at each perusal, though there was much he could not understand. He began to pray for light. Soon the Spirit opened his eyes and led him to the cross, where he found pardon and direction and peace. All this time he had not conversed with a single Christian friend. Afterwards his wife sent him a small pocket Bible. The reading of it was a new revelation to him each succeeding day. His gratitude to God for having opened his eyes to behold such wondrous things out of His Law, was beautiful and child-like.

*The Soiled Testament.*

<sup>1</sup> B. F. Porter, Co. B. 11th Miss.

<sup>2</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Morristown, Vt.

Rev. Perkins K. Clark<sup>1</sup> writes in February from Point of Rocks :

Before I left home, a little girl came to me, wishing to send something to the soldiers. Her mother said she had been saving all her pennies a long time, and had been very unwilling to part with them.

*Little Clara's Bible.* But when she heard I was going to the army, she wanted her mother to come with her to bring some of them to me :

“ Well, how many will you take, Clara ? ”

“ Twenty-five, ”—this was one-fourth of the whole store. The twenty-five pennies were brought to me, and a valuable, though modest little roll I thought it to be. I decided to add to it some of the other funds entrusted to me, and procure a Bible, to be given in Clara's name.

As I was visiting my patients at Point of Rocks Hospital, a young man of the 1st N. Y. Mounted Rifles, who had a Testament, asked me for a Bible. He was searching for the truth, and under deep conviction of sin. I said to myself, Here is the man for little Clara's book. So I told him all about the twenty-five cents, and wrote on the fly-leaf of the book, “ Albert Smay, Co. C, 1st N. Y. Mounted Rifles. Bought with pennies given by little Clara Hastings, of South Deerfield, Mass. Presented by Rev. P. K. Clark, U. S. C. C., Point of Rocks. Feb. 14th, 1865. ‘ Search the Scriptures. ’ ” As I gave him the book, I spoke to him earnestly about the duty he owed to God. He was overcome with emotion, and hiding his face under the blanket sobbed like a child. The next day I carried him some blackberry syrup. Again I presented Christ to him :

“ I haven't found Him, ” he said, “ and it seems to me I've been trying as hard as I can. ”

“ Well, now, suppose you stop trying, and let Him try. He invites you ; believe this and trust Him. His promise is, ‘ Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out. ’ ”

Sabbath morning, I saw him again.

“ Yesterday, ” said he, “ I found Him ; I saw that I could do nothing but just believe. ”

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, South Deerfield, Mass.

His face and all his bearing indicated the deep peace of God. I was to leave next morning, and came to bid him good-bye.

"Jesus is my Saviour," he said, with tears rolling down his cheeks; "*I can leave all with Him.* I'll write to you when I can sit up. Tell little Clara how I thank her for the dear book."

When my term of service in another part of the army had expired, I hastened again to the Point of Rocks Hospital. Albert had taken a new sickness and was dying. He was too weak for much conversation :

"Is Jesus precious to you, Albert?"

"*He is all that is precious to me, now.*"

He whispered his wish that the Bible should be sent to his mother. A faint smile came into his face as I spoke of the Better Land. It rested there. On the morning of February 28th he died, happy in Jesus.

Rev. W. A. Mandell tells this story of the last hour :

At City Point Hospital, a young drummer-boy, who had been wounded, was dying. He asked a Delegate to read and pray with him. A number of passages were read; the sufferer kept saying, "Read some more." At last the Delegate came to the fourth verse of the twenty-third Psalm.

*The Comfort in  
the Dark Valley.*

"Stop," said the boy, "that's it; read it again." It was done.

"Read it again, please." It was read the third time.

"Will you put my hand on it, please?"

He could not see; so his hand was guided to the page and verse :

"Lay it open on my breast, Chaplain."

It was done, and the dying child folded his dear arms over the sacred words, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." Still pressing it to his breast, the boy passed from the scene of earthly conflict to the Country of Rest.

A conundrum propounded by a soldier to Rev. E. P. Smith, in February, gathers up into small compass so much of the real difficulty of army life that it may well close our chapter :

I was riding on top of a train of cars, running over what the soldiers called "Gen. Grant's railroad,"—the line that stretches from City Point up to the left of the army. While we were passing through a forest cleared by soldiers' axes, a private, sitting by my side, called attention to the large pine trees which had been torn up by the roots in the wind-storm of the night preceding. They had been left standing for Quartermasters' purposes after the smaller ones had been cut away for fuel.

*"Can't Stand  
without the Lit-  
tle Ones."*

"Chaplain," said the soldier, "do you know why those trees that have tumbled over, are like a great many men in the army?"

I gave it up, and he answered—

"Because they can't stand without 'the little ones' to help them."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE EASTERN ARMIES.

FROM THE INVESTMENT OF PETERSBURG, UNTIL THE CLOSE OF THE WAR.  
(Concluded.)

June 1864—April 1865.

A LITTLE story told by Rev. Geo. N. Marden illustrates the same general truth with the incident which closed the preceding chapter :

At one of the City Point hospitals was a soldier who told me he had been near the gates of death.

“How did you feel in view of meeting God?” I asked.

“Well,” said he, “I thought it all over, and felt calm and ready. I never made any profession, but I’m convinced of the truth of religion. When young, I used to read Tom Paine and Voltaire, and I liked to argue, for the sake of argument, with any one who seemed sectarian or fond of discussion. Yet I did not believe a word of what I read. I *always believed in my mother’s religion.* No man on the face of God’s globe can lodge an argument between me and my mother’s religion.”

Rev. Dr. Robert Patterson, writing from Hatcher’s Run, in March, 1865, gives an account of the opening of a fresh box of Testaments for the men who were to march within a day or two :

“Boys, I want eight men to help in with this box of Testaments.”

“Here you go, Chaplain,” said a child of fourteen or fifteen, as he caught hold with the others.

*Pleading for a Testament.* "That's a queer little fellow," says one of the men; "he is from Hagerstown, where, when the inhabitants fled, his father bushwhacked Stuart's Cavalry and got killed, and he enlisted."

He gets a Testament and a hymn book :

"If you give me another, I'll distribute it."

"To whom will you distribute it, my son?"

"To my Color Sergeant, sir."

He is bringing in his blanket and great-coat for the Commission to send home for him.

"I wish you would give me one of those Testaments. I had one covered with leather, mother gave me, and I carried it all through the campaign, till I lost my knapsack. I wouldn't have taken fifty dollars for it."

"Please, Chaplain, let me have one. I have a Bible my mother gave me, but the covers are worn off it, and I have to tie it with a string; and I think I'll send it home."

Here is a young convert who found Christ last week, and he must have one. There is a boy who wants to send home his Fifth Corps badge, a Maltese silver cross, inscribed with Antietam and a dozen other battles. We cannot refuse him one.

The box of Testaments will scarcely last till night. Here is a Chaplain with an oat sack for papers and Testaments; he will shoulder it two miles. Here comes a brother with whom I have crossed the prairie, and mingled in the great revival of 1858; and he says the spirit among the men is the same as in that. His Colonel, McCoy, conducts the meeting when he is absent, and the chapel tent is filled every night.

I attended a Bible-class on Sabbath afternoon, in the Third Brigade, Second Division, Fifth Corps. Almost all the boys had Testaments; but one of the leaders, buttoned up to the throat, went around, and opening his breast poured forth the Word of God from his overflowing bosom, to those who needed. Then they all began the study of the Sermon on the Mount. At night in that chapel over a dozen were under conviction and seeking prayer, after the sermon. They will not willingly leave the meeting till the drum calls them away.



Rev. W. H. Gilbert,<sup>1</sup> canvassing the army to find its need of the Word of God, comes upon these incidents :

In one tent, where there were four men, two of them went to the meetings, and became hopefully converted. Without opposition from the other two, they began reading the Bible and praying in their tent. One of them, a short, stout man, whom they called "Chubby," was accustomed to read for them. *"Mother Taught Me to read it."* At length Chubby was sent to the front. When the hour of worship next came, his companion, not willing to give up the exercise, or to conduct it entirely alone, asked his comrades who should read the Bible for them :

"Will you, William?"

"No," was the reply; "I can't read the Bible, I never did."

The other tent-mate, who was a very profane and wicked man, responded—

"I will; I ought to. My mother taught me to read it; and it would have been better for me if I had always obeyed her." And the tears flowed, as he took the book and read a chapter. When he had done, his pious companion knelt to pray, and he knelt too; and when the other had prayed, he followed, and then and there gave himself to Christ, and began a Christian life.

In one of the meetings at City Point, a soldier said that he had been trying to serve Christ for about six months. He had been trying to induce all his company to come to the meeting and seek Jesus; and had persuaded eleven to come. *Its Price above Rubies.* He drew his Bible from his pocket, and said he had read it through three times since he began to serve Christ, and he would not exchange it for all other books that could be collected.

Rev. John B. Perry<sup>2</sup> writes in March from the chapel at Warren Station, of the influence exerted through these "tabernacles in the wilderness:"

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<sup>1</sup> Joint Agent of the American Bible Society, and of the Commission.

<sup>2</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Swanton, Vt.

There were two boys from a regiment not noted for piety, who began to attend the services at Warren Station chapel. Becoming interested in the meetings, they persevered and soon gave evidence

*A Chapel's Influence.*

that they were born of God. Going back to their own camp, they started social worship in their tents.

The little gatherings were nightly continued; the number in attendance increased; soon thirty from that regiment indulged hope in Christ.

In another regiment there had been found, a few months before, but a single professing Christian. He had been alone for a year. He was an unassuming, quiet, conscientious boy, about nineteen years old. His life was so spotless and his efforts so faithful that interest among his comrades was at last awakened. On the 1st of April there were eighteen of the regiment who cherished a substantial trust in Christ as the Divine Saviour.

The fruit on the battle-field of these awakenings was what might have been expected,—soldiers “strong in the Lord.” On the evening of March 22d, a soldier who had recently found peace was baptized and received into the Army Christian Association.

*At Home with Jesus.*

In the severe fighting of March 25th he was mortally wounded. When brought off the field, though suffering intensely, he was happy in mind. He sent messages to his friends at home, and to his companions in arms, urging them to seek Christ. As the breath ebbed away amidst the outward signs of extreme bodily anguish, we asked him whither he was going:

“I am going home; yes, I am going home to be with Jesus.”

Rev. W. Howell Buchanan<sup>1</sup> writes of the way in which the soldiers became attached to the chapels:

I attended one meeting in the chapel at Meade Station, whose like for deep, quiet, religious earnestness I had never seen. It was literally baptized in tears, and it was certainly baptized by the Holy

*The Gate of Heaven.*

Ghost. One young man, whose emotions continually choked his utterance, told me—

“I helped to build this chapel, and I shall never forget the place. I didn't know when I was at work here what good

<sup>1</sup> Of Elverston Ill.

it would do me, but I have been converted here. I've been home since, and united with the old church, Dr. Plummer's, in Allegheny City, but I can never—never forget this chapel. It's been the gate of heaven to me."

Just before the order came for an advance along the whole line, the chapel meetings were at the climax of their interest and power. Two narratives will illustrate this. The first is from the pen of Rev. Dr. Patterson, written at "Quinnipiac Chapel," near Hatcher's Run, on March 20th :

Yesterday afternoon and evening there were two crowded meetings at General Gwyn's headquarters, in the chapel tent where the men have kept up meetings every evening for weeks, without any Chaplain. When I went in, a soldier with a Sergeant's chevrons was preaching Christ,—“His name shall be called *“Ironsides.”* Wonderful.” It was a noble gospel sermon. I thought of Cromwell's preaching and praying “Ironsides,” and took courage for our future.

At night I preached to a crowded house ; the officers and men sitting on round poles, with pins stuck in for legs, instead of benches. What our velvet-cushioned pew-holders would say to meetings lasting for three hours on such a “roost” I can't say,—but General Gwyn, with his Colonels and officers, seemed satisfied to obtain room amidst the crowd. After sermon there was a prayer meeting. The faces and utterances of the men denoted the deepest feelings. I had not been accustomed to so much excitement in my meetings at home, and so expressed myself to an officer present.

“You should have heard them express their feelings,” said he, “when with the skirmish line they took the enemy's works at Dabney's Mills.” It did seem as if they were wrestling in mortal conflict with sin. The Colonel said of some of the men who were praying—

“They are the best men in my regiment. In the fight, there's no nold back about *them*. That little drummer-boy yonder was a terrible fellow once ; but we have no trouble with him now.”

The second narrative concerns the meetings in the

Sixth Corps, conducted by the Corps Agent, Rev. Geo. A. Hall,<sup>1</sup> in the station chapel :

The nightly crowded meetings in the chapel witnessed such scenes as have never been known outside of army lines. The night before a fight on the left, the question was put to a most solemn assembly—

“*Falling in*”  
for the Front.      “How many of you that are seeking Christ are ready to surrender to Him now?”

In answer some twelve or fifteen came forward and knelt by the front seat;—among them was an interesting youth. An old man seeing him, darted from his seat and pressing through the crowded aisle, threw his arms about the young soldier, sobbing—

“My son, my son. He was lost and is found.”

Just then an Adjutant from Division headquarters, apologizing for his intrusion, called out—

“All men belonging to — Division, fall in.”

They were to march in the darkness of night, to secure a position for the attack at daylight. The men at the front seat arose, fell on each other's necks and wept. Some of them were to go. The father was not in the division ordered out. His boy was. The parting was tender and cheerful. He kissed him and said—

“Go now, my boy, since the Lord is going with you.”

There were hurried pledges to be faithful, and then they all took hold of hands around the altar and sang—

“Say, brothers, will you meet us  
On Canaan's happy shore?”

and hurried to their quarters to make ready to fall in. Some did not return from that fight. Two were brought into City Point Hospital badly wounded. They told us of the meeting, of their consecration, of their fearlessness in the fight, and their readiness to meet death, if it was God's will. Others came back and participated in a few more meetings in the chapel, and joined with us in our closing Communion service—the last meeting in the chapel, and the last meeting in the Corps before the final movement on Richmond.

It was a wonderful service, the ordinance of the Lord's Supper

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<sup>1</sup> Member of Troy Conference, Meth. Epis. Church.

under marching orders. Officers, soldiers and Delegates—all united hearts and said parting words. Some of them, without doubt, would next drink of the fruit of the vine new in the Father's Kingdom. None expected to commune together again in this world; but in this they were happily disappointed.

*The Lord's  
Supper under  
Marching Or-  
ders.*

When the Sixth Corps had finished its noble record of marching and fighting, and came to rendezvous back of Alexandria, Mr. Hall, with his station in working order and his chapel-flag flying, called in his boys once more. The blessed meetings were resumed and on the last Sabbath before mustering out, one more Communion service was held in memorial of Christ's love. It was a fit place and time for testimony to that love, by men who had come into the service as His disciples, had been kept true and were returning veterans in that service; by men who had fallen under army temptations and had been rescued; and by many who were going home after a three years' service to testify for the first time to their families and neighbors of the power of the Christian life.

Before closing the story of the armies operating against Richmond, reference must be made to the special work undertaken by the Commission in behalf of the colored troops, who made up the Twenty-fifth Corps in the Army of the James. A conference of Chaplains met early in the Winter at Butler Station, and was immediately followed by an appeal from the Executive Committee at Philadelphia for fifty teachers for colored soldiers. Gen. Butler gave *carte blanche* for all the needed lumber. Primers, Spelling-books and Bible-readers were forwarded in very large numbers. Soon thirty neat edifices attested the eagerness of the men to learn to read and write, and schools were in progress in nearly every regiment of the Corps. Two large Commission stations—"Birney" and "Wild"—one mile apart, were established to facilitate the general work. Long before

this, however, the attention of the Commission had been called to the necessity of doing something towards the instruction of this part of the army. Rev. J. W. Harding,<sup>1</sup> writing from Bermuda Hundred in September, 1864, says :

These colored soldiers have strong arms and warm hearts. They salute us respectfully, their bearing is soldierly, and the highest favor we can give them is a Primer or a First or Second Reader, or a Testament. They are bent on learning to read. It would please you to see me in the capacity of a primary school teacher to some brawny cavalry six-footer. He stands by my side, cap in hand, booted and spurred, his bright sabre clanking at his heels, and eagerly spelling out the words which shall unseal for him the fountains of knowledge. I could devote my whole time in giving them spelling and reading lessons. And then you should see them on their well-groomed horses, marching in a squad of Rebel prisoners. They say nothing, but they look everything, and so do their more than crest-fallen captives. We found some of these in the guard-house yesterday, who were actually in mortal dread of their colored guard, lest, remembering Fort Pillow, they might lay violent hands on them. There is no doubt that a salutary fear of our colored soldiers is pervading the Rebel camps. And then you should see these black troopers escorting in their wives and little ones and sweethearts, each loaded on the head and in both hands with the spoils of the Egyptians; and the laughing pickaninies, who cannot march, nestling in the left arms of their protectors.

It is impossible within reasonable limits to give anything like an adequate idea of the characteristics of the colored soldier. Yet an incident or two may help to form a partial picture. Rev. E. F. Williams gives a story occurring at the City Point General Hospital :

On one of the hottest days in August, Lieut.-Gen. Grant rode up

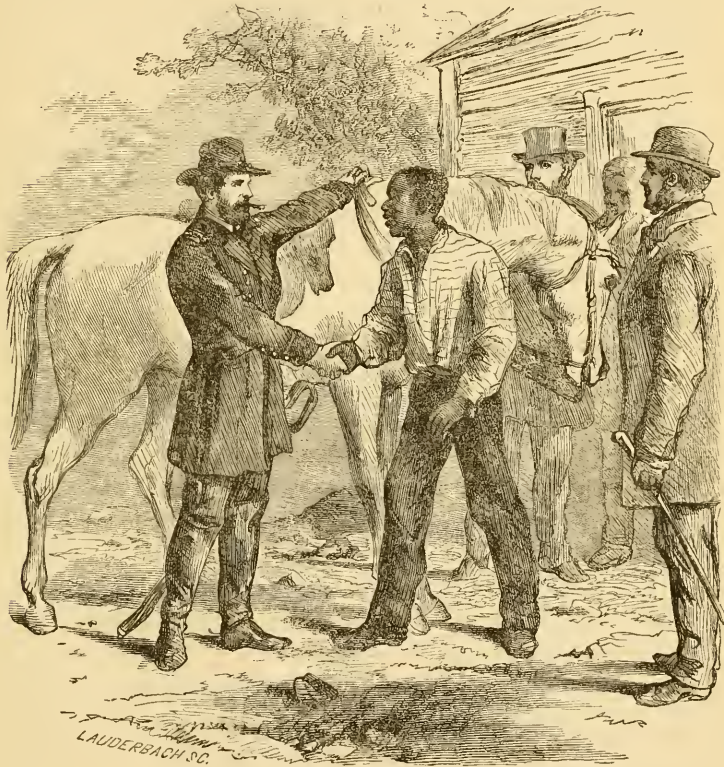
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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Longmeadow, Mass.



to the Commission headquarters, and asked for a drink of water. A cup of lemonade, sweetened with black-brown sugar, was handed him, with the apology that we had no water and the lemonade was just such as we gave the men in the hospitals. The General drank it with great apparent relish, thanked us for it, declared it could not be better, and shook hands with the Delegates who crowded around him. Asking for the accustomed "light," he was just about mounting his horse, when one of our negro employés, without hat, coat or vest, elbowed his way through the crowd, and reaching out an enormous hand, said—

*Gen. Grant and  
the Contraband.*



QUESTIONING GENERAL GRANT.

“How de do, Gin’ral Grant?”

The words were spoken with gentlemanly deference, and the man’s whole appearance indicated that he had been attracted not by mere

curiosity. The General shook the proffered hand warmly. The man then disclosed the purpose of his approach :

“ How am tings goin', Gin'ral ? ”

To appreciate the question it must be remembered that it was at a time of great depression among the colored people,—not long after the fatal mine explosion in front of Petersburg. The simple answer of the General at once quieted the man's fears :

“ Everything is going right, sir. ”

Politely bowing his thanks, his eyes meantime beaming gratitude, he backed out of the circle and returned to his work. On his way back I met him and asked where he had been :

“ Been to see Gin'ral Grant, sah. ”

“ What did he say to you ? ”

“ Said eberyting was goin' right, sah. ”

Before a great while the General's Sybilline sentence was known by all the colored people near City Point ; and it was astonishing to observe the effect which the simple words had in reviving the spirits of those who, a few hours before, had been so depressed and disheartened.

Rev. Geo. N. Marden gives a colored soldier's idea of the cause of the war :

Joseph Upcheer, of a colored regiment, was sick at City Point Post Hospital. He was full of Christian and patriot faith :

“ Some say dar's no God in dis war. But I puts my trust in de Lord, an' balls don't scare me. De han' ob de Lord is in de war. ”

*Why the War  
Came.*

“ What do you think is the cause of it, Joseph ? ”

“ He revolved the question a moment and then said, earnestly—

“ So much unfair work am de cause ob de war. My ole uncle, who died twenty year ago, put his han' on my head once, and says he, ‘ Young dog, make has' and grow. Bimeby you'll have a gun and fight. ’ Wese ben 'spectin' dis war, sah ; dere's been so much unfair work. ”

Mr. Edwin Ferris, of New York City, gives his experience of the eagerness of the men to learn :

There was no reserve, no cold formality; the greetings I received made me feel at home at once. Young and old were alike anxious for instruction, and applied themselves so assiduously that their progress was very rapid.<sup>1</sup> One day, while teaching one of them his letters, he found it difficult keeping them apart before his unused eyes. I shall never forget the way in which he lifted his sleeve and drew it across his face dripping with perspiration—

*Making him  
Sweat.*

“Massa, dis *do* make me sweat.”

One noble old Christian soldier said to me, “I bless de good Lord for what He’s helped me to larn. I’s e gwine to keep on right smart. I’s e got to work sharper’n dese young uns, case I hasn’t so much time lef” to study in.”

One more incident of eagerness to learn is related by Rev. Mr. Marden :

February 14th I discovered, within two stones’ throw of our chapel at City Point, a nest of contrabands’ huts on the edge of a little ravine. The men were laborers in the railroad department. The huts were of the cheapest construction. Two or three boxes, the same number of old barrels, a few nails, an old boot-leg, a few sticks and stones, with the aid of the all-pervading Virginia mud, constitute the dwellings. An old boot-leg cut up makes hinges, on which swing, for window and door, some painfully dovetailed bits of board.

*Hungry for  
Primers.*

My advent was the signal for a resurrection. As from the capsules of certain flowers the little black seeds roll out when the cell is broken, so from the patch-work huts the dwellers now poured forth. Each one wanted a book. One boy of eleven years read so well that I gave him a Testament, which made his face all at once like the “countless laughter” of Æschylus’ sea. Mothers came begging a primer for their children. All were eager, curious, delighted.

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Herbert C. Clapp, of Cambridge, Mass., writing from Wild’s Station in February, gives a remarkable instance of application: “One night I taught a man the alphabet and a few elementary principles. The next evening he came to me, prepared to recite *one half the spelling-book* I had given him. He had studied the whole day, with occasional assistance from a mate.”

One grown negro, on receiving a book, gave vent to a guffaw, the like to which I had never dreamed the human throat capable of. The women, unselfish as ever, seemed more anxious to get the primers for their children than for themselves.

Mr. C. E. Bolton,<sup>1</sup> a Delegate to the army in July and August, 1864, tells a striking story of the attachment of the colored soldier to the Bible :

William and Thomas Freeman were brothers, living in Connecticut at the outbreak of the war. They enlisted in the 30th Regiment U. S. C. T., and were afterwards transferred to the 31st. At the close of the first day's battle in the Wilderness, they together entered a large house, once the property of an extensive slaveholder. Several slave women in the dwelling were nearly famished with hunger. The soldiers kindly relieved their wants by emptying their haversacks of all their rations. The only return which the women could make was the presentation to William Freeman of a large, finely-bound and beautifully clasped quarto Bible, weighing about nine pounds. Thomas and William were both Christians, and valued the gift very highly. It took the place of blankets in William's knapsack. He carried it through all the marches to the entrenchments of Petersburg. There he went into the fatal charge of July 30th, after the mine explosion, and was wounded in the breast. The great Bible went with him into the battle in his knapsack. He would never allow it to be beyond his reach. His brother Thomas, who was a Color Sergeant, was wounded in the same engagement. He was among the few who struggled beyond the chasm made by the mine, and was carried back to find his brother dead. As the men were bearing him further on towards the rear, he begged that his brother's knapsack might be placed upon the stretcher under his head. Thus the precious book reached the hospital of the 4th Division of the Ninth Corps, where I was working in the Commission service.

William was buried between the picket lines under a flag of truce.

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<sup>1</sup> A Student of Amherst College, Mass. He was accompanied to the army by Profs. Seelye and Hitchcock.

POOR Thomas' wounds soon were discovered to be mortal also. Weak and worn out, he was taken after a few days to the General Hospital at City Point. Sergeant Edward P. Gilbert, of Bath, N. Y., was a wardmaster of our hospital. To him, as Thomas left for City Point, he sold the cherished volume.

A few days later this book, representing so much faith and heroism, became mine by purchase, and was afterwards given to Amherst College. President Stearns, in receiving it on behalf of the Trustees, remarked—

“I consider it one of the most valuable reminiscences of the war, presented to the College.” The book has now a prominent place in the show-case of the “Appleton Cabinet” at Amherst.

Another leaf from Rev. Mr. Marden's experience shows us how in the last hour the colored soldier could exercise the same trust with his white brother :

I met Thomas Jackson Yager in one of the City Point wards. He looked up at me with a smile when he saw my badge, and gave me his hand, thin and hard worn with years of unrequited toil :

*“Giving up  
when the Lord  
does.”*

“Do you love the Lord, Thomas?”

“I *does* love Him; He's *all* to me. I'se happy lyin' here,—full ob joy an' praise. I pray de Lord, bless you in your work.”

“Where are you from, Thomas?”

“I'se from Lagrange, in old Kentuck. I come into de army to fight for freedom. Lef' my wife and de chile behin' me, an' I dunno how dey treat her. But de Lord's been good to me, and I doesn't feel like nuffin' but tanks.”

A fortnight later I meet him again. His cheeks are sunken, and his eye dimmer than before. I take his hand again, and he begins to talk :

“My time won't be long heah. All my trust is in de Lord. I beliebe the Lord is waitin' for me. I'se weak, but I'se ready to go. Wish I could git a letter from my wife; I'se like to know how she's gittin' 'long. She wa'n't a Christian when I lef', but it looked



mighty like es if she wanted to be one. I'll never be of much more 'count heah ; but I hate to gib up 'fore de Lord gib up ; when He says I kin live no more, den I'se ready to gib up."

A little later, the Christian soldier had gone away to his everlasting rest.

The story of a conversation between a colored Sergeant, and Rev. E. P. Smith, the General Field Agent of the Western Army, while on a visit to the East, may give a little insight into the depth of the motives which animated the negro soldiers :

On the steamer from City Point to Fortress Monroe, I came on a group of negro soldiers in friendly conversation and banter with several white artillerymen. They were all on a furlough, and consequently good-natured. The colored men were going to Norfolk ; they had been selected for merit as entitled to a furlough. One was a Sergeant in the 36th U. S. C. Infantry,—a fine, open-faced, well-formed man of twenty-seven or eight years, wearing his belt and sword.

He heard the conversation on fighting men, high bounties, etc., in silence, until a batteryman turning to him asked—

"What bounty did you get?"

"No bounty. I wouldn't 'list for bounty. I have twenty-three more months to put in. I don't say I will go in again when that's out ; can't say till the time comes ; but, if I do, it won't be for bounty. I wouldn't fight for money ; my wages is enough."

"How much pay do you get?"

"Seven dollars a month, till they riz to sixteen. That keeps me along right smart. Them big-bounty men don't make good soldiers."

"What's the matter with them?"

"Dey comes in for money ; dar's no Country 'bout it, an' dey hasn't no stomach for fightin' an' diggin' an' knockin' roun', like soldiers has to."

"What's money got to do with that? Why can't a man fight just as well if he leaves a thousand dollars in bank, to have when he comes back,—'maybe sick or wounded?"

*A Colored Sergeant's Opinions.*



“Well, he mout; but y’ see it’s the greenbacks wot fatches him in, an’ he keeps studyin’ how he can jump for anoder bounty; an’ dem sort of sojers ain’t no count for fightin’.”

“Sergeant, didn’t you enlist ’cause you had run away from master, and had no place?”

“No, sir,”—with spirit; “I had a place an’ good wages,—heap more’n a sojer gits,—drivin’ team for Quartermaster; an’ when I told ’m I was goin’ in, an’ wanted my back pay, he cussed me, an’ said I shouldn’t ’list. I told him I had a right, an’ I would, an’ all I asked of him was to pay wot was comin’ to me—more’n two hundred dollars. He swar an’ took on ’bout ’restin’ me, an’ nex’ day when I had ’listed, he saw me on the street, an’ called a guard, an’ put me in irons ten hours. Dat’s my bounty, two hundred dollars—wages—gin up, an’ ten hours in irons by a Copperhead Quartermaster.”

The soldiers had gathered around, highly interested in the Sergeant’s straightforward, earnest story.

“I’d a split his copper head open with the irons,” said one of them.

“Dat’s not me,” said the Sergeant; “I don’t take vengeance—dat’s God’s business, an’ He’ll work it to suit Hisself.”

The men drew back a little, and were silent all round the ring. I stepped forward, and said to him—

“Sergeant, how long have you been a Christian?”

He looked at me with a full, quick eye, as if he had found a brother:

“Ten years, sir.”

