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WAR PAPERS

OF

FRANK B. FAY

WITH REMINISCENCES OF SERVICE

IN THE

CAMPS AND HOSPITALS

OF THE

ARMY OF THE POTOMAC

1861–1865

EDITED BY WILLIAM HOWELL REED

PRIVATELY PRINTED
1911

E629
F28

Gift
W. H. Tied
JAN 1[illegible] 1913

Press of Geo. H. Ellis Co., Boston

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PREFACE.

Frank B. Fay was born in Southborough, Massachusetts, on the twenty-fourth of January, 1821, the eldest son of Francis B. and Nancy Brigham Fay, and died March twenty, 1904.

He had the ordinary school education, and entered active business in Boston at the beginning of his twenty-first year, as a member of the firm of Fay & Farwells, one of the largest commission houses in Boston at that time. He continued in this business successfully many years, commanding the respect and confidence of all who knew him. He retired with a moderate competency, entered into several special partnerships which were also successfully maintained, and which gave him leisure for the public service which he enjoyed and in which he won distinction.

There was another finer trait which became a passion within him as the years went on, namely, a desire to serve those about him who were in trouble, and his mind and his heart were alway open to them. He entered public life early, and won public confidence by the breadth of his views, his courage, good sense, and high character, and this confidence ripened into the love of multitudes of people through all the years of his service for them. Whether in the crises of public affairs or in the private perplexities and griefs of those who gave him their confidence, he always managed to get under the load to lighten it for them. In these unobtrusive ministries his

nature grew rich in tenderness and sympathy, and he was the burden-bearer of many souls. This spirit became dominant in him as the years rolled on, and was the key-note of his career. It was inborn within him, coming by rightful inheritance from his father, the Honorable Francis B. Fay, whose whole life was rich and fruitful in good deeds, and from his mother also, who is still remembered for her inspiring helpfulness in all the ways of charity. When Fort Sumter was fired upon and the nation was in a blaze of war, Mr. Fay consecrated himself to the service of his country.

He was already endowed by years of experience and discipline for the work to which he then set his hand, and all his powers were readily at command for the emergencies of the conflict which soon came thick upon him. He began this service when the call for troops was made, and it did not end until the Confederate banners were furled in 1865 and the war ended.

He was Mayor of Chelsea, Massachusetts, at the time, and the men who went to the front were his especial care. This work soon took on large proportions, and included all who were in the service of their country, and it was continued with an unfaltering devotion and tenderness that made his presence a blessing on many a stricken field. He became widely known throughout the Army of the Potomac, and was welcomed everywhere. His sober gray dress, his tall spare form, his rather long hair, his kindly face, his generous plans for service, made him so marked a personality that the way was opened for him where civilians were not generally allowed to go. He was a privileged person, and it was a strong type of character that could win that distinction in the rough-and-

tumble of army life, where, without rank, individuals were submerged in the mass, and were passed by and forgotten. But, although privileged, he never intruded and was never in the way, yet was always at hand in emergencies with his abundant stores and his wise and kindly ministry. He seemed to have an intuitive perception of the objective of a campaign and also of his own objective in that movement. With almost unfailing precision his ambulances were pushed to the point of greatest need, and his stores were often available before the medical wagons were brought up. He was a great administrator in these affairs, and had the rare gift of seeing the right thing to do at the right moment, and a swift power of execution which was always efficient and sure. It is this type of man whose career in the army we are now to follow.

The narrative is partly his own. It is wholly so, so far as its outline is concerned, but it had to be filled in and enriched from a mass of disconnected notes and memoranda that he left behind him, which illuminate the story, and also by a record of experiences that he shared with others, scenes in which he was a central figure, but which he had no disposition or time to describe.

It is our task to use such material as we have, to tell the story of his army life which has never been told even to those who were nearest to him, to make real his self-devotion, his constancy, his chivalrous joy in work, and the treasures he himself gathered in his heroic ministrations. We shall then justly measure the service he rendered to his country.

WAR PAPERS OF FRANK B. FAY

CHAPTER I.

The Beginning of the War.

I have been asked to note some of my experiences with the army during the Civil War. I begin this narrative with some hesitation, but yield to the wishes of my family and my friends, who have made me feel that it is a duty to make at least an outline of a service which filled so large a place in my life in those years.

My experience was an unusual one. Probably no one not officially connected with the army was with it so much, especially for the purposes I had in view, which were to minister to the needs of soldiers, whatever their condition, sick or wounded or well. I ought to say in advance that for many reasons I felt that I was unfitted for such service. In the first place I was a man of peace. I never believed in war, and had refused to be even a fine member of a military company from conscientious motives. I had never seen a person die, had never seen a serious wound, and was sensitive to every form of suffering in others. Even the sight of a man with his arm in a sling gave me sympathetic pain, and I always felt that, if my fellow-citizens had known there was to be a war, they surely would not have chosen me as mayor of the city in December, 1860. But, being in office in time of war, I accepted the trust, laying aside all personal considerations for my country's sake, and did what could be done on many fields to lighten the burdens of the people whom I had taken the oath to serve.

I remained in office after three elections, during 1861, 1862, and 1863, doing some work that I did not seem to

be especially called upon to do as an official of the City Government, and then declined a fourth nomination, desiring uninterrupted service with the army in the field.

When in April, 1861, it became evident that we were on the verge of war, it was known that the Chelsea Light Infantry was liable to be called into service, and the City Government was anxious that it should promptly respond; but Captain D. W. Bailey, then in command, had shown some hesitation about going. On the evening of the eighteenth of April I called him to the mayor's office, and said, "We must know at once if you will go." He frankly replied that he had a blank resignation in his pocket which he proposed to fill out and send in the next day. But unfortunately, as it seemed, the call came on the morning of the nineteenth for the company to be ready to march at once. Without consulting any one, Captain Bailey went to the State House, and said his company could not be made ready to go. Governor Andrew disbanded it at once, and sent General Bullock with an express wagon to take their guns. The company had already gathered in the armory, and at the moment of the delivery of the guns Sumner Carruth, a lieutenant, offered to take command if a company could be enlisted, —stepped to the front and said, "Boys, will you follow me?"—and at nine o'clock that evening the recruited company marched to the State House. It became my duty and pleasure to tender the company to Governor Andrew, and I was authorized by the adjutant-general, as a justice of the peace, to swear them in, which was done in the Doric Hall Rotunda. In tendering them to the Governor, I alluded to the unfortunate events of the morning, hoping that the events of the afternoon would make amends. The Governor said he must forget that, as this was a new company, and this was probably the only one that was sworn into the service in the State House during the war.* It was too late for the company to join the marching force, and it was not until May twenty-three that it was sworn into the service of

* Captain Bailey volunteered later, and went into service with the nine months' troops.

the United States, becoming Company H of the 1st Massachusetts regiment, the first company in the state sworn into the three years' service. Much in the mean time had been done by the City Government as well as by the people, both men and women, to get the company ready, and my heart and hands were necessarily full.

This Company H went to the front, and on Thursday, July eighteen, at Blackburn's Ford at Bull Run, was engaged in battle, and several were killed or wounded. On receiving the news by a brief despatch in the Boston *Herald*, I left for the front that evening. Senator Sumner had letters for me to General Mansfield, then in command of the fortifications of Washington, to whom I applied for a pass to the battlefield, to recover the bodies of the dead and to aid the wounded. His adjutant-general received me, and, after telling him the object of my visit, he exclaimed, "Angels and ministers of grace defend us! and so you are going to recover the bodies of dead soldiers!" But, as I was a suppliant, I said, "Well, sir, you will remember that our citizens are not as familiar with death as you are, and cannot be expected to appreciate your feelings." At the same time I presume he had never smelled powder in his life, except at West Point. The flattery pleased him, and he referred me to General Mansfield in the next room. It appeared that General Mansfield's authority did not extend beyond the fortifications, and I was referred to General Scott, who said, "I can give no passes to the front to-day,"—and he had good reasons for his refusal. It was fortunate that the application was denied, as I should have met the flying fragments of our army defeated at Bull Run, now in rapid retreat in utter demoralization from the battlefield. I remained in Washington some days, helping the wounded, hunting up scattered men, and notifying Chelsea of their condition.

This was my first experience among wounded soldiers. It opened before me a rare opportunity for service, though I did not then dream of the demands it would soon make upon me or the scenes through which it would be my privilege to pass.

From my position as mayor I came into somewhat intimate relations with the soldiers and their families,

and tried to make them feel that my interest was much more than an official one. I induced the men to pledge a portion of their pay to their families or for deposit in the savings bank against their return. Doubtless this action of mine led to my appointment in 1862 as one of the Allotment Commissioners for Massachusetts and afterwards as United States Allotment Commissioner for colored troops. Through this Massachusetts commission more than three million dollars were sent to the state treasurer for the purposes named. But for this allotment, much of this money would have been wasted or lost in the service. Both these offices were without compensation.

My salary as mayor was four hundred dollars a year, and it is fair to say that in all my service during the war I paid my own expenses, keeping no account of them. They were all incident to my position and of great variety, and doubtless amounted to as many thousands as I received hundreds. It proved the best investment of my life, yielding an increasing income of satisfaction and comfort through the years and blessed memories to the end of my days. And what more could one ask than that?

It is to be noted here that Mr. Fay dismisses in a few words the service he rendered as one of the Allotment Commissioners of Massachusetts, but it is too important to be thus dismissed.

In looking over the mass of his war papers, dating back to 1861 at the time he was Mayor of Chelsea, we see his figure emerge and rise above those of his fellows in the great service to which at that time he devoted his life. It began with the enlisted men of his own city, and became widely extended to the soldiers of his own state and of other states, and was spread over four years of war. It led him through all the campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, and never ceased, so long as there was a wounded

soldier anywhere who could be reached by his ministry. Hundreds of these papers have passed under examination. They touch a multitude of interests that cannot be catalogued, and were all collateral to the great stream of beneficence which flowed onward and outward from his office through the war. There seemed to be no movement or activity within the multifarious lines of service for the men of the city of Chelsea in which he did not have a part. Here are rosters of soldiers, recruiting papers, orders for money, pay-roll receipts, shipments of stores, requisitions for hospitals, calls for more troops, lists of inquiries about missing men, the unravelling of complications about soldiers' pay, correspondence with families about allotments of pay, appeals from fathers and mothers about wounded sons or sons killed in battle, appeals for efforts to effect exchanges of prisoners from heart-broken parents, lists of effects found upon soldiers killed in battle, the return of these effects to those at home, with endless memoranda relating to men who had disappeared from the ranks or from hospitals, lost forever to the dear ones at home. There is simply no end to the variety or to the detail of these tragic stories that filtered through his mind and heart in those heroic years. Mr. Fay was not simply a public servant who took upon himself the duties of a chief magistrate, but he was the friend and brother of all who came to him in trouble. His official responsibilities with the Commonwealth and the city were, as a matter of course, administered with business-like fidelity, but they did not end there. There were hundreds of families involved in these responsibilities, and he stood as their personal friend, ready to serve, all his resources being at command to lighten the burdens

of those who had cheerfully given of their best for the service of their country.

In regard to the allotments of soldiers' pay, at the suggestion of President Lincoln the Congress passed an act on the twentieth of July, 1861, providing for an Allotment System for the benefit of all volunteers in the service of the United States, the same to be carried out by three commissioners from each state having volunteers. Frank B. Fay, Henry Edwards, and David Wilder, Jr., were appointed commissioners for Massachusetts in the month of February, 1862, and immediately began their work, visiting all the regiments of that state then in the field, and continuing the same service with the other regiments subsequently formed. The most direct and systematic plans were made. The commissioners arranged that the amounts allotted from the government pay-rolls should be sent to the treasurer of the Commonwealth, and by him to the treasurer of the city or town where the person resided to whom the allotment was made, who was to be notified, and then was to receive the amount. It was also arranged that, should the soldier so desire, the sum allotted or saved from the pay could remain to his credit in the hands of the state treasurer, to draw interest at five per cent. The system avoided the possibility of loss to the soldier, and relieved him of the expense of sending the money home, and made the state treasury a savings bank for those who desired it, the whole plan being executed solely for the advantage of the soldier.

The story of this service is briefly told here to show the absorbing character of his civic duties in connection with the war that Mr. Fay assumed in those strenuous years. There were sixty-one Massachusetts regiments of infantry,

five of cavalry, four regiments of heavy artillery, and sixteen batteries of light artillery,* and, scattered as they were over the vast field of operations, some idea may be formed of the prodigious amount of work that fell on these commissioners, who served without pay.

Governor Andrew, with his tender and large-hearted interest in this great scheme of relief for the families of enlisted men, gave every facility for the prompt and efficient work of this commission, of which Mayor Fay was the chairman. In fact, the Governor had much to do with the passage of the act providing for it, realizing the necessity of some provision for the dependent families of the men who had suddenly been called to leave their homes in defence of their country.

Circulars explaining the allotment act were prepared and mailed to the Massachusetts troops, as preliminary to personal visits to the regiments, each man being made acquainted with the plan and its advantages. The soldier was then left to make his own allotment of such part of his pay, if any, as he wished to have reserved. It will be seen that the task of carrying out this system was by no means a light one. Long journeys had to be made to distant armies and scattered camps, often on foot to almost inaccessible outposts. Whole companies were sometimes found to have been detached on active service, and at other times both officers and men were found to be indifferent to the plan and turned it down. There were also occasions when the entire army appeared to be on the eve of some great movement, or whole divisions had been advanced beyond reach or had

* Massachusetts contributed during the Civil War, for the army and navy, 159,165 men, and expended $27,705,109 in this service.

been sent to other departments of the service. Under these conditions the men could not be expected to give attention to such matters, and the work had to be abandoned. Then it often proved that the paymasters themselves were delayed in their disbursements, or errors were discovered in the pay-rolls, which involved delays in the payments and consequent privation to the men and their families, and also for months afterwards a mass of correspondence in straightening out these complications. All these and a multitude of other difficulties arose, which were met and overcome by these devoted commissioners, until forty-one regiments had been reached, and induced to take advantage of the system, which continued in operation until the end of the war. So well was this work done that three million dollars, as has been stated, were sent home by the Massachusetts soldiers, besides the amounts sent directly by the men themselves. It was a great public service, and was worked out by Mr. Fay and his associates with the enthusiasm and devotion which characterized all their army work.

CHAPTER II.

The Monitor and the Merrimac and Other Experiences.

In briefly considering the first campaign in Virginia, we must go back to the first call for troops after the firing upon Fort Sumter in 1861. The Confederate forces from South Carolina and the Gulf states were rapidly thrown into Virginia, while on the part of the North forty or fifty regiments of three months' men were quickly concentrated at Washington in defence of the capital. General McDowell, a highly trained officer of the regular army, was placed in command, and did what he could to organize his forces and make them ready for the serious work before them. They were raw troops, suddenly brought together from civil pursuits, with no knowledge of war, without discipline or organization, without a staff or a commissariat, and without organized artillery. It was simply an army in the making, but not yet made. The hostile forces confronted each other on the line of the Alexandria and Manassas railroad, and it was hardly to be expected that they could long be in this position without conflict. There was, moreover, great pressure upon the government by an impatient Congress and people for an immediate advance upon the enemy; and, largely in obedience to this great public demand, the battle of Bull Run followed on the twenty-first of July, 1861.

After a day of obstinate fighting with varying success, a part of the Federal line was thrown back in disorder in the afternoon, when, apparently without reason, panic swept the field. The troops fled, one division after another gave way, organization was lost, army trains and artillery joined in the rout and blocked the roads, and almost the entire force in hideous disorder surged back into the streets of the capital. The Confederates, unaware of the extent of the disaster, having been on the edge of defeat repeatedly through the day, did not follow up their advantage, and were in fact in retreat themselves at the moment of the Federal rout. It was a hungry, disorganized mob that swept back into Washington, and there was no power anywhere to stem the tide. It was three months before confidence was restored.

About a week before this disaster General McClellan came into notice in a short but brilliant campaign in Western Virginia, where he was able to telegraph to Washington, as its result, the capture of a thousand prisoners with all the enemies' stores, baggage, and artillery, and the complete disruption of the hostile force. He sent his captured flags to Washington, and was then called there and placed in command, and given the task of the reorganization of the scattered fragments of McDowell's defeated army. It was a giant's task, and it went forward with tremendous vigor. The nation had sprung to arms, and all its resources were placed at the command of the government for the prosecution of the war.

General McClellan had not only to reorganize the army then existing, he had to create a new one from the raw

material he had at hand; and, from the dissatisfied regiments and organizations unfitted to march or fight, he had at the end of three months a hundred thousand men trained and disciplined and deserving the name of the "Army of the Potomac." It was a great achievement, and, as Swinton says, "whatever may be written of McClellan's later career as a military commander, he yet challenges from all impartial minds the credit due to this mighty performance." He became the popular idol, and, as he went on with the reorganization of the army, confidence increased, and there seemed for a time to be no limit to the trust reposed in him as he made ready for the great contests that were to test his really untried abilities as a leader in great campaigns in the field.

By the middle of November the army was considered ready for an active campaign. General McClellan had already declared on assuming command that the war should be "short, sharp, and decisive," and this was the key-note on which public sentiment turned. But the late fall and early winter dragged along with the army inactive about Washington, when it was learned that the plans had been changed, and that there would be no movement until spring. He had at that time about a hundred and fifty thousand men under his command, two-thirds of whom might have been used to operate against his enemy, who still menaced the capital, flaunting their flags about Fairfax Court House within sight of Washington, and who were even erecting their batteries on the Virginia side of the Potomac, obstructing the navigation of that river. The patience of the nation was sorely tried. Its anxiety broke out at last in loud clamor for action, and this was the beginning of those

embarrassments which marred the harmonious relations between the government and the commander of the army.

We do not need to go into General McClellan's reasons for this inaction. They have been elaborately stated in his memoirs, and were sufficient for him. But, as the campaign went on, it was seen by competent military critics that he was deficient in certain qualities of mind that were essential in dealing with large problems of war. This was well illustrated at the time by the remark of the president of a Western railroad where he had been employed as chief engineer, who said, before he assumed command of the army, that he would show the same qualities in that position that he did as an engineer. "No man can build a better bridge than McClellan, but the trouble with him is that he does not dare cross it when it is done, and this quality of his mind will be shown in any army he may command."

General McClellan's plans contemplated a campaign against Richmond with his base at Chesapeake Bay, and a portion of his army was transferred to the lower Peninsula during the month of March, 1862. Whether the movement would have been farther delayed but for the direct order of the President that it should begin is a question. A great fleet of transport boats was assembled, and 114,500 men, 14,000 animals, forty-four batteries of artillery, wagons, ambulances, pontoon trains, and the enormous equipage of the army were safely landed within the month. A European critic calls it the stride of a giant, and it was so.

General McClellan reached Fortress Monroe on the second of April, and a part of his army was put in motion

for Yorktown on the York River, about sixty miles from Richmond, and siege operations were begun there. This siege was made necessary, as McClellan looked at it, by the withdrawal, by orders from Washington, of McDowell's corps of twenty-five thousand men, which was needed for the defence of the capital, but which was to have been used for a flanking movement against Yorktown. But Ropes, the military critic of this campaign, insists that McClellan could have forced the enemy to abandon Yorktown with the forces he had, and have saved the delays of the siege by pouring the thousands of men he had through the weak Confederate lines; and he adds that "one cannot help believing that greater enterprise and daring on the part of the commanding general would have been rewarded by a striking success." Moreover, the Confederates gained the advantage they desired by McClellan's siege operations, namely, time to concentrate their forces for the active campaign that followed. We shall see how they used this advantage later.

Having now stated the situation of the Army of the Potomac up to April, 1862, let us leave our forces in front of Yorktown, and turn to Mr. Fay's personal story. He had remained at home for several months after the battle of Bull Run, absorbed in his civic duties, which were mainly those connected with the war, and it was not until March, 1862, that he returned to the army to continue his work as Allotment Commissioner.

While at Fortress Monroe on this visit, he witnessed that remarkable naval engagement between the Merrimac and the Monitor which made a new era in naval warfare. This conflict was also witnessed by Arthur B. Fuller,

chaplain of the 16th Massachusetts regiment, who vividly describes it. We add also some account of the conflict from the Confederate side,* taken from reports and narratives of those who were on board the Merrimac when she moved down the James River on her career of destruction. These two accounts, condensed now into one narrative, give a vivid picture of this historic conflict.

On the fifteenth of March, 1862, a small fleet appeared in the James River, steaming down into Hampton Roads from Norfolk. It proved to be a convoy of a mysterious monster, half ship, half house, which had been rebuilt at the Norfolk Navy Yard, and was known as the Merrimac. She came down the river for battle, her objective being the wooden frigates Cumberland, Congress, Minnesota, and Roanoke, together with a fleet of gunboats, store-ships, and transports anchored in Hampton Roads. They were all at her mercy, and she was determined to work havoc among them and make her name remembered in naval history.

She came down with her stars and bars flying, and made for Newport News. As she approached with resistless force, with the black smoke streaming from her funnel and leaving a trail behind, the wooden ships in consternation cleared for action, the smaller craft getting closer in shore under the batteries or putting out to sea. The Merrimac was a formidable vessel, their first and only Confederate ironclad, and, so far as they knew, was the mistress of the seas.

"As we drew near the Cumberland," the Confederate report says, "we fired our pivot gun. Our crew was half naked, powder-blackened, and streaming with sweat

* *The Long Roll*, Mary Johnston.

on the gun-deck and at the boilers. The shell she sent burst above the Cumberland's stern pivot, killing and wounding many of her crew. When we were all but on her, her starboard blazed. This broadside tore up the carriage of our pivot gun, cut another off at the trunnions and the muzzle of the third, riddled the smoke-stack, and killed and wounded nineteen men. We answered with three guns, and as the smoke lifted we were on her under the fore-rigging, ramming her with an immense iron beak, which in the awful impact was torn off and remained in her side. Our ship hung for a moment and then backed clear, leaving a ragged gaping hole. She was listed to port and was sinking. The water reached her main deck, but all her men were on her spar-deck, serving her guns, fighting to the last. One by one they stopped as she was submerged, but she flew her colors till she sank."

"We then bore down on the Congress. She had slipped her cables, and ran aground, where she was safe from our ram. We could get no nearer than two hundred feet, but there we began to rake her with our fire."

"A hundred guns from the shore batteries and from the Congress and Minnesota were trained upon us, and the shot penetrated at every point not iron-clad that showed above our shell. There were now more dead and wounded to be cared for, and among the latter were Commodore Buchanan and Flag Lieutenant Minor; but we brought down her main-mast, disabled her guns, strewed her decks with blood, smashed in her sides, and set her afire. She hauled down her colors in her helplessness and ran up a white flag, when we ceased firing. Her hull was lifted high by the sand bank which held her. One by one her guns exploded and at night her ports were windows lit from within by fire, and at two o'clock in the morning her powder magazines were reached, with a burst of flame and an earthquake sound which rent her apart, and when all was cleared away there were only the huge fragments upborne by the sand and burning, and that was the end of the Congress."

The Minnesota and the Roanoke, which were the next objective, lay aground and helpless. The Merrimac turned her guns upon them and upon the batteries and camps of Newport News, and withdrew the victor in the contest. She anchored off Sewells Point up the river to care for her wounded, to repair damages, and the next day to make ready for the final victory that then lay within her grasp.

"How anxiously," says Chaplain Fuller in his narrative, "we waited for the morrow! At sundown there was nothing to dispute the empire of the seas with this marine monster which had wrought such ruin, and, so far as we knew, nothing to prevent her placing Washington, New York, and all our seaboard cities under tribute to her guns. But this was not to be. As night drew on, a speck of light gleamed on the distant wave; it moved, it came nearer, and at ten o'clock the Monitor appeared. She was but a speck on the dark sea, a laughable object by day, '*a cheese-box on a raft*' the enemy called her. She took her place concealed in the shadow of the Minnesota, awaiting the conflict. The next morning the Merrimac returned to her work of destruction, moving slowly down to her easy prey, and opened her broadsides upon the remaining vessels, when, lo! the little Monitor steams quietly out and offered her battle. How puny she seemed! Nothing but that little round tub appearing above the water, yet flinging the gage of battle to the gigantic Merrimac. It was David going out to meet Goliath! There were but two guns within that turret, but there were determined men behind them. The Merrimac after a few minutes of astounded silence opened the contest. She tried to sink her puny foe by a broadside, but, after the smoke rolled away, she had not been sunk, but stood there with the white wreaths of smoke crowning her tower, as a coronet of glory. She returned the fire, and for five hours stood to her task. The Merrimac tried to ram her, but in thus exposing herself to the

raking fire of the little craft she gained nothing by that manœuvre."

"Sometimes," continued the Confederate narrative, "there was not ten feet of water between those sunken decks. We fired every seven minutes, now the bow gun, now the after pivot, now a full broadside. The Minnesota as we passed gave us all her broadside guns, a tremendous blow at point-blank range, but our turtle back shook off the shot and shell and answered with her bow gun. This shell burst amidships on the frigate, exploded a store of powder, and set the ship afire. The Monitor backed away, gathered herself together to ram us in her turn, and laid her bow upon us and fired her 11-inch guns twice in succession, which drove in the Merrimac's sides three inches or more, and every man above the ports of the after guns was knocked down by the impact and bled at nose and ears. Her lighter draft put us at disadvantage. She was lighter and quicker and countered upon us, and manœuvred about us with ease, withdrawing out of danger from our ram to protect the other ships, sending shot and shell from her two gigantic guns, which we returned with our powder getting low. It was late afternoon. The tide was falling, and, being damaged, our pilots felt their way back to Sewells Point."

Her signals of distress were flying as she moved up the river, and she was towed back by her consorts to the dry dock at Norfolk, from which she never emerged. The Monitor was victorious and saved the day for the nation.

This great battle on the sea was the most important event of the war up to that time, and its results were felt in all the navies of the world. After the conflict Mr. Fay went on board the Monitor, and, when he saw the slight effect the monster guns of the Merrimac had upon her, wrote: "I should have no fear to be on board of her in action. She has proved her invincibility. In one way

it was an amusing sight to see what a splendid harbor-master the Merrimac was, and how quickly the harbor was cleared after she appeared. Peace to her pieces!"

The siege operations in front of Yorktown continued until the place was no longer tenable, and it was abandoned by the Confederates, but not without an obstinate battle at Williamsburg, which opened the way for our troops to White House on the Pamunky River. The army then gradually extended its lines, in the investment of Richmond, from White House Swamp, across the Chickahominy, round to Cold Harbor and Mechanicsville. Meanwhile the Confederates had met with a serious loss in the capture of Norfolk and the Navy Yard and the destruction of their famous ironclad. The defeated Merrimac, which had taken shelter there for repairs, drew too much water to go up the James, and as she could not keep the sea, now that her only port was closed to her, she was blown up by her commander, Commodore Tatnall, and her short career ended. This opened up the James River to a point within seven or eight miles from Richmond. These latter events took place in May, 1862.

As there were no active operations of the army immediately impending and his allotment business was over, Mr. Fay returned home for a few weeks, and wrote a series of "War Notes" covering his experiences in the region of Fortress Monroe and Yorktown.

Some extracts from these notes are here given:—

MAY 16, 1862.

"It is in my philosophy to speak cheerfully of the direst calamities and the sorest griefs."

