

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00020257180







OF
OF



OF
OF



OF
OF C

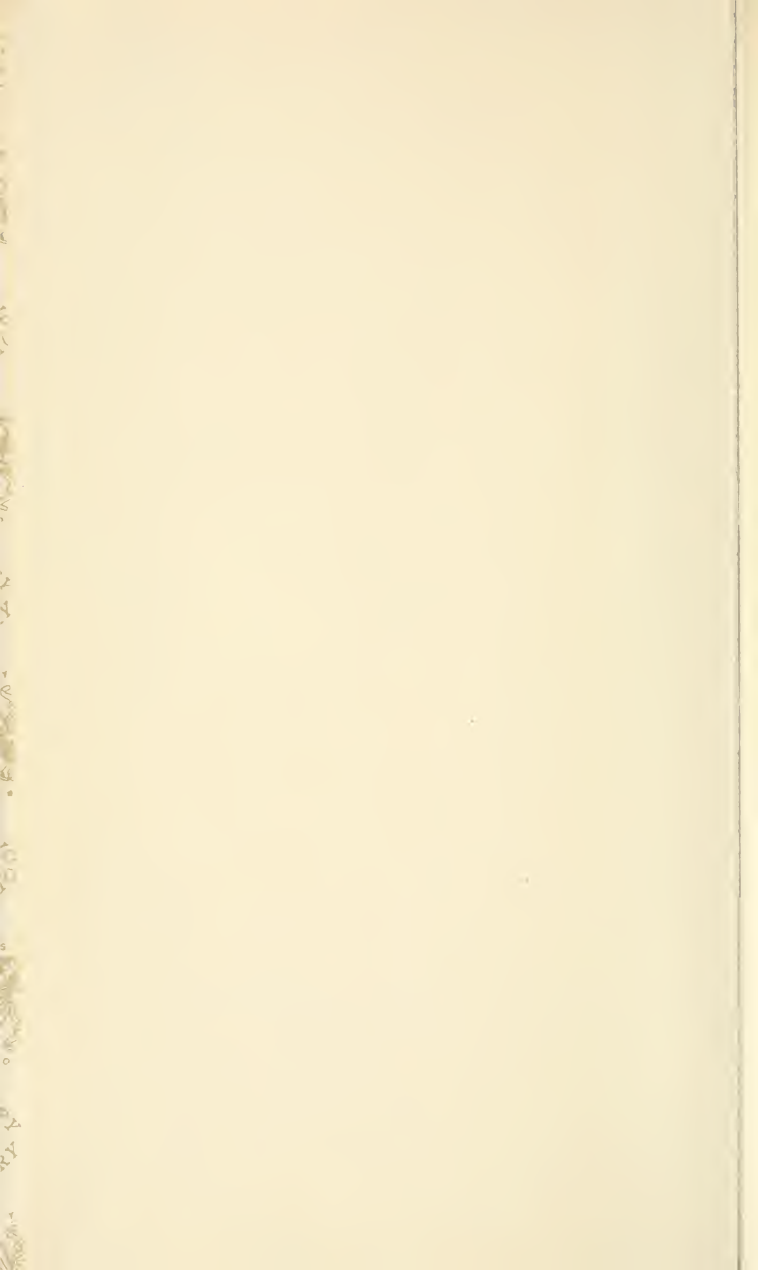


OF
OF
-RARY OF



OF
OF CO









John Quincy
Howard Kitching

1182002
"MORE THAN CONQUEROR,"

OR

MEMORIALS

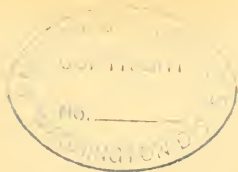
OF

COL. J. HOWARD KITCHING,

SIXTH NEW YORK ARTILLERY, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC.

Theodore Irving
" "

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE CONQUEST OF FLORIDA," "FOUNTAIN
OF LIVING WATERS," AND "TINY FOOTFALL."



NEW YORK:
PUBLISHED BY HURD AND HOUGHTON.

Cambridge: Riverside Press.

1873.

E 523
.8
60

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1872, by
JOHN B. KITCHING, •
in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

RIVERSIDE, CAMBRIDGE:
STEREOTYPED AND PRINTED BY
H. O. HOUGHTON AND COMPANY.

“A pilgrim of the faith is limned here
With dinted mail and russet weeds y’cladd,
He turneth from loose mirth his listless ear,
And leaneth on the crosse with aspect sad.
Rugged his path, and narrow and beset
With peril, sorrow, and temptation strong.
But neither gentle lure, nor direful threat
Can win him to the vaine and wanton throng,
Or force his feet from that straight path aside,
Following the footsteps of the crucified.”

Spenser.

PREFACE.



THIS memorial is written, not to emblazon the name of Howard Kitching on the scroll of history, or to point him out as a young man who climbed heights far above his fellows ; for his modesty was equal to his worth, and he would have deprecated all praise and shrunk from anything like eulogy ; but the rather, while gratifying the expressed desire of his many friends, who would not willingly let his memory die, to give a faint outline of the life of one who amid the manifold temptations of a soldier's life, was a true and faithful soldier of the cross.

He is but a type of thousands of young men, Christian young men, as brave and as true as he, who fought and bled and died for their country.

While we have learned from a terrible experience, that war is a great evil, and pray in the language of the Liturgy of the English Church, " Give peace in our time, O Lord," we would not

forget that fragrant blossoms may spring up on the battle-field, and the name of Jesus be glorified thereby.

It is not the exotic nursed in glass and artificial heat which is the type of strength ; but the plant struggling for existence on bleak cliffs, or the pine battling with Alpine gusts, or shivering amid Alpine snows. And while we know, that sadly too many young men, tenderly nurtured, and who had given hopes of shining brightly in the kingdom of Christ at home, tarnished their armor and were lost amid the fiery conflicts of army life, yet there were others, and they not a few, who were made stronger by battling with the blasts of temptation, and purified by the scenes of suffering and sorrow they were compelled to witness.

There are fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, throughout our land, whose hearts will beat the quicker when they are reminded of *their* young soldier who never returned from the war, and who will, we think, find a sad pleasure in reading the record of a brief life, so like that of the one whose loss they mourn.

There are many young men who have experienced the fever and flush of the fight, many who have only heard the story, who, we think, may find interest in a sketch of the life of a young man who

in a terrible crisis of his country's history, faithfully served his country and his God.

In dwelling, as we do with pride, on the bravery and Christian courage of *our* soldiers, we have not forgotten that the ranks of the Southern army were filled with spirits of equal bravery, — noble Christian men who were fighting for what they thought the right, though we believed them dreadfully in the wrong. Their memory is cherished by many a fireside in that stricken part of our land, and for many of them their record is on high.

There is so much that is heart-rending about this terrible war, it has broken so many friendships, severed so many tender ties, that some would bury the thought of it in oblivion. But that is not the Christian's way of dealing with a great sorrow. He seeks to understand the lesson the Lord would teach thereby. Oft and again, it is now as it was with Elijah. The Lord is not in the wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire ; but it is in the "still small voice," that comes after all these, that He speaks to his servant. So now, that the noise and confusion of horrid warfare have ceased, from those battle-fields where those who once fought as enemies lie quietly side by side, there comes a still small voice, that speaks of

Christian forgiveness and Christian love. The grave covers all enmities, and we trust and believe, the subduing hand of time will soften the bitter asperities of the hour, and that our country, purified by passing through the furnace, may be more united than ever—a grand and glorious Christian Republic.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. EARLY DAYS	1
II. THE PREPARATION	17
III. THE CONFLICT	47
IV. CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE	79
V. REFRESHING SHOWERS	105
VI. THE WILDERNESS	121
VII. THE TRENCHES	147
VIII. DEFENSES OF WASHINGTON	177
IX. THE LAST BATTLE	197
X. THE DISCIPLINE OF SUFFERING	203
XI. THE VICTORY WON	229
APPENDIX	235

EARLY DAYS.

“ A noble boy,
A brave, free-hearted, careless one,
Full of unchecked, unbidden joy ;
Of dread of books, and love of fun ;
And with a clear and ready smile,
Unshadowed by a thought of guile.”

“MORE THAN CONQUEROR.”



CHAPTER I.

EARLY DAYS.

“Then Jesus beholding him, loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest.” — MARK X. 21.

THE winter wind is sighing, and the leaves are rustling their sad requiem over the grave of many a young hero, who fell nobly fighting in the great war which has just resulted in the regeneration, the salvation of our country. In every city, in every town and hamlet in the land, on the square and in the narrow lane, in hall and cottage, on the mountain-side and in the valley, everywhere their memories are cherished; their names are household words, embalmed in many a loving heart.

The shadow has fallen upon a thousand, thousand homes, of which they were the light and the joy; and their youthful patriotism, their deeds of daring, will never be known beyond these quiet firesides.

And yet, though unknown to fame, their lives have not been wasted — they have not lived in vain. O, no! They have in dying, awakened in these myriad homes an heroic spirit, a breathing,

living thing, which will exalt and ennoble our country, for ages to come. Their stout young hearts have ceased to beat, but their example walks the earth with tireless feet; and the blessed Christian death of some, may, by the grace of God, lead many a young man to enlist, as they did, under the banner of the Crucified.

Among the many noble, warm-hearted young men who flew to the rescue, and offered themselves as volunteers for the defense of the country, sealing their offering with their life's blood, there are few whose names are enshrined with so much love, so many tears, and yet such fervent, grateful thanks to the wise Disposer of all events, as is the subject of these brief memorials.

The veil would never have been lifted from this young life, but in the hope that, by God's blessing, the noble character here portrayed might be the means of awaking in many manly hearts a desire to emulate his brief example.

" Stars are of mighty use; the night
 Is dark, and long;
 The road foul, and where one goes right,
 Six may go wrong.
 One twinkling ray
 Shot o'er some cloud,
 May cleare much way
 And guide a crowd."

JOHN HOWARD KITCHING was born in the city of New York, July 16, 1838.

In his early youth he manifested that earnest-

ness of purpose, and determination of will, which characterized him in later life, and it required a firm, but gentle hand to guide him. Like all ardent temperaments he had many a struggle with himself, and conflict with others, on his way up to manhood.

In the summer of 1855, as his father was obliged to go to Europe, and Howard's health was not strong, and his studies were being pursued in a very miscellaneous and desultory manner, it was decided that he should be placed at school in Switzerland.

The eager boy looked forward, with glowing anticipations, to his visit to the old world; not less attractive to him because the stormy sea was to be crossed. But his day-dreams were soon dispelled, when, five days out from land, he was seized with a severe illness.

The following letter, written on shipboard, is characteristic of him at this time, and is the first intimation we have of a struggle with a willful, wayward nature, a faint yearning after the things of a higher and better life.

STEAMSHIP ERICSSON, *June 29, 1855.*

MY DEAREST MAMMA:—Here we are at last within sixty miles of Scilly Isles, and hoping to arrive at Havre about four o'clock on Sunday. O, how glad I shall be to put foot on land once more, and O, how *gladder* I should be if it was Bay Ridge we were approaching instead of Havre, for I want to see you all so much. The ship has made rather a long passage, on account of a defect in her wheels, which could not be remedied very

well at sea. . . . I have not been at all sea-sick, but I caught a bad cold, and was laid up for a week with inflammation of the bowels, and rheumatism in my limbs. But by the excellent care of Dr. Dunham and the kind old stewardess, I was up on the sixth day. I would have given anything to have been in one of our nice beds, and have had you to take care of me; for, although they were all very kind, and did all they could for me, yet I could not be very comfortable, as you may imagine.

I read your Bible all the time, and I am so glad that you gave it to me, for I love to read it for your sake, hoping that I may learn to read it for its own sake.

I cannot bear the idea of remaining at Geneva, for I feel so wretched (just as I did before I left home), that I am very much afraid of being taken sick, and perhaps dying there, far away from all of you. And then after papa returns, it will be so lonely, and perhaps when I return, I might find some of you in your graves. If I should return safe and well, and find you all the same, I would feel as if I had done right in going; but otherwise, how small would be the gain, compared with the feeling that I had made our stay together in this world one year shorter by my own free will!

The truth is that I find it is a great deal farther than I had imagined. But still, if papa thinks it best that I should stay, I will do so as cheerfully as I can; for here I am, seventeen years old, and yet I have never given you and papa anything but trouble; but by God's blessing, I will try if I cannot be a comfort instead of a trouble, hereafter. For this reason I dislike particularly to remain, for I may not have much time to atone for the many hours of anxiety and trouble that I have given you both. O, mamma, I wish that I was at home to talk to you, for I could tell you so much better how I feel. . . .

I send Fan the first canto of a poem that I am composing. It is rather of the John Gilpin style, but for a

first effort, it is rather "*some*." I wrote it lying in my bunk when it got too dark to read. . . .

The poem which "is rather *some*," was a parody on "Childe Harold," called "Childe Howard," and gave infinite amusement to his sister Fanny.

This sister, the chosen companion of his laughing hours, was full of fun and frolic. With a slight, graceful form, and a step light and quick as a deer, she was ready to follow wherever he led. Singularly like him in her frank, impulsive nature; gifted, as he was, with great musical talents; a sunbeam wherever she went — like him, she found an early grave; like him, she sleeps in Jesus.

By the time that the shores of France began to loom in sight, Howard had recovered from his attack of sickness, but the Lord had prepared for him a pathway of disappointment to tread, more trying than the one just passed over. As they were entering the port of Havre, in the excitement of the scene that opened before him, he sprang upon a coil of rope and sprained his ankle. The accident was thought slight at the moment, but by the time the party reached Paris, he was obliged to be carried to his room, where he was closely confined for three weary weeks. That his impatient spirit should chafe and fret, to be held a prisoner in his room, while his companions were seeing the wonderful sights of Paris, is not strange. We give two letters, to his mother and sister, written immediately on his emancipation from this bondage.

WRITTEN ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

PARIS, July 16, 1855.

DEAR LOUISE :— Here I am, seventeen years old, crawling around on crutches as if I were eighty, and the worst of it is, without any prospect of dispensing with them for a while, at any rate. Yesterday morning I thought that I was better, but to-day I am just as lame as ever. . . . Last evening, papa, Will, and I went to church in a small Wesleyan Chapel in the Rue Royale, where we heard an excellent sermon. The Sundays here are more like our Fourth of July than anything else; everybody is out, rich and poor; most of the shops, and all the cafés are open, also the Exhibition, theatres, circuses, and all the public buildings.

The gentleman that we heard preach is a Yorkshireman, just come over; but he preached a very good sermon from First Corinthians seventh chapter, twenty-ninth, thirtieth, and thirty-first verses. But during the whole service we could hear the carriages passing, people singing, and men and women peddling fruit; rather a noisy Sunday evening, wasn't it?

PARIS, July 25, 1855.

MY DEAREST MAMMA :— Three cheers! Hurrah! I'm on my legs again, although a little stiff yet, I assure you. As soon as the Doctor went away (which was on Saturday morning), I began to walk a little, and my foot kept gaining strength, so that on Sunday I walked to church and back, without crutches. . . . On Monday I climbed to the top of the column in the Place Vendôme, one hundred and thirty-five feet in height. I guess the Doctor would stare if he knew it. On Saturday I was limping about on a pair of crutches, and Monday running up one hundred and seventy-six steps to get a view of Paris. Ask Mr. Irving if it is easy work for even a *well* man to accomplish? I dare

say he has been to the top, or at least he knows how high it is.

Alleume and I went to St. Germain to see the wonderful terrace, one mile and a half in length, and we had a ride on an atmospheric railway. There is a very steep grade on the road, which a locomotive cannot surmount, so they have a large iron tube running between the rails, in which a piston passes which is connected to the foremost car. Then they pump out the air from in front of said piston, and away the train goes up hill at the rate of thirty miles an hour. That's going before the wind with a vengeance, isn't it? When we arrived at St. Germain we were fully paid for going, for from the terrace, one has the most beautiful view in Europe. . . .

The result of the inquiries about the schools in Switzerland was not altogether satisfactory, and when the time came for Mr. Kitching to start for home, he could not make up his mind to leave Howard behind, and after a pleasant passage, they were welcomed back to "Dellwood."

He now resumed his studies with his German tutor, but they were pursued in a very irregular and desultory way, his passion for riding, boating, painting, and music, making formidable inroads upon his time.

He sang well, with that deep, clear voice that rang so musically on the battle-field, but his great delight was the cornet, which he played remarkably well. He joined a quartette band, and on many a moonlight night they waked the echoes in the grove at Dellwood with their delicious melody. How well his companions of those pleasant

days must remember his enthusiasm, and the warm glow his presence diffused over that genial company!

But while thus beguiling his time amid these earthly enjoyments, those who prayerfully watched his career saw that he was getting farther and farther away from the source of all true joy. Those things which never satisfied any one, did not satisfy him. He grew more wayward, more self-willed; gave way to wild bursts of passion, and then had seasons of bitter repentance. He knew the better way, but chose the worse, the beaten pathway of self-indulgence. But there is often the secret sigh, the whispered prayer, the longing for freedom, the struggle with sinful habits, the search after truth, the untold hope of better things, in many hearts which we, in our ignorance, suppose to be hard and dead. The Lord Jesus may be doing His own work, in the awakened, inquiring, burdened soul, and what is buried seed to-day, may become a glorious harvest in His own good time. So with young Howard; during this period of his life, there were bright gleams of better things, deeds done and words spoken, that sustained the anxious hearts of those who watched and prayed.

In the summer of 1856, through the carelessness of our quarantine officers, the yellow fever was introduced to the shores of Fort Hamilton and Bay Ridge. Young Kitching's family, with others, were compelled to leave their home, but he, with his natural fearlessness, insisted on remaining with

an aunt and the domestics, to look after things there.

It was a solemn and fearful season. The sun poured down with its burning, garish shine, day after day ; not a cloud was in the sky ; there was a hush in the air ; the fields were deserted ; and the stillness was seldom broken, but as the dead were carried out.

Sobered by the "pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noon-day," with time for serious thoughts, the Lord visited him then and there, and the Holy Spirit touched his heart. A letter to his eldest sister at this time, to whom every thought of his heart was always unveiled, shows the melancholy state of his mind, as he asks, "If I am called away, what shall I do to be saved?"

I had been the rector of the parish for more than a year. I had watched Howard's vacillating course, saw his danger, and, admiring his noble gifts, greatly desired that they might be consecrated to the service of the Lord. There was a voice, as we have said, in the breath of the pestilence ; a voice, piercing like a sharp, two-edged sword, and the stubborn soul quailed under the power of God's word ; but in the absence of plain-spoken confession, and prayer for divine succor, and some decisive movement in the right direction, the strange sound seemed to die away, and he returned, like a willing prisoner, to the charmed circle where softer melodies were heard.

But his conscience was no longer to be lulled to sleep by any music of earth. He had heard the Shepherd's voice. He fought against the call with all the might of his strong nature. Long into the night, after the midnight hour, we sat up and talked. His feet were planted on that dreary *legal* ground, that he was not *good* enough to come to Christ; and as his impatient temper constantly led him into inconsistencies, every day seemed to remove him farther from the Lord.

But still the Shepherd called, and Howard listened. In a little book, a present from his mother, called "Spiritual Songs," which he carried with him throughout the war, we find marked with his peculiar mark those beautiful, familiar lines of Bonar, which exactly describe his experience at this time. He doubtless had this period in view when he marked the passage: —

"I was a wandering sheep,
I did not love the fold;
I did not love my Shepherd's voice,
I would not be controlled.

"I was a wayward child,
I did not love my home;
I did not love my Father's voice,
I loved afar to roam.

"The Shepherd sought His sheep,
The Father sought His child;
They followed me o'er vale and hill,
O'er desert, waste, and wild.

“They found me nigh to death,
Famished, and faint, and lone ;
They bound me with the bands of love,
They saved the wandering one !

“They washed my filth away,
They made me clean and fair ;
They brought me to my home in peace,
The long-sought wanderer !”

Yes, the “long-sought wanderer,” after many a conflict, many a doubt, found rest in the precious assurance, “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from all sin.” His heart was calmed by the conviction that God had found a ransom, and that He reveals that ransom to us sinners, in order that we might rest therein, on the authority of His word, and by the grace of His Spirit. He was satisfied, at last, of the truth, that righteousness is not founded upon our feelings or experience, but upon the shed blood of the Lamb of God ; and hence, that our peace is not dependent upon our feelings or experience, but upon the same precious blood, which is of changeless efficacy, and changeless value in the judgment of God.

Blessed victory of faith in the blood of the Lamb ! We do not mean to say that there was never a retreat or discomfiture in his spiritual warfare after this. He had many a reverse, but the blessed truth, that “The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin,” was the rallying cry that brought him back to victory.

On the 7th of June, 1857, Howard Kitching en-

listed openly under the banner of Jesus. It was on one of those bright, pure days of June, when the breeze makes such laughing music among the trees, and the sunshine quivers beneath with such moving glory, and earth is like the vestibule of heaven, that he knelt at the chancel of that picturesque little church, and with all his family, but the two younger children, partook of his first communion. It was a time never to be forgotten by those who had prayed that this hour might come, an hour that has been written down by the recording angel in the Book of Remembrance. We never doubted for a moment, amid the lights and shadows of his changeful after life, that this was a sincere and earnest consecration of heart and life to the blessed service of his Lord and Master.

The time had now come for him to choose his profession or business, and having spent many summers with his family at West Point, and witnessed with great delight and peculiar interest the training of our cadets there, his early love of military life returned, and gave coloring to his thoughts as the various pursuits of life were presented. But his deep love for his mother, and her decided opposition to a military or naval education for him, settled that question, and he engaged in business with his father.

In the summer of 1860, he was united in marriage with Miss Harriet Ripley, daughter of Frank Ripley, Esq. The ceremony took place in Christ Church, Brooklyn, where he had attended Sunday-school as a boy.

In the autumn alarming symptoms of pulmonary difficulty began to develop themselves, and his father sent him to travel through the South, hoping that he might be benefited by change of air. He found the country all in a ferment, and very little chance of giving to his trip anything of a business character. From Florence, S. C., he writes:—

“There is no business doing. The hotels and railroad cars are all empty, as far as Northerners are concerned, and in fact the whole country seems to be in the greatest state of excitement.

“I hear that the laws are even more stringent in Georgia and Alabama, than in this State; Northerners being *invited* to leave, or, as Amos would say, ‘make themselves seldom,’ without regard to name, rank, occupation, or anything else. I have no doubt that these accounts are all more-or less exaggerated, but still people from the North are all going home (I mean business men), as they cannot do anything. I do not see how all this can affect our affairs, for I carry no samples, but am simply travelling for my health; but as I have been warned not to carry any pamphlets or cards in my trunk, you need not be surprised at my being put in ‘*quod*’ for six months. I am in for it now, so if you think it advisable, I will start next Monday for Montgomery, stopping at Atlanta, on the way. . . . I hardly know why I am so contented to-night, for I am as homesick as the mischief; but I think that it must be because I try always to begin the day *right*. I felt pretty badly this morning, when I found how things were, but I asked Jesus to help me, and it seems as though the parts of the engine almost went together of their own accord. Everything seems to go right; well, I must except the *prog*, but we are past the days of miracles, and this place is decidedly ‘*harder*’ than the wilderness of the Red Sea ever was.”

From this place Howard went to New Orleans, and his health not improving, he hastened home, travelling day and night.

This winter, while the clouds were gathering blackness at the South, and the distant rumbling of the thunder gave token of the coming tempest that was to sweep over the land for four long years, he remained quietly at his home on the banks of the Hudson. As his health was still too delicate to allow him to attend closely to business, when not busy with his pencil, he was scouring the country on horseback, leading that active out-door life, which was fitting him for the hard soldier life, which, hidden from view, was lying just before him.

How impenetrable the thick curtain which hangs between us and the morrow! How unconsciously we pass the turning points in our lives which shape our future destiny! How the Lord leads his children by a way they know not!

THE PREPARATION.

“And I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.”—ISAIAH xlii. 16.

CHAPTER II.

THE PREPARATION.

“Throughout the land there goes a cry :
A sudden splendor fills the sky ;
From every hill the banners burst,
Like buds by April breezes nurst ;
In every hamlet, home, and mart,
The fire-beat of a single heart
Keeps time to strains whose pulses mix
Our blood with that of seventy-six !”

BAYARD TAYLOR.

THE cannon which opened upon Fort Sumter awoke strange echoes, and touched forgotten chords in the American heart. American loyalty, which had slumbered so long that many thought it dead, leaped into instant life, and stood radiant and ready for the fierce encounter. No creative art has ever woven into song a story more tender in its pathos, or more stirring to the martial blood than the scenes that then transpired. From one end of the land to the other, in the crowded streets of cities, and in the solitude of the country, wherever our bright flag was flung to the breeze, there were shouts of devotion and pledges of aid, which gave glorious guarantee for the perpetuity of American freedom. Wives dashed aside their grief, and gave up their husbands ; mothers, with smothered

sobs, gave up their sons ; sisters gave their brothers to the great cause. Millions of freemen rallied to the rescue.

War is a dreadful evil. Its horrors, we have seen, cannot be exaggerated. But war has its gains as well as its losses. If it calls out in baser natures some of the worst and most devilish passions of the human heart, it kindles in others elevating and ennobling sentiments of duty and self-sacrifice, which otherwise they would not at all, or would have very feebly known ; lessons are learned in this stern school which would never have been learned in any other, but which no nation can afford to forego. For indeed, what would a nation be, over which for century after century the great anguish and agony of war, with all its elevating emotions and purifying sorrows, had never passed ? How mean, how sordid, how selfish, would the whole spirit and temper of such a nation become, its heart unmanned, its moral nerves and sinews unstrung ! O, no, the nations cannot do without the severe discipline of this terrible thing. For nations, as little as individuals, can do without tribulation ; and what is war but tribulation, on an enormous scale, and visiting, not as at other times, this household, and then this, but visiting hundreds and thousands of households, and bringing to them distress and anguish at the same instant. Fearful remedy as it must needs be esteemed, war is a remedy against worse evils,—sloth, selfishness, love of ease, contempt of honor, worship of mate-

rial things ; all which, but for it, would invade and occupy the heart of a people, and at length eat out that heart altogether.

And as the reactive influence which war exercises on a nation generally, that undertakes it in a righteous cause, is exalting, ennobling, purifying, so still more marked is its influence often upon those who are directly engaged in it. Some, of course, are hardened and brutalized by their familiarity with suffering, by the necessity which they often lie under of themselves inflicting it ; but many also there are, like "The Happy Warrior" of the poet,

"Who doomed to go in company with pain
And fear and bloodshed, miserable train,
Turn their necessity to glorious gain ;"

and who are only made more tender and more gentle thereby.

Howard Kitching was of this number, who, as he ripened for glory, through the discipline of suffering, grew more tender and more gentle by his ministry of love, for four years, among the wounded and the dying.

When the clarion notes of preparation rang through the land after the fall of Sumter, his heart was stirred within him, and he resolved to devote himself to the service of his country. But the struggle before he took the step was long and severe. His lungs were weak, and though light of foot, and as bold a rider as ever, he was not strong,

the home ties were never stronger,—the love of wife and child was woven now into their bright texture. How well has one of our sweetest poets pictured the struggle.

"O! do not cling to me and cry,
For it will break my heart;
I'm sure you'd rather have me die
Than not to bear my part.

"You think that some should stay at home
To care for those away;
But still I'm helpless to decide
If I should go or stay.

"I feel — I know — I am not mean;
And though I seem to boast,
I'm sure that I would give my life
To those who need it most.

"Perhaps the Spirit will reveal
That which is fair and right;
So, Marty, let us humbly kneel
And pray to Heaven for light."

And so they knelt and prayed, and the light came down upon the path which led from home to the battle-field.

He went down to New York, and immediately enrolled himself with the Lincoln cavalry. After drilling with them for several weeks, they were ordered to the seat of war, but family circumstances prevented his leaving with them. Shortly afterwards he received a captain's commission in the 2d New York Light Artillery.

At this time commenced his intimacy with Alexander Doull, the major of the regiment, a young Englishman, who had served with great distinction in the Crimea. He was a true soldier, a young man of real genius, and his friendship was of great value to the new recruit.

In September the regiment was sent down to Elm Park, Staten Island, where they were encamped, and employed in drilling and recruiting. One of our autumn storms set in one night, and the tents were nearly all swept away. The next morning Howard Kitching and Major Doull came clattering up to the door of the rectory, their clothes dripping, their horses smoking and panting, and they sprang to the ground with such a merry shout, it seemed more like the return of a pleasure party, than two young men, who had been delicately reared, coming from a night's exposure to wet and cold, and half famished.

And this was one of the common pictures to be met with every day, during the first years of the war. Mere boys, who had scarcely left their mother's side, enduring hardships like veteran soldiers. It was a splendid exhibition of the pluck and manliness of our American youth.

As orders were received from Washington that the regiment should get ready to start, Howard repaired to Peekskill, to have his little boy baptized. That baptism will never be forgotten. It was sweet and solemn and sad, a consecrated hour, a blessed parting scene. He brought his boy with-

in the shelter of the covenant, and left him encompassed by the sure shelter of the promises, and beneath the canopy of prayer.

We then read our favorite Psalm, the ninety-first, that sweetest song of David, that Howard loved so well, and so frequently alludes to in his letters, and then we knelt in a parting prayer.

The encampment of the 2d Artillery was the first foreshadowing the people of that part of the Island had had of the war. In a gently sloping field by the roadside, the white camp flashed in the sunlight; the streets between the tents were carpeted with grass, and the measured tread of the sentinels, and the shrill fife, echoed through the day and night.

This was the holiday side of the war which might be seen in every part of the land.

On the 7th of November, the tents were struck. It was a wild, gusty day, and very cold. The transition from the picturesque scene of the day before, when the sun was shining brightly on the well ordered camp, to the gloomy day and the confusion when the tents went down, was very striking. The men had been paid off, and were many of them intoxicated.

As we drove up to witness the departure of the troops, we saw young Howard mounted on that spirited gray horse which carried him through the whole war, spurring and dashing among the *débris* of camp life, and heard his voice ringing out loud and clear, giving his orders, as he attempted to make his men fall into line. The slight form

seemed to expand, and the boyish face to grow older, under the sense of responsibility, and as we marked his self-possession and commanding air, as he controlled those half-intoxicated men, we had no misgivings as to his fitness for the work that the Lord had given him to do for his country.

Just before the order to march was given, he was surrounded by the wives and sisters of the men of his company, and though harassed by the difficulties of his novel position, he had a word of cheer for each. We remember one old gray-headed man, pressing his way through the crowd, and with tears in his eyes begging Howard to be kind to his boy. The harassed and excited look passed away from his face at once, as he put his hand on the old man's shoulder, and promised him that he would look after his son.

And we may be sure that he did watch over that boy, for we have abundant evidence of his thoughtful consideration for his men, — boldly censuring them when they neglected their duties, counseling them in trouble, and writing letters for those who could not write, to their wives and friends.

The regiment, on reaching Washington, was sent to garrison Forts Ward and Ellsworth. The following letters from the latter place give a picture of his life there. It is the holiday soldier's life, when the "pomp and circumstance of war" are felt, and creature comforts asked for. But as the stern conflict goes on and the terrible reality thickens around him, we see the noble qualities of

the true soldier shine forth, and through the same discipline of hardship and danger the better and stronger characteristics of the Christian developed.

FORT ELLSWORTH, *November 18, 1861.*

DEAR PAPA :— I have been trying for some days to write a line to you, but have had no time, having been moved about from place to place — always on the march, and never at rest.

Now we are in Fort Ellsworth, things have a much more comfortable look, and we are hoping that we may be allowed to remain for a month at least, as we have in the fort a battery of six-pounders, enabling us to drill every day.

Fort Ellsworth, you remember, was built by the Ellsworth Fire Zouaves when they first entered Virginia. It is a very fine piece of work on a splendid commanding position, overlooking Washington, Alexandria, and all the surrounding country, for fifteen or twenty miles.

When we came in here on Friday evening, it was occupied by four hundred "man-of-war's-men;" in fact, a complete frigate's crew, — and they have been spending the past two months in putting the fort in complete order, just as sailors do, sodding, and whitewashing everything, and planting evergreens, until the inside of the works is the very picture of neatness; and if we were in barracks instead of these miserable tents, so that we could keep warm, we should be very comfortable and happy.

Our tents are very cold in this winter weather, and as our brilliant quarter-master managed to lose all my blankets, as also Major Doull's, we have suffered a good deal from cold. I took a severe cold, sleeping on the ground one rainy night, but am now getting very much better, and as we shall soon have plenty of blankets, I hope I

shall not take cold again. In fact, as I was weighed on Saturday, and weighed one hundred and forty-eight pounds, I think I am not much the worse for wear as yet.

Yesterday I was ordered out on picket duty, and five of us went out on the road leading to Fairfax Court House, considerably beyond our last picket, and I have now a better idea of the state of things on our frontier lines than I ever had before.

The roads are all barricaded, with squads of men posted behind the barricades; single and double pickets on every hill, and at every bridge and house; all the woods on our side the lines cut down so as to form an entanglement, and trees felled across the roads.

In our circuit we approached as near as was altogether safe, to the great pine woods you read so much of in the papers, where our pickets are shot daily, and where, by the way, Captain Todd, one of my old friends of the Lincoln Cavalry, was shot last Thursday, with thirty or forty of his men.

You must try to come on here for two or three days, before the army makes a march, for I know that you would be very much interested in matters and things, and it would give you a realizing sense of the war, which you have never had.

My gray horse is a most magnificent animal. He is just as well broken as Mac, is as bold as a lion, will jump anything and go anywhere, and in fact, is the admiration of all *Secessiondom*. I was offered two hundred and fifty dollars for him by my old friend Hidden, of the Lincoln Cavalry. . . .