“How old are you?”

“Twenty-eight, sir.”

“Then you were converted when you were eighteen years old. Where did you live?”

“Near Richmond.”

“Have you a wife?”

“Yes; I lef’ my wife an’ son when McClellan come close up to Richmond, an’ everybody reckoned he was goin’ to walk in.”

“How old is your son?”

“Not quite a year when I got away.”

“Do you hear from them?”

"Yes; I seen a lady from thar in Norfolk, an' she said, mas'er done an' sol' Nancy an' the boy."

"You will hardly see them again, will you?"

"When dey git done fightin', I reckon I kin find her."

"But you won't know where to look."

"Den I'll keep lookin', an' I reckon I'll find 'em. Anyhow, I trust in Providence 'bout it."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I mean de Lord God A'mighty; He knows all 'bout it, an' He will do what's right."

"Yes, Sergeant, the Lord may do what's right, but the man who has bought Nancy and your baby and carried them off, may not do what's right about it. What then?"

"Why, den, I reckon dat's for Him to settle 'bout. I'se nuffin' to do wid dat."

"You are pretty near your master; he might be looking for you one of these days."

"Yes, he mout; an' den, y' see, I mout be lookin' for him. Chance the same on bof sides now. They say my master was 'scripted an' had to go in."

"Perhaps, you will have a chance yet to pay him back," said the batteryman.

"I never pays back. De Lord A'mighty takes the vengeance. Dat's Hissen, an' I don't have nuffin' to do wid it."

"There's his doctrine again. Don't he stick to his text?" says a Pittsburg soldier. "He's right, too, all the time," says another.

"Don't know about the right," called a voice across the ring, "but he's bully on consistence."

"Well Sergeant, have you really made much by running away?"

"Made much? I made two hundred dollars in Norfolk, but didn't git it."

"I mean you are not much better off soldiering, lying out in the wet, digging in the trenches, and going in where the minie balls hum. That's not much better than to be at home on the old plantation with wife and baby."

"Sojerin' *is* hard work, but dere's a heap of difference."

"What's the difference?"

"Freedom, sir, Freedom! I say 'Liberty' in 'Dutch Gap.' I

wakes up in the night and says 'Liberty.' Yes, there's a heap of difference. I kin say Liberty all the time."

"You said you enlisted for your Country. What has your Country done for you except to give you a chance to make tobacco and cotton for your master, and have your wife and baby sold down in Georgia?"

"God has done a heap for me. He has given me my life. I never had no sickness, an' now He's done an' made me free, an' I'm willin' to fight for the rest of 'em."

"Sergeant," said a white soldier, "do you know that you are just like Jeff Davis on the war question?"

"Not much, I reckon."

"Exactly alike;—you are both fighting for the 'nigger.'"

"Dat may be, but it makes a heap of odds to which whips."

"Do you think Jeff will put the colored men in?" he asked.

"He is doing it now. It will not be long before a corps of those black fellows will be down on the 'right,' to drive you Twenty-fifth Corps men into the river. What will you do then?"

"If I should see my father in the Rebel army, I should shoot him. He got no business dar. Dar's some cullud people got no sense. Rebels has talked foolishness to 'em so much, you can't beat sense into 'em. I'se no use for dat sort cullud folks. I fight for the 'nigger' when he's right."

"Bully for him!" came from a dozen lips of soldiers gathered round. My thankful heart said, "God be praised for such piety and patriotism!"

At Fortress Monroe, on parting from the Sergeant who was going to the Norfolk boat, I offered a prayer for the mother and baby far away, and that a Country, saved by such devotion, may learn at last to deal justly by all her children.

Rev. C. D. Herbert,<sup>1</sup> writing in September from the Base Hospital of the Eighteenth Army Corps, preserves this memorial of a colored soldier's sacrifice:

In the knapsack of a dead colored soldier, I found a letter written

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, W. Newbury, Mass.

some days before, with a postscript added on the day of his death. It seems that when first brought into hospital, before he knew of the nature of his wounds and while expecting to recover, he wrote—

*Volunteered to Die.*

“When this cruel war is over I hope to meet with the dear friends I so much love. Fond memory brings back days gone by, and I hope to return to a blessed joyfulness in my once happy home. I feel anxious to serve you, O my dear country, but I am weak with infirmities. May God heal me, is my prayer in this army, and make me a soldier of the cross, and clean my heart of all its sins in the world; for Christ’s sake. Amen.

“JOHN C. WHITEN.”

When he learned how badly he was wounded, and that he must die, he took the letter from beneath his pillow, and added this touching postscript:

“Most sincerely yours—departed; John C. W. — *Volunteered to die.*”

My letter, breaking the sad intelligence as gently as I knew how, enclosed also the patriot’s last letter to wife and children, with its postscript.

Rev. A. Fuller<sup>1</sup> records two incidents of the memorable Sunday on which our army broke through the Confederate lines around Petersburg. They are a type of the triumph of the cause:

The fighting just in front of us, around three or four forts, had been desperate, and both parties had suffered severely. Among our own and the Confederate wounded we had all that we could do until late at night. Near evening the boom of the cannon, which since the previous midnight had been almost constantly rending the air, had ceased, and even the scattering shots of scouts and skirmishers had gradually died away. The troops had stacked their arms, and were eagerly talking over their coffee of the events of the day, or planning campaigns for the future. The bands, gathered about the flags of their respective regiments or brigades,

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Hallowell, Me.

were filling the air with music. The warm April sun, breaking through the clouds which lay heavily along the west, was adding the glory of its beams to crown the glory of the day.

The effect was marvellous. The quiet, solemn stillness of the hour, which the melody of the bands seemed only to render rythmical and deeper, was in such strange contrast with the strife and carnage of the day, that it would be hard to describe the attendant emotions. It was a time neither of war nor yet of peace; it was the hour of precious, hallowed, but costly victory, and many a weary head was turned feebly but eagerly on its bloody pillow of turf, to look upon the scene and listen to the softened notes of triumph,—until earthly sights and sounds were lost in the beauty and melody of the Other Land.

As I was resting a moment in my work, a band at army headquarters near us suddenly struck up one of our most spirited national airs. There was a Union soldier lying near me, whom I had supposed past all earthly waking. At the first note of the music he started and gazed wildly about him, as if trying to understand where he was. With a great effort raising himself on his elbow, he looked eagerly at me, and half fiercely, half pleadingly, asked—

“Is that a Rebel band, sir?”

“No,” said I, “that’s Union all through. Don’t you hear the air? The Rebels are a long way from here. We have carried their whole line of works.”

He looked somewhat incredulously at me, as if it was almost too much to believe; and then, as he saw and heard more distinctly for himself, and drank in gradually all of the truth, his whole countenance kindled up with enthusiasm. Looking reverently towards heaven, he said with a voice of the deepest solemnity and fervor—

“Glory to God! It’s all I ask. You may do what you like with me now,” and without another earthly word, he sank back and died.

Long after dark by the aid of lanterns, we were groping about to seek for any who might be still left without proper care, when I almost stumbled over a man lying by himself in great agony. His leg had been shattered by a piece of shell, which had struck him midway between the knee and hip joints. I had him carried to a Surgeon’s table, where his leg was amputated.

*Enlisted to  
Suffer.*

In the morning when he had somewhat recovered from the severe operation he had undergone, I carried him some food and drink. He was very grateful for the little attention. He had been the slave of a gentleman near Norfolk, where his wife, mother and children were still living. Escaping from his master to the Union lines, he was one of the first to enlist in our army. He was a Christian, and had become a soldier from a deep sense of duty to his race. Wounded the day before the general engagement, he had lain on the field, uncared for, with wounds undressed, and in great bodily agony.

"Well," said I, "you did not expect this when you enlisted, did you? If you were at home and well, would you come back again?"

He seemed moved at the thought of home, but with deep emphasis he quickly replied—

"Yes, sah; yes, I would. I specs all dis when I 'listed. I specs to suffer. I specs now I'll die; but, bress de Lord, I'se free, an' Susy an' de chillens free, an' I'se ready to die, ef de Lord will."

I offered a brief prayer and left him, never to see him again, and yet ever to remember the sable hero, so worthy to be an American citizen.

The Commission made full preparations for the emergencies which might arise during the pursuit of Gen. Lee. Happily there was not all of the anticipated need. The *Christian Banner*, of August, 1865, relates a story told by Gen. Edwards, of the battle of Sailor's Creek, fought on April 7th:

In the very thickest of the fight, C. F. Drake, of Co. B, 37th Massachusetts Regiment, ordered a Rebel Colonel to surrender. He replied that he would never surrender. Drake then shot him, inflicting a mortal wound. The Colonel fell, exclaiming that he was killed. Drake said to him, "I am a Christian, and will pray for you." The Colonel thanked him, and Drake kneeled by his side and prayed with him, while the conflict raged almost hand to hand around them. The Colonel pressed his hand, called him brother, told him that he too was a Christian, and thanked him. Then Drake resumed his gun and went on fighting.

*"Pray for thine  
Enemies."*



The main body of the Army, after the surrender, took up its line of march for Washington. Commission stations were retained, and work kept up among the troops remaining in the vicinity of the recent events. With a narrative illustrating this, by Rev. J. H. Moore, we close the memorial incidents of the active operations of the Army of the Potomac

It might be supposed that these great events, so exciting in their nature, would destroy the religious interest which was so remarkably manifest in the army previous to the advance. But such was not the fact. True, for a few days, nearly all the troops around City Point were away in the battles, and our chapel services, for the time being, were almost deserted by the soldiers; but when Richmond fell, the regiments which had been encamped here came back, and soon filled up the chapel again.

*Coming to  
Chapel Alone.*

A soldier, whom I had often seen before at our services, came forward one evening, and told me that his most intimate companion, who used always to attend the meetings with him, had fallen in the fighting before Petersburg.

“He was my dearest friend in the army,” the soldier said; “he was the instrument in my conversion. I remember how mad I used to get when he knelt down and prayed in our tent, before going to bed. I used to turn over and try to go to sleep and forget all about him. I held out a good while, but had to give in at last. So I began to pray too. We prayed together afterwards, and came here together. The last thing he did before going to the front was to kneel down and commit himself to God in our old tent. He fell dead at my side on the field; and now I have to come to chapel alone.”

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE EASTERN ARMIES.

OPERATING NEAR WASHINGTON AND HARPER'S FERRY.

June 1864—June 1865.

THE advance of Gen. Grant's army gave an immense increase to the Delegates' work in the Washington hospitals. Thither, when Fredericksburg was abandoned, were brought the wounded of the earlier battles of the great campaign. Camp Distribution, the point of departure for the convalescents of the hospitals, was well filled, and here was continued the blessed work of grace, begun so long before, until the return of the victorious armies and the close of the Commission's operations.

Rev. J. W. Hough<sup>1</sup> writes from the camp in June, 1864:

One of our candidates for baptism had been, to use his own words, "a very hard boy." Some months before, he had been confined in the guard-house for a misdemeanor, and on coming out he was ashamed to mingle with his comrades, lest they should taunt him with his disgrace. He determined to find something to read. Entering the barracks, he picked up a volume put there by the Commission,—Baxter's "*Call to the Unconverted.*"

"I was mad," said he, "when I found it to be a religious book,

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Williston, Vt.

and threw it from me. But afterwards, when I could find nothing else, I picked it up again, and lay down to read. It interested and impressed me at once. The question came to me, 'What right have I to treat God as I do? He has never injured me.' I was very much troubled, and so continued a long time, till I began to think less of myself and more of Jesus; and then His love came into my heart."

On the day of his discharge from the camp, he entered publicly into covenant with Christ.

Rev. Milton L. Severance<sup>1</sup> has preserved a soldier's straightforward form for expressing his thought:

The apostle says, "By this shall ye know that ye have passed from death unto life, because ye love the brethren," and I have never seen a livelier test of this than a colored soldier gave at the close of one of our evening meetings. There was a simplicity in his expression and manner which touched all our hearts:

*Charity.*

"I love my Saviour, I love the Church of Christ, I love the world, I love everybody, I love them that don't love me."

I felt that the poor son of Africa had reached the climax of Christian experience. Like the martyred Stephen, and his Saviour before him, he could pray for those who had spitefully used him.

Rev. Dr. C. W. Wallace,<sup>2</sup> in December, writes ·

One Sabbath morning at the camp, I met a boy at my door, waiting to see a Delegate. Poor little fellow, what a life he had had! His parents died when he was quite young, in New York city. He fell to the care of a brother, a most abandoned man. There was no one really to care for his welfare; the only faint bond between him and anything higher was the dim remembrance he retained of a good mother. For years he was a street "Arab," sleeping at night in boxes and doorways,—anywhere to escape Summer heat and Winter cold. His food was

*Crying out  
after God.*

<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Boscawen, N. H.

<sup>2</sup> Pastor of First Congregational Church, Manchester, N. H.

picked up in various indefinite ways. In his fifteenth year he entered the army. I found him to be a sincere inquirer for the truth.

“What shall I do?” he said. “Since I was a boy I’ve done nothing but swear and steal and everything else that’s bad, and now to try to be good,—it’s very hard.”

The poor fellow in his ignorance would weep, and put his hands out gropingly for the better way, but it was hard to direct him to Christ in a manner which he could understand. The few times I saw him he would come to the place of prayer, and bow himself very humbly among the others; but he was soon ordered to the front, and I met him no more. His strange, pitiful face and earnest cry for the truth deeply impressed me. They must surely have found an answer.

The permanent Agent in charge of the Commission’s work of the camp was Rev. Jas. P. Fisher.<sup>1</sup> From the final report prepared by his wife after his death, we select the following incidents:

A soldier rose one evening and told his story:

“My friends, I left home an infidel, but I left a praying wife. A week ago I received a letter from her, in which she expressed anxiety for the welfare of my soul, and desired to know if I still held to my old views. I wrote an answer, and in bitter words defended my old position. As I was about to seal the letter, it seemed to me I could not send it. I wrote another, softened down considerably from the first; but when that was done, I could not send *it*. I began another, but such was the power of the Spirit upon my heart, that I fell upon my knees, and begged for forgiveness before God. I could not finish the letter until I could say to my dear wife that Christ had forgiven my sins. I have been permitted to write to her that I am to-night rejoicing in *her* Saviour. I feel that I am now prepared for the battle-field, and, if I am ever permitted to return home, I trust I shall go back prepared for that also—a better man than when I came into the army.”

Another comes to tell of the preserving care:

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<sup>1</sup> Of Westfield, N. Y.

“Oh, yes! I tink it not right, when I my God not tank. He cares for me; the bullets go through my clothes, and hurt me no. I must mend my sleeve and my blouse in the side and in the front. Oh, yes; I must love my God, and keep fast to the Christian. And my heart pull me so heavy sometimes, when de priest say we shall get up in der meeting and say someting, and I no can speak goot English.”

*The Love that  
could not be told.*

“You can say you love Jesus.”

“Oh, yes, I have say dat, and keep say dat all der time.”

From Mrs. Fisher’s own experience,—a peculiarly rich one,—we take a story of the hospital connected with the camp:

On one of my visits, after staying over my time to speak to nearly all in the ward, I was hastening out; but the sad, despairing look from a cot I was passing so impressed me that I returned. To my inquiry after the soldier’s health, he answered—

“Yes; I’m sick, but I don’t care.”

*The Forgotten  
Saviour Recalled.*

“Do you love Jesus?”

“I don’t know as I do.”

“Have you a wife?”

“No, she died on the way to ——.”

“Children?”

“They died, the only two I had.”

“Parents?”

“No, they died in ——; and as for me, I don’t care what becomes of me.”

“Poor soldier,” said I, “how sorry I am for you! No friends on earth; no Friend in heaven! You are indeed to be pitied. But hear what the Saviour says to you; ‘Ye believe in God; believe also in *Me*. In My Father’s house are many mansions.’” I repeated through the sixth verse. Gradually the look of despair gave way, and he said slowly, in low tones—

“That is beautiful; that is *very* beautiful. Where is it?”

I told him the chapter. He reached under his pillow for his Testament, found the place and asked me to mark it. We read it over

together, he following every word in his Testament with a wonderful eagerness and interest :

“ Now, my boy, does not that Saviour love and care for you ? ”

“ Yes. I had forgotten Him in my trouble, ”

“ Don't you want to come to Him and trust Him now ? ”

“ I'll try. ”

In June, 1865, worn out with incessant toil, Mr. Fisher left his work at the camp. He reached the home of his brother-in-law in Newburg, N. Y., and unable to go further, sank and died.

Some of the scenes of his last days were touchingly beautiful. Like so many others of the Commission who have died in the service, when his mind wandered, all his thoughts were on his work for the soldiers. He was preaching, praying and exhorting. In his lucid intervals his mind turned at once to Jesus and heaven, a beautiful alternation and combining of the Christian's work and faith. The change from delirium was marked by a desire to get upon his knees and offer prayer. He loved to be on his knees. His supplications had little reference to himself, except for purification from sin.

*The Last of  
an Offered Life.*

“ Last night, ” said he, in troubled sleep, “ was the great night of the feast. Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me. ”

In a conscious state, he said to his son—“ My son, there is one passage of Scripture I wish to impress on your mind. I adopted it many years ago to die upon : ‘ The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth from all sin. ’ ”

On the last day of his sickness he called in his sleep, “ Frank, ring the bell ; it is time for meeting ; I am to preach to-night. Is everything ready, —ready for the celebration of His dying love ? ”

And so he passed on, not to the preaching in a rude chapel at Camp Distribution, but to the praise where God is the temple. Everything was ready, and our dear brother celebrates the dying love.

The Confederate Gen. Early in July, 1864, made a



raid into Maryland and Pennsylvania from the Shenandoah Valley. He succeeded in thoroughly alarming Washington and Baltimore, and but little more. Mr. H. M. Whitney<sup>1</sup> tells an incident occurring shortly after :

Before leaving home, a little girl had given me ten cents, the first money she had ever earned, and wanted me to use it for the soldiers. I bought a Testament and determined to give it to the manliest and most deserving soldier I met. For a long while it lay in my valise, for I felt that I had not yet found an owner for it. At last, after Early had been beaten back from Fort Stevens by the Sixth Corps, I found a new and bright face in one of my hospital tents.

“How are you, my friend?” I began.

“First rate.”

“Lightly wounded, then, I suppose?”

He drew back the sheet and showed me that his right arm was gone, cut off close to the shoulder.

“Is that first rate?” I asked.

“Why, it might have been ever so much worse, you know.”

Day after day I found him as cheery and uncomplaining. At first he was overflowing with fun all the time, but at last the terrible heat and the strain upon his system so much reduced his strength that there was only a merry twinkle in his eye when I came in, and a word of cordial greeting. Little by little I learned his history. The action in which he had received his first wound was his thirteenth battle. When he dropped his musket and reached round to take his useless arm tenderly in his left hand and walk off the field under a shower of balls, it was his first time off duty since he entered the service. He was only nineteen years old, but his patriotism was so ardent and his courage so magnificent, that I felt he had become my teacher. As soon as he could sit up, he was busy with pencil and paper, training the muscles of his left hand to replace those of the right. His face had grown pale and thin, his eye dull, his manner

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<sup>1</sup> Of Northampton, Mass.

languid, and his voice broken, but his heart was still strong and manful as ever. Low spirits or complaint seemed impossible to him.

I thought I should have to look long and far to find a soldier worthier of the little Testament. He was eager to get one, having lost everything in that last charge upon the enemy. So I wrote his name, company and regiment on the fly-leaf of the little book, and added how it had come from a little girl in the Connecticut Valley, who had given her first money to comfort the soldier. As I read it the tears started into his eyes.

"I wish," said he, "I had that arm, so that I could thank her myself."

He told me afterwards that he had been thinking much since he had been lying there, and was going to try and lead a better life. I tried to show him where the best and highest Life was to be found, but I know not whether he found it.

Mr. Whitney gives another incident of nearly the same date:

I discovered in one of the wards of Mount Pleasant Hospital, Washington, a young Swede, who had taken the first degree in the University at Lund. He could converse readily in five different languages, and was familiar with Greek and Latin. He was a private in a Maine regiment, a member of the Lutheran Church at home, and a sincere Christian. He wanted a Testament. I asked him in what language. He did not care, but on being pressed chose an English one, as he was not so familiar with our language.

*A Savant in  
the Ranks.*

"How came you," I asked, "with your fine education, comfortable circumstances and excellent prospects, to come to this country and enlist?"

"Why I heard there was a war over here, and I came."

The simplicity and candor of this blue-eyed, flaxen-haired son of the North, and his entire freedom from bloodthirstiness, puzzled me profoundly:

"Did you find the realities of the war at all what you expected?"

"Yes, but better. I have looked into these things a great deal at

home and in Germany, and I think no government and no people ever took such care of their soldiers."

The patient contentment wherewith he bore his severe wound, his coarse fare, his absence from home and friends, and all the little things which would have worn upon most men of his education, was an unceasing marvel to me.

In September "Carleton," visiting a Sunday evening Delegates' experience meeting in Washington, wrote an account of it for the *Congregationalist* :

The Carver Hospital Delegate reported that he found fully one-third of the men in his wards professing Christians. They were glad to see him,—very glad to get religious reading. A few days before, he gave an old man a little book, entitled, "*The Blood of Jesus*;" he had seen him again to-day. The old man greeted him with a smile:

*The Precious Christ.*

"I have found Jesus, and oh, He is *so* precious!"

Another from the same hospital, said—

I found among the patients a minister who enlisted as a private. He has been in the hospital sixteen months, and has maintained his Christian character through all the trials of camp and hospital life. I found some convalescents playing cards:

*"Can't keep Track of Sunday."*

"My boys, you don't play cards on Sunday, do you?"

"It isn't Sunday, is it? Why hang it all, Chaplain, we can't keep track of the days in the army."

I talked to them of home and of their mothers. The tears rolled down their cheeks. They put up their cards and read the papers I gave them.

The Emory Hospital Delegate said—

"I never saw men so ready to receive religious instruction, or who were so easily impressed with the truth. I am satisfied that this is a golden opportunity for the Christian Church. I found a young man to-day, who said—

*"Tell me just What to Do."*

"I want you, Chaplain, to tell me just what I have

to do to be a Christian. I will do just what you say. I want to be a Christian.'

"It was a sincere desire. I find that the Catholics are just as eager to have religious instruction as others."

Another from this hospital, said—

"I found Sergeant ——, of Massachusetts, very low, but he met me with a smile:

"All Right." "It is all right. I am happy, and I die content.  
Tell my friends so."

Another Delegate said, "I have been over the river to see some detached regiments, men who are not in hospital. I asked one noble-looking soldier if he loved Jesus:

"Everybody "No, I don't."  
Feels so." "Are you married?"  
"No; but I have a sister. She isn't a Christian, but she wrote to me that she wanted me to become one, and I wrote to her that I wanted her to be one; and I guess, Chaplain, that everybody who believes the Bible feels just so. If they ain't good themselves, they want their friends to be.'

"I found another soldier writing a letter on a little bit of paper. I gave him a full sheet and an envelope:

"Are you a Christian Commission man?"  
"Yes."  
"Not Quite so Hard." "You are a d—d good set of fellows."  
"Hold on, soldier, not quite so hard."

"I beg your pardon, Chaplain, I didn't mean to swear; but darn it all, I have got into the habit out here in the army, and it comes right out before I think.'

"Won't you try to leave it off?"

"Yes, Chaplain, I will.'"

Another Delegate told us—

"As I went among the men they gathered about me with great eagerness. They were a little disappointed however, when they saw that I was a Delegate of the Commission. They  
*Better than Gold.* took me to be the paymaster:

"But I have something that is better than gold.'

"Give me some of it,' said one, the son of a Baptist minister, a tender-hearted Christian."

Rev. E. F. Williams gives some reminiscences of work in that peculiar field of labor, the Soldiers' Rest at Washington:

It was but a rough kind of "Rest" in the opinion of recruits fresh from home; but to the "veteran," its tight roofs, hard floors and neatly-spread tables were vastly preferable to canvas tents, mud floors, hard-tack and salt pork. The principal barrack was about three hundred feet long; near it were several smaller ones. Our visits, made in March, 1865, were usually begun by distributing papers, books and stationery, giving notice of a meeting as we passed along. Sometimes we were obliged to modify our course however, as in the following instance:

*A Short Sermon.*

The barracks were nearly vacant throughout the day; our work therefore must be done just after breakfast or supper. Coming round rather late one morning, I found a regiment drawn up in marching order. Approaching the officer in command, I inquired—

"How long since these men have had the gospel preached to them?"

"Some three months," was the reply.

"Can I preach to them now?"

"Yes, if you can do it in five minutes."

Instantly I stated the case to the men, taking my text from Prov. ix. 12,—“If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it.” My subject was “Individual Responsibility.” It would have done any Christian good to see how the men drank in the only sermon they had heard for three months. But the five minutes were quickly gone; a hasty benediction pronounced, my audience moved down the street to the music of fife and drum.

On another occasion the whole barracks resounded with the noise made by a body of men whom an Orderly Sergeant was drilling. With some hesitation I asked leave to distribute my papers to the men as they passed. It was readily given. This work accomplished, I was turning to go, when the Orderly politely asked if I didn't wish to preach.

*“Drilling for  
Jesus.”*

"Certainly," said I, "that was what I came for, but as your men are busy drilling, we shall have to let it go, I suppose."

"By no means," he replied; "a little drilling for Jesus is needful now and then to make us good soldiers of the cross."

The music ceased, the men stacked arms and sat down in lines on the floor, and then we had a most precious meeting, in which the pious officer took a most cordial part. As I left the barrack, the tramp and ring of the military evolutions were resumed.

Another evening we found nearly all the men gathered round a wag, who was making a speech for their amusement. The moment seemed inopportune for a meeting, so we went on to another barrack.

*Choosing a Prayer Meeting.* Coming back in an hour, we found the same men spectators of some grotesque negro dances. Father Noble and I held a brief council of war, the result of which was that he stepped into the ring by the side of the dancers, and called out in his stentorian voice—

"I want to know if you are new recruits or veterans."

"Four years in service," was the general answer.

"I thought so," said he. "Now, we Christian Commission Delegates don't want to interfere with your wishes, only to consult them. You have had fun here now for over an hour. Those who, by way of change, want a prayer meeting, show your hands."

Nearly every right hand went up. Two or three only seemed offended, and muttered as they stalked off. The rest seated themselves in an orderly manner, and enjoyed the meeting greatly.

As we were leaving, a fine-looking young man grasped my hand and said—

"We are ordered front to-morrow, and can't tell what awaits us. Will you pray that I may be a faithful Christian?"

After I had reached the door, one who had followed me called me back, and with broken sobs told that he was a guilty sinner in deepest need of Christ.

Gen. Philip H. Sheridan was placed in command in the Shenandoah in August. At Opequan and Fisher's Hill, in September, he so thoroughly defeated Early, the Confederate commander, that he was driven from the Valley into the mountains. Returning after the chase, our army rested at Cedar Creek. Here, during



Sheridan's absence, on October 19th, the camp was surprised by Early, and our forces driven. "Sheridan's ride" from Winchester, however, ere nightfall redeemed the day. After this there was scarcely any more fighting in the Shenandoah Valley.

Mr. J. R. Miller, formerly Field Agent of the Eighteenth Corps in the armies operating against Richmond, became the General Field Agent in the Shenandoah about the time of the battle of Opequan. He writes of the scene after the battle :

Winchester was literally one vast hospital. The churches and public buildings were filled, while nearly every private house had its quota. There was great need of external relief; nothing was left in the country; Government supplies were all back; the nearest base, Harper's Ferry, was over thirty miles away, and the intervening country was overrun by guerrillas.

*How Sheridan's  
Men were Fed.*

As soon as the railroad was restored, Martinsburg became a place of great importance to our work. Almost every wagon-train from the front brought in two, three or five hundred men, who had come, jolted and wounded, in hard army-wagons over rough roads, twenty-two miles, from Winchester, with no beds, with no straw even under them, with no rest, and with nothing to eat. We were always apprised of their coming an hour or more before they began to arrive, and soon had all our preparations made. With tea, crackers, jellies, bread, meats, cheese and fruits, the Delegates hurried about until all were fed. Then came the bathing, washing and dressing, and it was usually well-nigh morning before all was done. When the morning dawned the same routine was renewed, and at noon the brave fellows were as comfortable as they could be made for their tedious railroad ride to Harper's Ferry.

Rev. P. B. Thayer<sup>1</sup> writes in October of his ministra-

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Garland, Me.

tions to Confederate wounded, who were brought to Martinsburg in the same wagons with our own men :

As we have ministered to their wants and addressed words of kindness to them, tears have started from eyes unaccustomed to weeping. They fairly overwhelm us with their thankful expressions. "This

is what I call living Christianity," one would say. "Boys, I give in." "This is the religion for me," another would add.

"I can't stand this," said a rough, hard-looking fellow, badly wounded in the foot, but able to hobble along on crutches,— "I can't stand this, boys; it overcomes me. I give in," and as he came towards us his whole frame shook with emotion, and the big tears fell from his sunburnt face,—tears which he awkwardly and vainly tried to hide from his comrades and us.

"You know," he continued, "I am no coward; I can face the enemy and not wink; but this kindness kills me; it breaks me all to pieces. I tell you, boys, this is no humbug. It's a big thing. It's the Gospel for body and soul,—just what we all need."

And so he went on in the truest eloquence for some minutes, closing with the ever-recurring soldier's benediction, "God bless you!"