When I left home in March as a commissioner for Massachusetts on soldiers' allotment, I had no expecta-

FRANK B. FAY

tion of so long an absence, and, but for the intervening event of the disaster to the Chelsea company in front of Yorktown, I should have returned sooner. It has served to show that the municipal machinery can run quite well without a mayor; and this makes me content to be absent when other duties call me away.

I first visited the 1st and 11th regiments, which favored the allotment system, and excelled all others in the state in the amount allotted, say nearly $7,500 per month each. I trust I shall be excused for being a little proud that the Chelsea company has outdone any other in the state in the amount allotted, say $975 per month.

The allotment system I believe to be a good one for the soldiers, their families, and the state. Many, however, looked upon it with suspicion, and seemed to think that, as the commissioners received no pay and the state, city, and town treasurers no additional compensation, "there must be a catch somewhere." In reply we referred to the general policy and practice of the state towards its soldiers as more liberal than that of any other state. They admitted this, and the soldiers of other states frequently referred to it. Still the idea that so much should be done solely for the benefit of the soldier could not be readily believed, so that, while many embraced the system, many refused it.

From Camp Hooper I went to Fortress Monroe. The army was lying a few miles from the fortress, and I had an opportunity of meeting the Chelsea boys in many regiments, and since then have seen all in the 1st, 9th, 11th, 15th, 16th, 18th, 19th, 20th, and 22d regiments, and Nims and Rhode Island battery C, sappers and miners, and the 12th regular infantry.

On my arrival at Fortress Monroe our fellow-citizen C. B. Wilder, agent of the contrabands, kindly furnished me with a horse to enable me to reach the troops before the advance, which took place next morning. I had never had much experience in the saddle, and to make almost my first experience there in presence of so many experienced horsemen did not elevate my pride, though it did the legs of my trousers, and I fancy I exhibited more hose than horsemanship. I think my horse knew my unskilfulness, and the more I hurried him the harder

he made it, as an intimation to be quiet. I was reminded of that saddle for some days afterwards.

After the battle between the Monitor and the Merrimac we went to Warwick Court House to hunt for Massachusetts regiments, and slept that night upon some hay kindly provided by one of the officers, with a tent-fly for a coverlid. Started early for a walk across the Peninsula toward Yorktown, meeting Massachusetts regiments on the way and attending to our allotment duties. The army being in motion, we found it difficult to get their attention.

The next three nights slept once in a tent, once under a tarpaulin, and once in a rebel cabin then occupied as a hospital, under the temporary charge of Drs. Gay, Hodges, and Homans of Boston. The road by which we travelled ran as near the front as civilians were allowed to go; and bear in mind that civilians were very scarce there. Every hour I was taken for a Confederate, and could hear the boys say to each other, "That fellow looks secesh." But I answered them good-naturedly, remembering that it was not the first time since the war began that my motives had been misinterpreted. I had only to hail from Massachusetts and I was well received everywhere.

The next day I reached the 1st regiment and found a home with the Chelsea company, although working among neighboring regiments and batteries. I found them looking well notwithstanding they had a hard time during the trip from their winter quarters, by close stowage and stormy weather on the steamers and by bad roads, frequent changes of camps, and short supplies. However, cheerfulness is the prevailing state of mind in all the regiments. Most certainly the affections of the boys cling around their homes, their wives and children, parents and sweethearts, if they have them, and they would be glad to come home *when the war is over.* It seems remarkable to us, when men come on furloughs or detailed for special duty, how uneasy they get after a few weeks and are not content till they have returned to camp.

I had prolonged my stay upon the Peninsula a few days, thinking, if a battle took place, I might be useful

among the wounded. But after a short time at the front I was satisfied that some weeks must elapse before the advance would be made, and therefore returned to Washington, promising, if possible, to make my next call upon them in Richmond.

I should be ungrateful if I did not here acknowledge the uniform kindness and attention I received everywhere. From colonels to privates, all have treated me as a brother. A hearty, cordial grasp of the hand, with a thoughtful, constant kindness toward me, is a richer compensation for the labor and discomfort of these journeys than can be expressed in figures. I ask no other.

Then came the sad story of the disaster at Cheesman's Creek to Company H of the 1st Massachusetts regiment, the news of which reached me as I had completed my business in Washington and was about returning home, and that 26th of April was a memorable day for me. I had left that company of Chelsea men so recently, with full ranks, and now there were "fourteen in killed and wounded." I took the first train and boat for Fortress Monroe and Cheesman's Creek, arrived next day, sent to camp for the bodies of the dead, and found the wounded most comfortably situated on board the steamer Commodore.

The embalming of the bodies, the sending them forward, the ceremonies here, are all on record, and I need not repeat them. Although accomplished with some difficulty, it has all been amply repaid by the comfort it has carried to sorrowing hearts, and I think I may say also to our whole community, for our soldiers have become so linked into our affections that private griefs become public ones.

I shall not stop here to argue the point of expense, raised by one of your correspondents, nor the question of robbing the volunteer of the glory of a soldier's grave, raised by another journal. Different men place different estimates upon "dollars" and upon "glory." For myself, I must say, I place at the present time a greater value upon comfort to the heart of the widow and the orphan and the bereaved parent. Before we enter upon another war, we will argue these and many other questions, that

those who enlist in it may know what is to be done to those who die on the field and to those "beloved, who are left to mourn."

MUSIC OF THE SHELLS.

During this week our troops were busy in building their fortifications and placing guns upon them, while the rebels were busy in using their guns already placed. They kept up almost a constant fire, doing little execution, seldom returned by our forces. The song of the shells was the only music we had, for the bands and the drums had been silent for some weeks. One gets used to this music in a short time and it becomes a pleasure, provided you do not find it approaching in a direct line, and then it becomes exciting. I had an opportunity to be a bit of a soldier on the day before evacuation. General McClellan was in the camp of the 1st regiment with Professor Lowe, who made an ascension in his balloon, upon which the rebels tried their rifled cannon. I was in an adjoining camp, and, as I was hurrying to the spot where McClellan stood, I heard a shot coming which seemed to my unpractised ear to be "quite convenient." I had heard about "dropping," and I tried it. About the time I struck the ground a solid shot did the same about twenty-five feet from "Little Mac" and about fifty feet from my resting-place.

The boys laughed at the mayor for going down, but I found it to be quite the fashion all around me, and I "allowed" they would excuse me for adopting the prevailing style. General McClellan smoked his cigar a little more rapidly than usual, mounted, and rode off. They were fortunate shots for the rebels, for it prevented the discovery of the evacuation of their position then going on.

That night was the noisiest I have ever known. The enemy concealed their retreat by an incessant firing by their rear-guard. Our camps were all darkened, as the guns had a good range on us, and I was obliged to suspend writing. The 1st regiment was on picket duty, and, as I was alone in the tent, had an excellent opportunity to reflect upon the probabilities of a shot coming

into that particular tent, but these reflections soon ended in sleep and no shells entered the camp.

Early the next morning the regiment returned, bringing the news of the evacuation of Yorktown. Then came shouts of joy and music of the bands from all the surrounding camps. This was followed by the order to "prepare to march, not to return." As I was unwilling to lose the opportunity to enter Yorktown with the troops, I marched on with the regiment, avoiding the torpedoes concealed beneath the surface of the road. We reached the town in safety, found it abandoned, and pressed on a few miles beyond, dropping in upon many rebel tents and barracks, where we found the fires still burning. We spent the night in Yorktown, occupying two of those tents, and had for supper three hardtacks, which we divided between us. In getting some water for this slender meal, I had an interesting adventure. I had picked up a pail and a tin cup and had found a well, drawn a supply, and fully satisfied my thirst, and was coming away, when some soldiers who were on guard in the town said in passing, "You had better get your water from some other well." "Why?" I inquired. They replied that they had found a paper on the curb of the well, "Beware of the water!" I had heard of arsenic in wells, and felt that the men who were capable of concealing torpedoes in the road might poison the water also. However, if this well was poisoned, my case was settled; but I would not poison my friend, so I emptied my pail and went to the other well, drank enough from that to weaken the dose I had already taken, and returned to my tent. I still live, and we may presume that the rebels need all their arsenic for medicinal purposes among their own soldiers.

Next morning our breakfast consisted of three-quarters of a biscuit each, which I had fished out of another pocket, and more cold water.

There were no white inhabitants left in Yorktown except an old white mule, whose usefulness had gone, "sad relic of departed worth," and who had been left to wander unfed, unhaltered, and undone.

It had begun to rain, and, as I was without great-coat or shawl, by the aid of my companion I made a water-

proof garment of a piece of canvas from our bedquilt, cutting a hole for my head in the centre and two for my arms at the sides. It was not ornamental, but was very useful. We pressed on to our destination through mud and rain, reaching it some eight miles from Yorktown, to find everything gone, "Headquarters of transportation removed to Yorktown," so we had to return there. It was sundown when we arrived, and, after sundry efforts to find shelter, my companion found a deserted hut (with a fireplace, but no door), and we took possession. We made firewood of the bedstead, shelves, and empty barrels, and with a few boards made a door, and with hard bread and water for supper made a night of it. In an unsuccessful search for a sutler the next morning to supply a breakfast, I met a wagoner of the 20th Massachusetts, who, seeing our half-starved condition, handed me some boiled eggs from his scanty fare. "Help yourself," he said, but I declined his luxuries. When he insisted, I took his name, and two months afterwards had an opportunity to return the favor, when I found him sick at Harrison's Landing, needing the very supplies I had.

As our service was over for a time in the army, we left Fortress Monroe for Baltimore, and these interesting experiences ended.

CHAPTER III.

The Peninsula Campaign and the Second Bull Run.

When the war began, Miss Helen L. Gilson, who had been in my family as a friend and teacher of my children, expressed her strong desire to serve in the army as a nurse. She had noble qualities of mind and heart. She was a winning personality, and was strong and brave, and we knew she would do good work there. A properly indorsed petition was accordingly sent to Miss Dorothea Dix in Washington, asking for an appointment for her. She replied, if she was over thirty years old, she could come, but, as Miss Gilson was only twenty-three, this service was denied her. In April, 1862, however, an urgent letter was received from Miss Dix, asking her to report in Washington, which she did. Miss Dix was surprised to find her so young and attractive, and to her eyes so unfitted for service, and she was sent to the Columbian College Hospital, where she remained for a time with Mrs. Pomroy, but without important duties. The real call, however, came later in the season, and it found her ready and eager to respond. This call came in the following way. I was returning from the army to Washington, and while awaiting the boat at Fortress Monroe met Rev. Frederick N. Knapp, who was in charge of the Special Relief of the Sanitary Commission. He was at that point with a steamer of supplies and some ladies on board as nurses. I asked him if he needed any new recruits, and he said yes, and asked me to send Miss Gilson down at once to him. He had met her in Washington and knew she could be useful. She went immediately to the army, reported to Mr. Knapp at Yorktown, and her work began, and it was continued, as we shall see later, until the end of the war.

General McClellan's forces at that time were in front of Richmond, occupying long semicircular lines in the

investment of that capital. The sudden transfer of this army from the high banks of the Potomac to the low and swampy region of the Peninsula, intersected with a network of creeks and rivers, caused a serious amount of sickness from malarial and typhoid fevers, and our forces were wasting away in those weeks of the early summer.

These conditions were alarming in view of the approach of an active campaign, whose character could be well foreseen in the inevitable crash of battle between two hundred thousand men well equipped with all the modern enginery of war.

The government and the Sanitary Commission made such preparations as they could for these emergencies, and the resources of both were sadly overtaxed. Many hundreds were prostrated by these wasting fevers, and the field hospitals were crowded. Their removal was a necessity before the fighting began, and it was already going on when General Lee struck our lines with the shock of battle. I was at home some weeks previous to this time, having left Miss Gilson at work in the field hospitals at White House, where she remained until the place was evacuated. I reached the army again at the beginning of this campaign, and went through that track of war, being later located at the camp of the 1st Massachusetts regiment not far from Harrison's Landing, which was the new base of the army.

Let us introduce here a few words as to this great Peninsula campaign, to make the situation clear. General Joseph E. Johnston, one of the ablest of the Confederate leaders who had been in command of that army in Virginia, had been wounded at Williamsburg, and was in temporary retirement. General Robert E. Lee, who was the military adviser of Jefferson Davis, was chosen in his place, and promptly determined that the Union army should no longer menace the Confederate capital. Being ready for battle, he suddenly assumed the offensive, and forced General McClellan into a campaign which proved

a disastrous one. The onslaught was so sudden and so terrific that he forced the Union army back, after a series of engagements, to Harrison's Landing on the James, and these successive conflicts are known in history as the "Seven Days' Battles." Lee's army of about a hundred thousand men was protecting Richmond with a long front on both sides of the Chickahominy River, while McClellan confronted him with about a hundred and ten thousand men whose outposts were in sight of the Confederate capital. Fair Oaks, Gaines's Mills, Savage Station, Glendale, and Malvern Hill were all within the Federal lines, each of them the scene of tremendous conflicts during the short campaign which began on the twenty-seventh of June, 1862. Gradually our army was forced backward, not always beaten, but slowly seeking a new base of supplies on the James River. In spite of the fact that the Confederates met with final defeat at Malvern Hill, the total advantage was with General Lee, who had driven the Union army back from the very gates of Richmond to a point twenty or thirty miles from that city. This was accomplished only by terrible losses on both sides. In this series of engagements the Federal army lost 1,734 killed, 8,000 wounded, and 6,000 missing (half of whom were probably wounded), a total of 15,849 men. The Confederate losses, according to their own reports, were about twenty thousand men, the latter army being the attacking force.

These were the first great battles of the war. The blood of both armies was up, their respective leaders were being tested, and the frightful losses on both sides were ominous of coming conflicts. From the figures given, it can be seen what a trail of blood was left behind, and how many

thousands of men had to be cared for, scattered over these disastrous fields. It was into such a holocaust of suffering and death as this that Mr. Fay and Miss Gilson began their hospital work.

Our temporary field hospitals first received and cared for all these men, but the malarial climate and the intense heat of this summer made it imperative that they should be sent North as rapidly as they could be moved, and they were transferred to the permanent hospitals in Washington.

To accomplish this, the Sanitary Commission applied to the Quartermaster-General for some of the large steamers that had been used as transports to the Peninsula, and were then lying idle, at a cost to the government of $800 to $1,000 a day each. The Secretary of War at once ordered as many of them as would carry a thousand men to be detailed to the Commission, which on its part agreed to take charge of the sick and wounded, and land them in Washington. These vessels were bare of everything for hospital purposes, but they were promptly fitted up and supplied from the storehouses of the Commission.

To retrace our steps a moment, we will go back to Miss Gilson's work at White House, which was suddenly interrupted by General Lee's attack, which broke through McClellan's lines and compelled his change of base. From the moment the Confederate advance began, White House was no longer tenable; but, as we have seen, this fleet of steamers was at hand. The sick and wounded were quickly transferred, and moved down the river to Fortress Monroe on their way to Washington. Miss Gilson secured passage on a tugboat for Harrison's

Landing, which was protected by our gunboats, and under date of July ten, 1862, she tells the story of this experience:—

It was a sad, anxious night after what seemed to us to be an ignominious retreat of our army from its position in front of Richmond. Our small tugboat on which we were packed came alongside the Monitor, which was anchored at Harrison's Landing. We were almost surrounded by gunboats, and the firing was kept up all about us. We could see the bursting shells and hear the explosions, and for a few hours the fleet did efficient service against the rebel batteries, which were finally silenced. The next day was the Fourth of July. The shore was alive with troops, and steamers were constantly arriving for the transport of the sick and wounded who were lying on the ground, *to be counted by acres*. Learning that the large Sanitary Commission steamer Knickerbocker was to carry a load of the wounded to Washington, a few of us volunteered our services to care for them, and before night five hundred men were placed on board. The ship was absolutely bare of supplies, as it was suddenly turned over to the Commission by the government, but the deficiency was soon made good from the Sanitary storehouses. Our party will never forget that Fourth of July. We dined on a few crackers which were found among the remnant of our stores. We also had a demijohn of wine, which we diluted and gave to our exhausted men. It was a touching sight to see these brave youth of our country, reduced by disease, come tottering towards us, entreating with imploring tones for a piece of bread or a cup of cold water. Everybody was in a whirl of activity, and the rush, heat, and confusion on shore one can never forget, as these overloaded trains arrived with their suffering freights of the wounded, who were fairly thrust upon these waiting boats. Lines of stretchers with their helpless burdens were being carried from the railroad to the transport boats, and the entire force of the Sanitary Commission was so employed.

One of this corps continues the description as follows:—

Many of these men had died upon the cars. They had been almost entirely unattended, and were literally packed together in the common freight cars with only a wisp of hay for a pillow. Many of the severely wounded came upon the roofs of the cars. It was midsummer in Virginia, and the close, fetid air was almost insupportable even to those who had become accustomed to such scenes. As the men passed from the cars to the boat, they paused at the Sanitary Commission tent which was pitched on the wharf, to be stimulated and refreshed before starting on their way. From this tent, meals were sent to every man on these boats, and more than three thousand were fed in this way. No one who lived and worked through these days and nights can tell the story exactly as it occurred. They remember scenes and sounds, but nothing in detail, and to this day there comes back the sight of wounded men borne by contrabands on board these steamers, dumping them anywhere and walking over them without compassion. Imagine an immense river-boat, every berth, every mattress, every square inch of room on every deck filled with wounded men,—even the stairs and gangways filled with them,—and then imagine fifty well men, laborers and others on every sort of errand, rushing here and there, every touch bringing agony to the poor fellows, while stretcher after stretcher comes along trying to find an empty space,—and then imagine what it was for these men of the Sanitary Commission to keep calm and firm in such surroundings and bringing order out of the chaos, and making sure that each man was cared for, refreshed, and fed.*

Follow us now on this steamer Knickerbocker, which was the boat on which Mr. Fay worked, as she moved down the James and up the Potomac to Washington. As night drew on, nobody who was on board can ever forget the ominous stillness of those crowded decks or the solemn hush of those suffering men. It was as dark as a

* Miss Wormely's *Sanitary Commission*, p. 82.

sepulchre and as silent as the grave, save an occasional moan from some wounded man. They were packed together so closely on the open decks that one could hardly move among them. With flickering candles to light the way, what a vision it was, the pallor of the suffering faces, the torn and clotted garments covering throbbing wounds! But the night passed, and, as the steamer drew up to the Seventh Street landing at Washington, the ambulances were waiting to transfer them to comfortable beds in the permanent hospitals. All these scenes and events occurred in June and July, 1862, and continued until the sick and wounded were finally withdrawn, and the campaign ended on the Peninsula.

Then followed a period of inaction, while new military dispositions were made in Washington under the direction of General Halleck, who had been made general-in-chief of the armies. The government needed an experienced soldier for counsel with headquarters at the capital, and he was placed in command. It proved a costly appointment for both government and people. General Pope had also been called from the West. He had won some distinction at Island No. 10 on the Mississippi River, and was given the command of a new army in Virginia, which was formed from the troops in the Mountain Department of that state and the Department of the Shenandoah, then under Fremont, Banks, and McDowell. This new force was called the "Army of Virginia," and was designed to cover the city of Washington from any attack that might be made by General Lee from the direction of Richmond, and also to insure the safety of the Valley of the Shenandoah.

Meanwhile General McClellan's army was on the Pen-

insula, resting after the disastrous campaign had ended at Malvern Hill. Pope had gathered about forty-five thousand men, but the three great divisions were wide apart, and were not brought together until it was discovered that General Lee was moving northward from Richmond with several divisions of his victorious army, which had been re-enforced from the Gulf states under Generals Jackson, Hill, and Longstreet.

General Pope's force could be hardly called an army, as it consisted of corps and divisions that had never been previously united, had had no experience in common, and knew as little of their commander as he knew of them. This heterogeneous body was now to be attacked by a real army, composed of bodies of veteran troops who knew their leader, who was the most accomplished soldier of the day, General Robert E. Lee.*

Pope's army, scattered as it was, was in a most dangerous position as Lee's forces advanced, but, when his movement was discovered, Pope drew his divisions somewhat closer together, both sides manœuvring for position over a wide stretch of country, from Gordonsville to the Rappahannock, and back towards Centreville and Manassas. It ended in a partial concentration about Bull Run, the scene of the first disastrous battle of the war.

Meanwhile a part of McClellan's army had joined General Pope; and Lee, realizing this, and having his forces well in hand, determined to force a battle before any further additions from the Army of the Potomac could reach the field.

There was really no commanding mind present in that campaign. Pope was at a disadvantage from the start.

* Ropes's *Story of the Civil War.*

Halleck attempted to direct movements from Washington, but the scene shifted every hour, and such direction was futile. Halleck was no tactician on the field of battle, whatever else he may have been, while Lee and his commanders were working out with great precision a campaign over a country they knew by heart. Pope personally knew but little of his commanders, who were widely separated, and there was no unity of purpose anywhere. He was trying to feel his enemy, who were elusive, now appearing in force in his front, now on his flanks, or with their cavalry working in his rear, and he was consequently ill prepared for the onset when it came.

The action began in the late afternoon on the twenty-eighth of July, with severe and continuous fighting, which continued with great obstinacy on both sides. The attack of Lee was a surprise to the Federals, and, owing to the late hour of the day or to other causes, the whole Union strength was not brought out. No advantage was gained on either side, and the losses were heavy. The next day found the Union army badly dislocated, its parts widely separated from each other, one corps at Groveton, others at Bristow Station, another at Manassas, and still another at Centreville, and it seemed hardly possible to concentrate them for a continuation of the battle that day. The artillery was employed during the morning, but there was no serious engagement until the afternoon, when the Federal attacks had been everywhere repulsed, and no success had so far been gained. On the thirtieth the battle was resumed. Pope massed his forces north of the Warrington turnpike, the whole plan being based on the belief that the Confederates were retiring.

But this was a mistake. They were far from retiring. They were strongly posted and ready for battle, and Ropes in his story, after a careful analysis of the situation, said "it was unnecessary to comment on the reckless tactics employed by General Pope on that day." Trying to force the enemy's position, our troops maintained themselves for half an hour close to the Confederate lines, but were swept by the enfilading fire of the guns, and retired in disorder. Position after position was attacked by the Federal army, but they were repulsed. At every point the enemy were too strong, both in position and in numbers, and the day ended in defeat. One grave mistake after another was made in Pope's tactics. He weakened one part of his line to strengthen another, and the Federal troops became confounded and bewildered by the spectacle of their supports and reserves marching to other parts of the field, weakened not only in numbers, but by the withdrawal of the troops they had depended upon for their re-enforcement in the combat, and were in no condition to make effectual resistance. There had been severe fighting over a long line and severe losses at intervals for three days, and the battle of the Second Bull Run ended. Lee captured seven thousand prisoners, numerous colors, thirty guns, and twenty thousand small arms, and our killed and wounded numbered some five thousand men.

Fortunately, several brigades had not been engaged, and the discipline of the army was not impaired. Had Pope held on and waited another day, he would have had the re-enforcement of Sumner and Franklin, who were at hand with twenty thousand men from the Army of the Potomac, and a different story might have been told.

But his retreat on the night of the battle changed the conditions, and gave the whole campaign a character of hopeless failure.

General Pope, on assuming command a short time before, announced that his headquarters were in the saddle, and that he had never shown his back to the enemy. It proved an inglorious campaign. The army was then drawn back to the defences of Washington, and Pope resigned his command. It was then united with the Army of the Potomac, which went almost immediately into the Antietam campaign.

CHAPTER IV.

The Antietam Campaign.

General McClellan reached Washington soon after the defeat of Pope's army, and was placed in command of the defences of the capital. Both of the Union armies had been consolidated, and McClellan, being the only officer in charge, assumed control of all movements outside the lines of Washington as well as of those within them.

The success of the Confederate campaign had been remarkable. The theatre of operations had been transferred from the front of Richmond to the front of Washington. "The Union armies were now on the defensive, and the rich harvests of the Shenandoah Valley and of Northern Virginia were now the prize of the victors. To crown and consolidate these conquests, Lee now determined to cross into Maryland." * His army lacked much of the material of war, its transportation was much reduced, and the men were poorly shod and clothed, but they were in high spirits and ready to follow their leader.

It has been stated by those who have made a study of the motives which induced General Lee to take the enormous risks of this invasion of Maryland that he had reason to believe that the people of that state were ripe for revolt, that they wished to "regain their liberties," and would be eager to join the Confederacy if an opportunity

* Swinton's *Army of the Potomac*, p. 194.

was given them. There was a strong though not large secession element in Baltimore, and there is no doubt they had promised recruits to his army, and were ready for any desperate deed to forward the success of such a movement. General Lee's proclamation to the people of Maryland that he was not their enemy, but their friend, certainly expressed this hope and offered this opportunity, and he probably felt that, if continued success followed his campaign, it might be made so decisive as to end the war. But in all this he was mistaken.

Moving his army north, he crossed the Potomac in the vicinity of Leesburg, Virginia, swinging round into Maryland. It was not known at first where he had gone; but, finding that his forces were making this aggressive movement, General McClellan pushed forward from Washington rapidly, and on the thirteenth of September the right wing of his army reached Frederick. It numbered eighty thousand men, with large forces left in the defences of the capital.

Lee's forces numbered about fifty-five thousand effective men, and, after severe fighting in the passes of South Mountain, they were finally brought into desperate conflict at Antietam, where McClellan took up his position for the expected battle. The whole Confederate line was about three miles in length, and on every suitable eminence General Lee had placed his batteries for the most effective use of his guns.

We do not need to give more than a brief summary of the movements of the two armies, and may omit most of the detail of the story of the conflict on this historic field, where with badly conceived and ill-combined movements McClellan began the great battle.

In the first shock of the conflict on one part of the field, the losses within hardly more than an hour were most severe. More than a third to more than a half of three of the Federal brigades were either killed or wounded within this time, and all of the regimental commanders in those brigades were either killed or wounded. Hooker had lost upward of twenty-five hundred men of the ten thousand he had brought into action. At another point on the Hagerstown pike, where the fighting was most severe, the 12th corps lost some seventeen hundred men out of the seven thousand brought upon the field. In both of these actions the Union troops suffered from the fire of the Confederate batteries stationed on the rising ground already referred to. Our batteries at the same time poured a destructive fire upon the Confederates, the shot and shell passing over the heads of the Union troops, and their losses must have been greater than ours.*

There was then a short lull in the battle, but it was soon resumed in the fields and woods near Dunker Church by Sumner, Sedgwick, and French, where they were confronted by the Confederates who had taken positions behind the rocky ledges with which that region abounds, and the losses here were terrible, — over twenty-two hundred officers and men, — and it was all sustained in a very few minutes. General Sedgwick was three times wounded, and left the field, and the troops fell back and reformed under the protection of the batteries. But the Confederates were in no condition to make farther attacks; they had no reserves, every man had been engaged, and at terrible sacrifice of life had repelled the three assaults on the left flank of their army.