FORT ELLSWORTH, *November 18, 1861.*

. . . Everything is so changed since I passed through this part of the country last spring. All along the line of the railroad from Baltimore to Washington, pickets are posted, every bridge is guarded, every depot surrounded by sentries, and in fact it is very difficult to

realize that one is passing through our free, happy country. Indeed, if you could stand with me on the ramparts of our fort, and look around over the surrounding country, every hill crowned with a breastwork or fortifications, and every valley holding a camp, or camps, with martial music sounding on every side, you would find it hard to believe that we were not in some fairy land. . . .

Give my best love to dearest mamma, and all the dear ones. Tell mamma that anything in the shape of cookies, gingersnaps, pickles, or anything good, will be very acceptable, as we are just now in a position to enjoy such things, being able to procure only simple pork and potatoes for our officers' mess. Kiss J. H. K., Jr. !

FORT ELLSWORTH, *Wednesday Evening, November 20.*

. . . . Your letter reached me this evening, just as I returned from a long, long day in the saddle, having been over at Bailey's cross-roads, at the grand review by McClellan of all the troops in this neighborhood. . . . I wish you could just look in upon us for one day; you would then have such a realizing sense of the change in my daily life since last year at this time. Up at six o'clock in the morning, making out my morning report of the condition of things in the fort, to hand in to the headquarters of Brigadier-general Franklin before nine o'clock; then drilling and working at the guns till dinner-time, beside superintending the police force necessary to clear up the grounds in and about the fort; then in the afternoon we have company drill and dress parade, which occupies the time till dark. Being second in command in the fort, gives me of course a great deal more to attend to than if I only had my own company to look after. I do not complain of my busy life, as I find it well suited to my temperament, but only tell you that you may have some idea of the manner in which I spend my time.

Now I suppose you will like to hear about the splendid review, and first I will tell you how I got there. I

had another invitation to ride on General Franklin's staff to-day, which was a great honor, and just as I had fixed myself and the gray up in great style, I discovered that the horse was dead lame, having sprained his leg in some way, during the night. You can easily imagine how annoyed I was, for I am exceedingly proud of the gray, and wanted very much to show him at the review. Major Doull having bought Mac and intending to go, I did not know what to do for a horse, particularly as I knew that everything in the shape of horse-flesh would be in demand, as is always the case on review days. But as I had determined to go, and had told some of the officers a few days before that I would never be *stuck* for a horse, I started for the nearest cavalry encampment as well as Gray could carry me, which was very slow, for he is very lame.

Well, I rode into the camp, and jumping from my horse as if in the greatest hurry, with my sword and spurs clanking, and making as much fuss as I could, I ordered some of the men standing around, to bring me their best horse, as *my* horse had hurt himself, and you would have hurt yourself laughing if you could have seen them hurry to change my saddle. Well, I mounted; and O, what a rip to ride on a field, rear, plunge, kick, do anything rather than go along the road as I wished him to; but still he was better than none, for *I got there*, and saw the most magnificent sight which I ever witnessed; seventy thousand men, infantry, cavalry, and artillery, spread over an immense plain, their bright bayonets glistening in the sun, the bands playing splendidly, cannon roaring from one side of the plain to the other, and in fact, words will not describe the splendid appearance which so large an army makes when drawn up in line of battle.

McClellan, McDowell, Franklin, Blenker, Smith, and all the other military big bugs were there. McClellan is a splendid little fellow, very light built, a good horse-man, and rides a fine blood horse.

From the fact of an order having been issued that the troops should appear on the field with knapsacks packed, and with four days' rations, and above all that they had been supplied with twenty-five rounds of ball cartridge, and the ambulances accompanied by the various surgeons belonging to the respective regiments were on the ground, the feeling was very strong with almost every one that McClellan meditated an advance, and that the review was only one way of assembling the troops without its becoming public that he intended to move forward. To say the least it was something of an experiment, assembling the whole strength of the army on one field when the enemy are posted in great numbers within ten miles.

Doull and I had resolved that in case there was a fight we would see the fun, and although I was so badly mounted, I must confess that I was sorry when the day passed away without any appearance of the enemy. . . .

FORT ELLSWORTH, *Sunday Evening, November 24.*

. . . . I am pretty tired, having been out to general inspection all the morning, and working at headquarters of General Franklin all the afternoon under orders from Colonel Burtnett.

. . . . You will think that my Sundays are unsuitably spent, and indeed I find it very hard to remember even that it is Sunday, — no church to go to, nothing to mark the day from any other, except extra parade in the morning. If anything, I am more busy than on any other day, as the men seem to feel that they are at liberty to bother me all day long for "passes" to go out of camp; and if any friends from the various camps desire to visit me, they invariably choose Sunday. I try very hard, however, to keep the day as I should, knowing that a man can be just as much a Christian when on duty at the head of his troops as in his quiet home. . . .

On Thanksgiving Day, the 28th of November, Howard received orders to move with two com-

panies to "Fort Worth," in Virginia, and the letters that follow relate to his life while there.

FORT WORTH, VA., *December 3, 1861.*

MY DEAREST L—— : I received your lovely letter, and would have answered it immediately, but that I was taken sick the day after I got it, and have been sick ever since.

We received orders late Wednesday night to move our two companies which had been guarding Fort Ellsworth to Fort Worth, the next morning, Thanksgiving Day. So we were obliged to give up our comfortable quarters, and take up our line of march for an unfinished earthwork, on the outskirts of our line of fortifications; where instead of spending our time drilling on the guns, and teaching our men something useful, we are forced to take up our axes and shovels, and go to work upon the Fort.

In Ellsworth we had very nice quarters within the works, and everything convenient, and were able to crib a little time every day to ourselves. Here we are encamped on a side hill, outside the work, the mud about eight inches deep, very little to eat, and plenty of work. If you could just look in upon us now, and see how I live, you would scarcely believe your eyes.

Major Doull has not, as yet, received his tents, and he and I have to occupy the same tent, which of course is pitched right in the mud, such things as boards for flooring being quite unheard of, and it is so full of trunks, cooking utensils, our beds, etc., besides our saddles, which we have to keep there, having no stable, that it is almost impossible to move around.

We almost froze the first night, and as I was sick in bed, and felt the cold very much, we foraged around and found a little cast-iron stove, which we rigged up in the tent, and except that we were smoked out like two woodchucks nine or ten times in twenty-four hours, we were more comfortable.

Then our "Bill of Fare," O my! I told the boys this morning when we succeeded in getting our *morning* meal (a piece of government beef and a tin cup of coffee) at one o'clock, after running around in the cold and snow for three or four hours, that I thought I would give about one month's pay to have one good meal at home. You must not think that we complain, however. . . .

FORT WORTH, *Wednesday Evening, December 11.*

. . . . Since writing my last letter, Beauregard has advanced to Fairfax Court House with (they say) seventy-six thousand men. Fairfax is between eight and nine miles from here, and as the enemy's outposts are thrown out about three and a half miles ahead of his main body, we begin to feel as though our fort was a pretty important position, being the centre upon which our forces must rest in case they are attacked. We have fortunately gotten everything in perfect order; our men and ourselves can work the guns (big and little) beautifully, and having plenty of ammunition and a good well just finished, we think we could stand a pretty good siege.

Last night at eleven o'clock, those of us who were up, were very much excited by discovering that the brigade under General Howard, numbering some five thousand men, were leaving their camps and taking up their line of march towards Fairfax. So suddenly and so quietly was it done, that unless we had been watching for some movement, we would never have suspected but that the thousands in the valley below us were wrapped in sleep.

For the first time I saw an army, roused suddenly from sleep without any previous order, march out in perfect silence to meet the enemy. It was as beautiful a sight as my eyes ever beheld. Our position is on a very high and steep hill, having something the same effect, as the view from Catskill, and as the different regiments left their camps and filed out into the plain below, their bayonets glistening in the unusually brilliant light of the

moon, and the murmur of their whispered orders came up to us like the hum of a bee, I became tremendously excited, and realized for the first time the feeling which prompts men to such feats of daring on the battle-field.

To give you some idea of the celerity with which a camp can be put in motion, from the moment when the first order to march was received, to the time when the order to move was given, just sixteen minutes had elapsed; four regiments of infantry and two batteries of light artillery having been got in readiness during that time. Doull was in command of the fort, and consequently could not leave, so I silently saddled "Gray Billy," and started for "better or for worse," just to see how things were managed. I joined one of the light artillery batteries, and accompanied them along the road till we were ordered to halt, and the captain formed his battery across the road to act as a reserve, in case the other force which pushed on ahead, were driven back.

I remained till about four o'clock in the morning, learning all I could, and posting myself regarding battery manœuvres, and then, as no enemy appeared, and I was obliged to relieve my guard at the fort at four o'clock, I returned. You can imagine that it is very galling to me to be thus tied down in a fort, instead of having my light guns and being in the field, but I do not see how it can be helped for a while, as Uncle Sam has not guns enough to equip the batteries now in the field. I have the promise, however, of Brigadier-general Barry (the chief of artillery) that my battery shall be the *first* equipped. . . .

Since recovering from my bilious attack, I have been very much better, and am in fact, becoming as tough and hardy as an Indian. Major Doull and I sleep without a fire, and I do not know what I should do now, if put suddenly into a house, with warm fires and soft beds.

Tell J—— that I have attempted many times to write to him, and to thank him for the magnificent glass which

he sent me. The glass is extra fine, and is most useful to me. . . .

FORT WORTH, *Sunday, December 21, 1861.*

. . . . MY DARLING H—— : As I now write, another poor fellow from the Eighty-eighth Pennsylvania is being brought to his last resting-place, on the little knoll behind my tent.

You will remember that I wrote you about the little grave-yard where they laid the poor fellow who was shot some two weeks ago, and where several of our pickets are lying, who have been shot at various times. We turned out our companies last week, and put a little rustic fence around it, and the place looks really pretty, only *so lonely*, and reminds one so strongly of the realities of war, lying, as it does, directly under the guns of our fort ; their black muzzles seeming to point directly upon the new-made graves. When I began to write, the band was playing (with muffled drums) Pleyel's Hymn, the comrades of the deceased singing a hymn (I cannot quite catch the words), and now they have just fired three volleys over him, and "left him alone in his glory."

I took about two hundred and fifty of the men down to the camp of the Fourth Rhode Island regiment this morning, to attend service, as we have no chaplain ; and although it was very cold standing in the cold wind, still I enjoyed the service very much. The chaplain is an Episcopalian, and it was so natural to hear our beautiful service again, for I have not been able to attend church before since I left home.

We closed with "Old Hundred," men and officers joining in ; and I sang so loud that I am sure Jeff. Davis heard me at Centreville, fifteen miles off ; and thought that Henry Ward Beecher was upon him with all his hordes. . . .

We find him, in the following extracts, looking back, with a yearning heart, to the home joys of

Christmas tide — the time of pleasant gatherings, and sweet and hallowed memories. Saddened though he is, with what bright words of fun he writes, so like himself.

FORT WORTH, *December 26, 1861.*

. . . . My first Christmas away from home was a sad one, I assure you; for we have been accustomed for so many years to have a family gathering at home, and have always looked forward to it with such pleasant anticipations that it seemed as much like St. Patrick's Day (which every one knows is the most dismal of all days), as like Christmas.

I had arranged to give a dinner to my company, of roast beef and plum-pudding, and considering all things it went off very well; the only trouble being that old "Gore," my company cook, put all the whiskey I gave him for sauce down his throat, and the men complained that the sauce was too "flat." We (that is Company B's officers), had a very nice dinner of turkey in my tent.

Thursday Evening.

. . . . I have just now received and opened the magnificent box of things which all the dear ones have sent me, and O my precious H——, I cannot say enough about them. The dear little diary, just what I had been thinking I must have, and the lovely cap which I have on my head this minute, and which fits like a "*plasther!*" and all the good things too, enough to make the whole battalion sick for a month!

One o'clock, Midnight.

DARLING MAMMA: — Your beautiful picture took me all by surprise, for I had begun to think it impossible to get a good likeness of you, and then to have you suddenly appear to me from the depths of a soap-box, the effect was magical! G——'s dear

little picture, too, is so pretty and cunning, all the boys are begging for it. Such good pictures seem to bring you all around me; and with yours, H——'s, little Howy's and G——'s before me, I can almost imagine myself at home.

January 7, 1862.

. . . . I commenced writing to you Sunday night, telling you what a nice time I had had reading to my men all the evening, but I was so tired and sleepy that I was unable to finish, and gave it up; having only succeeded in spoiling a sheet of government paper.

My men, as you know, are nearly all Roman Catholics, but when I give it out that I am going to read to them, the whole company, and many from other companies, collect in one of the largest tents; and last Sunday evening they were sitting as thick as they could squat around me, while I read "The Railroad Man" to them. I wish that more of them were Protestants, for then I could talk to them in a much more satisfactory way; whereas now, I can only read to them such books as will interest them, without frightening them into the idea that I am trying to proselyte them. The consequence of this would be that they would confess to their priest, who comes once a month and confesses them in B's tent, and he would prejudice their minds so much that all good effect of my reading would be lost; so all I can do is to read to them and leave the matter in God's hands.

One of my men, a splendid fellow, named Beck, was through the Crimean War, and knew Hedley Vicars. He was quite near at the time Vicars was killed. He speaks in the highest terms of him; says that he was always reading to the men, giving them books, talking to them, and that his men of the 97th loved him dearly.

This man Beck is one of the men who left his own company on the day we left Elm Park, and asked permission of Colonel P—— to join my company, and a better soldier I never saw.

Tell papa and mamma that if they have any books which they think would interest the men, to send them along, as I have entirely exhausted my stock. If papa could send me two or three of Jacob Abbot's histories — Alexander the Great, or any of them which he might select, I would read to them every night.

Tell mamma that the bed, sheets, and spreads which she gave me are being used for the first time to-night. One of our captains has been taken suddenly ill with what I fear will prove typhoid fever, and as he cannot be moved to the hospital, Doull and I are taking care of him. I made his bed very comfortable with my linen, and put hot bottles to his feet, and Doull is sitting up with him the first part of the night; I to take the last part, which, by the way, I shall not be in a fit condition to do unless I get to bed. . . .

Find out, darling, who sent each of the things contained in the Christmas box, so that I may thank them.

Kiss the little chap for me. Does he smoke a pipe yet?

We have found in his camp chest the following letter from a dear Christian friend, written at this time, which we insert, because it refers to a letter in which he relates some of his efforts as a soldier of the cross.

MY DEAR HOWARD: — I had the pleasure a few evenings since of hearing parts of your last letter to H—— read, and was deeply interested in all the details of your camp life. You will hardly credit it, that the most trifling circumstances of your daily doings are eagerly sought and dwelt on by us. W—— and I think of you every day, and pray for you through many an hour.

I felt a glow of pride on hearing of Dr. Lee's interview with you, and though a man is never a prophet in his own country, it was not difficult for me to think that the Doctor spoke advisedly when he wrote "Captain

Kitching is one of the very best officers in the whole army."

I never doubted that you had it in you, and only wanted grace and opportunity to bring it out.

But what made my heart throb with very gladness, was the simple statement you gave of your reading with the poor soldiers, for I know that in thus working for the Master, you will find a cheer and a joy in the work itself; and if you live through this conflict, when this war shall have become an event of history, and in after years you call to remembrance its strange hurried scenes, you may be sure that the hours thus spent will be the greenest, and freshest, and most fragrant spots in memory. And in that blessed land where "they learn war no more," you may meet those who found their way to Jesus' feet, by listening to your voice on the banks of the Potomac.

I am glad that you met with that old soldier who knew Hedley Vicars, and bore testimony to his unwearied efforts to bring the poor soldiers into the way of life. You may depend upon it, Miss Marsh's account of him was true to the letter, and that Major ——'s deprecatory reflections upon him, if they were not the suggestions of his own heart, were derived from those who, like himself, could see no beauty in that beautiful character — a young man fearless and loyal to his Saviour, while he was loyal to his Queen.

It is a glorious mission, and the Lord has sent you to do just the work you are doing. I know what Christian courage it requires always, in such company, to show your colors; but Christ's grace is sufficient, and if you are unfaltering, even those who cannot understand you will admire, and at last may imitate.

The angels do not look down upon a thing on earth more noble, than a young, and loyal, consistent *Christian* soldier.

FORT BLENKER, *January 19, 1862.*

. . . . On Friday morning, while we were all hard at work in Fort Worth, Major Doull received orders to march immediately to this post with two companies. In less than two hours' time, we had torn down our nice winter-quarters, which we had built with so much trouble; left our nice log cook-houses and stables, and were on the march; I, in command of the troops, Doull having gone ahead to arrange for our relieving the troops at Blenker.

Such a march as we had of it! Our way led through rough, unbroken woods, where the thick, black mud is actually in some places two and a half feet deep. My men, laden as they were with knapsacks, haversacks, and muskets, besides various articles which they had made at Fort Worth, and were loth to part with, could scarcely get along; sinking at every step knee deep in the mire, but still laughing and joking each other, and now and then roaring out a song which Lieutenant Howard or I would start. I was mounted on Billy, with a pack before and behind, so high that I looked like a Jew peddler; and after once getting into the saddle, could not get out again till I was "boosted" out by a file of men.

I never saw such a magnificent lot of fellows as mine. I thought that they would be very much dispirited at being obliged to leave their comfortable quarters during this miserable weather, and go forth, they knew not whither. But on the contrary, they received my orders to strike their tents, with cheers; and during the march, and on Friday night, although they were obliged to sleep in an old barn, without any sides (only a roof), men and horses all in together, I did not see one cloudy face; all were cheerful and happy, seemingly content to go wherever I ordered, and they were needed. . . .

Thursday night, I was enjoying the beautiful moon quite as much as you could have done, though by no

means sleigh-riding, for it was quite warm. I had got an old cornet from one of the boys, and was playing "Star Spangled Banner," and other patriotic songs for the officers to sing, and we were all out in the moonlight in front of our tents, making everything ring till twelve o'clock. . . .

FORT BLENKER, *February 2, 1862.*

. . . . I am working very hard at my books, as I find that military men expect me to make up with *brains* for absence of whiskers. I was called into court on Saturday, as a witness, and I heard afterward that the universal opinion of the members of the court was, that I am an extraordinarily young looking man for a captain, but that I appeared much older after I began to speak. I am afraid my youthful appearance will always work against me in my military career, but as I cannot very well help it, I won't worry over it. . . .

FORT BLENKER, *February 18, 1862.*

DEAR THEODORE:— I should have replied to your kind letters long since, but that my mind has been so completely upset by our trouble here, beside being so occupied with our examination, that even when I could find an hour, it has seemed impossible for me to write a letter that I would ask anybody to read. We have now passed the examination, and are waiting anxiously for the result of the report which was sent in to General McClellan by the Board.

Major Doull and myself have been assured that there is a bright day dawning for our regiment, after the gloomy experience which it has had ever since we entered Virginia.

Just as soon as we obtain the report of the Board upon our examinations, I will send it to you, as I know that anything which concerns my welfare so nearly as the opinion of a board of regular army officers, as to

my capabilities to fill my position will interest you and
L——

The examining Boards appointed by McClellan, have been the means of sending home a large number of inefficient officers.

Doull is already making a name for himself, proving himself quite equal to any of our West Point graduates in his military qualifications, and his proficiency in mathematics and civil engineering. So you see I could not have a better instructor.

We are very quiet here at Fort Blenker, having only two companies, with seven officers, and being almost entirely isolated from any other regiment. One day is painfully like another, the weather being so bad that it is quite impossible to have much out-door work. We are getting very weary of the monotony of this kind of life, and long for a change.

The greater portion of the troops on this side of the Potomac will be moved forward, just as soon as the roads become passable for artillery. Whether our regiment will be among the fortunate number, we cannot tell, but Major Doull has a proposal now before the Brigadier-general, to send us forward with siege guns and mortars, as it is very evident that the advance upon Manassas will be made after a very different plan from last summer. The rebel works will be regularly invested and taken by siege, five or six days' hard fighting being necessary for that purpose.

I find that the smattering of mechanics which I possess is of great assistance to me in the management of guns, and as I have been studying fortifications very diligently, I am anxious to have an opportunity of putting some of my theories into practice.

There is great rejoicing here over the news of the victories in the West, and the general opinion appears to be that the rebellion is "on its last legs." God grant that it may be so !

I am sorry to tell you that I meet with great discouragements in my feeble efforts to bring the poor men in my own and other companies to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Almost all the men in this detachment are Roman Catholics. My first lieutenant is of the same faith, and assisted by a priest who, like all his brethren, is most unremitting in his zeal. They all have the idea (quite right by the way) that I am trying to convert them; and although B—— does not of course interfere with me, still I cannot help feeling his influence. I do what little I can, hoping and praying that some of the poor deluded ones may be brought out of darkness.

Major Doull and I have inaugurated a temperance movement in the regiment, and I am glad to see that its effects are becoming manifest not alone amongst the men, but amongst the officers, many of whom have been making brutes of themselves ever since they began to feel that they were outside the influence of home and the restraints of society.

All the officers of this detachment and nearly two thirds of my men, have signed off; and the consequence is a very great improvement in the moral tone of the company.

My Sundays here, instead of being the happy days of home, are very sorrowful ones to me. One hundred men being crowded into one very small house, the Major and I are not only forced to occupy the same little room, but it always being the quarters of the commanding officer, every little detail connected with the fort is brought there, and on Sunday particularly it is utterly impossible for me to enjoy even a half hour to myself. Most of our army officers consider Sunday a day to visit each other, and as they think, enjoy themselves; and as D—— is not of my mind in religious matters, and has a great deal of company on Sunday in addition to the calls made upon me, it seems as though I never could be

alone. O how I long for those quiet lovely Sundays I spent with you and L——.

You perhaps cannot realize, occupied as you are in the Master's work, how difficult it is to have the same clear insight into heavenly things, and to keep a conscience void of offense here in camp, where I hear nothing but worldly conversation, and where one rarely hears the name of Jesus, except in some scoffer's mouth.

I know that the true Christian can be just as near his Saviour when in camp, surrounded by irreligious and profane men, as when shielded by the gentle loving influences of home. Still there is a sad feeling of loneliness consequent upon a position such as mine, which I cannot at all times get rid of. I have seen more open wickedness and unblushing sin, since my connection with the army, than I ever dreamed of before. We have no regimental chaplain, and the weather has been so terrible that none of the regiments about here have had regular service; consequently the few of my men who will go to the Protestant Church have been denied the privilege.

Those little books which were sent out from home have been read and read, over and over again; and just as soon as the affairs of the regiment are definitely settled, I am going to beg for some more. . . .

FORT BLENKER, *Thursday Evening, March 13, 1862.*

DEAR PAPA, . . . I am trying hard to find somebody to buy my gray horse; for although he is so beautiful, and I have succeeded in making such a fine saddle horse of him, still I see that he will never do any work where I am obliged to jump on him and gallop for a mile or two through bushes, and stumps, over fences, and ditches, and then perhaps leave him standing tied to a tree without a blanket, and this in all weathers. He still coughs a good deal and appears quite weak at times. And yet I am in hopes of meeting somebody who will fancy him enough to pay a big price for him. My old

friend Hidden of the Lincoln Cavalry had offered to buy him, but he, poor fellow, was killed last Sunday about ten miles from here while leading a charge at the head of his men. He died as a soldier should, in the performance of his duty, and the entire division are sounding his praises. He was out scouting with General Kearny, and they came upon what appeared to be a picket guard of the enemy. Hidden had only thirteen men, but he charged down a hill upon them, and found them to be about one hundred and fifty strong, and rifle-men. He however completely routed them, killing and wounding a great many and taking fourteen prisoners; but he lost his life, being shot through the neck and killed instantly. He was a noble fellow, and brave as a lion. I wish I knew that he was a Christian. You will remember him; he dined with you and me at Delmonico's one day.

I was out beyond Fairfax yesterday, sixteen miles from Alexandria, and from what I can learn, I think that our chiefs are not a little puzzled at finding that the rebels have evacuated Manassas.

I think that the strength of the army will return to Washington and be sent down the river, but of course nothing definite is known.

Wherever they go we earnestly hope that we shall be ordered to accompany them. Our regiment is rapidly getting into a splendid condition under Major Doull, and now that we have muskets we are ready for anything.

The fame of Ericsson and his monitor is in everybody's mouth, and I think that now he will be looked upon in his true character.

Was he on board during the fight? The "Times" says "yes."

In a brief note, written to his wife late at night at the close of a weary day, he says:—

Love our gracious Saviour, darling. Try to be with

Him more every day; and you will find that He is indeed "Our Elder Brother," and the Friend above all others.

In a letter a few weeks later he writes: —

I had a lovely letter from ——. He is I think, the most heavenly minded man I ever saw. How I wish that he could talk to the poor fellows who are lying in our hospitals about here, many of them dying without mention of Jesus' name being once made to them, — that name so full of comfort and hope to the dying Christian.

THE CONFLICT.

“ Rise ! for the day is passing,
And you lie dreaming on ;
The others have buckled their armor
And forth to the fight are gone :
A place in the ranks awaits you,
Each man has some part to play ;
The Past and Future are looking
In the face of the stern To-day.”

CHAPTER III.

THE CONFLICT.

“The next day they took him, and had him into the armory, where they shewed him all manner of furniture, which the Lord had provided for pilgrims, as sword, shield, helmet, breast-plate, all-prayer, and shoes that would not wear out. And there was here enough of this to harness out as many men for the service of the Lord, as there be stars in the heaven for multitude.”

BUNYAN.

THE dreamer's picture must have been in the mind of the young soldier, when he drew with skillful pencil, the sketch which forms the frontispiece of his pocket diary for this year, — Christian going forth to the conflict, clad in the whole armor of God. Behind him the pleasant fields and quiet valleys — before, the rough and dusty highway, strewn with emblems of death. But with firm hand he is grasping the shield, on which the white cross glistens, and his eye is gazing steadfastly on the motto over him : —

“Nominis stat umbra.”

For we have abundant evidence that whether in garrison or in the field, his strong tower was the name of Jesus ; and that though *in* the world, amid its most distracting, most disheartening scenes, he was not *of* the world. We know of no harder warfare for the young Christian than camp

life affords. O, how many young men who were moving humbly in the path of Christian usefulness amid the quiet of home life, have entered the army and lost their way, — passed over from the thorny outpost under the canopy of heaven, to the glare and the lights and the festive din of the enemy's camp, and forgotten the conflict. While others, like Colonel Kitching, have grown stronger from the stern conflict. "Blameless and harmless, shining as lights in the world;" O, we can never be this, unless we have hold of Christ. No power short of this can keep us steadfast in our Christian testimony, firm in our Christian hope, warm in our Christian love, where there is nothing without to encourage us.

Colonel Kitching was now to leave the barrack for the battle-field. His ardent spirit was chafing for more active service, and when it was announced that the army was about to advance towards Richmond, and there was a prospect of his being left behind to do garrison duty, he could keep quiet no longer, and volunteered to go with the army of the Potomac. In a letter of General Upton's,¹ referring to this period, and of his meeting with Colonel Kitching, he says, "Anxious to participate in the first campaign of the army of the Potomac, he came to my battery, and sought permission to join it. So anxious was he in fact, that he not only waived his rank to serve under me, but he went still further, and took command of a section as the junior second lieutenant of the battery.

¹ Then a captain in the regular army.

Foregoing every consideration due to his rank, and ignoring the pleasures and comforts of garrison life, he sought service in the field against the enemies of his country ; an act, not only indicative of his ardent patriotism, but one which will forever reflect credit and honor upon his character as an officer and soldier."

The following letter was written by Howard soon after joining General Upton : —

CAMP ARNOLD, MANASSAS, *Sunday Evening, April 6, 1862.*

. . . . I have not had one minute since reporting myself for duty to the battery. Two days after I joined, I was appointed adjutant of the artillery brigade of Franklin's division, which in addition to my daily duties as chief of section in my own battery, keeps me on the run most of the time. I suppose that I ought to consider the appointment a compliment, but as I had quite enough to do before, I must say that I would have been quite contented without it.

Now to tell you what we have been doing the past three days and how we got where we are now ; as I wrote you from our old camp (" Upton "), in a hurried note, we received orders Thursday night, at about eleven o'clock, to move on to Manassas Friday morning. So at nine o'clock we left our old camp, and pushed on to Centreville (twenty-one miles) before dark. We had a very hot, dusty march of it, I can tell you ; the lumbering artillery carriages raising the dust to such an extent that one could scarcely see twenty feet of the road, and the sun poured down upon us really like summer. We reached Centreville, as I have said, just before dark ; and after seeing after our horses and guns, we pitched a tent, and fixed ourselves as comfortably as we could ; the only difficulty being to keep warm, as it commenced raining just after midnight, and drenched everything through and

through — for while troops are on the march, the most we can do is to provide a shelter against the dampness of the night, and a hard beating rain seems to penetrate everything in the shape of canvas.

When I awoke yesterday morning, all my clothes had that miserable damp feeling that chills one so, and when I poked my head out of the tent it was raining great guns.

We ate a piece of beefsteak and some crackers, and started at seven o'clock, and until we reached Bull Run, it rained and rained till I thought it would never stop; and such dismal work it is marching with an artillery train on such a day. Every little while we would get into some deep hole where the heavy guns would stick fast, and we would have to put on extra horses to pull them out.

When we reached Manassas station the rain ceased, and things began to look brighter, and before we had our camp arranged, it had cleared off quite pleasantly.

We are located in a lovely spot here, about two miles beyond the old battle-field, with almost the whole of Franklin's division within sight of us. I suppose we are on our way to Richmond, and that we shall move on in the morning, but cannot tell positively. Much dissatisfaction is expressed at our having been withdrawn from McClellan's command and placed under that of McDowell, but as good soldiers we must go ahead, and do as we are ordered without grumbling. . . .

A true illustration of the spirit that animated the young men of our army. Educated, and accustomed to think for themselves on all subjects, they freely discussed every movement, but when the order was given to march, they were ready to go forward, anywhere, without a murmur. It was their intelligence, and in many cases, Christian

faith, that made them the noblest and best soldiers that ever fought for their country.

The order of President Lincoln, dictating a movement of the Army of the Potomac against Manassas, was at this time rescinded, and in compliance with the earnest solicitations of General McClellan, a change of base to the lower Chesapeake was commenced. This wonderful movement was aptly called by a European critic, "the stride of a giant." As a distinguished writer says, "To take up an army of over one hundred thousand men, transport it and all its immense material by water, and plant it down on a new theatre of operations near two hundred miles distant, is an enterprise, the details of which must be studied, ere its colossal magnitude can be adequately apprehended. It was an undertaking eminently characteristic of the American genius, and of a people distinguished above all others for the ease with which it executes great material enterprises — a people rich in resources, and in the faculty of creating resources."

The following letters refer to this time : —

ON BOARD TRANSPORT "WILLING," OFF YORKTOWN, }
Saturday Evening, April 19, 1862. }

MY OWN SWEET WIFE : — I intended writing you a nice long letter before leaving Alexandria ; but we received orders to embark much sooner than we expected, and our men having been paid off just as we left, the officers were obliged to do all the work, so that I did not get one moment in which to write.

Papa, I suppose, told you of our being ordered to

return to Alexandria in order to come down the river, so it will not surprise you much to know that we are here. We have received so many conflicting orders lately, that I think I should not be much astonished at our receiving orders to embark immediately for the moon.

We have just come in here expecting that we were to disembark in rear of McClellan's lines, and then advance by land, but we have within ten minutes received orders from General Franklin not to land, as we were going farther up the river, and Captain Purdy, Franklin's adjutant-general, made the remark to Captain Arnold, that "we should land under fire," so I suppose we may have a warm time of it. These things however, are very uncertain, and we don't really know where we are going.

I trust that our blessed Master in his mercy will spare me to return to you very soon, and I know that whatever happens, He will take care of us as He has in days gone by. And I want my darling one to trust Him implicitly; and when days seem darkest, and she may be tempted to think Jesus has forsaken her, go and tell Him everything just as she would me if I were there, and then leave all her cares with Him; and she will find Him the same kind, loving Saviour that He has always been.

I must confess H——`darling, that this is a trying hour for me; but I go to Jesus and He seems to be very, very near me sometimes, and then I think that all will be well if I only trust in Him.

As I am writing I can hear the booming of the heavy guns at Yorktown, where "little Mac" is banging away at the rebels. The report is that there has been severe work there to-day, but we hear nothing official.

Little Doull is in the trenches working away with his heavy guns. He will make a name for himself if he does not lose his life.

God bless you all, and in his infinite mercy unite us

again here on earth, and reunite, us in his, and our heavenly home. Jesus, Master, be with all my precious ones, and with their own

HOWARD.

To his wife : —

CAMP ELLIS, NEAR YORKTOWN, *Friday Evening, April 25, 1862.*

. . . . I have been nursing Lieutenant Williston of our battery, who has been very sick for a week past with typhoid fever. This, in addition to my other duties, has kept me so occupied that I have had no time to write.

. . . . We have been busy all the week getting our horses and guns ashore, and have just finished to-day. We are now awaiting the arrival of the new iron gun-boat *Galena*, to embark again for Gloucester Point. I inclose in my letter to papa a rough map, cut from the "Herald," which will give you some idea of our position. General McClellan is in front of Yorktown with nearly one hundred thousand men, and our division, with General McCall's, numbering in all about twenty thousand, are to cross the York River, and after effecting a landing, attack Gloucester Point, a place which is strongly fortified and held by the rebels, and where we shall probably be obliged to fight pretty hard to obtain a foothold.

. . . . My darling must pray, as I feel sure she does, that our loving Father will spare my life through the dangers of the battle-field, and also that He will enable her to be resigned to his will in *everything*, knowing that "He doeth all things well."

. . . . Give my best love to L—. Tell her that I would love dearly to have one of our old talks together and that through the mercy of Jesus, I can appreciate her feelings better now than in those old times. . . . God bless you, my precious one! I would so love to kiss you good-night as of old, and kneel down side by side as we did that sorrowful Sunday night, and pray to the same loving Jesus. We *can* do this, my darling,

although separated. . Don't forget to go to Jesus, at *twilight*, every day, and I will be *there* with you, even if in the saddle, marching in the dust, or on the battle-field.

