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WALTER R. STEINER  
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BEQUEST OF  
MR. WALTER R. STEINER  
JAN. 20, 1948



## CERTIFICATES.

---

WE, the undersigned, late prisoners of War at Andersonville, Ga. Florence, S. C., and other places, do hereby certify that the work entitled "LIFE AND DEATH IN REBEL PRISONS," by Robert H. Kellogg, is a faithful and reliable account of the inhuman course of treatment adopted by the Rebel Authorities toward us; and that the description of daily prison life, with its terrible sufferings and frightful mortality is in nowise an exaggeration.

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THE MIDNIGHT STORM: OUR MISERABLE LODGINGS.—PAGES 196-218

# LIFE AND DEATH

IN

# REBEL PRISONS:

GIVING A COMPLETE

HISTORY OF THE INHUMAN AND BARBAROUS TREATMENT  
OF OUR BRAVE SOLDIERS BY REBEL AUTHORITIES,  
INFLECTING TERRIBLE SUFFERING AND FRIGHT-  
FUL MORTALITY, PRINCIPALLY AT  
ANDERSONVILLE, GA., AND FLORENCE, S. C.,

DESCRIBING

PLANS OF ESCAPE, ARRIVAL OF PRISONERS, WITH NUMEROUS AND  
VARIED INCIDENTS AND ANECDOTES OF PRISON LIFE.

BY

ROBERT H. KELLOGG,  
Sergeant-Major 16th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers.

PREPARED FROM HIS DAILY JOURNAL.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

AS FULL SKETCHES OF OTHER PRISONS AS CAN BE GIVEN WITHOUT  
REPETITION OF THE ABOVE, BY PARTIES WHO HAVE  
BEEN CONFINED THEREIN.

‘ We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.’

ILLUSTRATED.—SOLD BY AGENTS ONLY.

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TO THE  
WIDOWS, CHILDREN, FATHERS, MOTHERS, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,  
OF THE THOUSANDS OF BRAVE MEN  
WHO HAVE LEFT THEIR HOMES IN THE MORNING OF LIFE;  
SUNDERED FAMILY AND SOCIAL TIES;  
ABANDONED CHERISHED ENTERPRISES AND BUSINESS SCHEMES,  
FOR THE PURPOSE OF  
MAINTAINING THE LAWS OF FREEDOM INVIOULATE,  
AND IN THE FAITHFUL PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTY,  
HAVE BEEN CAPTURED BY THE ENEMY,  
AND GONE DOWN  
TO UNTIMELY GRAVES THROUGH UNPARALLELED SUFFERINGS,  
IS THIS VOLUME MOST RESPECTFULLY  
DEDICATED.

---

"THEY SLEEP IN SECRET,—BUT THEIR SOD  
UNKNOWN TO MAN, IS MARK'D BY GOD!"

**SACRED**

to

the memory of the thousands of our brave soldiers who have sacrificed themselves upon the altar of their country, in defence of her laws and institutions; her liberties and rights. With the courage and ardor of Patriots; with the enthusiasm of loyal subjects under a good Government; with the intelligence and zeal of Union-loving citizens, and an unselfish devotion to the lofty principles of truth and justice, and an eye upon the basis of a lasting peace, they went forth pledging "their lives and sacred honor," in maintenance of the glorious cause. Many have languished and died in Prisons, and thus sleep the noble youth of our country; the pride of the land; the heroic sons of our worthy sires, and the honored brave of our Spartan-likemothers. They have fallen. Like autumn leaves at touch of frost, they have been swept to the earth, where they lie in undistinguished piles. The hearts of the people shall be their tombs, but marble and granite should be lifted high, as the testimonial of grateful mankind for the deeds they have done, and the radiant glory with which they have crowned the nation

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## PREFACE.

NO CHAPTER in the history of our unhappy civil war, is so well calculated to enlist the sympathies of the people, as the one enumerating the sorrows of our brave soldiers who have been so unfortunate as to fall into the hands of the enemy, as prisoners of war.

The multiplied woes of the battle-field; the sufferings of the sick and wounded in Hospitals which our own Government has provided, are almost the enjoyments of Paradise, in comparison with the fearful and prolonged agonies of Prisoners in *Rebel Stockades*.

Sad and mournful as it seems in the former case, there are mitigating circumstances which tend to soothe the feelings as we contemplate them. Their sufferings are comparatively short, and during the season of their continuance they are surrounded by those who are assiduous in effort to provide comfort and relief. Agents of the various humane societies can reach them and do them good; but in the latter case, they have passed the line which bars them from all these things.

We are even forced to believe, by the treatment to which they have been subjected by their captors, that it was their deliberate intention to destroy them, and that too in the most aggravated manner. They have allowed them to become so reduced in clothing as to have scarcely rags for a covering; they have condemned them to hunger and thirst, pain and weariness, affliction and misery in every conceivable form, so that the helpless beings have looked upon the approach of the King of Terrors as the arrival of a welcome messenger that had come to bring them a happy release.

When we consider these things, and our interest in, and relation to the *cause* which led them to peril their lives in this way, we can but feel that the public at large have a deep concern in these recitals.

In the preparation of the present volume, we have had an eye, not so much to a literary production, as to a simple, truthful story of prison

life; one which the survivors thereof should recognize as just, and the people of the country could accept as reliable and honest.

It is no place for brilliant fiction and exciting romance. These have been scrupulously avoided, but nevertheless, there are things which are as strange as the former and stirring as the latter.

If there are things which seem incredible, it is to be borne in mind that hitherto we have had but slight knowledge of what is meant to be a prisoner at the far South, and that these things come to us almost as new revelations.

Not an incident has been given but what can be confirmed on good authority; no coloring has been given to anything but what known facts would justify.

The author has gone fully into detail of every-day life at Andersonville, as here was the spot where the climax of rebel barbarity was reached.

It was the original design to have adopted a similar plan with reference to some other prominent Prisons, but on consultation with different parties who had been discharged from these various points, it was found to be substantially the same, and would therefore be only repetition.

The short sketches which we give of these, will enable the public to form a correct idea of the general system of treatment applied by the rebels to our soldiers who fall into their hands as prisoners.

The spirited and striking illustrations which were obtained expressly for these pages; the plans of prisons, &c., &c., are executed in a credible style, and form an attractive feature of the whole.

As the author had only a short furlough of thirty days, it became necessary to obtain a person accustomed to such work to prepare the manuscript for the press, and attend to the reading of the proof. In changing the style of the journal to a running narrative, the language is often different from the original, but the facts are strictly observed.

PUBLISHER.

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## THE PRINCIPAL REBEL PRISONS AND WHERE LOCATED.

Andersonville, Sumpter County, Ga., known south as Camp Sumter.

Millen, Burke County, Ga., " " Camp Lawton.

Columbia, Lexington County, S. C., " " Camp Sorghum.

Florence, Darlington County, S. C.

Tyler, Smith County, Texas, " " Camp Ford.

Salisbury, Rowan County, N. C.

Cahawba, Dallas County, Ala.

Danville, Pottsylvania County, Va.

Libby, Richmond, Va.

Pemberton, Richmond, Va.

Castle Thunder, Richmond, Va.

Belle Isle, in James River, little below Richmond.

Macon and Savannah, Ga., Charleston and Blackstone, S. C., and Raleigh, N. C., have been prison posts, but are now abandoned.

In the absence of much data on the subject, we can not give any accurate account of the number of deaths in rebel prisons; yet if we give the subject a thought and go into some calculations, we may form a more correct opinion than we otherwise should. Mr. Richardson, correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, says the deaths at Salisbury, N. C., were 13 per cent. per month. Mr. Kellogg says it was 12 per cent. for the same time at Florence, S. C. The deaths were 13,000 at Andersonville. The author says nearly one-half of his regiment captured, died in about seven months. If we assume that the prisoners will average 20,000 from January 1st, 1862, to February 1st, 1865, and the deaths to be 10 per cent. per month, or 2,000, then multiply by 37 months, we have 74,000 deaths. With such clothing, shelter, food, means of keeping clean and medical attendance as the laws of health absolutely require, would the deaths have been more than one-tenth the number? if not, we have, on the above estimate, 66,600 victims of inhuman treatment. Our estimate of the number of prisoners may be too large. Richmond papers assert that 150,000 have entered Libby Prison. The per centage of deaths may be too large; but allowing the estimates to be nearly right, the rebels have killed about as many in prisons as on the battle-field—whether designedly or not we leave the reader to judge.



# LIFE IN REBEL PRISONS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### SITUATION OF PLYMOUTH.

ON the Roanoke river in North Carolina, about eight miles from the Sound, lies the town of Plymouth, a place once important on account of its highly advantageous position as a depot, through which might pass, in transportation, the products of the State.

Tar, rosin and pitch, the prominent and well-known articles of manufacture in this land of *Pines* were brought from all parts of the interior to this point as a place of shipment, and consequently it came to be more or less identified with the interests of the southern people; so that it was not strange they should make vigorous efforts to keep it in their possession, or failing in this for a time, would again renew

their attempts to wrest it from the hands of their antagonists.

Rather than its resources should be employed in enriching those they deemed their enemies, they sought its destruction by fire. It was partly saved, however, and by the force of circumstances, afterward became appropriated as the most northern outpost of the U. S. forces in the State. Thus held, it was garrisoned by four regiments of infantry, one light battery, two companies of heavy artillery, and a few cavalry, all under command of Brig. Gen. H. W. Wessels, a noble officer and a brave man. Three forts—Gray, Williams and Wessels—offered grateful protection to these men, while Compher and Coneby redoubts, and a line of connecting breast works, afforded strong ground of hope that the position of an advancing foe might, at least, be rendered somewhat uncomfortable by the peculiar greeting they might receive in consequence of these. Added to these, and designed to act in harmony with them was the naval fleet, consisting of the gunboats “Miami,” “Southfield,” “Ceres,” “Whitehead,” and “Bomb-shell,” under command of Capt.

Flusser. So far as these were concerned, they certainly presented a formidable array of weapons with which to hurl missiles of deadliest intent against those who would murderously assail the devoted band of Unionists to whom was assigned the duty of keeping the place from invasion; but these, be they never so abundant, are fruitless, without the requisite hands to work them, as the sequel with its hopeless sorrows and regrets fully proved to us.

But as familiarity with anything, even with danger, has a tendency to make that tolerable which was once highly forbidding, so while these things threw about us their friendly shadows, a feeling of comparative security took possession of our minds, and fancy revelled in safety; a state suggestive of that of the ancient worthies, who, in order to escape their persecutors, retired to the secret caves of the mountains—the strength of the hills their covert; the voiceless woods their guard; the deep-toned thunder their music; their rocky depths only illuminated as the kindly sun shed pitiful gleams by day, and the stars came out in solemn parade at night, to assure

them that the might of *Truth* should eventually conquer their foes, and let the burdened free.

But we were not suffered long to cherish the illusions of *fancy*, for we soon found ourselves in a condition to yield to the sudden impulse of stern necessity, and battle for that which was temporarily our kingdom and our crown.

#### THE ATTACK.

The morning of the 17th of April, 1864, dawned upon us in our warlike retreat in all the beauty and loveliness with which nature is wont to adorn herself at such a season of the year. It was the hallowed day of the seven;—a time when the mind of the soldier naturally reverts to other scenes and other days, when it soothes itself by the remembrance of quiet services in home sanctuaries where no sights or sounds give evidence of war, except it be of that moral conflict which the individual is called upon to wage silently with the hosts unseen. Guard-mounting was witnessed as usual, and at the roll-call sixteen hundred men were reported for duty. All



necessary positions being occupied, the rest were at liberty to follow their inclinations, and as mine sent out their sweet invitations to repair to the *sacred temple*, I obeyed, and listened to a sermon from the Rev. Mr. B——, Chaplain of the 101st Pennsylvania Volunteers, in the morning, and in the afternoon went to Grace Church, one of those places still left open to lure the feet of the Christian warrior, where he may calmly consider the prospect of ultimate victory and success in the holiest warfare in which man can engage; —a consideration always attended by that other thought, that second to this only is the national strife in which his whole energies are enlisted, and which he is bound by every principle of honor and justice to maintain, until the coveted issue shall make it no longer a necessity.

Just at the close of the services, and shortly before the hour for Dress Parade, while yet the impressions of the day were thick about us, the cavalry pickets came dashing into town, having been driven in by the rebels. Artillery and cavalry were immediately sent out

to ascertain the strength of the enemy, but they soon returned, reporting a short engagement with a superior number, in which one of their men were killed, and a Lieutenant badly wounded. It soon became manifest that we were to be fearfully pressed, as three brigades of infantry were bearing down upon us, together with a heavy siege train of artillery, manned by a revengeful foe who were eager to take possession of the town, and send us to homes they had provided in mercy not particularly tender. With us were the 85th N. Y., commanded by Fardella, an Italian officer, the 101st P. V., together with the 103d of the same State, under Col. Lehman; the 24th N. Y. Independent Battery, under the direction of Capt. Cady; two companies Mass. heavy artillery, Capt. Sampson, and a slight force of the 12th N. Y. cavalry.

An attack was made upon Fort Gray, a mile or so above the town on the river, and as the shot and shell came swiftly down to us upon their death-fraught errands, our quickened apprehensions were not slow in discovering the propriety of using all available means

for safety. One of the latter striking near the tent of Capt. Morse, reminded us of the thought, that, especially in war,

There is but a step 'tween life and death,  
One moment life's pulses play, the next, soul is gone with the breath.

In anticipation of the battle the women and children of the town were placed on board the steamer "Massasoit," bound for Roanoke Island, among which were the wives of loyal North Carolinians; of men whose attachment to the Union cause could not be broken by threats; whose devotion to the government whose fostering care they had long enjoyed, nothing could quench, and therefore they had enrolled themselves as among the truest soldiers of the Federal cause when the crisis appeared, and there was no alternative but to do or die;—to be free or ruled with despotic power. To this place, whither these were sent as a place of refuge, Co. H of our own regiment, the 16th Ct., had gone in the morning, for the purpose of relieving some other troops, and were thus fortunate enough to escape the attack, the while, supposing we were resting under the silent wing of

peace, when war's chosen arrows were flying thick and fast about us.

The morning following this first outbreak we were aroused from our slumbers before sunrise by the roar of cannon, and the disturbance occasioned; the half-conscious state of the mental faculties which was speedily induced, made it seem that what was struggling for prominence was the idea that it was decided incivility on the part of the "rebs" to prompt such *early rising*. But what was wanting in dimness of vision for a moment was soon made up in the *keenness* which we felt inclined to exercise in the survey of things about us. Everything began to look dark, and signs were fearfully ominous of what was approaching. About 7 o'clock, Capt. Burke came in from the skirmish line in front, wounded in the shoulder. Firing was heard at intervals through the day, but no general advance until nearly dark, when the enemy came pouring in from the woods in great numbers, and charged upon our line of skirmishers with their characteristic *yell*.

The *few*, of course having no chance before

the *many*, they retired within the fortifications, when the exultant foe rapidly wheeled a battery into position, and under its destructive influence our beautiful camp was soon completely riddled, and Fort Williams pretty effectually silenced.

At this juncture, Lt. Col. Burnham ordered the Band to the breast-works, and bade them strike up some national airs, and though they might not have been particularly edifying to the gray-robed legions without, the spirit-stirring strains were in no wise lost upon the hearts of our own boys. Brave hearts became braver, and if the patriotism of any waxed cold, and the courage of any faltered, they here grew warmer and stronger until pride of country had touched the will, and an indomitable principle had been kindled that virtually declared the man a hero until death. It was with something of this new-imparted energy that our scanty forces were able, by the use of means still in their possession, to silence their opposers, and make it convenient for them to retreat; but supposing they would speedily rally and come down upon us with

new strength and ardor, we continued on the watch, relaxing not through the whole night. Snatching a few moments in the interval of quiet, I ran over to my tent,—a place, strange as it may seem, around which some fond associations clustered, and you, ye soldier-reader, can alone tell how sadly I felt when I saw rude marks that bore unequivocal testimony that it had been visited by one of those unsought and unwelcome bodies—a shell. Yes! in my absence it had found both *ingress* and *egress*, but as there is never any thing so dark but what there is light not far off, either behind or above it, so I consoled myself with the reflection that it had its way *alone*, and I was not there for its entertainment.

Notwithstanding the temporary success, the third day after the attack had things in a bad plight for us. The “rebs” had come into possession of Fort Wessels, and their iron-clad ram, the “Albemarle,” had found its way down the river, passing our batteries without being molested, sunk the “Southfield” and driven off the rest of the navy. Every hour our prospect grew darker and our hopes weaker, for

the men were completely exhausted by continual duty through the day, and as constant watching by night. Our garrison was so small that all hands were required at the breast-works, and even then, it was altogether insufficient for the work. Intense were our longings for reinforcements, but the threatening "Albemarle" kept any from coming to our relief, and we began seriously to think of a march to Richmond, Va., and the registry of our names at her famous Libby Hotel. Not particularly inclined to take such a journey, we resolved to wait until there was no further hope, and at half past one we were furnished with intrenching tools and told to work for our lives in building bombproofs, traverses, &c., and in a comparatively short time we were sheltered from the fire of the enemy, which was coming into our rear from their engine of death upon the river. Towards evening, having posted a line of pickets and reserve, I went over to my tent, hoping to gain a moment's slumber, but the increased cannonading having by no means a *soothing* effect, I returned again to the breast-works, where many a weary, way-

worn comrade was to watch through the night, although "*tired nature*" pleadingly called for some "*sweet restorer.*" Long before daybreak the enemy, under cover of the cannon's roar, advanced up the Columbia road and with wild cheers and yells charged upon the two redoubts which formed our protection upon the east side of the town. After a short, but bloody and decisive conflict they accomplished their object, and flushed with their success they came down through the camp of the 101st P. V., upon our regiment, evidently thinking there could be no barrier to whatever they should attempt to do; but their bravery was met by a corresponding principle on the part of our boys, and they were repulsed with great loss to them, yet a slight advantage could do but little for us at this time, for the rebels had possession of Fort Wessels, the two redoubts on the Columbia road, and the entire river side of the village. From this position they were pouring a terrible fire into our rear. Six very fine horses on a caisson near me were shot down in quick succession, and many of our men were sadly



wounded. At this time two or three officers came in, bearing a flag of truce, with a demand from Gen. Hoke for the surrender of the town and its garrison. After a short consultation the demand was refused by our General, and the fight went on, though with abated vigor on our part, as we were thoroughly exhausted by our previous labors. The refusal, however, soon brought them down in force upon us, leaving no alternative but to surrender, although it was done with no willing grace, yet it could but be attended with the consciousness that we had tried the virtue of resistance to the utmost.