Then the left centre of the Confederates was involved, and the conflict which followed here was without question one of the most sanguinary and desperate of the whole war. Shortly after it began, the Confederates fell back to a country road, or lane. For a considerable part of its course the level of this road is below that of the adjoining fields, so that it constituted a sort of natural rifle-pit. This sunken road was held for a time by the Con-

* Ropes's *Story of the Civil War*, vol. ii. p. 359.

federates, but at last they broke, and the road became for them a pit from which there was no escape from the deadly fire of their antagonists on the upper bank. The road was speedily filled with the dead and wounded. To this day it is called "the Bloody Lane." The Confederate left centre was thoroughly broken up. Its losses in killed, wounded, and prisoners greatly exceeded ours, and the casualties in the two divisions of Barlow and Richardson exceeded twenty-seven hundred men. Severe and almost even fighting on the right of the Union line ended the battle.*

During the night Lee tried to reform his forces and renew the engagement the next day, but it was found impossible, and on the night of the eighteenth of September his army crossed the Potomac, defeated. The battle of Antietam was one of the bloodiest of the war, and it is probable that more men were killed and wounded on that seventeenth of September than on any other day in the whole war. The Confederates lost 13 guns, 39 colors, 15,000 stand of arms, 8,000 killed and wounded, and 6,000 prisoners. The Federals lost 12,000 killed and wounded, but not a gun or a color. The dead and wounded of both armies were left on the field to be cared for by the government and the Sanitary Commission.

We have given this brief summary of the movements of the two armies in these three great campaigns of the Peninsula, the Second Bull Run, and Antietam, that we may be carried forward clearly and consecutively in our narrative. We have followed the varying fortunes of the gigantic struggle, we have seen the trampled fields torn with shot and shell, and have watched the hundred

* Ropes's *Story of the Civil War.*

and fifty thousand men in the deadly embrace of battle over blood-stained fields, stretching from lower Virginia to the upper Potomac and into Maryland, that we might make clear to ourselves the scale upon which this conflict was waged, its incredible sacrifice of life, its dreadful sufferings, and also the brighter picture of the agencies of alleviation that were employed to gather in the wounded and by all healing ministries bring them back to life again. It was this stupendous shock of war through which Mr. Fay passed in this summer of 1862, and it was this trail of blood that he followed in his persistent ministry. We must now resume his narrative:—

I left the Peninsula with the last of the wounded while Pope's struggle with the Confederate army at Bull Run was going on. Reaching the capital, we found enough to do in the reception and care of the men who had fallen on that field; and, as soon as it was made clear that General Lee was moving into Maryland, I made ready for what we might find to do in that emergency. While I was in Washington [he writes], the 35th Massachusetts regiment, which had just been mustered into service, reached the capital in time to join the movement into Maryland. It was commanded by Colonel Wild and Lieutenant-Colonel Carruth, and we saluted our Chelsea company as it moved forward and went into that fearful conflict at Antietam, although some days passed before the two armies came together in the shock of battle. On taking up a paper on the morning of the fifteenth of September, I saw the announcement of the death of the brave and capable General Reno in Turner's Gap of the South Mountain range, and knew that the 35th regiment was in his division, and had already received its baptism of blood. This was within less than a month of the date of its leaving home. I started at once for the scene of that engagement, taking train for Frederick, Maryland. I met Dr. Steiner of the Sanitary Commission there, who persuaded me to remain until the next day, as he pro-

posed to send a wagon-load of supplies to the battlefield. I did so; and the next morning, the team not being ready, started on foot for Middleton, and during that day, September seventeen, 1862, heard the guns of the battle of Antietam not far away. At Middleton I saw Colonel Wild of the 35th Massachusetts, whom I had saluted three or four days before, with his arm shot away at the shoulder, and began to work at once among the wounded at that place. As the burial parties were already beginning their work, I went with them, placing marks of identification on the bodies of the dead soldiers, with their names when ascertained, so that head-boards could be placed at their graves. These head-boards were pieces of cracker-boxes or other planed boards, marked with a pencil, a much more durable mark than when made by a pen. During the evening the Sanitary Commission wagon came up, and I went on with it, walking and riding by turns toward the battlefield. We were on the road all night, and by gray dawn we reached the field. The bridge had given way, and we were stalled till morning. I lay down in a corn-field, and had my first experience of sleeping on the ground, but it was good, refreshing sleep.

We found a sad state of things on our arrival. The whole town of Keedysville was one great hospital: houses, stores, churches, mills, and barns were all filled with the wounded, and hundreds, even thousands, were not sheltered at all. I filled my haversack and started out to notify surgeons to come to our wagon for supplies, and telegraphed Chelsea to send men and women and additional stores. As a result of the despatch, nine of our best people joined me, bringing abundant supplies, and they did most effective work on that field. I made my headquarters at Mr. Keedy's house in this town which was named for him, and found him generous and hospitable.*

* Forty years later Mr. Fay wrote as follows of these friends: "Of these nine friends all but two have gone forward to their heavenly life, leaving dear and cherished memories. We may believe that in that better land where there is no war, but all is peace, they may find in mutual service as much joy in helping others to progress in the spiritual life as they had here in the ministry to the suffering." Mrs. Sibyl Hunt at this date (1911) is now the only survivor of that party.

One day a bale of blankets arrived, which Mr. Keedy said was for me. It had no address upon it, and I distributed them promptly among those who were in the greatest need. The next day a gentleman from Pennsylvania appeared, inquiring for his blankets. They had been sent to him to distribute among Pennsylvania men. I told him they were all in use by the men who were around him, and he could take them if he so desired. But he smiled and said they were evidently doing good to somebody's soldiers, and he would leave them where they were.

I found enough to do at Keedysville. The Sanitary Commission was doing most systematic beneficent work, and we joined them in that splendid service. I hunted the field over for our Chelsea men, and found on the bare floors of an entry of a little house in town several of them, and with them Captain W. S. Cheever and (from Roxbury) Captain W. S. King of the 35th Massachusetts regiment, all badly wounded. I telegraphed to King's wife, and in response Captain Wyman and Mayor (afterwards Governor) Gaston started for the field. They both did good service there among the wounded of Captain King's company, which was recruited in Roxbury, and which suffered severely in that battle. On their return home they met Governor Andrew in New York, and through him two thousand blankets were sent promptly forward by the government. They also reported conditions to the New York branch of the Sanitary Commission, and they promptly responded by a large shipment of supplies. Our Chelsea delegates reported, when they returned, that they found me without an extra shirt, having torn up those I had to use for bandages. It was here that I met Oliver Wendell Holmes, who left hurriedly for the front in search of his son, Captain Holmes of the 20th Massachusetts regiment (now Justice Holmes of the United States Supreme Court), who was wounded in this battle. We were strangers, but I ventured to ask if I could help him, and he replied, "Yes, I am anxious to go through the hospitals, if you can point them out to me." I replied that every house, barn, mill, and church within a radius of miles was a hospital, but that we could undoubtedly find his son. I then remembered that I had

seen some of the wounded men of the 20th regiment in a house near by, and we went in search of him.

Dr. Holmes afterwards wrote an interesting account of this search in an article in the *Atlantic Monthly* for December, 1862, and we copy here some passages of this story:—

In the dead of night which closed upon the bloody field of Antietam, my household was startled from its slumbers by the loud summons of a telegraph messenger. The air had been heavy all day with the rumors of battle, and tens of thousands had walked the streets with throbbing hearts in dread anticipation of the tidings any hour might bring. The telegram was opened and read, "Captain Holmes wounded through the neck, thought not to be dangerous, at Keedysville." *Through* the neck—no bullet left in wound. Windpipe, foodpipe, carotid, jugular, half a dozen smaller but still formidable vessels, a great braid of nerves, each as big as a lampwick, spinal cord, ought to kill at once, if at all.

Dr. Holmes started the next day, and after many interesting experiences reached Keedysville as quickly as the trains could carry him.

On entering the small settlement of Keedysville, a familiar face and figure blocked the way, like one of Bunyan's giants. The tall form and benevolent countenance, set off by long flowing hair, belonging to the excellent Mayor Frank B. Fay of Chelsea, who had come promptly to succor the wounded of that great battle. It was wonderful to see how his single personality pervaded this torpid little village; he seemed to be the centre of all its activities. All my questions he answered clearly and decisively, as one who knew everything going on in the place. But the one question I had come to ask, *Where is Captain Holmes?* he could not answer. There were thousands of wounded in the place, he told me, and it might be

a long job to find him; the only way would be to go to every group of wounded and find him. A medical officer was presently met, who answered my question by pointing to a house, saying he is staying there. A chorus of hallelujahs arose in my soul, but I kept them to myself. Now, then, for our twice-wounded volunteer, our young centurion whose double-barred shoulder-straps we have never yet looked upon. Let us observe the proprieties, however; no swelling upward of the mother,—no *hysterica passio*, we do not like scenes. A calm salutation—then swallow hard. That is about the programme. I pushed open the door, and inquired. "Oh, no, sir; he left yesterday morning for Hagerstown in a milk-cart." And still I had to follow him.

It was a long hunt with many experiences, but the captain was finally found some days afterwards on a train that had left Hagerstown for Harrisburg. He had been traced to that point, and Dr. Holmes was in the station, awaiting the arrival of that train, and, when it came swiftly and silently in, he was almost startled to see it there on the track in front of him.

Let us walk calmly through the cars now and look around us. In the first car, on the first seat to the right, I saw my Captain; there saw I him, even my first-born, whom I had sought through many cities.

"How are you, Boy?"

"How are you, Dad?"

Such are the proprieties of life. The hidden cisterns of the soul may be filling fast with sweet tears, while the windows through which it looks are undimmed by a drop or a film of moisture.

In the interval between the arrival and departure of Dr. Holmes from Keedysville he visited the battlefield, of which he gives the following description:—

On coming near the brow of the hill, we met a party carrying picks and spades. "How many?" "Only one." The dead were nearly all buried then in this region of the field of strife. We stopped the wagon, and, getting out, began to look around us. Hard by was a large pile of muskets, scores, if not hundreds, which had been picked up and were guarded by the government. A long ridge of fresh gravel rose before us. A board stuck up in front of us bore this inscription: "The Rebel General Anderson and 80 rebels are buried in this hole." Other smaller ridges were marked with the number of the dead lying under them. The whole ground was strewed with fragments of clothing, haversacks, canteens, cap-boxes, bullets, cartridge-boxes, cartridges, scraps of paper, portions of bread and meat. I saw two soldiers' caps that looked as if their owners had been shot through the head. In several places I noticed dark red patches where a pool of blood had curdled and caked, as some poor fellow poured out his life on the sod. I then wandered about the corn-field. It surprised me to notice that, although there was every mark of hard fighting, the Indian corn was not trodden down. At the edge of this field lay a gray horse, whose owner, a rebel colonel, was killed near this place. Not far off were two artillery horses in their harnesses. Another had been attended to by a burying party who had thrown some earth over him, but his legs were stark and stiff beneath his partial covering. There was a shallow trench before we came to the corn-field, too narrow for a road, too elevated for a watercourse, and which seemed to have been used as a rifle-pit; at any rate, there had been hard fighting about it. The opposing tides of battle must have blended their waves at this point, for portions of gray uniforms were mingled with the "garments rolled in blood," torn from our own dead and wounded soldiers. I picked up a rebel canteen and one of our own, but there was something repulsive about the trodden and stained relics of that battlefield. It was like the table of some hideous orgy left uncleared, and one turned away from its broken fragments and muddy heel-taps. A bullet or two, a button, a brass plate from a soldier's belt, served well enough for a memento of my visit.

And so ended this incident which fell, by the way, in the midst of the overwhelming cares and duties of Mr. Fay's work on that Antietam battlefield.

As to the general conditions on the field of Antietam and the mass of suffering there, the surgeon of the 2d Massachusetts regiment reported that there were nearly ten thousand of the wounded of both armies lying in the fields from half a mile to three miles in rear of the battlefield, needing supplies of all kinds. The mortality among the Confederates had been fearful. Upon one spot Hooker's corps had advanced over a swell of land where their foes were sheltered; yet the havoc among our men did not equal the continuous rank of dead lying behind the fences which were riddled with musket-balls.

Dr. Agnew of the Sanitary Commission, passing over the radii previously ascertained to be within the circle of the battle, went with the wagon-loads of supplies carrying relief to the thousands of wounded men lying there. In some places they were clustered about barn-yards and floors and stables. He said he saw fifteen hundred wounded men lying upon straw near two barns within sight of each other. Indeed there was not a barn or farm-house, or store, or church or school, between Boonsborough and Keedysville and Sharpsburg that was not entirely filled with the wounded, both rebel and Union. Thousands were in the open air, and all received the kind service of the farmers' families and the surgeons.

"As to the measures taken for relief, everything in the way of medical supplies, as might have been expected, was deficient for two or three days after the battle. Men suffering agony from their wounds were without opiates.

Dressings, stimulants, concentrated food, were difficult, if not impossible, to obtain. The medical trains were stalled in the great movement of the army, which had passed rapidly through two disastrous campaigns, and was now in the midst of a third, which had left its thousands of wounded on our hands. The Sanitary Commission was first in the field, owing to the vigor and foresight of its leaders in Washington. It was at work at least two days before the medical wagons arrived. Thirty pounds of chloroform were given out within three days after the battle, saving fifty lives and several hundreds from the agony of severe operations. Nearly every barn and hospital and cluster of wounded over the wide extent of the field, embracing an extent of thirty miles, were receiving essential relief, while the regular medical stores lay at Monocacy Bridge, unable to cross it." *

The Sanitary Commission stores sent to Antietam within ten days of the date of the battle consisted of 28,763 pieces of dry goods, shirts, towels, bedticks, and pillows; 30 barrels of old linen, bandages, and lint; 3,188 pounds of farina; 2,620 pounds of condensed milk; 5,000 pounds of beef stock and canned meats; 3,000 bottles of wine and cordials; and many tons of lemons and other fruit; crackers, tea, sugar, rubber cloth, tin cups, and hospital conveniences. These stores afforded incalculable relief over these wide-spread fields. Within eight days from the occupancy of the field of Antietam by our force, nearly all the wounded received ample supplies of hospital clothing from the depots of the Sanitary Commission and the medical purveyor.†

* *Sanitary Commission Document, No. 48.*

† Dr. Steiner's *Report Sanitary Commission.*

Dr. Dimon of the 2d Maryland regiment, who was at Antietam, wrote as follows of the provision the state of Massachusetts made for her wounded men in this battle, and also of Mr. Fay's work on that field:—

The second day of the battle of Antietam, I did not know where I should get a hundred things I needed for my wounded men, when there suddenly appeared at the fence a wagon, in the charge of two gentlemen and a lady from Chelsea, Massachusetts, who had, as if by inspiration, filled it with everything necessary,—tin cups, basins, lanterns, bandages, lint, shirts, drawers, bed-sacks, towels, tea, candles, soap, concentrated food. They were supplying all troops along the road, not only their own, but those from every loyal state and every corps of the army. We had not previously a lantern to enable us at night to keep the wounds wet, turn over the wounded to ease their positions, or give them drink. If we used candles, which were scarce, they would blow out or endanger the barn in which we were. Tin cups to eat and drink from, and to keep water for bandage wetting, were in proportion of one to four men, including their canteens. We had but one basin for dressing the wounds of one hundred and forty-seven men, and that had a hole in the bottom stuffed with rags. So you see what a godsend this supply was from Massachusetts, and it seemed as though that state was the only one ready to relieve, instantly, the poor fellows who are doing so much for the country.

I am ashamed to say I have seen no one from New York, except a sutler asking fifty per cent. advance on his goods; and the Marylanders only appeared with their stores ten days after the battle. Those articles I have particularly mentioned constituted only a specimen of the judicious and plentiful supply that these generous and thoughtful people brought to us. I begged their names for my own grateful memory, of Mayor Fay of Chelsea, Massachusetts, of Alderman Low of the same town, and Miss Gilson, who were the first of those to relieve our wounded soldiers.

Dr. Louis H. Steiner, the head of the Sanitary Commission's operations in Maryland during the Antietam campaign, also wrote as follows of Mr. Fay in that emergency:—

"Mr. Frank B. Fay and Miss Gilson have been working with untiring zeal and devotion at or near Keedysville since the battle. These philanthropic patriots are examples worthy of all imitation on the part of those who aim to keep the good deeds which their right hands do from the knowledge of the world. I am pleased to record their names as among those whose labors have been more or less aided by the supplies of the Commission."

It can be well understood that there was little time for reports or letter-writing in such emergencies as Mr. Fay faced during the weeks after this battle. We can see him moving over the field with his supplies, or bending tenderly over these suffering men, cheering them with hopeful words, sending messages to their families, binding up their wounds, listening with helpful, sympathetic interest to their stories, and performing the last offices of comfort to those who were passing into the other world.

This work, so continuous, so persistent, pressed severely upon him. He was worn and overtaxed in body and mind, and the drain upon his sympathy was constant and severe. He wrote: "I am troubled almost beyond endurance by the mass of suffering I have no power to relieve. I have but little sleep, and that often in the open, on the ground, or in the shelter of a stone wall, wrapped in my blanket, or, if more fortunate, on the bare floor with a haversack for a pillow. And, as for meals, there are none provided, and we eat as opportunity offers. The dreadful scenes we have witnessed take the life

and courage out of a man. I have seen three thousand wounded within three miles of this place, besides other thousands between here and Frederick, and I doubt if I have seen half of them. And the dead! I had little conception of the horrors of a battlefield. Hundreds upon hundreds lying stark and unburied, waiting the last ministry of 'earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes.'"

Of Miss Gilson he wrote: "She had left Washington before I did, in an ambulance, in company with a lady from Philadelphia, to visit a hospital a few miles from the capital; but, hearing of the battle, they pressed forward to the field, and quickly established themselves there and began their work. We afterwards moved to Pleasant Valley, a few miles in the rear, and here our main work was done after the wounded were brought in from the fields and the emergencies of the campaign were over."

Mr. Fay then returned to Chelsea, leaving Miss Gilson with the army until the wounded were removed to the hospitals in Washington.

CHAPTER V.

The First Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville.

As we have seen, after the battle of Antietam General Lee withdrew his army safely across the Potomac on the twentieth of September, 1862. McClellan did not follow, though urged, even ordered, to do so from Washington. Both armies were doubtless glad to be free from the presence of each other, both of them needing rest and recuperation after the three terrible campaigns through which they had passed. They rested on their arms, the Confederates in the Shenandoah Valley, the Army of the Potomac near the scene of its recent battle, amid the hills and valleys of South-western Maryland.

A month passed before McClellan began his movement back into Virginia, and by the first of November his entire army had crossed the Potomac below Harper's Ferry, and moved towards Warrington. The government had become profoundly distrustful of him and removed him from the command, and he never went into active service again. Burnside was chosen to succeed him. This was on the seventh day of November. He reformed the army into three grand divisions of two corps each for his impending campaign, with his base at Fredericksburg on the Rappahannock. As it proved, this was his first great mistake, as Lee had no difficulty in concentrating his army in what proved to be an impregnable position on Marye's Heights to meet him. But

we have to do with the movement of his army rather than with criticism of the campaign, which is left to the military historians.

The city of Fredericksburg lies on the southerly bank of the Rappahannock, with the heights of Falmouth rising from the northerly side of the river. The town lies in the hollow of the great plain between these two commanding positions. Lee's army was rapidly concentrated on a series of ridges a mile beyond the town, the centre of the position being on Marye's Heights, and was intrenched there along the crest of these hills. At the end of a few weeks a most formidable array of works had sprung into existence for his artillery, which would present an inferno of fire into which no man or army would willingly venture. Plans were made by Burnside to turn this stronghold either above or below the city, but, as they were discovered by his antagonist, they had to be abandoned, and on the tenth of December it was determined to force the Rappahannock. Before dawn on the eleventh the pontoons were moved forward, and the engineers, under the cover of a heavy fog, began swiftly and silently their work of construction of the bridges for the passage of the army.*

They were met by the volleys from the sharp-shooters on the opposite bank, who were behind rifle-pits, stone walls, and buildings on the river street of Fredericksburg. By noon two bridges were available two miles below the city, but the one opposite the city met a different fate. It was here that a murderous fire was maintained, driving the men from their work, until General Burnside concentrated the fire of all his artillery upon

*Swinton's *Army of the Potomac*, p. 236.

the city to dislodge the sharp-shooters and batter down their defences. Nearly every man on these pontoons had been either killed or wounded.

The chief of artillery, General Hunt, then sent strong parties in open boats to land and dislodge or capture the opposing force. This *coup-de-main* was successful, and the bridge was completed within a few minutes. Up to this time it was literally going into the valley of the shadow of death to continue the effort on these pontoons. Volunteers were now called for to man them again in the effort to carry a force into the city. Swinton says, "The movement was gallantly executed, and the army, assembled on the northern bank of the river, spectators of this heroism, paid the brave fellows the rich tribute of soldiers' cheers."

Among these volunteers was Chaplain Arthur B. Fuller, a Unitarian minister, of the 16th Massachusetts regiment, who on account of broken health in the service had the day before resigned and had received his discharge. He had been watching with great concern the events of the day at the pontoons, and heard the call for volunteers. He seized a musket and joined in the hazard of the enterprise. The sudden emergency in which he decided to act was wholly unexpected by him. He was dressed in the uniform of a staff officer, and had been cautioned early in the day against exposing himself, as he would be a special mark for the sharp-shooters; but, in spite of all, he joined the ranks, and fell pierced by two bullets soon after entering Fredericksburg. One of his comrades thus wrote of his last moments:—

"We were in advance of the others who had crossed, and marched up the street from the landing. He ac-

costed me, saying, 'I must do something for my country,' and took his place on my left. He was perfectly cool and collected. I have seldom seen a man on the field so calm and mild in demeanor, evidently not acting from impulse or martial rage. His position was in front of a grocery store, and in five minutes after he took it, having fired once or twice, was killed instantly, and did not move after he fell, and was left on the field after we retired."

Mr. Fay's narrative is now resumed, as it relates to what occurred after the chaplain's death and his personal connection with it:—

I had returned to the army as soon as it was massed in front of Fredericksburg, and, not long after Mr. Fuller crossed, I crossed the bridge with Miss Gilson, and made my way into the city to be on the field of battle. At the end of the pontoon I met Lieutenant Myrick of the 35th Massachusetts regiment, who was in charge of some prisoners. He asked me if I knew Chaplain Fuller, and said they thought they had found his body, and I was directed to the point where he fell. I identified it at once, as I knew him well, and asked the lieutenant to make a box and place the body in it and send it across the river to Lacy House, and I would arrange to send it to Boston. He said there were no boards. I told him to tear off some from one of the houses opposite, and he had no difficulty in providing himself with the material. The body was tenderly removed and sent to Washington in charge of a wounded officer, and thence by Adams Express to its destination.

Colonel Higginson, in writing of the death of Chaplain Fuller in his *Harvard Memorial Biographies*, said: "I know of no other case in this war or in any other in which a chaplain, the day after his discharge, still wearing his

uniform and, therefore, more exposed, bearing his discharge on his person, volunteered without a soldier's training for the most perilous duty of a common soldier, and was killed in doing it."

Miss Gilson, who was with Mr. Fay and joined in the identification of the body, thus wrote of Mr. Fuller:—

"I met him a few days before his death, and drew from my pocket a well-worn copy of *Army Melodies* of which he was one of the editors, and told him I had carried it through the Peninsula campaign, often administering the medicine of music to the sick and wounded. The next Sunday I was one of a party who joined in a religious service conducted by him, and attended by some five hundred convalescent soldiers. Every eye was fastened upon him during his address, and each upturned face caught the glow of his enthusiasm. We parted, and I saw no more of him until we identified his body in Fredericksburg, surrounded by the rebel sharp-shooters who had fallen with him there. 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.'"

Mr. Fay then writes:—

The day before the battle I saw the 35th Massachusetts regiment marching towards the river. I knew they had been paid off the day before, and had collectively a large sum of money that they might be glad to send home before going into battle. I overtook them just as they came to a halt, and arranged with Major Willard, then commanding, to receive and forward the money. He called his captains, who then began receiving it from the men, recording their names and the amounts from each, together with the address to which it was to be sent, and I gathered it in. We had just completed our

work when the regiment resumed its march and went forward into battle. I shall make some farther reference to this later in the story. The money received was sent to Washington and was afterwards distributed according to the addresses given.

When Miss Gilson and I crossed the pontoon bridge into Fredericksburg, we went over in an ambulance. At the pontoon the guard would not let her pass. I insisted that she went everywhere within the lines of the army, and he called the sergeant of the guard, an Irishman, who, on seeing the beaded chain and cross she wore, mistook her for a Sister of Charity, and she was allowed to pass. It was just beyond this point that we identified the body of Chaplain Fuller.

We found work to do directly where we stood, and remained in the city through the day, undisturbed by the battle which was raging about us, both within and beyond the town. As night came on and the wounded were brought in and were carried across the river to our camps, we made ready for our crossing also.

General Ferrero, who was standing with General Couch near by, came to us, and said: "You must not cross the pontoons now. Don't you see the rebels have a direct range on the bridge with their battery? You can see the shells dropping at the end of the pontoon on the other side." I had noticed the firing and had heard the shells, but had not noticed where they fell. I moved Miss Gilson to one side behind a house, when an officer came up, and said, "I beg pardon, but there is a stone chimney behind you, and, if a shell should strike it, you will both be hurt," and I moved her again to a safer spot. Our batteries then opened on the rebel battery, and silenced it. General Ferrero then said, "Now is your chance, go immediately," which we did, and were soon on the other side out of range.

I mention an incident here, which for the moment caused me much amusement. That morning Miss Gilson, who had been more under fire than I had, and had shown great courage, asked me, "How do you think we are going to behave when we get under fire?" I replied that we could never tell till the time came. Just before we crossed the river I bought a newspaper, and, while

standing with the shells flying over us, began to read it, just pretending to show my indifference. She looked at me, and said, "Don't expose yourself, for at any moment you may be in eternity." When we crossed the pontoon, *there were no other travellers that way.* We were glad to be safely back again; but we did not hurry, for I knew there were thousands of men lying in their rifle-pits watching us, and we *would not run.* That convinced me that pride often forces a man to be brave.

In 1869 I was visiting a friend in Illinois, and, as I was relating some of my army experiences, one of his other guests said, "I can vouch for that last story you told, as I was on the staff of a Confederate officer at the time, on Marye's Heights, and with my field-glass noticed a lady and gentleman crossing that pontoon, and thought they did not seem to be in much of a hurry." It was curious to have such a confirmation of the story twenty-seven years afterwards, from one who was called our enemy at that time.

We were established at Howard's Hospital in the rear of Falmouth Heights, overlooking the field of battle, and here we found enough to do.

I have often thought of an incident at this hospital which shows how quickly a soldier becomes familiar with death. One of the men in the hospital had just died. After he passed away, I placed a handkerchief over his face. The man next him was wounded in the arm, and, as I handed him a cup of broth, he raised himself to a sitting posture, and, as he could not hold his cup at the same time, placed it on his dead comrade's breast until he could help himself with the other hand. Death was in fact stalking everywhere about us and was hardly noticed.

The next morning the artillery opened the battle of Fredericksburg. We were in a good position on the heights of Falmouth to witness it. The Confederates had opened their fire, and the shells were bursting over us, and we moved to a more sheltered place on a hill near the station, and here I watched the progress of the battle, including the fearful struggle that went on beyond the city, the repeated and terrific assaults on Marye's Heights, the repulse at the stone wall and the sunken

road at its base, where so many of our brave men were killed and wounded. This, together with our ministry to many of these men, was an experience never to be forgotten. I later became familiar with every foot of this ground when, in 1864, I occupied this region with my Auxiliary Corps of the Sanitary Commission after the battle of the Wilderness.