I feel, darling, that there is a bright, happy future in store for you and me; perhaps here on earth; *certainly* in our Father's house, where we shall be together "with the Lord."

CAMP ELLIS, NEAR YORKTOWN, *Friday Evening, April 25, 1862.*

MY DEAR PAPA:— . . . Were it not for H—— and the little one, I should go into battle without a shade of fear, and with all the ardor of my age and natural disposition.

But when I begin to think of what poor H—— will do if I am killed, I assure you, it tries my faith as well as my manhood, to the utmost.

But I do not wish you to think that I am desponding or discouraged. As I said before, were it not for others, who are comparatively helpless, and dependent upon me, I should have no anxiety, no fear for the future.

If I am spared to return, I shall be home by the middle of May; and then if we could keep house, somewhere near the "old home," I think I should be contented with everything and everybody. I suppose that you are very much in the dark in New York, as to the proposed plan of operations here, so I will tell you all I know.

McClellan is, as you know, in front of Yorktown, with something less than one hundred thousand men. He is mounting several very heavy batteries, but is not yet ready to open fire.

Our division (Franklin's), together with General McCall's, are to be sent across York River, and landed somewhere below Gloucester Point, with the intention of taking possession of it.

It is very strongly fortified, and held by the rebels, and once taken, Yorktown is lost; consequently, it is

supposed that they will make a desperate resistance. All the generals here express the opinion that this is to be the battle ground of the war.

I inclose a map which I cut from the "Herald," on which I have marked our present position; please give it to H—— as it will give her a very definite idea of where I am, and where I am going.

As I may not have an opportunity of writing again before we move, you must not be surprised, if you should not hear from me till you see us mentioned as having been in a fight.

I almost forgot to say that the new iron gunboat *Galena* is to accompany us up the river.

Is this one of Ericsson's?

CAMP ELLIS, NEAR YORKTOWN, *Sunday, April 27, 1862.*

DARLING MAMMA :— I have wished to write to you every day since we started on our first campaign to Manassas, but I am so differently situated here from what I was, as captain of my own company, that it is very difficult to manage to scribble even a few lines to H—— now and then.

We were only allowed to bring two tents to accommodate eight officers, and the result is, that it is quite impossible to be quiet or alone for ten minutes, unless I go outside, and leave camp altogether. You know how difficult it is to write, when surrounded by three or four noisy persons, who are continually talking to you, and to all appearance, doing everything in their power to disturb and interrupt you.

I really think that the experiences of the past six months have entirely obliterated all traces of a desire for military glory in the bosom of your humble servant.

I commenced a letter to you last night, but the very first page was so gloomy and miserable, in addition to the fact of the rain having leaked through the tent, upon the paper, making it look as though I had been dropping very large tears upon it, that I tore it up.

My discomfort is increased by the fact that I have little or no sympathy from any one in the company. The men are all strangers to me, and would remain so under the present dispensation, were I with the company for years — it being considered subversive of good discipline, and very irregular, for a commissioned officer to come in direct contact with the men in any way. And I find my lieutenants to be, with one exception, so very jealous of my being higher in rank than they, that I am obliged to be extremely cautious how I infringe upon even a custom of the company, much more an order.

I do not tell you all this in a complaining mood, but simply because I have always run straight to mamma with all my stories, and I know that you are always anxious to know just how I am situated, wherever I am. Nor must you think that I have any difficulty with any one here. Not at all. The trouble is simply this, that while in command of my own company, I felt all the time as though I was doing somebody some good; I knew each individual soldier, his troubles and sorrows. And you know how much interest I felt in everything which concerned my company.

Here, things are widely different. I am forced to act as though the men were mere machines, without either souls or feelings. I say forced, because I have already been shown plainly that my position as a volunteer, will not admit of my running against the prejudices of these regular officers.

I was ordered down the river this morning, to issue some orders to the engineers who are constructing the rafts which are to transport our guns and horses across York River, and I saw them for the first time.

They are formed of many canal boats, nearly twenty feet apart, tied together by strong timbers, upon which platforms are built, and upon these the horses and guns are to stand, the horses already harnessed and ready to be pushed overboard, and taken on shore in the shortest possible time.

I wrote papa, I believe, all about our proposed movements, so I suppose you all understand the plan of operations just about as well as we do here. The idea here is that the proposed point of attack is strongly fortified, and that we shall be obliged to disembark under fire of the enemy, which, to say the least, will be rather disagreeable, for my experience already proves that it is quite difficult enough to get large numbers of men and horses over the side of a vessel, and then ashore, even without the additional excitement of having both men and horses killed by shot and shell while in the water.

But it is thoughtless in me to worry you with these things when perhaps we may not be thus exposed.

And here I want to beg of you all not to be frightened if you hear of our division or even our battery having been engaged, for the newspaper reports of these things are always exaggerated.

You may be sure of one thing, that if anything happens to me you will hear it soon enough — such news always appears to fly on lightning wings.

It seems wicked to be scribbling this kind of letter on Sunday, dearest mamma, but this is the only quiet hour I have had inside the tent for a week past, and I know that you want to know everything about me. I do so long for a dear quiet Sunday at home, once more.

The only difference here between Sunday and any other day must be in a man's own heart; there is certainly none outside. I have very little time to read books of any sort, but I have that little "Diary" which darling Fanny used so long, and it is so small that I can carry it in my pocket, and can read a verse and hymn wherever I am. It is a dear little book, and being full of Fanny's well remembered handwriting, it is always accompanied by very sweet as well as very sad remembrances.

Papa told me in his letter about your thinking of buy-

ing a house for H—— and I. Were it not that I have had constant proof for the past twenty years of the boundlessness of your love for all of us, I could not believe it. It seemed too good to be true. And that darling H—— and I should really be living in our own little house, seems like something in the dim future, only to be dreamed of. You know how I love home, always did as a boy; and if my life is spared to return to a little home of my own, I think my cup of happiness will be full.

I know that my precious mother will be delighted to hear that Jesus' presence is almost always realized by me now. Sometimes, it is true, dark clouds seem to come between Him and my soul; but at such times I have only to go to Him and tell Him everything, and He at once dispels the darkness, and gives me perfect confidence and trust.

Good-by, my own darling, precious mamma. This may be the last letter I shall be able to write you.

Pray for me, that whatever happens, I may be safe in Jesus. Love to James and dear little Amy. God bless you all. Ever your loving son.

“Oft I walk beneath the cloud,
Dark as midnight's gloomy shroud;
But when fear is at the height,
Jesus comes, and all is light.
Blessed Jesus! bid me show
Doubting saints how much I owe.”

After remaining encamped for about a week, in the vicinity of Yorktown, they again took boats, and under Franklin steamed up the York River, and disembarked, on the 6th of May, at West Point. The battle fought the next day was the first battle in which he was engaged, and the two

letters following give us a faint idea of his emotions on beholding the stern realities of war, —

“The dead and wounded carried in.”

To his wife : —

CAMP NEWTON, WEST POINT, *Wednesday Evening,* }
May 7, 1862. }

. . . . We have just repulsed an attack made by the rebels about twenty thousand strong, under General Smith.

I have not one moment in which to write. By God's mercy I am safe.

We arrived off this place yesterday afternoon, and were hard at work landing our horses and guns, and the enemy attacked us at ten this morning, before our division was all ashore. Two of our infantry regiments were driven out of the woods with heavy slaughter, the 31st New York having lost two whole companies, and six or eight officers. When the enemy drove our men from the woods into the open ground, our artillery opened fire, and throwing solid shot and shell, soon made them “very scarce.”

We were in battery six hours, and we have all, including the poor horses, been in harness since Sunday morning; and as I have had nothing to eat but one big cracker since yesterday noon, I am beginning to feel hungry and tired.

I will write particulars just as soon as I can get time.

Our boys were not much exposed, and none hurt; but the manner in which some of the infantry regiments were cut up made me savage.

I have just come from a poor lieutenant who is mortally wounded. I have been telling him of Jesus, but, poor fellow, he is almost gone, and is hardly able to think, even. God, in his infinite grace, have mercy on his soul! He seemed to know nothing of the Saviour,

and although so fearfully wounded, would say at times, when able to speak, that he knew he would get well.

Don't be worried, darling. I am all right, and after having something to eat and three or four hours' sleep, will be as bright as possible. We shall probably follow the rebels up, and as we are now within twenty-two miles of Richmond, I think that a few days will probably finish up my mission and enable me to return to you all. . . .

CAMP AT "WHITE HOUSE," VIRGINIA, *May 16, 1862.*

. . . . I had no chance to tell you anything about the battle at West Point on the 7th, and I knew that if you were sure I was safe, you would be quite willing to wait for particulars, until I could get time to write fully.

We left Yorktown on Tuesday morning, Franklin's division, about twelve thousand strong, in a large flotilla of boats of every description. The infantry were carried on large steamboats, while the cavalry and artillery were towed behind on large rafts made purposely for them, the guns being placed around the edge, forming a bulwark, inside of which the horses were placed, with harness on, just ready to be hitched to the guns at a moment's notice. . . .

We arrived at West Point just before dark, and after throwing a few shells into some rebel cavalry which made its appearance on the shore, we commenced landing our troops. You will at once see that this is rather a risky thing — landing ten thousand men, and horses, upon a hostile shore, when every moment expecting an attack, for it being necessarily slow work, landing the men by small boatloads at a time, the enemy could attack them as they arrived, and slaughter them in detail.

These rebels, however, appear to be rather afraid of our gunboats, for we can in no other way account for their not molesting us, than the fact of our having two gunboats. At any rate, they allowed their chance to

slip by, and we worked hard all night, and just before daybreak we got all our artillery landed, losing only one horse out of five hundred.

My boating experience, as well as my knowledge of horses, was, I hope, of some service that night. If you could have seen me standing at the tiller, steering a huge raft, with one hundred and eighty horses on board, jumping and kicking, and trying their best to get overboard, whilst all the soldiers, worn out with hard work, were sleeping on all sides. you would have wondered what kind of craft I had got into.

However, as I said, we got ashore at last, and about nine o'clock in the morning we were attacked by the enemy in large force, under Generals Lee and Smith.

Several New York regiments were immediately ordered out to meet them, and very soon the musketry firing became very heavy. We had four batteries of artillery ashore, and we were held in reserve, ready for action, waiting till the rebels should come out of the woods into the plain, and give us a chance at them. Our men, the 31st and 32d New York, and one Pennsylvania regiment, had hardly entered the woods, when the firing became very heavy, and almost incessant, the rebels yelling and cheering like fiends, as they drove our men back by mere force of numbers. Every few moments some poor fellow was carried past us, either dead or horribly wounded.

We never fired a shot until our men began to appear, retreating from the edge of the woods, when we loaded with shell, and just as soon as the enemy made their appearance, we let them have it, one gun at a time, slowly and deliberately. They stood their ground for a long time, and their shooting was terribly effective, almost all of our wounded being hit mortally and many killed instantly, by being shot through the head. Only one of our artillerymen was hit, however, getting a rifle-ball in his elbow.

Our solid shot and shells were too hot for them, and at last they began to retire, when our brave infantry again pushed into the woods, and drove them about two miles before night came on. It was a glorious victory, for our force was small; they outnumbering us, two to one. We have since seen their reports of the fight, and they acknowledge that "they intended driving us into the river as at Ball's Bluff, but that *our artillery was too hot for them.*"

Indeed, General Newton has stated since that our guns saved the day. . . . Considering the numbers engaged, our loss was very severe; the 31st New York losing almost two entire companies, including four officers. The 32d New York also suffered terribly, as also the 16th New York, and the Pennsylvania regiment. General Franklin was with our battery during part of the time, and appeared pleased with our firing.

I believe that this army cannot be beaten now. They stand fire like veterans, and apparently the more terribly they suffer, the more fiercely they fight. . . .

IN CAMP, WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF RICHMOND, }
Wednesday Night, May 19, 1862. }

DEAR PAPA:— I have had no opportunity of writing to you since our fight at West Point, except to tell you of my safety, for we have been so continually on the move that we have scarcely had time to pitch our tents and get out our writing materials, before we would receive an order to move again.

The rebels have destroyed everything in the bridge line, and rendered the roads as impassable as they could; and as our corps is in the advance, we have to make roads for the whole army, and we frequently are delayed so much in a march of five miles that six and even eight hours will be consumed in accomplishing it.

McClellan seems to have thoroughly matured his plans, and is moving forward steadily and surely.

We are to-night within twenty miles of Richmond, having left White House Landing at four o'clock this morning. Our pickets are out about eight miles ahead, and report no considerable force of the enemy in sight: but the general opinion is that they will make a grand stand at a place called Bottom's Bridge, just this side of Richmond.

We have, of course, no reliable information respecting their force, but I am quite certain, from what our division did at West Point, that this army will sweep steadily and resistlessly over any and every force which may be arrayed against it.

The rebels had thirty thousand men at West Point, with thirty pieces of artillery, and the inhabitants about the neighborhood say that their avowed intention was to drive us into the river, as at Ball's Bluff. But Gideon's God is certainly with us, and one cause for congratulation is, that notwithstanding our apparent helplessness at the time, landing upon a strange and hostile shore, with only a portion of the artillery belonging to the division landed, we were enabled to repulse them, as we did, so effectually, that we learn now, from the people about, that they retreated that very night, even leaving their wounded. Their loss must have been very heavy, judging from the number of graves which we passed in our march.

If you could see me, nowadays, throw my mattress down either on the uncovered deck of an artillery transport, or right on the wet grass, it matters not where, and sleep just as soundly and as warm as if I was in my own bed at home, you would scarcely believe that it was the same chap who a little more than a year ago was nursing himself with such care, and having his lungs examined quarterly, by various physicians, to see how far they were gone.

To give you some idea of the life we lead, we received our orders last evening to move this morning at

four o'clock, and as I was "officer of the day," I was obliged to get up at two o'clock, having only had three hours' sleep, and attend to getting the battery ready to move. We then commenced our march at four o'clock, and were in the saddle till ten A. M., when we reached this place, and by the time we got our camp arranged (that is, our horses and guns, for our own tents did not arrive for two hours afterward), I was so tired and sleepy that I could not keep my eyes open, and laid down in some high clover with my overcoat over me; and although it was raining like fun, I enjoyed as nice and refreshing a sleep as I ever had in my life. I do not think that sleeping in the wet grass in a rain-storm would have improved my health last spring, do you?

But here we are obliged to do as we best can, and if our tents don't come up, we have to do without them.

I think I am getting fatter every day, although the weather is quite warm, and we are worked pretty hard. I cannot be thankful enough for my restored health. . . .

IN CAMP NEAR NEW BRIDGE, SIX MILES FROM RICHMOND, }
Thursday Morning, May 29, 1862. }

DEAR PAPA:— We are still idle here, waiting, almost momentarily expecting an order to move; and very anxious we all are, I assure you, to "go in" and have the fight over. It is rumored that we are to make the attack to-morrow morning, and I sincerely hope it may be so, as it is much more unpleasant waiting day after day in anticipation of a battle than it is to go right in and finish it up.

Our generals seem to think that the resistance here will be desperate, and McClellan is moving along cautiously. It is reported that the rebels have one hundred and seventy-five thousand men opposed to us, but we also hear that they are to a great extent demoralized and discouraged.

We had rather a brilliant affair day before yesterday. General Fitz John Porter moved up on our right with his division, about twelve thousand strong, and coming across about fifteen thousand rebels, he completely routed them twice, killing a great many, and taking about nine hundred prisoners. Our loss in all is about two hundred killed and wounded.

We can see the enemy's pickets distinctly from where we lie, and every little while the rascals send a shell over this way, just as a reminder of their presence.

Five o'Clock P. M.

I was sent this morning up to Mechanicsville, the scene of the recent fight, where our brigade has one battery stationed. How I wish you could just see the village where the fight took place! Every house is riddled with all kinds of projectiles, from a ten pounder cannon-ball to a pistol bullet.

The tavern of the place was used as a shelter by some of the rebels, and there is not a room in the house that is not shot through and through.

One ten-pounder solid shot from one of our rifle pieces had gone through the side of the house and through the walls of three rooms, entirely cutting in its course a door-post and casing four inches square, then passed out the other side of the house and entered an outhouse, where it at last brought up by striking and knocking down a brick chimney. I never fully realized before the fearful velocity and power of our rifle projectiles.

Our troops are in splendid fighting order. In every instance lately, when they have been tried, they have behaved with the greatest coolness. And there exists the greatest confidence in our whole army that we shall thrash the enemy very soundly, although they so far outnumber us. But you would be astonished to find how intensely ignorant we are here concerning the proposed mode of attack.

For instance, since I have been writing, one of our officers has brought in word that we shall not probably move upon Richmond for ten days or two weeks; and that McDowell was on his way to join us; and yet I should not be at all surprised at being called up before daybreak to have my section harnessed up. It is just so from day to day. We often hear a dozen or more different reports in one day, and the consequence is that every one becomes more or less indifferent to the stirring scenes about us.

We have been ordered out in a hurry several times lately, sometimes at night, and each time fully expecting that the crisis had at last arrived, and yet from constant association with such things, every one goes about his work as if we were simply preparing for drill or parade; and this is the state of things throughout the entire army.

CAMP NEAR NEW BRIDGE, *June 8, 1862.*

. . . . I must scribble a few lines to you to-night, just to try to drive away the loneliness that I have felt all day.

Everything remains about the same here, and I am beginning to feel almost discouraged. We hear almost every day that we shall probably attack Richmond immediately, and every few days an order will come to harness up our battery instantly, and be ready to move at a moment's warning, but still we do nothing. I think that General McClellan is right in being cautious, knowing, as he does, that the enemy will make a desperate stand just here, and we are indeed too near the termination of this wicked rebellion to risk anything by haste, when by waiting a few days, we can make assurance doubly sure. But it is very tiresome lying here within five hundred yards of the enemy, and having our pickets shot down daily, without being able to give them anything in return.

I went down to the banks of the Chickahominy a day or two ago, with ten or twelve forage wagons, belonging to our brigade, to get a load of clover (which is growing in great abundance near the river) for our horses. No sooner had I placed my men (about twenty-five in all) in the field, mowing the clover, than the rebels on the other side the river commenced shelling us with their ten and twenty pounder guns. The rascals fired so well that I was forced to place my wagons under a hill about three hundred yards off, to keep the horses from being struck. Then it was fun to see the men mow! The regular soldiers belonging to our battery, with real old soldier's pride, scorned to dodge or wince, when the shells came whirring through the air; but some of the men belonging to volunteer batteries would fall down flat in the grass every time they heard a shell coming. As they continued coming every three or four minutes, you may imagine that there was more dodging than mowing; but I laughed at the men so much, that after a little while they did much better.

Our poor infantry soldiers are obliged to work constantly under fire of this kind, building bridges and roads just below us, and every now and then some poor fellow is brought over this way on a stretcher. . . .

I have had a very quiet Sunday to-day; have enjoyed it very much with my Bible and my thoughts. I have followed my dear ones through the day, and have prayed earnestly that the same gentle, loving Saviour, who has been with me in the cheerless tent, would be with you all at home. Pray for me, that Jesus may keep my soul, as well as body, in his own gracious keeping.

IN CAMP, NEAR RICHMOND, *Wednesday Evening, June 11, 1862.*

. . . . I am beginning to feel as though I could not wait for the entry into Richmond, but must rush home to my own little wife and baby, and let other men fight the

country's battles; but I am trying to be patient, and am hoping that each day will bring the order for us to open the battle.

All my fond hopes and expectations of spending a nice summer at home with my darlings appear to be dissolving and fading away; for here we are in the middle of June, and not in Richmond yet. But we must keep up our pluck, and hope on still. We shall enjoy our lovely home together much more when I do, at last, return.

I have been indulging in some tremendous castles in the air lately, amongst which visions of housekeeping, little sitting-rooms, piano, fat baby rolling on the floor, etc., stand prominent; and yet it will hardly do to think too much upon these things, for at any time, one of the rebel round-shot may crash through my house, upsetting the piano, baby, little wife and all.

I wonder if my H—— remembers to pray with and for me at twilight every day. Jesus has been very kind to me lately, darling. He has made me contented and happy sometimes, when I would have been very miserable if left to myself. . . .

Just as soon as the fate of Richmond is decided, I shall hurry home, and we must wait patiently till that time. One consolation I shall always have in after years, that I gave a helping hand to crush out this unholy and terrible rebellion.

Our people at home must be very sad about poor, dear little Gracie. She was such a sweet child, and we all loved her so dearly. I think of poor L—— all the time. Does it not appear strange, darling, that she and Theodore should be so afflicted? But we know that "whom the Lord *loveth*, He chasteneth," and although we can scarcely understand why dear little Grace should be taken away, still we *know*, and I am sure that dear L—— feels, that it is all for the best, nor would she have it otherwise. May our heavenly Father spare *our* little one to be a comfort and blessing to us both!

That our loving Redeemer may be always present with you, to protect and bless, is the constant prayer of
 Your loving HOWARD.

Give much love to everybody at home. Kiss darling mamma for me, and tell her that I have given up the study of all tactics but the eighth chapter of Romans, which I find more and more glorious every time I read it.

How many a Christian heart will respond to this verdict of the riches of glory of that wonderful chapter. How many have been convinced, converted, sustained, and cheered by it.

We remember at this time reading a letter from a young officer of the army of the Potomac, sent us by his mother, a funny, cheery letter, giving an account of the hard and wearisome marches, the exposure to heat and to cold and hunger with not a word of complaint, and ending with the very unexpected ending, "Hurrah! mother dear, for the eighth of Romans!"

IN CAMP NEAR FAIR OAKS STATION, *Thursday, June 19, 1862.*

MY SWEET WIFE:— You will see by the date of this that we have at last crossed the Chickahominy, and are, as we supposed, fairly on our road to Richmond.

We crossed the river last evening, just before dusk, concealing our movements so successfully from the enemy, that they were pitching their shells and solid shot into one bridge, whilst we were crossing upon the next one below. After crossing we had a miserable, dreary march through woods and swamps to this place, which is very near the battle-ground of June 1st. Our way lay through a dense pine forest, which in many places was so marshy and swampy that our gun carriages would

sink in to the hubs, and then, such whipping and yelling and shoving and pushing to make the poor horses drag the guns out !

You would be surprised to see how hard-hearted and savage war has made me. If you could see me in some terrible mud-hole, with the gun sunk to the axle-tree, and the six horses in the mire to their bellies, urging and even flogging the horses, and scolding the men, endeavoring to extricate my gun by their united efforts, you would think that I had been transformed into some flinty-hearted omnibus driver.

But you see that the guns must be taken care of, even at the expense of the horses, consequently the necessities of the case have driven me to a much more accurate knowledge of what horses can stand than I ever had before.

To add to our discomfort, yesterday a heavy shower came on during our march, soaking everything, and obliging us, when at last we reached this detestable spot, to pitch our tents in a stumpy clearing, where the high weeds were so wet that it was almost like pitching our tents in the centre of a mill-pond. But you would have been surprised if you could have peeped in upon us after we had been in camp about an hour, to see how extremely jolly the party were. Seven of us in one tent, each with a piece of biscuit and pork, and tin cup of coffee ; you would have thought that they had never lived in any other style. I must however except myself from the above description, as I have been a little sick for two or three days, and having eaten little or nothing am quite weak. Besides which I am very apt, when I get through the excitement of the day, to sit down quietly and think of home and my dear ones there, so that the others frequently ask me what the matter is, and why I look so sad, when I am really enjoying myself much more than I could by laughing and talking with them.

The weather has been frightfully hot all day, so that we have almost roasted; still the heat has enabled us to dry our bed-clothes, so we don't complain.

Friday Evening, June 20, 1862.

I was obliged to cut my letter short last night, as I became quite sick, and had to lie down.

I have been in bed all day, and having taken some "horse medicine," and eaten nothing, I feel very weak, but am, on the whole, rather better than I was yesterday; will probably be all right in the morning.

Things begin to look as though we should have the great fight very soon now. Our lines are being pushed slowly but surely forward, until now our pickets are within one hundred and fifty yards of the enemy.

I rode out about half a mile from here, yesterday, to see about some bridges which our men are building, to enable our artillery to cross some very deep ravines between us and the enemy, and leaving my horse in a thick wood, I went forward to where our outside pickets are stationed, and was surprised to find that the "seceshers" were posted so near that we could almost speak to them. A little wood near by was full of them, and quite a pretty picture they made too, in their bandit uniforms and broad-brimmed hats and plumes. They wear clothes made of a kind of gray homespun, and instead of tight-fitting coats like our soldiers, they wear a loose blouse, which being confined at the waist, reminds one very strongly of the old pictures of Robin Hood's men, as they dodge in and out behind the trees. They tell our men that they have received orders not to fire upon our pickets, unless first fired upon; so there they stand looking at each other all day long. Now and then one of them will come out of the woods and wave his hat, or raise it on the top of his musket; then, perhaps, call out to one of our men, who will respond in a similar manner, making it extremely difficult to realize

that at any moment they may receive orders to commence killing each other.

Just behind where their pickets were so near us, the rebels have put up quite a formidable earthwork, and I could see the sentinel standing by one of their brass guns, and watching us very earnestly, as though he would like exceedingly to try what effect a little canister shot would have upon us.

We expected that we should move forward at dawn this morning, as we heard yesterday that we were waiting only for the completion of some little bridges, which were to have been finished last night; but no orders have come, as yet, so we cannot tell when we shall "pitch in." The sooner the better, as far as I am concerned.

I do not think our artillery will have as much to do as the infantry, in the coming battles, as our troops are learning to rely greatly upon the bayonet, and I am satisfied that if the rebels are once broken and started toward Richmond, our boys will never let them stop as long as two remain together. The artillery will probably open the ball, but once get our infantry started in a charge, and I am afraid it will be difficult for the artillery to keep up with them.

It is splendid to witness the perfect confidence of our troops in their ability to whip any force which may be brought against them. Even the regiments which were so dreadfully cut up in the late battles are waiting with the greatest eagerness to have an opportunity of avenging their fallen comrades.

The rebels have been firing into our hospital this afternoon, probably thinking it was the head-quarters of some of our generals. They got the range of the house to a nicety, and when Doctor Davis went over there about two hours since, he found the sick men scrambling for the woods in the neighborhood; and while he stood there, two thirty-pounder rifle shells passed through the house, making a noise like a locomotive. The doctor

immediately placed those who were too sick to get out of the house in the cellar, but they will all be moved to some place out of range.

How I wish papa or James could be out here one day with me, just to hear and see some of the newly invented rifle projectiles whirring and whistling through the air. They sound exactly like a locomotive and train of cars going over one's head.

It was only seven days after the events narrated in this letter, that General McClellan, having decided upon a change of base to the James River, commenced the famous retreat of seven days, which, whatever may be the opinion of the wisdom of the move, was conducted in such a manner as to reflect high credit on the army and its commander, and was the scene of some of the greatest hardships and most desperate conflicts of the war. Fighting all day, and marching all night, pushing their way across a dreary country, through dense woods and tangled undergrowth, across sluggish streams, the horrors of that retreat can scarcely be exaggerated.

We next hear of Howard Kitching at the battle of Gaines' Mills, where the troops first made a stand after their retrograde movement commenced. General Upton writes: "We entered the battle about four P. M., at once engaged the enemy's artillery, and remained till nearly dark under a heavy fire of shell and case shot.

"The right and centre sections of the battery were somewhat covered, but the left, commanded by Captain Kitching, was exposed to the full view of the enemy, and received much more than its

proportion of fire. During the entire battle he served his guns with great coolness, and was a brilliant example to the men.

"He received in the breast a most painful contusion from the fragment of a shell, but did not quit his post."

We do not give this testimony to the manliness and courage of Howard Kitching because he was singular in this respect. O! how many young hearts, as loving and as brave and heroic as his, were hushed forever amid these scenes of havoc and of death! The world will never know how *they* fought, and how *they* died, but may be able to get a clearer view of their patient endurance, and true heroism, in the mirror of a comrade's history.

We shall not follow the weary tread of the Union army any further. The painful story is recorded by other pens. When they reached Harrison's Landing, from constant exposure, unceasing excitement, and sleepless nights, passed in the saddle, Howard Kitching was seriously ill.

He readily obtained leave of absence, and soon after his return home, resigned his position in the Army of the Potomac.

It is astonishing, as has been remarked, that an army of volunteers, after such a struggle, should come forth in condition equal to, if not better, than could have been exhibited by the veterans of any of the standing armies of the Old World. It was of course owing to the possession of qualities by the volunteers of our republican army, which

appertain to the soldiers of no other army. Our troops possessed intelligence, personal character, an absorbing interest in the struggle, and a boundless, unselfish devotion to country; these, added to the drill, the *esprit du corps*, and the mechanical mobility of other armies, produce a military force, which may be temporarily beaten without being vanquished, which may render retreat victory, and which, though it may be decimated in numbers, has the vitality and cohesive force deeply implanted in its nature, which makes it practically invincible, as no troops without these noble moral qualities can be said to be.

No army could have been put to a more severe test of its mettle, than that to which the army of the Potomac had just been subjected; and from all we can learn, we judge there never was an army put to such a test, that came forth with such honor, in a military point of view.

CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE.

“ He sendeth sun, He sendeth shower,
Alike they're needful for the flower ;
And joys and tears alike are sent,
To give the soul fit nourishment ;
As comes to me or cloud or sun,
Father, thy will, not mine, be done !”

CHAPTER IV.

CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE.

“And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds; but the wind passeth and cleanseth them.” — *JOB xxxvii. 21.*

HOWARD KITCHING'S return home was welcomed with a joy deepened by the memory of the perils through which he had passed, though shadowed by the apprehensions springing from his shattered health. In the hope of arresting his malady and recruiting his strength, the family went with him to Oscowana, that beautiful sheet of water, lying among the hills that look down upon West Point. And there, sailing upon the lake, or rambling in the woods that wave their branches all along its border, he soon began to recover his wonted vigor, and with restored health, his restless desire to be with those who were fighting for their country returned.

In vain his friends contended that he had done as much for the cause as could reasonably be demanded of him, and that there were crowds of young men at the North, who had neither wife nor child, who had done nothing for the country, and who ought now to go to the front, where they were wanted.

But he felt that he was now more needed than ever. There was a general feeling of discouragement throughout the North, and he argued that his services were now peculiarly demanded. He felt that he was fitted, as only the experience through which he had passed could fit him, to command troops in the fearful struggle that every thoughtful person knew was yet impending, before the end could be attained.

He had been on a visit to New York, and startled his friends, on his return, with the announcement that he was going back to the field again. Colonel William Morris, of the 135th Infantry, had invited him to go with him as acting lieutenant-colonel. Difficult was it for those who loved him to spare him again, only partially recovered, to encounter the hardships and risks of war. But what he had suffered for the cause for which he had been fighting had only deepened his interest in the gigantic struggle. Sad was that parting. In that quiet spot in the mountains, many a prayer arose, and the blessing of many aching hearts went with him.

The regiment left New York on the 5th of September, and on reaching Baltimore, they were quartered in Fort McHenry, and soon after, the regiment was changed into the 6th regiment of artillery.

About the middle of October, Stuart made his famous raid into Pennsylvania. Crossing the Potomac with fifteen hundred troopers, he passed

through Maryland, occupied Chambersburg, and after making the entire circuit of the Union army, recrossed the Potomac. Colonel Kitching's regiment was sent to try to intercept this daring trooper, but returned after some hard marching, without having seen him.

Referring to this event, he says in a letter of October 16th: —

MY OWN DARLING MAMMA:— I have just returned from a wild-goose chase, through several counties in Pennsylvania, after Stuart, and as I am really tired out, not having slept any on a bed, or had my clothes or boots off since Friday last, I am sure you will not expect me to write to any one. . . .

Early in January, 1863, his command was removed to Harper's Ferry. In a brief note to his father, alluding to this, he says: —

I have just received orders to report, with my command (six companies), to Brigadier-general Kelly, at Harper's Ferry. So I have issued orders to have tents struck at daylight in the morning, and the command, ready to march at 9 A. M., with two days' cooked rations.

I am glad to move for many reasons, which I will explain when I have time; and I cannot help feeling a certain degree of exhilaration at the chance of seeing another brush with our mutual friend Jackson, who they say is advancing up the Shenandoah again.

Two weeks later, the lieutenant-colonel having reported himself for duty, Colonel Kitching was removed, and returned home. Very soon after this, Colonel Morris being promoted, he was ap-

pointed Colonel, and immediately repaired to his post. Captain Donaldson, a brave young officer, who was with him throughout his subsequent career, and who frequently distinguished himself by his gallantry, thus writes of this time:—

As adjutant of his command, I had many opportunities of noticing the affection with which he was regarded by all who were under his care. Who of the 6th New York Artillery, will forget the gloom cast over our camp, when an order from the War Department removed him from us as our lieutenant-colonel; and later, the joy which filled every heart, when the news reached us, that he had been made the colonel of our regiment? Returning to us on a dreary, rainy day, I can even now, in fancy, hear the gentle rebuke that fell from his lips, because we had allowed the men to turn out in such a storm, to do him honor. Little, though, did the brave fellows heed the rain, so long as he, their honored commander, was in their midst. The interest and welfare of his men were always looked after by Colonel Kitching, and whether in camp or on the march, a man had never twice to relate a grievance, either real or fancied, without receiving such counsel and advice as would tend to lighten his burden, and cause him to return to duty with that zest and heartiness, which should ever characterize every good soldier.

We give a copy of the order issued by Colonel Kitching, on assuming the command of his regiment:—

HEAD-QUARTERS, 6TH N. Y. ARTILLERY, }
CAMP HAIGHT, *April 16, 1863.* }

GENERAL ORDER NO 1.

Pursuant to special order No. 23, Head-quarters Second Brigade, First Division, Eighth Army Corps, the under-

signed hereby assumes command of the Sixth Regiment, New York Artillery.