In the Winter a deep and pervading religious work began in this department. The larger part of the army lay near Winchester, and most of the chapels were erected in that vicinity. There were thirty in all; four of them being large marquee tents, the others stockades roofed with canvas. A few incidents from Delegates' reports will illustrate the general character of the work.

Rev. Sewall Brown<sup>1</sup> writes in March, 1865, of service at Maryland Heights and Camp Remount :

John Sangden, a Swede, was a noble specimen of a Christian. One day he came in, wanting something in Swedish to read. I had nothing at the time, but hunted up Baxter's *Saint's Rest*, in Danish, which he could read. His gratitude was very deep. Not knowing

<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Baptist Church, E. Winthrop, Me.

how to express himself in English, he could only grasp our hands and shake them again and again, without speaking.

*The Unknown  
Tongue Inter-  
preted.*

At an evening meeting a short time afterwards, a Delegate noticed a tear in Sangden's eye and a glow in his face. He was invited to rise and speak :

"*Yag kan ecke saga*,"—"I cannot speak it,"—he said, and then added in English: "You say, 'My Lord Jesus,' and it feels my heart."

He then offered prayer in Swedish; the only words we could understand were, "Fader," "Jesus," and the "Christian Commission;" but the prayer was so intensely fervent that there was scarcely a dry eye in the congregation. He seemed to be praying earth up to heaven.

Geo. N——, a New York soldier, had come out of the lowest society of that city. His temper was remarkably violent, and had been so much indulged that, when provoked, he lost all command of himself, and became even unconscious of what he was doing. Liquor always made him "mad." Once, I remember seeing three men struggling with him while he was in the midst of one of these tempestuous passions, brought on by whisky. He foamed at the mouth, and was indeed a fearful sight. For this offence he was sentenced to thirty days' hard labor. It was a mournful spectacle to see the poor fellow going through with his enforced tasks. At the close of the fifth day, his sentence was commuted. I went to him to try and show him what kindness I could; he remembered some encouraging words of mine, dropped while he was under sentence, and his heart was touched. In a day or two he came to the chapel and asked for a Bible. He received it, with a hymn book and other good books, and set himself diligently to study them. He never missed a meeting afterwards; and when I came away was an humble, sincere inquirer after the truth.

*The Ministry  
of a Kind Word.*

Mr. J. H. Earle,<sup>1</sup> the Agent at Stephenson's Station, writes :

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<sup>1</sup> Of S. Abington, Mass.

One evening, after our usual meeting at the chapel, a Lieutenant asked us to go with him to the hospital, to see a soldier of his company supposed to be dying. Passing through the dimly-lighted ward,

*Healing the Sick.* with its sleeping patients and yawning nurses, we came to the cot of a fine-looking boy, in great distress about his soul's salvation. After a close talk with him, a Delegate prayed, he joining audibly in the petition. In humble submission he exclaimed again and again, "Here, Lord, I give myself to Thee." We felt that such a yielding up would be blest of God. And so indeed it was.

"Oh, I'm so happy! I'm happy all over," he exclaimed in a moment.

The Surgeon who was standing by watching the scene, said it was just the needed medicine for his body also. And so it proved, for from that hour he began to recover

With two incidents related by Rev. W. H. Kelton,<sup>1</sup> a Delegate at Winchester in May, we close the record of work in the Shenandoah Valley :

I found a Frenchman in the hospital, sick with rheumatism. He was intelligent and apparently pretty well educated, but quite derided the idea of reading the Testament. He eagerly accepted my offer

*Influence of a Loan Library Book.* to bring him a French book however; so in a day or two I handed him Monod's "*Lucille*,"—from our Loan Library. When I visited him next he greeted me very cordially, and drawing the little book from under his pillow, said—

"It is good; I like it; I read it through; I want a Bible for myself."

He opened the book, and showed me where he had written on the fly leaf—

"I like this book; I will read the Bible. Give me one. Jules Bernard, Bugler, Co. F, 5th N. Y. Cav."

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Baptist Church, W. Waterville, Maine. Since, rendered incapable of doing ministerial work by disease contracted in the Commission's service.

I was sure from his joy at receiving the Bible, that he would peruse it with profit.

A soldier of Co. A, 1st U. S. V. V., of Hancock's Corps, had been early cast upon the world to earn a livelihood. He became skeptical, profane and very intemperate. One day, while he was giving expression to his religious and irreligious notions, he used language like this—

*The Reign of  
Divine Law.*

"There is no law but what men make; there is no such thing as inspiration, only in that sense in which any man is inspired when he can impress and move men. The man Christ was the greatest who ever lived, simply because to this late day His words exert such a powerful influence on the world,—but He was human! His teachings have no Divine authority."

He told me afterwards that, while he was uttering the words, a comrade, much more wicked outwardly than himself, was looking at him very strangely. The look troubled him somehow. There was silence for a moment: suddenly his comrade broke out—

"If I believed all that, Captain Kidd would be nowhere to me."

The remark struck him like a thunderbolt.

"If indeed there be no Divine Law, and no power to execute it," I thought, "what is there to restrain my passions? What man can make, I, or any man, can break. At last I resolved to read the Bible candidly. I was utterly amazed at its revelations; each perusal gave me something new to think of. Somehow it was different from every other book. Gradually I became fully persuaded of its Divine authority."

While he was in this state of mind, the regiment came to Winchester and encamped close to the village cemetery. The seclusion and shadow of the "city of the dead" were in harmony with the man's troubled spirit. Thither he frequently retired to wander and meditate. One day he sat down by a small grave with a plain marble headstone, inscribed simply, "Her name was Mary." Above the words was carved a hand pointing upwards with extended finger. The whole arrested his attention at once. To use his own expression, "This was my sermon-book; to it I came often; it always had a lesson for me." Finally, he was led to the Commission prayer meetings; here the truth came home to him with power. One Sabbath evening,





saw such an intensely eager set of men. There was not an article we had, from a shirt to a newspaper, which was not in constant demand, often by a dozen voices at once. And there was good reason for the eagerness. There were in the camp probably not far from ten thousand men, most of whom were from Sherman's Army. Not a man among them, as far as I could learn, had a dime of money, while all had been without pay for many months. Their condition verified their stories. I had certainly never thought it possible for our soldiers to become so ragged and beggar-like. Scores, if not hundreds of them, came to us and made request for shirts, often with beautiful and touching modesty, their blouses meanwhile close buttoned about the neck, hot as the day was, to hide their condition. Shirts and pants hung in shreds; some wore drawers only, the pantaloons being past all presentableness or service; the shoeless and stockingless were numberless. Our hearts certainly lacked no stimulus in the blessed work of relief.

Yet all this time my heart was growing heavy over the prospects of the work on its spiritual side. I doubt if our camp was often paralleled for vileness. Its make-up will furnish a significant reason for this. Ostensibly it was a camp of men disabled by long marches, and convalescents still unfit for active service, sent here chiefly by boat from Newbern, in advance of their comrades, who were to come by land. But in addition to these, there were a large number of stragglers and "shirks," who had contrived to pass themselves off as invalids, and had so dodged a fatiguing march, with quite a numerous sprinkling of "bounty-jumpers" and conscripts. As an inevitable sequence, the morals of the camp were of the worst; and so incessantly on that first afternoon were our ears assailed with profanity and vulgarity, that the bare thought of trying to preach the Gospel to men so corrupt almost filled me with dismay.

*Adverse Influences.*

One circumstance occurred however to check my despondency and inspire hope. Just as we were ready for our lunch of crackers and bacon, a pleasant-looking soldier came to me, and with an earnest look drew me aside to ask if there was to be preaching in our chapel that evening. Upon my replying that there was to be, his eyes filled forthwith with tears, and an expression of devout thanks broke from

*The Spirit Working as It wills.*

his lips. His personal experience was a very remarkable one. A sailor for nine years, he had been a very wicked man. Nothing had arrested him in his course, until a few evenings previous, passing a tent, he heard some Christian soldier singing. He was struck by the melody, so much so that the music kept ringing in his ears constantly. He unbosomed himself to his comrade; they went together to find the tent, but could not. Their consciences were now, however, thoroughly awake, and they agreed among themselves that they ought to be better men. Finally, Wright—this was the soldier's name, Chas. Wright, of the 32d Mass.,—told his comrade that talking would not make them any better. The other suggested prayer. They did not know anything about praying, however. And it was not until after considerable hesitation that they got down on their knees. They confessed their common sins as well as they could, asked forgiveness, and found that prayer helped them very much. So they continued a day or two, working without encouragement from any about them, until it suddenly occurred to them that they were selfish about the matter, so they agreed to try and get in some of their comrades. They were successful, and after that had an evening prayer meeting at their tent, consisting of about ten men. Wright was a member of the Fifth Corps, which was hourly expected to arrive. He was in great anxiety, because he feared that when his Corps came, he would have to join it immediately, before our meetings began. He went away with a happy face when he found that we were to have a meeting that evening.

I had no idea there would be any considerable number of the men out. To our surprise the tent was crowded full, and probably one hundred and fifty men lay down on the grass outside, within hearing distance, when we rolled up the sides of the chapel. Close up to the desk sat Charles Wright. A squad of soldiers sitting near him had evidently formed the nucleus of his remarkable prayer meeting. Our doubts of the day were still hanging about us, and though we had grand singing, and the fullest attention was paid to everything said, yet it was only after a hesitating conference among ourselves that we proposed, not very courageously, a supplementary meeting of Christian soldiers for conference and prayer. To our embarrassment not a man stirred to leave. Supposing they had not understood, I repeated the notice that those who wanted to talk over their Christian

experience might remain. But nobody moved yet—so we had a whole tent full. The soldiers were invited to speak. Wright rose promptly and told the story which he had related to me in the afternoon; and after that we had no lack of them. The Lord seemed to be indeed present with us.

With that service began a revival. A fact remarkable to us was developed in these meetings, and this was that there had been a succession of revivals in the army all the way round from Chattanooga. Various places were spoken of which had been the scenes of deep interest,—Dalton, Goldsboro', Raleigh, among others. Some of the men had agreed to hold meetings every night of the long and perilous march.<sup>1</sup>

*Prayer Meetings on the Great March.*

These were often held under peculiar difficulties; many a time the soldiers gathered in the dark, where they did not dare to have fires. I never heard men speak more ably or with deeper earnestness than did these. In those solemn, quiet meetings of the "great march," held under such dangers, they seemed to have entered into the meaning of the Psalmist's song: "Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. He shall defend thee under His wings, and thou shalt be safe under His feathers. His faithfulness and truth shall be thy shield and buckler." And so, when they came into the country of safety, their song was: "Oh, what great troubles and adversities hast Thou showed me! and yet didst Thou turn and refresh me; yea, and broughtest me from the deep of the earth again. My praise shall be always of Thee."

Every night from three to fifteen men came forward for prayers. Our chapel tent was filled at every meeting until the camp broke up. One night I remember we had a tremendous thunder-storm. My impression was that it would be useless to hold a service. I wrapped myself up to keep out of the drenching rain and stepped over to the chapel. It was *two-thirds full*. The rain was dripping through the canvas. The water chased itself across the ground like a mill-race; and the men had to keep their feet out of it as best they could. The candles spluttered and died out as fast as they were lit; and excepting one or two which we managed to keep burning at the desk, we were in utter

*A Wet Meeting.*

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, in the 3d Brig., 2d Div., of the Twentieth Corps, such prayer meetings were held every night, from Tennessee to Washington.

darkness. Yet we not only had the regular service, but a prayer meeting afterwards also, and two new recruits for Christ came forward to ask our special petitions.

The men told many precious incidents of the Christian intercourse they had had during the long march. Once after a skirmish, a soldier told me, they held one of their usual night prayer meetings.

*Dying Close to  
the Prayer meet-  
ing.*

The wounded were being brought in and cared for as the soldiers were singing a hymn. A poor young lad, fatally wounded, was among the number. As they came up, they said to him—

“You are pretty badly wounded, ai’n’t you?”

“Yes,” said he; “almost gone; but didn’t I hear some singing?”

“Yes; we had a little prayer meeting.”

“Tain’t any use carrying me to the hospital; if you’ll just carry me up to the tent, near the prayer meeting, that’ll do. I would like to die up there.”

The soldiers carried him tenderly to the place; he lay there listening to the singing and the prayers until he died.

Across the river from Provisional Camp was encamped the Fourteenth Corps. After the grand review we established ourselves among them. We had many cases of interest. I remember one

*A Missionary  
in the Ranks.*

rather remarkable incident of a soldier named John H. Shay, Co. F, 104th Illinois Regt. He had saved up five hundred dollars from his army pay, which he proposed using to have himself educated for a missionary after his discharge. His story awakened a deep interest in our meeting one evening, as he told it—omitting reference to the money he had saved—in a peculiarly simple and artless way. He spoke so gently of his having no earthly home; and then, with faith and trust shining out of his eyes, he said he had One Friend who, he knew, would never forsake him or go away from him. His parents had been Roman Catholics.

Emanuel A—, Co. F, 31st Ohio, had the reputation of being the most accomplished gambler in his regiment. He was a fearfully intemperate man also, and as profane as intemperate. He rose for prayers one evening, to our general astonishment.

*Curious, Angry,  
Convicted.*

Afterwards he told me something of his experience. He had heard about the meetings, and so came one

night out of curiosity to hear the singing. He sat down on the grass outside of the tent to listen. By-and-bye something was said which he felt inclined to regard as a personal affront. He got very angry and rose to stalk away. A comrade followed him out and told him that was not the way to leave, "like a coward." So he prevailed on to go back. Again something sharp in the address came across him, and again he started off in anger. His comrade, himself not a Christian, stuck to him, and shamed him back again. This time something riveted his deepest attention. He began to feel there was some trouble within. He went away at the close of the meeting feeling all crushed down; carried his load for a day or two, and felt as if he must return to the meetings to confess his sins. He soon found out the way of peace, and coming into the meeting, asked prayers most earnestly in behalf of the "partner" who had urged him back to the chapel when he was going away cross.

The success of our revival work was due more than anything else to the religious element among the men, to the Christian spirit of those who had held to their prayer meetings during the march from Atlanta.

With two incidents, occurring near the close of the work in Washington hospitals, we bid adieu to the men who conquered with Sherman and Grant.

The first is related by Rev. Mr. Goodwin :

In Ward 75 of Carver Hospital, Washington, I found John Gillespie, a Pennsylvania soldier, who had lost a leg in one of the recent engagements before Richmond. His father was present and sat at his side, holding his hand. The soldier was in a deep stupor; various efforts had been made to rouse him up; when the Chaplain and I came in, we continued them, but he seemed too far gone to heed us. A little circle of comrades in the mean time had gathered round the cot. I offered a short prayer, and then we all stood a while watching for any change which might occur, momentarily expecting the sufferer to expire. Suddenly one of his comrades said eagerly that he thought he was going to speak. There was evidently a kindling up of the little life which was left in him. After trying to clear his

*"Forward,  
Double-Quick,  
March!"*



throat and mouth a little, at first only faintly articulating, "Forward," he at last broke out, as though he were again at the head of his company—

"Double-quick," and then "March" came out short and quick and clear.

The effort had exhausted his last remaining strength. A dull weight fell back upon the pillow. He was dead.

The last is related by Rev. Edward P. Smith :

Lieutenant Wood, of a Maine regiment in the Army of the Potomac, was on his way to the "grand review." He had gone through the war without a wound, and even without hospital experience. At

*Three Unim-  
proved Years.* the last camp-halt his division made before reaching Washington, as he stood in his tent door, he was mortally wounded by the accidental discharge of a gun. He was brought into Campbell Hospital. When I found him he was apparently peaceful in the immediate prospect of death. He had enlisted as a Christian, but while he had kept an unsullied reputation for uprightness and integrity, yet he had not been distinctly known in the regiment as a Christian; and this was now his bitter grief. He wanted to live to see his family again,—but more, far more, he said, to recover lost opportunities. He sent for his fellow-officers, told them his mistake and asked their forgiveness; while he trusted in the Saviour for his own forgiveness.

"I die as a Christian," he said to me, "and I die contented; but, oh, if I could have died as a Christian worker!"

"I am peaceful and assured in view of death," he said again, "but I am not joyful and glad; those three lost years keep coming back upon me;" then lying a moment quiet with closed eyes, he added, "Chaplain, do you suppose we shall be able to forget anything in heaven? *I would like to forget those three years.*"



## CHAPTER XV.

### *THE PRISONERS IN THE SOUTH.*

WITH NOTICES OF THOSE WHO RETURNED TO ANNAPOLIS.

Our purpose throughout this volume has been to give a representative, and not an exhaustive, collection of incidents. We do not propose to deviate from that plan in this chapter; nor to enter into the history of the Southern prisons; but to group a few narratives,—especially of the religious life of the men who suffered in them. The best method of presentation is the general one of our chapters,—the chronological.

Rev. C. C. McCabe,<sup>1</sup> Chaplain of 121st Ohio Regiment, was taken prisoner with the Regimental Surgeon in June, 1863, after Gen. Milroy's abandonment of Winchester. The news of Gettysburg was brought to Libby Prison, where the Chaplain was confined. He tells how the prisoners received it:—

I had a relative in Richmond, a staunch Rebel. The day they received the first tidings from Gettysburg he came to see me, his face wreathed in smiles:

“Have you heard the news?”

“What news?”

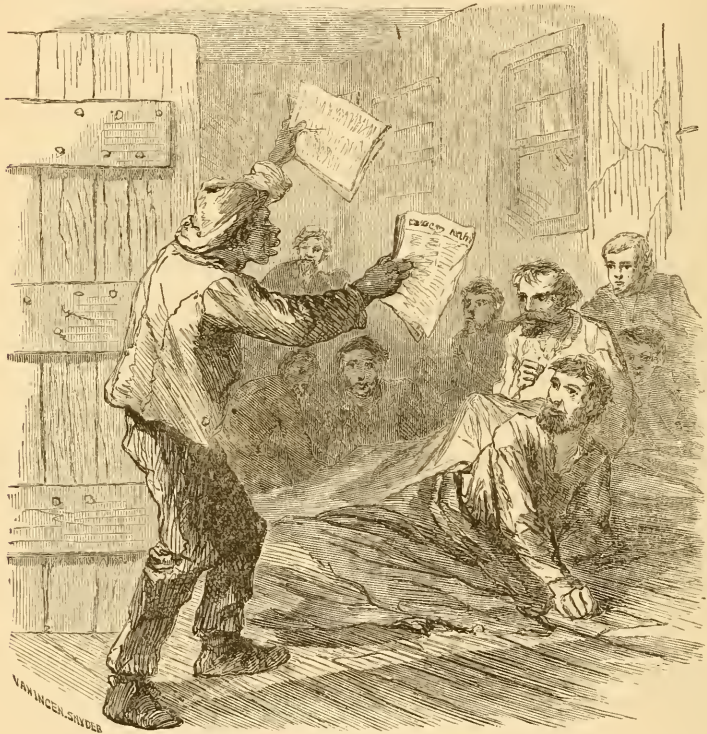
“Forty thousand Yankee prisoners in the Valley on their way to Richmond!”

*How we heard  
of Gettysburg in  
Libby.*

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<sup>1</sup> Member of Ohio Conference, Meth. Epis. Church. Chaplain McCabe was afterwards a collecting agent for the Commission, principally in the West.

I was astounded. In dumb amazement I listened to the Rebel officers speculating where the new prisoners should be stowed away and how they were to be fed. I went up stairs and told the news. Despondency settled down into every heart. That night, as we assembled for "family prayers," and sang, as was always our wont, the long-metre Doxology, it trembled out from quivering lips up to Him who has said, "Glorify ye Me in the fires." We felt we were so doing that night, if never before.



NEWS IN LIBBY PRISON.

I slept none that night, listening wearily to the watch calling the hours and singing out as he did so, "All's well." When the day broke I waited for the footsteps of "Old Ben," a character well known to every inmate of Libby. He was an old slave Union black man, who was the prison news-agent and sold papers at twenty-five cents a-piece. At last his

*One Cipher too  
Many.*

footfall came. He pushed the door ajar, looked round for a moment upon the sleepers, and then raising up his arms, shouted—

“Great news in de papers!”

Did you ever see a resurrection? I never did but once. Oh, how those men sprang to their feet; and what was the news? The telegraph operator at Martinsburg, when putting those ciphers to the four, had clicked his instrument once too often. There was a mistake of only thirty-six thousand! More yet! Lee was driven back; the Potomac was swollen; the pontoons were washed away! I have stood by when friends long parted meet again with raining tears and fond embrace, but never did I witness such joy as swept into these strong men’s faces, where the deepest sorrow sat but a moment before.

Well, what did we do? Why, we sang; sang as saved men do; sang till Captains Flynn and Sawyer, immured in the lowest dungeon below and doomed to die within ten days, heard us and wondered; sang till the very walls of Libby quivered in the melody as five hundred of us joined in the chorus of Mrs. Julia Ward Howe’s “Battle Hymn of the Republic”:

*Our Jubilee  
Song.*

“Mine eyes have seen the Glory of the coming of the Lord;  
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;  
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible, swift sword:  
His Truth is marching on.

“I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;  
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;  
I have read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps:  
His day is marching on.

“I have read a fiery Gospel writ in burnished rows of steel,  
‘As ye deal with My contemners, so with you My Grace shall deal:’  
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with His heel,  
Since God is marching on.

“He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;  
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat:  
O! be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet!  
Our God is marching on.

“In the beauty of the lilies, Christ was born across the sea,  
 With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me;  
 As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,  
 While God is marching on.

“CHORUS—Glory, Glory, Hallelujah!”

It was early; I am not sure but we woke up the President of the Confederacy himself with that song.

It was the Fourth of July, and we determined to have a celebration. Our programme was already arranged,—speeches, toasts and songs. But where should we get a flag? There were several in the prison;

“*The Fourth*”  
 in *Libby*.

but they were below in the office, turned ingloriously upside-down before the Confederate banner.

We might make a flag; but whence the material? A happy thought occurred to us. A man was found who wore a red shirt; another had a blue one; white (?) shirts were plenty. From a combination of these at last emerged the emblem of liberty with all the thirty-four stars. One of Grant’s men was chosen to hang the flag from the rafters,—no easy task, but successfully and safely accomplished. I never saw men gaze so long and earnestly at a flag before or since. What memories it called up!

Col. Streight, the President of the Day, made an opening speech, in which he enjoined upon us not to make too much noise, else the Rebels would interrupt. Just as he closed, a Confederate officer made his appearance and addressed the Colonel—

“Col. Streight, by order of the Captain commanding, this fuss must stop.”

“Fuss,” said the Colonel, “do you call this a ‘fuss’? Do I understand you to mean that we can’t celebrate the Fourth of July here?”

“Yes, sir, you can, but—” and just then looking up, he spied the flag. It evidently astonished him. He looked at it intently and long. Finally the power of speech returned:

“Somebody take that flag down.”

A man back in the rear rose, and said in a trembling voice—

“Let any Union boy here touch that flag that dares!”

None of us moved. The officer’s command was repeated. No one stirred. He must execute his own order, so he began the perilous ascent. He was not quite so light-limbed as the man who had

put it up, and it looked once or twice as if he would pretty surely come down with a crash and without his prize, but he finally succeeded.

Such was our humiliation. Little did we think of the compensation. Little did we know of the full import of the Gettysburg victory; much less of that other flag coming down that very day at Vicksburg,—“the Gibraltar of the Rebellion!” where the witnesses were not a few half-starved and half-clad captives, but a vanquished Confederate army.

*The Compensation.*

So God “commanded light to shine out of darkness!”

In the midst of the long weariness of captivity, there was no inner help and consolation equal to that afforded by the Gospel of Christ. Rev. Benj. Parsons, a Delegate in August, 1863, to the right of Rosecrans’ army, recalls this incident:

Sergeant Thos. A. Cord, of the 19th U. S. Infantry, was a member of an association of Christians in the division to which his regiment belonged. Owing to the pressure of military duty and the cold indifference of superior officers, he and his companions, only four or five in number, were obliged to obtain by stealth the privilege of social prayer.

*Steadfast in Tribulation.*

When off duty they betook themselves to a secluded spot in a wood, and there poured out their hearts together in prayer and praise. At Chickamauga the Sergeant was taken prisoner. Through some of his escaped comrades we hear that he has been appointed by his fellow-prisoners to conduct a prayer meeting at night in a subterranean apartment within the stockade at Andersonville. Faithful to his country, to his comrades and to Christ in the quiet camp, he was found foremost among the faithful in the land of captivity.

The Christian Commission held meetings at Chattanooga, in January and February, 1864, which were attended by Mr. Thos. J. Sheppard,<sup>1</sup> a soldier of an

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<sup>1</sup> Afterwards, in Summer of 1865, a Delegate of the Commission to aid in finishing Western work.



Ohio regiment, afterwards a prisoner at Andersonville. He writes :

A young man rose one evening at the Chattanooga meetings, and told us he was a sutler ; he desired to make confession of his wrongdoing, and under a sense of his sinfulness asked the prayers of God's people that he might become a Christian. He said that he was on his way home to be a better man, and then added—

*The Converted  
Sutler.*

“If ever I come into the army again, it will be with a gun on my shoulder.”

His confession made the profoundest impression upon the soldiers. Their marvel was at the radical nature of the change which the Grace of God had effected.

“There's no use doubting God's power in converting men,” said they, “when He makes a soldier out of a sutler.”

And nobly did the renewed man fulfill his vows.

Months afterwards at Andersonville, a soldier who had voluntarily remained to care for the sick when it was supposed he was going to the lines for exchange,—one who was known throughout all that prison as an earnest disciple of Christ, said to me—

“Do you remember how a sutler asked the prayers of Christians in a meeting at Chattanooga, and promised, if he came out again, to come as a Christian and a soldier?”

“Certainly, I do.”

“I am that sutler,” was his reply.

Amid rags and filth and sickness, faithful and patient, there was no Christian Commission Delegate who ever more beautifully illustrated the Gospel of temporal and spiritual relief, than did Sergeant Frank W. S——, of the 124th Ohio.

Rev. J. W. Hough, a Delegate to Camp Distribution, near Washington, in June, 1864, furnishes the following narrative :

In the Autumn of 1861, a volunteer cavalry company of home guards was formed in Williston, Vt.,—half in sport, half for the sake of drill. A member of Williams College, who was passing his



vacation in the village, was chosen Chaplain of the company. A gentleman from New York, connected with the Bible Society, sent a bundle of Testaments to distribute among the members. One Sabbath afternoon these were presented, with an address by the Chaplain upon the "Christian soldier."

*The Memorial  
Testament.*

One of these Testaments has come back to Williston, and lies before me as I write. On the fly-leaf there is an inscription in the Chaplain's hand-writing—

"Williston Cavalry Company, September, 1861;" and beneath it is pencilled his name,—“Charles B. Chapin.”

He enlisted in the Summer of 1862, in the 1st Vermont Cav., and the little Testament was carried to the war. It traversed Virginia from Harper's Ferry to Petersburg, and rode with its owner, under Kilpatrick's lead, within the defences of Richmond. On May 5th, the day of the first fighting in the Wilderness, Chapin became a prisoner, and it went with him. Its owner had been previously learning the value of the little book. During the busy campaigns in which he had proved himself a cool, courageous soldier, there had sprung up in his heart a new life. He could never trace its history, or fix its dates.

"I could not go into action without committing myself to God in silent prayer," he wrote; "and presently I came to feel that my prayers were answered."

He had learned the secret of faith in God; and so the little Testament became a priceless treasure during the long days at Andersonville.

When captured, his watch was taken from him, his money and even his pocket-knife also; but a memorandum-book and the Testament he was permitted to retain. Together these volumes tell the tale of his prison-life; giving hints and brief suggestions of sufferings which could never be told, and of joys which even that life of horror could not wholly darken. The diary paints the dark side of the picture; a sentence here and there bringing out vividly the indescribable filth and wretchedness of the prison, the intolerable heat, the ever-increasing insufficiency of rations, the progress of disease, the sinking of the heart, as hope almost gave way before despair, which wrung out the groan—

“ O God! will there never be an exchange?”

But the well-worn Testament goes into the inner life, and tells a heart-history in its marked passages. A large class of these was evidently made forcible by the surroundings of prison-life; as, for example, Christ's discourse upon the “*Living Bread*,” in St. John's sixth chapter; many of St. Paul's allusions to his imprisonment; and St. Stephen's martyrdom. Others struck a deeper chord; as Christ's prayer for His disciples, after the assurance, “In this world ye shall have tribulation;” the close of the eighth chapter of the Romans, beginning, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?” St. Peter's injunction, “I think it not strange, concerning the fiery trial which is to try you;” and St. Paul's triumphant message to Timothy, from out the old Roman Mamertine dungeon, “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.” With what deep interest do we find the soldier's mark about these words (Phil. i. 12, 21): “But I would that ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me, have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel. \* \* \* For I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through your prayers.”

After reading such entries in his journal as these—“Cannot get half enough to eat;” “Very, *very* hot;” “Do not hardly draw half rations;” “Had no blanket, so lay in the dirt;” “Water poor;” “Washed a pair of drawers, for the first time in two months;”—there is something inexpressibly touching in finding his mark upon such passages as these—“These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

Not only was the Testament read and re-read during the seven months of imprisonment, but lent to others also. The day of exchange, so earnestly prayed for, came at last, and when the wasted

form dragged itself out of the stockade, the little volume could not be found; it was in the hands of some fellow-prisoner, and gladly left that it might continue to comfort him. Chapin reached Annapolis, and sent a cheerful letter home; his father went down to bring him back, as he hoped, to the old fireside. It was not so to be. Starvation and cruelty had done their work; he had "fought a good fight, the time of his departure was at hand."