That night, while in my tent in a belt of woods near Lacy House, I heard the tramp of soldiers, moving in masses, marching by, and hailed them, and asked where they were going. "Going back," they replied. "Who is going back?" "The whole army is going back," they answered; and it was then that I realized that we had been defeated.

But we must give here a brief account of the battle. The pontoon bridge was laid on the morning of the eleventh of December. Forty-eight hours had passed in preparation for the attack upon Lee's defences.

The nature of the ground indicated that the main attack should be made on the left, below Fredericksburg, where there was room to deploy out of hostile range, whereas the plain behind Fredericksburg and below the terraced heights held by Lee's army was restricted, and badly cut up by ditches, fences, and a canal, and was directly in front of those formidable works which looked down in grim irony on all attempts at direct assault. General Burnside's plan conformed to these conditions, and he so instructed both Franklin and Sumner, his two commanders, but, after these officers had made their dispositions, Burnside changed his plan and determined to fight on another. We do not need to follow in detail the confusions which came upon this chess-board.*

The morning of the thirteenth of December found the sun struggling with a thick haze that covered everything,

* Swinton's *Army of the Potomac*, p. 246.

and delayed for some hours the impending battle; but towards ten o'clock the lifting fog revealed Franklin spread out on the plain, showing the gleaming bayonets of a column advancing to the attack. It was not long before the heavy fighting began, the Confederate guns concealed in the woods being silent until the Union forces were in point-blank range, when they opened and poured shell and canister upon them. The Confederates shattered Meade's line with a loss of forty per cent. of his force, while Reynolds lost four thousand of his supporting force.

Meanwhile Longstreet held his position along the stone wall and rifle trenches of the telegraph road at the foot of Marye's Heights. The whole plain in front of him was swept by a direct and converging fire from the batteries on the semicircle crest above; but under Burnside's orders there was nothing left to do but to assail this position. Division after division was thrown forward, and cross-fires of shot and shell opened great gaps in the advancing ranks; but, "closing up," the ever-thinning lines pressed on, but fell back amid the shouts and yells of the enemy, with losses of near half their number. Hancock then advanced under the same terrific fire, got nearer his goal, but his men were forced back after fifteen immortal minutes, losing two thousand of the five thousand he led into that charge, and it was found that the bravest of these had thrown up their hands and lay dead within five-and-twenty paces of the stone wall.*

It was in this charge that the noble Major Sidney Willard of Boston, in command of the 35th regiment, already spoken of, led his men into this valley of the shadow of death. Waving his sword and leading the charge, he fell, and, when his companions went to his

* Swinton's *Army of the Potomac*, pp. 250–252.

side, he murmured, "Tell them I tried to do my duty to my country."

It is not to be supposed that Burnside realized the bloody sequence to which he was committing himself when he ordered a division to assail the heights of Fredericksburg; but, having failed in the first attempt, there grew up in his mind something akin to desperation. Walking restlessly up and down the heights above the banks of the Rappahannock and gazing at the rebel position beyond the town, he exclaimed vehemently, "*That crest must be carried to-night.*" After failing in three assaults, he ordered Hooker in desperation to make a fourth. Hooker went forward to reconnoitre, but, seeing its hopelessness, begged him to desist; but Burnside insisted. Batteries were brought up to breach the works, and four thousand men went forward to a fourth attack, but were thrown swiftly back, leaving seventeen hundred of their number on the field, and the winter's day closed with thousands left dead or wounded before Longstreet on the left and Stonewall Jackson on the right of that position.*

In the night the aurora which flamed brilliantly over the northern sky looked down on the scene which has been thus described:†—

Elsewhere the sky was dark, intensely clear, the winter stars like diamonds. There was no wind. The wide unsheltered plain was sown thick with men who had dropped from the ranks, their marchings and tentings and their battles over. They lay here now stark and pale, but on the plain of Fredericksburg many and many were not dead and resting. Hundreds lay there, and could not rest for mortal anguish. They waved a hat or sword or empty hand for help and all in vain; and those who could not lift their voices moaned and sent up their prayers to

* Swinton's *Army of the Potomac*, pp. 250–252.

† *The Long Roll*, Mary Johnston, p. 650.

the silent heavens. Some had grown delirious, and upon that plain there was even laughter. All the various notes, taken together, blended into one long, dreary, weird, and awful sound, steady as a wind in miles of frozen weeds. . . . All through the night there streamed the boreal lights. The living and the dying, the ruined town, the plain, the hills, the river, lay beneath. The blue army slept and waked, the gray army slept and waked, and for two days lay there resting; the third night, in storm, in howling wind and driving rain and sleet, the Army of the Potomac, grand division by grand division, recrossed the Rappahannock.

General Lee was unaware of the extent of the disaster to the Union army, and, expecting an hourly renewal of the contest, refrained from assuming the offensive until it was too late. His enemy had been withdrawn. The loss on the Union side was twelve thousand in killed, wounded, and missing,—a tragic ending of the campaign.

In anticipation of the battle the Medical Department had made ample preparation for the wounded. Eighteen field hospitals had been established, with a perfect system for their removal from the field. This was accomplished without confusion, and such was the energy with which it was carried out that, when Burnside withdrew his army from the city on the third day after the battle, every man that could be found was either on his way to Washington or was well cared for in the temporary hospitals in the rear of our lines.

With the thousands of men to be removed either on foot or in ambulances from so extended a line of battle, it seems incredible that it should have been accomplished so speedily, when one considers the long distances to be covered in the search for these men in scattered cabins and farm buildings, and in all the nooks and corners of

the city of Fredericksburg, and in the face of an alert and watchful enemy.

While the field hospitals remained in operation, Mr. Fay kept at work through the freezing weather, living in a tent without a fire, and subject to all the exposures of an inclement season. It was winter and extremely cold, and, as there were no stoves, there was great suffering in the hospitals. Bricks, however, were heated in open fires, and proved a good substitute in the wards. Mr. Fay wrote: "At this time I seemed to be everything to everybody. I was called chaplain, surgeon, nurse, and major, but no title was needed to characterize the range of my duties." He might also have been called the "Hospital Directory," for it was his custom to make a record of the names and home addresses of all wounded soldiers with whom he came in contact, and was the source of knowledge concerning them. Far into the night, when his work was done in the hospital, he was sending forward to their families the last messages of these men. In hundreds of cases these careful records, maintained through the war, proved of inestimable value, as they told the last story of one and another poor fellow whose fate would never have been known and who would otherwise have gone down into a nameless grave.

During the campaign Mr. Fay had been re-elected Mayor of Chelsea, and returned home in December to prepare his address and make ready for his inauguration.

After so disastrous a campaign it can be readily understood that great despondency in the army followed. Desertions increased, and for the first time in its history it

could be said to be demoralized. Confidence in Burnside's ability to lead such an army was destroyed, and this feeling existed not only among his general officers, but all through the rank and file. After a few weeks this sentiment became so strong that it was carried up to Washington. Burnside resigned, and General Hooker was placed in command.

THE CAMPAIGN OF CHANCELLORSVILLE.

Under General Hooker, who in many conflicts had gained great popularity through the country and was known familiarly as "Fighting Joe," the army recovered from its depression, regained its old spirit and courage, and by the close of April, 1863, had reached a high degree of efficiency. His army had been increased to one hundred and twenty thousand men, including a cavalry force of twelve thousand horses, and was ready for another contest. The rolls of Lee's army showed on the first of April a total of sixty thousand effective men, and it remains to be seen what these two generals did with their respective forces.

Hooker planned to place his main army on the south side of the Rappahannock, twenty-five miles above Fredericksburg, towards Chancellorsville, and to mask this movement by throwing a very considerable force across the river below that city, to menace Lee's position there, compelling him to abandon it, while at the same time he prepared a powerful cavalry column to operate on his lines of communication with Richmond. This was a great plan, and promised success. But General Lee had not been idle through the winter, and had practi-

cally covered all the fords of the river for a length of twenty-five miles, occupied every advantageous position and hillside with formidable works for his artillery, and felt secure, knowing his ability to mass his forces quickly at any given point.

Hooker's movement, Swinton says, "in throwing his main army across the river above the points where it was guarded, and the remarkable success attending it, of which Lee did not become aware until the Rappahannock had been crossed, were the result of a secrecy and celerity of march new to the Army of the Potomac." He adds: "To have marched a column of fifty thousand men, laden [each] with sixty pounds of baggage, and encumbered with artillery and transportation, thirty-seven miles in two days; to have bridged two streams guarded by a vigilant enemy, with the loss of half a dozen men, one wagon, and two mules, is an achievement which has few parallels, and which deserves to rank with Prince Eugene's famous passage of the Adige. The success of this movement inspired the army, and greatly elated its commander, and there was much to justify jubilant expectation, for, of the two lines of retreat open to Lee, Hooker had laid hold of that by Gordonsville and threatened that by Richmond. The bright promise of these operations was clouded by but one fact,—the cavalry column which was to cut Lee's communications with Richmond had been delayed by the rise of the Rappahannock, and could not at the proper moment co-operate with Hooker as he had planned." *

All went well with Hooker's column so far. But, starting on an offensive campaign, he suddenly changed

* Swinton's *Army of the Potomac*, pp. 278–280.

it to a defensive one, and this was his grave error. He had reached his objective point, he had surprised his enemy, who had but a mere handful of a division in his front, and then, if ever, he should have moved forward. But at that point he failed, began to intrench, and his delay of forty-eight hours gave Lee his opportunity, and he used it well.

The real character of the movement which had been so well concealed became apparent to Lee, who, with instant perception of the situation, now seized the masses of his force, and with the grasp of a Titan swung them into position, as a giant might fling a mighty stone from a sling. Holding the Heights of Fredericksburg firmly, the rest of his army was put in motion towards Chancellorsville to meet Hooker. Hooker held, although not in great force, a ridge commanding Chancellorsville, which was vital to him, but lost it, the very position Lee was contending for. It might have been regained, but at this juncture his three columns had orders to withdraw. His commanders, with amazement at this order, sent to beg Hooker to push his army forward and hold the position they had gained, but it was of no avail, and he threw away the initiative with all its mighty gains and far-reaching hopes. Up to the moment of meeting his enemy, he showed a master grasp of the elements of war, but then there seemed to be a collapse of his powers and he was unequal to the emergencies that rapidly followed. His line of battle was some five miles in length at Chancellorsville, with the thickets of the Wilderness all around him, and he determined to fight a defensive battle. His position was a menacing one to Lee, and it was unassailable by direct attack, but Lee and Jackson together were equal to their emergency. Jackson proposed in council to execute a movement on a grander scale than he had ever attempted before, and deal one of those sudden and mortal blows on his enemies' rear that he had successfully carried out in former campaigns, and this was ordered. The plan was skilfully

masked and carried out, and Jackson's three divisions of twenty-two thousand men burst with resistless force upon the rear of the Union army. Brigade after brigade, surprised, broke and fled. The confused mass overran the next division, which compelled it to give way, and the whole 11th corps was soon in rout. Lee at the same moment was delivering mortal blows at Hooker's left and centre, and the open plain around Chancellorsville was like a simoon sweeping over a desert. A rushing whirlwind of men and artillery and wagons swept down the road, past headquarters and on toward the fords of the Rappahannock. Hooker, flaming out with his old fire, called for his old division, and the torrent was stayed. Jackson, quick to perceive the necessity of a final blow, went forward to reconnoitre. He went with his staff too far, and into the enemy's lines, and on returning through the darkness was mortally wounded by a volley from his own men, who mistook his escort for a body of Federal cavalry. He died at the end of a week. He was one of the greatest leaders on the field of battle, and his loss was a serious disaster to the Confederate army and the Confederate cause.

But the battle was not yet lost, as there were two more days of fighting. Sedgwick with his corps three miles below Fredericksburg had been ordered to rejoin the main army, and met the Confederates strongly intrenched on Marye's Heights. He captured this position after a severe conflict which cost him five thousand men. Advancing then towards Chancellorsville, and in Lee's rear, he was checked by that commander, who faced about to meet him, and then turned back again to confront Hooker, delivering heavy blows at his position at Chancellor House, around which the battle raged. At this point in the battle, General Hooker was thrown down by the concussion of a shell that struck one of the pillars of that house, on the balcony of which he was stand-

ing. This prostrated him for a time. "The corps commanders had already seen that it was only a question now of saving the honor of the army, as it was in effect without a head. Hooker had resolved to retire, and seemed incapable of other resolve." *

On the fourth of May both armies were in deadlock. Hooker had a strong defensive position, and Lee felt unable to attack with less than his whole force, which could not be brought into action while Sedgwick was in his rear. While Sedgwick was able to hold his own, he was not able to advance. Lee tried to cut the knot, but was not able. On the following night Sedgwick withdrew across the Rappahannock River, and the same night Hooker, in spite of the protests of his corps commanders, determined to retire also, and in the midst of a night as gloomy as the mood of the army the troops filed across to the north bank, and the campaign ended by the return of the army to the old position it occupied previous to the ill-fated movement.

Swinton remarks "that it was not the Army of the Potomac that was defeated, but its commander, and the rank and file were puzzled at the result of a battle in which they had been made to retreat without the consciousness of having been defeated." The Confederate loss was 13,000 men, including prisoners. On the Union side the losses were 17,000 killed, wounded, and missing. The army left behind its wounded, 14 pieces of artillery, and 20,000 stand of arms.

In the emergencies of this short and disastrous campaign neither the Sanitary Commission nor Mr. Fay could do much to relieve the suffering on the field of Chancellors-

* Swinton's *Army of the Potomac*, p. 293.

ville. It was practically out of their hands. Permission had been given, but afterwards withdrawn, for the movement of supplies across the river, because of the already overloaded transportation of the army, and consequently the situation of our wounded over many square miles of the battlefield was most deplorable. There were field hospitals in rear of the lines of battle, but the sudden and disastrous issue of the conflict forced the abandonment of large numbers of our men, who were left to suffer and die in the enemy's hands, whose means of alleviation were already overtaxed by the care of their own wounded. Our crowded field hospitals in charge of medical officers, besides thousands of men outside of them, were left behind, to be removed a few days later under flag of truce; and they were so removed after a correspondence between the two commanding generals.

Reference has been made to the severe conflicts near Fredericksburg and at Marye's Heights by Sedgwick's corps, where the losses were some five thousand men. Our forces held the city at this time, and Mr. Fay moved with his ambulance of stores into the town, and continued his work there till its abandonment by our forces. His record of this experience is meagre, but we quote it here:—

Rev. William H. Channing was with us there, receiving and working among the wounded who were brought into the city from the conflicts on the Heights. Late one night we all went out some distance from the town to aid large numbers who were being brought in from the field, who would otherwise have been unattended.

Their wounds were dressed, and they were supplied with milk punch and nourishing food, and, as we returned long after midnight, an old negro woman, who had seen us

at work there, begged us to come to her house and rest. She was most hospitable and kind. The next morning we took possession of the mayor's house, and prepared the stimulants and food for the wounded in a church near by. While engaged in our work here, it was reported that the enemy were swarming into the town, as our forces had abandoned it, and we were practically alone, and liable at any moment to be captured. We soon saw batteries of artillery and other vehicles moving rapidly down hill from the direction of Marye's Heights, and knew that it was time to leave. We placed all our stores in the church where we had been working, and went rapidly to the river and crossed the pontoons safely to the other side. We met our old friend Dr. Welling at this point, who was in charge of the hospitals at Potomac Creek, which were filled with the wounded from this engagement, and established ourselves there, continuing our absorbing work until the wounded were transferred to Washington.

At this time I made efforts to get a good supply of vegetables for the soldiers, of which they were in great need. General Hooker had introduced soft bread into the army ration, but there was nothing else in this form but desiccated vegetables, and there was more or less scurvy among the troops. I offered to supply the Medical Director with all the fresh vegetables he might need, if he would secure the transportation, knowing that I could induce the people of New England to send cargoes down to the base of the army. But he preferred cornmeal, and my effort failed. Later the suggestion was acted upon by the Sanitary Commission, which supplied the army with great stores of anti-scorbutics as they were needed.

At this Potomac Creek hospital we had a German by the name of "Silers," who was a comical genius, and Veazie also, a droll countryman of ours, and they kept our quarters in good humor in spite of its many distressing scenes. Our cook in the special diet kitchen was a negro, and very religious, and was much concerned about the future state of the poor fellows who were dying all around us. One day, as Miss Gilson came into the kitchen from the wards, she said that Captain Smith had

died, an officer well known to us all. He was a good officer and a good man. The cook was much troubled about his spiritual state, and asked if he was a Christian. She replied that she never asked that question. "I do what I can for them. I care for them, I pray with them, I sing to them, I work for them and feed them, and think I need do no more." Veazie, standing near by, said: "Do you know what I think when a soldier dies? I think the Lord snatches him up so quick that the devil can't get hold of him."

At that time we had several barrels of porter sent down to us from Philadelphia. We buried all but one to keep them cool. One was on tap, and, while Veazie was in the tent, the bung came out, and, as the most convenient way to stop the overflow, he sat upon the bung-hole, but the beer still escaped around him in foam, which was a comical sight.

While here, General Hooker and some of his staff dined with us, and it is but justice to him, considering the charges that were rife about his habits at that time, to say that he drank nothing at our table that day.

After the battle of Chancellorsville it became evident that General Lee would not long remain inactive, as he never failed to seize an opportunity for an offensive movement against his enemy. There was, therefore, great activity in every department of the army in preparation for another campaign which would be sure to follow. The army was recovering its old spirit and was gradually placed in position to cover the approaches to Washington, while the cavalry was thrown out to feel towards the passes of the Blue Ridge.

The wounded were removed to Washington, the hospitals about Aquia Creek were closed, and Mr. Fay returned home to look after the city administration. He found municipal affairs in good condition, and well

managed under the usual committees, and, more than all, the people were satisfied. To avoid cause for criticism at his long absences, he declined a re-election at the end of 1862, but there was a unanimous expression of the wish that he should remain in office, as he was their war mayor and was meeting all the requirements of his position.

He had not been long at home before the clouds of another great campaign burst upon Washington, in General Lee's second invasion of the North, and Mr. Fay made ready for the Gettysburg campaign of June and July, 1863.

CHAPTER VI.

GETTYSBURG.

I had been at home but a short time when the papers announced that the sick and wounded from Chancellorsville had been removed to Washington. I knew that meant a movement of the army, and that I ought to be there. I was getting ready, when a despatch came from Miss Gilson, saying: "Changes. When are you coming?" It had been discovered that General Lee was on his way north with his army, and that the Army of the Potomac must pursue. Our hospital supplies had been hurriedly packed and sent on barges up the Potomac to Alexandria. The surgeons and Miss Gilson had started June sixteen on horseback, and, passing through Washington, had gone on to meet the army at Manassas Junction. On my arrival at Washington I went to Alexandria to see if I could trace the supplies, but found they had been sent forward. By the kindness of a surgeon I obtained a pass in an ambulance to the field. The next morning I found that the larger part of our stores had been used on the way by the men in charge, and it was inexpedient for us to go on with the army empty-handed. I therefore decided to return to Washington to obtain a new supply. This was a great disappointment to Miss Gilson, who was anxious to be present at the time of the battle, which was daily expected. She knew she could be useful among the wounded, as she had become skilful in surgical dressing and in the preparation of special diet. She shed some tears at my decision, but yielded to the apparent necessity. We took our ambulance and personal baggage and started for Washington. The guerillas were scouring the country, and we could not reach our destination that night, but stayed at a little wayside hotel where the rebels had rested, and spent part of that day. I locked Miss Gilson into a room, and

slept myself over the bar-room where there was carousing all night. We reached Washington the next morning, remained several days, hearing rumors of battles which did not take place. Manœuvring on a grand scale was going forward by both armies, while both were rushing onward toward some unknown point of conflict. We waited developments, and in the mean time secured supplies and obtained transportation for them on a freight train to Baltimore. The Sanitary Commission then filled my car with additional stores, and sent Mr. William A. Hovey, of the office staff, with them to see to their disposition. I finally became satisfied that the conflict would be in Pennsylvania, and made my plans accordingly.

This forecast was correct, as we shall see in the following brief review of Lee's movement in that great campaign.

The Army of the Potomac had twice been driven back defeated in its attempt to cross the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg, and these defeats had raised the spirits of the Confederates to the highest pitch. After the defeat at Chancellorsville, as we have seen, the Federal troops were despondent, and besides were meeting with serious losses by the retirement of the short-term men whose time of service had expired. Lee's army, on the contrary, was being strengthened by conscription in the South, and had been largely re-enforced by two divisions of Longstreet's corps, which had been operating elsewhere. The conditions in the Army of the Potomac were perfectly well understood by General Lee: they opened the way to him for another invasion of Maryland and Pennsylvania, and he promptly took advantage of them. This movement was well under way before the meaning of it became clear, and, when it did become known, Lee's advance was

far north in the vicinity of Winchester, having marched seventy miles in three days. His line extended upwards of a hundred miles at that time. Hooker, held back by General Halleck in Washington, finally started in pursuit, moving his army to cover the capital. But finding himself deprived of his freedom in action, and embarrassed by the delaying tactics of his superior officer, he resigned, and General George G. Meade was appointed in his place, and was given absolutely a free hand. The forward movement of the army went on, as if no change of commanders had occurred. Lee's advance had already moved into Pennsylvania, and swept everything before it. Subsistence was levied on the rich farms of the country, and herds of horses and cattle were sent southward, and for a time Lee appeared to be master of the situation.

The concentration of both armies was gradually made on Gettysburg, a great natural battlefield, and here the decisive battle was fought. Meade proved to be a great tactician. Having an interior line, he was able to menace Lee, while at the same time he was so disposing his army as to be ready to confront his enemy wherever he might concentrate. Both armies were finally brought into line at the then obscure hamlet of Gettysburg, which proved to be the scene of one of the mightiest encounters of modern times.

It was the turning-point of the war, and this series of notes from Mr. Fay's papers would not be complete without some account of it. The most vivid, complete, and comprehensive narrative of the battle in our literature is one that was recently made public. It was written a few days after the battle by Colonel Frank Aretas Haskell of General Gibbon's staff, whose position as adjutant-

general in the 2d corps gave him unequalled opportunity for observation of many parts of that field, and we shall draw briefly from this privately printed narrative.

The battle began on the first day of July, 1863, before the Army of the Potomac had reached the field, and was sustained on that day by the 1st corps and two divisions of the 11th corps and Buford's cavalry, and these fragments of the army faced the overwhelming numbers of the enemy which had first arrived on the field and had taken their positions on a series of ridges beyond and north of the town, and commanding it. The Federals had withstood the Confederates through the day of heavy fighting most gallantly, but were forced back in some disorder in the afternoon. But General Hancock's arrival at this moment on the field, with his staff, had given a great re-enforcement of strength and courage, and the shattered brigades were reformed and took new positions on Cemetery Ridge, south of the town, which they held, and which proved later to be the centre of the great defensive line. This ended the first day's battle. Our losses were about ten thousand men, and this was not reassuring, but the rest of the army was at hand. General Meade reached the field in the late afternoon, and saw at once that a strong defensive position had been secured, and concentrated his army about it. Our line was in the form of a semicircle bending outward, of a length of four or five miles from Round Top on our left, along a series of ridges to Culp's Hill on our right. General Lee's position was on a great semicircular line facing inward, its two wings embracing ours.

It appears that General Lee had promised his corps commanders that he would not assume the offensive,

but let his enemies come out and attack him. But, as Swinton says in his *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac*, "after the first day's conflict, with his entire army well in hand, he determined to give battle, and such was the contempt of its opponents engendered by Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville that there was not in his ranks a barefoot soldier in tattered gray but believed that Lee would lead his army into Baltimore and Washington, if not into Philadelphia and New York."

"General Meade's final dispositions for battle were made before eight o'clock the next morning. The artillery was placed in its positions, the ammunition brought up, and the line made ready for the conflict. The morning was thick and sultry, the sky overcast with low vapory clouds. The men looked like giants there in the mist, and the guns of the frowning batteries seemed so big that it was a relief to know that they were our friends."

The two armies were well matched in numbers, about one hundred thousand men in each, and in artillery also, a hundred and twenty-five guns in each. The Federal lines were about a mile and a half from those of the enemy, with a great plain lying between them, broken somewhat by two low ridges, with farms of wheat, with grass and pastures and peach orchards and fields of waving corn; and this was the battlefield of Gettysburg.

The second day's battle did not begin till afternoon, when General Sickles of the 3d corps, without orders, on his own initiative, moved his forces forward a thousand yards to command a ridge that he thought he should occupy. This movement was unexpected and unauthorized, and was a mistake, but, having been made, it had to be sustained by heavy columns of re-enforcements,

as our whole left was threatened. To lose that commanding position of Round Top would put the entire army in peril, and it had to be saved. The great battle of Gettysburg on the second day was fought over this extended line, and involved most of the corps of both armies.

Colonel Haskell's narrative is as follows:—

The infantry of Longstreet and Hill came sweeping down on Sickles's front and enveloped his flank, sweeping it back after heavy fighting, which involved in succession our 3d, 5th, 2d, 6th, and 12th corps. The battle raged fiercely and continuously for hours all along our left and up the rock-ribbed slopes of Round Top with various fortunes, until the blunder of Sickles was repaired and the old lines were re-established.

Brigade after brigade of the enemy was thrown forward. The whole slope of Round Top is full of them in masses rushing toward our crest, which is aflame with the fire of our infantry and artillery. It is terrific, and it is a wonder how anything human can stand before it, and yet the madness of the enemy drove them on clear up to the muzzles of the guns, close up to the lines of our infantry; but our line stood firm. Such fighting cannot last long. It has gone on wonderfully long already. But, if we stop to notice it, the rebel cry has ceased. The Union lines advance. The rebels are breaking! They are in confusion in all our front. The wave has rolled upon the rock, and the rock has smashed it. They broke when they had almost pierced our lines, and the whole front, in spite of waving flags, and yells and the entreaties of officers, and the pride of chivalry, fled like chaff before the whirlwind, back down the slope, over the valley, shattered, without organization, fugitive into the woods, and victory was with the Republic. Our left on the line of battle was secure. And how look those fields, the ripening grain, the corn, the orchards, the grassy meadows, and in their midst the rural cottage of brick or wood? They were beautiful this morning. They are desolate now, trampled by the countless feet of the

combatants, ploughed and scarred by shot and shell, the orchards splintered, the fences prostrate, the harvests trodden in the mud. And more dreadful than the sight of all this, thickly strewn over all their length and breadth, are the habiliments of the soldier,—the knapsacks and the haversacks yawning with the rations the owner will never call for; canteens of cedar and of cloth-covered tin; blankets and trousers, overcoats and caps, and some are blue and some are gray; muskets and ramrods, and bayonets and swords, and scabbards and belts, some bent and cut by shot and shell; broken wheels, exploded caissons, and limber boxes and dismantled guns; and all these were sprinkled with blood, horses, a mangled heap of carnage, and last, but not least numerous, many thousands of men. And there was no rebellion here now,—the men of South Carolina were quiet by the side of those from Massachusetts, with upturned faces, sleeping the last sleep, with many wounded lying by their side, still survivors of the rage of Gettysburg. Yet, with all this before them as darkness came on, and new dispositions were made, the Army of the Potomac was quite mad with joy. No more light-hearted guests at a banquet than were these men as they boil their coffee or munch their soldier's supper to-night. And such sights as these will be so long as war lasts upon the earth.