All orders heretofore published will continue in force till further notice.

The commanding officer is induced by the recollection of his pleasant association with the command, as its lieutenant-colonel, to anticipate a bright and glorious future in store for the regiment, and assures his fellow-soldiers, both officers and men, that while making their comfort and welfare his first care, his ambition will be to render the regiment the first in the service in point of drill, discipline, and efficiency.

To accomplish this most desirable result, it is necessary that all should unite in a determination to learn their duty thoroughly, and perform it conscientiously. Strict and prompt obedience to order, is expected and will be enforced; the responsibility of the expediency of the order being left with the officer issuing it. In no other way can that discipline be maintained, so necessary to the welfare and effectiveness of any military organization. It is the determination of the commanding officer to advance those who by closest attention to their duties and ability in performing them, show that they will be useful officers in a higher grade.

He hopes and believes that the same unanimity of feeling and purpose which has hitherto rendered this regiment an example to others, will continue to exist and increase; and that whether in the dull routine of camp duties, or amid the excitement of the battle-field, we may always stand shoulder to shoulder — alike true to ourselves as Christian soldiers, to our noble regiment, and to our glorious cause.

(Signed)

J. HOWARD KITCHING,

Colonel 6th N. Y. Artillery.

E. DONALDSON, *Adjutant.*

In the letter that follows, we find him again

mourning over his troubled and discordant Sunday duties, and yet, amidst it all, rejoicing in a present Saviour.

CAMP HAIGHT, MARYLAND HEIGHTS, *April 26, 1863,* }
Sunday Morning. }

. . . . This has been neither a pleasant nor a profitable Sunday to me. The paymaster came this morning, and in addition to the excitement and bustle consequent upon the companies being paid off, the paymaster himself got very drunk — taking all day to pay three companies, when he should have paid the entire regiment before night. I stood it as long as I could in camp, and then, leaving the major in command, and seeing everything in good order, I mounted the gray, and rode over into Virginia to a little Methodist church.

I tried to enjoy the sermon, but there was an illiterate man in the pulpit who twisted the beautiful words of Scripture into such terrible jargon that it was truly painful to me.

You remember that Sunday was always a very tiresome day for me in camp. I inspected over six hundred muskets this morning with my own hands. If I could only be left alone some of the time during the day, so that I could read and think, I should be all right. . . .

I have just purchased a plate, knife, fork, spoon, etc., and my man James is going to cook for me, so I shall be quite independent. But since I have been here, I have been living like a pig, — the only decent meals having been at Mrs. M——'s tent. She is a very nice woman; lives here with two children in the midst of all this sickness, and is always as cheerful as if she had everything just as she could wish. Captain P——'s wife is dangerously ill here with fever. They all thought she would certainly die yesterday, but she appears brighter to-day. . . .

The Lord Jesus has been very dear to me lately, notwithstanding all my backslidings, all my open as well as

secret sins, my forgetfulness of Him; yet just at the time when I needed Him most, He came, and here amidst all my cares, troubles, and perplexities, He has been very near to me. . . If I could only tell my darling all I feel, I should be *very, very* happy.

Mamma gave me a dear little book of Hymns on Christmas in which I take great comfort, the little time I can get to read it. There are many beautiful things in it, that seem to be intended to reach our own case, in almost everything. One little verse runs in my head all the time, —

“Here in the body pent,
Absent from Him I roam,
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent
A day’s march nearer home.”

There was no one thing more striking, more admirable, than the cheerful courage with which our young soldiers, who had so many of them been so tenderly reared, endured hardness, and suffering of the extremest kind. How gloriously the spiritual triumphed over the animal. In what an uncomplaining spirit the following letter is written: —

CAMP HAIGHT, MARYLAND HEIGHTS, *May 5, 1863.*

. . . . I have not been able to write much lately, for half of my regiment is on the other side of the river guarding Harper’s Ferry, and as we are the only entire regiment here now, and are rather expecting an attack, I have been in the saddle most of the time day and night. Major Crookston is in command of the five companies on the other side, but I am obliged to look after them, particularly at night. If the rebels were only* smart enough to attack us *now*, they could take the place very easily, for we have not force enough to hold the Heights.

My command is in a terrible condition just now from a combination of causes. Fourteen of my officers are

absent — sick, and detailed on duty outside the regiment. Many of the companies are reduced to skeletons by sickness and death. I was just in the midst of moving to my new camp ground when this terrible storm (raging now) overtook us, consequently half my camp is in one place and half in another. My quartermaster has been taken very sick, and cannot be moved.

Many of my officers (including myself) have no tents, as we have been living in log-huts, and the quartermaster of this division, who should have had tents on hand, has none, so that many of us are really without shelter of our own. I have sent my new lieutenant-colonel over to the new camp, and I am obliged to sleep here in my hut, with one sentry in front of my door to let me know if the enemy come. If my regiment was all together in one camp, I would be with them, even though I had to sleep out on the ground, but having it divided, it is quite proper for me to be at any point between the fragments.

My hut is no protection from this storm, however, for it rains right through, so that my bed, over which I have laid an india-rubber blanket, has a puddle of water in the centre three or four inches deep. All my clothes, books, papers, and everything are more or less wet, but I keep a cheerful fire in my open fire-place which brightens me up a little.

My new camp will be beautiful if I can ever get my regiment together again.

I believe I wrote you of the death of Lieutenant H——, of Company "G." We escorted his body to the cars, this morning. Poor fellow! how I wish that I could believe him a Christian.

I expected papa to-day, but am rather glad that he did not come just at this time, for I want to show him my regiment all together when he comes; not, as now, split up into squads here and there; and indeed I do not know how I could make him comfortable in this awful storm.

If I get into Fort Marshall, I am satisfied that I can fill up the regiment very soon.

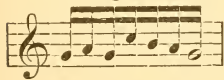
I am worked very hard, darling, have scarcely time to read my Bible or say my prayers. Do not forget to pray for me.

Sunshine after the storm.

CAMP BARRY, MARYLAND HEIGHTS, *Saturday Evening,* }
May 9, 1863. }

MY OWN DARLING:— I have gotten nicely fixed in my new camp; the weather is beautiful, the sick are all improving, officers and men are all happy, and I am happy too. My camp is already acknowledged to be the most beautiful camp extant. We have been furnished with new tents, perfectly white, and I have had each street lined with little fir-trees, and the spaces around the tents carefully sodded, so that it begins to look like a fairy scene. Nor have we neglected ventilation and healthfulness, for the tents are so arranged that every morning immediately after reveille, every tent in camp is raised from the floor so that everything is exposed to the air. All clothes, blankets, etc., are hung out till nine o'clock A. M., when the tents are let down, and the things placed inside in proper shape.

I have not yet had my own tent fixed (outside), for I wished the men to get themselves in comfortable shape before calling on them to attend to me. But I intend on Monday to have some nice trees planted around my own tent, and to make it as ornamental as possible. O, if you could only see it now with the little tents lighted up, and shining through the trees; the "tattoo" just beating,



you remember! and here and there a group of dusky figures collected like gypsies, in one spot, you would say that it was the most beautiful sight that you ever beheld.

I do hope that papa will come before we move, for I do want him to see it very much.

I am working very hard upon some new fortifications which are building here in anticipation of an attack; two hundred men from my regiment being detailed daily for that purpose.

We have just heard that General Keyes has entered Richmond, and the whole country is wild with excitement. I do not know whether to credit it or not, but hope that if true, we can hold on till Hooker can push Lee to starvation.

You will see that Hooker's defeat has verified my ideas of his inability to control so large an army; for you see that although he fought one third of his army magnificently, bravely, as he always has, yet the other two thirds were entirely beyond his control, and forced to act on their own responsibility. However, he did his best.

If possible, I shall get some photographer to come up here and take the camp; and all my officers, myself included, and my head-quarters.

C—— M—— is doing splendidly; stands up to his Christian principles like a man, is not afraid of any one's opinion, and is improving so rapidly that it is truly wonderful.

I am getting my matters into nice shape. The departments at Washington seem disposed to give me all the aid in their power; send me books, blanks, circulars, and explanations, so that I have really sculled my canoe into smooth water, and shall endeavor to keep it there.

Do you read the chapter regularly, darling? What a glorious chapter for to-night; the fifth chapter of First Thessalonians, and how the twenty-fourth verse seems to cover *everything*, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

The little book of "Devotional Hymns" which mamma gave me, is a source of great pleasure to me; many of the hymns are truly lovely. I have started a

subscription for a soldier's library, which, if we are ordered to some permanent post, can be made a source of much benefit as well as comfort to the men.

I had the first case of open rebellion to-day, and am happy to say the effect has been salutary. A "fighting man" (Irish, of course) in Company F., refused to obey his captain when told to take a spade and go to work; and his captain foolishly sent him to the guard-house instead of enforcing obedience. When I heard of it, I sent for the man to be brought to his own company street (where it occurred), and after asking Captain Morris to state the circumstances, I ordered him to go to work, before the whole company, or in fact, the regiment, for the men had found out that "something was up."

He did not absolutely refuse in words, but he put his hands in his pockets, and said that I had no right to make him work, or something of that sort. I told him even then that "I would give him one more chance; that every man in the regiment knew that although I did not talk very loud, or use profane language, when I said anything, I meant it, and that I never would permit a man to disobey me;" and then ordered him to go to work. He did not move at once, so I got off my horse, and took him by the collar, the natural result being, that he took the shovel and went to work in good earnest.

After he had finished his task, I sent for him to my tent, and succeeded in convincing him that "he had been a fool," and he promised that I should never have any trouble with him in future. I tell you all this, darling, because I suppose everything in my daily experience interests you. Tell papa to come on right away! . . .

Howard's testimony to the value of reading the Bible systematically, whether, as he did, according to the admirable order in the book of Common

Prayer, or on any other plan, will be responded to by every Christian. How often the portion for the day will be like the spring in the desert to the thirsty traveller, welling up with its waters of refreshment, the same living fountain he has met before; but found at just that time, possessing a cool, reviving power, of priceless value. Careless, desultory reading brings little profit, and has a tendency to dull the feelings, and incrust the heart, so as to make it impenetrable to the sword of the Spirit.

The Confederate leaders had resolved, at this time, to commence an invasion of the Loyal States, and in prosecution of this plan, Ewell had advanced upon Winchester, and had driven General Milroy into his works around the town. The following night Milroy abandoned his position, but his force being intercepted, a good part of it was captured in the confused *mêlée*. Upon receiving these tidings, the garrison withdrew to Maryland Heights, and from the letter that follows, we see that they had no thought of surrendering that important post without a brave resistance.

CAMP BARRY (HARPER'S FERRY), *Monday Morning,* }
4 o'clock, *June 15, 1863.* }

MY OWN DARLING:— I am beginning to feel quite at home now, as the rebs are on all sides of us, and we are all in "line of battle," expecting an attack. Our General Milroy has managed in some way to let them get between him and us, and cut him off with ten thousand men who ought to be here with us.

We are about four thousand strong, and will do *some*

fighting before we give up the place ; but we must be reinforced, for the odds are fearfully against us ; Ewell having at least thirty thousand men.

How I thank the Lord that you are not here now. General Kelly has just sent up a train to take the women and children to Baltimore, and I am truly thankful that you are not of the number.

I have ten companies of my regiment with me, in all, about six hundred men. The other two companies are upon the heights. I have been ordered to *hold* Fort Duncan, if I am driven from the open plain ; and I was up there last night, getting things in shape, and having the guns mounted.

Don't be anxious, my darling. I shall not be much exposed, I trust, and the same kind Father who has already brought me through so many dangers will be with me still.

Perhaps we may not have any fighting, after all. Will write as I get a chance to send a letter. This will be taken to Baltimore by this morning's train, the last which will leave here for some time, I guess.

Love to all the dear ones ; and O, so much to our darling boy.

Do not think our case desperate, my darling. We have a splendid position, and I trust can hold it. I thought better to tell you the truth. My pay is due from the first of May, to this time. Write me as usual. I have not a moment, so must stop. God bless you, my own little "birdie." Don't forget your Redeemer, nor

Your own

HOWARD.

The anticipated investment of Harper's Ferry did not take place, and Colonel Kitching's regiment remained there until after the battle of Gettysburg, when the government, eager to put into the hands of General Meade everything needed to

assure the destruction of Lee's army, directed the abandonment of Harper's Ferry; and the troops that had been defending it, under General French, joined the army of the Potomac, and by forced marches, attempted to intercept Lee's army at the pass of South Mountain.

On reaching Crampton Gap, after a very severe march over almost impassable roads, and hearing that the enemy were in force in their front, Colonel Kitching halted his column, and went into position.

In his pocket memorandum, we find the following entry:—

IN LINE OF BATTLE, *just going into action,* }
Sunday, July 12, 1863. }

MY DARLING H——: If anything should happen to me, good-by. God bless my darlings, both. Don't forget your Howy, but above all, don't forget the Lord Jesus.

There is pay due me from May 1st to the date of my death; ask papa to get it.

Bid all my dear ones good-by. God bless you, my own little comfort; you have been God's choicest blessing to me, next to my redemption by the blood of his dear Son.

Bring Howy up to love me, darling! I have nothing to leave you but my blessing. My trunk is at Harper's Ferry. Your own HOWARD.

The rebels declined the battle, and withdrew quietly in the night. The pursuit was continued, and the enemy was overtaken and defeated, as we find from the next entry in his diary.

Friday, July 23.

Marched from Piedmont to Manassas Gap. Found the gap held by General Hill, with sixteen thousand men. Attacked him and took possession of the Pass, driving the enemy to Front Royal. He evacuated in the night. Loss on our side seventy-five.

HEAD-QUARTERS 1ST BRIGADE, 3D DIVISION, }
August 10, 1863. }

. . . . Here is your warrior husband commanding a brigade, and the largest brigade in the army, too. General Elliott, who has commanded the division, is absent in Washington on a court of inquiry, and in his absence Morris commands the division, and I the brigade. . . . I have, of course, moved my quarters over to brigade head-quarters, and am really becoming quite a B. G., *i. e.* "Big Gun."

You should see me! The box sent by papa has not arrived, and I am as black and dirty as you can imagine. My clothes, outside, have become so soiled from lying upon the ground, that I look like some of those dirty rebel officers that you used to see at Fort McHenry; and then I am as black as an Indian, so you can imagine the general effect.

This experience of the past two years and a half, has given me a great abundance of self-reliance, and I am just as confident that if God spares my life I shall be able to get along as a business man, as I am now in attempting to command a division, *if I had one.*

General Lee made good his retreat, and the march was conducted leisurely towards the Rappahannock, and when encamped in the neighborhood of Warrenton, the next letters were written.

The sadness of heart which comes over him, as he looks out upon a weary, suffering, unsatisfac-

tory world, depicted in the next letter, is in accord with these lines, marked by him, in his copy of the "Hymn from the Land of Luther," which he always carried with him:—

"How weary and how worthless this life at times appears!
 What days of heavy musing, what hours of bitter tears!
 How dark the storm-clouds gather along the wintry
 skies!
 How desolate and cheerless the path before us lies!

"And yet these days of dreariness are sent us from above:
 They do not come in anger, but in faithfulness and
 love;
 They come to teach us lessons which bright ones could
 not yield,
 And to leave us blest and thankful when their purpose
 is fulfilled.

"They come to draw us nearer to our Father and our
 Lord,
 More earnestly to seek his face, to listen to his word,
 And to feel, if now around us a desert land we see,
Without the star of promise, what would its darkness
 be!

"They come to lay us lowly, and humbled in the dust,
 All self-deception swept away, all creature hope and
 trust;
 Our helplessness, our vileness, our guiltiness to own,
 And flee, for hope and refuge, to Christ, and Christ
 alone.

"They come to break the fetters which here detain us
 fast,
 And force our long reluctant hearts to rise to heaven
 at last;

And brighten every prospect of that eternal home,
Where grief and disappointment and fear can never
come."

TO HIS FATHER.

ARTILLERY RESERVE, WARRENTON JUNCTION, August 25, 1863.

. . . . What a hard, unsatisfactory world this is, and how discouraging would all our efforts be, were this all we have to look forward to! But thank God, this is only the work-house to fit us for our heavenly home, the mansion of rest, beyond the river. The whole wide world presents the same scenes, men toiling, striving, fighting, suffering; and how few, if any, attain the anticipated result of their labors and their pains.

I get terribly blue sometimes, when I think I am expending the very best years of my life, and I am tempted to think that perhaps my worldly interests and prospects would have been much farther advanced had I taken a different course. But then again, I *know* that such a cause deserves our *all*, if necessary, and I trust that in years to come I may see that it was well for me that I was led into this conflict. Certainly a loving Hand has guided my footsteps thus far. I have been enabled to take my part in the great strife, to bear my share of the burden, without the suffering borne by many others, and without entailing suffering and desolation on my friends; and I am often led to wonder why the Lord has dealt so mercifully with me.

You will remember that I was prevented from taking command of the 24th infantry last winter, by arriving in Albany one day too late. The colonel who was appointed to it was killed at Chancellorsville. The three colonels who accompanied me into Pennsylvania last fall, after the rebel Stuart, are all dead — two killed under General Banks, and one at Gettysburg.

We are doing nothing here; we hear that Lee is being heavily reinforced, but cannot tell as to the reliability of the report.

General Meade (so I hear to-day) climbed Water Mountain, near Warrenton, last night, and was much surprised at the extent of the enemy's camp-fires.

I have jumped (temporarily) into rather an extended and extensive command, being, during the absence of General Tyler, in command of the whole artillery reserve, consisting of thirty batteries, two regiments of infantry, and about three hundred ammunition wagons. Having been confined to my tent since my arrival here last Saturday, I do not let the command worry me much.

I am, I trust, getting better now. My original trouble is very much better; and what between blistering *outside*, and plenty of castor oil *in*, something had to get better, or worse. . . . We are having a terribly cold spell just now, and both officers and men feel it exceedingly, having left everything but one blanket at Frederick and Harper's Ferry. The men have only one coat, no overcoat, and only one blanket; and having no tents, they feel the change very much. I have obtained a new suit of clothes for them, which I hear will be here to-morrow.

To-night, I have arranged matters with a view to keeping warm, if possible. I have had a very large wood fire built right in front of my tent, and the sentry on guard will keep it going all night, unless the wind changes—in which case, his orders are to "stop putting on wood," as it would certainly smoke me out. I intend to go to bed in my overcoat, and hope that I shall keep warm. . . .

HEAD-QUARTERS 6TH N. Y. ARTILLERY,
ARTILLERY RESERVE, August 27, 1863. }

. . . . I will scribble you a few lines to-night before sleeping, to tell you that I am considerably better than yesterday, and hoping to be all right in a day or two.

The blister which the doctor put on last night seems to have done me good; much of the terrible pain suffered

yesterday is gone, and I have now some appetite. There is a cold storm blowing up which makes my little open tent in these dark woods seem very cheerless, and the raw autumn wind rushing through the trees has a tendency to make me homesick.

So long as I am well, and able to be moving about and attending to my daily duties, I can stand this miserable kind of life very well; but to lie on my back on my little camp bed, with one blanket, unable to do anything but *think*, it becomes quite a different matter to one who has always had such kind, loving hands to minister to him in sickness.

My camp here is in a very thick wood composed of oak-trees, some of them very high, and the storm howls through them making a hideous noise, and bending the great trunks as though they were saplings. I have just ordered my corps of pioneers to sound all the trees in our immediate vicinity, fearing lest some of them, being rotten, might blow down and injure some of the men.

The health of the regiment, and indeed the army, is not good. I have nearly one hundred men sick, and many of my officers. One of my captains was smitten with typhoid on our march to this place, and although I left him at a very nice house on the road, with the best doctor to attend him, yet I fear he cannot live but a day or two, and have telegraphed to his father. It is a terrible case. He is, or professes to be, a skeptic; has always railed at religion and everything of the kind. I have had several conversations with him since I took command of the regiment, but they have always appeared to be unprofitable, and now he is delirious, and the doctor tells me that it is terrible to hear him rave and swear.

I wish that I could get to him, but it is impossible, for he is seven miles from this and I am too weak to ride. In his lucid moments, all his bravado and boldness appear to have left him, and he cries like a child. He was a

good soldier, in the common sense of the term, — uncomplaining, prompt, and a good disciplinarian, — but, poor fellow, he scoffed at the only means whereby his poor sinful soul could be cleansed and made fit to inherit eternal life; and now God has cut him down in his pride and manliness as a warning to us all. I pray God that he may yet recover, but Doctor Porter thinks that there is little, if any hope.

One cause of the sickness in the army, and regiment, is the bad quality of the water; we are worse off in our present location in this respect, than we have been yet. Fortunately for me, I use very little water, seldom drinking between meals, and at meals having either tea or coffee.

I am now busy digging wells, hoping to obtain a better quality of water; but I really hope that the army may fall back upon the line of Occoquan Creek and Fairfax Court House, if for nothing else than plenty of good water.

I learned long since on the Peninsula that a soldier who drinks water in any considerable quantity while on the march, changing its medicinal properties as it does at every mile in the road, must inevitably get sick. I abstain scrupulously while on the march, and try to convince the men how injurious it is; but it is impossible. They will rush for a mud-puddle, as soon as they are permitted to leave the ranks, and the consequence is a universal prevalence of diarrhœa.

I ought from my experience here to be a most exemplary "Paterfamilias" after the war, for these men have to be treated just like children, and I have ten hundred and thirty-seven under my charge — to be fed, clothed, punished, praised, thought *for*, and thought *of* constantly. How weary I am becoming of this constant anxiety and care, for not a thing transpires in the regiment, however trivial its character, that is not in some way referred to me, and causes me more or less thought. . . .

The autumn of this year was spent by Generals Meade and Lee in attempts to outmanœuvre each other, with varied success ; and in December both armies, as if by consent, settled down in winter quarters, to recuperate from the wear and tear of the trying season of 1863, and renew their strength for the impending shock of arms, in the spring.

Lee held the south bank of the Rapidan, his forces being distributed from the river along the Orange Court House and Gordonsville road. The army of the Potomac established itself along the Orange and Alexandria Railroad from the Rapidan back to the Rappahannock. The ranks of both armies were filled up by recruits ; and drills, inspections, and reviews were energetically pushed forward within the opposing camps.

Fully occupied as Colonel Kitching was with the arduous duties of his command, he did not neglect, during this period of comparative quiet, his Master's work. He was much aided in this, by the timely arrival, on the 10th of December, of Mr. C——, the chaplain of the regiment, who proved a faithful co-worker all through the war.

With his aid, Bible classes and prayer-meetings were held in the colonel's quarters every evening, and the place was crowded with the soldiers, many of whom passed from death unto life. We well remember Howard's beaming look as he dwelt upon these evidences of a genuine work of grace, and we believe this hymn, which we find marked in his little book, dated at this time, truly portrays the history of his inner life : —

Sunday, December 20, 1863.

"My beloved is mine, and I am his." — CANT. ii. 16.

"Long did I toil, and know no earthly rest,
 Far did I rove, and found no certain home ;
 At last I sought them in his sheltering breast,
 Who opes his arms, and bids the weary come ;
 In Christ I found a home, a rest divine,
 And since then I am his, and He is mine.

"Yes ! He is mine ! and naught of earthly things —
 Not all the charms of pleasure, wealth, or power,
 The fame of heroes or the pomp of kings —
 Could tempt me to forego his love an hour.
 'Go, worthless world,' I cry, 'with all that's thine ;
 Go, I my Saviour's am, and He is mine.'

"The good I have is from his stores supplied,
 The ill is only what He deems the best ;
 He for my friend, I'm rich with naught beside,
 And poor without Him, though of all possessed :
 Changes may come — I take, or I resign,
 Content while I am his, and He is mine.

"While here, alas ! I know but half his love,
 But half discern Him, and but half adore ;
 But when I meet Him in the realms above,
 I hope to love Him better, praise Him more,
 And feel and tell, amid the choir divine,
 How fully I am his, and He is mine."

Colonel Kitching obtained leave of absence to pass the holidays with his family.

It was a calm, bright Christmas Day, just such a day as we love to picture, in our imagination, as fit to usher in this hallowed season, and the services of the church had more than their wonted sweet-

ness, and a thrill of deeper joy than usual went round the family group gathered in the home at Peekskill, because the absent soldier had returned, on furlough, safe and well. The tales of wild forays, midnight attacks, skillful retreats, and hair-breadth escapes, were listened to with eager ears and glowing hearts that night, and before we knelt in prayer, we sang that sweet version of the 91st Psalm, which he loved so well.

After a happy fortnight spent among his friends, he returned to his post, and the evening after his arrival, at the close of a letter he says: —

“Good-night, dear papa. May the Lord Jesus be equally near to all of us, that though we are not *all* able to be in the dear home circle, as in days gone by, yet we may be all *one* in Christ Jesus!

“That the dear Lord may be ever with you, is the prayer of your loving son,
HOWARD.”

REFRESHING SHOWERS.

“ Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in thy presence will prevail to make,
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take,
What parchèd grounds refresh, as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stands forth in sunny outlines, brave and clear;
We kneel, how weak; we rise, how full of power.
Why therefore should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others — that we are not always strong,
That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy and strength and courage are with thee?”

R. C. TRENCH.

CHAPTER V.

REFRESHING SHOWERS.

“ He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth.”— PSALM lxxii. 6.

WITH the shadow of home partings over his heart, Howard Kitching returned to his camp at Brandy Station, soon cheered however, by the light from above that was breaking over the regiment.

In a letter to the Christian Commission from the Rev. A. Cookman, written at this time, we find this description of the encampment:—

The camp of the New York 6th, arranged under the direction of Colonel Kitching, is perhaps one of the most tasteful and convenient in the army. It is as regularly laid out as Philadelphia. On the west of a hill are the officers' quarters, some of them so neat that really they would not disgrace Central Park. This, of course, is the Fifth Avenue of this military community. Immediately in front of the colonel's tent is the Broadway, a broad street which is flanked on either side by the soldiers' tents, arranged according to companies, with wider and narrower streets. In front of all is the parade ground, where each evening the regiment appears on a dress parade, and frequently a battalion drill. Surrounding this camp, and a part of the artillery reserve, are full batteries from New York, Connecticut, Ohio, Massachusetts, Maine, Virginia, and the United States regular service. Colonel Burton, acting Brigadier-general, has command of the whole, his head-quarters beautifully located on a fragment of forest. The forests through

this section have almost entirely disappeared in providing winter quarters and firewood. This is my field of effort for a few days.

HEAD-QUARTERS ARTILLERY RESERVE, }
Sunday Evening, January 10, 1864. }

MY OWN DARLING:— Here I am back again in my old tent, with no wife, no boy, "no nothing," but an old stove and a camp cot. The sudden transition from the comfort and happiness of home to this kind of thing, is indeed fearful,—much harder than ever before. I never have appreciated or enjoyed my home as much, and never have been obliged to return to such complete soldier existence, having, as during last winter, been either in garrison or in a permanent camp. . . . However, I am feeling better to-day, and from the present appearance of things I shall not have time to feel "blue" or anything else, during the next fortnight. . . . Everybody appeared very glad at my return. Two of General Tyler's staff officers hugged me, and said that "now their troubles were all over, and everything would be all right." General Hunt also told me that he was very glad indeed that I had returned, and that he did not doubt but that I could straighten things out. . . . I find that in my absence Mr. C—— has accomplished much. He has opened a large chapel tent, capable of holding nearly two hundred men; and on approaching the camp, this morning, it was delightful to hear my men singing. How thankful I am that the dear Lord sent Mr. C—— here. By his blessing it must be the means of bringing many of my men to Jesus' feet. God grant it, for his dear Son's sake. . . .

TO HIS FATHER.

NEAR BEVERLY FORD, VIRGINIA, *January 13, 1864.*

. . . . I am now commanding the artillery reserve, and cannot tell when I shall be relieved. . . . I am terribly homesick, as a matter of course; but am so much

interested in my work here, particularly in my own regiment, that I cannot regret my decision to remain in the service. Mr. C——'s labors have been already crowned with success, which is most gratifying. His Bible class has now forty-three members from my own regiment; eleven new ones joined at our meeting last night.

The men are overjoyed at the religious privileges which are now within their reach. After the breaking up of the meeting last night, Mr. C——, his two colleagues, and myself, had "family prayers," which was more refreshing than you can imagine, out here in the wilderness. Ask James to please hurry up the books, as the men are most anxious to have them.

I have just succeeded in making my quarters very comfortable, but feel the cold very much at night, the change is so great. The robe is the greatest comfort to me. The first night I put it on top of my other blankets, but found that the weight of it made me rather colder than before, by impeding the circulation, so now I put it inside, and sleep right on the fur, and it is glorious. Thank darling mamma and aunty for the box of eatables. I am enjoying them exceedingly.

I am very busy reorganizing things here at head-quarters; have brought Donaldson over, as acting Assistant Adjutant-general, and am sailing the ship pretty much on my own hook.

In a very hurried note a few days later, he says :—

Mr. C—— has gone to New York to be ordained to the ministry. Our work goes bravely on, and it would do your heart good to see how my men enjoy and appreciate the meetings for reading and prayer.

His inability to speak freely on religious subjects, which he laments in the next letter, is entirely distinct from that false shame which shrinks

from confessing Christ before men. It was doubtless owing to a faulty religious education. And the Episcopal Church has, we think, been remiss in this matter. It has not urged its members, as it should have done, to the taking an active part in the conflict with the world, giving each one work to do, and showing each person how to do it ; teaching its members that working for Christ is not to be the life of the minister and a few gifted ones in the congregation only, but of the feeblest and least influential of the flock. The aged man with his infirmities, the man in the strength and energy of his prime, the boy with all the freshness of his young heart, the matron, and the maiden, and the young girl, with her winning ways of girlhood, all are stewards, all have a place in the vineyard ; for each and all the Master has a work to do.

But we believe that now we can see the rays of golden light, the harbingers of a brighter day. Our teachers begin to understand the gospel of Christ in its fullness : to see that it was sent to win every affection, to brighten every smile, to shed fresh interest over every pursuit, to light up new hopes in every prospect ; to embrace every variety of human temperament, assist every degree of human capacity ; to understand and to teach that all the elements of human progress, which God so wonderfully carried on separately as preparations for his Son on earth, find their confluence and their highest employ under that gospel of which his Son is the centre and head ; that there never

was a holy thought, or prophetic yearning, or response of the life to the conscience in the land of promise, — never a beautiful word or thing in the land of intellect or art, — never a just ordinance or maxim of public integrity in the land of polity and empire, — which that Christianity, which incorporates and hallows the three, is not prepared to adopt, to amplify, to ennoble, to sanctify. We shall never have a strong growing Church, until Christians are brought up to this standard of the Bible, and become practical working Christians.

ARTILLERY RESERVE, NEAR BEVERLY FORD, VIRGINIA, }
Sunday Evening, January 17, 1864. }

MY OWN PRECIOUS MAMMA: — I had set apart this evening particularly to devote in part to you, but I have been occupied all day with a murder case which occurred last night, and since my return from prayer-meeting, my tent has been full of officers visiting me in relation to the murder, so that I am now alone for the first time, (eleven o'clock, P. M.)

This murder is a terrible affair. It appears that the tent of a sutler for one of the brigades in my command was forcibly entered last night, the sutler beaten to death, and all his goods destroyed, by men belonging to some of the batteries. The facts being reported to me, I immediately ordered a Board of Inquest in the case, and I have arrested everybody upon whom the slightest suspicion rests. The Board have not yet finished their investigations, but I imagine that it will turn out that there was an attack made upon the sutler for the purpose of robbery, which ended in a general fight, during which the deed was committed.

Such a thing could not have happened in a fort regiment, having guards and sentries; but in the batteries, no guards are considered necessary; consequently the

men are more at liberty. If the crime is proved upon any man, he will be dealt with summarily. . . .

I came very near being killed like General Corcoran, yesterday. In coming from head-quarters, my horse broke through some concealed ice, in crossing a very bad hole at a rapid gait, and we both rolled over and over in the mud. My staff officers thought that I was killed, and I thought that my horse was, for he doubled his head completely under him, and turned a complete somersault. But thanks to a kind Providence I never get hurt by these kind of tumbles, which kill other people; and I escaped with a slight sprain of my wrist.

But such a looking object, or rather objects, as my horse and I, you never imagined. I was completely covered with black mud from head to foot, and McClellan, my big horse, was worse, for he was considerably cut and bruised. I begin to fear that my fate will be *hanging*, for you know "a man born to be hung, will never be drowned."

Mr. C—— is in Washington, to undergo examination, previous to his ordination.

Our meeting to-night was very nice, but I now feel the want of that ability to speak freely on religious matters, which I so much admire in others. I consider it one of the great wants in our Church system, that young people are not brought forward to take an active part in religious meetings. It is a sore trial to me, and a source of deep mortification, that while private soldiers under my command can step forward and lead in prayer, or speak of the things of Jesus, I, who am *their leader* in everything else, am hardly able to say a word for Jesus.

I suppose the *real* trouble is that my fear of failing in anything before my men, is stronger than my desire to do my manifest duty in this matter; and I do strive against the feeling, but yet the difficulty exists. It is not *diffidence*. I do not hesitate to say anything to anybody in the line of my military duty, but on this one

point I feel myself to be *very weak*. Maybe practice will help me, at any rate I am trying.

Mr. C—— has said so much about W—— to the men that they consider her a kind of saint on earth (and indeed they are not far wrong). I think that I can see manifestations of a deeper affection for me lately than ever before. Pardon me, darling mamma, for saying so, when I know that I so little deserve their respect or affection, but I cannot help feeling happy when the men appear to have confidence in me, and to love me. . . .

The chapel tent, in which so many of their pleasant meetings were held was put up on the slope of a gentle hill, and nearly surrounded by a grove of pine woods, through which the winds swept with a melodious sigh day and night, and when this was mingled, as it continually was, with the sound of many voices singing familiar fireside hymns, the music, as it stole over the camp, hushed often the loud laugh of the careless.