#### THE CAPTURE.

We were at once marched out of town to their reserve picket force, on the Washington road, where we remained for the night, being allowed to retain our blankets, overcoats, and indeed all that we had with us, excepting, of course, our arms and equipments. I saw but one instance of robbery at the beginning, and that was by an officer, evidently in a state of intoxication. Riding up to one of our boys, he drew his sword and demanded his watch,

using threatening and insulting language, and declaring he would split open his head if he refused. Of course, there was no way but to yield.

Here we wrote hasty letters to our friends, which we hoped by some good fortune to send to them, on the route, or at least at the end of our march,—

For none will e'er forget his friends,  
If his heart be true and tender ;  
Though adverse gales blow swift and long,  
Love's ties we'll still remember.

On the morning of the 21st we awoke to new experiences. Instead of the calls to which we had been wont to listen, and the labor we had been accustomed to perform, we were but passive beings, subject to the will of a conqueror. In the early part of the day, rations were issued to us for four days, consisting of twenty-five hard crackers, and about two pounds of raw salt pork each. They were from the provisions taken with the town, and consequently were of good quality, although we did not particularly relish taking from their hands what, a few hours previously we had counted our own, but we remembered that

prisoners, like "*beggars, mus'nt be choosers,*" and that there was no way but to succumb as cheerfully as circumstances would allow. Our own regiment was over four hundred strong, and the whole number captured at the surrender, 2,197, so that we were quite a company, doomed to the miseries of *rebeldom*.

About noon we took up our line of march for the interior of Secessia, and kept on until nine in the evening, making a distance of seventeen miles, having passed through the villages of Foster's Mills and Jamesville, both of which were visited by our troops some time before under Maj. Gen. Foster, when he made his rade from Newbern to Whitehall and Kinston. Many white, ghost-like chimneys were still standing to mark the former abodes of the chivalry. At night our stopping place was in a corn-field by the road-side and our bed the places between the furrows, but lying on the cold, bare ground was no new experience for us, for we had often been dependent upon mother earth for a resting place, and the time and circumstances had also been when we had been more willing to "wrap the drapery of her couch"

about us, and we could have lain down to "*pleasant dreams*." Now, with wet, cold feet, gained by fording many a creek through the day, our situation was not very enviable, and it is not strange if visions of *downy beds* came floating over the minds of some on that eventful night.

The 35th N. C. constituted our guard, and we can say of them what can not be said of all the Southern troops, that they were a gentlemanly set of fellows, and treated the Northern soldier with some consideration. To have seen us through the day one would have supposed that we were the captors and they the prisoners, for as we were "*marching along*" we sung that song which usually falls with such strange significance on the ears of sensitive Southerners—

"John Brown's body lies mouldering in the grave," &c.,

Crowds of women and children lined the roadside, apparently eager to get even a glimpse of the "Yankees," of whom they had heard such fearful things, but we marked what seemed to us a look of surprise, as they surveyed what was unquestionably a set of decent, respectable looking fellows.

The next day we marched, with very little rest, until half past one, when we arrived at Williamston, N. C. Here we were conducted to a large pine grove by the road-side, and allowed to rest quite a little time. As before, a large concourse of women and children gathered to witness the strange sight, and in view of it find myself recording a paragraph like this—"Wonder what they think of us! I don't care what the ugly looking ones think, especially those who chew snuff, but I do hope the good looking ones don't hate us."

The village post-master came about among us, promising to mail letters for us, so we soon loaded him down with short letters, containing tidings of our fate to the dear ones at home, which we ardently hoped might reach them to relieve them of anxiety, or, at least, of suspense, and dispel the uncertainty which would otherwise exist to torture them.

After our short but grateful rest, we started again, marching until sunset, when we halted and went into camp in a grass field, and as we filed in, each man helped himself to a rail, so that the entire fence was soon appropriated

as fuel for our evening fires. Our guards made no objection to it, but on the whole seemed to think it quite a good joke on our part. Water was plenty by the road-side, and after making some "*crust coffee*," and eating some hard-tack and raw pork, we spread our blankets upon the ground and slept peacefully and well, fearing no very ill treatment from men who had showed so much consideration as to pitch a tent for the accommodation of one poor sick sufferer. After this night, our early morning ablutions were performed at a little brook, this followed by a scanty breakfast, and we fell in with the already moving column, feeling in excellent condition, physically, at least. At nine o'clock we reached Hamilton, and were introduced into the yard of a man who had once taken the oath of allegiance to Uncle Sam, but who was now very glad of the opportunity to bake poor corn-bread, or "*pone*," as the southerners say, and sell it to us for \$5.00 a loaf. At this place we bade adieu to our N. C. guards, with some regret, for they had treated us well, and we had yet to learn the spirit of those who were to take their places.

Nevertheless, our little squad of Co. A boys was bound to make the best of it, and selecting a pleasant spot, we put our things upon the ground in the order in which we expected to sleep, and then resorted to various expedients for amusement. There was "*right smart* of trading" went on between our boys and the Johnnies, some of the trades causing considerable merriment.

The 24th was the Sabbath, and what strange vicissitudes one short week had wrought for us. In not many things could we say it was a blessed contrast. Then we were free, now we were prisoners;—then we had plenty of food and comfortable shelter, now we had neither, or at least but little to satisfy our hunger. My friend, Sam B——, and myself, managed to make out what we called a breakfast, with the few scraps that we had left of our four days' rations, but the change was perhaps quite as keenly felt in the blighting of hopes as in anything. Plymouth was lost. We had hoped to save it for the Union side, but it was gone, and mourning was useless. It only remained for us to travel on until our

foes were satisfied. Not even the hours of holy time could be our own, but on, and still on, was the watchword. During the forepart of the day the people of the surrounding country gathered about us, it being their day for visiting and recreation. About noon we were to start for Tarboro, a distance of twenty-two miles, but a little before the time came some of the officers and men formed a group and sang "Home, sweet home," "Sweet hour of Prayer," and many other beautiful hymns, richly suggestive of homes on earth, and home in heaven. Our captors evidently thought it a strange and novel scene.

After forming our line in the road, ready for marching, the ranks were searched for deserters from the rebel army, a number of whom were detected and taken away. They had entered our service a long time before and were captured with us. We never knew their fate, but suppose them to have been shot. After this inspection we pursued the way our guards were treading, making twelve miles before nightfall, in season to seek the hospitality of pine woods near by. It rained some,



but making a sort of tent of our blankets, we concluded to let heaven and earth take care of us as best they could.

An easy march of ten miles brought us, on the morrow's noon, to the place of our immediate destination. The camp assigned us here was by a river-side, near the bridge. We were counted as we proceeded to pass through an immense crowd, of both sexes and all classes, who seemed to have congregated for no other purpose but to examine and criticise us, *poor unfortunates*.

Our boys were nearly starved, and before rations could be procured they bartered away clothing, gold rings and pens, in short, whatever they had, for a bit of something to eat. Five dollars in Confederate money would buy a piece of corn bread, baked with little or no salt, of the size of a man's hand, and for a small piece of pie I gave the last "greenback" dollar I had in the world. The citizens were perfect extortioners and robbers, but most of them so ignorant they could easily be imposed upon, and in consequence, our boys played some very sharp tricks upon them.

Sometime before the capture of Plymouth, our forces made a raid into Elizabeth City, and some of the men breaking into the *Farmers' Bank* at that place, appropriated to themselves a large number of unsigned certificates of deposit. These were made to serve us a good turn in our extremity. They were now filled out with any names that came convenient, and passed with the greatest readiness as good, sound money.

One man had a watch chain, made of *brass*, made in imitation of Uncle Sam's gold dollars, linked together, and after a brightening process, to make it resemble as nearly as possible the valuable coin, it brought in the fortunate possessor a small fortune in Confederate money.

The distribution of rations soon claimed our attention to the exclusion of everything else, as the "*inner man*" was sadly in need of refreshment.

These consisted of a cup of meal, the same quantity of black peas, and a small piece of bacon for each man. Kettles and wood were supplied to us, and making lively use of these,

we soon had something to eat once more, after which we retired to rest as happy as men could be in such a condition.

“*True happiness*,” says Addison, “is of a retired nature,” and so far we might have realized the idea of the man of letters, but we felt not quite like saying “*Celestial happiness*,” for many felt their *repose* would be slightly more “*divine*,” could they pillow their heads upon other than Confederate soil.

Two-thirds of the prisoners were sent to Goldsborough, N. C., the next day, on their way, as it was said, to Charleston. Each man's name, rank and regiment, was taken as he filed out of the guarded enclosure, consequently they made slow progress in the work, and our regiment, from its position, could not come in with those who were to leave that day. Employment diverts the mind, so we betook ourselves to the cooking of our rations, which were more justly distributed than on the day before, and also to make preparation, as best we could, for the satisfaction of hunger while on the journey we supposed would be taken on the morrow.

How far back in the *past* then seemed our day of New England comforts, but the present claimed our energies, and we thought ourselves in a fair way to become somewhat skilled in the art of making corn-dodgers, especially if we should abide long in *Southern society*. Trading was brisk as ever through that day, although at one time the Confederate soldiers were forbidden by their officers from taking any more "greenbacks," as there was a law making it a crime for a Southerner to possess or attempt to pass them; but in spite of the order they were still glad to take them when they could do it without fear of detection. We were told by the men in authority that we would probably leave at noon, but noon came, and the shades of evening gathered about us also, without any signs of leaving, so that there remained nothing for us but to compose ourselves to the idea of staying another night upon our miserable camping ground. To add to our discomfort, the *bacon* dispensed was not of the *sweetest* variety, but we were *prisoners*, and must not be expected to grumble at any bad treatment, but we

knew *memory* would be faithful to her trust in its remembrance, and the feeling of *retaliation* excited, we felt quite sure would find expression if any future time allowed the opportunity. During the day saw a copy of the Richmond Examiner, giving an account of our capture and the taking of the town, in a manner not very flattering to us, but the sadness occasioned was somewhat overborne by the intelligence almost simultaneously received, that the rebels had been foiled in their attack upon Newbern, and their iron-clad ram "the Neuse," blown up.

The indolence and monotony which characterized these days was unpleasant in the extreme. Sometimes we found little variety in spicy debates with rebel officers, upon the war and slavery. They seemed to be very fond of arguing with us, although our boys almost invariably got the better of them.

For a little time small squads were allowed to go out for wood, under guard, and I was fortunate enough to belong to one of these parties, and right glad was I to get away from our filthy surroundings, and breathe the pure,

fresh air of heaven, as it swept through the woods. Its influence was really exhilarating to *spirit* as well as body. Coupled with this was the information that we might be exchanged in a few days, and altogether hope became quite buoyant. Some cars appeared in our vicinity, and it began to look a little like departure. The possibility of its truth was inspiring, although we knew not what change would bring to us, but of one thing we were certain, that a prisoner's life in the South had more of unpleasant reality than romance. That night it was very cold, and with but one blanket between two, it was impossible to keep comfortably warm, but hearts were animated by the thought of our

#### DEPARTURE FROM TARBORO.

About seven o'clock in the morning, it now being the 29th, the welcome order came, "*get ready to leave*," but, as usual, our regiment was the last to be on the way. The street through which we passed on our march to the depot was very beautiful, and we all agreed it was the prettiest place we had seen in the South. It is the county seat of Edgecomb County,

situated upon the banks of the Tar river, and must have been a place of some importance before the war. It is in railroad connection with the South by a short branch road which strikes the Weldon road at a little place called Rocky Mount.

The train left at 10 o'clock, and we had a fair ride until night, when we became so weary we longed for a little sleep;—to lose ourselves in grateful unconsciousness for a little while, but we found there was not room for us all even to sit down, much less to place our bodies in such a position as to experience anything like rest, for there were forty-seven prisoners and five or six guards crowded into a box car, and a small one at that. Soon after dark the doors were shut by order of the officer of the guard,—Capt. Johnson, of the 28th Georgia, and we passed a most miserable night, nearly smothered, and pressed almost out of all shape.

We passed Pikeville, and some other places of little note, on the way to Goldsborough. Here we stopped some time, and drew rations for the next twenty-four hours, receiving three

small hard crackers and a little scrap of bacon to subsist on for that time. It was very evident our enemies did not intend we should suffer from being over fed.

At midnight we reached Wilmington, where the guard availed themselves of the opportunity to do something for their own comfort. They alighted, kindled fires, and had a good time all to themselves, while we, poor creatures, were obliged to stay in our wretched car until morning. Soon after sunrise we were ordered from our miserable confinement and marched down to the dock, where a ferry-boat was in waiting to convey us to the opposite side. We landed on a large lumber dock, where we made a stay of several hours, during which time we received our allowance for twenty-four hours more; this time obtaining a small loaf of sour wheat bread, no larger than a man's fist, and some bacon that smelled so badly that, hungry as we were, we left it upon the ground untouched. "Is there any excuse for this treatment here under the very shadow of one of the wealthiest cities of the South?" was the question we asked ourselves,



and the reply dictated by reason was, "*there can not be*; it is equally inexcusable and inhuman."

Three large blockade runners were lying at the docks on the Wilmington side; very sharp, rakish looking steamers, painted grayish white, in order not to be seen at a distance when at sea. While gazing at them we suddenly heard heavy and rapid firing in the distance, the intent of which was soon ascertained in the return of a handsome steamer with the Confederate flag floating in the breeze, it having been repulsed in an attempt to run out at the mouth of the river.

A short time before our arrival the place had suffered from an immense fire. Remains of buildings and docks were still smoking and burning. One of the prisoners who went through in advance of us, placed a lighted pipe in a bale of cotton, and before it was discovered the fire had made too much progress to be easily arrested. The loss was estimated to have been about six millions of dollars, one million of which belonged to the Confederate government.

Our companionship with lumber was broken by orders to embark for Charleston. Our Asthmatic locomotive had a great time in climbing a steep grade near the city, but after an untold amount of whistling and screaming it succeeded in pulling us up and sending us away on our journey. We passed several trains loaded with troops, either on their way to Lee's army or to Newbern.

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## CHAPTER II.

### ARRIVAL IN CHARLESTON.

The first of May in the land of our birth is generally considered, especially by the young, as a day to be honored above many others, as it is the harbinger of glad summer days to come, but all former customs with us seemed to have been reversed, and the great question on its anniversary under a Southern sky, was, how to make even existence itself, not *comfortable*, but simply tolerable.

In the forenoon of the day we were transferred to another train, and another guard of Georgia troops placed over us. We were put upon platform cars, a position in which to enjoy fresh air, besides affording an opportunity to take a comprehensive survey of the scenery as we passed along. As we entered the city, it was very fine. Handsome live oak trees lifted their venerable heads, fringed with gray moss; flowers with varied hue were in full blossom, and princely residences were scattered here and there, giving an air of pleasantness to the whole, and but for the peculiar associations connected with the circumstance of our being there just then, we might have enjoyed a stroll about some of the inviting paths. In some of the gardens they were picking green peas, while at home we supposed them scarcely planted. It was the Sabbath, and great crowds of people thronged the street corners to stare at the "Plymouth Pilgrims," as the city papers sarcastically called us. Among them were many Union people whose unmistakable expressions of sympathy did us much good, for we had

expected nothing but taunts and insults, especially in this "*hot-bed of secession.*"

One aged lady watched for an opportunity, and in a moment when the guard had their attention diverted in another direction, she came up to the side of the cars and gave us something to eat, at the same time commiserating our situation. Nowhere else in the Confederacy had we experienced anything like this, and probably its repetition would seldom, if ever, occur again. We left this city, having Savannah, in Georgia, for our next destination, and while crossing the railroad bridge we had a glimpse of Fort Sumter in the distance. It was intensely tantalizing to our spirits to be so near our forces, and yet prisoners and helpless. Our ride, notwithstanding, we acknowledged to be splendid, and we made quite good time, but just before the end of our route, we were overtaken by a rain storm which proved slightly inconvenient in our unsheltered condition.

At Savannah we changed cars for Andersonville, which place was to be our theatre of action for an indefinite time. But thirty-five

were put into a car this time, thus giving us room for the requisite expansion for comfort and a space in which to rest, which we gladly improved. We traveled one hundred miles that night upon the Georgia Central road. It is built upon strong pieces of timber, kept in very good repair, and apparently in excellent condition. Painted signs by the roadside informed us that the track was of American rails on one side, and English upon the other; it being done as a sort of test of the superiority of one over the other. They were laid in 1857.

At station No. 13 the train stopped quite a long while, and we were allowed to wash in a brook near by; to receive very good rations—so good, that we thought we should be fortunate if we could have those equally fair in our place of imprisonment. The country in this vicinity was very pleasant, much finer than anything we had yet seen in our "*pilgrimage*."

At 4, P. M. we arrived at Macon, a beautiful city, built upon high ground, and in general appearance much resembling Hartford, Ct. We

had a very good view of it as we approached it upon the cars, and had some sport in pointing out the Pearl Street Church, Touro Hall, &c. Ah! if in reality we could see the church spires of this New England city again, how happy we should be, was the thought that very naturally came into our minds, and if we had indulged in gloomy forebodings there would also have been the sad conviction that many a comrade would doubtless close his eyes upon all that was earthly, ere we should turn our feet again to the land from whence we came.