But this did not end the battle on the second day. Our right had been weakened to re-enforce our left, and, before the 12th corps could be brought back to defend its old position on Culp's Hill, the enemy determined to crush that line and double up that wing of our army. General Ewell had sworn an oath to do this, and in the late afternoon, before the conflict at Round Top was over, he suddenly burst upon this weakened line, and thrust his forces within our breastworks and held his position there during the night, awaiting General Lee's re-enforcements in the morning. The 11th and part of the 1st corps were thrown into the battle to check the Confed-

erates, and the fighting was most severe. Culp's Hill is densely wooded, a precipitous, rocky defile, a natural fortress, and was strengthened along its entire crest by heavily timbered breastworks thrown up the night before. The old 12th corps now reached the field and prevented farther breach of our lines, which were held safely through the night.

General Lee had thus directed his attack upon both flanks of our army. He expected to carry one of them the next day, and made his dispositions to drive Ewell's wedge in farther, and so dislodge and double up his enemy. But General Meade checkmated him by assuming the offensive before Ewell could be re-enforced, having brought powerful batteries to bear during the night, which opened a frightful fire at four o'clock in the morning. The Confederates lost their hold, still fighting for hours behind rocks and trees, until they were finally repulsed and driven from our lines, which were then re-established. Their dead and wounded were thick all over the slopes of this long ridge. The forest trees were almost literally stripped some fifteen or twenty feet up from the ground, so thick upon them were the scars the bullets had made. Upon single trees not eighteen inches in diameter one could count two hundred and fifty bullet-holes. These perforations told the story of the hail-storm of lead that swept through these dark recesses. After the battle, all through these bullet-stormed woods were interspersed little patches of earth raised a foot or so above the ground, and near by upon a tree whose bark had been smoothed by an axe, written in red chalk, would be the words "75 *Rebils beried hear*" and "54 rebs there," etc. Such were the marks of conflict in these woods when

the writer passed through them some weeks afterwards. The Federal losses during the two days' fighting had already reached the frightful aggregate of more than twenty thousand in killed, wounded, and missing, and the battle was as yet undecided. Both the efforts of General Lee to turn the flanks of the army had failed, and there remained nothing for him to do but to assault the centre of our lines. He had gained nothing up to this time, his losses were even heavier than ours, and he was less sanguine of success. His hope now lay in his artillery.

Colonel Haskell resumes his narrative:—

During the night the lines of the Union army were reformed and made ready for the renewal of the conflict on the next day, the third of July. The disabled batteries were replaced and well braced up with guns, wherever there were eligible places, from the artillery reserve. It was half-past one before a sound of musket or gun was heard upon the field. For hours an ominous stillness had rested upon it. Immediately after the sharp sound of one of the enemy's guns struck our ears. It was the signal-gun for the opening of the battle. In a moment the whole rebel line was pouring out its thunder and its iron on our devoted crest all over the centre of our position. The mighty din that now rises to heaven and shakes the earth is not all the voice of rebellion, for our guns, the guardian lions of the crest, have opened their fiery jaws in reply. The men of the infantry have seized their arms, and behind every rock and in every ditch they hug the ground, silent, unterrified, little harmed. One hundred and twenty-five guns are now pouring their solid shot and shell on our position, and our batteries of Parrots, Napoleons, and rifled ordnance of an equal number are sending their messages of death onward to the enemy. These guns are great infuriate demons whose mouths blaze with snaky tongues of living fire, and the smoke of Hades. The thunder and lightning of these two hundred and fifty guns are incessant, all-pervading, in

the air above our heads, on the ground at our feet, remote, near, astounding, and these hailstones are massy iron charged with exploding fire. Our artillery men on the crest budged not an inch, but though caisson and limber were smashed, and guns dismantled, and men and horses killed, they kept on with their tremendous reply. An hour and a half passed, and the firing did not abate. Soon after some signs of weariness appeared, and the fire slackened and by three o'clock ceased. The dead and wounded were lying about; some batteries lost ten to twenty-five men each, and half their horses, but our infantry in their rifle-pits were unbroken. The enemy's fire was too high,—its purpose had failed. General Lee planned to break or destroy the centre of our line with his artillery, and then pour his masses of infantry upon it, pierce it, and roll it back upon its two wings, and so complete his victory. But man proposes, and God disposes. Silence again fell upon the field, and then every eye could see the legions of the enemy, an overwhelming tide of armed men, sweeping upon us. We sprang to our saddles, and a dozen bounds brought us to the crest. To say that none grew pale and held their breath would not be true. There are eighteen thousand in this column, with more than half a mile of front. More than a thousand yards the dark gray masses deploy, man touching man, rank pressing rank, line supporting line, a forest of flashing steel, and not five minutes' march away! They move as one soul in perfect order, over ridge or wall or stream, through orchard or meadow or corn-field, grim, irresistible. As they approached and drew nearer, our whole artillery opened upon them with shrapnel and canister bellowing in their faces, until only a hundred yards divide our ready left from their advancing right. All was orderly and still upon the crest as they drew near and we made ready for them. Should they pierce our line and become an entering wedge and drive it home, that would sever our army asunder, and the well-earned fruits of yesterday would be lost. It was a vital moment for us,—and then the storm began. Our volleys blaze and roll like an inferno of fire along a thousand yards of front, and the countless level barrels of the enemy blaze back upon us. Wondering how long the rebel ranks,

deep as they were, could stand this fire of infantry and artillery, Webb's brigade suddenly broke at the angle of our crest, and it was lost to us. Our line was melting away. They were already driving their wedge to split it, and were massing their forces there. But Colonel Haskell, acting as a general at that point, brought up Hall's brigade, reformed Webb's broken line, and after long contest the rebel division staggered back, and the crest was safe. But the conflict raged farther down our front, where the enemy were massed, near the apex of the crest, as if a new battle, more deadly than the first, had sprung up from the ground. In the shock and confusion of this contest all formations were lost; companies, regiments, brigades, are blended and intermixed. The jostling, swaying lines on either side boil and roar and dash their foamy spray, two hostile billows of a fiery ocean. Thick flashes stream from the wall; thick volleys answer from the crest. Individuality is drowned in a sea clamor. The dead and wounded lie where they stagger and fall, and there is no humanity for them now. Now the loyal wave rolls up as if it would overleap its barrier, the crest; and the wave surges back. Again it surges, and again it sinks. The color sergeant of the 72d Pennsylvania grasps the stump of the severed lance in both hands, waves the flag, and rushes toward the wall. "Will you see your colors storm the wall alone?" One man only started to follow. Down go color-bearer and color to the ground, the gallant sergeant is dead. But the whole line springs; the crest of the solid ground heaves forward its maddened load, men, arms, smoke, fire, a fighting mass; it rolls to the wall; flash meets flash; the wall is crossed; a moment ensues of thrusts, blows, yells, shots, followed by a shout, universal, that makes the welkin ring again, and the last, bloodiest fight of the great battle of Gettysburg is ended and won.

Swinton, in his *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac*, says:—

"Whatsoever valor could do to wrest victory from the jaws of hell, that the troops of Pickett's division did,

but at last, almost within the works, they flung themselves on the ground to escape the withering fire that was pouring into them, and threw up their hands in token of surrender, while the remnant staggered back broken and defeated."

"Saddest sight of such a field," says Haskell, "were the thick dead of Maine, Minnesota, and Michigan and Massachusetts and the Empire and Keystone States, who, not yet cold, had given their lives to the country on that stormy field. Sixteen hundred of the enemy lay dead among the trampled grass, and eight thousand wounded are with them in our hands." Their total losses in the three days' battle were estimated at thirty-five thousand men, though the actual figures were never given. Five thousand were buried by our detail after the battle, and there were ten thousand prisoners. Their wounded probably numbered twenty thousand, as they were the attacking force and were frightfully exposed. Our own losses were close to thirty thousand killed, wounded, and missing.

Oh, sorrowful [writes Colonel Haskell] to see so many wounded. The whole neighborhood in the rear became one vast hospital, miles in extent. Some could walk, others were moved on stretchers, and thence the ambulances bore them to their destination. At every house, barn, and shed the wounded were laid, by many a cooling brook, by many a grassy hillside the red flags beckoned them to their tented asylums, a great army, a bruised, mutilated mass of humanity. Every conceivable wound that iron and lead can make were there. Some have undergone the surgeon's work, some, like men at a ticket-office, awaiting their turn. Some walk about with an arm in a sling, some prone upon the ground. From a small round hole upon many a breast the red blood trickles, but the pallid cheek and the hard-drawn

breath and dim-closed eyes tell how near the source of life the bullet had gone. The surgeons with coats off and sleeves rolled up, and their attendants with green bands upon their coats, are all at work, and their story need not be told. Near by appears a row of small fresh mounds placed side by side. They were not there day before yesterday, they will become more numerous every day. Such things I saw as I rode along.

General Lee retired into Virginia with his defeated army. It was several days before Meade could follow in force. The Union army was worn down with four weeks of marching and fighting. It was diminished by heavy losses, by sickness and prostration. The enemy was somewhere in its front strongly placed in defensive positions, their main body concealed, protected by rifle-pits, and could confidently await attack until they could safely cross the Potomac into Virginia. When General Meade was ready, he moved, and struck their rear-guard as the main body were crossing the river and were moving southward. A long campaign of manœuvres followed, extending through the rest of the summer of 1863 and the winter of 1864, when both armies again faced each other on the banks of the Rapidan.

We have followed, perhaps, in too great detail this series of conflicts on the field of Gettysburg. But let it not be forgotten that these first three days of July, 1863, were the most momentous of the war. During this time the life of the nation hung upon a thread. The capture of Washington and an unchecked invasion of the North would have followed Confederate success on that field. In those dark days of the war, who could have foretold the results of such a catastrophe? It may not be in vain, therefore, that these pictures are given here of

heroic struggle at the cannon's mouth, in fire and flame and smoke, with the uncounted dead scattered over six miles of the field of battle, that those of another generation who may read the story may catch the spirit of the men who stood fast on the rocky summits of Gettysburg, and offered their lives to their country, "that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Returning now to the battlefield, let us see how it was there after the conflict ended.

"Thousands of stricken horses still lay scattered as they died. Bent, splintered muskets, rent knapsacks, bruised canteens, shreds of clothing of blue and gray, belts and cartridge-boxes, broken wheels, torn blankets, ammunition boxes, smashed timbers, shattered gun-carriages, parts of harnesses,—of all that men or horses wear or use in battle were scattered broadcast over miles of the field." It was strewn with the dead from the fastnesses of Round Top to Culp's Hill, and all along the front of Cemetery Ridge, through Sherfey's peach orchard, the dead angle, and even in the lines of the Confederates about the Seminary, and the ridges and fields and shambles of the first day's conflict. They were temporarily buried where they fell, in trenches or in single graves, and, when the writer passed over the ground some weeks after the battle, the mounds were everywhere, telling the dreadful story of the uncounted dead, friend and foe lying side by side.

Extraordinary efforts were made by the Sanitary Commission to reach the field by the time the battle began. Their wagons accompanied the army, and relief was dispensed to wounded men within an hour after their wounds

were received. Two wagon-loads of supplies were with the headquarters' train, and, as soon as the assault began, these wagons were despatched, under escort and under fire, to the point where the surgeons had established their temporary hospitals, and to which the wounded were brought in in large numbers. As these wagons bearing the familiar inscription, "U. S. San. Com." (always dear to the eyes of sufferers in the army), came in sight, a surgeon who was standing not five hundred yards in rear of the line of battle, surrounded by sufferers, for whose succor he had exhausted all the means at hand, exclaimed joyfully: "*Thank God! here comes the Sanitary Commission. Now we shall be able to do something.*" Brandy, beef soup, chloroform, lint, bandages, were all at hand, and saved many lives. The wagons, being emptied, were at once sent back for more supplies, and this was repeated time and time again. These Sanitary Commission wagons always appeared to be ahead of the medical stores, which were often delayed in the overburdened transportation of the army.*

All over the field, during the battle, the wounded, as they fell, were gathered into the field hospitals that were nearest them, and as soon as possible were sent forward to the trains. They made their painful way alone, trying as best they could to stanch their wounds; some more seriously hurt, haggard and pale, were resting their arms on the shoulders of their fellows; many were on stretchers, with appealing eyes; and not a few breathing their last. Reaching the railroad, they were cared for according to their need.

Opposite the station were the store tents of the Com-

* *Sanitary Commission Reports.*

mission, with clothing, crutches, canes, pads, pillows, splints, bandages, and with every kind of stimulant, all of which were dealt out with unsparing hand. Large kitchens with cooks and attendants were at work day and night providing for the demand. Surgeons and dressers were also at hand, applying fresh dressings and preparing these thousands of men for their journey to Harrisburg, Baltimore, and Washington.

Dr. Steiner of the Commission, who was in charge of the work in the field, says regarding the numbers of those who received this particular care: "I do not think that a man of the sixteen thousand who were transported during our stay went from Gettysburg without a good meal. Confederates and Unionists together, they all had it, and were comforted and satisfied."

It was into such bewildering scenes as these, enacted over this wide field where twenty-two thousand men of both armies were left to be succored and cared for, that Mr. Fay and Miss Gilson came with their supplies, and with their finely trained skill and sympathy went to work in the 3d corps hospitals on that battlefield.

Let us now take up Mr. Fay's brief narrative, which left him with his stores starting from Baltimore for Southwestern Maryland, where the expected battle was to take place:—

Reaching Winchester on the third of July, we found our stores had been stalled on the way. An ambulance train had, however, come down from the front with the wounded, and I secured transportation for our party on its return, while I waited for the supplies. When they arrived, I engaged three four-horse wagons, loaded them,

and started for the front, Mr. Hovey and I securing two horses from wounded officers who desired them returned to the army. We were near exhaustion, having had no sleep, and had tramped all day in the rain, but started at night for the field, twenty miles away, and rode till morning.

We waded through streams of uncertain depth, swollen by rains, and after many difficulties reached the field by sunrise. Here it was all confusion, and the battle was still in progress, though near its end, and there was much difficulty in locating the 3d corps hospital, which was our destination. There were sad sights here for us, and work enough for a hundred men, if we had had them. The wounded were brought in, and were crying out everywhere for attention. They were in barns and outhouses, scattered on the ground over a vast field, Confederates and Union men lying side by side, helpless and suffering together. I need not describe the scene. It is beyond description. We could do much, but not a fraction of what was needed. Miss Gilson slept in her ambulance, and I found my bed on a pile of sawdust in a store tent. It was a time of great stress and strain, and can never be forgotten. To attempt to give any account of our work in detail would be impossible. We simply worked where we stood, and did what our hands found to do. I never visited the field to see where the battle raged, which now I should have been glad to have done. But our one spot of earth with its sad burdens was all we could attend to then.

Night and day the work was never done. Two incidents occurring here have often been recalled. I found a rebel soldier, badly wounded through the lungs, lying in a corn-field. He could only whisper at first, but by the aid of stimulants was able to speak distinctly. He was lying between the rows in a muddy flow of water, which was trickling down under him. He asked me to move him upon a dry spot, which I did. He said to me, "I know I shall not live through the night," which seemed evident to us all. I offered to write to his family, and was surprised to hear him say that his wife lived in Ohio. On expressing this surprise, he said: "I do not wonder at it. I have treated my family shamefully. I abandoned

them, went South, and here I am." I took his address and wrote to them, and the next day he could not be found. He had doubtless died as he expected, and the burial parties had buried him where he fell. My letter reached his old home, and his family received in this way their last word from him. Another occurrence impressed me deeply. A young man by the name of Everett (a brother of one of the Boston firm of Williams & Everett) was wounded in the ankle, but lockjaw intervened, and he suffered severely. He was lying upon damp ground, but under a shelter-tent. As I was called to the town for supplies, I asked Miss Gilson to have one of our bed-sacks filled with hay, and make a bed for him.

That night, about midnight, I was caring for him, when, in sudden agony, he sprang up and seized the tent-pole, with the look of death in his face. A comrade put out his wounded arm to sustain him, and he died standing there. I prepared his body for burial and gathered together his belongings to be sent to his family. As I did so, the man lying next him asked me to stoop down beside him, when he said, "I have lockjaw also, and shall soon follow him." I saw the symptoms, but, as was my habit, tried to encourage him, and said, "You have many chances for recovery, and are even now quite comfortable." He replied that, if he could have a dry bed to lie upon, he might get well. Removing him thence, I turned Everett's bed over, placed comfortable blankets upon it, and left him for the night. He was our special care. Two days later he rode off on an ambulance, to be transferred to Baltimore. Some years afterwards, standing one evening in Scollay Square waiting for a car, a man spoke to me, and said, "Do you remember the death of Everett at Gettysburg?" "Surely I do," I replied. He then said, "I was the wounded comrade who put out my arm to hold him as he died." It was remarkable that we should have come together again after so many years.

We remained at Gettysburg until the wounded were gathered into permanent hospitals and the battlefield emergency was over, when we started for home. This was in August, 1863.

It was at this time that I made the first suggestion which led to the organization of the Auxiliary Relief Corps of the Sanitary Commission, which did such efficient work on all the later battlefields of Virginia. As I returned home, I met Mr. Frederick N. Knapp, who was in charge of the Special Relief work of that organization, and said to him *that the Commission might do as a body what I was doing as an individual, working at the bedside of the soldier.* They had never done this, their battlefield relief being confined to the distribution of hospital supplies in the emergencies of battle. I opened before Mr. Knapp the immense opportunities of service in the line of personal ministry to the wounded, and I knew I had in him a wise and sympathetic listener. The suggestion did not bear fruit at once, but after one or two letters passed between us, in which I stated in detail my many experiences and laid before him a plan for organization, it was found that the seed had fallen into good ground, as we shall see later in the story.

While at home after the battle of Gettysburg, during the month of September, 1863, I received an urgent appeal to go to Folly Island, South Carolina, where Company G of the 40th Massachusetts regiment was stationed. This company was recruited in Chelsea, and was comprised of many of our best young men. We were particularly interested in this company, and, when it was organized, desired that it should be officered by Chelsea men, and I went to Governor Andrew about it. He listened to my request, and said: "Mr. Fay, this is no picnic. We want men for officers who have been baptized in blood." I replied that we had selected such men, and mentioned the names of George E. Marshall, who had been a sergeant in the 13th Massachusetts and was then in hospital, wounded, and William A. Smith of the 1st Massachusetts, and Horatio Jenkins, who had also seen service. These men received their commissions from the Governor.

The climate of South Carolina that summer, together with other conditions, had caused a good deal of sickness in the company stationed there, and it was their condition that induced me to waive my preference to remain at home, and go to them.

We had a cool reception from General Gilmore and from the medical director in charge. They did not want volunteer assistance. It had proved meddlesome in the past, and all such applications for service were at that time denied. Our passes from the War Department carried us through, however; and, when the colonel and surgeon of the regiment were found to be eager for our service, we were allowed to remain.

The men themselves welcomed us warmly. We found many of them depressed and ill and their strength much reduced by improper diet in that enervating climate. A special diet kitchen was at once established. This diet was greatly needed in every ward of the hospital which was filled with patients. In the 40th regiment alone there were one hundred and twenty cases there. The water used was sea water, filtered through the sandy shore, and the men were generally in low spirits. We were here about three months, during which time the health of the regiment improved, and its whole morale seemed changed.

The 24th Massachusetts regiment was at Morris Island, and some colored regiments in the same locality; and, wherever we went, we were treated with the utmost cordiality by officers and surgeons. It was here that I first saw the horse "Johnny Reb," loaned to me by Lieutenant Jenkins. I afterwards bought him, but General Gilmore would not allow any horse to leave the island. The horse was afterwards sold to the surgeon of the regiment, and my next view of him was at Bermuda Hundreds in Virginia in the fall of 1864. I met the surgeon there, and said jocosely, "I see you have my horse." "Your horse?" "Well," I said, "I bought him and never sold him." He then said quite seriously, "If this is your horse, I cannot hold him, although I thought I bought him fairly." I explained, but said to him that, if he ever left the army for any reason, I wished him to give me the first choice to buy him. He later resigned, and I bought him over again. The horse was one of Ashley's rebel cavalry, wounded in the head at Gettysburg, captured and cured, and wounded twice afterwards before he came into my possession. He was a wonderful animal, in perfect health, fast, intelligent, a

good jumper, and afraid of nothing, and I used him for years afterwards.

We returned home from South Carolina in December, in time to prepare my farewell address as mayor of the city, having positively declined another re-election.

At this time the Army of the Potomac was in winter quarters near Culpeper, and Mrs. Fay desired to visit Dr. Welling, whose headquarters were with the 11th New Jersey regiment at Brandy Station. We made that visit, which was full of pleasant incidents to Mrs. Fay, returning home in February; and on the seventh of March, 1864, I returned to the army, Miss Gilson having spent the winter there.

CHAPTER VII.

The Wilderness and Spottsylvania.

We were now approaching the last year of the war. General Grant had been summoned to Washington from his triumphs in the West, and had been invested with his new rank of Lieutenant-General, commanding the armies of the United States. He entered upon his great task with headquarters in the field with the Army of the Potomac. Nobody who lived through that winter of 1863 and 1864 will ever forget those solemn days during which the nation girded itself for that portentous struggle which was impending in Virginia.

The Sanitary Commission during that winter, in anticipation of the coming campaign, made ample preparations to meet its emergencies, and its plans were matured on the broadest possible scale. Among other changes in its service was the establishment of the *Auxiliary Relief Corps*, as suggested by Mr. Fay, in an effort to get closer to the soldier in the field, and to provide a more intimate and tender ministry than had ever before been undertaken on a large scale on the battlefield. This was the fruit that matured from the suggestions made to Mr. Knapp after the battle of Gettysburg.

About a month before the campaign began [Mr. Fay writes], I was commissioned to organize this new form of relief and take charge of it. I asked to be excused, as such administrative work would deprive me of the opportunities for personal service at the bedside

of the soldier, which I preferred; but I was told that, if I declined, the work would not be done at all. I was offered all the men and all the money needed to perfect it and to carry it through, and, as a result, the Auxiliary Relief Corps was then and there formed, and began its work. It was understood that I should select fifty men for this service, and the Commission would provide the remainder from lists of students from Harvard, Princeton, and other colleges. I sent for Edward Everett Hale, Rev. William H. Channing, George L. Chaney, General James F. B. Marshall, Professor Leonard, and others of like character, and among them Mr. A. M. Sperry, who afterwards became my good friend and took my place when I resigned. Dr. Hale could not join us at that time, and he sent in his place William Howell Reed, who promptly reported with the others at Fredericksburg.

My first duty was to provide a series of emergency store chests, in which ample supplies could be closely packed and easily transported to any point where they might be needed, to be used whenever other stores were not at hand or could not otherwise be obtained.

The careful consideration of possible needs in the plan for these chests will be seen in the following list of the contents of one of them, which was opened by the writer at Fredericksburg, while the battles of the Wilderness were going on. The whole invoice was packed in a space of fourteen cubic feet, about the size of a large carpenter's chest, and, as we read the list, it seems incredible that it could have been done.

6 cans of tomatoes.
6 " of chicken.
6 " of mutton.
12 " of milk.
6 lbs. of farina.
3 lbs. of meal.
6 papers of broma.
1 pail of butter (6 lbs.).
½ can of crackers.
2 lbs. coffee.
1 lb. tea.
3 lbs. sugar.
4 bottles whiskey.
2 " brandy.
2 " cider.
2 " sherry.

1 bottle cider vinegar,
1 " raspberry vinegar.
1 " cologne water.
1 " bay rum.
2 bottles Jamaica ginger.
1 bottle brown ginger.
6 bottles extract of almonds.
4 " " of vanilla.
2 " " of lemon.
2 " of ink.
4 papers hops.
2 dozen lemons.
1 bottle mustard.
25 nutmegs.
1 bottle Cayenne pepper.
2 bottles pepper.
1 box salt.
6 shirts.
13 pairs of drawers.
8 pairs socks.
2 dozen handkerchiefs.
5 arm slings.
4 pairs slippers.
6 boxes troches.
6 boxes Russia salve.
6 empty vials.
12 boxes matches.
1 paper tacks.
6 lbs. nails.
1 ball twine.
A lot of bandages.
A lot of comfort-bags.
A lot of night-caps.
1 roll of oil silk.
2 pillow-sacks.
2 padded rings.
1 piece of netting.
2 bedticks.
½ ream of paper.
1 dozen penholders.
1 dozen pencils.
1 box pens.
250 envelopes.
12 cakes of soap.
6 sponges.
12 dozen pipes.
1 box candles.
1 roll of wire.
1 box of combs.
6 sheets of wrapping-paper.
1 blacking-brush.
12 papers tobacco.
1 dozen towels.
1 dish-pan (3 gallons).
1 baking-pan.
1 dozen deep tin plates.
1 dozen tin plates.
1 tin cup.
6 teacups and saucers.
2 tin tumblers.
2 tunnels.
2 toasting-irons.
2 basting-spoons.
12 large spoons.
12 teaspoons.
1 butcher's knife.
6 knives and forks.
1 basin.
1 hand-saw.
1 hatchet.
1 hammer.
2 pocket looking-glasses.
1 nutmeg-grater.
1 brush broom.
1 corkscrew.
2 candlesticks.

I called the corps together in Washington for conference and for general instructions. There were no hard-and-fast rules. The men understood that the corps was organized for personal ministry, and that this was to be provided with all the sympathy and devotion they would give a patient at home. They were selected men,

well equipped by previous training for service, and could be trusted to act with courage and good sense in all emergencies, and we were soon called into service.

The Army of the Potomac had been massed north of the Rapidan, confronted by General Lee with his army highly tempered and ready for the conflict. General Grant suddenly moved his army of a hundred thousand men across that river, and began a campaign "unsurpassed by any on record in the elements that make war grand, terrible, and destructive." This can only be made real to the present generation by reading Morris Schaff's story of the battles of the Wilderness in the successive numbers of the *Atlantic Monthly* which appeared during the fall and winter months of the years 1909–10. These battles were fought on the fifth, sixth, and seventh of May, 1864, with results that will appear later in this record.

The Wilderness was not a forest in its ordinary features. The region rests on a belt of mineral rocks, and for a hundred years mining has been done there. The timber had been cut down for many miles, and in its place there had arisen a dense undergrowth of low-limbed, scraggy pines, stiff, bristling with chinkapins, scrub oak, and hazel. It is a region of gloom and the shadow of death. The troops could only receive direction by the compass. Lines of battle were impossible, and no officer could see ten files on each side of him. Artillery was almost wholly out of use, and cavalry also. But in the horrid thicket, obscured by the smoke of the infantry firing, lurked two hundred thousand men, and through its lurid flames there came out of its depths the crackle and roll of musketry, like the noisy boiling of some hell-cauldron, that told the story of death. Tens of thousands of the dead and wounded in blue and gray lay in the thick woods,*

* Swinton's *Army of the Potomac*, pp. 428, 429.

while the nation, holding its breath, awaited the news of the conflict that flashed over the wires.