We have heard Howard Kitching tell, with tears in his eyes, how his heart would throb, when sitting in his tent, he heard the men singing these old, well worn hymns, — “Just as I am;” “A charge to keep I have;” and “When I survey the wondrous cross.” Meetings were held in this tent three times a day, and every evening. A library was formed of books contributed by numerous friends, and religious books and papers were distributed throughout the regiment. The tent, when not otherwise occupied, was also used as a reading room. And in this way much was done for the temporal and spiritual welfare of the soldiers.

TO HIS FATHER.

Saturday Night, January 30, 1864.

Mr. C—— must have been exceedingly pleased with his visit home. He can't say enough of you all. Many thanks for the basket of things; I shall enjoy them very much.

I am building me a new log-house over in the regimental camp, as I shall vacate these premises in favor of the new commanding officer, Colonel Burton, 5th U. S. Artillery, on Friday next. I hope to be with you again for a day or two immediately after the first of the month, as it has become necessary for me to visit Albany again, in connection with some new companies which the governor is sending to the regiment. I am filling up the regiment very rapidly now, and hope that by April I shall have over fifteen hundred men in the field. . . .

I wish you could see our chapel tent, papa, and the men flocking to it to hear of the Lord Jesus. Numbers come out openly, every day, and rejoice in having found the Lord. There are now three clergymen in the tent, besides Mr. C——. A chapel tent has also been put up in the regular brigade, horse artillery, in this command. I am very grateful and happy for all this. Indeed, were it not for this, I should be sorely tempted to quit the army before spring. . . .

Good by! God bless you all with his choicest blessings. Your loving son,
HOWARD.

Wednesday Evening, February 3, 1864.

MY DEAREST PAPA:— Many thanks for your kind, encouraging letter of January 30th. The box has not yet arrived, but will be very welcome when it does come; the only trouble will be how to distribute the good things, as our meetings include about three hundred men now, and are increasing daily. . . . My regiment is filling up very rapidly. I have now eleven hundred

and sixty-six men, and shall have eighteen hundred before the spring campaign opens. One new company from Elmira has been added in a body. The captain is a Methodist clergyman, and "spouts" in meeting at a great rate.

I shall be relieved from this command to-morrow, probably, and shall be very glad to be free from the additional care and responsibility; and many recruits having joined my regiment, I ought to be with it.

There is really a revival in my regiment. Men are coming forward daily to testify for Jesus, and a perceptible change in the tone of the entire regiment is manifest. Would that my officers could be moved by God's Spirit to come out on the right side! There is a clergyman from Philadelphia now here. He preaches every evening, and says that he never attended more interesting meetings.

But I cannot quite overcome my old antipathy to their "free and easy," everybody-get-up-and-say-something style, and frequently see and hear things which seem to me quite inconsistent with the solemnity of the occasion. . . .

A work of grace like this could not go forward without exciting enmity, and the bitterest opposition among the ungodly men of the regiment. The chaplain was persecuted, and every effort was made to effect his removal. The colonel was opposed by those from whom he had hoped better things, and Satan made a fierce onset, to overthrow the work so gloriously begun. But though "cast down," Howard Kitching was not "destroyed," and with a sad but brave heart he went quietly forward, and he and the chaplain ultimately lived down all opposition, and many soldiers were enlisted under the banner of the Crucified.

This outpouring of the Spirit was not confined by any means to Howard Kitching's regiment; it was very general throughout the army of the Potomac this winter. Not only in chapel tents, but by the camp fires, on the cold hill-side, the voice of prayer was heard, and the answer came, and many a heart beat stronger through the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

As the spring campaign was drawing on, and the hour of battle near, the Lord's Supper was celebrated for the last time,—to many of the men their last communion. From those who shared in these privileges, we have had most touching accounts of these scenes in the army; from the strangeness of the surroundings, and solemnity of the associations, they were scenes never to be forgotten.

March 22, 1864.

. . . . We are now having the most violent snow-storm of the winter. It has been storming all the afternoon, and the snow is nearly a foot deep, making the camp look very cold and dreary; the sentry in front of my tent is nearly blinded, and can scarcely walk his beat. I am not very well, but yet not very sick; probably the March weather has affected my lungs again. I have kept in my little house all day, and am now going to bed.

March 25, 1864.

. . . . It is storming so fearfully that I am almost deafened with the thunder of the rain upon my canvas roof. It has been a very gloomy day, and the patches of dirty snow scattered here and there, make the landscape far from agreeable. We have had such a dry, mild winter, that I fear our troubles are yet to come in the

shape of spring rains, and indeed it is raining just now, as though it would never stop.

Tuesday we had a regular old-fashioned snow-storm. The snow fell to the depth of about eight inches, and Wednesday morning cleared up as bright as could be, the sun making everything sparkle and glisten like gold. Some of my men made me a little rustic sleigh, to which I harnessed my two horses, and gave Mrs. Colonel Burton a sleigh ride; the only sleigh, I guess, that has ever appeared in the Army of the Potomac.

Yesterday we had the greatest fun! The men from the different companies began to snowball each other; so I divided the regiment into two wings, about two hundred men upon each side. I took command of the right wing, and gave the Lieutenant-colonel and Major the left, and after inviting Colonel and Mrs. Burton out to see the sport, we had a *scientific* snowballing. The battle lasted for about an hour, but although the left wing had the most men, yet my wing drove them off the ground, simply by tactical manœuvring.

No one was killed, but several wounded, including many officers. Three or four of them have black eyes to-day; but all enjoyed it very much, and the frolic did the men a great deal of good. It certainly did me a service, for I have been so blue lately, and have been so confined, and felt so discouraged, that the effect of a hearty laugh was beneficial. . . . I have been so worried lately that I am not like my old self at all. . . . I am beginning to feel very old — older every day! . . .

March 27, 1864, Sunday, Midnight.

MY OWN SWEET DARLING:— Again has the holy Sabbath (and Easter, too) been to me a day of hard, hard work.

Colonel Burton has turned over the command of the reserve to me, as he is to leave to-morrow, and two regiments of heavy artillery have reported to me, and kept

me on the jump, organizing matters, and getting them into camp. They are very large indeed, — the 4th and the 15th New York Artillery, — numbering twenty-five hundred men each. The 4th will be ordered to the 2d Corps soon, but the 15th will be brigaded with my regiment, giving me the command of a brigade of four thousand men. General Hunt thinks it will be permanent, so I suppose I shall be acting brigadier-general till the end of the war; or till I get my head shot off — no, my darling, no danger of that!

I will write you all about my new command to-morrow. I wonder how you have spent this beautiful Easter Sunday? Do you remember the last? . . . I have good news for you. I shall try to run home for two or three days after Colonel Burton returns — probably next week. . . . If I can only get *one day* at home, I will come. . . . Pardon this hurried note, my darling, it is the best I can do to-night; but I could not let this Sunday go without dropping at least a line to my own "little heart's-ease." . . .

HEAD-QUARTERS FIRST BRIGADE, ARTILLERY RESERVE, }
Sunday Evening, April 17. }

MY OWN PRECIOUS MAMMA: — Your dear, sweet letter has been read again and again, and would have been answered long since, if I had been able; but as you will see by the heading of this, I am acting brigadier-general, and as it will be a permanent command, I am organizing it to suit my ideas; and changing many things. After I get the machine running regularly, I shall not have as much to do, as when commanding officer of my regiment, there being fewer details; but for a time I shall have every moment occupied. I have about four thousand men in my brigade, two thousand being Dutchmen. . . .

I have not enjoyed my Sunday at all. Orders have been coming in all day, and my tent has been filled with officers from the different corps. These Sundays

in the army are dreadful indeed, spent as they are generally. I am not usually annoyed in this way, for officers know that I like to have my Sundays to myself, but to-day many have called to congratulate me upon my new command.

O, how I look back upon our dear, quiet Sundays at home, particularly the evening time, when we have for so many years been *all together* singing sweet hymns; and I can truly say "making melody in our *hearts* to the Lord."

I believe, darling mamma, that children never had so many pleasant times to look back upon, shadowed by so little grief; and under the dear Lord's kind providence we owe our gratitude to you and dear papa for making our home so pleasant, and throwing around it so many blessed associations.

And my own darling mother, none of your children appreciate that dear home more than I; indeed I believe, not half as much. How could they? All have a home but me; I sometimes feel like a wanderer upon the face of the earth. . . .

My last visit home was on many accounts one of the brightest spots in my life. My darling boy is so sweet, and seems to love me so dearly. . . . and though all these things make it much harder to leave you all, yet the memory is very comforting and pleasant. . . . I find that this routine of military duties is becoming more irksome to me every day. I long for home, with those I love, and who love me.

I note what you say of the dear Lord's care of me and mine. I do not forget this, dearest mamma; indeed I could not endure this experience, if I were not certain that my darlings are in better keeping than any protection I could give them. . . .

April 22, 1864.

. . . . My brigade is splendid. We were reviewed by General Grant on Wednesday. He only gave us thirty minutes' notice to turn out. I had three thousand

men on the ground, and was complimented very highly upon their appearance, their perfect drill, and splendid marching. I was introduced personally to General Grant.

TO HIS FATHER.

Saturday Evening, April 30, 1864.

. . . . I have been suffering from a pretty severe attack of pleurisy since yesterday. At one time to-day, I was in dreadful pain; but have been blistered, and am now much better. I trust I shall be all right in the morning. I was foolish enough to drop asleep in my tent, with a draught blowing over me, and my illness is the natural result.

I suppose you are all anxious to know something of the destination of the Army of the Potomac, and indeed so are *we*. No one knows anything. We are making great preparations; so are the rebs. They are throwing up *dirt* most industriously in our front at Culpepper.

This army is growing like magic. My own regiment is to-night over eighteen hundred strong; my brigade thirty-nine hundred. I have had a battery of mortars turned over to me to-day which smells strongly of siege. I am drilling my brigade very hard, and have an idea that you may hear something from the "First Brigade, Artillery Reserve, Army of the Potomac," before fall. My Dutchmen say that I am "*ter duyvil*," because I "gives 'em so much drill, and so little lager." But I am sitting up too late for a sick man, and must go to bed.

THE WILDERNESS.

“‘WHAT have you seen?’ said Christian.

“‘Seen! why the valley itself, which is as dark as pitch: we also saw there the hobgoblins, satyrs, and dragons of the pit; we heard also in that valley a continual howling and yelling, as of a people under unutterable misery, who there sat bound in affliction and irons: and over that valley hung the discouraging clouds of confusion: Death also doth always spread his wings over it. In a word it is every whit dreadful, being utterly without order.’”

BUNYAN'S PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WILDERNESS.

“He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.” — DEUT. xxxii. 10.

ON the 3d of May the order went forth for the army to march.

We give an extract from the journal of a friend of Colonel Kitching's, as it is one of the indications we have of the kind of preparation he made, when it was possible, before going into battle.

May 3, 1864.

Colonel Kitching sent for me at eleven o'clock, P. M., as we were to leave at three o'clock, the following morning, to begin our campaign in the Wilderness. After some pleasant talk we read the Bible together, and then prayed for God's blessing for ourselves and families, and the army, and especially our regiment. The hour and a half thus spent together was a solemn and precious time. We parted very cheerful and happy in the Lord.

Ten o'clock, P. M.

The men are singing and packing up.

The 5th of May found a hundred thousand men across the Rapidan.

The barrier that had so long divided the opposing armies was passed, and with the mingled emotions which grand and novel enterprises stir in men's breasts, the

troops looked out, hopefully, yet conscious that a terrible struggle was before them, into a region yet untrodden by the hostile armies, but soon to become historic by a fierce grapple of armed hosts and bloody battles in many tangled woods.

The line of march of the Army of the Potomac, after crossing the Rapidan, led through a region known as the Wilderness. This desolate region is thus described by the author from whom we have just quoted:—

It is impossible to conceive a field worse adapted to the movements of a grand army. The whole face of the country is thickly wooded, with only an occasional opening, and intersected by a few narrow wood-roads. But the woods of the Wilderness have not the ordinary features of a forest. The region rests on a belt of mineral rocks, and, for above a hundred years, extensive mining has here been carried on. To feed the mines the timber of the country for many miles around had been cut down, and in its place there had arisen a dense undergrowth of low-limbed and shaggy pines, and stiff and bristling chincapins, scrub-oaks, and hazel. It is a region of gloom and the shadow of death. Maneuvering here was necessarily out of the question, and only Indian tactics told. The troops could only receive direction by a point of the compass; for not only were the lines of battle entirely hidden from the sight of the commander, but no officer could see ten files on each side of him. Artillery was wholly ruled out of use; the massive concentration of three hundred guns stood silent, and only an occasional piece or section could be brought into play on the roadsides. Cavalry was still more useless.

It was not the design of General Grant to give

battle in this difficult country, but he hoped, by turning the Confederate right, he would be able to mask his march through the Wilderness, and then by rapid advance towards Gordonsville, plant himself between the Confederate army and Richmond. But Lee, instead of falling back on finding his flank turned, took a strategic offensive, directed a rapid concentration of his forces to meet Grant, and aimed to shut up Grant in the Wilderness.

We cannot follow the Army of the Potomac step by step through the terrible battles of the Wilderness, — the strangest battles ever fought, — though to do so would give examples of patient suffering, unflinching courage, and high heroism, such as the world has seldom witnessed or history recorded.

Brave young boys! how many fought their last battle there. To many of them, one step from the thorny tangled wilderness to the sapphire pavement above.

This great struggle commenced on the 5th of May, but Colonel Kitching's brigade was not ordered in until the following morning. The soldiers had been listening to the roar of cannon and the peal of musketry, and the confused noise from the battle-field all day, and the order for them to enter where the shadow of death was falling so heavily, seemed to sober and solemnize the most thoughtless.

A meeting for prayer was held at midnight. The spot chosen was the graves of those who had fallen in the previous battle of Chancellorsville.

The moon lit up this strange scene. Forty-seven men were there, with their colonel among them. We have heard Howard Kitching often tell of this night, and of the earnest, simple prayers of these soldiers, only such prayers as are made at such times.

Such scenes as these were not uncommon in the army of the Potomac, and we think they deserve to be recorded, as they are among the few things that can relieve the dark background of the dreadful thing men call war.

Howard Kitching's military journal of this period shows an amount of labor, suffering, and privation that befel the troops in the continual shifting of his corps, fighting by day, and marching by night, of which no general statement can give any idea. For twelve days the fighting was incessant. Every effort was made during that time to find a spot where the rebel lines could be broken. But these attempts were skillfully met at every point; wherever an attack was made, the enemy bristled out in breastworks, and every inch of ground was contended for, with a dash and a vigor which could not be overcome.

The following was written on a little scrap of paper, on the battle-field:—

NEAR SPOTTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE, *May 13, 1864.* }
Six o'clock, A. M.

MY OWN PRECIOUS DARLING:—I thank God, I am still alive, and able to write you a line, for I know that you must be terribly anxious.

We have all been going through the most terrible ex-

periences for the past week, reaching the climax yesterday and last night. The world never saw such fighting. Both sides feel this to be the last struggle, and contend with a fierceness that is awful. Our losses have been fearful, probably *forty thousand*.

I am not well, darling, and after the excitement is over shall probably feel worse. Would that this were the last of this terrible struggle! How I long to know how my darlings are, and how I long to be with you, *never, never* to leave you again.

The general result of our week's fighting has been good, but the cost heavy.

I cannot write more now, darling; I am sitting in the mud and rain, the very dirtiest looking object you ever beheld. I will send a line as I have opportunity. Bless you, my sweet wife!

Ever your own

HOWARD.

General Grant, at length becoming satisfied that Lee could not be dislodged from his stronghold in this entangled Wilderness by direct assault, resolved by a flank movement to dislodge him from this unassailable position.

“Preparations for this movement were begun on the afternoon of the 19th of May; but the enemy observing these, retarded its execution by a bold demonstration against the Union right. It happened that the flank was held by a division of foot artillerists, under General Tyler, posted in an important position, covering the road from Spottsylvania to Fredericksburg, which was the army's main line of communication with its base at the latter point. Ewell crossed the Ny River above the right flank, and moving down, seized the Fred-

ericksburg road, and laid hands on an ammunition train coming up. Tyler promptly met this attack, and succeeded in driving the enemy from the road, and into the woods beyond. The foot artillerists had not before been in battle, but it was found that once under fire, they displayed an audacity surpassing even the old troops. In these murderous wood-fights, the veterans had learned to employ all the Indian devices that afford shelter to the person; but these green battalions, unused to this kind of craft, pushed boldly on, firing furiously. Their loss was heavy, but the honor of the enemy's repulse belongs to them."

These "green battalions" were the foot artillerists of Colonel Kitching's brigade.

It was soon after the battle, when the land was filled with rumors of battles lost and won, and anxious hearts were watching for some certain tidings, that a poor woman, respectably clad, called at Howard's home, and asked to see his mother. She remarked that she was a mother, with a son in the army, and therefore knew what a mother felt at such a time; that she had walked a long distance to give her to read a letter from her son, who was in Colonel Kitching's regiment. We cannot refrain from giving an extract, as it serves to show the class of men that composed his command:—

On the 19th inst., near Spottsylvania Court House, our (Kitching's) brigade and Tyler's division were attacked by Ewell's whole corps, and led by that general in person; and although it was the first time we were

so actively engaged, and could not be expected to stand as unflinchingly as older troops, still the flower of the Southern army, led by one of their ablest generals, and outnumbering us five to one, could not force us back one foot.

Our little colonel was at his post as usual, with a smile and cheerful remark for all, and a word of consolation for the wounded. Our regiment captured, during the fight, seventy-nine prisoners. They all say that they were addressed by their general before they left, who told them that they were going to attack raw troops, and a victory would be easy and decisive; but they all say they do not wish to see any more such raw troops.

Our colonel may well be proud of his regiment, as we are of him as our commanding officer. I wish you could see him once. To see him is to respect him; but to know him is to love him. He is just my idea of a perfect soldier and gentleman. While the shells are flying over us, and the bullets whizzing past us, he is walking leisurely up and down the line, and if any of the boys should dodge, he will say with a smile, "No ducking, — stand up!" His demeanor and example in battle has made heroes of the meanest cowards.

The conduct of the 6th Artillery in this battle was thus noticed, in the following General Order:

HEAD-QUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC.

The Major-general commanding desires to express his satisfaction with the good conduct of Tyler's division and Kitching's brigade of heavy artillery in the affair of yesterday evening. The gallant manner in which those commands (the greater portion being for the first time under fire), met and checked the persistent attacks of a corps of the enemy, led by one of the ablest generals, justified the commanding general in the special commendation of troops, who, henceforth, will be relied

upon, as were the tried veterans of the Second and Fifth corps, at the same time engaged.

By command of MAJOR-GENERAL MEADE,
[Signed] S. S. WILLIAMS, A. A. G.
BRIGADIER-GENERAL TYLER,
Commanding Division.

The terrible experience of the twelve days before Spottsylvania convinced every man in the army that the position of Lee was, in truth, impregnable. Above forty thousand men had already fallen in the bloody encounters. General Grant, anxious as he was to give Lee a crushing blow, was convinced that it could not be done by direct assault. He then began to turn the position by a flank march. This is an operation usually accounted very hazardous, in the presence of a vigilant enemy. It was, nevertheless, conducted with great precision, and skill, and complete success.

This turning movement, jealously guarded as it was, did not pass unobserved by the wary enemy. Accordingly, at midnight on the 20th, the same night on which Hancock set out, Longstreet's corps was headed southward, and another grand race between the two armies, similar to that from the Wilderness to Spottsylvania, was begun. Neither army seems to have sought to deal the other a blow while on the march, and both headed, as for a common goal, towards the North Anna. On the morning of the 23d May, the army reached the northern bank of that stream. But it was only to descry its old enemy planted on the oppo-

site side. After a series of strategical moves, crossing and recrossing the North Anna, the army struck to the southward and was across the Pamunkey on the 28th. Pushing on towards the Chickahominy, heavy skirmishing took place on the 30th of May, as they drew near that river, the approaches to which they found strongly covered by Lee's army.

It was ascertained that the whole of Ewell's corps held position at Shady Grove Church, and as the enemy soon afterwards appeared to be threatening to move round by the Mechanicsville pike and turn Warren's left, Crawford directed one of his brigades to the left to cover that road. This brigade had hardly reached the vicinity of Bethesda Church when Rhodes' division of Ewell's corps assailed it furiously in the flank. After maintaining the unequal contest for a few moments, the brigade fell back to the Shady Grove road with the enemy in full pursuit. At this moment General Crawford brought up the remainder of the reserves, and Colonel Kitching's brigade of heavy artillery opened fire in conjunction with batteries on both flanks, which nearly demolished the rebel column of attack. The enemy fell back in terrible disorder, and left their dead and wounded behind them on the field.

His own letter gives an account of this struggle, out of which he came unharmed, sheltered, as he felt he had been, by the impenetrable armor wrought out of many prayers.

SOUTH SIDE OF PAMUNKEY RIVER, VIRGINIA, }
 May 29, 1864. }

MY DEAR PAPA:— I would have written you a line long since, knowing how very anxious you must be, but it has been quite impossible to get a letter away, and I have had no mail from home since the 8th. I am most anxious to hear from you all, and if I permitted myself to think of my anxiety and imaginings, I should be quite unfitted for duty. But I know that the same kind Hand that has so wonderfully preserved me through the past three weeks has my loved ones in his keeping, and that I can leave them with Him.

I suppose that the papers have given you a pretty good idea of our present whereabouts, and our doings since the opening of the campaign, but nothing but the actual experience could give one any adequate conception of the severity of the fighting. I had considered myself an old soldier after the Peninsula campaign, but have learned that I had never seen fighting till now.

My brigade, three thousand strong, is doing duty as infantry, and has "seen the elephant," I assure you. When our army first met the enemy, May 6th, I was ordered to the front, and reported to General Warren, Fifth Corps. He ordered me to join General Wadsworth, who was fighting and hard pressed in a thick wood, on the left of our line. I "pitched in," but before I could join Wadsworth, he was shot through the head, and I met his division broken and coming to the rear. I let his tired men pass through my lines, and waited for "Johnny Reb;" but at the first fire my right regiment broke and ran away, leaving the right of my line unprotected, and the best I could do was to fall back fighting. My own regiment did splendidly, manœuvring as coolly as if on drill. After getting my brigade together again, we went in and "flaxed" the rebs out.

Since the 6th instant my command has fought with

every corps in the army ; and on the 19th, I was sent up on the right flank to guard the Fredericksburg road, while the rest of the army was making a demonstration on our left.

I made my dispositions as well as I could, but from the length of the line which I was required to hold, I had to scatter my brigade too much. At four o'clock, P. M., I was attacked by Ewell's entire corps, but my men did fight magnificently. We never lost one inch of ground, but held the whole corps of rebels till nearly six o'clock, when reinforcements came on the ground. The fun of it is that the reinforcements came on the ground separately, by regiments and batteries, and learning that your hopeful son was in command of the position they reported to me, so that by seven o'clock I was fighting over seven thousand men, and in command of more than a division. My old regiment, the Second New York, reported to me, and I had the pleasure of leading one battalion into the fight. . . . I have lost thirteen officers and five hundred and thirty-two men in my brigade, but the command is in first-rate condition and spirits, and appear to think that they have been pretty well handled.

I inclose copy of an order issued by General Meade on the action of the nineteenth, which will explain itself. You must not misunderstand me, dear papa, in thus speaking of my command. My officers and men deserve all the credit that they have received, and of course I am proud of them ; and am sure that you will be glad to know that my command has done well.

We had a brisk fight crossing the North Anna, on the twenty-third. My *Christian* men have done particularly well. I could tell you of many instances of most heroic behavior on their part, but have not time now. I can hardly realize my own escape. From the fact that my troops were mostly new, I felt it to be necessary to expose myself more than would otherwise have been my

duty, and yet, while every one of my field officers has either been wounded himself or had his horse killed, I have had only a slight scratch. A sharpshooter succeeded in breaking the skin of my neck, but it did not hurt me much. We afterward wounded and captured him, and he said that "he had fired seven times at that little colonel, and that he would die happy if he could have hit him."

I think that our bushwhacking is over for the present, for we are so near Richmond that I do not think the enemy will stand *outside* his works. If we can get him penned up there we shall wind up this arrangement very soon. I should be quite content to retire now, if the campaign were ended. . . . These chaps cannot say that I am afraid to fight as infantry, now!

Pardon my writing of nothing but myself, but I have only time to write the news. Here is an order to move forward to Haws' shop, six miles, so good-by! God bless you all. Love to dear, darling mamma.

Your loving boy,

HOWARD.

Tuesday Evening, May 31, 1864.

MY OWN PRECIOUS WIFE:—I am writing this in the rifle-pits that cost me nearly two hundred lives yesterday to hold, and where the rebels lost more than three hundred men in their attempt to take our position. My brigade was assigned permanently to this division yesterday morning as an infantry command, and I had just reported to General Crawford, when I was ordered to the front to support Colonel Hardin's brigade, which was being hard pressed at the time.

I led my column to the front at once, but the order proved to have been issued too late, for I had but just got my column in motion, filing along a narrow road, when the enemy broke Colonel Hardin's line and came upon the head of my column.

I had no time to form line of battle; two of my

staff fell at the first fire ; one, Lieutenant Ferris, by his horse being shot through the head and falling upon him, and the other, Bailey, shot in the breast. Major Crookston and Captain Palmer, just behind me, also fell, Crookston's horse killed, and Palmer shot through the ankle. This terrible fire right into the head of the column broke the men, many of whom had fallen, killed or wounded, and in less time than I have been telling you, my brigade, excepting one battalion which I managed, through the heroic exertions of Majors Jones and Shonnard, to keep together, was sailing across the plain.

My officers are magnificent, and at the first fence, where any protection could be had from the murderous fire, they rallied the 6th Artillery, and I made a stand for about thirty minutes against two brigades of the enemy. They came on in two lines of battle, waving their battle-flags, and led bravely enough by their officers, but our rail fence, of which we had made as good a breastwork as we could, did us good service, and we did give them "Jessie." I was forced to fall back, having no reinforcements, but they lost one brigadier-general, one colonel, three lieutenant-colonels, and a large number of men, besides our taking over seventy prisoners.

A rebel colonel (Christian), who was badly wounded and fell into our hands, told me that he had never seen such fearful volleys as our men poured into their ranks.

We fell back to our supports, and got two batteries into position, and then had it hot and heavy till night put an end to it. . . .

At ten o'clock last night I had just come in from the field, after burying my dead and bringing in my wounded, and was lying under a tree, wondering why it was that I was so miraculously spared, while every one with me had been killed or wounded, when my orderly returned from headquarters with the first mail that I have received since the twelfth, and as I read one dear letter after another, I ceased to wonder at my preserva-

tion, for I thought that any one for whom so many earnest prayers were continually ascending must be almost bullet-proof. Such dear, loving letters from my precious H——, Louise, darling mamma, Theodore, and all! Never had soldier such friends, and I believe that never was soldier's head covered in the day of battle by such fervent prayers.

I sometimes think, darling, that I ought not to write you thus fully about these dreadful battles, and lead you to think how much exposed I am to injury and death; but then again, I think so long as it is so, and cannot be helped, and the papers give you the same general information, without its correctness, that it is better for you to know *from me* just how it is, and be prepared for the Lord's will.

. . . . I notice one thing which encourages me greatly, that the rebel attacks upon our lines are becoming weaker and weaker. If the Administration will but send us plenty of reinforcements, we can finish up the rebellion this campaign, I believe. The prisoners that we take all appear to be glad to get into our lines, and say that "the jig is up." But O, what a fearful sacrifice of life will yet be the price of our success.

I am off duty to-day, darling. The excitement of yesterday brought on my dysentery, so that I cannot ride, and have been lying still all day. Don't be worried when I am a little under the weather. I am not very sick, and indeed, if I were, it might prove a blessing, by keeping me out of some other danger. Just trust in our Heavenly Father's tender love and care. He has kept us so far, and will not forsake us now.

You would scarcely know me, darling, if you could see me now,—I look so rough. My clothes are torn and dirty. I am tanned as black as a darkey, and from hard work and want of sleep, I look as though I had been on a spree. O, how I long for rest!

My pickets are popping away now in my front.

Whew! how tired I am of hearing fire-arms. Fourth of July would have no charms for me now.

Bless you, my darling, precious wife. Kiss my darling boy for me. The dear Lord keep my darling secure from every harm. . . .

Mr. C—— is lying on the ground beside me, and sends his best respects. He is doing a blessed work amongst our wounded. He is a noble soldier of the Lord Jesus.

It will interest you to know that my bed is a blanket laid upon the ground, in rear of the rifle-pits. I have not had any tent up, or roof over me, but one night during the campaign.

IN RIFLE-PITS, NINE MILES FROM RICHMOND, }
May 31, 1864. }

MY OWN PRECIOUS MAMMA:—I am now sitting upon my india-rubber blanket in the rifle-pits, for which we had a fierce fight yesterday. . . .

I got in action about one o'clock, and we had it hot and heavy till after dark. I have only a moment to scribble; cannot give you particulars, but am again thanking my Heavenly Father for my preservation. I lost two of my staff, shot by my side, and every mounted officer in my own regiment was either shot himself or had his horse killed under him, and I escaped unhurt.

I do not speak of my exposure to worry you, darling mamma, but have thought it better for you to know the truth, and be prepared for any dispensation of God's providence.

We are very much encouraged by our successes thus far. Whenever we meet the enemy in the open country, or he attacks us, we whip him. Yesterday, they were slaughtered fearfully. I went over the field after the fight. We found one brigadier-general, one colonel, two lieutenant-colonels, beside about three hundred

men, lying in front of my command alone. We also took about eighty prisoners. Would that the leaders of this terrible rebellion would see the certain downfall of their wicked efforts, and stop now, rather than sacrifice the lives that must be lost before the end of the campaign!

My loss yesterday will prove about two hundred in killed, wounded, and missing.

Give my best love to all the dear ones. This is a miserable apology for a letter, but I can only scribble these little notes to you, telling you of my safety, nowadays.

I am sitting amongst my men in rear of my rifle-pits, with an india-rubber blanket under me, and the stars over me. Mr. C—— is quietly sleeping on his blanket near me. My pickets are occasionally popping at the enemy, and *vice versa*. My clothes are ragged, and dirty; I am tanned like a darkey, and altogether look pretty seedy; but I believe that my superior officers and my command have full confidence in me, which is a source of great comfort.

Many thanks for telling me what Sergeant Lloyd's mother said. These little things are a great help to a soldier.

You had better direct your letters to Kitching's Brigade, Fifth Army Corps; as we are no longer a part of the reserve, but a regular infantry command. I must close now, dearest mamma, although I hate to send you such a letter — all about myself, too; but I know you are anxious to hear of my safety. I shall now read my chapter in the Bible, and turn in on my blanket for a little rest, for I got none last night. God bless you all.

Ever your loving

HOWARD.

The rifle-pits where the next letter was written, had been won from the enemy by Colonel Kitching's brigade after five hours' hard fighting. In

the engagement he received, as we have seen, a slight wound on the neck from a minie ball. But the panoply of prayer was around him, and we find him, while sorrowing over his dead and wounded soldiers with that deep tenderness which belongs to all heroic natures, again taking comfort in the thought that he was sheltered thus by prayer.

It is common for Christians to acknowledge in their talk this power of prayer, but how few actually realize that every one among us, the simplest, the feeblest, the neediest, may as a prince have power with God and prevail. All who are anxious pray. But it is not always the prayer of faith, made as to One who can be and will be prevailed on to answer it. The *prayer of faith* is always answered. The reply may not be altogether according to our desire; the result of the victory altogether of our own shaping. There is in spiritual things many a glorious victory that comes in the guise of a defeat, just as there is many an inglorious defeat that looks at first like a victory. But still, prayer shall win its end; its best end; its end of glory to God, and of blessing, richest blessing to your beloved one and to yourself; it shall bring abundant consolation, and fullest satisfaction, if it be in faith — if it be earnest — if it be unwearied. How many a prayer offered up by desolate firesides received their fullest answer amid these scenes of carnage; how many were brought to Jesus; how many found the battle-field the pathway to the land where they learn war no more!

IN RIFLE-PITS, NEAR COLD HARBOR, }
 Friday Evening, June 3, 1864. }

MY OWN PRECIOUS SISTER:— Your dear, sweet letters, as also Theodore's, of the 21st of May, reached me on Monday night, just after our terrible fight had been stopped by the darkness, and I had just returned from my picket line, where I had been collecting the dead and wounded of my poor fellows. I was completely exhausted, and was lying on the ground wondering *why* the Lord had spared me so wondrously through such an awful fire, when so many of my comrades had fallen by my side. My orderly handed me a bundle of dear letters from H——, yourself, Theodore, and dear mamma; and as I read them, one after another, I ceased to wonder at my preservation, for *all* told of constant and unceasing prayers going up for me, and I began to think that one so cared for, and prayed for, must be almost bullet-proof.

If you could but realize, darling, the comfort of such dear letters from home at such a time. I have been almost constantly under fire for a month, and although I trust that no sense of personal danger has ever interfered for one moment with my duty, yet I am of that temperament that I always have a vivid realization of the exposure of my position; and after the great excitement attendant upon the proper management of my command is over, then comes the thought of dear H——, my poor fatherless boy, and a dear, kind father and mother, who can only remember me as a source of anxiety and care. After every fight I have had these terrible seasons of depression, and had had no mail from home since the 8th till Monday last.

Don't think, darling, that my heart fails in the good work; it is not that. I never feel stronger or more hopeful than when my brigade is engaged. It is the reaction afterward—the mournful duties of collecting, identifying, and burying my dead comrades—trying to

help and comfort my poor wounded, who seem almost to shame me for having escaped. This is what tears the heart of a man in times and scenes like these. And when I read your dear letters, telling me how you longed to have me near you to comfort me; and I began to think of the inexpressible comfort of being for an hour with H——, or you, or dear mamma, I just forgot my manliness and burst out crying. I could not help it.