We stopped two hours at Macon, and surely "*ignorance is bliss*," for had we known the fearful sights that were shortly to meet our gaze, reluctance to proceed would have been doubly sure. The rebel officers gave us favorable descriptions of the location of the prison; speaking of it as being situated in a healthy part of the country, with a fine stream of water running through it, and as to food, assuring us that we would fare well on account of the richness of the State, it not being impoverished like many parts of the South.

At nine o'clock we were able to chronicle our

ARRIVAL AT ANDERSONVILLE,

or rather at the station, for there is no village, and the prison is nearly a mile out from this. This place, so notorious in the history of the war, is situated in Sumter Co., about sixty-five miles southwest from Macon, and fifty from the Alabama State line. We were counted as we left the cars, and then marched a short distance from the depot, where we remained all night, surrounded by a line of fires and a heavy guard. Here we heard terrible stories of small-pox being prevalent in the prison, and also about the "*dead line*," which was death to any one who should step over it, but even then we thought they might be trying to frighten us.

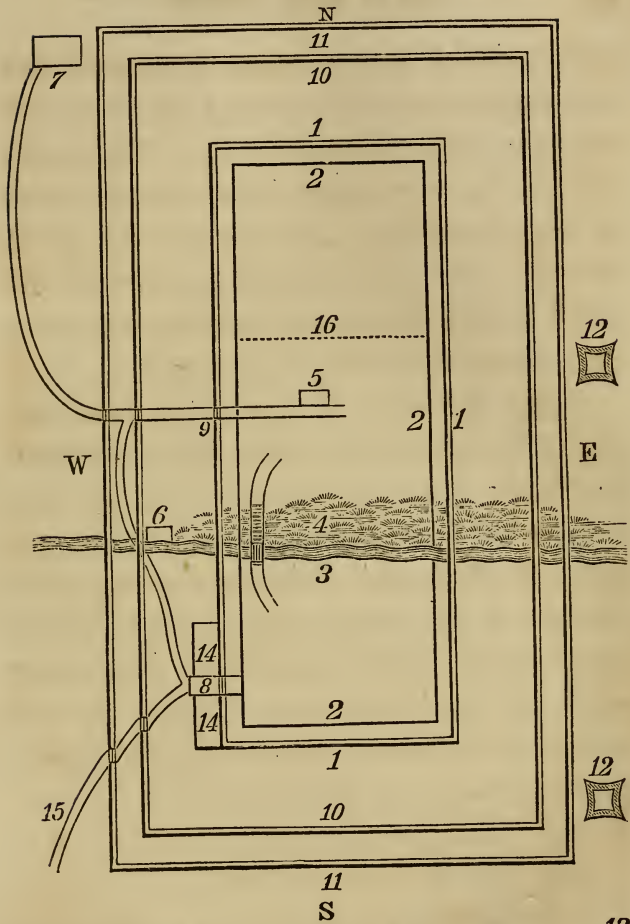
We were aroused from our slumbers the next morning at an early hour, and called to submit to the orders of a bustling officer, dressed in Captain's uniform, who did his work with a great deal of swearing and threatening, dividing us into messes of ninety men each, each mess to be in charge of a sergeant, who should

call the roll every morning, draw the rations, and receive an extra one himself for his trouble. Three "nineties" constituted a detachment, which was also in charge of a sergeant. Thus classed, and our names taken, we were marched off to the prison. As we came near it, we found it to consist of twelve or fifteen acres of ground, enclosed by a high stockade of hewed pine logs, closely guarded by numerous sentinels, who stood in elevated boxes overlooking the camp.

As we entered the place a spectacle met our eyes that almost froze our blood with horror, and made our hearts fail within us. Before us were forms that had once been active and erect;—*stalwart men*, now nothing but mere walking skeletons, covered with filth and vermin. Many of our men, in the heat and intensity of their feeling, exclaimed with earnestness, "Can this be hell?" "God protect us!" and all thought that *He* alone could bring them out alive from so terrible a place. In the center of the whole was a swamp, occupying about three or four acres of the narrowed limits, and a part of this marshy place had



# ANDERSONVILLE STOCKADE.



## EXPLANATION.

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. STOCKADE.                    | 10 & 11. OUTER STOCKADES.  |
| 2. "DEAD LINE."                 | 12. EARTHWORK FORTIFICATIONS.  |
| 3. BROOK.                       | 13. LOCATION OF HOSPITAL.  |
| 4. SWAMP.                       | 14. PLACE WHERE THE SURGEONS PRE-<br>SCRIBED FOR THE SICK AND ADMIT-<br>TED TO THE HOSPITAL. |
| 5. REBEL SUTTLERS.              | 15. ROAD TO CAPTAIN'S OFFICE.  |
| 6. BAKE-HOUSE FOR CORN-BREAD.   | 16. LINE OF OLD STOCKADE.  |
| 7. BAKE-HOUSE FOR BACON, BEANS. |  |
| 8 & 9. ENTRANCES.               |  |

been used by the prisoners as a sink, and excrement covered the ground, the scent arising from which was suffocating. The ground allotted to our ninety was near the edge of this plague-spot, and how we were to live through the warm summer weather in the midst of such fearful surroundings, was more than we cared to think of just then.

Along the edge of the swamp, from one side of the camp to the other, ran a little shallow brook, three or four feet wide, and this, with a few small springs, were to furnish our water for the season. Whatever we may have thought of the dangers of the past; of the uncertainties which encircled us prior to our captivity, when we were exposed to the assaults of the enemy, we now felt that almost infinitely better would it be, to

“Dwell in the midst of alarms,  
Than *reign* in such a horrible place.”

No shelter was provided for us by the rebel authorities, and we therefore went to work to provide for ourselves. Eleven of us combined to form a “*family*.” For the small sum of two dollars in greenbacks we purchased eight

small saplings about eight or nine feet long; these we bent and made fast in the ground, and covering them with our blankets, made a tent with an oval roof, about thirteen feet long. We needed the blankets for our protection from the cold at night, but of the two, we concluded it to be quite as essential to our comfort to shut out the rain. In the afternoon we drew rations, each man getting a pint and a half of coarse corn meal, about two ounces of bacon, a little salt, and also a little soap. We baked a cake of the meal for our supper, and being very weary we laid ourselves down upon the cold ground to sleep. It was very cold, and our hard couch, without any covering to wrap about us, made it comfortless indeed.

There were ten deaths on our side of the camp that night. The old prisoners called it "*being exchanged*," and truly it was a blessed transformation to those who went from such a miserable existence on earth, to a glorious one above. We could not weep for such, but only rejoice that their cares and toils were ended.

We could not wonder that they should feel in their last hours that—

“It is not death to die—  
 To leave this weary road,  
 And, 'mid the brotherhood on high,  
 To be at home with God.

It is not death to close  
 The eye long dimmed by tears,  
 And wake, in glorious repose,  
 To spend eternal years.

It is not death to bear  
 The wrench that sets us free  
 From dungeon chain, to breathe the air  
 Of boundless liberty.”

*Faith* alone could rise above the feelings which shrink from death and burial in such a place, and in such circumstances, but *faith* opens wide the “*golden gates*” of the Celestial City, and through them the redeemed soul may pass to the abodes of purity, *itself* bright and shining, whatever might have been the condition of its clayey tenement below. A decent grave and a friendly burial would be a great mercy, but careless hands and unfeeling hearts hasten the soldier to his last home; but their dust shall not escape the Father’s care, and future re-animation shall testify to the power and constancy of the heavenly *Watcher*.

After being there a short time, the balance of the Plymouth pilgrims came in, including the remainder of our regiment. We were in better spirits than the day before, having had time to accustom ourselves to things a little, so that when they filed in through the misery, we even laughed at their disconsolate looking faces, forgetting we, too, looked equally doleful on the preceding day.

What can not soldiers make up their minds to endure? We found upon inquiry, the name of the prison was Camp Sumter, and that ten thousand prisoners were then confined within its boundaries. We were particularly cautioned by those who had been there some time, to beware of the "*dead line*," about which we had heard upon the night of our arrival, and then believed to be untrue. We found it to be no fiction, however. All around the inside of the stockade, and about a rod distant from it, was a slender railing, and the least trespass over or under this, whether ignorantly done or not, met with instant death from the vigilant sentinel who was eager for an opportunity to shoot one of the "*damned Yankees*."

About this time Maj. Gen. Howell Cobb, commander of the Georgia State militia, made us a visit of inspection, and the ladies in the vicinity gave a pic-nic to the rebel soldiers in honor of the occasion. What his august presence would have to do with our welfare was a matter of conjecture. We heard floating rumors of an exchange of prisoners, but dared not hope for their truth. There were men who had been prisoners through the previous winter, upon Belle Island, in the Danville prisons, and other places, ragged, some of them nearly naked, worn down by long suffering to mere skeletons; who ought to be exchanged, if only for *humanity's* sake. "Why doesn't the government do it?" we asked, but we could not answer.

#### A PLAN FOR ESCAPE

was natural enough for men in such condition. On the night of the fifth some of them "*tunnelled out,*" hoping to be so fortunate as to pass once and forever from such fearful bondage, but the *blood hounds* were soon put upon their track, the usual method of our chivalrous enemies in finding and re-capturing runaways.



REBEL MODE OF CAPTURING ESCAPED PRISONERS.

The first part of the history is a general account of the state of the world at the beginning of the world. It is divided into three parts: the first part is a general account of the world, the second part is a general account of the human race, and the third part is a general account of the human mind.

The second part of the history is a general account of the human race. It is divided into three parts: the first part is a general account of the human race, the second part is a general account of the human mind, and the third part is a general account of the human body.

The third part of the history is a general account of the human mind. It is divided into three parts: the first part is a general account of the human mind, the second part is a general account of the human body, and the third part is a general account of the human soul.



Their yelping could be plainly heard in camp, a sound fitted to intensify our sympathy for the poor objects of their search. In consequence of the absence of these prisoners the rest of the camp were kept in ranks for a long while after roll-call; probably while the rebel officers were seeking to acquaint themselves with the manner in which they had made their escape, and who they were.

I had always supposed it to be the privilege of a prisoner of war to make his escape if he could, but there it was considered a crime, and a man was tracked like a felon or an outlaw who should dare make the attempt. Talk no longer about "*mudsills*," and "*greasy mechanics*!"—public opinion at the North would not tolerate the barbarity which finds ready applause at the South. Either the race of F. F. V.'s must have become sadly degenerated, or they were always inferior to the people of the North.

To insure correctness in the roll-call, the guards of the stockade were instructed to fire upon any men who should attempt to cross the brook from one side of the prison to the

other. Thinking it would be no violation of orders to step to the side of the brook, to wash my hands, I did so, when snap went the cap on the gun of one of the guard near me. On looking up I found he had intended to shoot me, but his gun had missed fire—*thanks to a good providence*. Thinking "*discretion the better part of valor*," I hastily retreated from harm's way, imagining it best to observe the rules tolerably in *letter* if not in *spirit*.

Three rebel officers of rank, *Surgeons*, it was supposed, rode into camp in the forenoon, and after inquiring into our causes of complaint, made us many fair promises of improvement in the prison, but we doubted at the time if they would ever be fulfilled. The rations which followed were a little more varied, having in addition to corn meal and bacon, molasses and rice, with a little salt, but exceedingly small quantities of anything. It was difficult to obtain wood enough to cook even what little we did have.

At this time we began to find lice upon our clothing, although we had been in prison but

two or three days, and it was of no use to attempt to rid ourselves of them for they were everywhere, even crawling upon the ground where we slept. We thought of our friends at home, and wondered how they would feel if they knew we were in such condition. To add to our sorrow and indignation, we found a large gang of *desperadoes* among our own men in camp, whom we called "*Mosby's Raiders*," and who lived by robbing and beating, sometimes almost murdering their comrades in misfortune. They attempted to carry out their plans in a thieving raid upon us, probably meeting with a strong temptation in the looks of our overcoats and blankets, but we were out in a twinkling, prepared for our defense, and they, seeing an overpowering force, beat a hasty retreat. We would fain believe that such men are an exception among Federal soldiers, but it may be we can not tell how harsh treatment, and long continued neglect and abuse, would degrade manhood in any case. We, as a regiment, presented a united front, and were therefore too strong for them. It required no little vigi-

lance and sacrifice to adapt ourselves to all these circumstances of our prison life. "*Man*" is said to be "*a creature of adaptation,*" but let him be placed within the stockade of a Georgia prison, subject to the will of arbitrary rebels, and he will be puzzled to make himself a very graceful representative of the truth. Much can be done, however, and these things I resolved to make rules for *personal observance*, at least. Feeling that *cleanliness* was an indispensable condition of health, I determined to keep clean at all hazards, and therefore I would repair to the brook at early dawn, before it had been disturbed by others with like intent, and there wash my clothing as well as I could. "God willing," I would say to myself, "the 'rebs' shall never have the satisfaction of carrying my body out upon a stretcher." "I will live to spite them."

A few days after we had been in camp, I visited the boys of the 16th on the other side of the camp, and found them well and pretty cheerful, considering their situation. Towards evening of the day, Corporal F—— and myself walked up by the large prison

gate, and there lay ten dead men ready to be carried out for burial. They were to be taken just as they were, placed in an army wagon, one upon the other, until it was filled, and driven off to the place of burial, like so many animals, without coffin, or even a winding sheet. Then they were to be placed side by side in long, shallow trenches, a few boards placed over them, a covering of earth thrown in, and the burial of the *patriot* was ended. We could but sigh for these thus passing to their graves, "unwept, unlamented and unhonored," but, "*was it so?*" Surely a nation's pity, and a nation's gratitude must be stirred at sight of these countless sacrifices upon her altars. Then, too, as the intelligence should find its way back to many a home in northern vale or hill-side; to the hamlets on western prairies, or those among the rugged slopes of the East, there would be loving hearts that would mourn, and many tears would be shed in memory of the silent sleepers in southern graves, and for the future they must be like those who seek in vain to—

"Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow."

As we stood there in presence of the uncovered dead, the consciousness of our situation led us to feel,—

“We are fellows still,  
Serving alike in sorrow. Leaked is our Bark,  
And we, poor mates, stand on the dying deck  
Hearing the surges threat:”

The weather was very warm, and at evening many of the poor sick men repaired to the brook to bathe. One poor fellow who was reduced to a mere skeleton, found himself too weak to drag himself from the water, and was obliged to receive help from a comrade. Upon passing from our tent the next morning, I discovered a dead body lying near, and looking more closely saw it to be this same poor fellow who, the evening before, had sought the invigorating influence of a bath for his weary frame. He has met the grim sentry, Death, passed over the dark waters, and *hope* would picture him as among the *glad immortals*.

At the gate were twenty others, most of them from the poor fellows who had been prisoners a number of months on Belle Island, in the Libby and Pemberton at Richmond, and also at Danville. With them, also, the

warfare was accomplished; the race run, and in some instances, at least, we trust a welcome victory gained.

The regiments of rebel soldiers stationed in the vicinity seemed entirely unmoved by the sight of so much suffering, and the knowledge of such inhuman treatment of thousands of poor fellows in their midst, only served to kindle their exultation and make them show it out in wildest demonstration. Before we had been many days in captivity, they held a

#### SHAM FIGHT,

which drew admiring crowds of people from all the surrounding country to see how the thing was done. The *so-called ladies* of the South are exceedingly bitter in their opposition to the North, and follow their "*liege lords*" in the exhibition of it, and therefore on all such occasions they are present to do what lies in their power to keep the zeal and enthusiasm of their soldiers up to the fighting standard. When we first heard the firing we thought the "Yankees" had surely come, and the hearts of our poor men bounded with joy at the very thought of *deliverance*, but they

sunk proportionately when the truth of the case was made known to them. Our imaginations pictured something other than *make believe* struggles and we hoped before the summer was over there would be *realities* that would tell with some favor upon our destiny; that, at least, we would catch the echo of some sounds of different spirit and intent from those our heartless foes poured into our ears during that, to them, *hilarious* season. After their sport was over in that line, many of the women came down to our prison, crowding around the gate, amusing themselves by throwing in bread, and witnessing the eagerness with which our half starved men would scramble to get it, for at this time life was sustained only by a miserable pittance of poor corn bread, and a small bit of boiled bacon. Had they been like some of the sympathising women of the North of whom we had heard, the sight of so many pallid faces and wretched forms, would have stirred their pity, and called forth some effort to relieve a little of the suffering, though it were among those who had held arms against them. In



how many cases had loyal ladies gone forth, themselves reared in luxury and unused to hardships, and with their own hands ministered to the wants of the sick and wounded, not overlooking even the rebel sufferer in their Christ-like mission.

We could but think of the humane treatment our foes had received in the Federal dominions, and contrast it with our forlorn condition. They, with the best of clothing, abundant rations, comfortable lodgings, and the kindest hospital treatment, while we had scarcely covering for our nakedness, food insufficient to satisfy even the cravings of hunger, no bed but the ground, and a condition of things in the hospital that induced speedy dissolution, and withal we were compelled to endure the sneers, taunts, and abuse of men and women alike. Not that we in our misery would have retaliated, for we felt that it was the Bible way of doing things; that we were thus exemplifying the spirit of the gospel, in heaping "coals of fire" upon the heads of our enemies, and besides, we had not been without evidence of its beneficent results in our

own experience. The men who had attended us a portion of the way, a North Carolina regiment, had, at a previous date, been prisoners of war upon our side, and in remembrance of the kindness they received were more favorable to us than they otherwise would have been.