If it was a drawn battle, leaving both of the combatants bleeding and exhausted after three days of conflict, it soon became certain that there would be no retreat for the Army of the Potomac. If Grant had to wade through a sea of blood, he would go forward to his goal, and, when night came, the army began its great flanking movement out of the Wilderness to Spottsylvania Court House. To confirm this, General Grant's sententious message was sent out to the country, that he would *fight it out on that line if it took all summer.*

We must leave the details of the conflict to the historians, as we are more concerned here with the poor human wreckage left on the field, as the army swept on its way.

Simultaneously with the advance movement of the army the Sanitary Commission threw its forces into the field, and the men of Mr. Fay's corps began their work. Belle Plain on the Potomac was the temporary base of the army, and this corps landed there and were sent forward, some on foot and some by ambulance, to Fredericksburg. This base of the army was an ordinary beach on that river, sloping up to higher ground, and for the moment the whole transportation of the army was concentrated here. River boats and barges, pontoon trains, commissary stores, ammunition, batteries of artillery, men and horses, regiments of soldiers, wagons and ambulances, quartermaster trains and hospital equipment, went floundering on through the mud and rain. Meeting all this entourage of the army outward

bound, were the great incoming trains of the wounded returning over the boggy roads from the battlefields, and room had to be found for them as they swept into this great scene of confusion, and landed their living freights of suffering men upon the hillsides bordering the river. Three thousand men were lying cold and shelterless on these soggy fields when we reached there, awaiting transportation to Washington, and the numbers were increasing every hour.

The kitchens of the Sanitary Commission were in full operation, and there was ceaseless work in the dressing of wounds, in the distribution of stimulants, hot broths and other food to these half-famished men who had been jolted over the long reach of these sodden roads, stretching for twenty miles from the Rapidan.

The rain poured down on these shelterless thousands, and the ground was like a sponge. Blankets were provided, and fires were started over the hills, and in the evening they were gleaming with cheerful warmth. Groups of men were huddled over them, and were accepting their lot with a cheerful courage that was wonderful to see.

Our destination was Fredericksburg, and we moved forward to that city, crossed the pontoons over the Rappahannock, and reported to Mr. Fay at his headquarters, which was marked by the red flag of the Sanitary Commission.

He had divided his Auxiliary Corps into companies of six, with a captain over each of them, and they were assigned to different sections of the city. The ambulance trains were now all halted at Fredericksburg and unloaded there. Every house in the city was turned

into a hospital. Every public building and church was also used. The pews were torn out to make floor space, and the wood was used for fires in the kitchens. But the long trains kept arriving in an endless procession, until their living freights had to be discharged upon the sidewalks until shelter could be provided. The battles were going on, the booming of the guns and the crash of musketry filled the air, and twenty thousand wounded men were in the city.

We found Mr. Fay in a whirlwind of activities, quiet, calm, efficient, and apparently unmoved by the clamor and agony of appeal for help from a hundred different sections of the city which he had to meet. He quieted the fever around him by his presence and self-control, and kept himself and those about him sane. Delegates from many states poured in upon him, each on his own errands of mercy. He received their passes and set them all at work. They could not leave without his permission, and this added large numbers to his working force. The Auxiliary Corps was known as the A. X. C. All requisitions for supplies were examined and viséd, and, as the storehouses became emptied, new supplies were daily received from Washington, so that at all times there was an abundance for all emergencies.

Mr. Fay welcomed our party of four, General and Mrs. James F. B. Marshall, Rev. William H. Channing, and the writer, and we were assigned to Marye's Heights, a mile from the centre of the city, and the emergency chest already described was sent forward. We found that every possible place of shelter in the outskirts of the town was occupied as a hospital. In mansions, in barns and sheds and farm buildings, in rooms, entries,

attics, and upon porticos we laid our wounded men, and were thankful for any shelter for them. Among these houses was the Rowe mansion, occupied by the owner. He was a good Confederate, and held to his cause by opening his cellar at night as a rendezvous for a band of Mosby's guerillas (his son being one of them), who held their secret meetings there, planning the capture of the town with all our wounded. This house was our headquarters, and we were living over a powder mine which, we knew, might at any moment explode.

Our principal hospital building was on the summit of these heights, the home of John L. Marye, from whom they were named. It was a typical Southern mansion, with fine grounds,—a great hospitable house in its best days, but then ruined by the plunging shot and shell during the two great battles of Fredericksburg which raged about its doors. Gaping holes were rent in its walls, partitions were torn away, rich mouldings and ornaments were shattered by the concussion of artillery. General Lee had made this his great defensive position, and occupied these heights with his batteries of a hundred guns.

No space was unoccupied under that roof. As close as they could be laid, these suffering men were placed upon the floors, with barely sufficient room between them for the dressing of their wounds. Even to this day the writer can see the long rows of men lying there, and can locate in order, man by man, those whose wounds received our care and whose heroism won our undying admiration. This man with a ragged channel through his cheek and jaw across which a fragment of shell had ploughed its way; there one with his shoulder torn away, with the

ashen hue of death on his face; this Indian sharp-shooter with a shell wound in his thigh,—they are all burned into the memories of those who saw them, and come back to us now, each with his own tragedy; some of them pleading for a sleeping powder for one night at least to ease the pain. Here side by side they lay through long days and nights, with no sound save the stifled moan, yet all of them having the grateful consciousness that they were tenderly cared for from great reserves of sympathy, as well as from the unfailing supplies which were always at hand in these emergencies.

Let the writer give here the following notes to show the character of the work and the tenderness and sympathy which were back of the entire service of these men of Mr. Fay's corps who carried out, each in his own way, the spirit of the service that it was designed to secure for the wounded men.

In one corner, upon a stretcher, lay a soldier whose character was indicated by his strong face, his bright intelligence, and his manly self-control. He was wounded through the lungs, and every breath was pain. His cheerful courage, his companionship, his gratitude for all our sympathy and care, his bright smile even in the face of death, lighted up that room of suffering. In the hurried evacuation of the place, at the last moment, he passed away, was saved the agonies of transportation, and was laid under the shade of the old oak-trees on that hillside where so many of his comrades found their last resting-place.

Near him was a pitiful case, a lad, Adoniram Cookson, wounded in the back by a fragment of a shell. He was hardly more than sixteen years of age, and how he drifted

into the army we never knew. He was so pinched and delicate one could easily have carried him in his arms. The only position in which he could rest was on his elbows and his knees, and he was constantly turning from side to side and moaning in his delirium. We watched over him and comforted him as his mother would have done, and in intervals of consciousness got his home address and sent the sad story to those who had lost their boy. He fell asleep at last, and joined the ranks of the other brave fellows who had given their lives for their country.

Another lad in the corner of the same room was propped up by a bed-rest, and was slowly wasting away. He never complained, and could never express his gratitude for our care. His life slipped away from us, and we had another story to tell to another stricken home.

Even the storerooms and entries of the old mansion were crowded, the places made vacant by removal or death being quickly occupied again by new arrivals. And so from room to room, from entry to entry, we moved about through the day and night, carrying our comforts and our stimulants, speaking cheering words here, giving a little companionship there, to brighten, so far as was possible, the heavy hours. "It is so hard to hear the hours strike," said one who could not sleep; yet here they were bearing their pain or facing inevitable death with a courage that was wonderful to see.

In a group of four Indian sharp-shooters in one corner of this hallway, each of them with the loss of a limb, an arm at the shoulder, or a leg at the knee, never was patience more finely shown. It was the old Indian en-

durance, silent, speechless in their suffering, and dying there, making a mute appeal to our sympathy, and expressing both in look and manner their gratitude for our care.

William H. Chambers, who was paralyzed by a spinal wound, preferring a stretcher in the open air to the close and crowded rooms, was lying helpless on the lawn. There was a touching contrast between the poor, wrecked body and his bright, clear mind, which in these last hours was burning like a flame. He was fast sinking away. He knew he could not live, and did not wish to live to be a burden to his friends. As we were about to move him to the steamer for Washington, he died, leaving messages for those at home and welcoming the change that was coming to him as a happy release. We were strangely drawn to him, and could not resist the inspiration of his gentle, kindly spirit, which could look so bravely upon death and speak so calmly and without fears of those far away who would mourn for him. Yet his death was a relief to all,—to him and to us, who felt that life prolonged would be to him a lingering misery.

One soldier (I can never forget his simple, earnest faith) asked me to stop and talk with him. A discharge of grape and shrapnel through his leg had shattered it from thigh to foot; and, as the wound was fatal, an amputation was deemed unnecessary. The poor man knew his end was near, and he had much to say of his wife and his crippled boy, and asked me to write to them. He told me his motive for entering the army, of his home in the Green Mountains of Vermont, and of his great sacrifice. He had been a minister of the Methodist faith in his earlier days, and later the editor of a local paper. He dropped

his pen and shouldered his musket when the call for troops came, and his life and service in the army were all he had to give, and he gave them freely for his country. As I sat on the floor with his hand in mine, and saw the film gathering over his eyes, and knew from his whispered words that he felt the end was near, he looked up and sent his last messages, asking that a lock of his hair or some token be sent to his wife and children, and very soon the new morning dawned for him.

The last words of one of these men may be worth a record here. He was wounded in the groin, and had been lying for several days with no possible hope of recovery. He talked freely of this, and said, "When the end comes, dress me in a clean white shirt and put two white roses in my hands," then adding, to those who were lying near him, "Keep on, boys, fighting for the flag; bear all things and suffer all things, but never give it up." His request was remembered even to the roses, and his grave was strewed with flowers.

Monday, the twenty-third of May, 1864, was a perfect day. The breeze came fresh and cool from the north, the air was pure, the sky cloudless, and the whole firmament a heavenly blue. It was a day for the convalescents, and it seemed as if our men must be revived by the bracing air. We moved them out of the stifling rooms to the lawn. Under a grand old oak, whose spreading branches gave shelter to nearly fifty men, was a Massachusetts lad, Joseph White, whose case we had been watching for many days with the strongest interest. His wound was in the arm under the shoulder, and did not seem to be severe. He had been weakened by hemorrhage, but was hopeful that within ten days he would be at home

under his mother's care, and asked me to write her. Taking pen and paper, I wrote at his dictation, and the letter was full of his hopes and plans. He felt as sure of life as any one of us who ministered to him. I left him for an hour, hardly out of sight, working among his companions who seemed to need care even more than he, when, turning, I noticed an extreme pallor in his face. I found that an artery had been opened in process of healing, and that he was beyond all human aid. He realized this, and knew there was no help for him, and it was wonderful to see his courage as he looked at those oozing drops which every moment brought him closer to the other world. The letter was still unsealed, and he asked me to add the postscript with his last messages, and in a few hours he passed into his larger home.

In the mean time fierce conflicts were going on, all through the Wilderness and up to the very edge of Spottsylvania and beyond, and the wounded were daily swelling the numbers under our care. One ambulance train which reached the Heights discharged its living freight of five hundred wounded men upon the ground, there being no nook nor corner of shelter in any building in the town. These men had had no nourishment for three days, and many of them were dying. The kitchens were started again, and soon rich broths of chicken, mutton, and tomato were being generously provided, with milk punch, soft bread, and stimulants, every man being refreshed and fed, and made as comfortable as possible until he could be sent forward on his way.

The fearful losses in these great battles made a call for re-enforcements imperative, and a column of sixteen thousand men from the defences of Washington were sent

forward, and moved down through Fredericksburg to join the army. We had received the news of the capture, by Hancock, of nine thousand prisoners a few days before, and this column was actually passing to the rear, while the new army of fresh troops were marching to the front. They were full of fire, and their enthusiasm was enkindled afresh at the sight of the captured guns and other trophies of that field. The roses were blooming in the gardens everywhere, and, as the column passed the Heights, clusters of them were thrown into the ranks, as if to strew their way to victory. The strains of their music, their colors, their glistening steel, had passed but a few miles beyond sight and hearing, when they were struck by the shock of battle. Ewell's corps of Lee's army in an attempt to turn our left fell upon these re-enforcements. The fighting was obstinate, and continued some hours until the Confederates were driven back, defeated. General Porter in his narrative in *The Century Magazine* relates that, in passing over this battlefield after dark, a staff officer saw in the vicinity of the Fredericksburg road a row of men stretched on the ground, looking as if they had just lain down to sleep. He started to shake several of them to arouse them, and was shocked to find that this row consisted entirely of the dead, lying as they fell, shot down in ranks, their alignment perfectly preserved. The scene told with mute eloquence the story of their valor.

Five hundred of these brave men, who had passed through their first shock of war, were brought back wounded, and some of them dying, with the roses hardly faded that we had thrown to them, the ambulances moving over the same roads over which they had

marched with steps so firm and hearts so light a few hours before. It was after sunset, and the long train of ambulances and army wagons was parked in an open field directly in front of Marye's Heights, which we then occupied as our hospital, and where we made ready for the service demanded of us.

The camp for the night was settled at dark, the horses were champing their food after their long day's fatigue, and the weary drivers were stretched asleep around the expiring embers of their fires, while the moon, half obscured in the smoke of these tremendous battles which had not yet ceased, shone out red and lurid, lighting up that field for ministry to those who had come under our care.

In the first ambulance the writer reached was Captain Kellier of the 20th Massachusetts regiment, severely wounded. His arm was off at the shoulder, which was also injured, and his jaw was fractured by a fragment of the same shell that had injured his arm. He appeared to be near his end, but was restored by stimulants, and later told his story. How he ever got into that ambulance train we never knew, as his regiment swept onward with Grant's flank movement and he was left among the dead on the field where he fell. His regimental surgeon, Dr. Hayward,—a hero himself, if there ever was one,—had passed him by as mortally hurt and dying, but Kellier appealed to him to try to save him. He was placed on the rough operating table, his arm was removed, the shoulder attended to, the jaw wired back into its place, and a new cheek was built up by transplanting from the severed arm; and all this skilful treatment was given with only the rough appliances of the battlefield. He had

been taken to the rear on a stretcher, and in this condition had fallen into our hands. With a feeding-cup he was served through the night at intervals with as much strong milk punch as he could drink, and with other nourishment, but we supposed he could not survive the transportation to Washington. He did survive it, however, and got well. Four months later, coming out of the Parker House in Boston, the writer ran across him, his empty sleeve and his scarred face being the only reminder of that experience. He said he was *in extremis* when we met him, but, when he drank that milk punch, he felt life coming back to him, and he knew he should live.

Under one of the ambulances we found a lad of the 1st Massachusetts heavy artillery, Charles H. Cutler of Lawrence, wounded through the breast. He had crawled out for a breath of air, covered with his tent-cloth which served as a blanket. He was praying that he might die. Rev. William H. Channing, who was of our party, with that quick sympathy and readiness for service which was characteristic of all he did, drew from the lad his story, got his father's address, and spoke to him of his critical condition. He replied that death would be welcome to him in his agony. He wanted to be baptized. So, kneeling under the ambulance with our rubber basin of cold spring water, the poor boy received his first and last communion with tender words of prayer and blessing. Giving him a sleeping powder, we left him with hearts touched and uplifted by the gentle resignation of the poor sufferer, who was so soon to pass into his eternal rest, and then sent to his home the story of these hours.

Moving through the long streets of this ambulance train, we kept at work through the night. The embers of the fires were dying out; and in perfect stillness, with the moon low in the west, with flickering candles we visited the dead to gather together and mark for identification every article we could find that gave the name of the man and of his home address. There were many such names and addresses, and many such articles, photographs, testaments, watches, and other belongings that were sent forward later, with the full story of the tragedy.

At daylight we were still on the field with fresh spring water for the wounds and a breakfast of bread, hot soup, milk punch, and coffee, before starting the ambulance train over the terrible roads to Belle Plain on its way to the hospitals in Washington. But the dead were yet to be buried. With a small detail of men the long trench was dug, each of us taking a turn at the spades, and here we placed the eight comrades who had died for their country. Standing on the mound of earth his own hands had helped to make, surrounded by soldiers and teamsters who were serving on that field, Mr. Channing began his short funeral service over those brothers bound together in a common cause, commending their souls to the loving care of the Almighty Father.

As the hours passed through that night and the succeeding days, we lived over again in our memories the frightful conflicts of the first battle of Fredericksburg a year and a half before, which had raged over the very fields upon which we were then standing, and in front of the very stone wall against which Burnside had repeatedly and unavailingly thrown his forces. The converging cross-

fires of Lee's batteries on the crest above had opened great gaps in the advancing ranks, and night dropped its curtain on the scene where ten thousand dead and wounded were stretched on that ground or piled up along that sunken road which not one of them could cross and live. These blood-soaked fields with which we had now become familiar became sacred soil for us, not only by the sacrifice of these men who had given their all for their country, but also by our own ministry to the five hundred men then under our care.

The following picture is given here of Miss Helen Gilson on one of those days of trial when she and Mr. Fay visited our group of hospitals on the heights of Fredericksburg:—

One afternoon, just before the evacuation, when the atmosphere of our rooms was close and foul, and all were longing for a breath of our cooler northern air, while the men were moaning in pain or were restless with fever, and our hearts were sick with pity for the sufferers, I heard a light step upon the stairs, and, looking up, saw a young lady enter, who brought with her such an atmosphere of calm and cheerful courage, so much freshness, such an expression of gentle womanly sympathy, that her mere presence seemed to revive the drooping spirits of the men, and to give a new power of endurance through the long and painful hours. First with one, then at the side of another, a friendly word here, a pressure of the hand there, a smile of good cheer and of tender sympathy with every one of them in their extremity, her presence was an angel's ministry to these suffering men. Before she left the building, she sang a few familiar hymns and national melodies, and I remember how her voice,

which was one of unusual sweetness and power, penetrated to every part of the building. Soldiers with less severe wounds from the rooms above began to crawl out into the entries, and men from below began to creep up on their hands and knees to catch those notes of her song which were thrilling indeed at that time and which even now linger in my memory. This is my first reminiscence of Helen Gilson, whose ministry was always so tenderly welcomed wherever she went in the Army of the Potomac.

The flanking movement of General Grant from Spottsylvania to Hanover Court House in the direction of Richmond left Fredericksburg exposed, and made the evacuation of that place an immediate necessity. Those who could walk were sent forward on foot to Belle Plain, and thousands of others were loaded on the steamers which were brought up the Rappahannock to Fredericksburg, and sent on to Fortress Monroe and Washington. Great suffering ensued in this hurried removal, and many died in the transit, but there was no alternative. It was either that or the capture of everybody in the town, which would have been the greater calamity.

There is always in such movements a poor remnant liable to be sacrificed, and such is the fortune of war. In this case, after the steamers were loaded and under way, some forty men were discovered to be in the farmhouses of the region, all of them with thigh amputations. They were helpless, and would have died if we had abandoned them. A detail was sent out to scour the country for miles to bring them in, and one by one, borne on stretchers, they were laid on the deck of our small Sani-

tary Commission steamer, Kent, which was the last to leave, and which was held for them. The certain capture of the entire party seemed at one time to be its fate. The Medical Director, Dr. Edward B. Dalton, would not allow the steamer to leave until all could leave. Mosby's guerillas were already in the outskirts of the town, and we could hear the tramp of their cavalry and the clanking of their sabres and carbines as they came charging and cheering down the heights toward the river. But Dr. Dalton stood unmoved, with his guard with levelled muskets ready to enforce his orders to both the steamer captain and his crew, and no man touched that hawser that held us to the shore; and, as the last stretchers were brought on board and the lines were cast off, these rough riders came swarming down to the landing with yells and curses, firing their last volleys as we swept round the bend of the river, out of sight and range.

Mr. Fay had gathered his entire corps together on this boat, and all got to work on the decks to care for the forty amputated cases that had thus been saved. This was the last achievement of Mr. Fay's splendid corps at Fredericksburg, and was characteristic of all the heroic work they did on that field.

The steamer touched at Port Royal on the Rappahannock, and soon had orders to move up the York and Pamunky Rivers to White House, which was the new temporary base of the army.

The entire negro population of the region had been literally swept away from their homes and their anchorage by the movement of the two armies through this part of Virginia. It was an impulse unrestrained for

freedom. They swarmed to the river-banks by the hundred, even by the thousand, in companies, in smaller groups, in farm wagons, even singly and alone. There were whole families, even to the children, some of them babies in arms. They had their small belongings and were dressed in the gay attire of their former owners, all moving like the children of Israel through their desert into what they thought was to be their promised land. As we swept by them down the river to our destination, they held up appealing hands to be taken on board and carried they knew not where. At Port Royal they swarmed in such numbers that a government barge was appropriated for their use. A thousand or more were stowed upon her decks, all seeking to be free, knowing not what freedom meant. It was simply a dream to them. There were gleaming signals all about us, and a thousand colored lights were reflected in the water. In the distance we could hear the low soft music of the negroes' songs. Impassioned and plaintive, it increased in volume, until the whole chorus broke out in wild melodies which came to us over the water, gradually melting away into the croonings of the few who were charged with the refrain. Visiting the barge and listening again to their singing, we seemed to hear a thousand voices blended into one. When the music ceased, Miss Gilson, who was with us, spoke to them. She tried to tell them what freedom meant. There would be no longer the old master and mistress to deal out the peck of corn or to care for the old people and the children. They would now have to work for themselves, provide for their own sick, and support their own families; but all this would have to be done under new conditions. No overseer

would threaten them with the lash, for their new master would be the necessity of earning their daily bread. The old order of things had passed away, and the new order had come. Then, enforcing industry, truthfulness, and fidelity, she said: "You know the Lord Jesus died and rose again for you. You love to sing his praise and to draw near to him in prayer. But this is not the whole of religion. You must *do* right as well as pray right. Your lives must be full of kind deeds, of unselfishness and forbearance and truth. This is true piety. You must make Monday and Tuesday just as good as Sunday, remembering that God looks not only at your prayers, but at the way you live and speak and act every day of your lives." She then sang Whittier's well-known hymn, "Song of the Negro Boatmen":—

Oh, praise an' tanks! De Lord he come
To set de people free;
An' massa tink it day ob doom,
An' we ob jubilee.
De Lord dat heap de Red Sea waves
He jus' as 'trong as den;
He say de word: we las' night slaves;
To-day, de Lord's free men.

. . . . .

We pray de Lord: he gib us signs
Dat some day we be free;
De norf-wind tell it to de pines,
De wild-duck to de sea;
We tink it when de church-bell ring,
We dream it in de dream;
De rice-bird mean it when he sing,
De eagle when he scream.

We know de promise nebber fail,
  An' nebber lie de word;
So, like de 'postles in de jail,
  We waited for de Lord:
An' now he open ebery door,
  An' trow away de key;
He tink we lub him so before,
  We lub him better free.

De yam will grow, de cotton blow,
  He'll gib de rice and corn;
Oh nebber you fear, if nebber you hear
  De driver blow his horn!

It was a pathetic, a terrible sight to see these people, whole populations, throwing themselves away in masses from their homes, casting themselves upon the world, with no thought of their future, moved by one impulse,—to be free. It was the beginning in this part of Virginia of the grave problem of the negro which the government had to face, and which afterwards found its partial solution in the Freedman's Bureau, in the colored schools and camps, where he was trained and made to work out, as best he could, his own salvation. And this care continued for years during the entire reconstruction period.

Mr. Fay's administrative work at Fredericksburg has been described here in one part only of the great field of his operations, but it illustrates the whole of it. In this story he does not appear prominently in it, but his presence and his direction dominated it all. Everybody was inspired by his personality and looked to him as the leader. There was no nook or corner of the town that

was not under his constant care, and never in the rear of any battlefield, since war began on the earth, was sympathy so wisely directed or so generously expended in ministry, with resources so large, as over this great area of suffering men.

His corps was landed at White House on the Pamunky River, a few miles in rear of Cold Harbor where the two armies came immediately into conflict. The story of what was done there will be told in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

Cold Harbor and Petersburg and the Winter of 1864–65.

Mr. Fay reached White House with his corps on the eve of the battle of Cold Harbor. He found there the 18th corps and part of the 10th, which had just arrived as re-enforcements of the Army of the Potomac. The army at the time was in a great movement from Hanover Court House to Cold Harbor, which was an important strategical point in the campaign. The concentration of General Grant's forces here will be referred to later on.

The Medical Director of the army, Dr. Dalton, had been ordered to establish a temporary hospital at White House to receive the wounded in the expected battle, and toward night Mr. Fay and the writer went over the great plateau to select a site. Good water was the first necessity. Several springs were found, and an open field, dry and accessible, was staked out for the tents then unloading from the barges by the riverside. The plan of the hospital was drawn, its streets laid out, and the work went on. Through the long hours of the night Mr. Fay superintended the landing of the tents, gave a hand in the unloading of supplies from his own steamer, in establishing kitchens, and working in the swamps in the midst of the thick fog rising from them. The writer shared with him these labors, to be ready for the impending battle.

The next morning a desultory firing began, full of foreboding of the coming conflict. While waiting there, our party, consisting of Mr. Fay, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. B. Marshall, Mrs. General Barlow, and Miss Gilson, went to the 40th Massachusetts regiment in command of Colonel Marshall, of which the Chelsea company was a part, nearly all of the men being personally known to Mr. Fay. The headquarters were under a thick bower of the branches of magnolia-trees, as shelter from the blazing sun, and we had a soldier's welcome. General Barlow was also there. He came down from his command to see his wife, who had followed him so far in the campaign, keeping in the rear, but still in communication with him. We reclined under the shade, quietly talking of many things, while Colonel Marshall awaited orders. The men were resting on their arms, their knapsacks within reach, ready to move. By the appearance of the men no one could have told that they were on the eve of battle. They were old soldiers who knew what campaigning was. They boiled their coffee, and munched their hard bread as usual. They were chatting in low tones and were running about among their comrades, making ready for their march and talking of everything but their future. How few of them realized that for many of them the setting sun of that day would be their last on earth! As we sat in this cool, shady spot, a staff officer rode up with orders for the regiment to join in the brigade. The colonel parted with us, speaking the last words he was ever to speak to these friends, mounted his horse, and the column moved forward. The skirmishing had begun, the regiment formed with the other forces, and plunged into the battle of Cold

Harbor. Within a few hours the colonel and a hundred of his men were dead on that field. The brown, haggard soldiers with powder-stained hands placed him reverently under the sod with their comrades who had fallen at his side. This is the brief story of Mr. Fay's experience within the sound of the guns of Cold Harbor, which were sending out their messages of death to many thousands of men on that fateful day.

Turning now to General Grant's flanking movements before the battle. After he had reached and passed Hanover Court House, he concentrated his army about Cold Harbor during the last days of May. Lee had already brought his forces up, and was building impregnable works along the Chickahominy. There is a perfect network of roads and small streams and rivers all through this region. The country is flat, with low swampy bottom-lands, and quickly becomes impassable in the heavy summer rains.