Under the hardships of prison life, into which was crowded the discipline of a score of common years, he had ripened for heaven.

"Father, sit down by me; I want to tell you how I feel—I don't know as it's just right. I feel so perfectly satisfied with all God has done. I wouldn't have one thing changed. I would be glad to go home and see mother again; but if God arranges otherwise, it's all right. I would have it just as He pleases. Tell Eddie and Allie and Millie to meet me in heaven; and tell Mr. Hough to say to all my young friends in Williston to meet me there too."

The last entry in his journal reads, "Mustered for pay;" he was being "mustered for pay" indeed; the Captain of his salvation was even then saying, "Behold I come quickly, and My reward is with Me." Peacefully, even gladly, he entered into rest. Let those who can, imagine the contrast between Andersonville and heaven.

During the weeks in which he lingered, business once called his father to Washington. In the depôt there was a group of soldiers. Accosting them, he found that one was a released Andersonville prisoner.

"Did you know Charley Chapin?" he inquired.

"Charley Chapin? Guess I did," was the quick rejoinder.

Explanations followed, and the soldier expressed his surprise that he was yet alive. Opening his knapsack suddenly, he added—

"Here, I've got a Testament that belongs to him. He lent it to me and I couldn't find him to return it. I've read it through four times. I wish you would give it to him."

So the precious little book came back to him who had fed upon it when starving, and to his friends in whose eyes it was a priceless treasure. It lies on my table this afternoon, where the "Chaplain" wrote in it four years and more ago. It bears on it the scars of service. Its sides and edges are worn. Its back, having failed, has been replaced by a piece of rough leather, once apparently part of a boot-

leg, carefully stitched on. Its pages are wonderfully clean, testifying to the care with which it was used, and reminding us of one of old, who in the depths of an experience, not wholly dissimilar, exclaimed—

“I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.”

During October and November, 1864, Rev. J. M. Clark<sup>1</sup> labored among the returned prisoners at Annapolis. From his report we make these extracts :

One of the men who wished to be prayed for, awakened uncommon interest in our evening meetings. After a season of prayer a converted soldier rose and said—

“I am glad to see that brother soldier here for prayers; we were in Richmond prison together, and I have often prayed for him.”

Soon after, the penitent rose to add a few words himself:

“I have been a backslider from God. Before I entered the army I enjoyed Christ; but since, I have not lived as I ought. I’ve been home on furlough, and if any one had heard the prattle of my little boy, he would have been struck with it; but how do you think it made me—his father—feel, when he said to his mother, ‘When papa comes to dinner, will he talk to God as he used to?’ Oh, I tell you it cut me to the heart. I am determined, if God please, to live a Christian life.”

Two other men were forward for prayers at the same time. Both had been wounded and in captivity, and now both came limping along together and bent their crippled limbs in earnest humility and petition before God.

One of the saddest sights we had to witness were the paroled men leaving camp for home on furlough. Twelve ambulances came from the city to convey those unable to walk. About fifty others hobbled along on crutches, a pitiable sight! God help and bless them! Poor, brave fellows, they are cripples for life, many of them for but a short life. It was

*A Crutch Battalion.*

<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Meth. Episc. Church, Ashburnham, Mass.

mournful to watch them—a full hundred—as they turned their faces homeward; and to think of the aching eyes that would fill with tears again when the maimed heroes got back to the old home town.

Rev. Wm. DeLoss Love<sup>1</sup> was a Delegate at Annapolis in December, 1864. We add a few sketches from his pen:

When the steamers bearing the Union paroled prisoners reached the wharf at Annapolis, it was customary for the Delegates of the Commission and others to go down and greet those grateful, earnest men, as they stepped again on the shore of what they often termed “God’s country.” The hospital band also met them there, and poured forth sweetest strains of music.

*The Supreme  
Affection Strong  
in Death.*

I was delayed one day on the arrival of a steamer, and when I reached the wharf some were bearing the feeble, freed prisoners on stretchers to the Naval Hospital; others were placing some of their suffering companions on a platform car, which was to be rolled along up to St. John’s College Hospital.

As I came near the steamer, the first object that specially attracted my attention was an emaciated, feeble man, lying on one corner of the car platform, the sun welcoming him with its gentle and soothing rays, and he feebly, but touchingly, exclaiming, “*Oh, that pretty band!*” My associate Delegate of the Commission had taken his name, and was then trying to learn his regiment and his father’s name and place of residence; for it was evident the young man could not long survive, and that unless we obtained these particulars then, the poor soldier would have that sad word, “Unknown” placed on his little head-board in the cemetery, and no relative would ever know where or when he died and was buried.

The soldier was not yet so far gone as to forget his own name, but he was obliged to take a little time for thought to recall his regiment. When the Delegate asked for his father’s name and place of residence,

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Spring St. Congregational Church, Milwaukee, Wis., and Editor of the *Wisconsin Puritan*.

he could not at first tell, but in his hard effort at recollection, said, "Wait a little and I'll get it." Soon he did get it, and then the attention of most of the bystanders was turned to others.

But I felt in my heart a longing to know whether this soldier, so near his end, was a friend of the Saviour. I came close, and putting my lips near his ear, said—

"Do you love the Lord Jesus Christ?"

He started with an animation not manifested before, turned his feeble and glassy eyes straight and lovingly upon me, put an unwonted energy into his voice, and replied,—

"My friend, I do!"

It was enough. I never saw the soldier again. Doubtless ere the day wore away he was carried by angels into Rest.

There had come to Annapolis some months before, a skeptic to see his severely-wounded and feeble son, who had recently arrived from the Richmond prison. The father tarried, hoping to witness his son's improvement, now that he had exchanged quarters in Libby for those at Annapolis. But the change he had looked for was of another character. Gangrene had reached the wound, and the flesh of the young man's limb was gradually rotting away.

The Surgeons abandoned nearly all hope of his recovery, and the benevolent Chaplain told the father that his son must probably soon die; that he had better so inform him, and advise him to make all needful arrangements before leaving the world.

The father replied that he could not bear the task, and asked the Chaplain to do it for him.

"And," said he, "speak to him in regard to *all* his interests; those of the *future* also." Then he further added, in much seriousness, "I have been an unbeliever, a *wicked* man; but my son's mother is a Christian, and he had better follow *her*."

The Chaplain gladly went to the son and told the father's message, and asked what reply he should return.

"Tell my father," said he, "that I have not deferred preparation for the future to this late time. Long, long ago, previous to going into battle, I gave myself up to Jesus, and now am ready to go and meet Him when He calls me. Tell him also that I hope he will prepare to meet Him too."



This message, tenderly given by the Chaplain, made a deep impression on the loving but skeptical father.

One evening, as I sat writing letters for soldiers in Chaplain Henriès' office at the Annapolis Hospital, Division No. 1, there came into the room a very aged and feeble man from Cambridge, Ill., who with trembling and sadness, inquired if we could tell him anything about his son, N. H. Tilson. We replied that we did not recollect to have seen him. He said that he had received a letter from some one in that hospital, informing him that his son had reached there, a paroled Union prisoner from Savannah. He further said that before receiving that letter he had not heard from him for about a year; that then he learned he was probably slain in a battle near Knoxville, and he and his family had given him up as dead. But when they received the news of his arrival and sickness at Annapolis, they all sat down and wept in their joy, and then decided that he and his daughter—both of them feeble in health—must set out to find him. They had travelled a thousand miles or more; he had left his daughter at the hotel, telling her that she must be prepared for the worst.

*The Lost Son  
Found.*

Chaplain Henriès told him that he would go through the wards and make inquiry for his son. After he had gone, I endeavored to comfort the dear old man—a warm-hearted Christian—by saying that we found many of the prisoners from Andersonville who had either been converted there or soon after their arrival at Annapolis. He replied in tears that his *chief* prayer for his son all along had been that, if still living, he might become a Christian.

While thus conversing, I turned over the leaves of my Commission note-book, then nearly full, to see if I could find any trace of the son of this aged man. At last I discovered his name, but did not at first mention my discovery, lest I should find there also a record of his death. Glancing rapidly along the lines, I found this: "N. Holmes Tilson, Cambridge, Henry Co., Ill. Been in prison a year; taken prisoner at Knoxville, Tenn., Nov. 18th, 1863; *became a Christian last of June or first of July at Andersonville.* Not heard from home for about eleven months."

I read my sketch to the father; he was so overcome with joy that he could scarcely speak. Soon the Chaplain returned with the glad news that he had found him. He said that as he went into the room

where the boy lay, he recognized him as one he had several times visited alone and with myself; but in the multitude his name had been forgotten. The young man said—

“Chaplain, you have not been to see me in a great while. Have you got a letter from my father?”

“No, I have no letter from him. What would you give to see your father?”

“I will give twenty-five dollars this minute!”

“Well, I’ll go and bring him.”

This last sentence was uttered so playfully that the lad hardly knew what he meant, and presumed it could not be that his father had come.

But soon the Chaplain escorted the old man to the room where the boy lay. The father hurried over to the low cot in the corner, knelt down, put his arms about his son, and the son threw his arms about his father’s neck, and there they kissed each other and wept.

The lost son was found,—in more senses than one, the father thought. Not only had the Lord found him at Andersonville, but in a few days it was evident that he would never recover, and that the earthly loss would be the heavenly finding.

Perhaps one of the most remarkable episodes of the history of the war, if it could be fully written, would be the narrative of the preaching of the Gospel in Andersonville stockade. Little however remains beyond the mere outline shreds of an account. Rev. J. M. Clark, who after his first Delegate’s experience, became the Commission’s permanent agent at Annapolis, preserves a few disconnected relations of soldiers concerning this phase of the story of the prison :

Among the thousands of unfortunate men imprisoned, there were some Christians and Christian ministers, who were willing to preach the Word in season and out of season. These were called

“Chaplains;” I suppose few if any of them held commissions.

*The Gospel in Andersonville.*

Within the bounds of the camp there were three

spots where the men were accustomed to hold preaching and other services in the evenings. When the smaller area was too strait for the congregation, notice was proclaimed for the next meeting in a larger space. The spot most frequently used was on the south side of the stream, in the place used for the execution of the six criminals, or "raiders" as they were called. The attendants numbered as high as four, five and six hundred at a time. Sad to say, the soldiers' testimony was that they were often disturbed by wicked fellow-prisoners on the outskirts of the congregation. The meetings however were attended and sustained by sincere, earnest men, whose labors were not in vain.

Many of the men tell me that it was in the time of their captivity that they "began to call upon the name of the Lord." Some of them told touching stories of their weakness and consequent inability to get to the prison prayer meetings. Said one—

"I was too weak to walk, yet I wanted to go to the meeting; so I crawled upon my hands and knees half-way and got where I could hear, and stopped there thinking I could pray. Afterwards I crept back to my old place."

One poor fellow who had been very wicked, became too sick to leave his place. He had a desire to go to the meeting; so two of his comrades took him up and carried him. Lying upon the ground amid the congregation, he listened and was deeply convicted of sin. A number of devout soldiers gathered about and prayed for him. He was converted and shortly after began to recover.

In one of our wards at Annapolis lay a brave soldier, who had escaped with life and no more. He was continually recurring to thoughts of the old prison meetings. The first evening I met him he was suffering from a severe cough, which continued with scarcely any intermission for more than two hours. His agony was intense, and great drops of sweat trickled from his brow. Meanwhile his heroic wife stood at his side, grave and composed, as she had been through many anxious days. In the intervals of coughing he would offer short prayers like this—

*Praying for  
Enemies.*

"O Lord, bless those men whose cruel treatment has caused all this suffering; have mercy upon them and show them the right way; give them life,—eternal life."

At another time, as we stood by him, he said—

“The blessed Lord has been very good to me. Oh, yes, He has brought me out of that horrible prison; yes, He heard my prayer; He can make me well. They *did* use me badly, wife; the Lord have mercy on them! Oh, I think of the poor prisoners left behind. They are wicked—many of them. I have heard them swear and curse and mock those who prayed; and after a few days I have seen them go to the meetings and fall down upon their knees to pray; and some of them came away with new hopes. Oh, yes, the Lord heard prayer for sinners there; He hears prayer always. How good He has been to me!”

In the same room lay another poor boy whose severe sufferings moved all to pity. He had been a prisoner for fifteen months, and had endured even more than the usual privations. Both his feet were frozen, discolored, swollen and intensely painful. So acute were his sufferings that the tears forced themselves from his eyes in spite of his efforts to restrain them. I tried to soothe him, and asked—

“Give me a  
Prayer.”

“Is there anything more I can do for you?”

He looked earnestly up in my face and answered—

“Give me a prayer, if you please.”

So kneeling by his side, I besought the Lord for him. During the night, the nurse told me, he was much engaged in prayer. Early the next morning he died.

Rev. Dr. Patterson puts into a few earnest words his experience of the prayer meetings at Annapolis, attended by the returned prisoners in March, 1865:

If one wants to know what prayer and thanksgiving mean, he must hear our returned prisoners pour out their hearts before God for the redemption from Southern bondage, and supplicate for their brethren still in the prison-house. Choirs, organs, Te Deums, Doxologies are poor, dumb things beside the tears streaming down the smoke-dyed cheeks of these veterans; and as the manly, trumpet voice quivers and grows husky, and breaks down in sobs at the throne of grace, one begins to

*A Prisoners’  
Prayer Meeting.*

know what is meant by "intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered."

There is a lad of nineteen who stands up and says—

"I promised the Lord that if ever I got out of prison I would stand up for Him the very first chance; and now I want to serve Him, and I ask your prayers."

There is another who can only hang his head and weep, and stand up also when the invitation is given. Just behind him a manly-looking fellow gets up and says—

"Ain't there some more here who promised God if He would get them out that they would be Christians?—Now, soldiers, don't be afraid of men. We weren't afraid of men in Salisbury. We can't put down God with a lie, no how. Just speak out and don't be ashamed of Christ. He was not afraid to be ridiculed. He was put to the most ridiculous kind of usage and death for us. Now, stand up for Him." Thus the meeting goes on.

Mr. Chas. Harris,<sup>1</sup> a Delegate at Camp Parole in April, 1865, recalls a few interesting incidents of the meetings and hospital work :

An Irish soldier, who had been formerly in the navy, was led to Christ at our meetings. He was a tall, noble-looking man; and his change seemed to be thorough and deep. He thought a great deal of a certain corner of the chapel in which he had been wont to sit about the time when the Saviour was seeking him. He used to speak of it as his "sweet little corner," and was under the impression that the Spirit was somehow there especially present. When any one from that quarter rose to ask for the prayers of those present, the Irishman's heart used to go out towards them with special sympathy and a strong faith in their salvation. When we asked him how he came to think of coming to Christ after so many years of careless trifling, he said—

*How a Sailor  
Came to Christ.*

"The Lord got His grapnel-irons a hold of me; He pulled on the starboard side, and then He pulled on the larboard side, till I could not hold out any longer, and so I surrendered the ship."

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<sup>1</sup> City Missionary of Peoria, Ill.

Poor fellows! God only knows how utterly disheartening their trials had been. One of the soldiers in the hospital asked the nurse to bear a message for him,—the tragedy and hopelessness of which are beyond all conception :

“*I am Dead.*” “Ask the Christian Commission man to write a letter to my sister, and to tell her that *I am dead* and to come for my body.”

So much has been written upon the subject, and so few villages throughout the North lack stories—always told with horror and tears—of their own unreturning men who had been carried away into the hopeless country, that we have not thought it necessary to enter into the harrowing details of imprisonment, miseries. With Rev. Mr. Clark’s account of the arrival at Annapolis of 2739 paroled men, on March 9th, 1865, we shall close this chapter :

It has always been my custom to meet the transports at the wharf and to render, especially to the sick and disabled, all the assistance in my power. Stimulants—cherry cordial and brandy—given under the inspection and with the approval of the Surgeons, were most valuable in reviving the men, and in prolonging or saving life.

*How the Prisoners came into Annapolis.*

The scene on one of the boats was beyond description. After the comparatively well men had passed to the wharf, I went below to the lower deck, where seventy-five poor fellows lay in that dark, close part of the vessel, unable to help themselves; filthy, ragged, infested with vermin. These sufferers were without shirts, many of them barefoot, and some *absolutely naked*; others with their fleshless limbs exposed, and themselves too feeble to gather what shreds and rags there were about them. One man was helped along towards the hatchway, a naked skeleton, with only a blanket thrown over his shoulders. Another lay utterly nude, and so demented as not to notice his exposure. I covered him with a bit of matting that lay near, and gave him some cordial. Another lay stark and dead, on his right side, in the same position of contortion and agony in



• which he had died. By the dim light of a lantern, I went to every man and offered him a cordial; many were too weak to drink, save with the greatest difficulty. Two dead bodies lay on deck, covered with coarse bagging. I lifted the cover to look at the face of one; it was a countenance of complete emaciation and agony. A thoughtless prisoner looking on, said with a laugh—

“Give *him* a drink.”

One man on a stretcher, on the way up to the hospital seemed very weak and faint. The bearers paused, and I lifted up his head to give him the cup with cordial. His thin, trembling hand carried it to his lips, then holding it out from him, he said—

“Here’s bad luck to the Confederacy. May I never fall into their hands again.”

*Deliverance.*

There was something in the words and action which thrilled the bystanders.

A man tottered down the plank from the transport, pale and haggard, but with a smile upon his face. As he neared the wharf, he raised his fragment of a hat, swung it in the air and tried to cheer, but his voice was too weak to make a sound. All took the will for the deed, and the nurses conducted him to the hospital.

*Too Weak to  
Cheer.*

Another prisoner told me of his feelings when he came into our lines to embark:

“I thought I should shout lustily, but when the moment came I was speechless; my emotions were unutterable. I felt only as if I would like to go down and kiss the deck of the transport, over which floated the dear old stripes and stars.”

*Speechless.*

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE WESTERN ARMIES.

FROM THE FALL OF ATLANTA TO THE CLOSE OF COMMISSION WORK; WITH SOME NOTICES OF HOSPITAL AND OTHER WORK BEFORE ATLANTA FELL.

*June 1864—September 1865.*

THE great hospitals in the rear were soon overflowing with patients from the front, both sick and wounded. In June, Mr. A. E. Chamberlain writes from Cincinnati :

A friend telegraphed me from Northern Michigan to go and see his son, William Van Tine, a soldier in Marine Hospital. I did so, and afterwards continued to attend him in his sickness. He had been married only a few months before coming into the army, and now, the Surgeon told me, he must die. He was very cheerful about it, and continued so during all his sufferings. When very near his end, I received a despatch from his father, saying that he would be at the hospital next morning. Van Tine looked up at me when I told him, with a pleasant smile on his face :

*"I Have Gone Home."*

"That will be good, but he won't find me here. I shall be gone before that."

The soldier's words were evidently true; I asked him for a last message for his father. He was silent for a moment, the smile still clinging about his lips and eyes, and then said—

"Tell him I have gone home."

"Have you any message for your wife?"

"Tell her I have gone home."

"Is there nothing more you want to say, William,—no other message I can bear for you?"

“No; that is enough. They will all understand it,—I have gone home.”

Could we have sung a hymn by that couch, what one would have been more appropriate than Dr. Bonar's?—

“Beyond the parting and the meeting,  
 I shall be soon;  
 Beyond the farewell and the greeting,  
 Beyond the pulse's fever beating,  
 I shall be soon.  
 Love, Rest and Home!  
 Sweet Home!  
 Lord, tarry not, but come.”

Within half an hour he was resting at home.

Mrs. E. I. Ford, the wife of Post-Surgeon Ford, of Nashville, a constant friend of the Christian Commission, relates an experience, in July, of work in the wards of a new hospital opened at Nashville for the men from the front:

Most of the boys, even those whose limbs had been amputated, were doing well, when hot weather brought that scourge of the wounded, gangrene, which in spite of every precaution attacked very many of the patients. With most of them it was arrested; but such was the constant alternation and suspense that they needed more than usual sympathy, and nourishment better than common. The Commission Delegates were always gladly welcomed.

*The Patience  
 of Hope.*

Soldiers do not intrude their sorrows upon others; only when you stoop down to them, and ask them of the homes they have left and the toils they have encountered, and not always then, may you catch a glimpse of the sacrifices they make for their country. A boy of eighteen, of athletic frame and cheerful countenance, had suffered amputation of a right arm, and was doing well when he was attacked by the gangrene. From this time he was an object of my special interest and attention. Many a little luxury was procured, but soon they were seen to be of no avail. The disease, once arrested, reap-

peared with renewed violence; its inroads upon his constitution could not be repaired. A friend from his Western home came to cheer him day after day with kindest converse and sympathy. One day, before an operation, he said to me—

“I feel sometimes like giving up, but when I think of home and friends, I try to live for their sakes.”

“But, my boy, you were brave in the face of the enemy; can’t you meet this foe with the same courage? You may have an Almighty Arm to lean upon.”

“Oh, how much I need it! How I long to find it!”

“But you may find it *at once*; Jesus says so,—‘Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.’”

“Ah, yes; but I’ve been such a sinner, so wicked, such a hard boy,—and all the while I had a praying mother at home.”

“But the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. Only receive Him now, and your mother’s prayers are answered.”

He was soon enabled to accept the Saviour. He drooped gradually, and cared less for the comforts brought him, but never wearied of listening to the “sweet story of old.” He looked at me thoughtfully one day, and said—

“I have made up my mind that I can’t live, and I’m ready to die; but, oh, if I could only die at home, with my mother and little sister beside me, I should be satisfied! That’s all I want now.” With an imploring look, he added—

“Will you ask my Doctor if I may be carried home? It is my last request,” and then the tears came. I turned away heart-sick, to entreat for what I knew could not be granted. My husband assured me it would be impossible; so I carried back a reluctant response. He was calmer. When I told him, he said—

“I could hardly have expected it.”

“Shall we send for your mother?”

“No,” said he, after a moment; “she is feeble, and must not come here.”

No more earthly complaints were uttered; no more wishes for what might not be. The “Everlasting Arms” were underneath and around him, until he was “present with the Lord.”

The two following letters from a Tennessee cavalry-

man are remarkable alike for their earnestness and their frank, blunt, unmistakable way of putting things:

TULLAHOMA, N. & C. R. R., TENN., July 18th, 1864.

GEO. H. STUART—Dear Sir :

Will you be so kind as to send me a book, the title of which is *A Pastor's Sketches*, in two volumes? In looking over the contents I see a few pieces, the headings of which fit my case so well that *I want to see the reasoning*. Paul said that *he* was the "chief of sinners," but I think if he were here that I could drill him for two or three years to come in that well-known science of the devil—wickedness.

*The Record of  
an Inner Strife.*

I have taken it into my head that if there is grace for the devil's "right bower," I will, through Christ, try and obtain it. I have no faith that I ever shall be saved, but it is perhaps worth an effort in that direction. I was brought to that conclusion yesterday by reading *The Young Irishman*,<sup>1</sup> from *A Pastor's Sketches*. His case and mine are not parallel by any means, but I hope some of the other sketches are. If I thought God would forgive me at all, *I would go about praying with a light heart, even though the blessing was deferred until the last moment of my existence. But I have been so wicked that I know He ought not to pardon, and I fully believe He will not.* So I do not feel like praying. Another thing,—*I Can't Repent; I am Waiting for Conviction*; I think it possible that I may have committed *The Unpardonable Sin*; I have *No Escape*; *I Can't Pray*; *I Can't Feel*; *What Can I Do?*<sup>2</sup>

I have not the amount of money equal to the price of the two books, or I would cheerfully send it. I, like the prodigal son, have spent my money in "riotous living." I merely ask the books as a *favor*—not that they will benefit me; but they may be the means of *Driving the Arrow Deeper* into my *Divided Mind*.<sup>2</sup> If it does any good, you shall hear from me.

Yours respectfully,

A. L. G., Co. F, 5th Tenn. Cav.

<sup>1</sup> Published separately in tract form.

<sup>2</sup> Those acquainted with Dr. Spencer's invaluable book will recognize these phrases as the titles of several of the sections.

The books named, with one or two others, were procured and sent to him. In due time came the following letter :

TULLAHOMA, *August 12th, 1864.*

DEAR BROTHER:

The books came safely to hand ; and they have more than met my expectations in removing the obstacles in my way. I trust, under God, through the merits of Christ, that every prop of unbelief and sin will be knocked from under me, and that I shall be compelled by the holy influences of the Divine Spirit to flee the wrath to come and embrace the truths of Christ crucified.

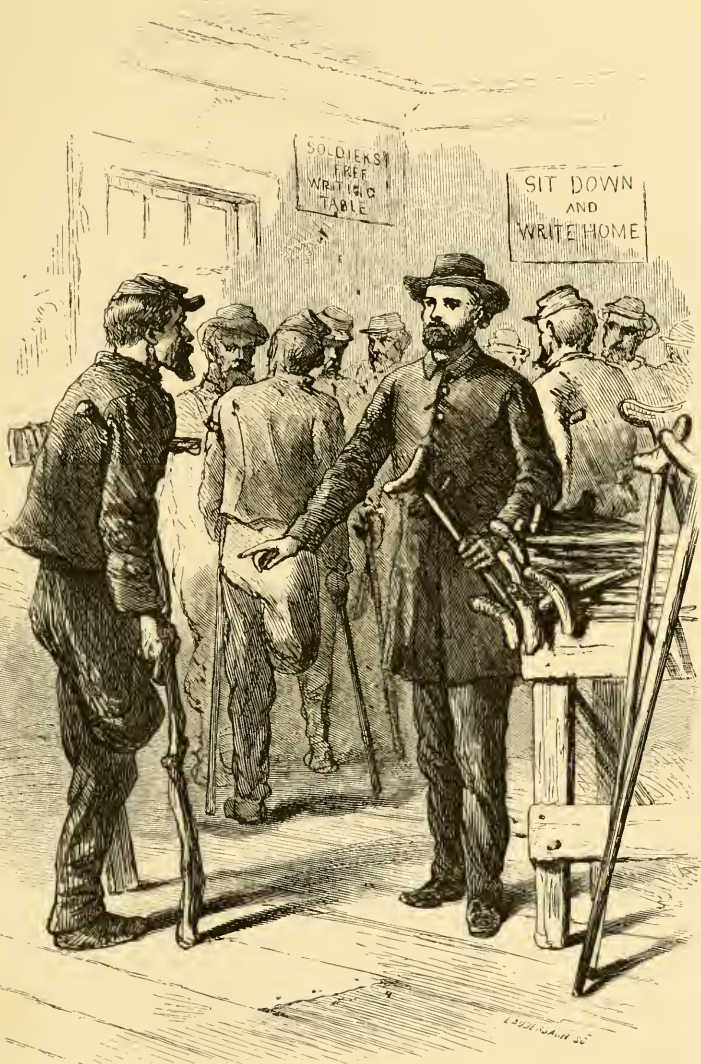
I do not know in what terms to express my gratitude to you for your kindness. I shall study the precepts of the books in as prayerful a manner as my wicked nature will permit ; and I pray God that if you hear from me again, you will find I have fully embraced Christ.

*I have been desperately wicked, but I believe Christ died to save sinners, and I know I am one of them ; so He certainly died to save me.* Brother, will you pray that His dying be not in vain so far as my individual case is concerned? I know you will ; and after this life shall have been spent, I hope to make your acquaintance in that region where there is no sin to corrupt, no doubts to blind our vision, but where we shall see as we are seen and be for ever under the shadow of that love which fills the soul with eternal bliss. May God for ever bless you and yours is the sincere prayer of your unworthy brother,  
A. L. G., 5th Tenn. Cav.

We have only one other trace of the earnest Tennessean's life. It is after the war, in a town of Southern Tennessee. We find him laboring to gather together a school of the neglected children of the neighborhood, sending for books for *them* as once he had done for himself. God grant him full entrance into the privileges of the children of God!

The Pittsburg Branch of the Commission had sent a large invoice of crutches to the office at Nashville. In a letter under date August 10th, 1864, to Mr. Wm. P. Weyman, the Receiver of the Pittsburg Committee,





CRUTCH EXCHANGE.



Rev. Mr. Smith takes this method of thanking and of asking for more :

I have sent you by express a package of crutches,—a slight return for the fifteen hundred your Commission has given through our office to the maimed who come hopping and hobbling in from the fights. And yet I think you will agree with me that my package of a dozen represents a heavier outlay than *Trading Crutches.* your boxes of a thousand and a half. Each one of the sticks I send had been cut and shaped by a man who has lost a limb or its use in the service. They are the representatives of battle-fields all along from Lookout Mountain to the hills looking down on Atlanta. We have hailed the boys trying to make their way along the streets with them, and brought them into our office for a trade. It is delightfully refreshing to hear their remarks and see their satisfaction as they go hopping off trying the new pair. One said to me—

“That’s a bad trade for you.”

“No, I think not,”—said I; “if you can give that much of your leg”—it was off above the knee—“we can give you the crutches and have the best of the contract.”

He looked down thoughtfully at the vacancy, and answered—

“I never saw it before, but that’s so.”

“That was a mistake of yours,” I said to another, who came in on the oddest pair of crutches I had ever seen,—one fashioned from a panelled board, the head wound with cloth and a bit of suspender,—the other an oak stick pulled up by the roots, one of the roots left branching out to form the head of the crutch.

“What’s a mistake?” he asked.

“Why, losing that leg.”

“Don’t see how I could help it.”

“Easily enough,” I replied; “suppose you had stayed at home, as others did?”

“I can’t see it in that light,” he said; and then with flushed face and flashing eye, stamping the sticks on the floor, he added—

“I would rather be here on crutches than at home a Copperhead.”