We reflected, also, that the time would come when the "*cruel war*" would be over, and it would be better to have an *honorable record* upon the pages of history, than to have the disgrace of the world upon us, for such "inhumanity to man," as made our "countless thousands mourn." Amid all our thoughts and imaginations, nothing seemed so strange to us as the apathy of the Federal government, and of the northern people toward us; that they were doing nothing to release us from the inconceivable wretchedness in which we were placed. There we were, thousands of human beings, who had cheerfully volunteered for the service of the country, ready to sacrifice everything in *honorable* defense of her laws and institutions, crowded into an enclosure, with no room for exercise, scarcely enough

to move without jostling against each other, the very air filled with fetid odors, which of itself was sufficient to plant the seeds of death in every system. Revolting as the scenes were, which constantly met our eyes, we could have borne it all; we could have met sickness, hunger and exposure, and the thousand prison ills which beset us, with brave hearts, but for the cruel suspicion which tormented us, and which was "assiduously fanned by the rebel authorities," that we were abandoned by our government and our friends; those whom we had so faithfully sought to serve, and but for whom we would then have been in our homes of cheer and comfort at the North. Many—yea! hundreds, who would have experienced every form of hardship uncomplainingly, "sank away and died, heart-broken, under this melancholy delusion, while a few, whose ties to the Union were new and slight, sought to avenge their supposed wrongs by taking service in the rebel ranks."

We had no means of ascertaining the falsity of any of these things, shut out as we were from all communication except that from

rebel authority, and that was not calculated generally, to soothe our fears or quiet our suspicions. This much, however, we have to say to the credit of our brave boys, that in a vast majority of cases, no combination of suffering makes them a whit less firm in their allegiance to the Union cause, or prompts a desire for *peace*, except on a true and lasting basis. They do not wish to see the old Union as it was, with the dark stain of slavery upon it; to have it remain, a perpetual element of discord at home, and a just cause for reproach abroad, but they do wish for the use of prompt and energetic measures to hasten the day that shall bring a desirable end. They do not ask to be free from all participation in the strife, but they do long to walk forth from their *cankorous* dens, even though it be to meet the sulphurous smoke of the cannon, in the fiercely contested battle, for there, at least, would be *glorious action*, and per chance a lull that might give a grateful moment under the shadow of some tree, the mossy seat rendered specially inviting by the remembrance of the place where not a foot of earth could be

found but was infested with *creeping things* that made it well nigh intolerable.

When we had been captives of little more than a week standing, the rebel sergeant, Carmichael, who counted our squad every morning, told me, after roll-call in the morning, that the exchange officer, Major Turner, was in Andersonville, and the work of exchanging prisoners would begin as soon as the action on the Rapidan was over. Allowing the statement to have an exhilarating influence upon my own spirit, I went up to the hospital to do what I could by way of comforting the poor sick men there. I read to them and tried to cheer them by telling them of what I had heard of the prospect before us, but the poor fellows had been deceived too many times to dare build a hope upon such a rumor.

Little did we then know how many would pay the last debt of nature, and leave their wasted bodies in Georgia soil, before such a result would be accomplished. Happily for us, then, we could not read the "*Book of Fate*," or turn the leaves of wonder-working Providence for the utter blasting of our hopes

would have been too much for us, and many would have died in despair. The pious heart could only remember that it was to

“Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,  
But trust him for his grace,”

and also comfort itself with that other assurance, that

“Behind a frowning providence,  
He hides a smiling face.”

The policy of the Confederate authorities respecting us seemed to be, to unfit as many as possible for future service, and to secure the object more speedily, they cut down the rations to half the usual quantity, so that the old prisoners who had been in the *notorious Libby*, at Richmond, declared it was even worse than at that place. Had it been by reason of *scarcity*;—had we known their supplies were unequal to our need, we should have felt differently—we could have submitted to the inexorable necessity, but we had reason to think otherwise.

About this time a copy of the “*Macon Telegraph*” was brought into camp, giving an

account of the commencement of the great battle between

GRANT AND LEE.

It was represented as the "bloodiest battle of the bloody war," but not boasting much of their success, we concluded the "*Stars and Stripes*" were triumphant, and "God grant it," was the fervent prayer that went up from many a heart. Of one thing we were certain, if our General was defeated we knew our enemies would not be slow in acquainting us with the fact. In the numbers that immediately followed, the telegraphic news was cut out, a circumstance that looked rather ominous, and quite inclined us to the belief that Grant had pretty thoroughly routed Lee. Feeling well over the reports, a crowd of boys of the 16th collected and showed their enthusiasm by singing "*America*," "*Star Spangled Banner*," "*Red, White and Blue*," at the top of their voices, probably much to the disgust of our guards on the stockade, though possibly not, for many of them were so ignorant it was doubtful if they knew one song from another. Their general lack of intelligence

was illustrated in a little incident which occurred when we first entered the prison. A rebel officer, with all the dignity of his position, while surveying the newly arrived, remarked to them, "*if* there is a sergeant among you *that can write his name*, he may step forth,"—as if it was a matter of doubt whether his northern guests had even such an advantage as this in their training. A smile might have been observed on the faces of the entire crowd, not one of whom, boasting New England origin but could wield the pen with more or less grace. Southern statistics could show no fact that would coincide with this. The very constitution of things in their society rendered the whole system of education defective.

Following closely upon our jubilant concert, and as if to dampen the ardor of our patriotism, an item of news was brought in by the rebels, more in accordance with their wishes. They maintained that Gen. Steele, commander of our forces in Arkansas, had been captured, with his whole army, consisting of upwards of nine thousand men. We could only hope it



was untrue, for we were still keenly sensitive to our nation's honor. Let things be as they might outside; let them be shrouded in uncertainty and doubt, of one thing we were painfully conscious, that a *great congregation* was fast going to the silent dead from our midst. Visiting the hospital one morning I found that from thirteen in one tent, three had died within a few hours, and the rest looked as if their days were fast being numbered. Shortly after, another breathed his last, but from what I saw of him I think he was ready for the call of his Master and considering our situation we almost felt inclined to say with more than ordinary emphasis, "How blest the righteous when he dies."

Strange as it may seem, these ever recurring death-scenes had no humanizing effect upon some of our own men. The gang of gamblers and desperadoes who were a pest to the camp, and with whom life and property were not safe, were ever ready to incite whomsoever they could to join in a lawless mob, although the solemnities of life's closing day were thick about them. They even had

a fight when this last mentioned man was dying. Who would not rather make his exit from earth under different circumstances? Who would not choose that the lamp of life should go out among friends at home,—gently—free from such distracting influences? But there was manifestly no help for it. The Confederate authorities seemed to have no care of what passed inside, provided we were unsuccessful in making our escape from thence. We were left entirely free to frame our own laws, and carry them into execution if we could.

The morning of the 11th found us exposed to a pitiless storm, the first rainy day we had in camp. Much to our gratification, however, we found our own little tent, made of woollen blankets, to shed the rain very well, but what they would become by the continued action of sun and rain was a question that deeply concerned us. According to frequent rumors we might soon be in the land of plenty, and moreover of humanity, but herein was our trouble, there were too many stories afloat to have a good foundation. One day might be

cheered by strong assurances of immediate exchange, and the next sink us correspondingly low in despair. For some reason *deception* seemed the peculiar delight of our enemies. Whether they did it to gratify an insatiable thirst for *revenge* in themselves, or to keep us more reconciled, more willing and patient to abide our time, was something we could not determine. The feelings occasioned by our disappointment can be better *imagined* than described; but imagination even in her most extravagant flights, can but poorly picture the horrors of this prison life. Our constant experience was "Hope deferred" that "maketh the heart sick." Almost every new arrangement that was made seemed to make it the worse for us, or, at least, left us nothing but to fear a still more rigorous discipline, if it were possible.

At this juncture of affairs, when Gen. Johnston was being badly pressed by Sherman's army, it became necessary for the rebels to send every available man to the front, consequently the soldiers who had been our guard were ordered to Dalton to aid in repelling

him, and their places were filled by some of the Georgia militia. The former looked upon these latter with supreme contempt, and applied to them the name of "*new issues*," but we thought not of anything, or cared, except the possible change it might work in our treatment, although we expected not much in our favor by this movement.

From this time onward, for a while, we had some communication with the outside world, through the

#### ARRIVAL OF PRISONERS,

who were coming into camp in greater or less numbers almost every day. A squad of eighteen or twenty came in on the afternoon of the twelfth, all of them from Sherman's army, with the exception of two or three from Currituck, N. C., near our place of capture. The boys from Dalton brought us cheering news from our forces at that place, telling us that our brave General was in the rear of the rebel army and giving them what we were pleased to denominate "*particular fits*." We didn't know what our neighbors thought in the camps outside, but for some cause there

was a great deal of cheering among them—possibly it was exultation at some *fancied* victory, a not very strange way of doing things for them, as they have sometimes been falsely informed for reasons best known to the original inventors of the fabrication. Occasionally these things were varied by some trifling attention to our comfort, as for instance, a number of men were set to work in widening the brook, with the idea of having it planked upon the bottom and sides, in order to give the men a clean place in which to wash. These matters were things of inestimable value to us, and we watched their progress with the deepest interest, all the while hoping that summer would not pass away without its completion.

We turned from watching this enterprise to welcome sixteen more prisoners, but no! we will not say *welcome*, for this implies congratulation, and we could not extend anything like this to a human being about to be initiated into such a terrible experience. There was one thing about it, the news they brought was most eagerly received. These were from

Dalton, and we learned from them that, when they were captured, Sherman was flanking the rebel army, and that Kilpatrick was there with a large force of cavalry and mounted infantry. Hope suggested the possibility that he might come down and release us, in which case we thought we could speak of *welcome* in unmistakable terms. The sight of a man at the head of such a force would have been hailed as was *Moses*, in ancient times, by the oppressed Israelites, as the *Great Deliverer*.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### DISCOVERY OF A TUNNEL.

It were quite remarkable if among so many men, in miserable confinement, there were not various methods of escape devised and attempted. Our greatest source of trouble was the fact that there were so many contemptible traitors in our midst, who, for the sake of an extra ration, would betray any attempt to escape on the part of their com-

rades. This made an *effort* to escape almost an impossibility without the certainty of detection. The work of completing a *tunnel* had been silently going on, and we hoped to be successful in keeping it from the peering eyes of the rebels, but in some way they discovered it on the afternoon of the thirteenth, and Capt. Wirz swore that no more rations should be issued until the place was filled again with earth. This captain was the commandant of the interior of the prison, and was a wretch of the first or worst degree; insolent, overbearing, heartless, and of course a coward, for no man but a coward would come into camp and draw a revolver upon helpless men as he had done. He was said to have been a *deserter* from our army, but I could not vouch for the truth of it. Notwithstanding his threat, we did not go *supperless* that night, for the "reb" quarter-master came in with men and the necessary implements, and filled up the place, thus blasting one more hope; but as this principle is strong in youthful spirits, we quickly turned from one thwarted plan to the formation of another, which might

in its turn come to naught, yet, nevertheless, afforded us an opportunity for the employment of our otherwise inactive energies.

At this time I formed an acquaintance with Sergeant Major E., of the 15th Wisconsin Volunteers, from whom I learned there was a

#### SECRET ORGANIZATION

in progress for the purpose of attempting an outbreak and escape on a grand scale. I told him he might count me in on any such project as that, for one might as well lose his life in such an attempt as to die by inches in the foul atmosphere of the prison. The plan was to re-commence *tunneling*, and in this way undermine the stockade at several different points. At a pre-concerted signal the men were to rush upon it in a body sufficient to overturn it, and still another body were to seize the artillery and turn it upon the rebel camps, leaving us to pursue the way we had chosen, towards Pensacola, Fla., as the most feasible, from whence we could join our lines. A great deal was involved in the enterprise, and it was necessary to start right. It needed



extreme caution, time and patience, and more than all, perfect union among the prisoners, for the "rebs," with eagle-eyes, were awake to the possibility.

Under pretense of digging for water we would sink a well in some chosen spot, and after getting down several feet, abandon it and commence in another place, which was really the point of *attack* all the while, but which could be better worked by the ostensible object of the other. Reaching the requisite depth in the second, the tunnel was to proceed out from it to the desired place. Of course the work must be done at night, and with just such instruments as could be obtained. These were old knives, spoons, broken canteens, in short anything that could scoop out a handful of earth. This in one part of the camp was of a reddish color, while in others it was so sandy as to defy all attempts to make a way through, as it would fill in as fast as we might dig. To dispose of this as fast as it would be taken out, we obtained an old sack, and this was to be filled and passed along to men who were to be stationed at

proper intervals between the point of working and the first well, which it was found to be very convenient to fill up just then, as a well without water was of no account. Beyond this it was conveyed to the marshy places, and to the brook itself, and left there. As nothing could be done except under cover of the friendly shadows of night, it must be comparatively slow.

The days were many of them fine, and the Johnnies had a gay time without, all unconscious of what was going on within. While we were contemplating the best method of action in our proposed endeavor, they were having a pic-nic, or something of the sort, among themselves, being regaled by a band of music with such airs as the "Bonnie blue flag," and "Southern Marsailles," doubtless designed to "*fire the southern heart,*" and inspire it with hope and courage, now that the two armies were actively contending for the mastery. A great crowd of ladies were discoverable, who were probably present to applaud and admire the men who thought it a brave deed to shoot a defenceless prisoner.

In these moments of observation I said to myself "What a difference being inside of the stockade makes in one's condition! Without all is gayety and happiness, or at least, *apparently* so, while within, misery remains unchecked," but countless others have known sorrow, even—

"Illustrious spirits have conversed with woe,  
Have in her schools been taught,"

then why should we not nerve ourselves as well as others to the stern discipline?

Nearly a hundred more Yankee prisoners came in on the 15th, most of them from Sherman's army at Dalton, but a few from Newbern and Plymouth, N. C., those from the latter, however, being such as were detained at Tarboro on account of sickness. The few who came in on the day previous were attacked and robbed the very night of their arrival, by the band of marauders who still infested the camp, and almost completely ruled it. It was reported that one poor fellow came to an untimely death at their hands, and another received a most unmerciful beating because he showed resistance to their inhuman

attempts. Some might suppose that these men, all prisoners for the same cause, would be bound together by kindred ties, inasmuch as they were sharers of the same misfortune, but we are not to forget that under any circumstances the same number of men would furnish specimens anything but favorable to humanity. There was a *Judas* among the "twelve," of Palestinian memory, so now, there are men of like passions and character in small groups of whatsoever locality. One thing is certain, the monotony of our camp was too often varied by these unwelcome demonstrations.

It was about these days a rebel publication fell into our hands, printed at Richmond, and called "The Second Year of the War." It was a very one-sided affair, full of misrepresentations, making everything Southern about perfect, and all action on the corresponding side unworthy and barbarous. I finished its perusal, ending with thorough disgust, and wondering if that was the kind of trash the Southern people would have to accept as *history*. It spoke of the robbery of shoes

and clothing from the dead and wounded, at the second Bull Run battle, as a very commendable act on the part of their soldiers, and the tenor of the whole was in keeping with the same, but if it did no more for me, it whiled away a few tedious prison-hours, and that was something of a consideration. Things which we would not have once paused to consider, now arrested our attention, and really ministered to our happiness. Just before sunset, one afternoon, the clouds thickened in the sky above us, and poured upon us a little rain. They soon broke away; the sun came out, and in the eastern sky appeared a beautiful rainbow. "Is it a good omen for us?" was the question it prompted, and though we could not answer, we certainly looked upon it with pleasing emotion, for it almost seemed like the coming of a heavenly messenger, and this was the pledge he brought that God had not forgotten us. We accepted the pledge and allowed faith to bring its own comfort into the passing hour, nor was the future made any darker, but rather brighter, by the sweet teaching of the heavens.

The fifteenth was our second Sabbath in Camp Sumter, though one would have hardly thought it *holy* day, there being nothing to distinguish it from any other through the week. There was no *sanctuary* summons for us; no pealing bell to remind us of the crowd who were gathering under the roof of God's sacred temples, nor scarce an influence more quieting and elevating than usual. Had there been even a *retired spot* in any corner, one might have stolen away and found a sort of Sabbath for his own soul; the calmness of solitude might have brought him nearer heaven, but there was no such place known there. Those who were so fortunate as to possess small shelter tents could retire within them during the warm hours of the day, and perchance forget present discomfort, for a season, in recollections of the *past* and anticipations of the revealed future, but even then distracting sounds would soon recall them to the sad scenes among which they must live.

About noon this day we were startled by the report of a gun from one of the sentries,

and on seeking to discover the cause found that

A CRIPPLE,

whom we had often seen, had been shot for going inside the "*dead line*," and refusing to go out, saying he wished to die. The guard fulfilled his wish very quickly, and indeed, any one having any desire to "shuffle off the mortal coil," has only to step inside that line, and the work is done. It was the general opinion in prison, that this man, though a prisoner himself, was a traitor to the rest of us, and was the principal agent in showing the rebel authorities the locality of every new "*tunnel*," just for the sake of a small reward in the shape of something to eat. We felt that if this was so, *shooting* was only too good for him. Capt. Wirz was around soon after with a guard, spying out the land, but we heard nothing of his being enlightened as to our undertaking, which was still steadily going on. I was daily becoming better acquainted with the *ringleaders* of the plot. They were a bold set of fellows, most of them those who had been prisoners for a long time, and had

tried to escape several times before. We only hoped they would be more successful now.

Towards evening of this same Sabbath, I again visited the hospital, and found only *one* living of the *thirteen* who were under that one tent fly a few days ago. *Death* reaps a rich harvest here, surely, I thought. It has emphatically *all seasons* for its own. Not an hour of the day but souls were winging their way from that miserable prison up to the throne of God. *Angels*, we believe, came down to that wretched place on *errands of love*; as *guards* to earth-weary spirits in their upward flight, and moreover, the *compassionate Jesus* looked down to those lowly couches upon his trusting ones, and paved the way with light for them.