But this is scarcely a soldier's letter, darling! Now for the *other* side, which is just as fully realized, I assure you.

We are driving the enemy at every point. Wherever we meet him we show our ability to overcome him. Even the heavy artillery, which was considered *raw* and undisciplined, has been able to repulse their choicest troops twice.

I hear that my brigade has been mentioned very kindly by the press; have you seen it? My brave fellows deserve it — six hundred and thirty of my brigade, including thirteen officers, have either gone to their last roll-call, or are swelling the list in hospital. But it is becoming a by-word in the army that the wounded heavy artillerymen complain less than any other men in the hospitals. A braver, cooler, and more obedient set of men, I never saw. O, that they were all Christians, and could testify for the Lord Jesus, as did one of my poor sergeants, Hart, who had both legs blown off, and spent last Sunday as his first day in heaven.

But, if I do not say good-by, this cannot go to-night. Even as I write this, my darling, a twelve-pounder shell is rushing over my head, and bursts in the field behind us.

How much I wish to say to you, my darling sister! . . . Write me your dear letters whenever you can. Thank dear Theodore for his lovely letters. God bless you all, darlings! Don't worry at the tone of my letter. I never hid anything from *you*, and thoughts of H—— and Howy do prevent my being a *thorough* soldier at all times. God bless you, darling.

Your own brother,

HOWARD.

Sergeant Hart was a noble Christian soldier, whom Howard Kitching loved with a very strong love. We remember well his telling us, when on a bed of suffering, with tears in his eyes, of the last farewell of Hart.

In the very thick of the fight, he was carried past him, mortally wounded, and, looking up with a bright smile, he exclaimed, "Colonel, I shall have the honor of being in heaven before you." And we were told by one who visited him in the hospital, that just as the shadow of death was falling upon him, he made a last effort, and his clear voice rang through the building as he sang a verse of the hymn they were so fond of singing in their prayer-meeting:—

"Joyfully, joyfully, onward I move,
Bound to the land of bright spirits above;
Angelic choristers sing as I come,
Joyfully, joyfully, haste to thy home!
Soon will my pilgrimage end here below,
Home to the land of bright spirits I go;
Pilgrim and stranger no more shall I roam,
Joyfully, joyfully resting at home."

And so he fell asleep.

How pleasant it is to think how many sons and brothers, on the battle-field and in the hospital, have been cheered, at last, by the memory of some sweet household hymn.

Friday, June 3, 1864.

MY DEAREST PAPA:—I am in rear of my command in the rifle-pits, near Cold Harbor, within six miles of Richmond.

We have not been engaged to-day, but are exposed to heavy fire of artillery in our present position, which makes us keep pretty close to mother earth. Yesterday and day before, my brigade was in action, adding to the number of my poor fellows who have gone to their last account, or are filling the hospitals, and yet how wonderfully has the Lord preserved me, a monument of his wondrous power and love.

We are steadily driving the enemy back upon his lines around Richmond, but the tenacity and stubbornness with which he holds his ground is wonderful. O, if the leaders of this wicked rebellion would only see that their ultimate doom is fixed, and by a surrender stop this fearful bloodshed! But I suppose that some good will come of this sacrifice of life which we may see hereafter.

The army is tired out, but in good spirits. . . . Tyler was hit this morning. This is truly "the Valley of the Shadow of Death," but I trust that the Lord is with us. . . .

This "Valley of the Shadow of Death" was to be strewn with many more victims, for these reconnoissances showed Lee to be in a very strong position, covering the approaches to the Chickahominy, the forcing of which it was now clear must cost a great battle. It was evident from the development of the enemy's strength, that the effort to cross where the two armies faced each other, had little promise of success. It was resolved, therefore, to move toward the south, and force the passage of the Chickahominy at Cold Harbor, and thus compel Lee to retire within the intrenchments of Richmond. We shall not follow in detail the movements of the army which led to this disastrous battle.

When the dispositions of the several corps were made, the order was given for a general assault along the whole front of six miles, to be made at half-past four in the morning.

Next morning, with the first gray light of dawn struggling through the clouds, the preparations began; from behind the rude parapets there was an up-starting, a springing to arms, the muffled commands of officers forming the line. The attack was ordered at half-past four, and it may have been five minutes after that, or it may have been ten minutes, but it certainly was not later than forty-five minutes past four, when the whole line was in motion, and the dark hollows between the armies were lit up with the fires of death.

It took hardly more than ten minutes to decide the battle. There was along the whole line a rush — the spectacle of impregnable works — a bloody loss — then a sullen falling back, and the action was *decided*.

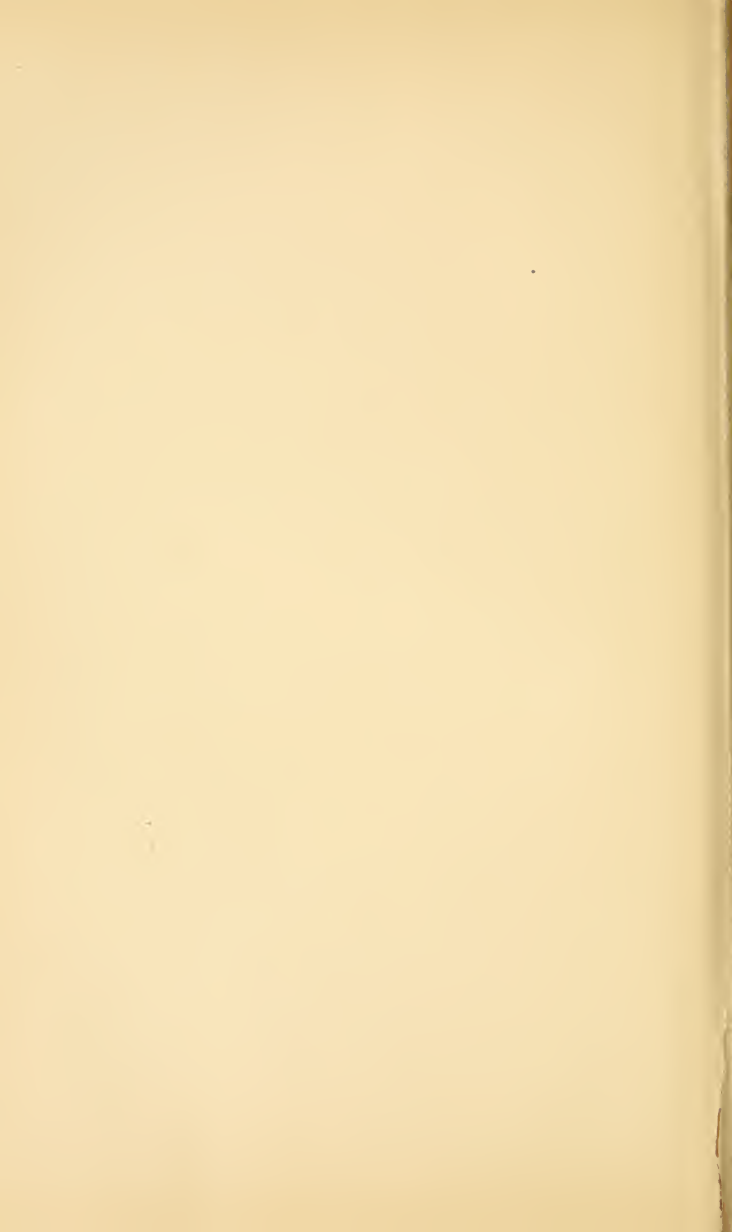
Through this withering fire of shot and shell, Howard Kitching passed unscathed.

This was the last of the series of conflicts fought so desperately from the Wilderness to the Chickahominy, in which Grant's loss consisted of more than sixty thousand men put *hors de combat*.

The result of this battle showed that this line could not be carried by direct assault. General Grant resolved, therefore, to transfer the army, by a flank march, to the south side of the James River. This march of fifty-five miles across the Peninsula was made in two days, and with perfect success, and the morning of the 16th June found the whole army on the south side of the James.

Petersburg, which has been defined as a fortress thrust forward on the flank of the Confederate capital, was a possession coveted eagerly by each combatant. Grant designed to seize it before Lee could reinforce the feeble garrison. But there was unaccountable delay, grievous mismanagement, and, when too late, heroic but fruitless assaults, repulse and mournful loss of life. Convinced by these failures that direct attack was in vain, General Grant ordered the troops to begin entrenching a systematic line.

It was after a campaign of nearly two months' duration—a campaign of varying fortune, of gigantic battles, of signal successes, of vast losses, of ceaseless activity, of unsurpassable hardships, of great marches, which can in no wise be computed by the hundred miles it traversed since the day it crossed the Rapidan, a campaign characterized by consummate generalship on the part of its leader, as well as of his subordinates—a campaign demanding the constant exercise of every military and manly quality on the part of every soldier engaged in it; it was at the end of such a campaign that the Union army found itself arrested before the strong chain of redans in front of Petersburg.



THE TRENCHES.

“ The feigned retreat, the nightly ambuscade,
The daily harass, and the fight delayed,
The long privation of the hoped supply,
The tentless rest beneath the humid sky,
The stubborn wall that mocks the leaguer’s art,
And palls the patience of his baffled heart :
Of these they had not deemed. The battle day,
They could encounter as a veteran may ;
But more preferred the fury of the strife
And present death, to hourly suffering life.”

CHAPTER VII.

THE TRENCHES.

“For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.”

ISAIAH XXV. 4.

There was a general feeling of disappointment, and great depression at the north with the result of this campaign. It was difficult for the people to appreciate what had been accomplished. “For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood,” and it is only after the shout is hushed, and the strife ceased, and the smoke of the battle entirely cleared away, that a just judgment can be formed. They knew by many a darkened fireside that the sacrifice had been a fearful one.

Not so with the army. Its spirit was never more unbroken, never more patriotic, never more heroic. An intelligent writer, who visited the army at this time says:—

“If there be one term which will at once pointedly and comprehensively characterize the fixed moral quality into which the army of the Potomac has grown, it seems to me to be a word which has lost much of its primitive force from frequent and inapplicable use—the word *indomitable*. It cannot be broken, it cannot be over-

come; it cannot be reduced to despair; it has no thought but of continuous struggle, through cloud and sunshine — no prospect other than of ultimate success. You feel this everywhere, in its ranks and under the most inauspicious circumstances. You see it among the private soldiers and officers. You notice it in the forefront of the battle line, and around the nightly camp fire. You see its deep impress on all faces; you hear its expression universally; and you behold it working itself out practically."

And not the wearisome days and wearisome nights, the scorching heat by day and the cold night chill, the hard life in the rifle-pits before Petersburg, could wear down the heroic spirit of that heroic army.

IN RIFLE-PITS, TWO MILES FROM PETERSBURG, }
Tuesday Evening, June 21, 1864. }

MY DEAR PAPA :— Your kind letter of June 13th reached me yesterday, with two from dear mamma, two from Louise, and one from Gussie; so you can imagine that I had a real feast for a time. Our mail generally comes in this manner, so that for three or four days, sometimes a week, we may receive nothing, and then a whole batch of letters will come together. It really seems as though these dear home letters always come just when most needed, and most acceptable; another manifestation of love from our Heavenly Father in sending these dear comforts just when weariness and gloom renders them so precious.

Since Friday last my brigade has occupied a most uncomfortable position, having been in the rifle-pits the whole time; and since Saturday night in such close proximity to the enemy's lines that both parties are obliged to cover themselves in every possible way.

Saturday afternoon our whole division received orders

to advance and occupy a line some three hundred yards in advance of that occupied during the day; so at four o'clock our line was formed and the order given to advance. My brigade was formed in two lines, and at the command, jumped over the breastworks and pushed ahead in beautiful order; but having to cross a cornfield in very short range of the enemy's works, they opened on us such a fearful fire of artillery and musketry that I lost one hundred and fifty-nine men killed and wounded before I gained the desired position. Once there, we held on, and very soon threw up a little work along our line which covered my men very nicely.

It is truly wonderful, the quickness with which our soldiers can throw up sufficient earth to protect them from rifle balls. Bayonets, spoons, hands, sticks, — almost anything is used to "scratch dirt," and like magic a line of two or three thousand men who are one moment exposed to every shot will be pitching head foremost into the earth, like moles.

The brigade of regulars on my left, lost even more heavily than I. We are now holding the position gained at that time, but as I said before, so close are we to the "Johnnies," that both sides are living in holes in the ground. I am for the first time occupying a little bomb-proof headquarters, made of pine logs with sand outside, which protects myself and staff perfectly so long as we can remain inside. I tried being without cover the first day, but had two men on guard at my head-quarters and three of our horses, shot; so I made up my mind to "go into garrison." Since then we have been more comfortable, but the bullets do whistle around in a terrible way; every tree near us is riddled.

Many of my men are becoming splendid marksmen. The men from western New York, that I got last winter, are almost all good shots, and have been inflicting severe punishment upon the enemy. I have stopped the firing of my pickets once or twice, for I think it nothing less

than murder, but just so soon as my men stop, the rascals commence to crawl up towards us so that we are forced to open fire again. I take it for granted that all these matters interest you all, more than anything else that I can write.

I saw General Warren last evening at his head-quarters and had a very nice talk with him. He appears to know you very well, remembers dear Fanny, and talked about you all for some time.

He said a great many very kind things to me which I can tell *you*, but please do not repeat except at home. General Warren told me that his corps was very proud of my command, and of me; and that he had recommended me for brigadier-general, and that I stood third on the list from the corps. I thanked him, of course, but told him that I did not anticipate anything of the kind from him. He said that I deserved it, and should have it; that everybody in the corps wanted me to have it. Don't think me foolish, dear papa, or that I am puffed up by foolish speeches. I only tell you these things just as they are told to me, and because I know that you all feel interested in my position and success.

I cannot understand why everybody is making such a fuss about me, for I have not done anything that I am aware of, which calls for it. My men have indeed done nobly and I am proud of them; but it really makes me very sad when I think that I am in any manner being benefitted by the loss of so many brave men; and I almost feel ashamed that I have not been hit. But O, how I do long for the time when I can return to you all and be free from this unnatural excitement.

I am unable to give you any news about the movements of the army generally. There is some new movement on foot. I believe it to be another demonstration upon the enemy's right flank; but everything is kept exceedingly quiet. I cannot think that we shall attempt another *assault* upon the works of the enemy,

if we can get around them in any possible way, for the sacrifice of life is too heavy.

The plan of Generals Grant and Meade appears to be to work upon the communications of Lee toward the south, which if successful will of course put Lee in a bad box. He has now only one channel of supplies open, *i. e.*, the road through Weldon, and I imagine that their visions of short rations must be getting very distinct and unpleasant.

We are hoping that the rebs may be holding out only for the Chicago Convention on the fourth of July, and that if they can glean no hope from that they *may* decide to give up a worse than bad job. I pray God that this army may not suffer a defeat meanwhile, for the effect upon the whole country would be most disastrous. Under God, nothing but some terrible mistake or mismanagement could produce such a direful result, for we must outnumber the enemy by some forty thousand men, and we have a good and secure base, which is the most important part. . . .

I forwarded the letter for Dr. Richardson. His young relative is safe and well. As to Lieutenant Stewart, I do not know whether he is alive or not. I heard it rumored that he had been killed, but do not know. If I can learn anything of him I will let you know.

I must bid you good-night, and go to bed, for it is very late, and the Johnnies do not suffer me to sleep much. Even as I write a bullet grazes the top of my log house and whistles through the trees.

Best love to all the loved ones, and with a heartfull for yourself, dear papa, I am as ever,

Your loving son,

HOWARD.

ON NORFOLK AND PETERSBURG R. R., TWO MILES FROM }
 PETERSBURG, *Sunday afternoon, June 26, 1864.* }

MY OWN PRECIOUS MAMMA :— My command has just been relieved, temporarily, from the horrible rifle-pits which we have occupied since Saturday the 18th, after our famous charge on the enemy's works, *which we did not take.*

That night, Saturday, as soon as it became dark, I advanced my line about two hundred yards nearer the enemy, and threw up a new line of breastworks, and there we have remained until to-day. The heat has been terrible, and having no shelter from the broiling sun, many of my poor fellows have been completely used up. The thermometer stood 105° in the shade yesterday, so you can imagine the condition of things in a narrow rifle-pit, dug in the sand, and without shelter from the sun. Our lines are now so close to the enemy that if a man shows his head above the breastworks on either side — bang! bang! a volley of musketry will warn him not to be guilty of such rashness again. Immediately after dark, however, we all jump out of our holes and stretch ourselves; spades, shovels, and picks are put in requisition to strengthen the line or to dig underground passages from one line to the other, officers who have been unable to leave their pits during the day, visit each other to talk over the little events of the day, and until midnight the entire line appears to be alive.

My command has been so much exposed and lost so many men during the past week, that a brigade was sent out to relieve me; and I have my men now encamped in a nice woods, not quite out of reach of shell, but where it is clean, and where both officers and men are enjoying themselves, washing and resting.

I have not had much of the day to myself as yet, for we have just made camp, and I want to write you a few words at least, to tell you of my continued health and safety. This little matter off in the mail, I am promis-

ing myself a nice quiet Sunday evening. Not but that it is a real pleasure to write to you all, dearest mamma, but I get so little time or opportunity to be quiet; or even to read my Bible unmolested, that it is doubly appreciated when a *real* Sunday is granted me.

Mr. C—— is to have a meeting this evening, the first opportunity since crossing the Chickahominy; but it is very, very sad to see the gaps made in our little congregations by these merciless bullets. Many of our Christian soldiers have glorified their Master by a soldier's death; and two of the leading spirits of these little meetings, Sergeants Hart and Hutton, have been killed, making a sad difference in everything connected with them.

Mr. C—— has completely won the hearts of both officers and men by his kindness to our wounded. He is truly a wonderful man, and is becoming quite celebrated in the entire army. . . .

—— and —— have been ordered before a military commission, and will be discharged from the service. With these two men I trust that the last remnant of the wicked influences, which have so terribly injured this regiment, will have departed, and that hereafter the Lord's work will go on untrammelled.

I received another dear, lovely letter from L—— yesterday. These dear letters from yourself and L—— are so comforting to me, and always have something in them which goes right to some needy spot in my wicked heart. Never had any one such friends as I. I bless God constantly for them and only wish that I deserved a tithe of the love so constantly lavished upon me. . . .

The Lord is certainly blessing me for the sake of my friends. Give my best love to all the dear ones. . . . God bless you, my own precious mamma! That you and dearest papa may be preserved many, many years, to those who love you so dearly, and that your children may be able to *comfort* your declining days, is the constant prayer of your loving son,
HOWARD.

June 30, 1864.

MY DEAREST PAPA:—Yours of 25th is at hand. Many, many thanks for the stationery; it is most acceptable. . . .

I am very grateful that the article you allude to, speaks so justly of my brave men, who, by their cool bravery and willing obedience, have been the material cause of my success. A braver or more *perfectly* obedient regiment of men does not exist. In our terribly severe charge of the 18th June, the regiment was joined in line with the brigade of regulars, and elicited the warmest praise from them and their officers, for their behavior under such terrible fire.

Poor fellows, I wonder that they can find heart to speak a good word for me, having been so frequently rushed into almost certain death by my orders.

There is no general news. Our cavalry have been operating on the Danville railroad, but have not as yet returned. We are in the trenches still, but have made a kind of arrangement on both sides "not to fire at each other unless to combat some movement." This does not include officers, however; I wish it did. The moment an officer shows himself he becomes the target for several rifles from the enemy. The rebel officers cannot be so easily distinguished, even though we had the same disposition to pick them off, which, thank God, our soldiers have not.

In riding along my line yesterday, one of my staff officers remarked that my large horse would probably draw fire, when "zip!" a rifle bullet whistled past his head, making him rear and plunge, so that I thought he had been hit, and looked him all over, trying to find the wound. I have been very fortunate in this campaign as regards my horses, not having lost one of my own yet.

I am very uneasy at what you tell me of your anxiety about me. I am in the Lord's hands, dear papa. He, who has spared me thus far, can certainly

take care of me in the future. Do not let it prey upon your mind. . . .

I am very glad that you and dearest mamma are spending a little time at Oscawana. I hope the change will strengthen mamma. Good bye. God bless you all. Your loving son,
HOWARD.

TO HIS FATHER.

July 3, 1864.

. . . . What a Sunday for a Christian man to spend! Occupied the whole day with my duties here — scarcely time to pray.

How I wish that I could be with you to-morrow. Rumor says that we may have a noisy Fourth here. My skirmish line is banging away now in a manner that quite eclipses anything of the kind in New York, and the enemy's mortar shells, which they will insist upon throwing over here (although they go right over us without injuring any one), make a terrible noise, roaring and hissing through the air like so many air-locomotives. . . .

IN TRENCHES NEAR PETERSBURG, }
Wednesday Evening, July 6, 1864. }

MY DEAREST PAPA:— Your kind and interesting letter of the 2d instant reached me last evening. . . .

I am pushing my line ahead to-night, and throwing up new works, so can only scribble a few words.

I am gradually crawling up to the "Johnnies'" works. I moved forward last night more than one hundred yards without losing a man. My men are just in the spirit of it, and advanced so cautiously and quietly that the "Johnnies" were apparently exceedingly astonished this morning, to find a stout line of rifle-pits a hundred yards nearer them than at "tattoo." There exists considerable rivalry amongst the different divisions and brigades as to which shall approach the enemy's lines

most rapidly. To-morrow morning, if I am successful to-night, my line will be within about four hundred yards of theirs.

The men are so near each other now that they call out to one another in a most amusing way. Last evening the enemy called to us "Yanks" that their time would be out in three days, "when they were coming over to see us."

On "the Fourth" there were some North Carolina troops in front of us, and when we raised our "stars and stripes" on our breastworks and the band played Star Spangled Banner, the rebs took in their secession rag and cheered lustily. I believe that were it not for our politicians these two armies would settle this matter and reconstruct the Union in twenty-four hours.

The news that Ewell is at Harper's Ferry, does not scare us very badly here, although I see that it is creating something of a bobbery at the North. One of our divisions, Rickett's, of the Sixth Corps, was sent around to Sigel to-day. There is no news of interest here. Don't believe the newspapers, I beg of you!

Well, I must away. If you hear a heavy musketry to-night, you will understand it to be my line advancing!

May our heavenly Father bless you all, and have you in his gracious keeping, ever prays your loving son,

HOWARD.

The severe mental struggle which Howard Kitching alludes to in the next letter was one of the "great fight of afflictions," through which many a stout heart had to pass in this war. They were most of them young men, who had not only left their family and homes, but their business, and sacrificed every temporal advantage to serve their country in her hour of need, and the har-

rassing thought was ever present, that if they fell in battle, their loved ones were unprovided for.

IN RIFLE-PITS, NEAR PETERSBURG, *July 12, 1864.*

MY DEAREST KIND PAPA:— Your loving letter of last Saturday, written at Dobb's Ferry, has just arrived, and you cannot imagine how your kindness makes me a new man for the balance of the campaign. You are all so kind to my darling wife and boy that I know I ought not to worry about them, but the ever-present thought that in the event of my death they would be left unprovided for, is one continual nightmare to me. I *cannot* shake it off, do what I may. I reason with myself about duty to my country, and all that, and yet the fear that I *may* have done wrong in entering or remaining in the service against so many discouragements and over so many obstacles (intended, it may be, to have prevented my doing this,) *will* remain with me day and night. . . .

I can tell *you* this, papa, without fear of your misunderstanding it; for I am confident that you know *no other* consideration would induce me to "look back, having once put my hand to the plough." I pray continually for implicit trust in the God of the fatherless, and I have endeavored to fight as became a Christian soldier. No man dare hint that I have ever hesitated to lead where men ought to follow; yet the torment of my anxiety for H—— and my boy, is none the less severe.

You can then imagine why your past kindnesses, and especially your last letter, should give me new confidence, and help to lift this weight off my mind.

. . . . God grant that at some future day I may be able to return all your loving kindness. I am so thankful that darling mamma is better. I feared that her trip to Oscawana and her adventures there might have proved an injury instead of a benefit. Give her my

best love. I will reply to her dear lovely letter to-morrow, if I live.

Our situation here remains about the same. We are gradually advancing our lines, strengthening them as we go. There is the constant fire of artillery and mortar-shells, but not so much musketry of late. I have lost several good men yesterday and to-day by mortar-shells, and had three very narrow escapes myself; having been covered with dirt, and grazed by pieces of shell — but thank God, I am all right yet. I am now getting some batteries into position, which I trust will drive the rebs away from the guns which are annoying us so much.

The Maryland affair is assuming larger proportions than at first, but I still doubt whether Lee has weakened his forces here to any considerable extent. The raiders I believe to be mostly from in front of Hunter.

Good night. Our heavenly Father bless you all, and reunite us here, or *hereafter*. Your loving and grateful son,

HOWARD.

TRENCHES NEAR PETERSBURG, *Sunday midnight, July 17, 1864.*

MY PRECIOUS SISTER:— We are all under arms awaiting an attack of the enemy, so I can only say a word.

I had intended writing you a long letter this evening in reply to your dear lovely letter of Monday last, received last night; but a deserter from the enemy coming into my lines and informing me that the enemy were massing large bodies of troops in my front, preparatory to an attack to-night, set me at work, as you may imagine, getting everything in readiness to receive our visitors.

So instead of being able to spend this Sunday evening telling you and H—— what a precious Sunday I have enjoyed I have been obliged to *almost* forget everything but how best to arrange every means in my power for the slaughter of my fellow creatures. But this is war!

I have placed my brigade in two lines, four ranks deep, batteries on my flanks ; everything is ready to open on our enemies at the proper time. Just now everything is unusually quiet — the ominous *hush* before the storm. Before day-break the whole earth about here may be trembling with the roar of cannon and the shock of struggling men. If the enemy attack, and we repulse him, as by God's help, *I* mean to, *just here* — we shall follow him up, endeavoring to rush into his works when he does. But man proposes, God disposes — we can only do our best.

The dear Lord has been very near me to-day, my darling. It has been Sunday in my heart, as well as in the almanac. It seems as though I have obtained a better realization of the all-sufficiency of the Saviour's sacrifice, than ever before — its adaptation to every individual case.

My precious sister, I cannot express my thankfulness for your dear letters, which with T——'s, mamma's, and all the rest, are such loving aids in showing my path and assisting me to follow it. Never had any one such friends as I ; and when each mail brings me a dear letter from one of you, with its words of cheer, I feel as though I could never thank God sufficiently for such blessings. As you say, darling, I ought to be good and happy, for I believe no one ever had as many dear ones praying for him as I. When I look back and compare my religious privileges with those of others, I shudder to think how obstinately wicked I must be to resist such influences.

But I must stop scribbling, for my little desk and private papers are not safe here, and should be sent to the rear ; so I must bid you good night and shut up my desk.

God bless you, my own darling sister. Thank dear T—— for his kind letter. You and he are just my ideal of true patriots. Although your knowledge of

"the situation" is not sufficiently detailed to enable you to see as *we* do many causes for our want of success in the wickedness and selfishness of our leaders, yet it is as well you should not know — and I trust that God will save our country, notwithstanding our national sins.

Don't worry about me. If we are, as I suppose, on the eve of another battle, the same strong arm that has thus far kept me, will keep me still.

This letter is all "I," but my darling will pardon it.

Your loving brother,

HOWARD.

IN TRENCHES NEAR PETERSBURG, July 18, 1864.

MY OWN H—— :— I scratched you a miserable little note last night while awaiting an attack of the enemy which did not "come off," so to-night I will drop you a line to tell you that I am all right — have not been fighting, but am terribly homesick. All this makes me blue — but it is the Lord's will, and *must be right*.

. I came so near being ordered to Washington yesterday with my regiment that it is quite a disappointment to me that the order was countermanded. It seems that a regiment of heavy artillery was ordered by Grant to go to Washington for permanent duty on the fortifications. As my regiment has been more hardly used and suffered more than any other, General Meade decided to send it, and was just issuing the order, when an order came from Grant, countermanding it until it can be ascertained whether or not one of the regiments now there with the Sixth Corps will remain. Wasn't it a narrow escape?

I hear that General Meade spoke of retaining me here as a brigade commander in case he sends my regiment, but do not know how that would have been. There is nothing new with us. Continual shooting at each other by the sharp-shooters with every now

and then a twelve pounder solid shot, or twenty-four pounder mortar shell tearing through my head-quarters making everything ring again. I have had to put up a little fortification to protect my horses, for the rascals shoot them right in front of my tent.

Major Shonnard leaves for home in the morning. O, how I envy him, and how delighted his mother will be to get him safe home. He has done his duty as a soldier in a fearless manner and carries with him the respect of all his brother officers. . . . He is a splendid fellow, and has proved himself a true friend of mine. . . . I must to bed, my darling, for it is midnight. Do you read the chapter every night? Don't forget to pray for me, precious! Keep *very near* to the dear Lord. May He bless you with his choicest blessings. Kiss my boy for his papa.

TRENCHES NEAR PETERSBURG, *Saturday Evening,* }
July 23, 1864. }

MY DEAREST PAPA: — I am so “chock full,” of good news to-night that I must give my dear ones the benefit of it. I enclose an official copy of telegram received to-day from Sherman, which speaks for itself. He is doing wonders.

I consider Atlanta to be of more importance, in a military point of view, than Richmond.

Next, General A. J. Smith has thrashed the rebs soundly upon the same ground where our General Sturgis was defeated recently; and that will perhaps please you all equally well with all this good news.

Lastly, my regiment has been ordered to Washington to take charge of the defenses there. I received the order this morning, and am getting the regiment in readiness to move so soon as the Sixth Army Corps returns to this army. I learn that General Grant ordered General Meade to send one regiment of heavy artillery to Washington, and General Meade said that as my regi-

ment had done infantry duty so long and so well, and had suffered so heavily, it deserved the first chance for rest and recuperation. I cannot help feeling pleased; for coming as the order does, unsolicited, and as a kind of reward of merit, it does us no harm as soldiers, and is very acceptable.

My command in Washington will be quite extensive; a brigade covering a line of works of about eight miles. Truly the Lord has been wonderfully kind to me.

I at first thought that after getting my regiment nicely fixed in garrison, I would apply for a command in this army again, as I am told that General Meade will give me a brigade here if I wish it; but on second thought, I feel that I ought not to do so. I have shown my willingness to fight, I hope, when it has been my duty, and the Lord has preserved me miraculously. Now that He has opened this way of serving my country with equal honor, and greater safety, it seems hardly right to *volunteer* anything, simply to gain military reputation. Write me what you think.

I have been to head-quarters to-day, and find that every one thinks that my regiment has earned this respite and that I ought to take it. Won't H—— be glad?

My regiment, officers and men, are delighted, and have been cutting such capers on their breastworks that the Johnnies wanted to know what was the matter.

The rebs are getting very sulky over the news from Atlanta. They have forbidden all intercourse between their men and ours, and are now amusing themselves by throwing a shell occasionally into our lines; and perhaps suspecting that I am about leaving they throw them unpleasantly near my head-quarters.

Please send this letter to H—— for I cannot write her to-night, and if she only learns that I am coming to Washington, she will be so pleased as not to care how she gets the information. I will write to her to-morrow if I live.

This letter is as usual, all about myself; my desire to tell you what I know will interest you, being my only apology.

God bless you all! How can we thank Him enough for his wonderful kindness to us.

Good-night, my dearest papa. Love to darling mamma and all. Ever your loving son, HOWARD.

BEFORE PETERSBURG, *July 29, 1864.*
Friday Night, one o'clock.

MY PRECIOUS, DARLING WIFIE:— I have just received orders to move in an hour (at two o'clock) into position, preparatory to the grand assault upon the enemy's line.

Burnside with the Ninth and Eighteenth Corps is to make the assault, supported by our corps. My brigade has been selected as the leading one of the Fifth Corps.

I had hoped that on your account I might leave for Washington before another fight, but it is God's will that it should be otherwise. He will take care of me as He has always done. Don't be worried, my own little precious wife! I will get word to you immediately after the fighting is over.

If it should be the Lord's will that anything should happen to me — always trust Him for everything. Let nothing weaken your trust in Him. Bring my boy up to know and love Him.

Never forget, my own, sweet wife, how dearly I have loved you. You are my best earthly blessing.

Good-by, my darling! I will write to-morrow night, God willing. I trust I may date my letter in Petersburg.

May the dear Master bless you. *Trust Him, darling, and He will. . . .*

Gradually advancing their lines and strengthening them as they went, when the system of works

was completed, the 30th July was fixed upon to make an assault on the enemy's position. To further this *coup-de-main*, under the direction of General Burnside, a mine was dug under a fort, the destruction of which, it was thought, would secure the fall of Petersburg.

This appears to have been a wretchedly mismanaged affair. There was lamentable error somewhere, and the sacrifice of many brave fellows was the consequence.

The explosion of the mine was the signal for a simultaneous outburst of artillery fire, all along the line, from the various batteries. The earth shook for miles around, under this terrific fire. The enemy's guns were soon silenced.

When the assaulting column reached the fort, it was found to have been converted by the explosion into a huge crater.

In the men poured without hesitation, and pressed on till they were met by the deadly fire of the enemy. Here they stood at bay. The several divisions pressing in became mixed up; and a scene of disorder and confusion commenced which seems to have continued to the end of the conflict. The withering fire of the enemy made frightful havoc. For two hours our brave men fought desperately, but, being unsupported, at length withdrew in utter confusion.

Colonel Kitching expresses the feeling of the army at "this miserable affair." The whole country, which had been filled with rumors of the

fall of Petersburg, was chagrined and saddened by the issue.

IN CAMP, NEAR PETERSBURG, }
 Tuesday Evening, August 2, 1864. }

MY PRECIOUS MAMMA :—I commenced a letter to you last evening, but after writing a page or so, I found that it was too soon after our recent disgraceful failure for me to write to any one, and that I was saying many things that an officer commanding a brigade ought not to say; so I tore my letters up, said my prayers, and went to bed.