It is a bad region for army movements. Lee was covering Richmond and the Virginia Central railroad, his line of supply, while Grant was trying to secure the Pamunky roads to Richmond. Both were aiming at the same point, but General Lee had got there first, and was on an interior line. By the twenty-ninth to the thirtieth of May the two armies were getting close together, Lee's forces being heavily intrenched. On the thirty-first our army was pressed up to the enemy, as close as practicable without assaulting; but the position they held was so strong naturally, and so well defended, that an assault was not attempted on that day. The main line of the enemy was about fourteen hundred yards distant from ours, the interval being mostly open ground,

but broken more or less by swamps, and it had artillery in position with direct and flanking fire. Lee's position was about six miles from the exterior line of the intrenchments of Richmond, his right only about half of that distance from the most advanced intrenchments. This proximity to the defences of the Confederate capital, together with the condition of the Chickahominy River, appeared to bring Grant's turning movements to an end. Lee's right was secure. His left, being among the wooded swamps of two rivers, was difficult to attack. His front was the assailable part, though it had not been reported that it was practicable to carry it by assault. But General Grant decided to make the attack. He had in fact to do this or withdraw, his alternative being a safe passage across the James, for which preparations had already been made, for the transfer of his entire army and its trains to the front of Petersburg. But he would not accept this alternative until he was convinced that his enemy's line could not be carried. Promptly, therefore, at the hour designated on the third of June, the whole line was in motion, and for an hour the dark hollows between the two armies were lighted up with the fires of death. The 2d, 6th, and 18th corps advanced under heavy artillery and musketry fire, and carried the rifle-pits. But there the fire became still hotter, and cross-fires of artillery swept through the ranks of the 18th to the 2d corps of Hancock. Notwithstanding this destructive fire, the troops went up close to the main line of the intrenchments, but, not being able to carry them, put themselves under cover and maintained the positions they had gained, which were in some places but thirty, forty, or fifty yards from the enemy's works. The greater

part of the fighting was over in an hour, though attacks were renewed after that time, but without result, and the battle ended disastrously. General Grant took the entire responsibility of failure, and in his Autobiography regretted that he ordered the assault. The offensive movement stopped as soon as he became convinced that it could not succeed. For several days the army confronted General Lee, threatening his position to detain him where he was until new dispositions could be made. The losses during the three days in front of Cold Harbor were about ten thousand men, and in all the operations from the first to the twelfth of June, when the army crossed the James, the grand total was fourteen thousand men. It seemed then as it does now that it was a frightful waste of life without compensating results, and this appears to be the verdict of history.

The great plateau at White House was a temporary hospital. It was soon covered with tents, kitchens, and feeding-stations, and more than eight thousand men passed through our hands. Mr. Fay's quarters were on the deck of a barge, without other shelter than an ordinary fly-tent through the heavy and continuous rains. How Miss Gilson or Mrs. General Marshall survived the exposure of these dreadful days this story cannot tell. Mrs. General Barlow was prostrated, and was removed to Washington, where she shortly after died, a martyr to the cause. As one looks back upon that hospital encampment and all the suffering witnessed there, its distinctive features are lost in the confused recollection of agonizing sights and sounds, of sleepless nights, of days crowded full of effort to relieve the victims of that fearful conflict. By the fourteenth of June, two weeks after the battle,

the army crossed the James and the wounded were transferred to Washington.

During the interval between the battle of Cold Harbor and the withdrawal of the army to its new position in front of Petersburg, while General Grant was making these new dispositions and was engaged in the gigantic task of the safe transfer of his forces, Mr. Fay had been chosen, without his knowledge, a delegate to the National Republican Convention held in Baltimore, and we will let him tell his own story:—

I obeyed this call reluctantly, although as I think fortunately, for by this time I was in the early stages of malarial fever, and needed the change. The work was put into the competent hands of Dr. Parish, and I took the boat for Baltimore. Nature struggled for a day or two with the disease, and successfully in the end, as it proved to be nothing more than a temporary prostration, and I was able to do my part in nominating Lincoln and Johnson for the next four years. How little we realized the tragedy that was so soon to follow the inauguration! After the convention adjourned, I went to Washington, and from there to Fortress Monroe to await events. But immediately after our steamer arrived there with our stores, and our corps of twenty-five men and women were ready again for service. Receiving permission to go up the James, and feeling sure that the next movement would be in front of Petersburg, we pushed up to City Point, which would be, in that case, the natural base of the army. This forecast was correct. We found that the 2d and the 18th corps had already landed there, having crossed the river in pontoon boats, and had gone up towards Petersburg, and had had an engagement there. Our supplies were landed and our kitchen started, and we provided for those most in need whom we found there. This was before the main army had crossed the river. We found at City Point Colonel Arnold A. Rand, of the 4th Massachusetts cavalry, in command of the post. He was well known to me, and furnished us with a

four-horse wagon and a cavalry guard, and we despatched a load of stores for the front, under the charge of General J. F. B. Marshall, who, with a corps of eight men, with Mrs. Marshall and Miss Gilson, went to the front to be ready for the coming battle.

Soon after we reached City Point, the great pontoon bridge, a mile long, was laid across the James for the transfer of the army. To accomplish this change of base secretly in the face of an alert and watchful enemy, with a wide river in our rear, was a most hazardous undertaking. Such a movement, when successful, is regarded as the ablest manœuvre taught by military art. While Grant was supposed to be in front of Lee, heavily intrenched, the latter suddenly learned that the entire Union army—its vast supplies, its infantry, cavalry, artillery, and all its trains—had been silently moved across the river, and were on the march to Petersburg. This was one of the greatest achievements of Grant during the war. It was a campaign of giants. Lee at once retired toward Richmond, and by the time our forces had begun to draw a cordon about Petersburg Lee had already thrown some of his forces into the city, and was intrenching there. General Grant failed to secure this position, as he had planned, because of the failure of his advance forces to seize it, as they were ordered to do and might have done, and the opportunity was lost. Heavy fighting followed for three days before he would abandon this objective, which was vital to the success of his campaign. This series of conflicts resulted in a complete repulse of our forces at every point, and they were attended by a mournful loss of life. Siege operations were then begun before both Petersburg and Richmond, and continued until spring.

Mr. Fay's journal does not tell the story of what happened to General Marshall's party, who made their way to the front with the stores in that four-horse wagon, but the writer, who was one of his corps, can relate it.

They reached the lines of the army at dusk, and found themselves suddenly involved in the lines of the battle of Petersburg, but were turned back out of the danger zone. They had lost their way through the woods, being guided by the musketry firing, and, finding themselves involved in the regimental movements, and almost between the lines of fire, got back to the rear as best they could. The field hospitals, if such they could be called, were simply points to which the wounded were brought and laid upon the ground, the operating tables being built up on the spot from such rough boards as could be gathered from the farm-houses near. The medical trains had been stalled for hours in the fields in the forward movement of the army, and could not be reached, but the surgeons established these hospital stations and began their work without their anæsthetics, hoping hour by hour that they would be at hand. The story of what happened in the rear of these blazing lines of musketry, its victims with the grime and smoke of battle upon them brought thus to the knife of the surgeon at the amputation tables, simply cannot be told. It does not need to be told.

It was in the midst of such physical horror as this that Mr. Fay's Sanitary Commission team worked its way through these congested lines of the army, and came upon the scene with the supplies of ether, chloroform, dressings, stimulants, and food, with its efficient men and women ready for service; and there was not a surgeon on the field who used the supplies who did not thank God for them,

and feel that the relief given through those three days of battle alone justified the entire expenditure of the Sanitary Commission during the war. The forecast which provided for this emergency, and the pushing of this wagon-load of supplies through all the difficulties encountered, were simply characteristic of all Mr. Fay's service in the field.

As the siege of Petersburg went on, City Point became the gateway of the army. It was the base of supplies, and a town of considerable proportions grew up about the banks of the river. The headquarters of the army were established there, and a mile back from the landing, on a wide plateau, were the great corps hospitals. A branch railroad ran through the centre of the hospital grounds, so that the sick or wounded might avoid ambulance transportation, and be taken directly from the cars and laid upon their hospital beds. A dispensary, commissary storehouses, general and special diet kitchens, were provided for each of the hospitals, with provision for the Sanitary Commission stations in each corps. It was a vast establishment, with accommodation for many thousand men, all under the care of Dr. Edward B. Dalton, Medical Director. It was at this point that Mr. Fay established his headquarters during the summer and winter of 1864, until the final campaign in 1865, which ended in the capture of Richmond and the surrender of General Lee.

Dr. Dalton gave the Sanitary Commission all the facilities needed for its work. His personal relations with Mr. Fay were most friendly, and the two departments worked together effectively. Dr. Dalton was a highly gifted administrative officer, and left his mark upon the

entire field-hospital system. Seventy-five thousand sick and wounded men passed through these hospitals during the year.

It was during the summer of 1864 that Mr. Fay narrowly escaped with his life from the explosion of the ammunition barge at City Point which cost so many lives. He tells the story of this experience, as follows:—

On the eleventh of August, 1864, I went down to the mail-boat, as was my custom, to mail my letters. I also had a team to get a tent which had been made for me and which had just arrived. The mail-boat had a large number of passengers,—friends who had visited the hospitals and the army, and officers going home on furlough or sent as messengers to Washington. At the stern of the boat lay a barge loaded with ammunition. The steamer had just started, and, as I was throwing a box into the wagon, the ammunition exploded, killing every one on the barge or near it. If it had happened a few moments before, the mail-boat would have been blown to pieces with the loss of the passengers and crew. How many were killed will never be known, but the fragments of human bodies were lying all about. The buildings on the wharf nearest the barge were crushed. Missiles of all kinds, shells, Minié balls, pieces of lumber, guns, bayonets, filled the air, and dropped all around me. I was knocked down by the concussion, somewhat injured in the face, my arm was disabled, and my side severely bruised, though the ribs were not broken. Curling up in the smallest space, I put my arms over my head to protect it. At that moment a frightened horse, with swinging trace chains, came on the run down the railroad track where I was lying. I got under my wagon, for the missiles were still falling. One of the horses of my team had fallen. The runaway horse struck him as he was struggling to free himself, and his heels were more dangerous than the flying fragments in the air. I fortunately escaped further damage, and the horse died before he could be rescued. At that moment some one called out, "Another

explosion," and I saw piled up against the building, which was on fire, large boxes of ammunition which had just been unloaded. Starting to run, it occurred to me that there might be men under the crushed building who ought to be rescued, and I turned to them. At that instant a tugboat ran up to the wharf, threw out some hose, with one man only to handle it. My right arm was helpless, but with the other hand and arm we managed to drag it to the fire, and it was soon extinguished. My horse was hitched at a distance and was uninjured, and, reaching the hospital, I was duly cared for, and remained a short time only out of commission. To show the force of the explosion, I learned afterwards that the keel of the barge was thrown over the building, which was thirty feet high, and landed on the track near where I was lying. It was a fortunate escape for me.

There are some additional facts relating to the frightful effects of this explosion given by Morris Schaff, the ordnance officer in charge of that barge, that will be of interest as showing the wonderful escape of Mr. Fay from instant death, which was the fate of nearly all of those who were near the barge at the moment of the explosion. This officer states that there were some twenty or thirty thousand rounds of artillery ammunition and seventy-five to one hundred thousand rounds of small-arms ammunition on that barge. "We were at a game of chess in my house on the bluff, a hundred and fifty yards back from the wharf. A solid twelve-pound shot crashed across the bed into the mess-chest. Shells burst over us, and a fragment just grazed my shoulder. There was, of course, a sudden stampede into the garden. Shells were falling or bursting every instant. The sky was full of falling missiles. One of my clerks was killed there, and we carried his body back into the office from which he had

fled when the projectiles that were hurled in every direction began to enter it. From the top of the bluff there lay a staggering scene of a mass of overthrown buildings in tangled and impenetrable heaps, and in the water were wrecked and sunken barges. Next the ammunition barge was a canal-boat filled with saddles and cavalry equipments. The explosion sent them flying in every direction, like so many big-winged bats. One of them killed the lemonade man who at the moment was doing a thriving business under a tent-fly, surrounded by mule drivers white and black, soldiers and civilians, many of whom suffered the same fate. In a barber's shop near, all were killed, and, when their bodies were gathered where the tent had stood, they numbered thirty in all. A musket was found standing upright in the road, buried to the second band, almost half a mile back from the wharf. I have always thought it must have been that of the sentinel on the barge, for it does not seem possible that any of the rifles in the storehouse could have reached a height such as this one must have attained, to give the necessary velocity to penetrate so deeply. It was estimated that the explosion cost the lives of at least two hundred men, besides the maiming of a multitude of others, though the exact number of casualties was never known."

Dr. R. B. Prescott, who was also near the spot, wrote as follows of his experience: "It has always seemed almost miraculous that I was not one of the victims. I was knocked down by the concussion, and an officer with whom I had been talking only a moment before was instantly killed,—torn all to pieces in fact. In my mind's eye I have often seen that dreadful spectacle, that im-

mense cone-shaped mass of flame and smoke rising seemingly hundreds of feet into the air, and filled with timbers, saddles, military stores, and bodies of men and horses. It was a sight never to be forgotten."

The appalling fact regarding this explosion is now a matter of history. It was caused by a Confederate torpedo, manufactured and placed there by a rebel officer, Captain Maxwell, who with great daring penetrated our lines with it. His report to the Richmond authorities was captured by Dr. Prescott, referred to above, in which the whole story is given in great detail, with the description of the torpedo, which was fired by clock-work. This officer (Captain Maxwell) relates with some gusto that "the scene, though terrific, was in some aspects ludicrous! The air was filled with all sorts of the munitions of war. Army saddles careened through the air as though playing leap-frog, while headless bodies, arms, legs, and heads of the unfortunate crew flew about in the smoke." One does not need to comment on this description. It was not war. It was simple butchery.

There was another incident that occurred at City Point some months later which will be of interest. It was related to the writer by Mr. Fay, and concerns the visit of President Lincoln to the army during the winter of 1864–65.

He had come down to the James River to confer with the two Confederate Commissioners, Alexander H. Stephens and Judge Campbell, in relation to terms of peace that would be acceptable to them. As he expected, nothing came of it; but public sentiment at the moment seemed to demand the interview. During that visit he was at General Grant's headquarters near the hospitals,

and visited all of them. Standing by the diet kitchen of the 6th corps hospital, the headquarters of Mr. Fay, after the President had visited every bedside and had shaken hands with all the convalescent soldiers who stood in line before him, Senator Sumner who was with him remarked, "Mr. President, you have taken the hand of some thousands of men to-day: you must be very tired." "Tired?" said Mr. Lincoln. Then, with a quizzical look in his face, he glanced about as if in search of something, picked up an axe that was near him, and, swinging it several times over his head, began with powerful strokes upon a chopping-log in front of the kitchen. Every stroke, clean and strong, went to its mark like that of an experienced woodsman, and the chips went flying all about him and about the wondering company standing near. Then, dropping the axe, he turned to Mr. Sumner, and said, smiling, "No, Mr. Senator, you will see I am not tired, and can still hew to the line." A few weeks later he lay dead at the hand of the assassin, and there was not one among these thousands of men who did not recall with tender emotion or who could ever forget the pressure of that friendly hand as he came into the presence of his great leader and friend.

Up to the date of the attack on Petersburg the colored troops had taken but a passive part in the campaign. They were now first brought into action where the fighting was desperately contested, as was shown by the numbers of the dead and wounded left on the field. The wounded were brought down to City Point, where a temporary hospital was established to receive them. It was ill provided, its organization, if it had any, was imperfect, and the mortality was frightfully large. The severity

of the campaign in a malarious country had prostrated many with fevers, and typhoid in its most malignant forms was raging with increasing fatality. The stories of suffering reached Miss Gilson at a moment when the campaign through which she had passed had greatly impaired her strength; but her duty seemed plain, and, as there were no volunteers in the emergency, she prepared to go. Her friends did not expect she would survive this task, but, saying she could not die in a better cause, she started out alone. A hospital had to be created. Official pride and prejudice had to be met and overcome, and it had to be done without seeming to interfere. She gave, as was her rule, instant and unquestioning obedience to medical and disciplinary orders, and this opened a pathway for a service that was welcome everywhere. A hospital kitchen was organized on her method of special diet, the nurses were made to learn her way and to accept discipline, and harmony soon prevailed. The rate of mortality decreased, and the hospital became known as one of the best in the department and had the most cheerfully picturesque series of buildings at City Point. Her personal presence in the wards was a benediction, as was her ministry at the bedside of the soldier. Nobody could see her moving about her work, or sitting in her sober gray flannel gown by the dim candle-light, with her eyes open and watchful through the night, with hands ready for all those endless wants of sickness, without being moved by the devotion and tenderness which were given to the humblest man whom she was there to serve. And every hour as it passed added strength to her influence and to her command of a position which won and received the warm appreciation of the entire Medical Corps.

In Mr. Fay's narrative there are many references to a book, *Hospital Life in the Army of the Potomac*, from which he quotes as a sufficient record of his own experiences. It was written by one of his corps who was closely associated with him, and the story there told is often as complete a narrative as if Mr. Fay himself had written it. Some of the pages of this volume are quoted here as showing the work that was done at City Point during the long siege before Richmond and Petersburg.

The editor gives this additional picture of Miss Gilson at this time:—

The grace and dignity with which she went about her work won all hearts. As she passed through the wards, speaking here and there cheering words to these suffering men, calling them by name, and knowing the story of many of them, they would follow her with their eyes and hold out a supplicating hand for just the word of sympathy and good cheer that was always at command for all of them, and she was always rewarded by grateful words for her tenderness and care. She seemed to be mother and sister to them all.

Absorbed in her work, unconscious of the influence of her gentle personality, whether in the kitchen, in the heat and overcrowding incident to the issue of a large diet list, or in her quiet hours at the bedside of these men, she always seemed to impart courage and good cheer; and when asked for some simple religious service, the reading of a psalm, the singing of a hymn, or the offering of a prayer, her voice was always at command in these devotions. But it was not in these ministries alone that her influence was felt. Was there jealousy in the kitchen, its cause was soon discovered and harmony was restored;

was there profanity among the convalescents, her daily presence and kindly admonition or reproof were enough to check the evil; or was there hardship or discontent, the knowledge that she was sharing the discomfort also was enough to compel patient endurance until a remedy could be provided. And so through the whole war, from the seven days' conflicts upon the Peninsula in those July days of 1862 through the campaigns of Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Antietam, Gettysburg, and the conflicts of the Wilderness, for the possession of Richmond and Petersburg, in 1865, she worked steadfastly on until the end. Through scorching heat and pinching cold, in the tent or upon the open field, in the ambulance or in the saddle, through rain and snow, amid unseen perils of the enemy, under fire upon the field, or in the more insidious dangers of contagion, she did her part with womanly devotion, and to hundreds whose sufferings she relieved or whose lives she saved she was

"A noble type of good
Heroic womanhood."

Mr. Fay became greatly interested at this time in an Italian soldier who had strayed into our camp, and we find references to his story in his memoranda. The poor fellow was ill and helpless, and had wandered away from his regiment with a deadly homesickness, entirely broken down and needing rest and care. In some way unknown to us, he had found his way to this colored hospital. He could not speak a word of English, and, as it proved, was far gone in consumption. We had been ministering to his wants with the sympathy his case had awakened, and by French and such few Italian words as we had

at command tried to talk with him. As we spoke of our cold climate and contrasted it with that of Italy, his eyes brightened, and, with his arms extended upward, he gasped out, "L'Italie est paradis!" He seemed to see his own smiling Pavia and Vigevano, to feel the soft breath of the Mediterranean, and to bring up all the sunny memories of his far-off home that he was never to see again.

After much effort we found in a neighboring hospital an Italian who could act as interpreter. We were eager to learn his story, which proved to be the old tale of deception and fraud, of the cruelties of the bounty agents, and of sufferings the sequel of which would soon be death. He had been in the country but a few days when, he knew not how, he found himself clothed in a blue uniform and regularly enlisted in the military service of the government. A man of delicate frame, he had simply broken down from the severities and exposures of the campaign, and here he was to die. His mind reverted to his distant home, and he spoke with deep feeling of his poor old father and mother and his brothers and of what a tragedy their separation had proved, of his dear old cathedral of Vigevano, and of his employments which he should never enter upon again. He knew he was going to die, yet did not shrink from death. He welcomed it rather; for what was life to him? It was only privation, hardship, loneliness, and suffering. He had no influence to procure his discharge; he could make no appeal for justice; his comrades were strangers, and spoke a strange tongue, of which he knew not a word; he had no companion to whom he could look for sympathy or to whom he could tell his story of wrong; indeed, he could hardly

make himself understood by these new friends who were trying to comfort and cheer his last hours. But one boon was granted him,—that of hearing his native language from the lips of a countryman. At first he seemed bewildered, then overjoyed that such a blessing should have been his before he died. His eyes opened, expressing content and peace, though there was still a restlessness and anxiety, of which we could not guess the cause. He was sinking rapidly with some weight upon him that he had not the words or the wish to reveal. At length, asking if he had money to dispose of, he gave a sigh of relief, and unstrapped his belt, which contained, as it proved, eight hundred and fifty dollars. His pulse was growing faint, but he tried to write the name of his family and their home address. The words were slowly spelled out one by one in a trembling hand,—his own name, Giovanni Qualia, and that of his brother, Giuseppe Qualia, St. Andrews Street, Vigevano, Department of Pavia, Province of Vigevano, Italy. The money was to be sent to him, to be divided according to his discretion. The dying man seemed now at ease, and we left him to rest. As we withdrew, he held my hand firmly in both of his to express his gratitude. He never spoke again, and before morning passed away. His body was removed to the tent for the reception of the dead; and at four o'clock of the following afternoon on two stretchers the body of a colored soldier who had died in the cars on the way to the hospital and this poor, friendless Italian were carried out to their graves. There were two mourners walking on either side,—a sad funeral procession. We performed a short service for the poor unknown negro, whom nobody would mourn,

and for this stranger from another land. Soldiers gathered about the mound of earth, standing with uncovered heads, and, while the earth trembled with the tremendous firing all about us, we committed these two men to their soldiers' graves. This was our Sunday service. Letters were sent to Italy, containing a remittance of twenty-nine hundred and fifty-two francs, the proceeds of the money given into our care, and it was gratefully acknowledged later by the family.

Half a mile from the hospital grounds at City Point was a wretched group of tents called the hospital of the wagon-train. It was not a hospital, but a place where some thirty men were lying sick and neglected, who had been discovered by Mr. Fay, and whose condition was deplorable. They were wagoners, rough, hardy pioneers from Maine, but, being civilians and employed only as laborers, were not entitled to medical care except such as they could secure by payment. They were destitute and suffering from inflammatory rheumatism. Mr. Fay arranged for such care as we could give them, and their condition gradually improved. One old man was lying on a rough bunk, quiet and patient, with sunken eyes and a face worn by pain. Mr. Fay provided him with many comforts, and, as he received them, he said: "We have these societies in our town for the soldiers, but I never began to realize the value of them till now. Mind, I'm none of your flatterers. I'm an old man, have had a hard lot in life. I've got five sons in the army,—my all; and, if I never see them again, I give them to the cause. You don't know how your coming here kind o' cheers me up." We knew it did, for we saw the tears gathering in his eyes; and, when I thought of those five sons, I could

but recall the letter of consolation then just written by Abraham Lincoln to the poor widow who had buried her five boys, when he spoke of the feeling of "solemn pride" which was her precious privilege, now that she had laid such a sacrifice upon the altar of her country. I could not but feel that the same was applicable to him also,—that "solemn pride."

But these instances of tender care need not be multiplied. They are brought together here to show how perfectly Mr. Fay was able to realize his own conception of a personal ministry among suffering soldiers which, without treating them in masses, could reach down to the individual man in his need, to soothe *his* pain, to cool his brow, to touch with gentle hand his shattered frame, and by all the resources of wise and tender ministry bring him back to life again.

There is, however, another side to life in an army hospital, and any true picture of it must represent that other side. It is not full of romance or of heroism, though there is an abundance of both to be found there. You are dealing with all sorts and conditions of men, some of them strong, thoughtful, heroic, claiming nothing for themselves, eager to share, ready to bear others' burdens as well as their own. Then there are also just the average men, who have negative characters or none at all, stolid, indifferent, who don't care much either way. Then come the "bummers," who joined the army for the large bounties they received, deserted, and then "jumped them" to enlist again for more money. They were always ready to play upon one's sympathies and to practise the well-known tricks of such soldiers, who disgraced the uniforms they wore. These were the outcasts of society,

of whom the world would say they were fit only for the front of battle and it would be a good riddance if they died. It was our fate to meet many of them.

There was one institution at City Point during this year that was filled with such men. It was known as the "Bull Ring." It was the prison of the army, and consisted of barracks, with a wide enclosure open to the sky, surrounded by a high stockade, and guarded night and day. There were four hundred men imprisoned here, and their condition was a disgrace to the army. They were held under a great variety of charges, ranging from the highest crimes known to military law down to the common delinquencies of the soldier. The court martial dealt with these men as rapidly as it could, but its work never appeared to be done. When rumors of unwholesome brutal conditions in this prison reached Mr. Fay, his indignation was quickly aroused, and he at once asked permission on behalf of the Sanitary Commission to make an investigation. The writer joined him in this inspection. We stood on a raised platform built on the stockade for the guard, and looked down upon the yard. Presently the men came shuffling out of the building, with that listless air which showed how indifferent they were to their fate,—couples chained together, men half naked and alone, clad in every variety of garments, Federal uniforms and Confederate, the blue and the yellowish-gray, all in rags; some with a meal-sack over their shoulders, some with a gunny-bag for a jacket, others with their cotton drawers, and with feet tied up in bagging to serve as shoes and stockings; without hats, with uncombed hair, ragged, all alive with vermin. Here were hardened criminals,—the outlaws of society,—reckless and defiant, many of them

under sentence of death, yet unconcerned about their fate, and careless whether the execution were ordered for to-morrow or were indefinitely postponed. There were sixty or seventy others who knew that after trial their crimes would be expiated on the scaffold or that they would be shot, who yet accepted their lot with a profane bravado which made one shudder.

The line was formed, and our distribution of clothing began. One by one they came forward. To the first, "Unbutton that blouse and let us see what you require." It was stripped open, and the man was naked to the waist, "A woollen shirt for you." The next man, with gunny-cloth tied over his feet, sore and bleeding with the cold, "A pair of shoes and stockings." The next, comparatively comfortable, "Only a towel." The next one, with only a thin pair of drawers, "Warm drawers and a pair of trousers." And so, one by one, the men pressed forward, some with meal-sacks for a blanket, others without even this covering, breaking the line in their eagerness to receive something to keep them warm,—a shivering, suffering crowd, pinched by the frosty morning air. They moved about the yard to keep up a brisk circulation,—men of all ages, from the gray-haired to the youngest lads, and some so broken in spirit that they had resigned themselves to whatever fate might be in store for them. There was one lad not over sixteen years old in this pen, a bright little fellow, quick in his movements, the only cheerful one in all that crowd of men. As I asked the officer in charge why a boy was placed with such desperadoes, the lad looked up and said with perfect nonchalance, "I relieved my captain of some of his greenbacks; he had too many, and I had none; he didn't know how to use them,

and I thought I would spend them for him." The boy was demoralized; but, when I remonstrated with the officer against confining such a lad with such associates, he said, what I had already been convinced was true, that he was as bad as any of the men, and could not be worse. I replied that he might be made better, and ought to be removed. He pointed to headquarters, and told me to go there, if there was wrong to be redressed.