From the hospital I went to a *prayer meeting*;—not such a meeting as people have at *home*, and as I had had in the land I had left, but, thank God, we could pray as well, if not *better* there, for we felt the need of *Divine* help more than we ever could while surrounded with every help and every comfort. The shadows of evening had gathered about



us, and we had no roof over our heads but the sky, and no light but that of the moon and stars, but these things we knew would prove no hindrance to our access to the *merciful throne*, and the listening ear of the *Eternal* would as readily bend to our *praises* and *complaints* there as anywhere else.

The next day twenty-one more prisoners were added to our number, coming from the same point as those who had recently arrived. They brought us right good news from Sherman's army, telling us of the capture of Dalton, and that the rebel Gen. Johnston was falling back with his forces to Resaca. These things did not a little to keep up our spirits. Everything was dark, however, in regard to almost all other points. We heard nothing from Richmond, although one of the guards told one of our boys, at this time, that it was "*a gone-up case*," and that our armies were getting the better of them everywhere.

No letters at all came to us, and we concluded all communications were interrupted by our "*raiding parties*." As Kilpatrick and

Stoneman were both at Resaca, and meeting with excellent success, we could not but hope they would head an *expedition* for our liberation. For some reason the "*rebs*" were particularly watchful over us, evidently fearing something would escape their notice, and they would in some way lose their hold upon us. Very strict orders in regard to attempts to escape were read in the camp at morning roll-call. We thought it very poor policy for them to do this, for the *penalties* were only what we expected, as a matter of course, and the issuing of the order only proved that they were "*on the scare*" a little. The punishment assigned for the violation of such orders, was the wearing of a heavy cannon ball, attached to the ankle by a chain. This had already been awarded to some, but Yankee ingenuity had found a way by which they might be unfastened, so that freedom could be enjoyed through the day, and the thing put on to appear in due form before rebel majesty at the hour assigned.

None can tell our intense longings to know the *real* condition of affairs in the field. Re-

ports in regard to operations were various. At times we would feel remarkably cheerful over the good news brought in by the prisoners, and were content to remain in our wretched quarters longer, if we could only know Uncle Sam's armies were steadily accomplishing the desired result. Through this medium we learned that Gen. Wessels was confined at Macon, and that Col. Beach had been exchanged, being held as prisoner of war only a few days. We were again told that we might hope for this. Capt. Wirz, and the Confederate newspapers, also, assured us that a general exchange had been agreed upon, and that four hundred had actually been exchanged already,—Aiken's Landing, on the James river, and Savannah, Ga., being the chosen points for execution; but our experience in these matters had been to confirm doubt instead of hope.

At this time the weather was quite warm, but fine, and the evenings beautiful. The bright moonbeams looked down lovingly upon us, and with seeming *pity*, making it so light we could see to read the fine print of a

small testament quite readily. Could we have commissioned it to do anything in our behalf, many would have said,

“Roll on, thou silvery moon,”

and tell the friends of the soldier the misery in which they dwell, that they may do something for our rescue.”

Resaca contributed another quota of men on the 20th. They brought the intelligence that Joe Johnston was falling back from Calhoun towards Atlanta, and that Sherman was flanking him all the time as usual. These things, doubtless, had some influence in exciting the fears of our enemies, and it soon became evident that all the promises they had made to us was simply to keep us as quiet as possible. To this end we attributed the slight increase of rations for a time, but no light thing could divert us from our fixed purpose, and the *out-break society* had a consultation in spite of it all, and at its close we could say, in the words of a once famous Connecticut politician, “*things is working.*”

Day by day the weather was getting warmer, and it was fearful to think of spend-

ing the summer in our narrow pen. Prisoners were coming in by the *hundred*, and this made it still more dreadful. Among half a thousand who came in at one time, one hundred and fifty were from the army of the Potomac, who were taken at Parker's store, May 5th, in the first of the series of battles in front of Richmond. The next day six hundred more came in, having been taken in the wilderness near Chancellorsville. The 7th Penn. Reserves were among them, being peculiarly unfortunate, as their term of service expired in a few days, and now they were in a situation not to be as promptly mustered out as they would like. Through them we obtained some knowledge of the manner in which things were progressing. They told us of the confidence of the army in Gen. Grant, and also declared that it was in splendid fighting condition. We heard, too, that Holcomb's Legion, S. C., were captured by Spear's cavalry, so the tables were turned upon them. A short time before they had been guarding us at Tarboro, N. C., and now they too were prisoners. Truly the fortunes of war are varied.

5

We felt sorry to see so many of our men captured, but they assured us that the rebels lost more by far, than we upon our side. For a time they came in rapidly, both from Grant's and Sherman's army, and while this state of things lasted we were tolerably well informed of the doings in the different fields. When some of the latter came through Atlanta, the women and children were being removed to Macon and other points out of the reach of the Union army. This, of course, indicated the character of Southern opinion with reference to their advancing foe, but we were cheered in proportion as they were distressed.

The rapid influx of prisoners made an enlargement of our prison limits necessary, and a number of men were taken out to do the work. They had extra rations as an inducement, and better treatment in every respect, as the reward for their labor. I hardly knew what to think about it, whether it was right or wrong. The question would come up, "would our government like to have its soldiers' build their own prisons?" It certainly was a great improvement, and of untold

benefit to the inmates, and circumstances might have rendered it right and proper that it should have been done in this way. On the twenty-fourth nine hundred came in, and we were getting frightfully crowded. There was no circulating about the camp except with the greatest inconvenience.

There was a great deal of talk among the prisoners about breaking out, but comparatively few knew of the operations in progress to secure such a result. This very night of the day when so many came in was the time fixed upon for the grand demonstration, and if everything went as we thought it might, it bade fair to be a success. The stockade was duly cared for, being undermined in five or six different places, and we looked with the greatest interest for the hour to arrive, when at the sound of the trumpet, the walls, *Jericho-like*, would fall and let us go free. The men were all ready for a general rush upon the artillery, and imagination already pictured the dismay of the rebels, and our own triumph as our exulting hosts should pass on beyond the boundaries of oppression towards their native

land of freedom. Many hearts beat high with hope and expectation in view of what might be coming. Possibly they were on the eve of a mighty deliverance, and the morning might dawn upon the place where imprisoned legions *had been*, but were not. The night was auspicious, being dark and rainy, and we ardently hoped everything would favor our darling scheme; but alas! these things were all doomed to sudden re-action, and we were made to feel how strangely evanescent are the brightest and strongest hopes; how quickly these may yield to despair, and gladness be turned into sorrow. Just before the hour for action had arrived we<sup>e</sup> found the whole

#### PLOT WAS DISCLOSED.

One of the ring-leaders had given the minutiae of the affair to Capt. Wirz; one whom we had supposed true from his very position, and whom we thought by every motive of self-interest would feel himself bound to be faithful to the organization of which he was so prominent a member. Of course, immediate preparations were made to



frustrate our designs, and through the rascality of this one man the whole thing came to naught, leaving us like

*“Patience on a monument,  
To sit smiling at grief.”*

He was at once taken out of prison and probably richly rewarded for his villainy, and it was well for him, for his long continuance on earth might have been a matter of doubt if he had remained in his accustomed quarters. Vigorous measures were quickly taken to prevent any further attempts on our part. A large reinforcement of rebel troops arrived to make the guard doubly sure. The stockade was strengthened in such manner as to resist a like onslaught in the future, and things generally indicated a determination on their part to make sure their hold upon us a while longer.

The evening after the disclosure we found the following, posted near the prison gate :

#### NOTICE.

“Not wishing to shed the blood of hundreds not connected with those who concocted a mad plan to force the stockade, and make in this way their escape, I hereby warn the leaders and those who formed themselves into a band to carry out this, that I am in pos-

session of all the facts, and have made my dispositions accordingly, so as to frustrate it. No choice would be left me but to open with grape and canister on the stockade, and what effect this would have in this densely crowded place need not be told.

May 25th, 1864.

H. WIRZ.

As it proved, the only consolation we could reap from the transaction, was in the idea that we had pretty well *frightened* them. We had no reason to think our condition would be any the better for it, nor could it hardly be worse. It was a matter of chagrin that we were betrayed in the manner we were, but could only *endure* what we could not *cure*. It had no particular tendency to allay our irritation to see the rebels bring in over seven hundred prisoners that day, making more than sixteen hundred poor fellows who had come in within two days. They were from Grant's army, and had been taken in the early part of the month. They had been robbed of almost everything in their possession—*coats, blankets and haversacks*—leaving them utterly unprepared to stand the hardships of prison life. I could not forbear exclaiming, "What a chivalrous enemy we are fighting!" but, "He robs himself who spends a bootless *grief*," and therefore, amid everything calcu-

lated to *depress*, I determined to maintain, as far as possible, that *energy of character* which Von Kneble says is the basis of all "*true hope*." "A strong mind," he says, "always hopes, and has always cause to hope, because it knows the mutability of human affairs, and how slight a circumstance may change the whole course of events. Such a spirit, too, rests upon itself; it is not confined to partial views, or to one particular object. And if, at last, all should be lost, it has saved itself—its own integrity and worth. Hope awakens courage, while despondency is the last of all evils; it is the abandonment of good,—the giving up of the battle of life with dead nothingness." Fully confident in this, that *hope* and *courage* were the best physicians, I brought my soul into as close companionship with them as possible. I had seen many give themselves up to life-consuming *anxieties*; had seen them torture themselves with insatiable longings for home, friends and comfort, and they had been the sure victims of the *grim tyrant*. These were, indeed, in a pitiable condition. They were suffering, and naturally

enough came the desire for the tender ministrations of mother, wife or sister. It was natural, also, that they should think of the little *home luxuries* which would be so grateful now to their sickly tastes and feverish frames, but these vain, incessant longings always told sadly upon their condition. It was those who bore up with brave heart and strong will that came out the best, or perhaps one might say came out at all. Some, by yielding to the influence of the *horrors* about them, relapsed almost into a state of *idiocy*, and indeed it required no little care to preserve the type of intelligent manhood at all. The tendency of everything about us was to belittle both mind and body, and the call was urgent for a high standard of courage to resist the swelling current. In view of it we would say to every one just being introduced to prison-life from the army of his country, "*Be hopeful, be courageous, for herein lies your strength.*"

The day following the sensation notice of Capt. Wirz, he took several men into his employ for the purpose of digging a trench

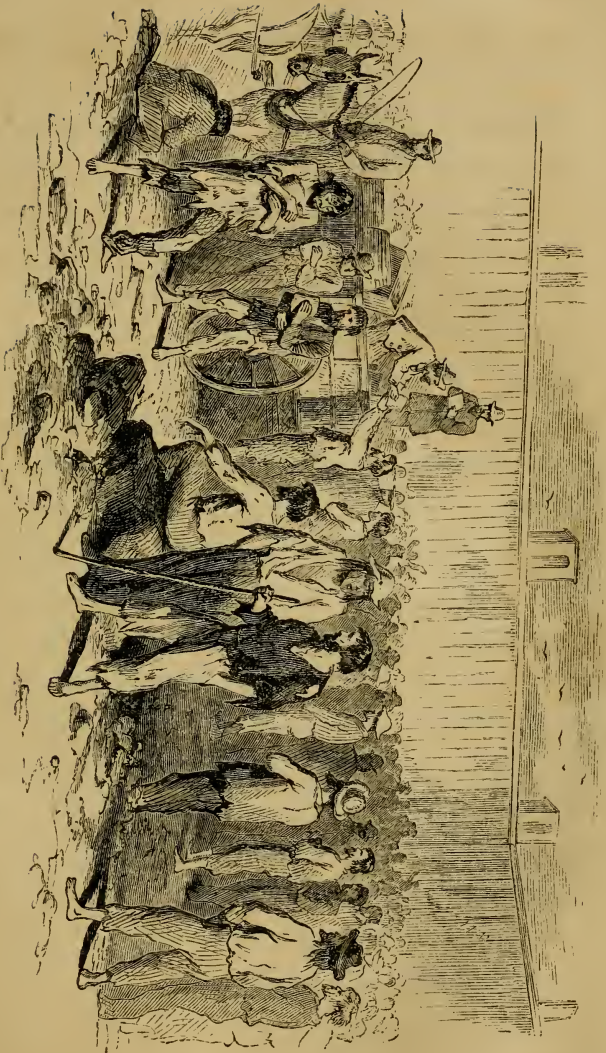
around the camp inside the "*dead line*," for the more ready discovery of any "*tunnels*" that might have been dug, and also to render it more difficult to attempt any more in the future. Doubtless he thought he was doing a smart thing, accomplishing that which would effectually put an end to all similar working, but even then *Yankee ingenuity* was busy in solving the problem—how this could be made void—and the result was a conclusion to dig *under* the trench, although it involved a greatly increased amount of labor. It was a time of sore extremity with us, and it was daily becoming worse, so that we felt from shrinking from no undertaking, however hazardous, that afforded the least glimmer of hope that we might escape. The rations were miserable and wholly inadequate to the demands of anything like a healthy organization. About this time they were slightly varied in the shape of *two buckets of mush* for ninety men. "*Chicken feed*," the boys called it, and it seemed a very appropriate name, for it was nothing but coarse corn meal

and water, with a little salt, half cooked. The manner of

#### DISTRIBUTING THE RATIONS

was as follows:—Once every day might be seen a large, uncovered army wagon, drawn by two span of mules, coming into the prison-gate, the driver seated upon the near mule behind, and an officer in the vehicle whose business it was to check what was issued to the sergeant who stood ready to take it from another who stood between them, and pass it over to the “ninety” which constituted the division over which he was placed. These “nineties” had *sub divisions*, so that the work of dividing and circulating the given material was quickly done, and indeed, often times this might be done by reason of the very small amount that was allowed for distribution.

Among so many men, with such variety of taste and disposition, feeling and motive, it was not strange that some little incident, calculated to enhance the serenity, or disturb the equanimity of the prisoners, should be almost constantly occurring. Oftener it was the latter, as the passions of men, so little



PRISONERS RECEIVING RATIONS.





restrained, found manifestation in a way they would not in the midst of civilized society, where public sentiment frowns upon anything like general disorder. It was not infrequent that one of the camp thieves or "*raiders*" would be arrested in his *prowling* operations at night, carried to the brook, to endure the process of "*gagging*" and "*bucking*," having one side of his head shaved, and this not being considered sufficient punishment, he would finally be thrown into the swamp, there to consider the propriety of discontinuing his "*raids*" for a season. Truly, "the way of transgressors is hard."

Another thing which tended to keep up a little excitement was the frequency with which we were met by false promises from the heartless Captain over us. Notwithstanding the repeated instances of deception we had experienced, every fresh assurance would of course stimulate our hopes that possibly it might be true. When he told us that in four weeks we would surely be within our own lines, and that we would commence going out in a few days, we could only say to each

other, "time will prove the truth of the statement." "It may or may not be,—mōst likely the latter."

Soon after these things were told us, the "rebs" showed unmistakable signs of alarm about something. The working parties were all ordered inside the stockade, while their soldiers were posted around the outside of the prison, as if in expectation of an immediate attack. Appearances indicated something quite out of the ordinary course of events, but it was of short duration, as they finally returned to their camps, and everything went on as usual. We afterwards learned that the whole thing was occasioned by a report that a body of our cavalry had crossed over Flint river, at a point only twelve miles from us. We began to reckon of "the *good time coming*," and were content to "wait a little longer" for it, provided it would only come, but as we heard nothing more from it we were obliged to consider the whole report incorrect, and settle ourselves down again to the toleration of our wretched lot. What this wretchedness includes, one may imagine somewhat if he

seriously think what it means to have nothing but *half a loaf* of corn bread, weighing about six or seven ounces, as the only thing upon which to subsist for twenty-four hours.

Whether what preceded the distribution of this short allowance had anything to do with it or not, I can not tell, but it was quite certain that this was the way we had often been made to feel the power of their indignation. A number of "*tunnels*" were discovered about this time, and filled in by the "*Old Dutchman*" and his minions. This personage was none other than Capt. Wirz himself, who was best known in prison by that name. Indeed, a stranger would have thought it his only title. In all things that pertained to this common labor of the prison, he had become Argus-like, and every new discovery only tightened the cords which his *hate* would draw about us, but *why should we cease?* We could but perish if we were betrayed, and it was quite certain many would, if they remained much longer. One hundred and seventeen men were added to our number on the 28th, having been captured at *Cass Station*, twenty-five miles from

Atlanta, in the rear of our army, but they were a stupid set, mule drivers, &c., and they brought us but little news of any character. The "*Macon Confederate*" was boasting of a great victory. Grant had been defeated with the loss of sixty thousand men, and Gen. Sherman's army was "*greatly demoralized*," but we felt a little inclined to make some allowance for its stories, since the latter had met such success in flanking Joe Johnston and his army, and to set down the paper as the chief of *false teachers*.

The 29th was the day so often sung by Christian assemblies as the one of

"All the week the best,  
Emblem of eternal rest,"

and do you wonder that I allowed memory and imagination to do their utmost to convey me to a different atmosphere; that I found my

#### SABBATH THOUGHTS

to be recorded at its close in something of the following manner? "My mind has been at home to-day, and I have seen in imagination the dear old church with all its blessed associations; the Sabbath school with its teachers

and scores of happy children, and last, but not least, '*the old homestead*,' in its rural peace and quiet. I wonder if they know at home of our real condition here. If the nation itself knew of it, it seems as if we would be liberated, even if an army had to be raised for this work alone."

Nearly a thousand prisoners came in on the afternoon of that Sabbath, what would have been considered a large congregation in many of our city churches at home. A few of them were those who had come from other rebel prisons, but the greater part of them were from Grant's army, and Siegel's corps in the Shenandoah valley. Some of the 1st Mass. regiment were among the number. They were captured just on the eve of their departure for home, their time having expired, and great must have been their disappointment to have been brought to such a place, when they had almost felt the touch, and seen the smile of welcome from the "*loved ones at home*."