He thanked me for the new ones,—they all do that most touchingly,—and when I said it was *he* that was giving and not I, he said

it was not much that he could give, but he would like to give it over again, and the other leg too, if it would help on the work.

The following story of prison work at Nashville in August, is told by the General Field Agent :

Mr. Walter Tearne, from Covington, Ky., was our visitor to the military prisons. Of the numbers of men confined in these, some are not only innocent, but Christians. Through some misapprehension or carelessness they have found their way there.

*A Christian Hero.* Of course, on the prisoners' own statements there would be very few guilty ; but after investigation we not unfrequently find men who ought to be released, and sometimes are able to help them out ; at least we can comfort them in their trouble by personal attention and sympathy.

Mr. Tearne found one young man very eager for a Bible. He had read his Testament "all up," he said, and when he received a Bible the next day, he could not conceal the glow of satisfaction which lighted his face. He sat down to it at once as a student, reading aloud to a group of prisoners in the yard, some of them coming up with the "ball and chain." The next day the Delegate found his Bible student with paper and pencil collating and comparing passages. In other words, he was making his Bible, with its ordinary text, into a reference Bible, and so he continues now, "searching the Scriptures." When he finds a passage which matches or throws light upon one in question, he is as glad as the woman with her candle and piece of silver, and comes to Mr. T. as the neighbor to rejoice with him.

The boy has a history. Brought up by "the best father and mother in the world," according to his account, trained from youth in the Christian life, he was converted before joining the army, and came away three years ago, with a mother's blessing upon him and God's love in his heart. In his regiment he was known as a true soldier and faithful Christian. Last Winter he was in a division sent, after the Chattanooga battles, to relieve Burnside and raise the siege at Knoxville. For three days and nights his regiment had been on duty, marching and fighting, while he had scarcely an hour's sleep. Prisoners were captured, and he was set to guard one who, it seems, was as tired and worn as himself. He told the Lieutenant who

ordered him on guard that he could not keep awake,—that he could not even keep his eyelids up while receiving instructions. But he was put on, and remembered nothing afterwards except the snoring of the prisoner lying at his feet, till he was himself aroused by a guard and put in irons. His sentence was six months' imprisonment. We would interfere in his behalf, but his time will expire before official relief could be obtained, and his three years' service will end about the same time.

He speaks of "these dreadful six months" with horror. Only through the utmost vigilance by day and by night had he kept himself clear from vermin. The single cotton shirt he wore was actually hanging in shreds, while his pantaloons and blouse were patched and tattered, though neatly washed and most elaborately darned. What vigilance such neatness must have cost no one can know who has not seen military prison-quarters and life; and then, as the soldier says, six months in contact with such a crowd of wretches, so thoroughly abandoned and impure, has horrors ineffable. In it all the true boy has been cheerful, and without a word of murmuring against the Government. He says it is an awful crime for a guard to sleep at his post, and has no doubt the court-martial was sorry to sentence him, but could not help it for the sake of the example.

When congratulated upon his double deliverance by the expiration of his army service as well as of his prison term, he said—

"Oh, no; I am coming in again. I shall run up and see my mother and be back in a month in the ranks. I couldn't stay out while this thing is going on. I think too much of the old flag to hang round home while others are fighting."

When it was suggested that with his three years' duty and the last six months' treatment, he had done his part, he repelled the idea, saying that nobody had done his part till he had done all he could do.

The boy goes home to his mother in good clothes next week, and if I could get a furlough I would give half of it to follow him to his father's cabin on the Illinois prairie and see the greeting.

Rev. Victor Miller<sup>1</sup> gives two items of work in Murfreesboro' and Nashville during October:

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Lutheran Church, New Wilmington, Penna.

We had a daily prayer meeting at our rooms in Murfreesboro'. A Scotchman who had been a miner in the "old country," told me his experience of them :

"They did me a wonderfu' sicht o' guid. I was a wicked mon when I cam to th' army; I car't for naething, and ance I was to be shot for sleepin' at my post, after I'd been drinkin'. I had a bairn at the Deaf and Dumb Asylum in Columbus, Ohio. He writ me when I was in prison, and tell't me of some who had foun' a freen' in Jesus. I couldna help thinkin o't; but then, there was the hate for the officers, and as lang as I kept hold o' that, I couldna find Him; I couldna read a chaipter, nor pray. Syne I cam to th' meetin's, an' then I let the spite all go. Whiles I had to stand guard, I chang't wi' some one else, at the meetin' times."

As the humbled man talked, the warm tears rained down his bronzed cheeks.

As I went down the steps after a preaching service in the Zollcoffer Barracks at Nashville, I was passing out between the two guards.

*Finding Home.* "Let the Christian Commission man pass," said one, and there was a tremor in his voice as he added—

*"Wherever you find that, you find home."*

Mr. A. E. Chamberlain, writing from Cincinnati, gives a glimpse into the meaning of faith, in Christian plans and work: .

Our treasury in Cincinnati ran dry in October, and we scarcely knew where to look for more money. Just then word came from Nashville that our men wanted onions immediately. I looked at Mr.

*Money from the Lord.* Marlay<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Marlay looked at me. "You haven't a dollar in the treasury," said he. "That's a fact," was all I could say in reply.

But I thought I would start out and see what I could do. At

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. John F. Marlay, Secretary of the Cincinnati Branch of the Commission. A member of Cincinnati Conference, Meth. Episc. Church.



Seventh and Western Row, I found fifty barrels of very nice onions:

“How much are you asking for them, Mr. Buck?”

“Seven dollars a barrel, sir. Cost me six.”

“Send them down to the boat at six dollars,” and Mr. Buck, for the soldiers’ sake, obeyed. When I got back to the office I told what I had done:

‘But where on earth’s the money to come from?’

“I’m sure I don’t know, unless the Lord sends it.”

Of course, under the circumstances of the purchase, the bill must be paid on presentation. Soon a clerk brought it in, and while he was laying it upon the desk, a little boy entered the room, bringing two checks from gentlemen I had not known before as at all interested in our work; one was for \$200, the other for \$100; both for the Christian Commission. Did not the money come from the Lord?

A month or two afterwards our Field Agent sent us word that the men were dying of scurvy—that he must have a supply of crout and cabbage for immediate distribution. For months we had been spending all we had received as fast as it came into our hands; there were no funds to meet any new purchases. The remembrance of how God had

*How we got  
Crout for Nash-  
ville.*

helped us before, returned to encourage us,—and yet we did not know just what to do. Musing on the matter, I stepped to the window, and there saw the drays, used in my own business, unloading casks on the sidewalk. I called to the driver to know what they were. He didn’t know, but had left a letter on the desk. I opened it. It was an invoice from the town of Lebanon, Ohio, of thirty-four barrels of crout and pickled cabbage. I could not help crying out on the spot—

“Thank God for Lebanon! Thank God for the crout and cabbage.”

That very day it was sent down to the army as a first installment. A grateful Surgeon sent me back word that if barrels of gold dust had been sent instead, they would not have compared in value with that crout and cabbage.

Lieut. Gen. J. B. Hood, after the fall of Atlanta, made several abortive movements to draw Sherman from

Georgia; but that commander, after vainly attempting to lay his hand upon the nimble-footed Confederate, committed the defence of Tennessee to Maj. Gen. Thomas, and gathering up all his garrisons and cutting completely adrift from all communications, on November 11th began his memorable march through Georgia and the Carolinas to the sea. Two Christian Commission Delegates, Mr. Wm. A. Lawrence and Mr. Arthur Lawrence, accompanied the army to Savannah, and there received and distributed the large invoice of stores with which the New York Committee of the Commission welcomed their arrival. The opportunities for Commission work were so restricted by the character of the march, and the losses to the army of life and limb were so small, that we shall not need to delay upon the incidents of the movement.<sup>1</sup>

While the Federal General lingered before beginning his hazardous march, Hood hung along the Tennessee about Florence, Alabama. The moment the tidings of Sherman's movement reached him, he put his army in motion towards Nashville. On the last day of November was fought the sanguinary battle of Franklin, resulting in Hood's temporary repulse and the continued falling back of the Union forces. On December 2d Hood appeared before Nashville, and sat down to his impotent and impudent siege<sup>2</sup> of a city defended by a

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<sup>1</sup> On pp. 391, 392, will be found a few incidents of the movement, related in the prayer meetings about the time of the "grand review" at Washington.

<sup>2</sup> While all in the city were held in no slight suspense by the close siege, and apparent inaction of General Thomas, the night before his movement against Hood was made, Mr. Smith, returning from a reconnoissance along the lines, overtook a gray-headed negro hobbling into town. "Well, uncle, how are the times?" he asked. "I was jus' studyin' dat ar, Colonel." "What about General

force twice as large as his own. On the 15th, Thomas moved out of his entrenchments against the besiegers. The evening of the next day witnessed the complete defeat and disorderly rout of the Rebel Army. From this time it well nigh ceased to be an army. In the Spring following, Forrest's cavalry, the special pride of the Western Confederates, could oppose but a poor resistance to Wilson's raid through Alabama.

Mr. B. F. Jacobs preserves a number of incidents of the battle of Nashville:

Gen. Steedman's Corps of colored troops made a reconnoissance in force, on the eve of the battle of Nashville. Mr. Dutcher<sup>1</sup> and I made every preparation to receive the wounded. Soon they began to come in on stretchers. Suddenly, we saw a bare-headed soldier staggering towards us; his hand was *Devotion.* to his forehead, blood was pouring down his face, and tears were washing this away, almost as fast as it came. I supposed he must be very badly wounded, and went to meet him:

"My boy, are you hit?"

"Yes," said he, in a dazed way, taking the hand from his forehead, and seeing the blood on it; "I b'liebe so."

"Don't it hurt you?"

"Oh, no," said he, "I don't mind it much."

"Well, what are you crying for?"

Turning round, with a scared look he pointed to the woods from which four men had just emerged, bearing a stretcher with an officer's body on it.

"Oh," said the poor fellow, "look dar! My Captain's wounded! My Captain's wounded!"

Hood?" "Dat's it, Colonel; I's jus' studyin' on 'im." "Is he coming into Nashville?" "Dat's it, Colonel; dat's it 'zackly; I was studyin' dat ar berry partickler." "Well, is he coming in?" "No, sah; General Hood won't come in." "Why not?" "*He couldn't do jus'is to hisself in heah, sah.*"

John A. Dutcher, Esq., Milwaukee, Wis.

This was the hero's sorrow; and all the time we were caring for him it seemed to be the uppermost and only grief.

During the cannonading on the Sunday before the raising of the siege, I was in front of the headquarters of the Fourth Corps, at Acklin Place. General Wood was in temporary command. Major Bridge's Battery held the summit of the hill just beyond. After distributing some things among the men, I suggested to the Major that we might have a meeting in spite of the cannonading, as it was Sunday morning. He said at once that I might take all the men who were not absolutely wanted to work the guns. There were two infantry regiments supporting the battery, so after several hymns were sung, a pretty large audience was gathered. Officers came riding up, and all were on the *qui vive* of expectation. I mounted a cracker-box for a pulpit, read a chapter and then talked for fifteen minutes, while the battery near was sending its constant response to the Confederate shells. Generals Wood and Schofield, the Chief of Artillery, and their staffs were by this time a part of the audience. I reminded all present of the peril of the hour, and asked them to unite with me in prayer. The Chief of Artillery sung out to his Orderly to have every gun cease firing; the soldiers knelt upon the ground, and the officers, taking off their caps, bowed their heads, while, during the silence of the guns, we invoked the Divine blessing. The Chief came to me when it was over, and said earnestly—

“In the name of these soldiers, I want to thank you for this.”

The General Field Agent gives the narrative of relief service during the night of the first day's battle:

The work for the night was to go over the field, searching for men who had been missed by the stretcher-bearers; to gather up the dead, identify them through their comrades, if possible, and mark them by a card; to give coffee and hot soup at the flying hospital, and be next friend to men dreadfully wounded, —many of them dying.

*A Brother's  
Rest with his  
Dead.*

Coming upon a straw stack in our search for the dead, we found two bodies side by side, as if laid together by some friendly hand. As we were lifting them on the stretcher one of them sprang out of our hands, and pointing to his comrade, said—

“It’s my brother, sir; it’s my brother that’s dead. We two were all; we enlisted together, and I am alone now.”

Missing him in the fight, he had hunted over the field and found him dead by the stack; and lying down to watch him till morning, had fallen into “the image of death,” from which we had awakened him. When we took up the body to lay it in line with others, the brother followed after, bringing straw to make a bed for himself and his dead. We gave him room in that long row of silent sleepers, and nestling close to the corpse, he lay down for his last night’s rest with his brother.

The scene at the house taken for the flying hospital baffles description. While Hood was falling back, the citizens who still believed in the Confederacy had taken their movable property, including bedding and best furniture, to the rear, for protection within Rebel lines. This house had been made a receptacle for neighbors’ furniture, and we were hence able to put a first-class mattress under every wounded man. All the rooms below, and the piazza on three sides of the house, were laid thick with officers and privates. Some were sleeping under the power of opiates, some were already sleeping in death, others were writhing in mortal agony. Some were calling for the Surgeon, some for water, some for mercy; others were offering a prayer of trust and joyous hope of heaven just at hand, and others still were waiting in silent, anxious suspense for the Surgeon’s decision as to the nature of their wounds.<sup>1</sup>

*A Hospital  
Scene.*

Mr. Jacobs writes of a soldier to whom he ministered at this hospital:

Our improvised hospital was at the foot of the hill our boys carried by storm on the first day’s fight. Shortly after it was established, I met four men bringing in a soldier of an Indiana regiment, named Jackson. I saw that he was shot through the lungs, and must die,—indeed, I thought he would live but a few minutes. I stooped down to him as the men walked along:

*The Sweetness  
of Prayer amidst  
Pains.*

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<sup>1</sup> *Annals, U. S. Christian Commission*, pp. 508, 509.

“You are badly wounded?”

“Yes.”

I asked his name, regiment and home. He told me about his family. I inquired if he was a Christian :

“Yes; but what do you ask that question for?”

“Why, my brother, you are going to die.”

“Oh! am I?”

“Yes.”

“Soon?”

“Yes, very soon.”

He was in very great pain. We laid him down on the piazza, and arranged as soft a place as we could. His groans were dreadful. He told me what to write to his wife, and gave me her photograph and his watch to send home. After taking care of many others, about eleven o'clock at night I went back to him. Kneeling at his side, I strove to comfort him in his pain. I told him he would not suffer long, and asked how he felt :

“It would be so sweet if I could hear somebody pray once more.”

While I offered a short prayer he held my hand in both of his, and sobbed out responsively to the petitions, adding at the close—

“Oh! I do so love to hear you pray. Ai'n't you going to stay with me?” said he, as I turned away—“ai'n't you going to stay with me until I die?”

“I can't, Jackson, while all these men are here.”

Amidst the paroxysms of pain he labored until his last breath. His frequent exclamation was—

“Blessed Jesus, come and take me out of my pain!”

Mr. Smith's attention was attracted to this soldier later in the night. He writes of him :

At one o'clock, after personal attention to every man, and having arranged for a watch by relief, we rolled up in our blankets for a little rest. But there was one voice from the wounded, rising above all the others, now in a shriek of torture and now in a tender appeal to the Saviour. It was from an Indiana soldier, wounded in the bowels. One of the Delegates, bending over him, whispered—

*The Invincible  
Love.*



“Jackson, do you love Jesus?”

“Don’t I love Him!” was the instant reply.

His wound was mortal, and beyond any human relief. We were obliged to leave him and go back to our blankets. Long after midnight that voice from the piazza, distinct in the dreadful chorus of groans, making sleep impossible, stole in on the chilly night air like the voice of a flute in the clangor of trumpets:

“Dear Jesus, You know I love You. Come, Jesus, dear Jesus; I am all ready now. Come, Jesus. You love me, and You know I love You, dear Jesus.”

Fainter and less frequent came that sweet, divine appeal, till it ceased and we slept. In the morning we found a smile in the eye and on the lips of the dead patriot, which seemed to be still repeating—

“Dear Jesus, You love me, and You know I love You.”<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Jacobs continues the account of the second day’s conflict:

About four o’clock in the morning we began supplying the men with whatever we had to comfort them, and especially attending to the removal of the wounded from the immediate front. This work continued throughout the day, while our men were lying down, awaiting the orders for the final charge. The monotony of the position, with the accrued weariness of the previous day’s fighting, put one poor fellow to sleep. A shot came, as he lay unconscious, piercing his head and killing him instantly. He was a magnificent-looking soldier; his whole appearance and physique were of the finest. There was no change upon his face as his comrades bore him back; the smile of rest even was undisturbed. In a little while the charge would be ordered. Yet I was anxious to give him a Christian burial. The boys said “Aye, aye,” with a will,—and with such things as we had, pieces of boxes and boards, we dug a grave. Before he was wrapped up in his blanket, I looked to find some little token to send

*The Burial  
just Before the  
Charge.*

<sup>1</sup> *Annals, U. S. Christian Commission*, p. 509.

home to his family. Not finding anything of special interest, I cut a lock of hair, warm still with his life's blood, and put it in my memorandum-book, to be afterwards forwarded to his mother. There was no dying word to accompany it. We buried him hastily, but decently; on an end of an old ammunition-box I inscribed his name,—his only head-stone. When the grave was filled, I said—

“Let us have a moment of prayer, boys.”

Just as we had all bowed round the grave, the hastening hoofs of the aids' horses called the men to the charge. The prayer was brief, but ere it was over the bullets had begun to sing, the men were back in their places, and the line was sweeping on in triumph towards the doomed works of the enemy.

Just before this scene, while I was moving about among the men, Gen. A. J. Smith, commanding the Sixteenth Corps, came by with his staff. He jumped off his horse near where I stood and looked at me curiously. I was a rather strange-looking figure,

*A Cup of Coffee  
for Gen. Smith.*

I imagine; two great haversacks, distended with crackers, tea, dried toast, whisky, bandages, brandy, sponges, etc., were over my shoulders; a three-gallon coffee-pot was in one hand; a big twelve-quart tin pail with fresh water in the other, while a bundle of tin-cups hung on my arms and over my back and shoulders. I suppose I looked like Robinson Crusoe, or somebody laying in supplies for an indefinite siege or a life on a desert island. The General demanded who I was. I told him I was a Commission Delegate:

“What have you got in that big pot?”

“Coffee, General,—for these wounded men; it is very good for some of them, you know. Won't you have a cup?”

“Thank you; I don't care if I do. I haven't had a mouthful to-day, and I've been in the saddle since four this morning.”

An Orderly rode up just then, and seeing the General drinking, said to me—

“I'll take some if you please.”

“Haven't you had your breakfast?” asked the General, sharply.

The Orderly replied in the affirmative:

“Don't give him any; keep it for the men; I don't think I ought to have taken any myself.”

When the fight was over, Gen. Smith in a tent with Gen.

McArthur and a number of Delegates, after recounting the above incident, said<sup>1</sup>—

“ I must say that since Jesus Christ left this world, there has never been a more heavenly institution than the Christian Commission. I thought when I passed your folks going out, that their place was about six miles in the rear, but I have now come to a different conclusion. Many a man owes his life to you.”

It was unequivocal testimony from an officer who made no pretensions to be a Christian.

When the charge was ordered, the troops to whom I had been ministering carried the enemy's works, capturing eighteen hundred prisoners. In the charge they lost heavily; a Minnesota regiment had one hundred killed or disabled. I pushed on over a corn-field after the troops, and came to a large house about a mile beyond. It had been the headquarters of a Confederate General, and its occupants had all run away during the battle. No one was on hand to organize a hospital, so I undertook it myself, directing stragglers and all other unemployed persons I could find to clear the rooms and bring in the wounded. Going out then to the point where the fighting had ceased, I turned the streams of wounded towards the house. It was supplied with magnificent furniture, which we had to put out into the yard to make room as the wounded accumulated. Every floor in the house, the great halls, the porches in front and rear, were soon crowded full with suffering soldiers. About this time a Surgeon<sup>2</sup> arrived. He asked who was in charge of the hospital. I reported myself as a Commission Delegate, who had taken the direction of affairs until the proper parties should arrive, and was very glad to surrender my trust to him.

*An Extemporized Flying Hospital.*

“ By no means,” was his reply; “ retain your command and I'll serve you to the best of my ability.”

Two Assistant Surgeons soon came in, and we all went to work with a will. With the concentrated beef in my haversack, we soon had twenty quarts of soup; putting into it what crackers and

<sup>1</sup> The words are recorded by Mr. Chas. Harris, of Peoria, who was present at the interview.

<sup>2</sup> Surgeon Kennedy, of a Minnesota regiment.

crusts of bread we had, I was able to give every wounded man in the house a light supper. Poor fellows! they were almost starved, few having had anything since their early morning rations. I succeeded in confiscating a horse, and sent a soldier back through the mud at midnight to our office in Nashville with an order for supplies. He returned about two o'clock with stores packed in two grain-bags, and otherwise distributed about his person. At three we had coffee and soup made, and the men had another meal.

About seven our Christian Commission wagon made its appearance, loaded down with supplies. With that wagon-load the men were fed morning, noon and night of Saturday, and morning and noon of Sunday. Not a particle of Government stores reached the hospital in answer to the Surgeon's requisition until late Sunday afternoon. When they did come, the Surgeon, with manifest feeling, said to the Assistant Medical Director who accompanied them—

“If it hadn't been for the Christian Commission, these wounded men would have starved to death before this.”

We wanted some one to take more particular charge of our property; so on Sunday I found an able-bodied Englishman of fine personal appearance, whom I “detailed” as Hospital Steward. He did us most efficient service. In our general clearing-out on the evening of the battle, there had been only three things kept in the house,—a piano, a family portrait and a large mirror with a six-pound shot through it. After the men had been cared for on Sunday morning, we arranged to hold service. Thinking it would be pleasant to have singing, I made the remark that if we only had some one to play the piano for us, it would be everything we could want. The Surgeons were still at work in the amputating-room; they could not help us even if any of them had been able to use the instrument. To my surprise my English Steward stepped forward, and said modestly—

“Colonel, I used to play the piano a little in England; 'maybe I could draw down a tune for you.”

He had on a red flannel shirt, picturesque but unfashionable, and his sleeves were rolled up above his elbows, more unfashionable still. Without stopping for any preparations, he took his seat on a cracker-box to make a preliminary trial. The practice was highly satisfac-

*Our Sunday  
Morning Prayer  
Meeting.*





SONGS FOR SIGHING.





tory, and so he accompanied us excellent'y, while we sung our songs of Zion, and,

“My country, 'tis of thee,”

to the melody “God save the Queen,” familiar to every Englishman. And never did boys enjoy music as did our wounded in that morning meeting.

Surgeon Ford, of Nashville, already referred to as a constant and valuable friend of the Commission, furnishes the narrative of Henry Cutler, a young Illinois soldier wounded in the Nashville battles, and brought in the night to a hospital:

I examined his wound—in the right lung and liver,—and gave the nurses directions about the dressing. As I was about leaving, he asked what I thought of his case.

“You have a very serious wound,” I replied. *A Martyr.*

“Do you think it is mortal? You need not be *Patriot.*  
afraid to tell me the truth, for I am not afraid to die.”

“Such wounds,” said I, “are necessarily fatal, and I fear you have not long to live.”

“Well,” said he, “it’s all right, though it seems hard to die so young; I had high hopes, but God has so ordered it, and I am willing to go.”

“Do you feel that you are a Christian, and ready to die?”

“Well, I don’t know; I have tried to be a Christian, but the army is a hard place.”

“True; but if you can put your trust in Christ now, He will not forsake you.”

He spoke of his mother, and asked if I thought she would have time to come to him before he died. I had to tell him that I thought it impossible, but would telegraph her if he desired. He thought a moment, and then said that perhaps it would be best not to. I asked him for any message he might have for her:

“Tell her I would like to die near her, but that I die happy. I am thankful I can die among friends, and that I did not fall into the hands of the enemy. I had a presentiment when I left home that I

should never see mother again, and when I leaped the breastworks to make the charge, I was sure I should be wounded or killed."

"Do you regret now having enlisted in the service?"

Immediately his eye brightened, and a smile of profound satisfaction overspread his face, as he answered with the greatest emphasis—

"*Oh, no, by no means.*"

It was painful for him to speak, so I bade him good-bye. He lingered until the morning in great agony, yet without a murmur, when death eased him of his pains.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Chas. Harris writes from Nashville in December:

A Mission Sunday-school in Peoria had sent me the means of supplying many little needed luxuries for the soldiers. Purchasing some oranges once, I handed one to a poor, sick boy in the Post Hospital. He took it with a suppressed exclamation of delight, held it up, turned it round and round, and at last broke forth—

*The Children's  
Orange.*

"My little daughter wrote me two days ago, 'Papa, I would like to send you some oranges, but I can't do it.' And now, here the Lord has sent me one; my little girl couldn't send any to me, but He puts it into some other child's heart to do it, who could."

After the benediction in our prayer meeting the other day, a Surgeon rose and said—

"I have been at this meeting twice, and perhaps some of you think I am a Christian, but I am not; I have risen to ask your prayers. I *want* to be a Christian."

*A Surgeon's  
Want.*

We had a few moments of silent prayer on his behalf; and earnest, I am sure, were the petitions offered. The next day he rose again, and testified of the power of Jesus to save. Our

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<sup>1</sup> Surgeon Ford adds: "I regret that I had not leisure at the time to send Henry Cutler's message to his mother,—and now I have lost her address. Perhaps this may meet her eye, and bring some comfort to her afflicted heart." It is worthy of record in this connection, that after the Nashville battles, during four or five days, an average of 35,000 sheets of letter paper and envelopes were distributed daily by the Commission Delegates.

thanksgivings were now as fervent as had been our prayers before. He was the second Surgeon converted at our daily meetings while I attended them.

Rev. H. McLeod, laboring in the hospitals at Paducah, Ky., in January, 1865, tells the following story of his experience :

I was called one night to see a soldier who was thought to be dying. Two days before, he had been put ashore from one of the transports hastening up the river. He was unconscious, and no one could tell me anything about him, save that he belonged to a Michigan regiment. Remembering that the mere utterance of the name of Jesus had often recalled the wandering senses of the dying Christian, I sat down by him, and opening the little Testament on the stand, read—

*“Though he  
were Dead, Yet  
shall he Live.”*

“For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

I next read Jesus' words to Martha :

“I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever believeth in Me shall never die.”

The dying man opened his eyes and looked at me :

“Does it pain you to hear me read?”

“Oh, no; when well, I used to love to read the New Testament. There's one in my knapsack.”

“Are you afraid to die?”

“No,” and the face grew bright; “I long to go to heaven.”

“Is Jesus with you?”

“Yes, He is with me.”

I asked for his father's name and home; he gave me the particulars, but added—

“Write to mother; she is a Christian, father is not,” and he passed again into the old state of unconsciousness. I began writing a letter to his mother. After a little while he opened his eyes and asked for me. The nurse pointed me out. He said—

“Oh, yes, you are writing to mother; tell father to become a Christian.”

Calmly he gave directions about the division of certain property between his two younger brothers; and very soon he was resting with Christ.

Mr. A. E. Chamberlain writes of a visit paid by himself, in company with Judge Bellamy Storer and Rev. B. W. Chidlaw of Cincinnati, to a Nashville hospital:

We came to a soldier who looked very desponding.

“My good fellow, you look sad,” I said.

“I feel so,” was his reply. His left foot was off at the ankle, from a wound on the last day of the battle of Nashville.

*The Arch of Prayer.*

A father and mother were living at home in Missouri. His wife lived on Empire Prairie, in the same State:

“Have you written to your wife since the battle?”

“No, sir,” said he; “I got one of the boys to write.”

“But you told all about your wound?”

“Well, I told him to write that I was *slightly* wounded; I didn’t want to let her hear all the worst at once.”

“Did you tell her about your amputation?”

“No, sir; that would have broken her heart.”

I told him how I thought he was doing wrong in so concealing his condition:

“Now I am going to write her and tell her all about how you are. Is she a Christian?”

“Yes.”

“Are you?”

“No.”

“You need your wife’s prayers, my brave fellow.”

“Yes, and I have them.”

“But you know she can’t pray for you intelligently, unless she understands all about your case.”

I wrote all the particulars, so far as I could get them, and then told the soldier that I wanted him to add one more paragraph at the bottom of the letter:

“Your wife has been praying alone long enough. I want you to add that from this very evening you are going to pray for yourself. And then hereafter, if you never meet her again, your prayers will go up from here, while hers go up from Empire Prairie, both meeting at the throne. It will be an arch of prayer, with God at the key-stone. Will you leave the arch incomplete? Will you authorize me to tell your wife that you will so pray?”

The poor fellow went through a deep struggle; his whole frame shook with emotion. But after a minute he threw up his arm and said—

“God helping me, I’ll do it. Put it down.”

I knelt and prayed with him. Then reading over the letter, with the added clause, I asked if that was all right,—if he was willing to stand by it.

“Yes,” said he; “that’s all right.”

The next morning I went in to see him again. One of the pleasanter countenances I ever met was that of the poor soldier. It seemed as if the invisible arch of prayer had been already established.