I see by the papers just received, that everybody at home was led to believe for a time that our assault upon Petersburg had been successful, and that we were in possession of the place, and, indeed, so we should have been, had there been any management of affairs upon the field.

At eleven o'clock Friday night, I received orders to move my brigade at two o'clock to the front of General Burnside's line, and then go into position, preparatory to supporting him in his assault at three o'clock. My brigade was to lead the division. I did as ordered, and at three o'clock received orders to remain in position till further orders. At 4.45, A. M., the mine under the enemy's battery in our front was blown up, and at that signal the artillery along our whole line opened upon the enemy. Such an infernal noise was never heard before by mortal ears. Gettysburg, Malvern Hill, and Antietam would not compare with it. At that moment the infantry should have charged, but did not move till some time after, giving the enemy time to recover from their surprise and prepare to resist our assault.

When the storming party did move, it was composed of blacks, instead of white soldiers, as it should have been, and in consequence the work was but half done. Still our column pushed into two of the enemy's lines of works, and if our division had been ordered to sup-

port them, all would have gone well; but for some reason no order came to Warren to put us in, and the Ninth Corps was driven back.

Never, in my opinion, has the army had such a chance of complete success; never has such a chance been so completely thrown away.

I had watched *my* men with considerable anxiety before the attack opened, for they having learned that they had been ordered to Washington, I feared that they might be unwilling to go into another fight, if they could help it; but on the contrary, I never saw men so eager for a fight. I could scarcely keep them quiet. Every man could see the enemy's weakness and just what was required to enable us to rout them completely; and yet no order came, and we were forced to lie still and see our men fall back. The loss in my command was very slight: one officer and seven men, all day.

The entire army is terribly chagrined at the "fizzle;" a board of officers is investigating the matter now, and I trust that the responsible party may suffer.

No one knows anything of our future movements. You will all be very much disappointed that I have not, as yet, left for Washington, and, indeed, I do not think that I shall go at all now. The programme has changed so materially that I do not think my regiment will be sent. You may imagine my disappointment, particularly now. . . . But it must be "all well" or it would not be so, and I endeavor to be contented. My chief disappointment is on account of H—— and my dear ones at home. Your dear letters, from yourself, H——, and Louise, reached me last night; all so joyous at my being ordered to Washington, and now if I should not go, your disappointment will be in proportion.

God's will be done. He has so wonderfully cared for me through three years of peril, He can surely be trusted implicitly now.

You ask about my health. I have not been very

well for more than a month, but did not desire Shonnard to say anything about it at home. . . . Severe exercise or excitement have been very painful at times, but since we have been in the trenches I have been able to rest a great deal, and as I am evidently improving, I did not say anything of it in my letters, for I knew it would do no good, but only worry you all if you thought me ill.

I am very anxious about you, darling. . . . I am very glad you are going to Oscawana for a time, for you always appear to improve there. Don't get lost in the woods again!

I am so crazy to see the new home. Every one writes of its beauty and comfort, till I think it must be a little paradise. Any *home* would be a paradise to me now, after my three years soldiering.

. . . . How I would like to go fishing with papa at the Lake! But it is late, and I must stop scribbling. If you can read this, I shall be much surprised; I write such a dreadful hand — but then all *great* men do!

Thank you again, my darling mamma, for your kind, loving letters. Give my love to all, and with a heart full for yourself and dear papa, I am, your loving son,

HOWARD.

TO MAJOR SHONNARD.

CAMP NEAR PETERSBURG, *Wednesday Evening,* }
August 3, 1864. }

MY DEAR FRED:— Your most kind and interesting letter has just been received and read with great pleasure. I note all you say about the best interests of the regiment, and will endeavor to reply at length to-morrow. I have only a few minutes now.

You have ere this learned of the failure of our assault upon Petersburg on Saturday last. I am sorry to confess it, but it was truly the most disgraceful “fizzle” of the whole campaign. Everything was

planned well and wisely, and up to a certain point succeeded, but the assaulting party did not do their duty, or the works would have been ours.

The negroes behaved badly, and yet in my opinion if our division had been ordered in, we would have carried everything. I speak of *our* division because we were lying all ready to support the storming party, and from our position just in front of the exploded mine could see everything. General Warren selected the third brigade to lead our division and I went into position at three o'clock, just where Burnside's corps crossed our works to go out.

The state of the case was so simple, the enemy's weakness so apparent, that our men were just bewitched to push forward, and it was with the greatest regret that the order suspending offensive operations was received. I wish that I had time to give you a detailed account of the whole affair, but I have not. The artillery fire on our side was in my opinion, and I believe has been generally pronounced, the most magnificent ever witnessed. The enemy's fire was completely subdued, and had the infantry done half as well, Petersburg would have been ours. However, there is no philosophy in bemoaning our ill success now; the only way is to *atone* for it. The loss in my brigade was slight; one officer, Gilberts, slightly, and seven men wounded. A court of inquiry is in progress for the purpose of fixing the responsibility of our defeat, and I earnestly hope that the guilty party may suffer.

It would have done your soldier's heart good, my dear fellow, to have seen the Sixth Artillery throughout that whole day. Moved suddenly at two o'clock in the morning, without coffee, they all thought that we were on our road to Washington; and when I told them that on the contrary they were to *lead* our division in a desperate assault on the enemy's works, in place of the demoralization which I feared on account of their disap-

pointment, there was nothing but manifestations of joy at our having been selected for the work, and the most evident determination to do it *thoroughly*. The only disappointment appeared to be that they were not permitted to retrieve the day with the bayonet.

Fred, it is a *noble* regiment. I am well pleased that brave Crosby is doing so well. He well deserves his promotion. Many thanks, my kind friend, for your sanguine expressions regarding my promotion, but I am not so sanguine. . . . Having tried to do my duty to and with my command, I am willing to leave all else with One who has already blessed me beyond, far beyond my deserts, or even hopes.

I trust that ere this you have been able to meet my mother and sisters. They are most anxious to see you. Write whenever you can; your kind letters are most grateful to me, I assure you. Remember me kindly to your parents, and believe me as ever,

—
Your sincere friend,

JOHN HOWARD KITCHING.

P. S. Regan, of "E" company, was wounded in the foot, May 30th and sent to hospital. From what I can learn, he was hit *slightly*.

NEAR PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA, August 7th, 1864.

MY OWN SWEET WIFE:—This has been a terribly uncomfortable day. The heat is intense, the dust suffocating, and the flies unbearable. No one ever experienced such torment from flies since the plague of the Egyptians. Not such flies as we have at home, but great green chaps that bite like rattle-snakes, and stick like glue! We can scarcely eat except before daylight, and after dark, and as to obtaining a wink of sleep, it is quite out of the question.

I have been terribly homesick to-day. I always have a longing for home and my darlings, but sometimes it becomes so strong that for the time being it almost unfits me for my duties. . . .

Everybody has been *blue* since our terrible "fiasco" on the 30th. The campaign has virtually ended without our capturing Richmond or indeed gaining any decided advantage, which amounts to a sacrifice of all the noble men who have fallen since we crossed the Rapidan.

What Grant proposes to do *now*, nobody can imagine. We certainly need one hundred and fifty thousand men in addition to those we now have, to enable us to take the offensive. Had we been successful on the third, everything would have been different. We ought to have captured at least ten thousand prisoners and all the artillery that they have here, which would not only have weakened them numerically, but would have served to discourage them immensely as well as to encourage *our* people, and promote volunteering. . . . I do not pretend to cast the blame upon any individual, for I do not know enough of the orders issued during the day; but *somebody* is to blame.

Since the attack, my brigade has been lying in our present camp in the woods, just out of range of the enemy's missiles except now and then a large thirty-pounder, which comes whir-r-r-ing along. The lines are very quiet, however, most of the time. . . . How much we shall have to talk about, if God spares me to return to you. I really feel ten years older than I did before this campaign. Responsibility and constant care make one grow old very rapidly.

I wonder how you have been occupied, to-day, darling? I have been reading over Theodore's little "Fountain of Living Waters," and love it more than ever. Papa in his last letter inclosed some little scraps from a religious paper — they interested me so much that I inclose them.

We have very little opportunity for religious meetings now, as when the command is not in the front line, a large proportion is away on fatigue duty, building batteries, etc. Last Sunday we had church under the

trees, and Mr. C. preached a first-rate practical sermon, to a most attentive congregation. The men think everything of Mr. C., and well they may. He has been most faithful and kind. . . .

FIFTH ARMY CORPS, *August 9th, 1864.*

DEAR PAPA:— I inclose check, my wages from “Uncle Samuel” for the month of July. Heavy pay, is it not, for living in a hole in the ground and being shot at daily by “Johnny Reb.” . . . It may be the last full month’s pay I shall ever receive. Who can tell? . . .

I inclose official copy of telegram received last night from Department of the Gulf. The news is good, particularly as it comes through rebel sources. I am anxious to learn how the “Tecumseh” was sunk. There is nothing new here. . . . Please tell Mr. Charters that his friend, Lieutenant George D. Hyatt, died of congestion of the lungs in my hospital, soon after I last wrote him. We sent his body home.

I trust that dear mamma is better. Give my best love to all. God bless you, dear papa.

Your loving son,

HOWARD.

There has just happened a terrible accident here. The large ordnance warehouse at City Point blew up to-day, killing and wounding a large number of men, and destroying a large amount of property. The explosion shook the earth about here for fifteen miles.

Mr. C—— had a most providential escape. He was in the express office at City Point when the explosion occurred. The whole building, as well as all the buildings in the neighborhood were destroyed; men standing beside him were literally blown to pieces, and yet he escaped with only some slight bruises, and being stunned for a time. Truly the ninety-first Psalm is verified literally with those “who abide in the secret place of the

Most High." "The destruction that wasteth at noon-day, does not come nigh them."

I have just received a truly characteristic telegram from General Sherman, a copy of which I inclose.

Yours lovingly, HOWARD.

COPY OF DESPATCH FROM GENERAL SHERMAN.

NEAR ATLANTA, *August 7th*, 8.30 P. M.

We keep hammering away here all the time, and there is no peace inside or outside of Atlanta. To-day, Schofield got round the flank of the line assaulted yesterday by General Reilly's brigade, turned it, and gained the ground, with all our dead and wounded. We continued to press on that flank, and brought on a noisy, but not a bloody engagement. We drove the enemy behind his main breastworks, which cover the railroad from Atlanta to East Point. We captured a good many of the skirmishers, which are of their best troops, for their militia hug the breastworks close.

I do not deem it prudent to extend more to the right, but will push forward daily by parallels and make the inside of Atlanta too hot to be endured. I have sent to Chattanooga for two thirty-pounder parrotts, with which we can pick out almost any house in town.

I am too impatient for a seige, but I don't know but here is as good a place to fight it out as further inland. One thing is certain — whether we go inside of Atlanta or not, it will be a used up community by the time we are done with it.

[Signed.]

W. T. SHERMAN,
Major-general.

In his last letter from the trenches in front of Petersburg,* he writes : —

I have learned in the army that it will not do for

any one who professes to have experienced the love of Christ to conceal the fact. He must show his colors *boldly*. Not only so, but he must stand by them. It is just so *everywhere*. He or she who dares not come out on the Lord's side, before the world, although professing Him in the church, will possess the respect of no one, not even those who are openly impious. And more than all, they are more guilty in the Lord's sight than the open sinner.

What Howard Kitching learned in the army, — that a soldier of the cross, to be respected, must show his colors boldly and stand by them, — is a truth confirmed by the experience of every Christian. The coward, of whatever description, is an object of scorn; whereas there is a kind of reverence for bravery, even when men are inclined to wish it a better cause. And when a man has once declared himself the disciple of Christ, the world expects him to act up to the declaration; and though it may despise his principles, and hate his preciseness, it will think the worse of him in proportion as he seems ashamed of his religion, and the better in proportion as he is firm in its maintenance and display.

The solution to the problem of the Apostles' boldness before their enemies was, "They had been with Jesus." And so must we be with Jesus, if we would bear good testimony for Him in the presence of the world. To have heard of Him, to have read of Him, is not enough; we must *be with Him*; walk with Him in a consenting will, love Him as having loved us, be joined to Him in

one spirit. Thus alone can consistent testimony be borne to Him by his people. They who have been with Jesus fear not the pomp, nor the scoffs, nor the threats of men. The winds may blow and the floods arise, and the rains come and beat on that house, but it shall not fall, for it is founded on a rock. A man's religion before the world is one of those things by which his genuineness and reality as a Christian are most readily *tested*.

We cannot put on this character. It must result from the gradual accretion of many experiences, many trials, many failures, many prayers, years spent under the eye and within the sound of the voice of the Saviour. We cannot build it up on the shifting sands of fashion, or on the soft and tempting soil of self-indulgence; its foundations must be on the holy hills, or it will never stand.

And it is a comfort to think that many a soldier who lies buried in these places, made desolate by the ruthless tramp of contending armies, — poor, and weak, and mean, and unlearned, many of them may have been, their names unknown except by a few comrades, — still there is cheer in the thought that they shall stand in the Great Roll-call, unabashed, with One to answer for them; their names known in heaven, for they are written in the Lamb's book of life. They loved their Redeemer here — they walked with Him, they served Him, they confessed Him, — and He will not deny them *there*.

DEFENSES OF WASHINGTON.

“ I say to thee — do thou repeat
To the first man thou mayest meet
In lane, highway, or open street, —

“ That he and we and all men move
Under a canopy of love,
As broad as the blue sky above ;

“ That doubt and trouble, fear and pain
And anguish, all are shadows vain,
That death itself shall not remain ;

“ That weary deserts we may tread,
A dreary labyrinth may thread,
Through dark ways underground be led ;

“ Yet, if we will one Guide obey,
The dreariest path, the darkest way
Shall issue out in heavenly day ;

“ And we, on divers shores now cast,
Shall meet, our perilous voyage past,
All in our Father’s house at last.”

DEAN TRENCH.

CHAPTER VIII.

DEFENSES OF WASHINGTON.

“For now we see through a glass, darkly ; but then face to face : now I know in part ; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

1 Cor. xiii. 12.

HARD pressed as Lee found himself in his beleagured lines behind Petersburg, he resolved on a plan of relief which had before proved so successful. This was to make a diversion in favor of his own army by such a menace against Washington as would compel Grant to part with so many troops from the army of the Potomac that offensive operations against Petersburg must cease.

The force detached by Lee for this expedition consisted of a body of twelve thousand men under General Early. Following the beaten track of invasion, Early marched rapidly down the Shenandoah Valley.

From the peculiar situation of that valley in a military point of view, it was always open to a detached force to make incursions across the frontier of the loyal States, whether for the purpose of plunder or of a diversion in favor of the main Confederate army, by a menace against Washington.

“The only force at hand with which to dispute Early’s advance, was a body of a few thousand

foot artillerists, hundred days' men and invalids under General Wallace, then in command at Baltimore. But on learning of the irruption of the enemy across the Potomac, General Grant detached the Sixth Corps from the Army of the Potomac, and forwarded it by transports to Washington. It happened, too, at this juncture, that the Nineteenth Corps, under General Emory, which had been ordered from New Orleans, after the failure of the Red River expedition, had just arrived in Hampton Roads. Without debarking it was sent forward to follow the Sixth.

The advanced division of the Sixth Corps under General Ricketts having arrived, General Wallace, with that added to his heterogeneous force, moved forward to meet Early, and took position on the Monocacy. Here he received battle on the 8th, and though he was discomfited, the stand he made gained time that was of infinite value."

On the 11th, Early's van halted before the fortifications covering the northern approaches to Washington. By afternoon his infantry came up and showed a strong line in front of Fort Stevens. Early had an opportunity to dash into the city, the works being very slightly defended. Great was the panic in Washington, and the alarm throughout the northern States was almost as great.

But the rebel commander hesitated and lost time, and during the day the Sixth Corps arrived, and was soon followed by the Nineteenth.

On the 12th July, a brigade of the Sixth Corps made a sally from the lines and fell upon and drove the enemy for a mile, suffering a loss, but inflicting heavier damage on the enemy. That night Early withdrew across the Potomac, pursued by General Wright, who did not overtake the enemy until he reached the Shenandoah Valley.

But though driven back, the rebel commander bivouacked in the valley, and kept up such a threatening attitude that it was found impossible to return the Sixth and Nineteenth Corps to the Army of the Potomac. No sooner was this attempted, than Early was again across the border and threatening Washington.

Colonel Kitching was ordered with his command to Washington, to take charge of the defenses of that city, and arrived there on the 16th of August.

WASHINGTON, 1ST BRIGADE, HARDIN'S DIVISION, }
22D ARMY CORPS, August 17, 1864. }

MY DEAR PAPA : — I telegraphed you yesterday of my arrival here with my command. I reported to General Augur, and was at once placed in command of this brigade.

General Augur told me that I would find things in very bad shape, and indeed I do. There has been no system in the management of the command till everything has gotten wrong end foremost. I have relieved the former staff and am trying to get matters regulated, which will keep me very busy for ten days at least, when I hope to be able to take matters easier.

The command is large, comprising thirteen forts with their garrisons, extending about eight miles. I have not yet been able to ride over my line, and see what I have jumped into.

My officers and men are delighted to get into nice barracks after living as they have. I have a little cottage, two rooms, which I can clean up, and make very comfortable. My head-quarters are about four miles from Washington City.

I am pretty well; have a bad cold, but nothing more. . . . My best love to all. I shall only have time to scribble a line now and then till I can get a little ahead of my work.

It seems so queer to be able to lie down at night in quiet, without the danger of being blown to pieces by a mortar shell. I appreciate it, I assure you. . . . You cannot imagine how I thank God in my heart for this quiet — the absence of suffering and death which has accompanied our campaign in the field. God bless you all!

Your loving son,

HOWARD.

Pardon the style of this, dear papa. My experience here now is rather worse than it was when you visited me at Harper's Ferry, when I first took command of my regiment; people running in every minute — no time for anything.

TO HIS MOTHER.

WASHINGTON, *August 18, 1864.*

. How thankful I am, darling mamma, that the Lord has seen fit to remove my command from the field for a time. They have shown by their conduct a willingness to do their duty in any capacity, and now, so long as it is necessary that some troops should be here, I am very glad that it is my command.

As I wrote papa, I am more busy just now than I ever have been in my life, but it will be so only for a week or two, till I get things running regularly. After that I expect to have a very easy time.

I am much better in health than I have been for some time : the change has done me good. I shall try to get a few days with you soon, God willing.

Poor Mr. C—— is in hospital. He is quite sick, but I hope will be better in a few days.

It seems singular indeed, to be in a city again, after the past summer's experience. How mercifully has the Lord spared me when so many of my acquaintances have lost their lives ; so many their limbs, or their health. If you, darling, were only as strong and well as I am ! I shall wait for a letter from you most anxiously.

Give my best love to all. Louise wrote me such a dear loving letter. No one was ever blessed with such dear friends as I.

God bless you, my own precious mamma.

Best love to dear papa, Theodore, and all

Yours lovingly,

HOWARD.

SUNDAY NIGHT, *August 28, 1864.*

MY OWN DARLING : — I had intended writing you a nice long letter to-day, but an opportunity offered for me to attend church in town, and as I have not been in such a long time, I went. I have just returned, having enjoyed the services very much indeed — a real good sermon, beautiful music, and the *dear old service*. I begin to feel quite civilized again. You will see by the papers that my regiment just escaped another bloody fight by leaving Peterburg when it did. The Fifth Corps has again seized the Weldon Railroad, and the Fifteenth New York Artillery, one of the regiments of my brigade, has been very much cut up, losing its commanding officer and many others.

How can we ever be sufficiently thankful to Him who has spared me in this miraculous way !

WASHINGTON, *September 5, 1864.*

MY DEAR PAPA: — General Hardin being absent, I am temporarily in command of the division, with my head-quarters here in the city.

I am getting along pretty well in this department, the only trouble being that my efficient force is too small by far for the work to be done — particularly as the works in my lines have been garrisoned by one hundred day troops, and have been suffered to get into exceedingly bad condition, requiring a great deal of extra labor to repair damages and put them in shape.

My worst trouble is that many of my officers and men are getting sick. It is invariably so, when troops return from the field into barracks. I cannot find that the locality is unhealthy, although this is the worst time of year here, from September first to the middle of October.

The men having been so long in the field, eat everything, and do everything foolish, so that my hospitals are full. . . . I feel as though it would not be a very difficult matter for me to get sick with fever, or chills, or something of the kind. I am gaping and stretching all day long; but I have taken a dozen grains of quinine daily for a few days, and feel much better this morning.

When General Hardin returns, I will try again to obtain a leave for five days, for I am so anxious to see you all, and to attend to home matters, that I am very restless indeed.

. . . . We are sending some troops to New York in anticipation of the draft; but I do not apprehend any trouble.

The news from Atlanta is glorious, is it not? O, for a decisive victory in the East!

Give my best love to darling mamma, Gussie, Louise and all. How are the little ones? Thank dear Gussie for her lovely letter and the beautiful little painting. God bless you all. Ever your loving son,

HOWARD.

FORT RENO, *September 7, 1864.*

. . . . My dear little doctor (Baker) died yesterday, after a week's illness, of typhoid fever. He had been at my head-quarters all through the campaign, and had endeared himself to all by his bravery and loveliness of character. The poor fellow never was sensible for a day after he was taken, and ran down to a mere shadow.

I am trying to get the government to allow me to issue to my men a ration of whisky and quinine daily, as a preventive against the malaria. I have been quite sick, myself, but am now quite well again.

General Hardin inspected my brigade to-day, and was so pleased that he told me that I could have my leave whenever I asked for it; so as soon as I can settle this matter of the major's, and get things in nice running order, I shall try to run home for two or three days. . .

It was one of those glorious American sunsets, which defy the richest tints of the artist and the burning words of poet to paint. As we sat looking out of the casement of our little cottage on the banks of the Hudson, river, and cliff, and distant hills, and fleecy clouds, all shimmering in the golden glow, a scene so hushed and lovely, we were led to contrast this quiet picture with the scenes of conflict and suffering through which our soldiers were passing. While thus talking, the door opened softly and Howard stood before us, with beaming face and merry laugh at our surprise.

Only hearts that have long been weary with watching for the footsteps of one long absent, hourly facing death before a watchful foe, can realize the comfort of such a meeting.

The quiet evening passed in talking over the summer campaign, and we were filled with ever deepening wonder and gratitude at his escape. He fought over for us, in his life-like way, some of the desperate battles of the Wilderness, giving us a more graphic idea of the fearful struggles in that dreary region than we ever had before, and such glimpses of brave young Christian lives that ended there, that it saddened us to think no record should ever be had of them.

A great change we saw had come over Howard Kitching. He was the same bright spirit as ever, and the old sunny smile still passed at times over his handsome face. But he had grown older, and his look was more often than before grave and quiet, and a sense of deep responsibility evidently weighed upon him.

How many boys, just from their mothers' side, grew at once into manhood amid these scenes which taxed every energy of every man in the army.

The following day we joined the family at the lovely lake of Oscawana. Howard was obliged to visit Albany on business, but returned to the lake at midnight, sick and weary. While we chafed his cold hands and a hot supper was preparing for him, our thoughts and conversation turned upon the three years that he had been exposed to cold, and want, and hardships of every kind, with no gentle hand to minister to him in sickness, or care for his comfort, and we began to feel that we could not spare him again.

Late into the night we sat around him, urging him to leave the service. We pressed the fact that he had done his duty nobly, had shrunk from no sacrifice, and that now the claims of wife and child and mother were paramount, and from other family considerations, it was his *duty* to remain at home. There were those who needed the support of his strong arm, and now that the Lord had spared him so wonderfully, it seemed but right that he should return to other duties, and allow his place to be filled by young men who had fewer claims upon them.

Howard listened sadly to all our arguments, and they had weight enough to depress and perplex him, but the *soldier's* heart was in the forefront of the conflict; and the thought of staying at home, before the day of final victory, seemed so painful, that we parted sorrowfully, grieving much that we had said anything on the subject.

The next day was the last Sunday we were all to join in the beautiful service of our church. The pathos of its soul-subduing Litany never appeared deeper, the appropriateness of its tender petitions never more heartfelt. We met, a small congregation, in the parlor of the hotel. The preacher took for his text "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you." In speaking of the majesty of the Lord who careth for the sinner, he quoted the eloquent words of the poet:

"He rides unseen on the hurrying storm;
He sits on the whirlwind's car;

He wraps in the clouds his awful form,
 And travels from star to star.
 A thousand messengers wait his will,
 And a million heralds fly,
 And their Sovereign's high behest fulfill
 Through a vast eternity."

And yet, though so exalted, the preacher added, *He careth for you. Himself careth.* He hath delegated to angels the ministering to your wants, but He hath not divested Himself of his love for you. Having loved you with an everlasting love — having written your poor name on the eternal pages of his book of life — having drawn you, in his own manner, through the love of Jesus, to Himself, quickening and regenerating, washing and sanctifying by Jesus' blood and Jesus' spirit, He has put you among his children. He has prepared and He destines for you an eternal home. But you are yet a poor sinner in the wilderness, journeying onward — and in the wilderness you have wants and sorrows, and dangers, and fears and conflicts. But amid them all the Father is caring for his child! And lest your knees grow feeble and your heart faint, lest necessity felt and feared daunt you, Himself hath given you this assurance — "I care for you — I am with you — I *will* care for you and be with you, never leaving, never forsaking."

Yes, children of the heavenly King, you who are journeying homeward to your Father's courts, there is no season, there is no circumstance, there is no place, but He careth for you: hovering

around you as the eagle over her young, watching you as the good shepherd his flock, encircling you, as the hills are around Jerusalem, loving you more tenderly than doth the mother her nursing child.

We shall never forget the wistful look of the young soldier, as he sat listening to his last sermon, nor his tearful acknowledgement of the comfort these words of assurance gave; remarking that we, who enjoyed these privileges all the time, could not half appreciate them, nor know how to sympathize with the poor fellows in the army who had no Sunday.

The last Sunday evening was spent, as so many Sunday evenings in other days had been spent, in singing old familiar hymns. The parting hymn was, by mutual consent, the favorite hymn of a sister, now in glory:

“ Be still my heart, these anxious cares
To thee are burdens, thorns and snares;
They cast dishonor on thy Lord,
And contradict his gracious word.

“ Brought safely by his hand thus far,
Why wilt thou now give place to fear?
How canst thou want, if He provide,
Or lose thy way with such a guide?

“ Though rough and thorny be the road,
It leads thee home, apace, to God;
Then count thy present trials small,
For heaven will make amends for all.”

The next two days, our last together before the great shadow fell upon us, were bright and beauti-

ful, and that lovely region lay bathed in the subdued golden light of our autumnal glory. We were out upon the lake, or wandering through the woods gathering wild flowers and the gorgeously tinted leaves of the forest, or clambering up cliffs, and he and a younger brother made the woods ring with their peals of laughter and snatches of songs. It was the holiday after the long weary school days — the buoyant sparkling spirit mellowed, not destroyed, by the faith of the Christian.

These last scenes linger in the memory and stir among the heart-strings of those who loved him.

He mounted his horse in the morning, just as the sun was tipping the hills with gold. We watched his graceful figure as he rode down the winding road — caught a last glimpse as he passed over the brow of a hill — one wave of the handkerchief and he was gone, and we saw him not again till he was brought home wounded from the field of battle.

WASHINGTON, *October 2, 1864.*

MY DEAR PAPA:— I have just received my very "honorable discharge" from the service of the United States, upon an application of my own on the ground of more than three years service. The order will be issued to-morrow, and I shall leave for New York to-morrow evening.

My reason for leaving the service at this time, you know. . . . All my friends say that I have done a very foolish thing, and perhaps I have, but I have determined after much prayerful consideration, and have *tried* to do what was best. I hope you will approve. . . . I am assured here that I can obtain a command at any

time, so if everything goes right, and the country needs me, I can return by and by. . . .

God willing, I will see you Tuesday, when we can talk matters over. I shall go to Albany Tuesday night, after which I shall return to the army for a day or two to bid my command farewell. . . .

Love to all. I am *terribly blue* at the step I have taken. Your loving son,
HOWARD.

WASHINGTON, *October 4, 1864.*

MY DEAR PAPA: — I wrote you day before yesterday, that I had received my discharge from the service by reason of more than three years service.

I made all my arrangements to go home last night, but when I went to the War Department yesterday morning, the Secretary of War revoked the order, and ordered me to report immediately with my command to General Sheridan.

It is a terrible disappointment to me, for I had struggled with myself very hard ever since my return, to decide whether I ought to be discharged at this time, and having made up my mind that it was my duty, and the order having been issued, it cut me terribly to have it revoked. It puts me in the position of a man who tried to get out of the service, but could not. . . . I cannot learn where my command is, but presume it is near Staunton by this time. I intended to leave for Harper's Ferry this morning, but could not get transportation for my horse. I shall leave to-morrow morning. I shall have a nice little ride of one hundred and sixty miles through a country full of guerrillas, after leaving Harper's Ferry. What command I shall have, or what I shall do when I get there, I cannot tell yet. . . . I shall take no baggage to the field this time; shall leave all my books, papers, and other things at the Metropolitan Hotel here, so if you should want them at any time you will know where to find them. . . . I have but

little time and cannot write to any one else now. Give my dearest love to all the loved ones. . . . God bless you all. Yours lovingly,

HOWARD.

HEAD-QUARTERS PROVISIONAL DIVISION, HARPER'S FERRY, }
October 6, 1864. }

DEAR PAPA:—I arrived here yesterday noon, and instead of being permitted to go on at once to my command, was placed in command of all troops arriving here on their way to General Sheridan.

There are about three thousand here now, belonging to the Sixth, Eighth, and Nineteenth Army corps; representing every regiment in those corps, and all sorts of officers. I am now getting them armed and organized as quickly as possible, and as soon as I get about four thousand I shall push on for Sheridan. I have organized two brigades and hope to get off on Saturday or Sunday. . . . My head-quarters are on a high bluff above the Shenandoah; prettily located, but cold and damp, nevertheless. . . .

HEAD-QUARTERS PROVISIONAL DIVISION, HARPER'S FERRY, }
October 9, 1864. }

MY DARLING LOUISE:—Your dear precious letter has been read over and over again, and would have been answered at once, but that, as you probably know, I have been so very busy, and so uncertain where I was going or what I was going to do, that I have not written to any one, save a few words to H—— and papa to let you know of my whereabouts and safety.

For two days in Washington I considered myself out of the service, and was making all my arrangements accordingly, expecting to be with you all in a day or so, when an order was issued revoking my discharge.

True to my determination expressed to you, as soon as I reached Washington, I applied for my honorable discharge on the ground of more than three years ser-

vice ; but you see that we soldiers are not permitted to return to our families even when our term of service expires. However, I am trying to think that it is all for the best, although it is a terrible disappointment to me, once having made up my mind to do it, and that it was my duty.

When I reached here on my way to the front, General Stevenson placed me in command of this division organizing for General Sheridan, and I have been working day and night to get them clothed, armed and equipped, ready for the field. I have three brigades, about two thousand each, and having been obliged to make up a staff temporarily of the officers as I found them, all strangers, you can imagine that I have had to do considerable work unaided. The command is all ready for the field and I have just issued marching orders for to-morrow morning. I hope to reach Strasburg Wednesday evening.

My future is of course very uncertain. I cannot tell what I shall do until I get to the front. . . .

My visit home was one of the pleasantest that I have had. Unfortunately, you and I had no opportunity of seeing much of each other. . . . The truth is, darling, I was very much worried and troubled while at home. I don't mean unhappy, but anxious and puzzled to know what was best to do. You know I have a great responsibility, for a young man. All the time I was home I was cogitating over the step that I took when I reached Washington, and it involved so many important considerations that I was much exercised to know what to do. It was useless to ask for advice at home, upon that particular point, for I knew that a desire to have me at home would render *home* judgment partial. . . . Here I am in an old half worn tent, no baggage, blankets laid on the grass, the weather as cold as winter ; surrounded by strangers, holding a temporary command in which I can take but little interest, and with my future

more uncertain than ever before. All this, after anticipating a winter spent with H—— and my boy.

But I am trying to think that good will result from it, although I cannot see it yet. I get fearfully blue and discouraged at times, but you and I know where to go at such times, darling! Were it not for the comfort and encouragement that we receive from above, I do not know what I should do under some of the bitter disappointments which I have suffered. . . . This has not been like Sunday, for I have been so occupied all day getting clothes and shoes for my men. How I long for Sundays at home.

Good-by, my darling sister. Thank you again for your sweet sympathizing letters. Write me whenever you can. Give my best love to dear Theodore, and believe me, my darling, as ever,

Your truly loving brother,

HOWARD.

HARPER'S FERRY, *October 9, 1864.*

DEAR PAPA:—I am still here, not having yet completed the equipment of my division. I expect to move for Winchester to-morrow morning. I am very busy. We were at work all night last night, drawing and issuing arms and clothing.

My old brigade arrived at Martinsburg on Friday, and will return to the front with me. I have ordered them to leave Martinsburg on Tuesday morning and meet me at Bunker Hill, so I shall take about seven thousand men to Sheridan. I learn this morning that Sheridan has retired to Strasburg, but do not know how reliable the information is. He has not had a fight, but simply fallen back voluntarily, after destroying the wheat in the valley. . . . I have not heard a word from home since leaving Washington. I fear my letters have gone to the front. . . . I trust you are all well. My best love to all.

Your loving son,

HOWARD.

The marks in his pocket hymn-book show that he found solace in these dark days in these beautiful lines of J. H. Newman : —

“I will lead them in paths they have not known.” — Is. xlii. 16.

“Lead, Saviour lead, amid the encircling gloom

Lead thou me on :

The night is dark, and I am far from home,

Lead thou me on.

Keep thou my feet, I do not ask to see

The distant scene — one step enough for me.

“I was not ever thus, nor prayed that thou

Should'st lead me on ;

I loved to choose and see my path, but now

Lead thou me on.