An almost equal number came in on the following day, among whom were a large number of Connecticut men. Twenty-four of

the 8th regiment; fifty-two of the 7th; one hundred and thirty of the 11th; and fifteen of the 21st. They all belonged to Gen. Butler's division, and were captured two weeks before, in an attack upon Fort Darling, near Richmond. Their captors had robbed them of everything, from blanket to haversack; so that there was nothing before them but actual suffering for the want of a covering amid the exposures to which they must be subject. That night I worked until near midnight, with a few friends, upon a "*tunnel*." It was new work for me, and rather hard, but I was willing to work hard, if I could only get out of that horrible den, into *God's country* once more. Our

"MODUS OPERANDI"

in "*tunneling*" was something after this sort: To begin with, a situation was selected near the dead line as possible, in order to make the distance as short as it could be to the outside of the stockade. A *hole*, or "*well*," as we termed it, was first sunk straight down to the depth of six or eight feet, and then the "*tunnel*" *proper* was started towards the stockade,

under which it passed. But one man could dig at a time, but we often relieved each other, as the work was very fatiguing. As we continued our excavations the dirt was pushed back in the manner I have indicated before, in a *meal sack*, which we stole from the ration wagon for the purpose. Every morning a line of bright red earth could be seen along the edge of the swamp, the nightly result of the labors of earnest seekers after *freedom*.

Every night fires were kindled at short intervals all around the prison, and a line of pickets posted outside these fires, so that "tunnels" had to be continued a long distance out in order to have the place of egress as safe as possible. We usually commenced operations about nine or ten o'clock at night, or as soon as it was dark enough to admit of our working without being seen by the vigilant sentinel upon the stockade. In this particular we had the advantage of them, for we could plainly see and watch them by the light of the circle of pitch-pine fires around the prison, while they could not see us at all

down in the darkness of the pit. In this instance, at least, we preferred "darkness rather than light," although our deeds were not evil.

If the thing could be carried through to completion, some dark and stormy night would be chosen in which to pursue the pathway to light. The slight curtain of earth that had been left at the end would be carefully broken through, and those who had dug the lane would stealthily crawl out and make for the woods and swamps, but a few rods distant. After the owners had safely passed through, any one else was welcome to go out by the same way, and it was considered quite desirable to have them, as it distracted the bloodhounds, and prevented them from getting on the track of the first ones. Very few, however, succeeded in making good their escape in this way, for insurmountable obstacles would almost invariably occur to render the attempt abortive. As we have before stated, it was almost impossible to complete anything of the kind without being betrayed to the Confederate authorities by some of the cow-



ardly traitors in our midst, who for the sake of an extra ration of corn bread, or a plug of tobacco, would tell all they knew of any attempt to escape, and beside it was not uncommon for a "tunnel," when nearly completed, to cave in on account of the nature of the soil.

Although the exertion made us tired and stiff, we yet continued our labors, and thought we were progressing gloriously, coming nearer and nearer to freedom every hour, when suddenly we came upon an unlooked for barrier, which ended alike our visions and our efforts. An old *hospital sink* had been covered over in this very spot, and stood there a thing impenetrable, between us and the liberty we thought we were bringing to ourselves. These were some of the "*shadows*" of camp life. If there were any "*lights*," they were the feeble hopes built upon rebel falsehoods. About the first of June they told us that the 51st Virginia regiment was at Andersonville for the purpose of guarding us to the place of exchange. Whether they were there or not we can not say, but we are quite sure we were not among any thus guarded.

Prisoners still continued to be brought in, the majority from Butler's army, the remainder from Sherman's, with the exception of some few from other prisons that were becoming somewhat unsafe, in consequence of the movements of our forces in too close proximity. Some eight or ten of the latter came on crutches, having already lost a limb in the service. We hardly saw the propriety of sending such men to us, for they could not run away if they would.

About this time there came a severe rain storm, giving us a good wetting, but we felt little like grumbling, for it proved a rich blessing to the camp, washing away an immense amount of filth. It was hard, however, for the thousands of men who had not even the poor shelter of a woolen blanket for their protection. It was just such a time as we might expect some poor fellow would try to make his escape, and a couple of shots after dark told us that such was probably the case, and this was the greeting he received.

We had had but little rain in the early part of our history in camp, but now we began to

think that June was the rainy month in Georgia, and that it had set in, in right good earnest. We could not betake ourselves to any refuge from the tempest, and though the wind should blow, and the rain descend in torrents, we must stand and take it. Of course none will be surprised if we had to lay ourselves down to rest in rather of a *moist condition*, but let such a night be followed by good news from our army in the morning, and it was wonderful how it lessened the feeling of discomfort consequent upon it. It was at such time that we heard that Gen. Grant had broken Lee's center, and that the 5th corps occupied Mechanicsville, only four or five miles from Richmond; also that Fort Darling had fallen. It was almost too good to believe, and prudence suggested that we wait for its further confirmation before we were very jubilant over it, but it afforded us, at least, something to *think* upon. These things were also accompanied by the report that *His Majesty*, King Jeff, had asked for an armistice of six days, in which to repent of his evil ways, and seriously consider the question of

submitting to lawful authority, but we in our prison hoped most sincerely, if anything of the kind had been asked, it would not be met by *disgraceful compromises* for the sake of *peace*, but by renewed activity on the part of our armies to bring things unto such a basis that the sword might be honorably sheathed, and the Union be restored and preserved as it should be. To hold any communication with the *arch traitor* for anything less than this was something of which we did not like to think. We were in a place that seemed to us to surpass all others in everything that tended to make life gloomy, but we could still say, "*Our country forever*"—"tribulation shall not make us part with our love for it."

A miscellaneous crowd of prisoners came in on the 3d. who were captured at different times and places, having fought under the command of three Generals, Grant, Burnside and Sigel. Some came in also from colored regiments. A number of the 54th Mass. regiment, and some others, were already of our number, and they were universally treated better than we white soldiers. They were taken outside

every day to perform some labor, and allowed double rations, and also the privilege of buying things outside and bringing them into the prison at evening, and selling them to such as had any money, for a good round price in "*greenbacks*."

*Rain* was the order of the day about these times. It would commence very early in the morning and continue through the day, perhaps slacking just enough to enable us to cook a little. To those who dwell in their "*ceiled houses*," this may not seem a particularly important item, but to those who had no shelter, no alternative but to feel the pitiless torrents upon their stiffened, aching limbs, and no bed at night but the cold, wet ground, it was a matter of painful interest. The thunder would roar and the lightning flash, and we would have what the "rebels" would call a "*right smart shower*," but it was all the same to us,—we must take it. Imagine these wretched thousands trying to shield themselves in every possible way from the fast falling rain, and then see them turn hopelessly away and lie down, with their scanty garments

already drenched, to be tantalized with *dreams* of comfort, if so be that sleep does not utterly refuse to embrace them in such circumstances. Then, too, comes the waking hour, surely attended with the consciousness of weariness and pain, that can not be removed, since the aggravating cause is ever present. I remember, myself, waking long before daybreak with these uncomfortable symptoms, and finding them my companions all the day long; but I meant to keep well at all events, if determination of will could do anything towards it. Sickness began to increase fearfully, in consequence of the wet weather, and many, doubtless, died from the effect of exposure alone.

The 4th of June I visited the *outside world* for the first time since my entrance into prison. An opportunity was offered to a few of us to go out after wood, and I gladly availed myself of it, just for the sake of breathing the pure air. Oh, how good it was for us to get out into the woods once more, among the trees and flowers! It almost seemed like a *new world*, and my spirit revelled in the glad change for the brief season it

was given me to enjoy it in. What a blessed thing it would have seemed to us then, if we could have made that place our home, instead of going back to that *filthy den!* How much better it would have been for us to have made our bed under the spreading branches of those trees, that would have done their best to have screened us from the *chilling dews* and *falling rain*, for the unconscious kindness of *inanimate* things is dearer to the heart than conscious, continued *unkindness* of living men, at least, we felt that it would have been so then. A half dozen men took advantage of the freedom thus allowed, and made their escape, making the rest of us feel that the *ban of proscription* would be put upon all like privilege in the future. We were not with them when they managed to do the thing, but they "*muzzled*," or overpowered the guard that was with them, and left on a *bee-line* for their *federal* comrades somewhere.

An unusual number of camp rumors were afloat on the fifth, one of which was, that Pearson, the rebel Colonel, had positively stated that the work of *paroling* would com-

mence on the following day. It was also told us that Gen. Lee had evacuated Richmond. We put them both down as *rebel lies* for we had seen and heard so much we would scarcely believe them upon *oath*, and the sequel proved us correct, for the next day came, and evening also, and *paroling* was something of which nothing was known or heard.

Two or three days after this, several hundred more prisoners were brought in, some from the armies of Grant and Sherman, but many of them found their way thither as the result of a clearing out of the Richmond prisons and hospitals. Through this medium we learned that Gen Siegel had been relieved of his command, by order of Gen. Grant, for disobedience of orders, and that Maj. Gen. Hunter had taken his place; also that Gen. Lee's head-quarters were at Danville, Va., he having fallen back from his position near Richmond. From every appearance the general condition of things did not seem calculated to keep the rebel element about us very quiet. The men were in commotion, and evi-



dently manifested concern about something. They went busily to work planting artillery to command the camp and railroad, an effort that was understood when we found that Kilpatrick was operating with a cavalry force in the vicinity of Augusta. They were, no doubt, preparing to receive a visit from their Federal brother, and thought it advisable to guard against too great intimacy with the *household, in general*, over which they presided. As for ourselves, whenever we thought of such a *possible visit*, we counted upon a violation of their laws of etiquette, and an acquaintance as intimate as we desired. We calculated to enter our complaint, and he in turn would show forth his sympathy in a way agreeable to us, but displeasing to them; but our imaginings were useless, as no opportunity was given us at that time. We were to encounter the storms and tempests a little longer. This had come to be our daily experience. Our blankets were getting worn and threadbare, and afforded us but poor protection. The large drops beating against them would find their way through, and give us a thorough wetting.

Copies of the Charleston Mercury of the sixth and seventh found their way to our hands, giving an interesting account of a naval conflict on *Albemarle* sound, between the rebel iron ram of the same name, and several of our new wooden gunboats; also, the capture of the U. S. steamer "*Water Witch*," in Ossabaw sound, near Savannah, Ga., by five barges filled with "*rebs*," who boarded her as they did the *Under Writer*, at Newbern, N. C., last winter. The editorials of these papers expressed a great deal of regret that any of their State legislatures should advocate *peace propositions* at this time, as it would very likely be construed as an *evidence of weakness* on their part, and gratuitous information that tended to anything of this sort was against their principles.

Although we were mindful of the *allowance* it was necessary to make for the communications of these papers printed in *rebeldom*, yet they gave us something of an idea of what was passing on the other side; a side from which we were as effectually barred as the *Oriental*s in their strong-walled cities at night, as far as

any intercourse was concerned. There was this difference, however, the gates opened for them every morning—for us, almost *never*. They could go forth to traverse the hills and vales beyond, as they wished, leisurely beholding the rising glories of early dawn, or musing with calm content upon the richer beauties of the setting sun. Noontide, morn and evening were alike to us, save as, now and then, we were hurried under a heartless guard, to some neighboring wood, to gather a small supply for our necessity, and then hastened back within lines and bars, rigidly drawn and securely fastened.

The country about our camp was gently undulating, and not far from us were large pine forests, that evidently had not rang to the *woodman's axe* for a long time, if ever. In the immediate vicinity of our camp there was nothing green. Should anything struggle for life through the hard earth, it would soon be trodden down by the tramp of so many feet. It might be that in some chosen corner, some dwarfed and stunted thing would be tenderly guarded, because of the idea of *greenness* and

*growth* which it might impart. In this way a few stalks of Indian corn were permitted to grow, and it would have well nigh been considered *sacrilege* to have destroyed what was so richly suggestive, to thousands of hearts there. How much the remembrance of kindred things had to do with our repeated attempts to escape, I will not say. At any rate we determined to keep them up. I became interested in still another "*tunnel*," and things again proceeded so far that it was almost ready to "*break*." If the weather was favorable, one more night, we thought, would be sufficient to complete the arrangement, and put us on the way to freedom. Before dark I went over to the other side of the camp to see Sergt. Maj. S—, with reference to it, and there learned to my surprise and deep regret, that it *had caved in*, after having been dug a distance of *ninety* feet. Disappointed feeling exclaimed, "*This is too bad!*" All our attempts to escape had been frustrated just as they had seemed on the point of succeeding, but remembering the old school motto—

"If at first you don't succeed,  
*Try, try again,*"

we immediately began to dig for another. There might be this advantage in working under the earth, one might possibly keep *dry*. Above, *thunder storms* were the order of the day, sometimes one following another in quick succession.

So much *rain* seemed to hold the *pugilistic* element in check, but the "*raiders*" eventually meant to make up for lost time. On the return of a pleasant morning, they had five distinct fights before roll-call, which was in the early part of the day; but one must remember we had no laws but those of our own making, and these could not be enforced with authority they thought binding. There seemed no way but for every one to follow the bent of his own inclination, and in numberless instances the leaning of the "*tree*" showed the unhappy twisting of the "*twig*" at some other period of history.

For some days no prisoners were brought in, a circumstance that was quite *remarkable*, since they had been coming so rapidly

almost every day, for a long time. But the absence of this excitement was balanced by the rumor in general circulation, that a thousand men were to be taken out of prison for the purpose of

#### RETALIATION,

as our government had showed signs of doing the same thing for the Fort Pillow massacre. "If it is so," we said, "let them try it, and see how they will succeed." "Perhaps in some way they may get a full cup wrung out to them."

Amid all these unpleasant episodes of prison life we continued to brighten many an evening hour by talking over old home scenes, and rehearsing the jolly times of old in our regiment, before we had been called "to hang our harps upon the willows," in a strange land. These things furnished us with material for lively conversations, and reminded us of a story of two men who were once placed in the confinement of a cell for some years, for a matter relating to truth and conscience. No light was ever given them to show them the dismal walls of their windowless, sunless

apartment, or to reveal to each other the features of his companion. They could only listen to each other's voices, and the first year they whiled away the time by rehearsing in each others ears every little incident of their lives. The second year they amplified and embellished these as best they could, but the third found them altogether talked out, and no alternative left them but *perpetual silence*, so that the *weariness* of their confinement pressed heavily upon them, and there was danger that the mind would cease its power to work. It required no very great stretch of the imagination to take in the *truth* of this. *Activity of mind*, in any case, requires that it have its appropriate aliment to stimulate it, and shut out for any considerable period of time from all this, it will necessarily grow feeble and sluggish. It is true that, as far as *numbers* were concerned, these were enough, but all were in the same condition, circumscribed in range of thought and action.

It came to be quite an era in our lives if we could be guarded to the adjacent woods for a season. Several of the boys were

allowed to go out in this manner on the 11th of what would have been the "*month of roses* in our own land. Sergeant F—— and one of the Corporals from our own little squad went out, and came back in great glee, bringing with them some beautiful flowers, and what was of more *use* to us, a good supply of wood. They brought us a glowing account of the *beauties* of the *outside world*, making us ask again, in addition to times unnumbered before, "*When* will our irksome confinement end?" That night the sun went down like a *globe of fire*, in the midst of rain clouds, and thus closed another week of our stay in what so many have called the "*sunny South*."

We awoke Sunday morning to find our *thoughts* "*homeward bound*," as usual. We wondered what they were doing, thinking and saying there, and it really seemed to do us good to think and dream of *home*. We felt that we should be fully prepared to appreciate its comforts, if we should live to return. Sixty-eight prisoners came in that day from Sherman's army, which they reported to



be near Marietta. The rations which awaited them and us were a few spoonsfull of uncooked rice, a tea spoonful of salt, and about two ounces of bacon, and this to be cooked and eaten amid the mud and misery which a regular "*north-easter*" was producing about us.

It was said that *one hundred and two* died that day, and from what I saw I think it was true. We became so accustomed to death, it lost all its solemnities, and was looked upon as nothing unusual. Indeed, one or two could almost always be seen *dying* at the brook-side. For some reason the roll-call was omitted on the following morning, and the Sergeants of the "*nineties*" received orders to send the sick up to the prison gate. This at once gave foundation to the report that these were to be sent off to our lines, and that a large number beside were to be *paroled*. Many believed the rumor, and there was excitement for a while, but it soon passed away, as no one left. We were to learn that it was not very easy to gain a transition from our mud and filth to dry, cleanly things. It was very damp from incen-

sant rain, and we suffered with the cold, but were better off than hundreds, yea, *thousands*, who lay down every night to seek their rest without any covering at all. Belle Island could not have been much worse. "Will God prosper a government which treats defenceless men like this?" we asked, and we were answered, "No! it is a *sin* to think so for a moment."

When I would have to stay in my little dog-kennel of a tent nearly the whole day, on account of rain, it was hard sometimes to keep from "*feeling blue*," but I had kept up good spirits so long, I reasoned with myself upon the propriety of continuing the same until I should step within Uncle Sam's lines, and then it would require no effort to be light-hearted; it would come as a matter of course. I emerged from my narrow quarters for a little season, on the afternoon of such a day, hoping to luxuriate in the woods for a time, as it was our turn to obtain fuel. We waited at the gate a long time, with the expectation of having it opened unto us, but were finally told by the rebel Sergeant that

we could not go, and we went back to our tent again, to do as best we could, with our meal and bacon.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### ARRIVAL OF PRISONERS.