Mr. G. W. R. Scott<sup>1</sup> went to the Army of the Cumberland as a Delegate, in March. On the road to Nashville the following incident occurred:

In the evening, as the train was passing through the woods, about six miles south-west of Cave City, Ky., it was attacked by guerrillas, who had previously torn up about one hundred yards of the track. They fired volley after volley into the cars, shouting all the while like demons. The train-guards returned the fire, but as the robbers were protected by the bank, no injury was done them. Soon the train was surrendered by the military conductor, and the bandits began a general work of pillage. Each passenger and soldier was thoroughly searched; money, watches, and even finger-rings were taken. The amount of property which thus unceremoniously changed owners was estimated at fifty thousand dollars.

*A Delegate's  
Shirts for Band-  
ages.*

The work completed, the train was fired and seven cars consumed.

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<sup>1</sup> Of Pittsburg, Penna. A student of Andover Theological Seminary, Mass.

The guerrillas remounting their horses, rode off with their booty. The wounded were now to be looked after. There was no Surgeon on board; so Mr. Scott found it necessary to begin his Commission work before he had expected to be called on. He began to dress wounds, and, in utter lack of bandages, was obliged to tear up his own shirts. Two soldiers volunteered to assist. Five balls were extracted, dislocated members set, and the wounds of sixteen men dressed. Mr. Scott remained with the wounded till the next afternoon, when Surgeons came. He had the gratification of hearing from them that the disabled men had all been properly cared for, and that their wounds were doing well.

From Mr. Scott's report of work at Tullahoma, to which post he was assigned, we select two incidents:

I stopped at the bedside of a young man, the classic beauty of whose face strangely attracted me. I asked him if he was getting better:

"No, sir; I am going to die."  
*"Mother's Here."* "Are you prepared?"

"Oh, yes," said he, with a glad smile; "I gave myself to Christ long ago."

"Shall I write home?"

"Yes, sir, do; it would please mother so much. Tell mother,—tell—father,"—his voice faltered, and soon his mind began to wander. He lay unconscious afterwards for a little while; then waking from his stupor, he said, in a manner which I can never forget—

"Wait, Chaplain, you needn't mind; *mother's here.*"

He lay quiet for a moment, filled perhaps with the invisible communion, and then "fell asleep."

A scene in one of the wards impressed me with its deep solemnity. Three convalescent soldiers were grouped about an old, gray-haired "veteran." They had just finished singing a familiar and beautiful hymn. Evidently the old man's heart was deeply

*The Last  
 Earthly Hymn.*

touched by the song of Zion. His face was lit up with something of the brightness which must have shone from St. Stephen's; he scarcely seemed to be a creature of earth.



The convalescents began another hymn. There was a quivering of the old man's lips, but no sound came from them. By and bye the smile and the brightness became fixed,—I looked closer,—he was dead! The soldiers sang on,—not noticing the change. The hymn would not open the dull ear of death, but who can say that the freed spirit did not drink in the upward floating melody?

Gen. Clinton B. Fisk,—whom we have already met with in the earlier operations of the Western army—during the Summer of 1865 was acting for the Freedmen's Bureau in the State of Tennessee, with his headquarters at Nashville. Rev. Edward P. Smith<sup>1</sup> relates an incident told by the General at the close of a Sabbath service in Cumberland Hospital, Nashville, during July:

One of my noble boys, very young and a Christian, was brought into the hospital, stricken down with malarial fever. Weary with the tedium of camp-life he longed, as he lay on his weary cot through the "lazy, leaden-stepping hours," for the active fray. His ideal of a soldier's life was "at the front." Learning of his sickness, and that he must soon die, I hastened to his side. After talking with him about his soldier life, his home and his approaching death, I said—

*"Going to the Front."*

"Now, my boy, when I get back to St. Louis, I shall go to see your mother, and the first question she will ask will be, 'How did Charley die?' Can't you tell me in a few words exactly how you feel about dying?"

"Yes, General," said he, fastening his deep, blue eyes upon me; "I think I can. It seems just as if I was *going to the front.*"

And so indeed he was. For is not the real campaign beyond, for which this life is only the drill camp?

Our record of incidents of work in this army may

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. Mr. Smith had in February been called from work in the Western army to the Potomac field, and in the following month had been transferred to the post of Field Secretary at the Central Office in Philadelphia.

close with one related by Rev. Jeremiah Porter,<sup>1</sup> who was laboring in August among the troops of General Logan's Corps, in and about Louisville, Ky. It is characteristic of the devoted and energetic lady, whose care and kindness had won for her the title of "Mother of Sherman's Army":

Several regiments had been ordered to Texas; and there were indications of scurvy within their ranks. Energy and promptness could provide potatoes for them,—a capital anti-scorbutic. Mrs. Bickerdyke determined that they should have them.

*How Potatoes  
were sent to  
Texas.*

It was Sunday, and the troops were embarking; the potatoes must be drawn from the Sanitary rooms and shipped that day, or the men would suffer from the want of them. An ambulance was ordered for Mrs. B. and my wife; it was raining in torrents; they went to the Quartermaster's for the teams which had been promised the day before, and which the storm had delayed. The captain of one of the steamers had promised to take the potatoes.

The ladies waited in the storm until the army wagons were loaded with fifty barrels of the needed vegetables; and then, hastening in advance to the river bank, were astounded to find that the boats had already left the levee. The spectators volunteered to comfort them by remarking—

"You're too late; the boats have gone."

"Gone! they shall come back," said Mrs. B., decisively.

Assuming an attitude of command worthy of Joan of Arc, waving her sun-bonnet and gesticulating with her hands, she made known her orders. The steamer obediently returned and took on board the supplies.

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<sup>1</sup> At the outbreak of the war Pastor of the Edwards Congregational Church (now Seventh Presbyterian), Chicago.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE WESTERN ARMIES.

WORK ALONG AND NEAR THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER.

*July 1863—Dec. 1865.*

OUR last notices of the operations on the Mississippi were of the fall of Vicksburg. After that event Gen. Grant sent Sherman after Johnston, who had been hovering upon the verge of the Union Army, awaiting any opportunity that might offer to compel the raising of the siege. Sherman drove his adversary out of Jackson, after a painfully fatiguing march from Vicksburg. Mr. A. E. Chamberlain narrates an incident connected with this movement:

The 57th Penna. was one of the regiments which went with Sherman. The intense heat and fatigue of the rapid journey compelled the men to throw away their baggage. A soldier named Wilmarth had with him a Bible,—a mother's last gift. When he had thrown away his knapsack, he carried the book in his hand for a long distance, until the question of retaining it came to be one of life itself. At last, to keep up with the rest, he was obliged to leave it behind him on the road. He put it where he could see it for a long time as he marched away. When it had faded from view, he could not say that his burden was lighter than before.

*"It Brought  
me to Jesus."*

When the expedition was ended, several fractions of regiments which had suffered greatly passed through Cincinnati. Among these was Wilmarth's. I went over on their arrival to see the Regimental

Hospital. For six weeks the men had had no changes, and were fearfully dirty and neglected-looking. Wilmarth lay on the first cot. He pulled the blanket up to hide his squalor and wretchedness. I had brought up some Scripture portions for distribution: but the moment I entered, I saw it was not the time for tracts in that room. The seventeen men needed another phase of Christ's Gospel.

"Boys, you want clean clothes first of all," I said; and began taking an account of missing stock to be supplied. Coming to Wilmarth, I asked what could be done to make him more comfortable.

"I was never a beggar in my life," he replied.

"My dear boy, this isn't begging; all I want to do is to pay a little installment on what we owe."

The Surgeon sent his ambulance to the Commission rooms for the goods, and within three hours I called again.

The three hours had certainly developed a revolution; one would not have known the place or the men's faces. Now was the time for Testaments. Coming to Wilmarth, I asked him if he had one. His answer was the incident of the march to Jackson. I put a copy of St. John's Gospel at his side, marked a few passages, and spoke of the great love to him. So with them all. Then, after a short service, I bade them good-bye, never expecting to see them again.

Two weeks afterwards, Rev. Mr. Chidlaw and I held Sunday service at Licking Hospital. I noticed a soldier leaning against a post; going to him, I asked if he was a Christian:

"I don't know, sir; I'm trying to be one."

"How long have you been trying?"

"Ever since"—and he held up a little Scripture portion as he spoke—"ever since you gave me that book, sir."

I remembered him at once. Taking out a bright, new copy,—for his was already worn with use,—I asked—

"Suppose you give me that one, and take this."

"You could not get this book, sir, for the whole State of Kentucky; *it brought me to Jesus.*"

Going over not long afterwards with reading matter, Wilmarth met me at the gate and said—

"Mr. Chamberlain, I want to ask a favor of you; would you mind giving me the reading you send over here to the hospital? I could talk to the men about Christ, if I had it to distribute"

I gladly assented to the arrangement, and until he was sent to his regiment, several weeks later, he did a faithful Chaplain's duty in that hospital.

The work along the Mississippi was mainly in the field of the St. Louis Committee of the Commission. Mr. K. A. Burnell and Mr. F. G. Ensign were its Agents, with their headquarters at Memphis. Some of Mr. Ensign's reminiscences follow :

In the Gayoso Hospital at Memphis, I found a soldier who had lost an arm and leg in the first grand assault on Vicksburg. I gave him some cordial, and made him as comfortable as I could. He asked in a surprised tone—

“Who are you? Where did you get these *“I Haven't Done Anything.”* things?”

I told him how they came from Northern homes.

“*Who* sent them?” he asked again, in a kind of bewilderment.

“The people at home who love you.”

Tears came into his eyes as he lay quiet for a moment.

“Why,” said he, “I haven't done anything to be remembered so.”

“You have given your leg and arm.”

But this fact did not strike him as at all important; he only reiterated,—“I haven't done anything.” I told him I had a nice little Testament for him :

“My eyes are weak, sir; I'm afraid the print's too small,” and he looked longingly at the book.

I gave him one of the beautifully-printed Scripture portions of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

“Well,” said he, when he found that his eyes rested on the page without pain, “this is the best of all. I have been here for weeks, and I did want to read the Bible so. This is just what I want. Who sent it?”

“Those at home and across the sea who love you and pray for you.”

Again the unselfish heart found utterance :

“Why, I haven't done anything.”

I spoke to him of Jesus, and visited him often afterwards. He gave his heart to the Master.

About the beginning of November, a soldier of the 7th Indiana Cavalry came into our rooms, with soiled clothes and a worn appearance generally. Cut off from his comrades while on a scout, he had with much difficulty straggled back to Memphis.

*The Two Let-  
ters Home.*

His first request was for envelopes and paper to write home. Bringing his letter to me, he said--

"Could you lend me a stamp? I have no money."

I told him I would mail the letter for him.

"Well, but," said he, argumentatively, "I want to pay for it."

"We don't take any pay here."

"But how do you get these things to run the concern?"

I told him friends at home sent them:

"Whose friends? You don't mean mine?"

"Yes," I replied; "friends who are Christians sent them."

"Why," said he, musingly, "my wife's a Christian."

"Very probably then, she helps to send such things."

I showed him an envelope, on which was printed, "This is a gift of Christian love to you, soldier." His eyes filled, as he read it:

"I never knew religion meant this before."

In the afternoon, we began our daily prayer meeting with the hymn--

"All hail the power of Jesus' name."

During the first prayer, I heard some one sobbing aloud. When the meeting was over, I found it was my soldier friend of the morning. He told me, that while passing the door, something urged him to enter; it seemed to him that he would be lost if he passed on, and that there was salvation if the inward voice was obeyed. We prayed for him, and with the confidence of a little child, the man there gave himself up to Jesus.

He came in the next morning. There was another letter to be written; it was to tell of a life turned at last into its right course, and it was to gladden the heart of a waiting, praying wife.

A soldier of the 89th Indiana came in one morning in the beginning of 1864, sat down at my desk and opened a letter. He sobbed aloud as he read it. I asked what I could do for him. He gave



me the letter to read; it was from his sister, with the sad news of his mother's death. The poor, bereaved man said—

*“She Won't Pray  
for me any more.”*

“My mother's been praying for me all my life, and especially since I came to the army. I've felt her following me. Those prayers have been a great protection,—and now she is dead,—and mother won't pray for me any more. What shall I do? I don't feel safe without mother's prayers.”

“Why,” said I, “Jesus loves you, and you must pray for yourself. Your mother's prayers cannot *save*.”

“But, *can* I pray?”

“Certainly you can.”

“Won't you teach me how to pray?”

“I will try,” I answered. “Don't you want to give your heart to Jesus, and love Him for giving you such a mother. Now, I'll pray first, and I want you to follow me.”

I prayed with the burden of the poor, chastised heart on mine, and I shall never forget his childlike petition which followed—

“Dear Jesus, my mother is gone home to Thee; teach me to pray as You taught her,”—this was his deep and earnest longing, something to fill the void which had been made in his life. He very soon gave himself entirely to Jesus, and came forth a bright and devoted Christian. He used to say to me—

“I want to live as my mother prayed.”

As long as I knew him his life was consistent with his desire.

The St. Louis Committee succeeded in enlisting quite a number of earnest, self-denying ladies in its work. Some of these labored more especially in the barracks and hospitals in and near the city. A sample of their service and method of dealing with the men may be gathered from the following extracts from the journal of Miss Sue McBeth:

“No. 1, Schofield Barracks” is a transportation depôt for going South, or returning home on furlough. One day it is crowded, the

next almost empty. All classes of men are for a time brought together here.

*Concerning*  
*"Hard Cases."* "We have about the hardest men in our hospital that you can find anywhere," said the commanding officer, one November afternoon when Mrs. M. and I went to see if he would not appropriate to us a room for Commission purposes, wherein to store our library, stationery, etc.

"We've been up stairs all the afternoon, and haven't yet found any 'hard cases.'"

"Of course, they wouldn't behave badly before you."

He was very kind, promised us the room, and allowed the men afterwards to go across the street to prayer meeting, and very precious hours were some of these.

"Can you raise yourself up, so as to look out?" I said to a sick boy as the wind one day bore the voice of singing from the yard below; "isn't that a pleasant sight?"

"Yes, indeed it is," was his answer.

The setting sun was glancing on a hundred or more new uniforms, as their wearers sat ranged in rows on the narrow piazza, or stood facing the Delegate who spoke to them the words of life.

Yesterday, as I was talking to this same soldier, I noticed two strangers coming into the ward. One of them belonged to the 176th Illinois, a regiment just discharged and going home, but this man, too sick to proceed, had got a comrade to stay with him.

*Getting Ready*  
*to Live.* "I've been wanting so much to see you again," he said when I spoke to him:

"Why, did you ever see me before?"

"Yes, in Ward 1, Benton Barracks. Don't you remember, I was the one, you said, who was taking jaundice."

I could not remember him; but he went on:

"I've been thinking so much of what you said then, and I wanted to see you again to tell you. You remember I said something about 'getting ready to die,' and you said you didn't believe in that,—it wasn't the right thing to do; I ought to 'get ready to live'; I owed my life to God, and it was not right to keep it back from Him; I ought to present my body a *living* sacrifice to God, which was my reasonable service, instead of turning to Him at the last moment, so as to get into heaven."

“And did you do so?”

“Yes, I think I did,” he said, earnestly.

He had many of the Christian family marks, and again expressed his strong desire, in life or in death, to be only the Lord's.

“You remember you wanted me to promise to begin praying that night,” he said after a little, “and I told you I was afraid to make the promise, for fear I would break it.”

“But you did pray?”

“Oh, yes; that night and many times since.”

His comrade came up then, and I began giving him some of my little tracts.

“You gave me that before,” said he, handing me back “*The Substitute*.”

“When did I give it to you?”

*The Substitute.*

“In the hospital in Benton Barracks, where I was sick. Don't you remember? I have all the little books you gave me in my knapsack here, and I'm taking them home to the children.”

“You have a ‘Substitute,’ have you, brother?” I said as I returned the tract to my satchel. “You see there is a last great ‘Draft’ coming, for which every man on earth is ‘enrolled.’ I was in Ohio a few weeks ago, and some who didn't go to war tried very hard to get ‘exempt,’ and if they could not, they took great trouble to find a ‘substitute,’ paying large sums to get others to take their ‘chance,’ as they called it, of death. Now, against that last grand ‘Draft,’ there is a ‘Substitute’ provided, Who has already taken our place even unto death, and He is offered ‘without money and without price.’ Have you accepted Him as *your* ‘Substitute’?”

“I hope so,” said he, earnestly; “I have never made a profession of religion, but—”

“You think you possess it,” I said, as he hesitated:

“Yes, I do hope so.”

We had a little talk about the duties of a new life:

“My wife wrote me that she had been thinking about these things too; in her last letter she said she was going to join the church, and wanted me to do the same. I was so glad to hear it, but I told her to wait until I came home, and we would take hold of hands and go together.”

The “supper-call” sounded. I wrote their names in their Testa-

ments ; their good-bye was " God bless you," and mine, the prayer, " Send them forth into Thy Kingdom, dear Saviour."

One Sabbath, towards the year's close, while talking to a little fourteen-year-old drummer-boy in Ward P, Jefferson Barracks, I noticed a soldier at a little distance with his back towards me, busily

writing. Going to him presently, I asked—

*The Wife's Prayers.* " Writing home, are you ?"

He looked up, and I saw it was one whose wife had been lately visiting him :

" No, I wasn't writing a letter ; I was only copying a prayer my wife sent me. You see, when she was here I told her how I felt, and when she went home she wrote down two prayers, and I'm copying them in this," showing me his note-book. " I might lose the letter, and I'm learning them by heart. My wife's a Christian, but I never cared anything about these things until I came into the army. I had no father or mother or anybody to teach me anything good when I was a boy, and I just worked my own way the best I could. I didn't know how to pray right, and, oh, I've been so wicked."

" Then you feel how much you have sinned against God ?"

" Yes, oh, so much."

" Did you tell God how you felt ?"

" Yes, but you see, I'm so little used to pray that I hardly knew how."

I told him that

" Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,  
Unutter'd or expressed,"

and urged him to give himself to the Saviour now.

" I have tried to do that," he said, humbly.

" Do you think He has pardoned you ?"

" I don't know ; sometimes I think He has ; then again, I'm afraid to believe it, for you don't know how great a sinner I've been," and the soldier's lips quivered.

" But, this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinner*s,—not the *righteous*. Don't you find some love for Him in your heart ?"

" Oh, yes, a great deal."

“More than for your wife even? Could you give up her and the little ones, rather than Him?”

He hesitated a moment, then looking up with tear-filled eyes, he said, slowly—

“Yes, I think I could give up everything in this world rather than give up Him.”

I spoke a few words of cautious encouragement, for evidently the Spirit was teaching him. It was not long until the witness of this was given. While he remained, his life was quiet, consistent, upright: he carried to the field the sure trust that Christ would be with him “even to the end.”

The veterans of Gen. A. J. Smith's Corps, after co-operating in the ill-fated Red River Expedition, were brought back to Vicksburg. Rev. R. Brown,<sup>1</sup> a Delegate during June and July, 1864, thus describes work among them:

Worn and discouraged, they lay on the sands by the Mississippi near Vicksburg. The tents for the troops did not average more than one to a company, so that they spent most of the day under their blankets stretched out on sticks to shelter them from the intense heat of the sun. Meetings among them were impossible in the day-time; as we distributed papers from company to company, the question was asked if we could not have a night meeting? The men were more than willing.

*Evening Meetings at Vicksburg.*

Chaplains Smith and Bardwell co-operating, the band was procured to play, and the soldiers began gathering about us in the darkness. Night served the double purpose of sheltering from the heat and of hiding the nakedness of many who lay under their blankets during the day for want of clothes. There was a solemn glory in the scene; the sparkle of the stars far over our heads, the dark, broad, silent river, with the fleet of transports on its breast, the unseen presence of the distant city, the flickering light of the circling camp-fires—and close before us the shadowy forms of the brave men upon whom still rested the dust of battle.

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of First Congregational Church, Oswego, Ill.

We spoke of friends and loved ones at home, and then of the "Friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Half-suppressed sighs and sobs began to come to us out of the midst of the great company; and when at last we asked who would pledge themselves to become the friends of Christ, though in the darkness we could not see them, we knew that many were standing up in solemn dedication; and our hearts went out in earnest prayer that the consecration might be unto life.

During our two weeks' stay with these noble men, the night meetings were continued with great success, the sun-down gun being the signal for gathering. They had a great effect upon our daily prayer

meeting in the city; the best-dressed men coming in *Re-consecration.* large numbers from the camp. The testimony borne by some of them was remarkable. One young soldier, I remember, rose the day before my departure, and with deep emotion, said—

"Early this morning, before sunrise, I heard the sound of a human voice coming up from a sheltered ravine. I followed in the direction of the sound, and found it was the voice of an old colored woman in prayer. She was thanking God for His mercies to her, praying for the soldiers who were fighting for her liberties, and for the masters who had enslaved herself, her children and her race. She committed the yet undecided contest, with all her personal interests, into His hands, with such implicit, childlike trust that I turned away utterly condemned. Since then troops of broken vows and pledges have come to memory. They are so many, and have filled me with such confusion, that I have come here to day to renew them before you all, and to pledge again my whole heart and life to the Saviour."

The soldier's intensely earnest manner thrilled every listener.

In the Fall of the year, the Chaplain of a large colored regiment in the neighborhood of Vicksburg, wrote to Mr. A. E. Chamberlain, of Cincinnati, for Primers. Mr. Chamberlain sent them, and adds a subsequent history:

Soon after, another request came for five hundred Testaments, and again another for five hundred more. In his last letter the Chaplain



told me that he had one thousand men who could read the Testament. Shortly afterwards I had a visit from him.

He asked me especially for a large-print Bible or Testament, to be used by an old soldier named

*"Uncle Readin'  
for Hisself."*

"Uncle Sam," whose story is worth preserving.

"The day before I came away," said the Chaplain, "we were organizing regimental writing schools. 'Uncle Sam,' though an industrious student of reading, seemed to lack enthusiasm in the new enterprise.

"'Uncle,' said I, at last, 'you want to learn to write, don't you?"

"'No, massa, no; uncle care's nuffin' 'bout de writin'."

"'What made you so anxious to learn to read, then?"

"'Wanted to read God's own word, massa.'

"'Can you read it yet, uncle?"

"He took his Bible, and opened it at St. John's third chapter: 'God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

"He began spelling the words; when he was half through the sentence his feelings overcame him; looking up, he asked—

"'Is dis ra'al? Is dis de sure'nuff word ob de Lord?"

"'No doubt about it, uncle.'

"'An' uncle readin' it for hissself!"

"He took the book and spelled through the rest of the sentence.

"'Now,' said he, 'if ole uncle dies, he kin go up dar, and tell de good Lor' Jesus dat he read in His Own Book, "Whomsoever b'liebes on 'm shan't perish, but hab eberlastin' life," an' de Lor' knows dat Uncle Sam b'liebes on 'm,—an' he read it for hissself in His Own Book.'"

Uncle Sam's indifference to his opportunity to learn to write was fully explained; his mind was occupied with the direct revelation from God.

An interesting letter, written in October of this year, by an officer of the army in Louisiana, to Mr. J. H. Parsons, the Corresponding Secretary of the St. Louis

Committee, gives an observant soldier's opinion upon the comparative mortality among Christians and others in the army :

H. Q. PROVISIONAL BRIGADE, MORGANZIA, LA., Oct. 19th, 1864.

" \* \* \* \* We have lost very severely in men and officers this Summer and Fall. Some regiments have buried nearly one-half of their men. I had from the first taken special pains to have religious services held often in my regiment, when I commanded it. Often hearing irreligious officers say that this was one of the causes of great mortality, as 'religion tended to depress the spirits of the men,' and that if these exercises were banished, the health of my men would improve, I determined to find out the truth of this; and upon a careful examination, I was *disappointed, I must acknowledge*, to find that, while *two-fifths* of my regiment had died since entering the service, *only one in every eight* of those who were Christians had died, showing a great disparity in favor of the latter. I also, by the same examination, learned that those who were most zealous in learning were least liable to sickness, and when sick they generally recovered soonest.

"These facts at first impressed me as strange, but I have no reason to doubt them, as they were obtained by careful officers. \* \* \* \*

"A. J. EDGERTON,

"Colonel Commanding Brigade."

Near the close of 1864, by an arrangement between the Western Branches, the care of the important station of Cairo, the "gate" of the Western army, was transferred to the special superintendence of the Peoria Committee. From reports of their Agent, Rev. J. D. Wyckoff,<sup>1</sup> we select the following incidents of work :

No part of the Delegate's ministry was fuller of consolation and blessing than the duty of writing home letters for the men. I remember a noble-looking, reticent Indian of the 16th Wisc., named

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Elmwood, Ill.

Peter Powels, who had not heard from wife or mother for six months, and who was too shy to ask any one to write for him. By degrees I found out something about his friends, and was able to write a letter for him, which pleased him mightily. I shall not soon forget how his brown face flushed up, when he found that in his delight he had let go the sentence—

*An Indian's  
Reserve Broken.*

“Tell her I would be glad to see her,” as if that was too much for an Indian to confess.

Passing along the street, I once greeted a stalwart soldier, who warmly grasped my proffered hand, and said, without further introduction—

“I have no ‘abiding city’ here.”

“May I ask if you seek one to come?”

*The Light  
Burning.*

“Yes, thank God, I do. I don’t have any time to myself, but I try to keep the lamp burning.”

On inquiring, I found his to be a most remarkable case. Away from home and all Christian associations, with no Sabbath, with inadequate rest, with no time even for a prayer meeting, pursuing his laborious duty of wagon-master in the wicked city of Cairo, he could yet so keep the inward light burning, that when I met him first, it seemed to shine out from his eyes into mine.

In the Receiving Ship at Cairo were six or seven hundred sailors. Among them all I could learn of but a single Christian. Accidentally another was discovered by his coming to me for a Bible:

“Haven’t you got one?”

“Yes, sir; I want it for a mate, though.”

*John Jones.*

I gave him one with a word of encouragement, and left him, to watch for the tug which was to carry me to Mound City. Presently he returned and asked me for a New York *Observer*. Some further conversation ensued. I found that he had no father or mother, that Jesus was his only friend, and again bade him good-bye. The tug was still invisible, and the sailor came up again. Extending his right hand, partly closed and inverted, he said—

“I want to do something for Christ; won’t you take this for the Commission?”

He had handed me five dollars out of his poverty, and would not be denied the privilege of giving it. I asked his name; reluctantly

he gave it—a rare one, I believe,—John Jones. I shall not soon forget his quiet, subdued, half-tearful manner.

This was in November; two months later I started from Cairo to visit the Mississippi gun-boat fleet. After boarding several vessels, I was transferred to the *St. Clair*, Captain J. S. French. I had been so disheartened at not meeting with any Christians on some of the other boats, that this visit charmed me exceedingly. Here were three Christian officers; the commander was a generous, courteous “old salt,” who, the first evening of my visit, called the men on deck and introduced me to them with some crisp, telling words. He showed me a well-worn copy of the little book called *Daily Food*, to which, he said, it was just as natural for him to go in the morning as it was to eat his breakfast.

I found four Christian sailors on board. After a meeting on Friday evening, a man came up on the quarter-deck and said he would like to “see the Reverend.” I stepped aside to see him; he handed me a five-dollar bill, saying—

“Put that where it’ll do good.”

I looked narrowly at him, and lo! there was my old friend, John Jones of last November. It was as good as a run home to meet him again and find him still holding to the blessed way.

The terrible “Eclipse disaster”<sup>1</sup> changed all my plans of visitation. God grant I may never have such work to do again. Such was the accumulation of severer cases, that the men with broken limbs had to wait a whole day ere they could be attended to. The frightful burns, with the exerceiating resulting pain, made the scene one of living death.

One poor fellow recognized my voice. He had been a few times at our Cairo meetings. He was fearfully scalded all over the body, and could scarcely see. He moaned out that he wanted “to see the Christian Commission man.” I came to him:

“I am the Christian Commission man, my dear fellow; what can I do for you?”

“I was in your meetings there; I was ashamed to ask you to pray

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<sup>1</sup> The Mississippi steamboat, *Eclipse*, was blown up while bringing North a large number of men, who were on furlough, or whose terms of enlistment had expired.

for me then. I've been a great sinner, but I'm seeking repentance and forgiveness. I'm not ashamed to ask Christians to pray for me now. I've been in battle since I saw you ; but oh, that was nothing to this!"

I told him about the Healer of pains,—the ever-waiting Saviour of the world.

It was a solemn, oppressive, dazing day ; one which made me wish for the end of the misery of the war, for the coming in of the day of Eternal Peace.

Poor fellows! they had taken passage on their way home from the war ; many of them having just finished their terms of enlistment. They had had bright anticipations of the pleasant greetings hidden by the hills and the long prairie reaches between them and home,—greetings which to so many never came.

Miss Katharine M. Bissell<sup>1</sup> was a Delegate in the Commission rooms at Vicksburg towards the close of 1864 and in the beginning of 1865. An incident told by her illustrates the value of the work which could be done by ladies in the army :

In the neighborhood of Vicksburg, about December, was quartered a brigade of soldiers, who for several reasons were in a rather demoralized condition. The men were often almost ungovernable. Only one of the officers seemed to have any special control over them, and he never left them for a moment, exerting himself earnestly to restore reason and authority.

*The Sergeant's  
Determination.*

Sergeant Fuller, of one of these regiments, came into our rooms one morning and leaned against the reading rack. The whole expression of his face was one of homesickness and indifference,—perhaps of something worse. I was taxing my brain to find some way of approaching the Sergeant without giving offence, when I thought of a beautiful bouquet of flowers which I had received that morning. Holding them out to him, I said—

“ Don't you think they are pretty, Sergeant ? ”

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<sup>1</sup> Of Hartford, Wis.