I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,

Pride ruled my will ; remember not past years.

“So long thy power hath blessed me — sure it still

Will lead me on,

O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till

The night is gone,

And, with the morn, those angel-faces smile

Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.”

THE LAST BATTLE.

“ Soon and forever the work shall be done,
The warfare accomplished, the victory won ;
Soon and forever the soldier lay down
The sword for a harp, the cross for a crown.”

CHAPTER IX.

THE LAST BATTLE.

“The night is far spent, the day is at hand.” — ROM. xiii. 12.

SHERIDAN'S army, flushed with repeated victories, lay quietly but strongly posted on the bank of Cedar Creek.

At early dawn on the morning of the 19th of October, the light so dim, struggling through a dense fog, that they could scarce distinguish friend from foe, the rebels startled them from their slumbers, with a fiendish yell, sweeping through the camp in overwhelming numbers. The surprise was complete. Colonel Kitching had barely time to buckle on his sword, seize his pistols, and mount his horse. Having only one battalion of his own regiment, he succeeded, after an almost hopeless effort, in rallying his men, and held an important road for several hours, until nine out of eleven of his officers were either killed or wounded.

One color-sergeant after another was shot down, and his troops were giving way before a wild onslaught, when Major Jones, who was greatly beloved by the regiment, fell mortally wounded. Howard Kitching spurred forward and called out, “Stop men, you will not let Jones be made a pris-

oner!" They rallied to a man, and stood their ground until their major was safely carried to the rear. We have heard Howard tell, with tears, how many brave young fellows lost their lives in the rescue of an officer they loved so well.

Just here it was, that a young color-sergeant was carried by, his life-blood ebbing fast away. With a sad but radiant face he looked up and said, "Colonel, I did the best I could!"

Colonel Kitching then reported in person to Major-general Wright, commanding the army, asking to be assigned to some command, where he could be of most service. The order he received was, "that he should rally the troops wherever he should find them," so as to delay the advance of the enemy, until a position should be found where they could make a stand.

With all the dash and energy of his character, he addressed himself to the difficult duty. He spurred among the disordered soldiery, and his clear musical voice rang out over the wild scene, as he called to them to "fall in." They soon began to rally around him and contend for every foot of ground. But the enemy was in overwhelming numbers, and the command was driven as far as the Creek, which they found blockaded by the baggage trains.

He succeeded by his influence and unwearied efforts in securing the passage of the wagons. Once across the stream the panic-struck stragglers began to rush to the rear. Again his voice was

heard above the din and confusion, the roar of musketry, and the mingled shouts of battle. In the midst of this wild tumult, facing the enemy, a minie ball crashed through his foot. Wearied and wounded he still sat his horse, and gave his orders, though now in subdued tones. He was again and again urged to leave the field, but refused until the army had taken a position where they might repel any attack of the enemy. At this moment it was that General Sheridan rode up to the front, and gave new life to the troops by the magnetism of his presence.

Satisfied that all was right now, he directed Captain Donaldson to accompany him to try and find a surgeon to dress his wound. Growing fainter and fainter from loss of blood and suffering, he was yet compelled to ride for nearly four miles to the rear, before he could obtain assistance. They then found an assistant surgeon, belonging to one of the cavalry regiments, to dress the wound, which was discovered to be so serious, that he advised the wounded officer to be carried in an ambulance to where he could obtain medical treatment without delay.

The ambulances came rumbling by in rapid succession, but were all filled with wounded men, and Colonel Kitching was unwilling to have any poor fellow disturbed to make room for him. A stretcher was then made of a piece of shelter tent and pine poles, and with the help of some stragglers he was carried several weary miles. But this

mode of transportation proved so painful, and as Howard was growing weaker and weaker, an ambulance, containing a poor soldier, mortally wounded, was stopped, and he was placed beside him, and so they reached Winchester.

Suffering as he was, he did not allow himself to be driven to the head-quarters of General Edwards until he had seen his wounded comrade safely and comfortably cared for in the hospital.

While waiting an examination of his wound in this dreary place, — a bare room, crowded to suffocation with wounded and dying officers, — the news was received of Sheridan's brilliant attack, and the total rout of the enemy. Howard looked up from his couch of suffering and exclaimed, "If this be true, I should be willing to lose another leg." The ball was safely extracted, but the surgeon advised that he should be removed away from these sad scenes, and where he could feel the sunshine of loving faces, and be nursed by loving hands.

The brave young soldier had fought his last battle, his active work was done — it had been nobly done. He had yet to pass through the harder fight of patient suffering ere the hour of victory came.

THE DISCIPLINE OF SUFFERING.



The way is dark, my Father! Cloud on cloud
Is gathering thickly o'er my head, and loud
The thunders roar above me. See, I stand
Like one bewildered! Father, take my hand,
And through the gloom
Lead safely home
Thy child!

The day goes fast, my Father! and the night
Is drawing darkly down. My faithless sight
Sees ghostly visions. Fears, a spectral band,
Encompass me. O Father! take my hand,
And from the night
Lead up to light
Thy child!

The way is long, my Father! and my soul
Longs for the rest and quiet of the goal;
While yet I journey through this weary land,
Keep me from wandering. Father, take my hand;
Quickly and straight
Lead to heaven's gate
Thy child!

The way is dark, my child ! but leads to light.
I would not always have thee walk by sight.
My dealings now thou canst not understand.
I meant it so ; but I will take thy hand,
 And through the gloom
 Lead safely home
 My child !

The day goes fast, my child ! But is the night
Darker to me than day ? In me is light !
Keep close to me, and every spectral band
Of fears shall vanish. I will take thy hand,
 And through the night
 Lead up to light
 My child !

The way is long, my child ! But it shall be
Not one step longer than is best for thee ;
And thou shalt know, at last, when thou shalt
 stand
Safe at the goal, how I did take thy hand,
 And quick and straight
 Lead to heaven's gate
 My child !

CHAPTER X.

THE DISCIPLINE OF SUFFERING.

“There came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

“And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.” — ST. LUKE ix. 34, 35.

A TELEGRAPHIC dispatch from General Sheridan, on Thursday, October 20, announced “Victory in the Valley.” “We have again been favored by great victory — a victory won from disaster by the gallantry of our officers and men.” “I have to regret the loss of many valuable officers killed and wounded; among them Colonel Joseph Thorburn, killed; Colonel J. Howard Kitching, wounded; Colonel R. G. McKenzie, wounded severely but would not leave the field.”

A few hours later came a telegram from Howard, saying that he was only wounded slightly, would come home as soon as possible.

The first painful shock soon gave way to a feeling of intense relief and thankfulness that the precious life was spared — and in the hours of suspense that followed, we tried to believe that this, too, might be a blessing in disguise; a slight wound that would give him back to us again, and keep him safe from further danger.

We were ill prepared for the sad surprise that awaited us. We went on in the night train, reaching Baltimore an hour after midnight. With beating hearts and noiseless steps, we sought his room, anticipating a joyful meeting. A tall figure started up from the darkness at the door of his room.

"O, 'dis de Colonel's sister! Glad to see you, Miss Louise. Massa Fred, too. De doctor say if you come, you not to be let in—de Colonel too bad to see anybody."

We sat in the darkness with the faithful negro, and waited. Presently his father, who had reached Baltimore by a previous train, came to us, and from him we learned how Howard's thoughtful love had dictated the telegram on the battle-field, to save us the shock of knowing the truth at once. There was reason enough for our deepest anxiety.

We left Baltimore early in the morning. His surgeon, and his faithful friend, Captain Donaldson, watched over him with the tenderness of brothers. Everything was done that could be done to alleviate the suffering of that weary journey.

The President of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad had most kindly prepared an entire car for our use—having the seats removed, and every possible arrangement made which could add in any way to our comfort, personally superintending everything, that there might be no confusion or delay.

Most touching was the respect and thoughtful

kindness manifested throughout the day. While we stood around the stretcher at the station, trying to shield him from the cold wind, an Irish woman with a baby in her arms looked over his sister's shoulder. Seeing the still rosy cheeks, and bright curls, she wiped away the tears with the corners of her apron, and said, "Och, an its dreadful! such a lovely young man as that!" and then whispered "Has he a mother? O, an it's the pity for her, poor thing."

All day long there were whispered questions, and words of sympathy — cologne water, and fruits and other little delicacies offered. Two or three times a fellow-traveller would come beside him with a cheery, hopeful word — some allusion to the glorious victory of the day before — once or twice a "God bless you, Colonel! you are suffering in a glorious cause."

May He who has promised never to forget "the cup of cold water," abundantly reward every loving look and word that sent a ray of sunshine through the gloom of that dark day.

At a late hour, Saturday night, we reached the Metropolitan hotel, New York, where his mother was waiting his arrival.

When Howard saw her anxious, pallid face bending over him as he lay exhausted upon his stretcher, he looked up with a bright smile, and forgetting his sufferings, with a cheery voice, tried in every way to allay her fears and give her hope for the future.

We draw a veil over the weeks that followed — days and nights of weary suffering, with no moment of relief or rest. "I tell you what, darling," he said suddenly one night, "this is a great deal harder work than marching, or fighting, either!"

The strength and endurance that had been proved on many a battle-field, many a weary night march, and in the scorching heat of the deadly rifle-pits, was to be put to still severer test, before the final victory.

His sister said, "It is always a great deal harder to suffer than to work. It requires more grace; and therefore, I suppose, we can glorify the Lord a great deal more by patient endurance than by active service. At any rate, darling, you have the promise, 'My grace is sufficient for thee.'"

"Yes," he said, "it always *has* been."

Then they talked for a little while of the meaning of that familiar word, "a soldier of Christ," how little they had ever before realized its depth of meaning — all that it implied of single-hearted devotion, implicit obedience, entire self-sacrifice. How little we knew as Christians, of that readiness to suffer any hardships, endure any privation, counting no sacrifice too great, even life itself, in *our* glorious cause.

The "Silent Comforter" was hung where the first rays of morning light would fall upon it, and often after a weary night of suffering, the text for the day seemed manna from heaven — the very portion his soul required — a fresh draught

from the Fountain of Living Waters. Many a sweet talk we had at early dawn, when his eye first rested on the words of comfort and peace.

On the fourteenth of November, at Yonkers, his little daughter was born. When the first agitation of hearing the tidings was passed, he whispered, "O, isn't it a blessing? I am *so* thankful. Now H—— will have a dear little daughter to comfort her when I am gone." Then first we knew that he thought his recovery doubtful — and although we tried in every way to reassure him, increasing weakness, and other alarming symptoms, convinced us that there was reason enough for his forebodings. That evening, the surgeons, in consultation, decided that amputation could no longer be postponed without endangering his life. The decision was told him, tenderly and cheerfully, with many assurances of his speedy recovery. He talked with the surgeons, in his usual calm, courteous way, but when they were gone and the room was still, we saw that the shadow was still upon his heart; it darkened over us all — we could not but think perhaps it was the shadow of death.

The physicians decided that a day must elapse, to try by stimulants to revive his failing strength. It was a day of clouds and darkness. Reduced by pain and long confinement, his nervous system was utterly unstrung, and his courage and fortitude gave way. It seemed impossible for him to become quite reconciled to the loss of his foot. His natural dread of the operation was very great, and many

times he said, he must beg the surgeon to try to save it, evidently fearing that it might be sacrificed to save prolonged suffering.

The night before the operation the shadow of thick darkness was over the weary one. He was restless and feverish and faint with anxiety and pain. The enemy of souls was on the watch at such an hour. His mother tried to soothe and lull him to sleep, by repeating familiar hymns and Bible verses. At length, as if quite unable to repress the agony of feeling, he stretched out his arms and drawing her down close beside him, resting his face against hers, he burst into tears, saying "O! mamma! darling, it is of no use. I believe Jesus Himself has forsaken me. I have been such a sinner. I am so wretched. I cannot come up to the dreadful to-morrow. I am so weak, so miserable. And then as if recollecting himself, he added, "Mamma, dear, you know I am no coward, I never was afraid to do my duty, but I am so sick."

His mother sought to calm him by reminding him of Jesus' power and love, and dwelling on the unchangeableness of Him, whose promise runs, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in nowise cast out."

In desponding tones he said: "O! He has forsaken me, I cannot pray."

Again she who sat beside him, reminded him of Christ's faithfulness and the unfailing nature of the promises, and repeated those blessed words "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." For a

few moments the cloud lingered on his pale face but a sweet smile chased it away, the enemy was beaten back, and kissing his mother, he said with a quiet, assured voice, "That is so. What would I ever have done without you, mamma!"

In the morning of that sad day, the following note, from one he loved, was read to him :

Tuesday Evening, November 15, 1864.

MY DEAREST HOWARD : — Though not present with you to-morrow, I shall be with you in spirit and in the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, very near to you, as at the mercy seat I ask the Lord to give you grace and strength and sunshine, in what seems a dark passage.

The earnest prayers from so many loving hearts, going up for you now, will bring a blessing, and you will yet see love, the tenderest love, written all over this trial.

Do not worry your mind or heart with misgivings about the past, or present, or future. Look away from human instrumentalities altogether, and believe that every circumstance is ordered by Him who watches the falling of a sparrow. Leave everything with the dear Lord who has made you his own dear child, and lie in his arms quietly and listen to those sweet words of his, we read together this morning. "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee. The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace, both now and evermore.

With deepest love and tenderest sympathy yours,

It was thought advisable to remove Howard to another room before the amputation, that entire

change of scene and fresher air, might enable him to shake off the low fever which was wasting his strength.

A cheerful, sunny room was prepared for him — everything made to look as bright and pleasant as possible — but it was a very sad, weary face that looked around upon it all. His eye rested upon the text his mother had hung opposite the bed. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire thou shall not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee; *for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.*"

"Fear not; I will not fail nor forsake thee." With such a look of surprise he said, "O mamma, what a comfort! that that should be the text for to-day. It seems almost like Jesus speaking;" but there was not the look of peace and quiet trust we longed to see. We felt that there was a dark shadow on his heart. The moment he was left alone with his sister, he grasped her hand, and with a look of intense anxiety and distress, said, "Darling, if I die this morning, do you think I can be saved?" After a moment's silent prayer she said, —

"Why Howy, I have no more doubt of it than that you and I are here now."

"O, that is because you don't know. You don't know anything about what a sinner I have been. You think I have been good, but I have not. I

have been dreadfully wicked; if you *knew*, you wouldn't think I could be saved at all."

"O, Howy, after Jesus has been your precious Saviour all these years, you are not going to distrust Him now! You know his blood cleanseth from *all* sin. However you have wandered, He is so glad to receive you back again — He will forgive it *all*."

He shook his head sadly. "No, L——, not such sins as mine, — you don't know."

She said, "My darling — this is Satan's work. He always comes at just such times, to torment us with our sins, and keep us from looking to Jesus. Whatever you have been, Jesus is ready to receive you *now*, and forgive you freely. He says "Him that cometh unto me, I will *in nowise* cast out."

"But it was so dreadful in me — I will tell you — and then you will know. That morning, you know, at Cedar Creek, when the rebels rushed through my camp — it was awful — we could hardly tell friend from foe. I had only a few of my own men, all those mixed regiments — they didn't know me, and I could not manage them like my own brigade. I tried every way to rally them. We were making a desperate stand, when some teamsters and other fellows came rushing across the field, enough to make a panic — and *an oath* escaped me!"

His friend Captain Donaldson had come in and sat down beside him. "Donny," said he, "did you ever hear me swear before?"

"*Never*, Colonel."

"It was dreadful, — I don't know how I could have done it — it must have been Satan — but I was so excited," and again came the eager whisper, "Do you really think Jesus can forgive *that*?"

"But you know, Howy, 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin.' Suppose that you have never loved Jesus at all — never tried to serve Him — have sinned against Him all your life. You are a poor miserable sinner — you cannot do a thing to save yourself. Now it was for *just such sinners* that Jesus died. St. Paul said, 'It is a faithful saying, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.' If you are the chief of sinners, then Jesus died to save *you*. He *will* save you, now. 'My sheep shall *never perish*, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.'"

They were interrupted by the arrival of the surgeons; but as his sister stooped to kiss him, there was one more eager question, "You really think I'm safe?" and a quiet look of peace came over his face. "Well, then, I'll trust Him."

Two hours of terrible suspense and we were again watching beside him, waiting for returning consciousness. At length he looked around upon us, with such a bewildered look, and then the sweet bright smile came back, as his sister said, "Do you know me, darling?"

"O, yes, L——, I always know *you*."

"Well," she said, pointing to the text, "you see it was all true! The Lord has kept his promise."

“Yes,” he spoke slowly and with difficulty, “*He always does. He’s so good.*”

The peace which shone in that bright, quiet smile, “kept his heart and mind” in Christ Jesus, unto the end.

Howard did not rally, as we had hoped, after the amputation. The low fever which had hung about him from the beginning of his illness developed typhoid symptoms, and day by day his strength wasted, until hope almost died from our hearts.

His sufferings at this time were intense. Utterly prostrated with fever, not a moment’s relief from pain, rarely able to sleep more than three minutes at a time — no wonder that he wearily longed for rest.

“It seems so strange,” he said; “I used to throw myself right down on the ground, sometimes the rain pelting down on me, and sleep like a top. *Now*, I would give anything for half an hour’s sleep, and can’t get it.”

“*Thou* holdest mine eyes waking,” said one who watched beside him. “You know, wearisome days and nights are *appointed*.”

“Yes, I know. I do try so hard to be patient; but I am *so* weary.”

Only those who watched through the weary days and nights, whose aching hearts cried in the morning, “Would God it were evening,” and in the evening, “Would God it were morning,” could know how patiently he endured — how ten-

derly watchful he was of those who nursed him ; how often, with the sweet kiss and earnest loving thanks for some little relief afforded, came the tearful words, " It is *such* a comfort — but you will all be worn out. If I could only do without you ! "

On the night of the 25th of November, a wicked attempt was made by some emissaries from the South, to fire the city of New York. By a concerted plan nearly all the large hotels of the city were fired at the same hour.

We were watching in the stillness of the night in the sick room, anxious lest a step or a word should disturb the quiet, and entirely unconscious of the excitement in the streets, no sound of alarm having reached us.

Suddenly the door opened softly, and without a word the faithful negro walked in with the Colonel's stretcher, put it down beside the bed, and in a moment had spread blankets and pillows upon it ; then stood beside it like a dark sentinel.

We saw in a moment what it all meant. Almost overwhelmed with fear of the consequences of such excitement, and exposure to the cold, we whispered " Pete, is our hotel on fire ? " Raising his finger warningly he said, " Yes, Miss, right smart ! Don't tell de Colonel ! Four gentlemen's waitin' outside de door — and we jest carry him out when de time comes, and not disturb him a bit. "

But to our surprise, Howard raised his head from

the pillows, looked down at the stretcher, and then with such a bright smile and little nod to his servant, said, "All right, Pete : you're a good fellow ;" then to us, "Now don't be frightened, darlings ! we can manage first-rate. Where's mamma ?" And as she came in, pale with excitement, he reached out his hand to her, and drew her close beside him with protecting tenderness, talking so brightly and cheerfully, as if his were the strong arm that was to rescue us all.

As we watched his bright eye and the quiet tone of command that seemed to come with the emergency, one said, "Why, Howard, I believe if you could command your regiment, and lead them into battle, it would make you well !" His eye brightened, and strength seemed to come with the very thought, as he said, "I really believe it would ! If I could only mount my horse."

Through the loving kindness of the Lord, we were spared the necessity of leaving the room. The fire was extinguished with very little difficulty, and though it was a night of excitement and alarm, as tidings came of the fire breaking out in one hotel after another, and anxious men walked the streets all night, the quiet of the sick room was not again disturbed.

On the first of December Howard was removed to Yonkers. His physicians hoped that entire change of scene, with the fresh air of the country, and the comfort of having his wife and little children, would enable him to rally, and break up the fever that seemed wasting away his life.

He bore the journey well. "The fresh air was so delicious," he said, "that he did not even mind the jolting of the ambulance over the stones."

But the next day was one of excessive exhaustion. His mother, and others who had been watching with him, quite worn out, had been obliged to return home for a day of rest, and his sister was left alone with him. She writes: —

"It was a sweet, sad day. Howard seemed very ill; and when he said to me so quietly and decidedly, "Darling, I shall never be well again!" my heart contradicted the cheerful tones with which I strove to encourage him, and draw bright pictures of happy days to come.

"We had many a little quiet talk that day; the 'peace that passeth understanding,' seemed to pervade the very atmosphere of the room; and as evening drew on, though his increasing weakness startled me, he was unwilling to have the family summoned.

"In the stillness and the starlight,
In sight of the Blessed Land,
We thought of the by-gone Desert-life,
And the burning, blinding sand.

"Many a dreary sunset,
Many a dreary dawn,
We had watched upon those desert hills
As we pressed slowly on.

"Yet sweet had been the silent dews
Which from God's presence fell,
And the still hours of resting
By Palm tree and by well.

.

“ ‘ We were talking about our King,
 And our elder Brother,
 As we were used often to speak
 One to another.

“ ‘ The Lord standing quietly by,
 In the shadows dim,
 Smiling, perhaps, in the dark, to hear
 Our sweet, sweet talk of Him.

“ ‘ “ I think in a little while,”
 I said at length,
 “ We shall see His face in the city
 Of everlasting strength ;

“ ‘ “ And sit down under the shadow
 Of His smile,
 With great delight and thanksgiving
 To rest awhile.”

.

“ ‘ I knew by His loving voice
 His kingly word,
 The veiled Guest in the starlight dim
 Was Christ, the Lord !

“ ‘ I could hear that the Lord was speaking
 Deep words of grace ;
 I could see their blessed reflection
 On his sweet, pale face.’ ”

Towards midnight he sank so rapidly that the family were hastily summoned, but the fearful crisis passed, he fell into a sweet sleep, and the morning dawned upon brighter hope.

Days and nights of suffering were yet in store ;
 faith and patience had not yet their perfect work ;

there were lessons still to learn in "the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ."

One night, long after midnight, when he seemed perfectly worn out with pain and fever, and a racking cough that gave him scarcely a moment's rest, one who watched him, took up a book of hymns that lay upon the table, in hope of some word of comfort and strength to soothe the restless questionings of her aching heart. The book opened to a hymn, which seemed an answer to all unbelief, an echo to that loving, half-reproachful question, "*He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?*"

"Birds have their quiet nest,
Foxes their holes, and man his peaceful bed ;
All creatures have their rest, —
But *Jesus had not where to lay His head.*

"Winds have their hour of calm,
And waves, to slumber on the voiceless deep ;
Eve hath its breath of balm,
To hush all senses and all sounds to sleep.

"The wild deer hath his lair,
The homeward flocks the shelter of their shed ;
All have their rest from care, —
But *Jesus had not where to lay his head.*

"And yet He came to give
The weary and the heavy-laden rest ;
To bid the sinner live,
And soothe our griefs to slumber on his breast.

“ What then am I, my God,
Permitted thus the paths of peace to tread?
Peace, purchased by the blood
Of Him who had not where to lay His head?

“ I, who once made Him grieve;
I, who once bade His gentle spirit mourn;
Whose hand essayed to weave
For His meek brow the cruel crown of thorns:—

“ O why should I have peace?
Why? but for that unchanged, undying love,
Which would not, could not cease,
Until it made me heir of joys above.

“ Yes! but for pardoning grace,
I feel I never should in glory see
The brightness of that face,
That once was pale and agonized for me!”

No sound broke the stillness, and his sister thought the sweet hymn had soothed him to sleep. An hour later, he suddenly exclaimed in such a tone of real distress, “ O, L——! *both* hands and *both* feet!” Thinking he must be suffering intensely, she said, “ Why, darling, are you so much worse? I thought you were asleep.”

“ O, no,” he said, his eyes filled with tears. “ *Jesus* — how could he endure it? *Both* hands and *both* feet! and all for us, too!”

Then he told her how often he had thought that the pain in his lacerated foot must have been the same kind of pain that Jesus suffered; how his own suffering, even with all the alleviations of our loving care, had made him think more and

more of the dread mystery of that death upon the cross; the hiding of the Father's countenance; the taunts and jeers of the multitude, all the fearful circumstances of that fearful day. It was too painful to dwell upon, and they were glad to look up to Jesus glorified, and join the song that is evermore ascending "unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever."

Howard soon began to improve, and gained strength so rapidly that the shadow that had been over us so long was quite dispelled, and we looked forward without misgiving, to his entire recovery. Many a pleasant family gathering we had, around his wheel-chair; amused at his merry stories, rejoicing in all the evidences of returning health. About this time one of his orderlies, from the Sixth Artillery, arrived, in charge of the Colonel's horses. Most amusing were the interviews between the two; the little Irishman's humorous replies to numberless questions, about all that had transpired since the Colonel's absence, with occasional sly suggestions, from "Pete," who generally sat as a shadow, just behind him. Many a cheery message was sent back to the regiment, telling them that as soon as he could mount his horse, he would be with them to lead them in the assault on Petersburg."

The week before Christmas was bitterly cold. A heavy snow-storm, followed by a keen north wind, made us fear that we must give up the

pleasure we had anticipated of bringing Howard to Dobb's Ferry before the holidays. Thursday, the twenty-second of December, the cold was intense. We were sitting around the fire, thinking the wind must have reached its height, when we heard the sound of sleigh bells, and a moment after Howard drove up to the door, alone, in a little cutter. He was so benumbed with cold, that he could neither move nor speak. As quickly as possible, he was carried in, and laid upon the sofa, while we chafed his hands and face, and wrapped warm blankets around him. Pete came in, almost as much overcome with the cold as he. A warm punch, which had been ordered Howard was brought, but he said, "O, that's just the thing for Pete! Drink it quick, Pete, it will warm you directly."

We insisted that *he* should take it, for we were filled with apprehension; and felt that not a moment should be lost, and that the strong negro man would suffer less from a few minutes delay, but our remonstrance was useless.

"Drink it quick, Pete!" he said. "Why, mamma, the poor fellow is almost perished! You know they are used to such a warm climate; he never knew what kind of winters we have here at the North; did you, Pete?"

We succeeded at last in restoring them both to warmth and comfort; and Howard's joy at being once more at home, almost overcame for a time, our fear of the result. "Why, mamma,"

he said, "I would have driven three times as far, just to lie here once more, and look around at all the dear home things."

The house was undergoing extensive repairs. It was impossible to make him comfortable there, and rooms had been prepared for him at the house of Mr. A. near by. He did not seem to have suffered from the exposure as we feared. On Saturday, the day before Christmas, we brought him home again; had quite a merry little sleigh ride, and then all day he lay on the sofa in the little sitting-room, "*so* happy to be really at home." "Why, mamma," he said, "you have no idea what *perfect bliss* it is, just to lie here and see you and A., and all of you going about just like old times. The dear old pictures and easy chairs! everything looks so lovely."

Our hearts linger around the memory of that day. As we sat around him, talking of all the pleasant Christmas times that we had passed together, and rejoicing in hope of happy days to come, no voice whispered that the bright face would never make sunshine in our home again; that the loving look with which his eye rested on all the familiar home treasures, was a look of farewell.

"You and I will dine together, mamma, to keep Christmas!" So a table was spread beside his sofa, and they dined together; his hearty enjoyment making it a real Christmas treat to us all.

Before evening he was suffering much; but it

had been "*such* a happy day!" and as he was assisted to the carriage many a lingering look came back from the threshold, and waving his hand with a parting kiss, he said, "I think I'll come and spend the day with you *every day*, mamma! it has been such a treat!"

The pain which commenced that evening increased in severity, and it was soon evident that he had taken a violent cold. For a few days we did not apprehend serious difficulty. He was able to sit up for a while each day, and although suffering intensely at times, we all shared his cheerful anticipation that he would "be all right in a few days."

THE VICTORY WON.

“ A journey like Elijah’s swift and bright,
Caught gently upward to an early crown,
In heaven’s own chariot of unblazing light,
With death untasted and the grave unknown.”

CHAPTER XI.

THE VICTORY WON.

“But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” — 1 COR. xv. 57.

THE Scriptural lesson for the day, Tuesday the tenth of January, was Howard's favorite chapter, the 8th of Romans, and its lessons of joyful trust were well fitted to cheer him as he was about to cross the dark river.

Those glorious words, the assured confidence of the Christian warrior, how meet to be the last his eye should ever rest upon this side the valley.

“Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Words of light that he could welcome now that Satan had long since departed, and the smile of Jesus was filling his heart with quietness and peace.

The inflammation of the wound had increased to

such a degree, that a slight surgical operation was necessary.

Hearing this, and that his mother was also seriously ill, we came in haste, from New York, in the same train with the surgeon.

A violent storm was raging. The wind moaned drearily through the trees that shut in the house from the road. The driving storm without gave a deeper hush to his quiet curtained room.

Howard's face lighted up with a glow of surprise and pleasure, as he grasped my hand and said: —

“How good you are to come out in such a storm! I am afraid you will both be sick from such exposure!”

There was only time for a few questions. When the preparations were completed, he said “Wait a moment, Doctor!” then drawing his sister close down to him, he whispered, “If I should not live through this, dearie, you know *who* I have trusted.” Then repeating the farewell messages she had so often before received, for the other loved ones, and seeing the tears in her eyes, he said in his bright, cheerful tone “but this is only *in case* I should not live. You know the Doctor says there is no danger. Now go, darling! You cannot do me any good, you know, and you will suffer more than I will.”

He drew her closer for a moment with a lingering kiss, saying “It will all be over in a few minutes, darling, and we will have such a nice talk *afterward!*”

Chloroform was administered, and the operation performed almost instantaneously. A shadow passed over his face, then a calm, bright smile. Howard Kitching was "with the Lord."

"The wistful, longing gaze
Of the passing soul —

"Grew only more rapt and joyful
As he clasped the Master's hand,
I think, or ever he was aware
They were come to the Holy Land.

APPENDIX.

- “O safe at home, where the dark tempter roam’s not,
 How have I envied thy far happier lot!
 Already resting where the evil comes not,
 The tear, the toil, the woe, the sin, forgot.
- “O safe in port, where the rough billow breaks not.
 Where the wild sea-moan saddens thee no more ;
 Where the remorseless stroke of tempest shakes not ;
 When, when shall I too gain that tranquil shore ?
- “O bright, amid the brightness all eternal,
 When shall I breathe with thee the purer air?
 Air of a land whose clime is ever vernal,
 A land without a serpent or a snare.
- ‘ Away, above the scenes of guilt and folly,
 Beyond this desert’s heat and dreariness,
 Safe in the city of the ever-holy,
 Let me make haste to join thy earlier bliss.”
- “Another battle fought — and O, not lost —
 Tells of the ending of this fight and thrall,
 Another ridge of time’s lone moorland crossed,
 Gives nearer prospect of the jasper wall.
- “Just gone within the veil, where I shall follow,
 Not far before me, hardly out of sight —
 I down beneath thee in this cloudy hollow,
 And thou far up on yonder sunny height.
- “Gone to begin a new and happier story,
 Thy bitterer tale of earth now told and done ;
 These outer shadows for that inner glory
 Exchanged forever. O thrice blessed one !
- “O freed from fetters of this lonesome prison,
 How shall I greet thee on that day of days,
 When He who died, yea rather who is risen,
 Shall these frail frames from dust and darkness raise.”

APPENDIX

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

To all who shall see these presents, Greeting.

Know ye that I do hereby confer on J. Howard Kitching, of the U. S. Volunteers, in the service of the United States, by and with the consent of the Senate, the rank of Brigadier-general, by Brevet in said service, to rank as such from the first day of August, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four; for meritorious and distinguished services during the campaign of this year, before Richmond, Virginia.

And I do strictly charge and require all officers and soldiers under his command, to obey and respect him accordingly; and he is to observe and follow such orders and directions from time to time as he shall receive from me, or the future President of the United States of America, and other officers set over him according to law and the rules and discipline of war. This commission to continue in force during the pleasure of the President of the United States for the time being.

Given under my hand, at the city of Washington, this twentieth day of April in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-five, in the eighty-ninth year of the Independence of the United States.

By the President,

ANDREW JOHNSON.

EDWIN M. STANTON,
Secretary of War.

Recorded, — vol. iv. page 20, Adjutant-general's office, April 20, 1865.

U. A. NICHOLS,
Ass't. Adjutant-general.

At a meeting of the officers of the Sixth Regiment, New York Heavy Artillery, held at Camp Defences, of Bermuda Hundred, Va., on Monday evening, January 16, 1865, the following Preamble and Resolutions were unanimously adopted.

Whereas, Brevet Brigadier-general J. Howard Kitching, Colonel of the Sixth Regiment, New York Artillery, died on the 10th day of January, 1865, of wounds received in the engagement of Cedar Creek, Virginia, on the 19th day of October, 1864: Therefore,

Resolved, That, recognizing the act of our Heavenly Father, in thus removing from us our commanding officer, we bow submissively to his inscrutable will.

Resolved, That the character of General Kitching as an officer and a gentleman, was such as commanded our highest respect and esteem. His qualities as a soldier and a leader, whether displayed in the quiet of camp or in the storm of battle always secured the earnest confidence of all. We feel that no one can supply his place with us. He died for his country, but his memory will ever live in our hearts as that of a good man, a true soldier, and a gallant officer.

Resolved, That to the bereaved family of our deceased commander we tender our sincere sympathy and an earnest prayer that the God of the widow and the fatherless may protect and comfort them.

Resolved, That as a further mark of our respect, the officers of the regiment wear the customary badge of mourning for thirty days.

Resolved, That these resolutions be published in the New York "Herald," "Times," "Tribune," "Army & Navy Journal," and Yonkers "Statesman," also that a copy be engrossed, and transmitted to the family of the deceased.

GEO. C. KIBBE,

Major Sixth N. Y. Artillery,
President.

JACOB BOWERS,

Lieut. Sixth N. Y. H. A.,
Secretary.

H 122 80 1







MAR 80



N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA 46962