ABOUT the middle of the month things seemed to be growing worse and worse. Twenty-three hundred prisoners came in, in two days, the fifteenth and sixteenth, partly from Grant's army, but more from Butler's. "*Poor fellows!*" we said silently, as they came in, "it is an awful place for you to come into just now." It was bad enough at any time, but worse than ever then, because of the mud and filth which everywhere covered the ground. Several of our regiment who were left behind to take care of the wounded at Plymouth, were brought along with them, introducing a welcome visitor, in "*Trip,*" Co. B's little dog, who had been with us long months before we were taken. We at once

concluded to consider him a fortunate dog if he was not converted into *steak* or *soup* in the early part of his residence among us. We were actually suffering from *hunger*. When I attempted to arise from a sitting posture I would find myself dizzy and *blind* for a few moments, and I could attribute it to nothing but our exceedingly meagre diet. It was poor in *quantity* and miserable in *quality*. At this time we had but just wood enough to cook a little rice for breakfast, and we could have nothing more the remainder of the day. Let the intensity of our *cravings* be ever so great, there was no remedy. Six of our "*ninety*" were at length permitted to gather their "*handful of sticks*," that we might cook our cake of meal on the morrow, and truly men must be of the *true metal* to remain *staunch and true* through all this. That they did the following little incident will testify.

#### A YANKEE TRAITOR

who works in Americus, making shoes for the Jeff Davis government, said to be first and foremost in the shop, came into camp and was

caught trying to entice out others to work with him. It excited the indignation of many, and as a fit punishment for what was esteemed his villainy, he was taken and half of his head shaved, and then left to make his way out, hooted and jeered at by the whole crowd, but even then it was considered altogether too slight for one who would dare tamper with their *loyalty*. This was a jealously guarded treasure through the whole.

Our hopes that things would be better after the visit to the woods, were not realized, for if nothing else were in the way, the rain would seriously interrupt our cooking. The Orderly and myself made a breakfast of corn-meal and water, stirred together without salt, and half cooked upon a tin-plate, and a little scrap of bacon beside, although we felt it to be a shame to dignify such stuff by the name of "*breakfast*."

In the after part of the day I went up for medicine for the sick men in our "*mess*," and while waiting for my turn to be served, I had a good confidential talk with one of the guards, whom I found to be a true Union man.

He had been driven from his home into the Confederate army about four weeks before, although for a year and a half he had managed, in one way and another, to keep out of the service. He was a very intelligent man, of about middle age, and gave it as his opinion that the C. S. A. was about "*played out.*" The heavy rains had destroyed the wheat crop, and it was doubtful in his mind if the Confederate government could subsist us three months longer. The matter thus represented, of course, made it appear more hopeful for us. He was looking for a speedy change in his own condition, for "as soon as your army crosses the Chattahoochee river," he said to me, "I shall turn away from these things and seek my home." When I returned to my tent after this interview, I found that the old stories had been renewed with great zest, and that some believed that transports were at Savannah, with rebel prisoners for exchange. The number, however, who had been ready to receive such doctrine had greatly diminished, and there was no lengthened exultation over this.

Scenes of a different character soon engaged our attention. A man who was quietly sleeping in his little blanket tent near the edge of a well, was suddenly buried alive by the falling in of the earth. This was followed not long after, by the wounding of two men by the guard. A man had stepped inside the "*dead line*," and was at once fired upon, but instead of receiving any injury himself, it had fallen on the innocent two who were lying down in their tent. Amid these scenes we noted the arrival of ninety-five more men; those who had belonged to a *raid* sent from Memphis, Tenn., under command of Gen. Sturgis, and were attacked and badly defeated by the rebel Gen. Forrest, at a place in Mississippi. Gen. Sturgis is said to have been *intoxicated* during the engagement, and that as soon as he saw things were likely to go against him, he turned away with a portion of his cavalry, and sought to save himself from capture. A recruit for our regiment was among the number who came in. He was captured on a raid in Hertford Co., N. C., and that was the first time he had ever seen the

*Sixteenth*, to which he was bound. Quite a novel place to join them in.

On the morning of the 20th we heard that *gold* was down to 119 in New York, and that many *brokers* had been ruined by its decline. We thought, however, that it was *good news*, if only *true*, for surely it would not have had such a fall, but for great *military successes*, and these were our special delight. We were, ourselves, in a situation to do nothing, and it afforded us intense satisfaction to know that the *wheels of progress* were moving. It called all our energies into requisition to keep the *current of life* in our own bodies from utter stagnation. We attempted to build a *mud stove* for our comfort, as there was plenty of that material at hand, but the rain made our labor ineffectual. Already we had seen *twenty days* of rain in succession, and we began to reckon on becoming used to it. That day Corporal B——, of our regiment, who had been long time in a sickly condition, finished his earthly course. He was the first of our number to die in that place, and it very naturally gave rise to the inquiry, in



thoughtful minds, "Who will go next through the *dark valley* into the spirit world?" The blows of the *fell destroyer* were falling thick and fast, and none could ward them off. By night and day he rioted in our midst, claiming his victims by the score, and forcing upon us the reflection that

"The appointed house, by heaven's decree,  
Receives us all at last."

While awaiting the completion of the new stockade, the roll-call was omitted a few mornings, and lest some have a wrong idea of this, I will here say, that *names* were never called, but every morning a rebel Sergeant would make his appearance, at which time we would fall in, four ranks deep, when he would count us, and make sure that everything was right before he left us. This intermission, we thought, would have afforded us a fine opportunity to escape without being missed, if other things had been favorable, but hitherto some "*unconquerable bar*" had always been interposed between us and freedom, and there seemed little encouragement to proceed. Beside, the rebels were on the alert, being in

constant expectation of an attack, as it was reported that our cavalry were in the immediate vicinity. Nearly all the forces about the prison were sent away, leaving scarcely none but the guard on the stockade. In this period two hundred more from Gen. Sturgis' *raid* came in, all giving the same story in regard to the shameful conduct of their commander. Thus can it be seen how little our every-day life varied. Almost constantly we were seeing new ones come in to swell the tide of misery for themselves and us. Now we would see a "*raider*" led by our tent in chains, with his head shaved, to some place of punishment, and again the report of some gun would tell us that some poor and perhaps unconscious trespasser had gone too near the line of death, and had sealed his fate with his blood. It was so on that day. One poor fellow was shot through the body just for reaching inside the "*line*," to get a *root* for the purpose of making a little fire to do some cooking. The one who thus shoots a soldier, it is said, receives a "*furlough*," as a reward for the very *virtuous deed* he has done. The

absolute truth of this I can not vouch for, but I have noticed that almost invariably the man who performs such an act is relieved from duty by another person, and he is not seen. Desirable as a *furlough* might be, I would poorly relish it, if gained only by murdering a helpless fellow creature. Not long after this I narrowly escaped a similar fate myself. Going up after medicine for the "ninety," I ignorantly stepped over the boundary line, but looking up just in season to observe the attitude of the too willing sentinel, I saw my danger and saved my life.

Almost every afternoon, at four o'clock, it was the duty of the Sergeant of the "nineties" to obtain remedies for the sick, provided there were any to be had. After roll-call in the morning the sick ones were allowed to go out of the gate, into an enclosure made for the purpose, and the rebel surgeons would prescribe for them, and also admit a few to the hospital. Then, whatever their sufferings might be, they must go nearly all the day long with nothing to alleviate them, but we might consider it good fortune if, even then,

any soothing draught could be obtained where-with to ease the pain which was often times intense, from the aggravated form which disease would almost necessarily take under such a *regime* as we were all subject to.

The cheerful sunshine came to bless us at length. The twenty-third was a warm, bright day, and three hundred more prisoners marked their entrance into prison then; not a very desirable era in their history, as they will soon find out, we thought. They were from the 2d corps, and were captured at Petersburg, Va., about a week before. They reported our forces close upon that city then, and we fancied it already *ours*;—yes! *ours*, for did we not still belong to the hopeful *Union*, and were not her victories *ours* also? We were identified with our country's struggle in a peculiar sense, and her prosperity was never dearer to us than then. It gave us courage to hear from them that Grant's army was in excellent condition, and constantly receiving reinforcements. Hope was slightly confirmed, also, by the assertion that a copy of the New York Herald was in circulation through the

prison, in which it was stated that "*exchange*" was to commence on the 7th of the coming July, and that transports had already left that city for Savannah, with that end in view. We longed to know if it was *really* so, for the suspense we were in was terrible, and this, combined with the actual privation we were constantly enduring, made the days seem insufferably long. That night we had no bacon with our rations at all,—nothing but a pint and a half of corn meal, and a little salt, for twenty-four hours. Many of the men would eat up what they received at a single meal, and then go hungry until the next issue. The morning following this, we had some fresh meat, from which the orderly and myself made a pretty good soup. That which came to our part of the detachment was very good, but much of it was miserable, being badly *tainted* and *full of maggots*.

During the day, notice was given to all prisoners, who had their money and valuables taken from them at Richmond, to send in their names with the amount of their loss, to Gen. Winder, and he would settle with them. We

assigned it just about the same place in our belief that we did many other things they said, supposing, of course, that it would amount to nothing, or at least nothing more than an order upon the rebel sutler, which was equivalent to the same, at the prices he charged for every thing.

In conjunction with this came another *humbug*. The rebel regiments about us, it was said, had an order read to them at dress parade, announcing to them that in about three weeks they would be allowed a furlough, as the prisoners were to be sent away. It would have been a most agreeable *truth*, but unhappily there was none of that *virtue* about it, and it was perpetrated for reasons best known to our enemies themselves.

The weather was getting very warm, and to preclude the necessity of toiling and sweating in the hot sunshine, we adopted the plan of rising before *sunrise*, to cook our scanty breakfast, and we found it to add materially to our comfort. We could but think of our comrades in the Union army, who were marching and fighting in the intense heat.

“*God grant them victory!*” was our hearty prayer.

General Sturgis' ill-fated raiding party still continued to furnish small additions to our number.

According to the reports they brought, it seemed that opposing forces sometimes came very near each other. Forrest had been within one mile of our pickets at Memphis, and captured many prisoners, and these had been re-captured by a force sent out by our officers to repulse them. We could certainly congratulate the *rescued*. At this time I received a letter from Adjutant Clapp, who was a prisoner at Macon, from which I learned that five generals, eleven colonels, twenty-five lieutenant-colonels, and nine majors—fifty in all—had been sent away from that place for exchange. Lieut. Col. Burnham, of our own regiment, was among the fortunate number.

Plainly the hour of our release had not come, and we must content ourselves as well as we could under rebel jurisdiction, until such time as we could hail the promised *day of jubilee*. Meanwhile, I must studiously consult *duty* and

*interest*, in no wise neglecting the former to secure the latter, unless I wished my life to pay the forfeit.

It again came my turn to go out with the squad after wood. We obtained our scanty supply, and were on our way back to prison, when we stopped for a few moments to rest. I improved the opportunity to dig all the *red root* that I could, as it was a valuable remedy for *diarrhea*, which was distressingly prevalent in camp. The sergeant in charge of the guard was rather cross and surly, and allowed us but a little time to get breath, and then ordered us on again. In my haste I left my knife upon the ground, and did not discover my loss until I was nearly back to the stockade. The sergeant then refused to let me return for it. I was just giving it up for lost, when Captain Wirz came riding along, and as a last resort I appealed to him. For a wonder he told me to go with him, and, walking his horse, he went with me to the spot where I had used the knife, and thus I recovered it. If I had failed to find it, he would have doubtless thought I was guilty of deception, and shot me through



without any remorse whatever. As we went back toward the prison-gate, we met other squads of prisoners going after wood, under guard, and seeing me in company with the "*Old Dutchman*," they supposed I had been captured in an attempt to escape, and consequently had a great many jokes at my expense. The captain, noticing this, remarked to me, "*They tinks you have pen up to some tevilment.*" The next day when the squad was called for again to go out after wood, no one wished to go, and I concluded to try it once more, though my feet were pretty sore.

While we were waiting at the gate to let the *dignitaries* pass us through, there came up a thunder-storm, and as a matter of course we received a thorough drenching. We were not to be intimidated by this, however, and went on, finding it all the more pleasant in the woods because of it. Our guard this time were very accomodating, and we had a right good time among the trees and flowers. While we were out, six or seven hundred prisoners from Grant's army entered the prison, and about the same number had been introduced

the day before. The last ones had been treated with the greatest severity at Richmond. They had been stripped and searched, and at length turned in upon us with almost nothing for their comfort.

The days now when prisoners did not come in were *exceptions*. About three hundred and fifty came on the 29th, mostly from Western Virginia, and they brought us some good tidings. They informed us that Gen. Pope entered Lynchburg while Gen. Hunter had drawn away the enemy's forces by a feigned retreat, and that he had destroyed the immense tobacco warehouses in the city, and also the large bridge over the James river at that point, although he failed to hold the place.

One of the men told me that he bought a paper on his way, which stated that the exchange of prisoners would commence on the 7th of the following month. As this coincided in every respect with a previous report, we could not but think it had some foundation. Surely anything that would appear *twice alike* must mean something.

These *new comers* afforded the "*raiders*," or camp-robbers, fresh opportunities to continue their work. They seized upon one of these, and it was soon seen that it was

#### A ROBBERY

in earnest. After severely beating and cutting his head, they took from him his watch and \$175 in money. He entered a complaint to Captain Wizz, and the whole camp being completely aroused, a crowd collected, armed with clubs, who began to arrest the gang as fast as possible. As soon as one was caught, he was handed outside to the care of the rebels, who were to watch over them until they could be tried by our men. A few, against whom positive proof could not at once be brought, were sent into prison again, where they had to run the gauntlet between a long line of enraged men, who, armed with heavy clubs, dealt blows at the miscreants as they ran past.

One man was killed while undergoing the punishment. About fifty of the band were caught, and the prospect was good that the

*infernal* proceedings which had so long been continued would come to an end.

All through the next day they were hunted with great success. The Rebel Quartermaster, rebel sergeants and guard, went into the prison, and, piloted by a notorious character known as "*Limber Jim*," and his comrades, they soon ferreted out the infamous scoundrels. They were taken outside, where they were to be tried by a jury of twelve men selected from the newly arrived, who of course would know the least about them, and would therefore be more impartial in rendering the verdict. Beneath their tents were found knives, pistols, watches, money, &c., and it is said that buried beneath one tent was the body of a man who was supposed to have been murdered by them.

It was a day of great excitement, and one which we thought would place an effectual barrier against such operations in the future.

Fourteen prisoners came in on the afternoon of the day, and among them was James Martin, of our regiment, whom we all supposed to be dead. His appearance created quite a sen-

sation, and we gave him a hearty welcome to our *hearts*, if not to the *prison*.

He was wounded on the skirmish line at Plymouth, on the second night of the attack, and was then taken prisoner and conveyed to Wilson C. H., North Carolina, where he was treated with the utmost kindness, so that he became quite well.

While the surgeons were attending to our sick at this time, they were suddenly ordered off, and left in a hurry without much ceremony. We conjectured that there might be special need of their services at Atlanta, and that this was the cause of their hasty departure.

On the first day of July, the

#### ADDITION TO THE STOCKADE

was completed and opened for the reception of the prisoners. All detachments, above forty-eight in number, were ordered to be inside of it in *two hours*, and failing to do this, their blankets, &c., would be confiscated. This, then, was the alternative,—thirteen thousand men must crowd through an opening about

*ten feet* wide, in two hours, or lose all their little property which was so very precious to them there. There was a perfect stampede towards the open place, and the camp, *generally*, presented a very animated scene. We grew "*beautifully less*" in a short time, leaving us a larger space in which to move and breathe, than we had known for a considerable period.

Our own regiment was to retain its position as before. During the night the part of the old stockade left standing between us and the new, was visited by an extensive "*raiding*" party, the men from all parts of the prison working until nearly morning in pulling down and carrying it off for fuel, so that at daylight but a very small portion of it was left standing. Then came the rumor that Capt. Wirz had ordered that no more rations should be issued until the timber was replaced, but such orders we received with the same coolness as usual. The day was filled with more or less excitement on account of the reports concerning "*exchange*," which were flying through the camp. The date fixed

upon was the 7th of the month, and as this was the same we had heard mentioned at two different times, and upon separate occasions, before, we thought it might be possible that it had a truthful foundation. We heard, too, that the people of the North were greatly aroused in regard to the subject, and were holding indignation meetings, and petitioning Congress to interpose in our behalf. If this were true, we hoped for good results to accrue, and therefore looked with some solicitude to the approaching day. The intervening time was short, and *hope*, and sometimes *fear*, was in the ascendant, lest the story should prove a fiction, and we be still left "*in the storm.*" We could only bring ourselves to meet it, if it should be, and

" With a heart for any fate,  
Still achieving, still pursuing,  
Learn to labor and to wait."

The latter grace, particularly, it seemed we might gain to perfection, if we were apt pupils at all. We were realizing the vision of the *poet*, in more than one respect, for we were leaving "*footprints,*" not only upon "*the sands of time,*" but perchance upon other and more

enduring material. Our imprisonment had a purpose to accomplish, and the part it would perform in future history might do more than we could imagine. Thus we might sublimely *theorize*, but our painful experience would still thrust itself upon us, and make our *desires* strong and earnest for the fulfillment of our hopes that had been newly awakened.

The first Sabbath of the month came on the third, and we thought of our friends at home gathering around the sacramental table, and we longed to be there, to enjoy with them the blessed feast, and the communion of kindred spirits, but we knew we were not forgotten; that, though absent, there were many who would send us a *wish* and a *thought*, and that in *prayers* which would wing their way upward the *soldier* and the *friend* would have a place.

*Life in camp* certainly needed grace, in measures "*large and free*," to keep the *spirit* quiet, for externally there was but little to calm the mind and stay its restless surges. Through this Sabbath there was a great deal of confusion, among the prisoners composing



the newly arrived detachments, and it took almost the entire day to get things into a condition of tolerable order. Roll-call was resumed throughout the entire prison, and no rations at all issued in all the long hours, so that we laid down to our rest at night, the *helpless victims of hunger*. We thought a corresponding *prison-life* might be a good *reform school* for some of the *Northern copperheads*; they would be so struck with the amount of sympathy displayed by their "*Southern brethren*;" their "*wayward sisters*."