He vouchsafed them a peculiar, masculine glance, bowed and smiled carelessly, then turned to his reading. I was a little nonplussed at first, but soon saw that he wanted to talk with me,—whether it was their fragrance which reached him, or possibly some home memories which the flowers had quickened, I don't know. I watched him a while till I was sure, and then told him I would be at leisure in a moment. We began a general conversation. As soon as I could I introduced the great question—

“Are you a Christian, Sergeant?”

“I am not a Christian now; I hoped once that I was, but there seemed to be so little about it which I could claim as a Christian experience, that I came to doubt it altogether, and now I'm as reckless as any of the others.”

I talked with him seriously and earnestly. He seemed deeply impressed, but would make no promise concerning the future. After that he came often to our rooms, and always renewed the conversation about the Christian life, until one day, after an unusually long talk, he stated his determination to become a Christian. From that time he was one of the brightest examples I ever met. His comrades noticed the change, and asked what made him “so still?” He told them he had found something to keep him quiet all the rest of the days of his life.

Rev. Ewing O. Tade,<sup>1</sup> the Local Agent at Memphis, in May, 1865, sent to the Chairman of the Commission a watch, handed him by a noble-hearted Christian soldier of the 113th Ill. Inf. The following note accompanying the gift, explained its beautiful meaning and purpose:

“A soldier, whose earthly light went out when his little boys, Paul and Frankie, died last March, thought, though poor, that decent gravestones should mark the spot where they lie listening for the word which shall call them forth to immortality.

*The Children's  
Memorial.*

“But he thinks he now sees a more excellent way,  
—to leave their precious dust with no costly memo-

<sup>1</sup> Pastor of Congregational Church, Washington, Iowa.



rial, seeing that He who redeemed shall watch it carefully. Let the price of the marble be expended in sending forth the Living Word; so they, being dead, shall yet speak. That whatever the accompanying watch may bring shall be devoted to the American Bible Society, as the gift of two little lambs, Paul and Frankie, who are now walking in the green and pleasant pastures by the side of the river of Life,—is the wish of their father,

“S. L. URMSTON.”

The watch, with a narrative of the particulars, was sent to the American Bible Society. The reading of the soldier's letter, at a meeting of the Board of Managers, excited deep interest and sympathy. Urmston was made a Life Member of the Society, and presented with a handsomely bound copy of the Bible.

The work among the troops in Arkansas was much the same as elsewhere. A few of its incidents, from the reports of Agents and Delegates, may be given. Mr. C. C. Thayer,<sup>1</sup> who was for a long time a Field Agent in Arkansas, narrates an incident occurring at Little Rock :

A very devoted Christian soldier, whose love for his country and family I had never seen surpassed, lay dying. He was dreaming; and as he approached the River of Death, a vision of his home came back to him vividly. He seemed to be leaving it once more for the war, and to be passing along the old road; a bend would soon hide all he loved from view. In the dream he turned for one last look: in his agony, he cried out—

*The Heavenly  
and the Earthly  
Homes.*

“O my wife, my darling wife! who made my home so happy, must we separate? My dear only son,—our joy and pride, must I leave you?”

He was silent a moment. Perhaps in the mean time, a new and brighter vision,—the verity from which the earthly one had ever

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<sup>1</sup> Of Chicago (Congregational) Theological Seminary. Now, a Missionary of the American Board in Central Turkey.

drawn its brightness and beauty,—was revealed. There was another bend in the road ; beyond were kinder arms than behind :

“ Yes, wife, I *can* give you up, and darling Henry too,—country, friends, all—*all* ; but, Jesus, I cannot give *You* up.”

The eyes that were looking upon the “ Elder Brother ” shone brightly. Doubtless, ere this, he has found that pure human ties never break ; that they could only be weak here on earth, because Christ’s unseen presence was weak also ; that when *that* grows into a continual knowledge, *they* will become infinitely more real and beautiful.

Another sketch by Miss Bissell, of work at Little Rock in June, gives the result of an effort to bring a soldier to a present decision for Christ :

Joseph Adams was a small, slender boy belonging to the 25th Ohio Battery,—a wild set of men, as far as any religious influences were concerned, and who had the reputation of being rather aristocratic.

*Decide Now.* Delegates used to say they were the hardest men to preach to on the whole station. They prided themselves on their fine appearance, were always well dressed, never left their camp without polishing their boots, cleaning their teeth, arranging their hair, and in every way making themselves as attractive as possible. Adams was nineteen years of age, and had already contracted many of his comrades’ bad habits. He was one of the best gamblers in the battery. His habit was to save his wages, and use his gambling gains for other expenses. The first time I saw him he was bringing back a book to our library :

“ I’m tired of these religious books ; I’ll take a history.”

I got the desired history for him, and began a conversation. He was very communicative, but his use of tobacco was so excessive as seriously to impede conversation. Several times he begged my pardon, while he awkwardly hurried to the door to discharge his overflowing mouth. It began to dawn upon him then that chewing in a lady’s presence was hardly in good taste, and so mortified was he that he apologized and declared that he would never chew again. In our talk he expressed his utter unbelief in Christianity, and spoke lightly of conversion. When he was through, I asked him—

“Adams, do you really know what we mean by conversion?”

“Well, no,” said he; “I don’t know that I do—exactly.”

I gave him the best idea of it I could,—how it was our duty to put ourselves in harmony with God, and consecrate our lives to Him. Not regarding his sneers against Christianity, I urged him to make this consecration at once. He was unwilling. I told him how much less willing he would be in three or four years hence. He looked up in a sharp way:

“I suppose three or four years ago you would have said the same thing.”

“Very possibly,” I replied; “and can you say that it would not have been true?”

As he went away I gave him *God’s Way of Peace*, by Bonar; he promised to read and return it. When he came back, I found that he was trying to compromise the matter, but I held him to the point of present decision. Finally he could elude the issue no longer, so he told me—

“I won’t decide the matter here. I want to think it over more.”

He looked at the clock; it was just a quarter to eleven:

“Can you decide within twenty-four hours?”

“Yes,” said he; “I can, and will.”

The next day, at a quarter before eleven, a note came from him, stating that he had been assigned to duty the preceding evening, and could not get off; that he had been thinking the matter over while walking his beat, and had decided to be a Christian; “with God’s help,” he added, “I mean to be one truly.”

He kept his word nobly, and for the months in which he remained at the post he gave the clearest evidence of a change of heart. Of course he was subjected to no small measure of ridicule, but he endured it bravely for the sake of the Master.

The Lieutenant of his battery was an exceedingly upright and moral man, and on this account nicknamed among the boys “Abe Lincoln.” He was not a Christian, though he had thought seriously on the subject. One day Adams went to him for permission to come to the prayer meeting at our rooms. The Lieutenant was struck with the request, hesitated, and looked at Adams for some time before granting it. From that day a change came over him; nor did the impression made by this

young soldier's request lose its hold upon the officer, until he became an humble, sincere Christian.

Rev. R. Brown, a Delegate among the troops at Fort Leavenworth, in the Fall and early Winter of 1865, describes an episode in his work :

About one hundred men of the 17th Ill. Cav. were confined in the Military Prison at Fort Leavenworth, on the charge of mutiny. On investigation I became satisfied that, while they had done wrong, there were many palliating circumstances. They certainly needed all the help we could render. Many of them were without shoes, shirts or stockings; some were very sick, and all sad and anxious. I interested myself earnestly for their release, and at last, through Gov. Oglesby of Illinois, an order was procured from the War Department, sending them to Springfield before their discharge.

*Work on behalf of Military Prisoners.*

Visiting them again, just as they were preparing to obey this order, I held a parting meeting. Never did praise and prayer seem so delightful; never was temple of worship more truly filled with the Divine presence than was that forlorn prison-house.

A lady from the East, of fashion and culture, reluctantly accompanied us to our last prison meeting with them. A box—the only movable thing that would answer for a seat—was placed in the centre of the cell for her. She wept as she saw the gratitude glowing in every face, and evident in every pressure of the hand and utterance of the lips. She was a church member, but this scene of praise and prayer gave her an entirely new view of life. She was silent afterwards about the meeting; before her return to the East I asked the reason:

*Life Becomes Real.*

“When I think of my reluctance to accompany you, and then of the evident presence of God in that meeting, I begin to fear my own hope is false, and my religion an empty form.”

It was the occasion of a new consecration, and a determination to do some of Christ's work among the poor.

Intercourse between the citizens of Leavenworth and the imprisoned soldiers had been quite frequent. In the opinion of many, the wonderful revival which visited the city soon after, and which re-

sulted in adding one-third of their present strength to the Protestant churches, was due in no small measure to the quickening granted to many during their visits to the Commission meetings in the prison and elsewhere.

*The Germ of  
a Revival.*

Two sketches of St. Louis hospital work may close this part of our record. Miss McBeth furnishes the first :

“Why, who is this? How did *you* get here, little brother?”

I had slipped into the wards after the lamps were lighted, to see some of the new patients who had reached us from the South that day, and just as I opened the door my eye fell on the strangest sight. The bed nearest me had been newly filled with straw, and upon the top of it, his little limbs scarcely reaching more than half its length, lay the oddest, oldest-looking boy, with a pair of bright, black eyes, looking at me out of a little, thin, withered face.

“*Our Baby.*”

“I came up on the boat. I belong to the — Regiment”—I have forgotten the number; would the face were as easily forgotten!

“A drummer-boy?”

“No; a soldier!” and what pride there was in that shrill, childish voice, as he called over the names of the battles he had fought.

He was a waif from one of our great cities, such as only cities nourish. He had never known either parents or home, but “just growed,” Topsy-like, and struggled up and out into the world the best way he could, until a recruiting officer, seeking one more name to complete his number, added this, and the boy was a soldier.

“Have you seen ‘our baby’ yet?” asked a nurse, as I came out of the ward that night,—so all had christened him from the first. I never knew another name for him. They moved him to a cot near the stove; attendants and convalescents petted and nursed him, and for a time he grew better under their care. Our hospitals were very full at that time, and death was busy in every ward. I spent my strength with those I knew must soon die, and gave “our baby” only a few passing words, waiting until I could have more time with him. He was getting much better, I thought, and needed careful instruction. He could neither read nor write; knew little more of God

than a heathen child; had scarcely heard Christ's name, save as an oath. I must begin with the very rudiments of the Gospel. And so I waited for a more convenient season, giving him my brightest-covered little tracts, for his comrades to read to him, and resting myself when I came home at night by putting all the old engravings I could find into picture-books for his amusement. At last a day came when I thought I could give him an hour; but when I stood beside his cot he had gone beyond my reach! I thought at first he was asleep—but no, he was dying! I bent close to his ear and tried to make him hear me, but not a muscle of that still face moved. Light, or sound, of earth could reach him no more for ever.

Rev. E. P. Smith, during a brief visit to St. Louis, was invited by Miss McBeth to see a Michigan soldier in Jefferson Barracks, in whose case she felt a peculiar interest:

I saw at a glance that he had not long to live. In his pale, thin face, flushed with the last sign of flickering life, there was a beseeching—a piteous longing, such as in all my hospital experience I had rarely seen. At first he gave me little heed, but as I laid the back of my hand upon his burning cheek, and stroked the hair from his forehead, he turned his eyes full upon me, in a look that spoke things unutterable:

*Christ Rejected  
for the Last time.*

“How are you to-day, my soldier friend?”

“Poorly, sir; very poorly; a few days more—only a few.”

“You are all ready, I trust?”

“I am going—there is no help for it; if you call that ‘ready,’ I am ready.”

“But I mean, are you prepared to die? Is this exchange of worlds going to be pleasant to you?”

“Pleasant! It is awful, sir; horrible beyond all account! But I have got to come to it!”

“No, my brother, there is no such ‘got to’ about it. You are in this world yet, and it is a world of mercy. This is the world where Christ died. Let me tell you what He says: ‘Whoso cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.’”

“I know it, I know it all; I have heard it a thousand times.”





“I CANNOT COME NOW—I WILL NOT.”

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“Well, isn't it true?”

“It may be—but not for me, now.”

“But He says, ‘If you will *come* to him;’ He does not say, ‘If you had come,’ or, ‘If you would have come,’ but ‘if you will come’—‘whoso cometh’—comes to-day—‘He will not cast out.’ It's a great pity you haven't come already, but—”

“Pity! It's my ruin, sir. I cannot come now—I will not. See there, stranger, do you think I am going to give that withered, dried-up hand to God, after I have given all its strength to the devil? Do you think I'm going to drink the devil's wine all my life up to this last day in hospital, and then offer the settlings to Jesus?”

“It was wrong, it was mean for you to refuse the best to your God, but see what you are doing now. Jesus has followed you all through, and to-day asks for this remnant of your life, ‘these settlings,’ as you call it. He really desires your affection and trust in Him for the little while you will lie on this bed.”

“Is it honorable or decent to give it now?”

“If He can ask it, is it honorable or decent for you to refuse it now? You have refused everything; Jesus makes a last request; will you refuse that?”

“I see it—that's so,—but—I am afraid I shall. You come a little too late! It's getting dark now.”

I prayed at his bedside, but he was only partially conscious. As I sat watching him, he said in a whisper, scarcely audible—

“If I could get back again—back again—”

Supposing he was thinking of his friends, I asked about his home in Michigan; rousing slightly, and with a shake of his head, he said—

“No, no—a boy again—a boy again—”

Thinking that he might have fallen into a sleep from exhaustion, I left him for a while. But it was the sleep of death. The consistency of sin held him straight through his course. He could not break it. He must begin anew, if at all, he thought, with the beginning of life; but, alas! for the boyhood with its thousand invitings it came back no more!

The work under charge of the Western Army Committees did not close as soon as did the field labors in

the East. The St. Louis Branch kept open its office at Memphis until October, 1865; and work upon the Plains, directed from Fort Leavenworth by Rev. W. J. Gladwin, as Field Agent, was continued into 1866.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### *ALONG THE COAST.*

*1861—1865.*

THE New York Branch of the Commission on its organization took the charge of the work among sailors and soldiers operating along our extended coast line from Virginia to Texas. It was a quieter service than was found elsewhere in any field of the war. On account of the distance from New York, Delegates were chosen for longer periods of labor. So much, however, which was common in all army experience, has been anticipated in the notice of other fields, that we shall not repeat ourselves by attempting to give even a representative series of incidents of this coast work. We begin our record on the seaboard of North Carolina.

Rev. Dr. A. L. Stone, who was for a time Chaplain of the 45th Mass. Regt., in a letter from Newbern, N. C., to the people of Park Street Church, Boston, his parish at home, gives a narrative of the illness and death of a soldier of his regiment, a younger brother of the Rev. Phillips Brooks of Philadelphia :

George Brooks, one of our own Boston boys, a member of Co. A., recruited by Captain Russell Sturgis (now our Major), was taken ill of typhoid fever about a week ago. From the first, he expressed his

*The Three Petitions.*

entire resignation to the Divine will, and enjoyed the constant presence of Jesus at his side. When I asked him daily, "Is your Saviour near you to-day?" the look upon his face had a radiant answer before his lips could speak, and through his sickness that faithful Presence sustained and cheered him. He was never dejected, never murmured. He would say but little, as his lungs seemed congested; but by gasps and whispers, one day he told me—holding my face close to his, so that he could make me hear his lowest words—that he had never had a full assurance of his pardon and acceptance until he became a soldier. He said that in the battle of Kingston, under that terrible fire of the enemy, "His Saviour came to him as never before, declared His presence, revealed His love, and '*held his soul in His hand.*'"

• As the hour of death drew on, he seemed to have three burdens of prayer; the first was quickly disposed of—he prayed aloud:

"O Lord, keep me, hold me fast, leave me not, let me not go!" and then all thought of himself seemed to be at an end.

Shortly after his lips moved audibly, and his second burden was laid down at the Divine feet:

"My God, spare my country—oh! save my dear native land!"

After a few moments of silence, the voice of prayer was again heard,—the last earthly articulation of his tongue. The words were those of the old familiar petition—

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

His own soul, his country, the Israel of God—these three interests he thus commended in last utterances to the faithful Promiser. How could a Christian life close more appropriately, more triumphantly?

The following incident of the siege of Washington, N. C., by the Rebels in March and April, 1863, related by a soldier of Co. G, 46th Mass. Regt., is a beautiful instance of heroic self-sacrifice and courage:

• A brave band of soldiers were set for the defence of Rodman's Point. The enemy, ten to one, pressed heavily upon them to drive them from the Point or destroy them. Overpowered, they fell back



to the Tar river, where only a scow remained in which they could embark. They hurried into her. The balls came thick and fast from the Rebels close upon their heels. The boat had to be pushed from shore with poles. But alas! when she was loaded, she stuck fast in the mud. The sides afforded some shelter to the soldiers while they remained lying; but who would leap overboard and push her out into the stream? Who would deliberately lay down his life for the possible salvation of his fellows? When several soldiers were about to do it, a large negro said—

*Dying that  
Others might  
Live.*

“You keep still and save your life. I can’t fight. I can push off the boat. If they kill me it’s nothing. You are soldiers, and they need you to fight.”

Leaping overboard, he pushed the boat out into the stream, then sprang back, pierced by seven bullets. He died in two days. Does Greece or Rome offer a higher patriotism?

Rev. A. P. Johnson,<sup>1</sup> a Delegate in the neighborhood of Hilton Head, S. C., in 1863, recalls several incidents of his experience:

On board one of the gunboats, I found a number of very sick men. I gave such stores as were needed to make them comfortable, and talked and prayed with them. One of them, evidently a foreigner, interested me exceedingly. I asked him—

“Are you a Christian?”

“Yes,” said he, “but there are few Christians in my country.”

*Waiting to  
Join in the One  
New Song.*

“What country is that?”

“Turkey.”

I asked him how he became a Christian there; his answer was a very interesting story of the missionary labors of Rev. Dr. Dwight. Here, far from home and kindred, he had been fighting for the land of his adoption, and was now dying in perfect peace, waiting for the fulfillment of St. John’s vision of the one song in one language:

“After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man

<sup>1</sup> Pastor of First Congregational Church, Charlemont, Mass.

could number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues, stood before the Throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb."

There were large numbers of colored people at Hilton Head, and I had interesting intercourse with them. One day a number of children came asking for books. One wanted a Testament. He was a

*Washed White  
in the Blood of  
the Lamb.*

"darkey" pure and simple, as bright in mind as were his teeth and eyes. His only name was mythological—Neptune, or as he gave it to me—

"Nep; on'y leben yeahs old, sah."

He could read well. I asked him what he wanted with the Testament:

"T' learn 'bout heben."

"Why learn about heaven?"

"So I kin go dar when I die."

"Why do you suppose *you* can go to heaven? You are only a 'little nigger.' You don't imagine there are any 'niggers' there."

"Yes, massa."

"But, you see, white children go there; and you don't love each other much,—can't play together. How can you get along together in heaven?"

"Dunno, massa; but I 'specs dey will."

I kept on raising objections, until finally I asked—

"Now, do you really believe that there are any black children in heaven?"

He reflected a moment, and then answered—

"No, massa, I 'specs dey isn't."

"Well, then, *you* cant go there, can you?"

"Reckon I kin, massa."

"But how can you go there, when there are no black children there?"

"'Kase dey is all white."

"But how's that?"

"*Oh, dey is all 'washed white in de blood of de Lamb.'*"

It was a "child's" faith, true to fact, whatever may be thought of its form.

A correspondent of the *Sunday School Times*, writing from Bentley, N. Y., in June, 1863, gives an account of a Bible-class scholar in that town, who enlisted on board the gun-boat *Daylight*, one of the blockading squadron off Charleston :

In a crew of two hundred men he found only one Christian. One Saturday it occurred to him that he would like to hold a prayer meeting the next day. His companion suggested the propriety of asking the Captain about it. To their great astonishment his reply was—

*A Bible-Class  
Scholar's Work.*

“Yes, you may have the free use of the ship, and I am proud to think I have young men on board that do pray.”

The next day about ten o'clock he got his hymn-book and Bible, and took charge of the “right wing” of the ship to begin his meeting. It was a very solemn service; an invitation was given to all those who felt their need of Christ to express it; twelve men knelt and asked the two to pray for them. Several of these found the “pearl of great price.”

Thus the Bible-class scholar had found another field of usefulness, far away from his own loved Sunday-school.

Not a few of our naval officers were throughout the war constant in their efforts to bring the Gospel with its holy influences near to the sailors' hearts. A correspondent writes of Admiral Dupont :

Before going into the “iron-clad” fight off Charleston, in April, 1863, the Admiral had prayers offered on his flagship, the *New Ironsides*. From the Admiral down to the powder-boys, all humbly knelt and sought strength for the coming trial, by joining in a short, touching prayer read by Commo-  
dore Turner. The recollection of the sight of those  
four hundred determined, battle-eager men, bowing in picturesque groups among the grim implements of war, before their Maker, will never be effaced from my memory.

*Prayer on the  
“New Ironsides.”*

An address was made by Captain Winslow of the *Kearsarge*, the destroyer of the *Alabama*, before the Port Society of New York, in December, 1864, which incidentally revealed a beautiful Christian influence over his men :

He stated that during the long cruise of the *Kearsarge* only two Sabbaths had passed without a religious service on board the ship. It was his custom to have the bell tolled and the men invited to come to his cabin, which was often filled with sailors for this exercise. In addition to the prayers, he commonly took up a portion of Scripture, expounded and endeavored to illustrate it; and when in the vicinity of the lands of Bible history and prophecy, he would call attention to the fulfillment of God's Word, and thus set Jack thinking upon the reality of Divine truth.

*Capt. Winslow's Services on the "Kearsarge."*

The following incident of the assault upon Fort Wagner, in July, 1863, was related to the writer by the relatives of the soldier :

A colored soldier from Philadelphia, who had enlisted in Col. Shaw's Massachusetts Regiment, was carried back at the close of the assault on the fort, shockingly torn with wounds—wounded unto death. Some one came to him, washed the grimed face and attended him while he was unconscious. After a while he began to talk as if he were in a dream. He thought that his wife Chloe was near him and giving him all the kind attentions. He told Chloe of his joy and assurance in the approaching freedom of his whole race :

*The Kingdom that Will Come.*

"De Lor' kep' us patient long, Chloe, den His Kingdom come."

Recalling perhaps the last conscious sight of the repulse and of his falling and flying comrades, he continued—

"It don't look es if He thought we wus riddy for't yit; but den, Chloe, *it am gwine to come.*"

He murmured on for a while about Jesus and Chloe and "de chillens," and then fell asleep.

In the New York *Parish Visitor* of October, 1863, occurs the following narrative of a Delegate on the South Carolina coast :

On returning to quarters, I found a soldier of the 7th New Hampshire who begged for some reading. Said he—

“I am a poor sinner and want something to guide me. The night of the assault on Fort Wagner, when the balls were so swift and thick around, I heard men swearing dreadfully, and it seemed so awful that I could not bear it. It made me afraid, and I promised my God that I would swear no more, but would serve Him from that hour; and He is my witness that I have tried faithfully; and now I want something to read besides my Testament, to help me along. This religion has a wonderful effect over me even in my dreams. When I got into temptation the other night in a dream, I turned away from it.”

*A Consecration in Battle.*

He spoke with the deepest emotions of his early religious training, his pious parents and of all the mercies of God. It seemed in all he said as if the very marrow of the man was penetrated by this new fear of God and love of His Son, which had come to him in the hour of peril.

I gave him the little book, *Come to Jesus*, and turned to the *Soldier's Series*, to find a tract entitled *Past Sins*. Holding it in my hand, while we pursued our conversation, I saw that the title caught his attention. In a moment he asked me for it, eagerly. Mr. B—— said something to him about being a missionary in camp now.

“Yes,” said he, “I try to be. You may depend on my doing what I can.”

His “God bless you” at parting was fervent and heartfelt.

Some time afterwards, as I was passing in a crowd of men along the beach, my eye was attracted by the salute of a guard. I looked up just in time to catch the pleasant smile of my Christian soldier; it told of a heart completely happy in the Saviour's love.

Rev. Robert J. Parvin furnishes a sketch connected with the battle of Olustee, Florida, in February, 1864 :

The 31st U. S. Colored Regiment was recruited at Camp William

Penn, not very far from St. Paul's, Cheltenham, Pa., my parish church. Its commander was Col. Fribley, who had formerly been a Captain in the 8th Pa. Regiment. At the camp he became deeply interested in his own spiritual condition, as well as in that of his men; and about a fortnight before leaving for Beaufort, he, with his young and devoted wife, was confirmed at St. Paul's by the lamented Bishop Potter. Soon after reaching Beaufort, the regiment was ordered to Florida. On the 20th of February, the Colonel was killed at the head of his men in the disastrous ambushade at Olustee. His body was left upon the field.

When his regiment started from Camp William Penn, I gave him a Christian Commission Testament, with these words under his name—

“Be thou faithful unto death.”

He carried the precious volume with him to the fatal field.

The blow was very severe to his wife; for a time almost too great to bear, but it wrought a beautiful purification. After many unavailing attempts to recover her husband's body, she returned to the North. A letter received from her shortly afterwards revealed her feelings:

“I have been ill both in body and mind; and could do nothing, think of nothing, but this great grief that has darkened my whole life. God alone knows how much I have suffered; and I fear I have rebelled against Him, for my heart constantly questions why it must be so,—why my dear husband, so good, so noble, so brave, must lay down his life in the bright promise of his youth, with the great work in which he was so earnestly engaged but just begun. My happiness was so bound up in him—my life so complete in his love—and now, what is it?—a blank, a wreck.

“Yes, often do I think, and my heart softens with the thought, of that Sunday morning in December, when together we knelt in your little church, and made an open profession of our faith in Christ. My dear husband was led there by a deep sense of his duty and love to God; I, I fear, from my love and duty to him. I hesitated long, for I feared my heart was not right, but I knew that he desired so much that I should unite with him, and I felt it my duty to do so,—and with him to lead and advise me, to assist and encourage me, I



hoped to be able to live a Christian life. But now my pillar of strength is gone, and I am left alone in darkness.

“There are many beautiful things in my husband’s past life that I should love to tell you, but I cannot now;—only this, that the last words I heard from his lips were those of prayer. He left me in the night. The Adjutant came for him in great haste, as the ship was then weighing anchor; but even then he did not forget to pray for us before we parted. And thus he ever did in our many meetings and partings; prayer was always his first and last thought.”

After recovering from the first sadness of her loss, Mrs. Fribley resolved to devote her strength to care for the race in whose behalf her husband had been so especially interested. For a time her home was the Christian Commission headquarters in Memphis, where she was a teacher under the direction of the Freedmen’s Bureau. She was one of the earliest of these, and still continues in the work which is alike a memorial labor and a joy.

A story of the battle of Galveston, on January 1st, 1863, which is a good example of the bravery and determination of our sailors, is preserved by the New Orleans correspondent of the *Boston Traveller*:

William Reid, an old sailor and man-of-war’s man, who was on board the *Owasco*, was one of the heroes of the fight. During the hottest moments of the battle between his ship and the Rebel batteries, this man, who is forty-eight years of age, received a severe wound while in the act of loading his rifle. *A Sailor Hero.*

Two fingers of his left hand were shot away, and the Surgeon ordered him below; but he refused to go, and tying his handkerchief around his fingers, remained on deck and did good execution with his rifle. Thirty minutes later, another shot struck him on the right shoulder; the blood came out through his shirt. Master’s Mate Arbana then ordered him below to the Surgeon. The brave old fellow said—

“No, sir; as long as there’s any fighting to be done, I stay on deck.”

When the engagement was over, he had his wounds dressed. He is still on board the *Owasco*, and whenever they beat to general quarters,

William Reid stands at his post, ready for orders. He was told one day by the Captain to go below, as he was on the sick list, and his place was the hospital. Displeased with the remark, he replied—

“No, Captain, my eyes are good, and I can pull a lockstring as well as any on 'em.”

Rev. Jeremiah Porter and wife were appointed by the Commission in the Fall of 1865, to labor among the troops in Texas. Extracts from Mr. Porter's narrative of that work—the last field-work of the Commission, which continued into the first months of 1866, may fitly close the coast record of incidents:

Mrs. Porter, just before we started from Chicago, informed Mr. E. W. Blatchford, Treasurer of the N. W. Sanitary Commission, of our destination. With accustomed liberality he placed at our disposal

four thousand dollars' worth of choicest supplies. *Getting to* With these we started on October 20th, accompanied *Brownsville.*

by Miss Lizzie S. Gary, of Galesburg, Ill. A month later, in attempting to go from Brazos Santiago to Brownsville, our operating point, a terrific “Norther” so crippled the steamer and exhausted all our fuel, that, unable to cross the bar, the commander ran the boat ashore on the beach near Bagdad in Mexico. In the yawl we went as near *terra firma* as we could, and were at last carried safely ashore in the sailors' arms.

On the beach we unexpectedly and joyfully met Mr. William Kirkby,<sup>1</sup> another Christian Commission Agent, who had that morning ridden from Brazos to learn our fortunes in the storm. The next morning, Sunday, after witnessing the genuflexions of Maximilian's soldiers at the mass, I crossed over into Texas and, finding some colored soldiers assembled for worship, joined them. A later appointment to preach filled up the day. Mr. Kirkby had happily prepared the way for us at Brownsville, and we were most cordially welcomed by Mr. and Mrs. Edward Downey, “faithful among the faithless” during the rebellion, Rev. Hugh McLeod, and Mr. Jas. A. Martin.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Of Brooklyn, N. Y.