After the distribution of the clothing, we went through the barracks. They were about fifty feet in width by one hundred and fifty feet long, and through the entire length, on each side, were bunks in tiers, which held three or four men each. In the middle of the building there was another similar construction, and every bunk was occupied. It was a dark, noisome place. The only redeeming feature of the prison was the food and the arrangement for cooking and serving it. Here everything was clean and in order, with an abundant supply. A report of the general conditions found in this Bull Ring was made to General Grant, and within a short time they were greatly improved, and all cause of complaint on the ground of inhumanity was removed.

And so the winter of 1864–65 passed with all these varied experiences, while Grant was gradually extending his lines and preparing for his great *coup-de-main* in front of Petersburg and Richmond in the coming spring.

CHAPTER IX.

The Last Campaign. Petersburg to Appomattox Court House.

The long winter of 1864–65 had passed, the buds and leaves of another springtime were opening, and we were entering upon the last campaign of the war.

Before we go on to the conclusion of the story, we must briefly review the military situation, and note the colossal scale with which, on every side, General Grant was bearing down upon the Confederacy, now tottering to its fall. The vast combinations on the chess-board of the war had been going on for months under his direction, and were now culminating to the point of co-operation between the armies of the West and the East, with the single purpose of the destruction of the insurgent armies and the collapse of the Confederacy. Sherman's daring and splendid march to the sea had cut the Southern states in twain. He had captured Atlanta in the summer of 1864, and had made possible that great swinging movement through Georgia to the Atlantic coast, the pivot of which was the Army of the Potomac in front of Petersburg and Richmond.

"Sherman had advanced from Atlanta, destroying Southern railroads, founderies, mills, workshops, and warehouses, moving over half a continent, and working ruin to all material resources as he marched. He reached the coast before the end of December, crossed into South

Carolina in February, 1865, and then moved slowly up through North Carolina to be ready to act in concert with Grant when the time was ripe to strike his enemy."

During the winter months of 1864–65, when so little appeared to the outside world to be doing in Virginia, Grant's efforts, says Swinton, "were mainly directed to restraining the Confederates from voluntarily giving up to him Petersburg and Richmond, which were no longer his objective. Lee's communications were now his objective, those interior lines of supply of food and ammunition which ran through the Carolinas and the Seaboard States, and radiated over the great productive territory of the Central zone."

Sherman was destroying those lines of communication, and was drawing his coils tighter over that entire region.

"He had reached Goldsborough, North Carolina, late in March, 1865, with a clear course to Petersburg, a hundred and fifty miles away, but remained there refitting his forces, as General Grant feared that, if he should move any farther on his way, Lee would abandon Petersburg and Richmond, and this he did not desire until he was ready for a pursuit that would end in the destruction of his adversary." *

Sheridan, with his ten thousand cavalry, started up the Shenandoah Valley early in March, as a part of the great forward movement, broke up and shattered Early's forces, completed the destruction of the James River Canal, destroyed the railroad toward Richmond and Lynchburg, and then, going entirely round General Lee's army, breaking up *en route* all the railroad tracks and bridges, he joined Grant again in front of Petersburg.

* Swinton's *Army of the Potomac.*

With these great combinations culminating to a point, and with forces adequate to his need, it seemed that the campaign now to be opened could have but one result. Swinton says that "it was not alone the overwhelming weight of physical power that threatened the insurgent armies, or that the Union forces had torn asunder the fabric of the Confederacy; but secret causes of disturbance in the moral order in the South had corrupted the life-blood of the revolt. The people had separated themselves from their leaders, and their cause was ready to fall to the ground. There were men enough in the South to continue the war, but those men were beyond the reach of the authorities at Richmond. The conscription had broken down, and the collapse of the commissariat was equally complete." * The desertions from the army were constant and large, and at the opening of the campaign, although Lee had on paper a hundred and sixty thousand men, he had in reality less than fifty thousand to defend forty miles of intrenchments. "It only remains to show how, in the last wrestle, these men comported themselves, when they at last broke down under a burden too heavy to bear, and the revolt which they had for four years upheld with their bayonets fell with a crash that resounded through the world." †

Lee's only hope was to unite with Johnston on the Danville line, and this was what Grant determined to prevent. We do not need to follow the campaign in much detail, although there are incidents in it that are of great interest. It really began with an offensive movement by General Lee on the twenty-fifth of March, 1865, in front of Petersburg, in the hope of diverting Grant's

* Swinton's *Army of the Potomac.* † *Ibid.*

attention from his proposed lines of pursuit, and to open for himself a line of retreat on the south side of the Appomattox, which was a much shorter line to Amelia Court House, his point of concentration on the Danville railroad. But, bold as this plan was, it failed. General Grant was not to be diverted by such an attack. It cost the Confederates two thousand prisoners and as many more in killed and wounded, and Lee could ill afford such a loss. "This offensive movement neither retarded nor precipitated the catastrophe, for Grant, having fixed the twenty-ninth of March for the opening of his campaign, held firmly to that plan." *

Both armies were unleashed on the twenty-ninth and thirtieth of March, 1865, and the fighting began on the thirty-first. On the first of April Sheridan was engaged victoriously at Five Forks, and had a part of Lee's line completely entrapped; and on Sunday morning, the second of April, Jefferson Davis was notified of Lee's purpose to abandon Richmond, and the Confederate President fled. Heavy fighting was going on all along the line, General Lee using all his resources to foil and hold off his enemy. The Confederate army, as we have seen, had been greatly depleted during the winter by desertion, and its wonderful courage and morale was greatly impaired. Moreover, General Lee was fighting forces overwhelming in numbers.

Abandoning Petersburg and Richmond, General Ewell, under orders from Breckenridge, Secretary of War, set fire to the cotton and tobacco warehouses and left the Confederate capital in flames, and it fell, after slight resistance, into the hands of the Union forces.

* Swinton's *Army of the Potomac.*

General Lee retreated by the north bank of the Appomattox instead of the south bank as he preferred, and Grant pursued on parallel lines to strike the Danville road by Burkesville Junction, to interpose his forces there. Lee was moving his army to Amelia Court House. Reaching there, he learned that the loaded cars containing the large supplies he had gathered for the subsistence of his army, and which he had ordered to meet him at that point, had been met by another order from Richmond, which was misinterpreted, and the entire stores had been sent to that city and burned in the conflagration. This was a deadly blow to General Lee. The chase for the hunted prey went on with all the vigor of a Grant and a Sheridan. One disposition was made after another, the entire army so far victorious in hot pursuit, pressing the rear, striking one flank and then another, cutting off trains, capturing artillery and prisoners. Swinton says that "the Confederates began their retreat with but one ration. They were living on the exhausted region through which they passed, and their foragers were so restricted by the clouds of Union cavalry that they could collect practically nothing. Those men were fortunate who had in their pockets a few handfuls of corn which they might parch by the wayside. The misery of the famished troops during these first days of April passes all experience of military anguish since Napoleon's retreat from the banks of the Beresina."

The doom of the Confederacy was written in unmistakable lines. But, in spite of this, General Lee, with courage and skill unabated, fought on, throwing his divisions upon every weak point of his adversary. It was all in vain, however, and he was forced back with con-

stant losses in these attempts to save his army. Pressed upon all sides, in hunger and fatigue, the Confederate column reached Farmville, with the armies of Grant so massed in front and rear as to give immediate promise of a sure and final ending of the campaign. This was the seventh day of April, and on the evening of that day General Lee received a note from General Grant asking of him the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, and on the ninth of April, after a personal conference at a farm-house near Appomattox Court House, the generous terms of capitulation offered were accepted, and the great Civil War was at an end.

During the first part of the campaign Mr. Fay remained at City Point. The wounded of both armies were scattered over sixty miles of territory, being left on the fields where they fell or moved to such shelter by the wayside as could be found for them. All along that bloody track of war every farm-house, barn, or wayside church, became a shelter for the wounded. The Medical Director of the army, Dr. Dalton, was ordered to establish a hospital at Burkesville Junction, a railroad centre, and to gather in the wounded there preparatory to their transfer to City Point. Surgeons from the base hospitals were ordered forward with tents and supplies, and the writer was detailed by Mr. Fay to join them. The railroad connection was broken at Wilson's Station, and a camp was made at that point until transportation to Burkesville could be had. A few hours after our arrival there a large body of Confederate prisoners appeared in the distance, creeping slowly forward in a long, sinuous line over the hills, filling the roads and going into bivouac in the fields adjoining our camp. This column proved

to be the corps of General Ewell, eighty-five hundred officers and men, captured by General Sheridan, and now moving to tide water where they could be held or paroled, awaiting the farther issues of the campaign. They had marched twenty-five miles over the boggy roads and through persistent rains, and the sight of this heroic but impoverished column (it was Stonewall Jackson's old corps) was enough to move any heart to pity. Chilled and suffering from the cold winds of the season, drenched to the skin, they simply dropped into the soppy grass in the last stages of exhaustion. The writer went down into this bivouac and moved among them to see what might be done to relieve the hapless misery of their condition. Footsore and weary, those who wished to go into hospital came forward. There were hundreds of them on fire with fever or racked by malarial chills or rheumatic pains, emaciated by hunger and want, and far too many for any hospital accommodations there. The commissary of the prisoners was then furnishing ample rations, and the fires were blazing on every hummock of dry ground, and groups were huddled over them on these closely guarded fields. In a group apart were the general officers, and the writer was detailed to consult with them as to what might be done on the spot for those who could not go forward. But the numbers were far too great for our resources of alleviation, and it was decided that they must all be rested and fed, and then all go on together, let who might drop by the way. There was no alternative. There was General Ewell, the commander, and Kershaw and Custis Lee and Tucker and Admiral Semmes of Alabama fame, with Du Bois and other division and brigade commanders of this famous

corps who had long followed their great leader and had won immortality with him. We sat together by the camp-fire, talking of the campaign and the crisis of the war, which, all admitted, was now at hand. General Ewell seemed prematurely old, with deep lines in his sunken cheeks, moving on crutches, a worn, sad-faced, broken man. He was no longer fighting Dick Ewell, with his dare-devil, picturesque profanity, his energy in battle, the chosen leader of Jackson's corps, who through a hundred battles had won the love and confidence of those who followed him. In the great catastrophe which had now befallen the Confederate forces he accepted the situation, and took the best, in fact the only view of the capture of his corps. He said the men would no longer fight, and the war was over. I told him of the Richmond conflagration, the fires of which he had himself lighted as his forces were withdrawn from the city, and the result of which he had not heard. His eyes blazed with their old fire as I told him of the feeling in Richmond for those who had ordered that conflagration, and he replied with passion, "As commanding officer, I was compelled to execute that barbarous order, and my main regret now is that I did not throw the man who issued it, General Breckenridge, the Secretary of War, into the midst of the flames." Kershaw, a model soldier in look and bearing, said to me as we talked apart, "For two years I have seen the inevitable, and did my duty for the cause I espoused, but I am glad the end has come," and that was the general voice of all of them.

One of the rank and file came forward, mistaking me for a surgeon, and holding out his hand, which was covered with a stained and ragged handkerchief, asked if his

fingers could be amputated. He was encased in mud, having fallen on the march from exhaustion and been trampled upon. His trousers were in ribbons about his feet, his hat without a brim, his hair bleached and tangled, and his Confederate butternut uniform just holding together. He was a pitiable-looking object, but the moment I heard his gentle Southern speech I saw there was a good kernel inside the rough shell. His wound had not been dressed since his musket was shot from his hand some days before, nor had the steel splinters been removed, and it was in a shocking condition. The hand was quickly cleansed and dressed, the steel splinters cut away, and there was certainly hope that it could be saved. As we were about to part, he begged for a "hardtack." One of the guard at his camp-fire cheerfully took from his haversack his ration of uncooked pork, cut off a generous slice, and with two pieces of hard bread made him a sandwich. My rebel soldier fairly devoured it. He said he was about starved, as his only rations for nine days had been a pint of unground corn. He then gave his history. He said he was from Savannah, and about the last of the old battalion of his friends who joined in 1861, and he had fought through the entire war. His father, who was well known in Washington as a Union man, had recently been appointed by President Lincoln collector of the port of Savannah, and he thought, if a letter could be sent to him, he could secure a parole. The letter was written, and it was a satisfaction a few weeks later to meet both the father and the son in Washington, and to know that the parole had been quickly arranged. The war was over, and the young man, clothed and in his right mind, recalled joyfully that raw

pork sandwich, which to him was a never-to-be-forgotten meal.

After this incident of the Confederate soldier was closed, the great column of prisoners moved forward to a point where they could be paroled as soon as the news of General Lee's surrender reached them.

All these incidents happened at Wilson's Station on the way to Burkesville Junction, which was our destination. Reaching Dr. Dalton's headquarters at that point, we found the almost impassable roads of the region congested with the ambulance and wagon trains. They were often stalled in bog holes, and were floundering through the mud, filled with the wounded who had fallen by the way over the sixty miles of battlefields and had been gathered in and brought to this point on the South-side railroad. Reaching there, these trains were turned into the open fields surrounding the station, and were unloaded upon the sodden ground and by the roadsides everywhere, and, after every house, barn, shed, and freight building were filled, there were still thousands lying shelterless there. As soon as the railroad was opened, the supply of hospital beds was ample, but for many days the conditions were most deplorable.

In two or three open sheds and in one railroad building were six hundred men without even straw for bedding, and there were no blankets to protect them from the rain which soaked through these long wards of misery. Dr. Richardson, who was in charge, ordered milk punch for the amputated cases, and they were soon supplied. Several were dying; and my brandy flask was soon in use, restoring two or three sufficiently to get from them their names and to write some last message to their

friends. In one row were five men lying on the hard floor, all with thigh amputations, and all were dying. In a small room partitioned off from the main shed were three hopeless cases, placed there that they might breathe their last in peace, apart from the noise and excitement of the overcrowded place. Men were sitting up, bathing their wounds when they could get water, or were helping each other, and up to that time nobody had entered the room since they had been placed there. As we entered one of these buildings, from one end to the other there were cries: "Doctor! O doctor! come and dress my wound."—"Mine, doctor, mine!"—"Don't pass me by!" each one making his own particular appeal. In another shed were two hundred Confederate wounded. One poor fellow with a thigh amputation lying in a building with some of our own men, in answer to the question whether he wished to be removed to the shed where his own companions were, said, "We are all of one family now; these are my brothers as much as yours; let me stay where I am," while I could see under his head a little Testament which he had been reading, having the new revelation of that wider fellowship which, I felt, he was so soon to realize in another world.

As soon as the railroad connection was restored with City Point, the trains were taxed to their capacity in the transfer of the wounded, and in three or four weeks the emergencies of this last campaign of the war were over.

While all this was going on and we were in the midst of these absorbing cares, the campaign was drawing to a close. Rumors of the surrender of General Lee had reached us, but the first visible evidence of the great victory was the wonderful sight of the forty captured battle

flags which came swinging into line in the advance of Sheridan's cavalry, in front of Dr. Dalton's headquarters. The great leader himself was mounted on the powerful horse that carried him to victory at Winchester. As he appeared, every cap was thrown into the air. Resounding cheers, a great roar of welcome, greeted him as he threw himself from his saddle and was surrounded by his troopers. The veterans stacked their captured banners, which, torn and in rags, were the emblems of our victory. The headquarters tent which the writer shared with the Medical Director was Sheridan's headquarters also, and it was a never-to-be-forgotten moment for all of us,—the Confederate standards lowered and drooping, and never again to feel the breeze!

Then later in the day came Grant himself, the unconquerable, with his staff and the corps commanders of the army, Humphreys, Wright, Parke, and Ord, dismounting at our poor Burkesville station, where there was hardly standing room among the wounded lying there. They had ridden hard and far that day from Appomattox Court House, thirty-five miles distant, encased in mud, but protected by their rubber garments from the persistent rains. Grant stood impassive and silent, taking little notice of the soldiers and others about him, who were regarding him with wondering interest, as they saw their great leader at the height of his achievements. The dignity and quietness of this remarkable group of men was in strange contrast to the tumultuous enthusiasm and gratitude of the nation then finding expression both within and without the army. It was one of the epochs of history, and these men who were its heroes were absolutely without sign of personal triumph. They

appeared to be simply a group of tired men, eager to get back, as if returning from an ordinary inspection of the army, yet the whole world was ringing with their achievement.

The broken railroad connection with City Point having been restored, the horses of the officers were loaded on the train, and within an hour these great leaders were on their way back to the base of the army on the banks of the James. Robert Lincoln, the son of the President, then on Grant's staff, with whom we talked, in speaking of the campaign said: "This is the tenth day since we left City Point. It exactly fulfils General Grant's plans, for, on giving to the staff commissary the orders for the headquarters rations, he simply said, 'Ten days' rations. We shall be back here in ten days.'" It was a wonderful fulfilment of the prophecy of that great campaign.

Then followed too quickly the overwhelming tragedy of the death of Lincoln, struck down all unconscious of his fate, in the moment of his triumph, by the bullet of the assassin, who stood lurking behind him. An unknown voice at my tent in the dead of night announced the assassination. Stumbling up from profound sleep, I groped my way to the station, where the news announcing the catastrophe was then passing over the wires to General Meade's headquarters. If the nation was stunned, how must it have fared with the army which had faced death in a hundred battles, through four years of war, fighting on to the end for their country? Every man grasped his musket, ready for any duty. Should it be a war of extermination? That was the first great passionate cry. But no, there were to be no reprisals. That was Lincoln's way. Flags drooped from half-staff,

drums muffled, dirges in the air in the place of martial music, and the measured booming of the guns were all emblems of the common grief. Men spoke low and trod softly, for fears were in the way. The golden bowl was broken, and the good President lay dead,—a sacrifice for his country.

It was through such experiences as these that Mr. Fay and those who were with him moved about their sad work over these desolate fields, through these long, windowless freight houses and the station platforms, dressing wounds, stimulating those whose strength was gone, and giving good cheer to men who had borne the burden of the battle and had shed their blood for their country. We could not do too much for those who had done so much for us, and so we worked on over this great track of war till every man was gathered in and all had been transferred to the wards in hospitals where every healing ministry was provided for them.

The last weeks of Mr. Fay's hospital experience were spent at Petersburg in the quiet, comfortable tents and barracks of the Fair Grounds. Peace had come, and here were the remnants of those who were to need his care. In the gardens of the city, flowers were blooming in tropical luxuriance, and the wards of the hospital were fragrant with them. The quiet of these days was like an oasis in the desert of suffering through which he had passed, and there are many cases of interest of which we have the notes. With one of these stories the record will close.

A boy of seventeen, a conscript in the Confederate army, was dying. He was the only son of a poor minister in one of the small settlements on the Southside

railroad, not far from Petersburg, and was seized during one of the last months of the war, while working on his father's farm, hurried to Richmond, and placed in the ranks of the army. He had grown up on the farm, an average country lad, doing his work, knowing nothing of the world or its base ways. His home was the parsonage of a poor parish with its narrow outlook and its stern theology. He had been brought up to feel that there was no hope for any human soul save through conversion and the blood of Christ; and here he was now, understanding nothing of these things, on this poor hospital bed, facing the end. The shell had grazed the spinal column, and had paralyzed the lower part of his body. Lockjaw had set in, and we saw that he was doomed. He opened his eyes, and said: "I am afraid to die. I have put off my repentance till it is too late, and I know God will not receive me." This was his one thought, his one agony. What could he do, how be converted? How was he to get the blood of Christ? What did it all mean, and why was he thus doomed? The long hours of the day were given up to him. All the resources of encouragement and consolation which these friends could offer him from Scripture or from their own hearts were freely given. God was not an angry God, but his Father. He was not doomed. Every promise and every hope gave assurance that this was so. After a long time spent in an effort to quiet his mind and to brighten his last hours, spiritual things became more real, the meaning of life and the life beyond became more clear, and, when these realities took possession of him, he became peaceful and trustful to the end. A letter was sent to his father, and it was a sad sight to see this poor, bent, gray-haired man sitting

by the hour by the bedside of his boy. We left them together, the son so happy now, the father so thankful that even this boon had been vouchsafed him, and both knit together in this last communion and companionship of their lives. So the night passed, and in the morning he bore the body of his son back to his stricken and childless home.

And so the story of Mr. Fay's army life is brought to a close. With the return of peace came the home welcome to the sick and wounded men. Ward after ward was vacated, hospital after hospital was given up, until the dismantled barracks were all that were left of the scene of these exhausting labors; and even these visible remnants of the war soon passed from sight. But the memories of these years lived on and yielded their rich rewards. Mr. Fay had learned in the army the joy of service, the greatest lesson of all, and this was his best possession. His whole nature was enriched. The more he gave, the more he had to give: he had won by service that which the world cannot give and cannot take away,—the gentle heart, the quiet mind, and a soul at one with the Eternal.

> "There is a jewel that no Indian mine
> Can buy, no chemic art can counterfeit.
> It makes men rich in greatest poverty;
> Makes water wine, turns wooden cups to gold,
> The homely whistle to sweet music's strain,—
> This much-in-little, all-in-naught, content."

THE WHITE AND THE RED CROSS.

Almost simultaneously with the preparation of these war papers there arose the interesting question of the connection of the Red Cross of international fame with the United States Sanitary Commission, and a brief chapter will be devoted to a statement of that connection.

The first suggestion of it was made by Mr. Anson M. Sperry, who succeeded Mr. Fay when he retired from the Auxiliary Relief Corps, and, the facts being presented to the Red Cross office in Washington, Major-General George W. Davis, chairman of the Central Committee, in two valuable monographs* has traced the origin and development of both these organizations, and has shown in graphic narration the connection between them.

He has established historically the priority of the great American prototype of the Red Cross, and has made it clear that the evidence of the achievements of the United States Sanitary Commission and the adjustment of its operations on a colossal scale to the exigencies of war that were presented to the Congress of Geneva in 1864 made that congress a success, and that without that evidence it would have probably been a failure, and all the efforts of M. Henri Dunant to establish the Red Cross might have been unavailing.

This connection having been established, it is proper

* In the *American Red Cross Bulletin* for April, 1910, and in the *American Journal of International Law and Supplement* of July, 1910.

to recall from the preceding narrative (see pages 93–96) Mr. Fay's relation to it.

The Auxiliary Relief Corps which he organized in 1863–1864 and led into Grant's campaign in Virginia in the spring of 1864 was the consummation of his own independent work in the army and of his personal ministry to the wounded during the first three years of the war. As these years went on, with closer observation of the need of adequate organization for such a service, with deepened sympathy for individual suffering, with the consciousness of the inadequacy of his own personal means to so great an end and of individual helplessness in the presence of the tragedies of the battlefield, there was no alternative for him but to see that organization was provided to meet them. He turned to the Sanitary Commission. It responded with large resources, with an extraordinary grant of power to him in perfecting the organization, and sent him into the Wilderness campaign with a body of highly trained men equal to the emergency.

It was on these battlefields in Virginia in 1864–65 that *organized personal ministry was brought to bear for the first time in war* in the alleviations of the sufferings of tens of thousands of wounded and dying men. And it was then demonstrated for the first time that this provision could be adequately made and the service adequately performed *outside the resources of government and entirely by volunteers.*

This latter was the theoretical contention of M. Dunant at Geneva, as against the doubting judgment of his associates, at the moment it was being proved on a colossal scale in Virginia, and the credit of the demonstration is due to the United States Sanitary Commission, under the powerful personal force of Frank B. Fay.

INASMUCH
AS YE
HAVE DONE IT
UNTO ONE OF THE
LEAST OF THESE
MY BRETHREN
YE HAVE DONE
IT UNTO ME

Presented by
HON
F.B. FAY
by the members
of the
Auxiliary
OF
UNITED
SANITARY
Relief Corps
THE
STATES
COMMISSION
1864
Fredericksburg
Port Royal
White House
City Point

The American delegates at the Geneva Congress had to combat the adverse opinion of the other plenipotentiaries that such a service was possible, and this was done successfully when the proof in their possession was presented. They laid before the congress "the latest reports and most valuable publications, medical, statistical, and others, with photographs of the principal depots and stations of the Sanitary Commission, with hospital plans, photographs from life of the field relief corps with its men, wagons, horses, tents, and their arrangements in action. These life pictures, books, and practical proofs produced an effect as great as it was valuable. To many of these earnest men seeking for light, with their whole hearts, in the interest of a long-suffering humanity, it was like the sight of the promised land. They had been working in the dark, and this was the opening of a window, letting in a flood of light, and putting an end to all the doubt that had arisen in their minds," and from this moment the Geneva Congress which established the Red Cross was a success.

This covers the ground of the priority of the United States Sanitary Commission in the work of battlefield relief. But there is also an interesting connection between the silver Greek cross of that organization and the Red Cross insignia, which should be stated, as it also is a matter of history.

There was in use by the Auxiliary Relief Corps of the Sanitary Commission in the Army of the Potomac a badge, consisting of a small silver Greek cross, surrounded by an oval band of silver, with the words "U. S. Sanitary Commission" deeply and legibly engraved upon it, which was attached to the coat or cap of its members when in service. This badge carried its bearers everywhere in

the army, when on duty. It came into general use, and was as distinguishing a mark of their position in the army as were the army corps badges worn on the cap of the soldier. It was worn by the writer through Grant's campaigns of the Wilderness, Spottsylvania Court House, Cold Harbor, and Petersburg, and up to the surrender of General Lee at Appomattox Court House in 1865; and it is an interesting fact that while the International Congress was in session in Geneva in 1864, legislating for the neutrality of hospitals and ambulances in future wars, *these white cross badges were in actual use in the great conflicts in Virginia*, while their bearers were relieving the horrors of war in their ministry of comfort and healing on the field of battle. The Sanitary Commission blazed the way for the Red Cross, and made its later triumphs possible.

When Mr. Fay retired from the Sanitary Commission at the close of 1864, and its affairs were turned over to Mr. Anson M. Sperry, the Auxiliary Relief Corps presented Mr. Fay with a silver Greek cross, perfectly designed and richly mounted and inscribed, in token of the loyal affection of its members and in memory of their united service for the soldier on many fields of battle. On another page will be found a full-sized reproduction of this cross, which is now in the possession of the American National Red Cross in Washington, having been presented to that association by Mr. Harry F. Fay of Boston, son of Mr. Frank B. Fay, as the proper custodian of this valuable insignia of a kindred ser-

vice. The banners of the United States Sanitary Commission have long since been furled, and its achievements of nearly half a century ago are well-nigh forgotten. The years 1861–65 are about as far away from the youth of 1910 as the battle of Waterloo was distant from the men of that time. The memories of martial valor, the sacrifice and devotion of those years when the life of the nation trembled in the balance, are now receding like muffled drum-beats into a dim and distant past, and will soon pass away. But the literature will survive, and in that literature the stories of the United States Sanitary Commission and its achievements will have many pages of surpassing interest, which will live as long as this nation shall endure.

"Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." The spirit that moved the men of the Sanitary Commission is still alive and will continue to live. The basis of it was Love, and Love is eternal and never dies. Its inheritor in this majestic service is the Red Cross of the twentieth century, and in its enlarged domain it will continue to work its miracles. It does not wait for war to move it to great achievements. It listens to every cry of suffering everywhere. In war, in earthquake, in famine, in plague, in fire and flood, in all calamities that afflict mankind, it is present in service in the spirit of the Divine Master, whose immortal words should be inscribed on all its banners: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

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