Our stores were placed in the hands of Mr. Town for Indianola, and of Mr. Martin for Brownsville and the Upper Rio Grande. Rev. Mr. McLeod was laboring with a brigade of white soldiers, three miles from town. In his Commission tent he preached every Sabbath, with help from myself and others. *The Laborers and their Work.* Mrs. Porter and Miss Gary took up their abode in a tent pitched for us at Orange Grove Hospital. Here Mrs. Porter distributed her stores, and Miss Gary taught the colored soldiers in a tent prepared for a dining-hall and place of worship.

On the night of Nov. 29th we had our first social meeting in the Commission Rooms in town. Thirty-five attended, and the Holy Spirit was evidently present. Prof. Shephard, of Yale College, returning from a geological expedition to the Mexican mines, with Mr. Lyon, an American merchant of Monterey, encouraged us by their presence and remarks. Three Christian army officers spoke, and prayers were asked for many.

Among the colored soldiers, we found many strange notions and perverted, physical ways of looking at spiritual realities, which did not however prevent a precious and beautiful simplicity of trust in Christ. A soldier named Emanuel Ricketts had entered the army in New York, about ten months *Wanting to Go.* before. He told me his history, when I met him first, and spoke with confidence of his knowledge of Christ as the Saviour; with this he could compare no earthly pleasures or hopes. The next time I passed his cot, I found him sinking rapidly. Thinking an orange would comfort him, I gave him one. He was engaged in earnest prayer as I offered it to him :

“Do take me to Thyself, dear Father; I want to go.”

After prayer he exclaimed—

“I see my Father; I see Him. Don't you see Him? Around Him they are singing and dancing. Why shouldn't they dance? Well, I'll dance soon.”

He tried to thank me for the orange, but could do it only with the simple words—

“My Father has oranges enough.”

“Tell my mother,” said he, as I went away, “I die happy; I didn't want to stay here; it ai'n't a good place.”

Soon after the first of the new year he went home.

We were grieved to find in Brownsville no Protestant school of any kind, and planned one for our soldiers and the Southern children of the town. Aided by Government officers, a building was secured and seated as a school. On the 1st of March, 1866, we took possession of the Seminary for our own dwelling.

*A Protestant School in Brownsville.*

Our school began with six scholars, all from one family. But in a few days some Mexican children came in, and prejudice began to give way. One anxious father asked Mrs. Porter—

“Do you teach any ‘religion’ here?”

“Oh, yes,” was the answer; “we teach the children to love one another, to love and obey their parents, to be kind and gentle, to obey God, and to love the Lord Jesus; and we teach the ten commandments.”

“Oh, that’s good,” said he, considerably relieved.

At the end of four months, the ladies had sixty scholars, more than half of them from Spanish Catholic families. In April the Commission closed its work, and all its Delegates and Agents, except ourselves, left the field. In the middle of June, our work accomplished, we left Brownsville, the last Commission Delegates.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### *THE HOME SIDE.*

BEAUTIFUL and wonderful as were the sacrifice and Christian experience which the workers of the Commission beheld in hospital, in camp, on the march and on the field, in many a saddened, anxious, loyal home other sacrifices were made and other experiences perfected. There were poor men and women whose mites swelled the millions which the nation gave; there were mothers and children who could not be denied the privilege of foregoing many luxuries and comforts, that the boys at the war might be helped and cheered. The purpose of this chapter is to preserve a few of the many incidents of the home side of the war.

Mr. Charles Demond, whose long charge of Commission work in New England brought him closely in contact with those who prayed and gave, furnishes the following :

At a meeting in a small town in New Hampshire, Prof. E. T. Quimby, of Dartmouth College, who had been a Delegate in the Army of the Cumberland, told his experience. When the boxes were passed, an old man of eighty put in a small, red cotton handkerchief. The collector, thinking he had made a mistake, was about to return it, but the old man made a sign to have it retained. When the meeting was over the clergyman of the place said to the speaker—

*Captain West-  
to's Handker-  
chief.*

“Captain Weston has given to you the last thing owned by him which he could give. A few years ago, the only one of his sons who could aid him came home to take charge of the aged parents, and they looked to him for support in their declining years. When the war came the son felt it his duty to enlist. He went with his father’s blessing, and he now fills a soldier’s grave in the South. Since his fall the old man has supported himself and his aged wife by his own labor. He is utterly penniless. He recently told me that he would be glad to do something for benevolence, but ‘for six months,’ said he, ‘I have had but three cents of my own.’”

Rev. E. G. Parsons, of Derry, N. H., had been a Delegate in the Potomac Army. Under date of July 28th, 1864, he wrote me :

“I told my little story to my congregation last Sunday afternoon, and took up a collection. A silver dollar was sent in afterwards by a good lady, who has a son in the Union Army. With it came this message :

“‘My mother, dying twenty years ago, gave me this dollar, which I have sacredly cherished ; that mother, if now living, would have five grandsons in the army. One has fallen upon the battle-field and another has barely escaped death of malignant disease, and I think she would have given this dollar for the soldiers.’

“Acting up to her convictions of her mother’s wishes, she sends the precious coin to your treasury.”

One of the most touchingly suggestive incidents I remember was that of a widow, who sent me her wedding-ring. She first gave her only son to die for the country, and then withheld not this dear pledge of love, made sacred by the death of him who gave it. Such benevolence gives to patriotism a purer lustre, and makes even the smoke and carnage of battle radiant with the reflected brightness of heaven.

Mr. B. F. Jacobs, the Secretary of the Chicago Branch of the Commission, tells two incidents of scenes in his collecting tours through the Northwest :

Speaking at Mineral Point, Wisconsin, after the addresses were over, we were raising a contribution and men were announcing their subscriptions. A soldier in the far gallery rose and said—



“Maloney, \$5.”

Three or four gentlemen who stood near me at once remarked—

*Why Mr. Maloney gave Five Dollars.*

“He can’t afford to give a cent. He ought not to do it. He has a wife and four children and they are very, very poor. He has hardly been able to support them with his soldier’s pay.”

At the close of the meeting I asked for him, and he came forward to the desk :

“Mr. Maloney, they say you ought not to give \$5 to this cause.”

“They don’t know anything about it,” said he, very emphatically.

“Well, do you think you ought to?”

“Let me tell you,” said he : “Seven years ago, when you were a clerk in Chicago, I used to buy goods of you. I failed in business, became dissipated till I was nothing but a miserable, drunken, wretched sinner, and my wife and children were well-nigh beggars—and almost worse than that, before I entered the army. In Virginia there, I was led to the Christian Commission meetings. I gave my heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. After that I saved every dollar of my pay to send home, whereas before I never sent a cent. All that I have, and all that my family have for time, and all that I hope for in eternity, under the blessing of God, I owe to the Commission. Don’t you think I ought to give five dollars?”

Early in 1864, a Commission meeting was held in Milwaukee. After the audience had retired, I was told that a lady was waiting to speak with me. She was standing near the doorway, dressed in deep mourning. As I went to meet her, she put out her hands with great earnestness, and said—

*“She was a Mother to my Boy.”*

“I could not go away without thanking you and telling you how grateful I am.”

I replied that she must be mistaken, as I did not remember to have met her before :

“Oh no! I’m not mistaken; it’s no difference; any Delegate of the Christian Commission would be the same.”

“What has the Commission done for you, madam?”

“My only son died in the hospital at Memphis. I was too poor to go and see my boy, after the letter came telling me that he was sick. But a lady Delegate of the Commission visited him daily in the hospital, ministered to his wants, comforted him in his loneliness,

and above all led him to Jesus. When he was dead, the same lady cut off a lock of his hair and sent it to me in a letter, with his dying words. *She was a mother to my boy.* And as long as I live, while the Christian Commission lasts, I want to pray for God's blessing upon all who love it and work for it."

Mr. Jacobs illustrates both the confidence reposed in those connected with the Commission and the stuff of which many a soldier was made :

A man came into my office in Chicago, about the first of May, 1864. He was an Irishman. Said he—

"I want to see Mr. Jacobs, the Secretary of the Christian Commission."

*Confidence and Thrift.*

I told him I was the man he was looking for :

"I have come to ask you to do me a favor. I've been in the service since April, 1861. I was rather wild before that. After I enlisted I saw how men went straight to ruin, and I made up my mind I would try and save myself and my money. I have laid by \$700. Before the war I lived in Chicago, and at the expiration of my second enlistment I have returned with that amount of money. I have bought a house and lot on the west side, have paid the \$700 down and given a mortgage for the balance, payable after one year. I have re-enlisted, and am going back to Virginia. I have no relatives in this country, except a brother in New York, who is quite well off. I want to put my property in trust with some one,—and I want you to take it. Here are the papers which I have drawn up myself. I have been protected so far, but I may fall in the next battle; so I have brought my will here too. Will you take charge of the matter for me?"

I told him I was a perfect stranger to him, and hesitated about assuming the trust :

"Who recommended me to you?"

"Nobody," was his answer; "but I have been in the army, and have seen the Delegates of the Commission, how faithful they have been. I am sure they won't steal. That's the reason I have hunted you up. Won't you take charge of all this till I come back, for if I ever do, I shall want it all?"

I opened the will and read it. In case of his death, unmarried, he had arranged that his property should go to the Commission, with a proviso remunerating me for my services. This latter was changed on the spot. I asked him why he willed his money to the Commission :

“I know of no men to whom I would so soon give my money as to the soldiers of the army; and though I have never needed the services of Commission Chaplains in hospital, yet I have seen what they have been doing for others,—and have got little books from them at times; and I know if I leave my money to them the soldiers will get every cent of it.”

I accepted the trust, and as the soldier went away spoke to him of the duty he owed to God.

The man lived to return from the war, pay off the mortgage on his house, take back the deed and will, and is now a member of the Young Men's Christian Association of Chicago.

Mr. William Reynolds, the President of the Peoria Committee, out of a large and successful experience as a volunteer collector, furnishes the two narratives which follow :

Chaplain McCabe, of Libby Prison renown, came to Peoria. We determined to canvass Central Illinois, with the purpose of raising fifty thousand dollars. Our first meeting was held in Galesburg, where \$1800 were collected. Next followed Peoria and Bloomington, raising \$1500 each. We *Morgan County, Illinois, and Jacob Strawn.* then went to Jacksonville, and held a meeting at “Strawn's Hall,” where \$2000 were contributed. I knew that Mr. Jacob Strawn, the largest farmer in the State of Illinois, was living two miles from Jacksonville. The next morning we went out to his house to solicit a contribution. He was absent, and we understood that he was going to Springfield the following day. Meeting him on the train, we presented the cause. He said he knew nothing about the Commission, but that he was going to call on Governor Yates, and if he said it was all right, he would make a contribution. He appointed an hour to meet us at the hotel.

We met him at the hour fixed; he said he had seen the Governor,

who had told him the Commission was "all right; a good institution." He then wrote a check for \$500 and handed it to me, saying—

"If you raise \$10,000 from the farmers of Morgan County, I'll make it \$10,000, instead of \$500."

We thought the sum too large, especially as Mr. Strawn refused to let us count the \$2000 just raised in Jacksonville. Our efforts to have the sum reduced to \$5000 were unavailing; there was no alternative but to work for the \$10,000, trusting in God to open up the hearts of the people. Mr. M. P. Ayres, a banker of Jacksonville, encouraged us to accept the proposition, promising the aid of his extensive acquaintance in the county, in appointing meetings and securing a full attendance by the people. He arranged for eleven meetings in various parts of the county, in school-houses, small churches and groves. We entered on the canvass, and within nine days held the eleven meetings and raised \$11,400. The meetings occurred in July, the farmers' busiest season; many of them coming from their fields to the speaking-places, and immediately after the addresses returning to their work.

When we came back to Mr. Strawn with the proof of our success in hand, he at once gave us his check, with the single remark—

"Pretty smart fellows; didn't think you would do it."

*The Heavenly Treasure.* After dinner he took us to the top of his house, to show us his splendid farms lying along the country in every direction far as the eye could reach. I asked him how many acres he owned:

"Forty thousand,—all under cultivation."

"How much is the land worth an acre?"

"Not less than \$50, sir."

"Then you are worth \$2,000,000?"

"Yes. I made it all myself, too. When I started I hadn't fifty cents."

I turned to him; a look of pride flushed his face, while his eyes swept the country in every direction:

"Mr. Strawn, you have asked me to look north and south, east and west, and view your possessions; and you say I cannot see the end. Now may I ask you to look up yonder. How much do you own up there?"

"Ah," said he, the tears filling up his eyes, "I'm afraid I am poor up there."

I tried to point him to the treasures and the mansions above.

This was the largest single subscription received by the U. S. Christian Commission. Mr. Strawn died very suddenly about one year afterwards.

I went to Sparta, a little town in Monroe County, Wisconsin, where I was personally an entire stranger. It was shortly after the Wilderness battles. I set forth to the large crowd of people who had gathered, the objects and labor of the Commission, but felt somehow that they might be unwilling to credit a stranger's statements of so great a work. I longed for a familiar face, some one in the audience to whom I could appeal for endorsement of what I was saying. But the whole company was strange. While speaking I noticed a one-armed soldier sitting immediately in front of me. I watched his face with great interest to see what impression my story was making upon him. When I had concluded and was about calling for subscriptions, this soldier rose and said—

*The Soldier's  
Testimony.*

"I would like to say a word, citizens, before the collection is taken up. You all know me, who I am, and where I came from. I have lived here long in your neighborhood. I enlisted in the first regiment that went from this district. I fought through the battles of the Wilderness; near the close of one day I fell wounded. I dragged myself into a bush concealed from the enemy, and lay there. Night came on. I think I must have died before morning, if no help had come. It grew very late, and there was no appearance of assistance. At last I heard a sound; there might be help in the distance. I tried to call out, but my voice was too weak; it went but a short way. A light came near me. I summoned all my energies and raised my voice to its highest pitch. Directly I saw a lantern approaching. Soon a man's voice asked what was the matter? I told him I was dreadfully wounded. He set his lantern down and started off to get assistance. Soon I heard the roll of wheels and there was an ambulance for me. He put me in it. From that time till I was well enough to come home on furlough—nay, till I reached Chicago—I never was outside of the care of Delegates of the Christian Commission. Citizens, I owe my life to them."

The enthusiasm aroused by this testimony was unbounded, and found practical expression in an excellent collection. From that time we were reminded monthly of the soldier's testimony by the contributions which regularly found their way to us from that little town.

The story of Mrs. Ellet of Philadelphia, recalls the memory of some of the deeds of the mothers of the Revolution:

Mr. Stuart, the Chairman of the Commission, with Rev. Dr. Robert Patterson, of Chicago, called upon her early in 1863. She brought out two valuable and beautiful shawls, the proceeds of which

*A Heroic Mother.*

she wished to have distributed among the widows and orphans of soldiers fallen in battle.

The dead body of her grandson had just arrived, and Dr. Patterson expressed the hope that God would sustain her under the bereavement. She stated that she had given her two sons—Commodore Ellet, of the Ram Fleet, and Brigadier-General Ellet, of the Marine Brigade—and four grand-children; and then added—

*“I do not regret the gift to my country. If I had twenty sons, I would give them all, for the country must be preserved. And if I was twenty years younger, I would go myself and fight to the last.”*

Few men in the country could so well appreciate the motherly sacrifice which was being made all over the land as President Lincoln. His letter to a pious widow living in Boston, deserves a place in history with his speech at Gettysburg and his second inaugural address:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, Nov. 21st, 1864.

DEAR MADAM: I have been shown in the files of the War Department, a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that

*The Costly Sacrifice.*

you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle.

I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming; but I cannot refrain from tendering to you



the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save.

I pray that Our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of Freedom.

Yours, very sincerely and respectfully,

A. LINCOLN.

To Mrs. BIXBY, Boston, Mass.

To receive such a letter, written by him who was within a few months to realize the sacrifice which he here writes of, seems almost a compensation for the loss.

The following soldier's letter needs no introduction. Its reading moistened every eye at the meeting which organized the Central New York Branch of the Commission in Utica. The father who penned it received his mortal wound the next day:

FORT BAKER, Oct. 20th, 1864.

DEAR LOTTIE: I found a small white envelope among the others that you put into my box before I came away from home, and I knew that Lottie put it there, because she wanted me to write to her. Well, it always does us good to please those that love us, and I am glad to think that my little girl would be pleased to have me write to her. It is a pleasant task for me, and the thought of good, loving children at home, who think of me every day, who for my sake are trying to be good to their mother and make her happy, is a source of comfort and encouragement and of consolation that I cannot describe with my pen nor tell with my tongue. How far this thought goes, or how much it contributes to reconcile me to the separation that for their sakes I have voluntarily endured, you can never realize. I know that you do not realize that I am here because I love you, and that you do not appreciate the necessity of my being here. But by and bye, when you grow up, you will understand things better, and when you read in history of this war and of its causes and objects, you will be glad that your father left home when you were a little girl, and went

*Father to Lottie.*

forth to contend for the right. You will love me all the more then, and so will all the rest of my children. This is the thought that encourages and consoles me; and then, beside this, the consciousness of none other than good and pure motives, and above all, the consolation from day to day that religion affords me, all contribute to make me happy, even while the constant longing, lingering anxiety about my home and family keeps them every moment in my thoughts.

Try and be good, Lottie, if you love me and want to do what you can to make me happy. Be good to your mother and grandmother, and brothers and sisters. Try and be good to the Lord, and then you will be happy yourself, and everybody will love you; and if I should never see you again on earth, we shall meet in heaven.

I pray for you many times every day, and I want you to pray for yourself and me. Try to learn in your books; go to school and Sunday-school always when you can. Save this letter till you get old.

Tell Harry I will write to him before long, and Freddy that I mean to send him some pretty stones I have picked up for him. Kiss all the family for me, from grandma to the baby, and love them all. God bless you!

FATHER.

Occasionally throughout these chapters, the story of a "comfort-bag" or "housewife" has been inserted. These were mainly the gifts of little children, and often contained letters to soldiers, which in turn called out replies from the camps and hospitals. Thus sprung up many a pleasant and profitable correspondence. Rev. E. P. Smith, while a Delegate early in 1863, near Belle Plain, wrote back to his Sabbath-school at Pepperell, Mass., concerning these bags:

It seems that the Sabbath-school children in Albany united to send "comfort-bags" to the soldiers, and on a given Sabbath each scholar brought a bag to her class. The superintendents collected them, and on Monday, when they came to count them, they found five thousand ready to go. They came in boxes to the Christian Commission at Washing-

*Comfort-Bags  
in the Army.*

ton, and have been given out one by one to the soldiers in this army. If you could see their faces when I hand out a bag and say—

“Boys, do you want any needles, pins, thread and buttons? Some little Sabbath-school girl made that for you, and sent it to me to give to you.”

“To give to us? Bully for you! A new kind of sutler, boys!”—  
 “See here, Jim, if a fellow goes ragged after this, he’s a *bummer*.” (That’s a soldier’s name for loafer.)—“Sabbath-school girls, eh? those are great little girls; they don’t forget the boys gone a-soldiering.”—“I used to go to Sunday-school.”—“That’s where I belong.”—“I have got a little girl in Sunday-school; wonder if she did not have a hand in one of these bags.”

So they talk till I am out of sight. Some of them pull out the tract, and some find a letter in the bag and read it aloud. The news that Vicksburg was taken would not wake up a more lively, pleasant feeling among the men than a quantity of these bags freely given.

I read some of the letters. Here is one, as nearly as I can remember it:

“DEAR SOLDIER: It must be hard for you to keep your clothes nice, so far away that your mother cannot come to mend them; so I send you this bag of needles and thread, and you can mend for yourself. I would send you a thimble, but mother says you could not use it. Now I hope you will keep your clothes very nice, so that when the ragged Rebels see you they will be ashamed of themselves.

“We talk about you, and pray about you in the Sunday-school concert, and every night I pray, ‘God bless the soldier!’ Good-bye, soldier!

“From your young friend,

“HATTIE.”

I’ll warrant the soldier will put that letter in his Testament, and if he lives to go home, it will go with him.

Some children in Lewistown, Penna., in February, 1864, sent a box of seventy-three housewives to the army. Each enclosed a note, with the little writer’s

name and address. By and bye the answers came back, and one who read them all writes of them :

One of the letters spoke of verses contained in his little housewife; the soldier said he had never before felt the great importance of the words. Another spoke of the housewife's use, and said he should always carry it with him, and, if he fell, it should fall with him. Another said that on his return home, he would go out of his way quite a distance to see and thank his "little friend Hallie." Another wrote that he was in name a Christian, but "someway he did not get along as he would like," but he promised renewed efforts in "walking the narrow way." Another had made a profession five years ago, had sadly gone astray, but now renewed afresh his "covenant with God;" he prayed for strength to endure unto the end. Another was one of six who, the Sabbath previous, had been baptized. He was from Maine, and had been from home four years. He could apply the beautiful verses contained in his gift; they had touched a tender chord in his heart.

Another brave fellow's acknowledgment runs thus :  
 "I have received your kind gift, for which I return my most grateful thanks. I have been in the army two years,—have been in all the battles my regiment was engaged in, and have escaped unhurt. I thank the Almighty. Our good Chaplain preaches for us every evening. When I first joined the army I was wicked—would laugh at good men—but I had no parents;—father and mother died when I was young. I was taken by an uncle, who was a wicked man, and let me run at large. I went to sea—and after that enlisted. *It is the first time I have written a letter since I have been in the army, and it makes me feel so happy to have a chance to write to a friend.*"

The charm of the letters was given them by the child authors; their simple, hearty, confiding words brought to the soldier a vision of bright, earnest eyes following little hands guiding unsteady pens across the paper; and with that vision came all the remembered sweetness of home. Mr. J. N. Stearns, the Editor of *Merry's*

*Museum*, a Delegate at City Point in July, 1864, transcribes two of these children's epistles :

"BOSTON, MASS.

"I am but a very little girl, six years old, but I thought I would like to make a comfort-bag for you as well as the big ones.

"I go to the Shawmut Infant School. I know lots of verses in God's Holy Book. I have got a mother, but I have not a dear father living. I hope he is living in heaven with Jesus Christ.

*Wee Letters.*

"TENY."

"NEW IPSWICH, N. H.

"MY DEAR SOLDIER: I wonder whether you are a well or a wounded soldier. I hope you are not sick. I am a little boy nine years old. I hope you love Jesus Christ. I hope you will love Him, if you do not. I shall pray for you. I hope you will write me a letter if you have time. From

"JOHN W. CUMMINGS."

The following, written by a very little girl whose brother had fallen upon the field, is from the *Sunday-School Times* of Jan. 7th, 1865 :

"DEAR SOLDIER: It is Sunday afternoon, and I thought it would be so nice to print you a little letter to put in the bags I finished yesterday. Mamma gives brother Charlie and me twenty-five cents a week each for giving up sugar, so we have earned a good deal of money already to give to the soldiers, so we both bought some of the things to put in the six bags. I hope you will take as much comfort as I did in making them for you. I hope this cruel war will soon be over, and let you come home to your children and friends. Won't we all be happy then! I pray God every day to bless you and bring you home. I hope you love Jesus. If you do not live to get home, I hope you will go home to Him, where I hope to meet you. Good-bye.

"From your little friend,

"MINNIE OLIVE C."

Rev. Luther Keene, a Delegate during October and

November, 1863, gives the following account of the reception of an interesting letter from a soldier by two little children of his parish :

As I was going away to the army, Charlie Huntingdon and Katie Walker gave me a little money for the soldiers. I bought a Bible with it, and intended to hand it to some soldier. But sickness so

*A Letter for a Bible.* hastened my return, that I left it with Rev. Mr. Bowler, the Agent at Washington. The address of the two children was written in it, and this request :

“Will the soldier who receives this book, when he is converted, write a letter to these children, telling them about it?”

In about six months after my return, they received the following reply :

“*To Katie Walker and Charlie Huntingdon,*

*North Brookfield, Mass :*

\* \* \* \* \* “Rev. Mr. Bowler gave me the Bible you sent to the soldier. It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge its receipt. I have a great many things to tell you, but you know a poor soldier does not have a great many advantages. If I had you here with me, wouldn't we have a nice time then? I would take you to see the 'front,' and the big guns, and the soldiers on dress parade, and I would tell you how they fight when they are in line of battle. I would tell you about the fourteen regular engagements I have been in, and how I was wounded five times, and how the bad Rebels took me prisoner, and how they kept me for three months and gave me very little to eat,—and how God brought me safe back again. And then, I would tell you how I used to drink a great deal, and what a bad man I once was ; and now, how I don't drink at all, and how I love to read the little Bible you sent me. I would then share my rations with you, and give you a part of my bed, and we would say a little prayer together, and I would kiss you, and God would watch you and me, until we awoke again to enjoy His love, His sunlight, His flowers amid their vernal bloom and fragrance,—and then we would praise Him again.

“I love little children, because I see God in their ways. Let your little hands be busy at all times, and your tender hearts bend to the



service of God. Never waste one moment; life is very short. There is a fire-fly in Southern climes, which shines beautifully when it is on the wing, but the very moment it rests it looks black and ugly. So it is with us; we are beautiful while we are working in the vineyard of God, and black and ugly while we turn towards worldly things.

"Now my little friends, you will continue to be good, will you not? And you will say a little prayer for me now and then,—asking the good God to forgive me what I have done wrong, and to make me good in the future.

"I sincerely thank you, and if you would like to hear from me again, it will be pleasant to write to you; and, if you have your little pictures, send them to me. And now, 'may God bless you and keep your hearts full of the Holy Spirit,' is the prayer of,

"Yours very affectionately,

"E. H. UNIAC.<sup>1</sup>

"Camp Distribution, Va.,

"Care of U. S. C. C."

Chaplain Thomas tells how a little Chicago girl made herself useful to sick soldiers in the Western Army:

Jennie D—— wanted to do something for the sick soldiers. She remembered how they were deprived of the delicacies and comforts of life, and her heart yearned for their relief. Not discouraged, as too many are, because she could not do everything, she resolved to "do what she could." But what could she do except save her lumps of sugar? When she had more than a pound, in the Spring of 1863, she sent it to the Army of the Cumberland by our Brigade Quartermaster. He handed me a package one day labelled thus:

*Saving Lump-  
Sugar.*

"Lump-sugar saved by Jennie D——, a little girl six years old, to give to some sick soldier."

"Do you know any sick soldier, Chaplain," said the Quartermaster, "who needs that?"

"Yes, sir, a good many of them," I replied.

At a prayer meeting in my tent, I held up the package and told

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Uniac, since the war, has been a successful Temperance Lecturer.

the men present what the little girls at home thought of the soldiers. They were not accustomed to tears, but if I am not mistaken, there was an unusual glistening in the eyes that looked on the package. I carried it afterwards to the four Regimental Hospitals in our Brigade, and *gave a lump to every sick man*, telling him who sent it.

How happy the poor boys were at the child's practical remembrance! They made all sorts of grateful and curious remarks.

One more incident of the children's interest in the soldiers, told by Rev. Robert J. Parvin :

I had been addressing a meeting in Rochester, N. Y., towards the close of 1864. A little girl was greatly interested in my story and wrote to me after my return to Philadelphia, enclosing a small contribution :

*What the Soldiers Deserve.*

ROCHESTER, December 23d, 1864.

DEAR MR. PARVIN: What you said about the Soldiers has made me think of them very often, every day and when I kneel down at night. It makes me very happy to send some of my Christmas money to buy some little comfort for a Soldier. (Mamma says I should use a little "s" for Soldiers, *but I think they deserve capital letters.*)

I mean to do all that a little girl can to help you.

Your affectionate friend,

JENNIE LEE.

These illustrative sketches of purposes, sayings and deeds begotten of the war will find an appropriate closing page in the words of Rev. Herrick Johnson, a Delegate about the Wilderness time.

They are the closing part of his address at the last Anniversary of the Commission in the Capitol at Washington :

"It was once my privilege to stand upon the summit of Mount Righi in Switzerland, and from its queenly top witness an autumnal sunset. Far away to the west,

the monarch of day wrapped the drapery of his couch about him, and lay down as if he were a god confessed. He flung his splendors on that unequalled landscape with royal munificence. He kissed the waters that lay embosomed among the hills, till they all blushed. The bald peaks to the right and the left of us bared their storm-beaten brows and bathed in the sunlight. And higher up and farther away, the snow-capped monarchs of the Alps tossed back the sun's last rays from their icy sides in cold and proud disdain. But, more beautiful than all, the gem of that most wondrous picture was the bridge of golden sheen that stretched over hills and valleys and lakes and dells from the far distant horizon to our very feet. It seemed as if heaven's gates had been left open and glory had stolen through. It was cast up by the hand of God, a way of gold, on which angels might have trodden.

“So I have stood beside the dying soldier, when it has seemed as if a bridge of golden sheen were let down from heaven, a highway for the ransomed of the Lord. And that way, cast up of God, has glowed with the steps of the angels, come to bear the soldier who had made his last charge and fought his last battle—*home*. And up that shining path, with angel convoy, the spirit has gone,—away from the clang of arms and the din of strife and the groans of the wounded,—away, away, to the very gates of pearl, to the Peace like a river and the Rest of God.

“Oh, *there* are the undying tokens and proof of the success of the Commission. The Nation may point to its States won back from treason! the Army may point to its battle-flags wrung from the foe by vigor and valor

and victory! Generals may point to their starred shoulders as proofs of undaunted heroism! Sanitary Agencies may roll up their peerless record of sublime beneficence! But *there*, up *there*, are the souls that are marching on—marching on! *there* are the trophies immortal that have been snatched from death! *there* are the unfading stars that have been set in Christ's diadem through the agency of this Christian Commission."

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