Monday brought "*the glorious fourth*." One year before, it had found us *up the Peninsula*, about eighteen miles from Richmond. Little did we dream that its next anniversary would find us in such a predicament, but there we were, and we must make the best of it. We wondered what was being done; if Richmond was ours, and with it Lee's army, or if we were to fight longer for the prize. The "rebs" were busy all day in re-numbering the detachments, preparatory to a parole, it was said. Our number was changed from forty-three to ninety-five, and we had numberless

secret questionings as to what effect it would have upon our destiny, if *exchange* should really be determined upon. I wished to keep fast hold of my confidence in the government, although the faith of many was growing weak. Reason asserted that there must be some satisfactory *why* that we were not exchanged, for surely we would not be left to die of gradual starvation, month after month, without it were so. I saw a man in the morning who was completely discouraged, and, really, he seemed partially *insane*. He refused to eat what little was given him, and declared that he was going to die in that way. "*You will not have to try very hard,*" I said to myself, as I gazed upon his pallid face and emaciated form. It seemed that all must meet a similar fate, unless there should be some change, for the material for food that we had just received was raw, and we had no means whatever of cooking anything then, as wood was wanting. Notwithstanding our cheerless condition, some were inclined to show some remembrance of the day. One of the boys had a few *percussion caps*, and by

snapping these with a *fragment of brick* and a *tenpenny nail*, we had a *miniature celebration*, the *oration* and *refreshments* being indefinitely postponed. It might be that at *home* they were firing *cannon* over some victory that we knew nothing about; perhaps publicly eulogizing some General who had suddenly won immortal fame by some brilliant achievement, and thus fostering *national pride*. We hoped it were so, for *loyalty* had not been *starved* out of us altogether, and we could rejoice in the *country's prosperity* even there.

It was not very warm just at this time, but we had a great deal of sickness. The Catholic priest was in almost daily, visiting the sick of his own order, and giving a word of good counsel to all. He was untiring in his administration of the rites and consolations of the Romish church to sick and dying Catholics. Clergymen of orthodox denominations I thought would do well to imitate his example in faithfulness and kindness to the dying soldier. We sometimes tried to draw out from him some information of matters in the

world outside, but we could seldom gain anything, as he was not allowed to make any communications to the prisoners under penalty of being forbidden admission to the prison.

Evenings called together a circle for *prayer*, and we had some good seasons in letting *faith* rise into a "*serener atmosphere*," and who shall tell how richly freighted with blessing were those evening breezes to the waiting souls; who tell of the *heavenly whisperings*? since

"More things are wrought by *prayer*,  
Than this world dreams of."

It was understood at this time that it would become a permanent institution, and that every return of the twilight hour, would bring the praying band together in some part of the camp.

On the 6th our number was increased by three or four hundred from Danville, Va., who had been captured in an attempt to destroy the railroad. They tore it up for a distance of thirty miles before they were obliged to discontinue their labors by rebel interference.

They told us that Gen. Speare was there with his cavalry brigade, and we counted upon something being done, since he never did things by halves. They all agreed in saying that Richmond was completely surrounded, and that everything was working well, the fighting continuing day and night, worse, if anything, during the latter season, than in the day. We set this down as *good* and *reliable*, and hoped accordingly.

We concluded the day with another interesting meeting by the *brook-side*, near our quarters, and we could but think it would have some good effect. The boys seemed more willing than ever to "*hear the word*," and it is to be hoped that the *Recording Angel* carried some good news to the upper world that night, respecting some poor soul in that little assembly.

The day so long before fixed upon for the commencement of the work of exchange, at length dawned upon us, and each hour found us anxiously awaiting the revelations of the next. We watched for the moments to be "*big with blessing*," but they did not come.

Nothing unusual marked any part of the day, and at night one might have looked in upon *hundreds* and *thousands* of disappointed ones. Many had firmly believed it for a long time. They had confidently expected that it would be the date of their release. It was a *release from earth* to one of our regiment. J. Hoskins closed his eyes upon all that was mortal that day, and the mysterious fingers of death were busy in severing the cord that bound several others to *life*. I then wished that the *President*, under whose banner we had fought, could look in upon our sufferings, for surely the sight would move him to help us, if any thing could be done. *Live worms* crawled upon the bacon that was given us to eat. "*It is all right,*" we said; "we are nothing but *Yankee prisoners*, or, as the rebels usually speak of us, "*darned Yankees.*"

A party of three hundred more took up their permanent abode with us on the 8th. One hundred and twenty-five were from James Island near Charleston, and the remainder from Petersburg, Va. Those from the former place were captured in a miserably

sustained attack upon it, led by Gen. Davis. *Five* of the *forty* boats that were to land their forces, they say, had touched the shore, when a fire of grape and canister sent terror to the hearts of the rest, who beat a hasty and cowardly retreat, leaving their General and the men who had already landed to fall into the hands of our enemies, and theirs. The following day, four hundred more names were entered on the roll-call. These, too, came from the vicinity of Petersburg, having been all the while since the 27th of June in reaching us. Some of our old friends in *Spear's Cavalry* were in the crowd, to begin their experience of the horrors of rebel administration.

Almost every day brought something to excite fresh disgust. A short time after the opening of the *new apartment*, I took a stroll over to its ground, and had a look at some of the new wells that were being dug there. One of them had been sunk to the depth of sixty-five feet, and still lacked completion. It was very difficult to obtain water in this manner, and the great mass of the prisoners had to depend for their supply on the little brook

which ran through the prison, and which a great part of the time was *completely covered with floating grease and offal from the cook-house*, which was situated just outside the stockade. Of course nothing but *stern necessity* would have made them willing ever to have touched their lips to such a forbidding mixture. How grateful then would have been the clear water of some bubbling spring from the Northern hill-sides! How refreshing would have been a draught from some "*old oaken bucket*" in a "*moss-covered well*," whose sparkling depths had not been stirred by unclean hands! It would have seemed like a "*God-send*" to many a weary prisoner, especially to the thirsty, fever-stricken invalids. The suffering occasioned by lack in this respect can be seen in the following instance, which was only one of many. One morning the Rebel authorities issued an order to the effect that all who were too sick to walk should be carried outside the prison-gate by their comrades. Such a great number went up that they were not all allowed to go out, and those who did were *left nearly all day in the burning hot sun*, before they were conveyed



to the hospital, without a *drop of water*. We were told upon good authority, that *about thirty of them died* while lying there in that wretched condition. What might not *pure, cold water* have done for some of them? It was only a specimen of the utter heartlessness of our foes. We felt that we would be glad if the suffering could be limited to those already in, instead of having it constantly augmented by new arrivals; but there seemed no prospect of an *end*, for the army at Petersburg were again diminished by *eleven hundred*, while ours increased correspondingly. These men had to march *eighty miles*, in consequence of the destruction of the railroads by our *raiding* parties. This looked like operating somewhat unfavorably upon Gen. Lee's communications.

Sickness, now, was rapidly increasing. Many of the boys had been obliged to give up and go to the hospital. Uncooked rations, *without salt or wood to cook them with*, were the order of the day. Hearing that Hitchcock of Co. C in our regiment, was sick, I went over to see him. He was almost gone. Not many hours after, he went to his long home, where no

rebel could trouble him any more. He was a quiet, good boy, and, we believe, ready for his summons to depart. Thus, another of our number has ended his marches and conflicts, his trials and sorrows.

Strangely different scenes often follow each other in prison, and it was so at this time. The 12th was a day of unusual excitement.

#### A GALLOWS

had been erected on the south side of the prison, and it was said that half a dozen of the *camp-robbers*, who had been tried and found guilty, were to be hung. At half-past four in the afternoon, Capt. Wirz came in with the *six*, under a rebel guard, and turned them over to the Police, or Vigilance Committee. They had been convicted of *murder* and *robbery*, and were sentenced to be *hung until they were dead*.

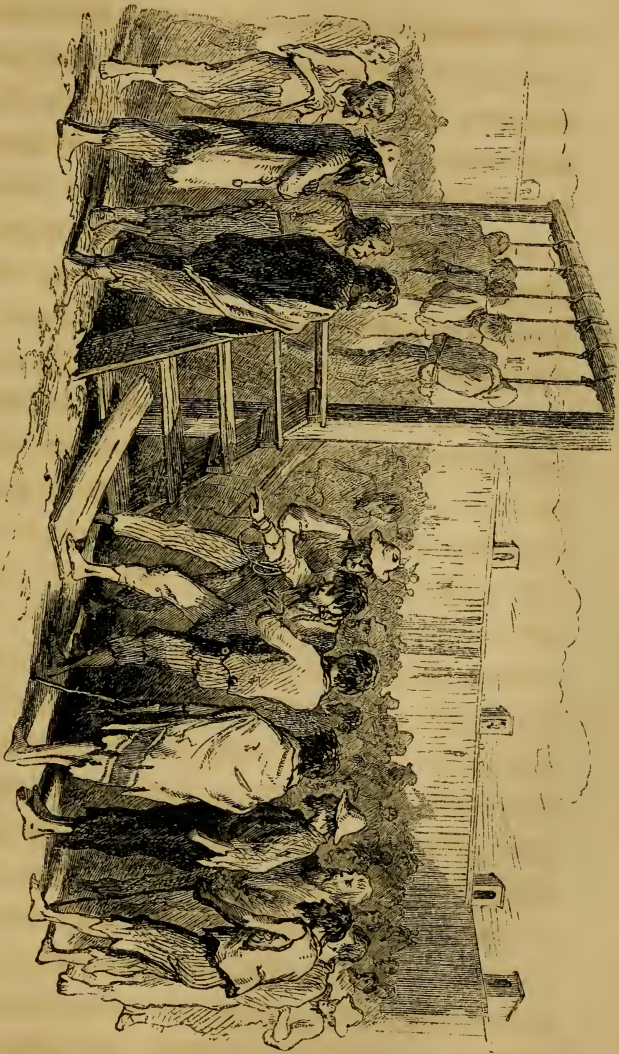
Upon giving them up for punishment, he made the following remarks: "These men have been tried and convicted by their own fellows, and I now return them to you in as good condition as I received them. You can now do with them as your reason, justice, and

mercy dictates. And may God protect both you and them."

The Catholic priest begged hard that their lives might be spared, but finding himself unsuccessful in this, he turned his attention to their spiritual condition, and spent a season in prayer for them. They themselves seemed strangely unconcerned, apparently thinking it was simply an affair got up thoroughly to frighten them, and they appeared to cling to the idea, even until they had ascended the platform erected for their execution. As they were about mounting the scaffold, one of them broke from the men who were holding him, and ran through the crowd, across the swamp, to the opposite hill-side, as if by one desperate effort he would escape his fearful doom, that began to take on the semblance of reality. He was captured, however, and led back; and as he was securely placed with the other five, such *forlorn wretchedness*, such *miserable hopelessness*, was visible in his countenance, as is impossible to describe. Opportunity was given them to speak, if they had any thing they wished to say. They said a few words, bidding

their comrades take warning by their fate. One, mindful of his relatives in this last hour, wished a friend to call upon them in New York City, if he should live to get home. These words ended, meal-sacks were drawn over their heads, the fatal ropes were adjusted, and as the drop fell, the rope around the neck of the leader of the gang *broke*, thus setting him free. He was at once taken up, had it re-adjusted, and was pushed off; the whole six were thus suddenly launched into the eternal world. It was a sad spectacle to see their bodies swinging in the air, but we felt it to be just, and another illustration of the truth, that "The way of transgressors is hard."

Their depredations had been carried on so long, and with such a bold hand; they had become so reckless of human life and property, it was necessary that an example should be made of them in such a way as to make a lasting impression upon all those who should be similarly inclined. Prisoners were coming in every day. Of course the crowd comprised all classes and dispositions, and it was desirable to have some system of *law and order* that would control the mass.



EXECUTION OF UNION PRISONERS.

JANUARY 24



The knowledge of such a fact would, at least, inspire the newly-arrived with something of *wholesome fear*, and the general tendency would be to keep in check a like outburst. Although the "*raging element*" had been comparatively small, it had been productive of most unhappy consequences, and we longed to have it shorn of its power, and severe measures were alone requisite for its accomplishment.

Five or six hundred came from Petersburg before the day closed.

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## CHAPTER V.

### NEW "TUNNELS."

ABOUT this time the influx of prisoners was rapid and great. Six or seven hundred came in on the morning of the 12th. They brought us information that we could hardly credit:—that the remnant of our regiment was consolidated with the 6th and 7th Conn. Volunteers, and were in the front at Petersburg. It *might*

be true, but of one thing we were certain, that we were still condemned to mush and meat, and it kept the idea of escape in constant agitation. Having made the acquaintance of Sergt. Maj. C——, who was interested in the subject, I finally decided to try "tunneling" again, in company with him, H. P——, and others. I had very little hope of success, however, since we had been baffled in so many attempts, but I called upon Jack F——, an old and experienced hand in the business, and received so much good advice, I felt encouraged to go on, when the favorable time for working should appear. This was not at all hours, as has been seen. Meantime, the usual routine was to be observed with the same calmness as ever. The meeting at evening was upon our side of the prison, and conducted by Sergt. Card, of the 19th Regular Infantry. It was an interesting season, and at its close, it being very pleasant, several of us prolonged our conversation until nearly midnight, rehearsing scenes and stories of the *past*, which came before us pleasantly and vividly.



We awoke early on the following morning, and went to work with the rest of the boys to build a mud stove, our old one having been destroyed by *digging under it for roots to burn*. When we completed it, it was a perfect model in appearance, and attracted a great deal of attention. We only hoped that, for the sake of comfort, it might be as fair in its operations as in its looks. *Great news* was in circulation that morning. The pirate "Alabama," it was said, *was sunk* by three of our steamers, and we were told, also, that Gen. Lee had again invaded Maryland with his army. Various things seemed to exist to cause unwonted excitement. The Sergeants in charge of messes were all ordered outside, in obedience to orders from Capt. Wirz, who informed them that he had discovered an *organized body of six thousand men* who had planned a

## NEW OUTBREAK,

and he threatened if the attempt was made, to *open with his artillery upon the prison, and "fire as long as there was a man kicking."* Somebody had humbugged him in fine style,

for no such thing was in contemplation, much less in process of working.

A little later in the day we were a little excited by hearing the rifled pieces, bearing on the prison, very suddenly discharged. They were loaded with *blank cartridges*, as it proved, and no damage was done. Immediately following these discharges, a great commotion was visible in the rebel camps. The regiments fell in at the *double quick*, and formed in line of battle around the stockade. All the pieces of artillery were manned, and we thought our forces must surely be in the vicinity, but such *hopes* were, as usual, blasted, and we learned that it was merely an attempt on the part of the Confederate authorities to see how quick they could get their troops out in case we really should try to force the stockade. Amid it all, the Captain so far softened as to promise that we might go out after wood under guard, at the same time acknowledging that "*he knew we were suffering for it.*" He spoke, also, of our President, as *Mr. Lincoln*, in the course of his remarks, and we thought it quite an improvement on

the titles with which he had been wont to designate him. The next day our *forces* numbered seventy more, who had been captured near Atlanta. They were bearers of *positive* news, to the effect that two corps of Gen. Sherman's army had crossed the Chattahoochee river, and that Atlanta itself, and Johnston's army, were in a *tight place*. Such information we were always glad to receive. It greatly encouraged us. There was a prayer meeting in the evening, as usual, but as it was the time for the newly organized company to commence the *tunnel* operation, we repaired to the spot, but circumstances being unfavorable, it amounted to nothing, and the prospect seemed to indicate that it would die out altogether. Probably past experience was not without its influence.

Soon after roll-call, on the morning of the 16th, a rebel Sergeant came in with an order from Capt. Wirz, for the Sergeant of our "*ninety*" to come out and rectify a mistake which had been made in the roll of names. Sergt. L—— being on the other side of the prison with his brother, I went out in his

place and did the required business. On my way back to the prison from the Captain's office, I quietly shouldered a *pine log*, which lay invitingly near the road-side, and carried it in. For a wonder, the rebel officers made no objection to it, and we really exulted in our valuable prize, for our "*ninety*" had had no wood given them by the "*rebs*" since the 30th of June, or *nearly a month*, and *uncooked* rations had been distributed to us many times. About the only variety we had in those days was a little *sorghum molasses* with our corn meal. *Salt*, we concluded, was a scarce article in the confederacy, since we would pass four whole days in succession without seeing any. While our *temporal* wants were thus poorly supplied, we were not wholly denied *spiritual* food. It was a blessed consolation that no earthly foe could interrupt our communion with the *heavenly world*. *He* who visited *Jacob* with bright visions, as he lay upon his stony pillow, could also make a *Bethel* for us in our place of exile. We had *preaching*. Elder Shephard, a Sergeant in the 97th Ohio Reg't, and a prisoner with us, officiated. Just after

one of our quiet sunsets, we gathered together and he gave us a splendid discourse upon the text, "Fight the good fight of faith." He drew a comparison between the *Christian* and the *soldier*, and carried it through in an admirable manner. At the close of the meeting *four* came forward for prayers—one backslider, one new convert, and two who were just beginning to feel the infinite importance of eternal things, and their relation to them. How strange it seemed to be enjoying such privileges in so terrible a place.

The 18th was a sad day for us, for D——, one of our beloved comrades, died. At about five, P. M. I went to see him, and found him in a dying state, *unconscious*, and breathing very hard. I spoke to him, but there came no response. He had spoken his last word upon earth. I left him a few moments to finish cooking my scanty meal, and on my return found him rapidly sinking. He lingered until about sunset, and then passed away. It was a touching sight to look upon; the sober, thoughtful faces of the few comrades who were at his side; the blanket thrown back to

admit as much fresh air as possible, and above all, the glazed eyes and vacant expression of our dead brother. Jackson, of Co. B, conducted a short service over the body, before it was carried out of the *prison gate*. A chapter from the bible—a prayer—and the funeral services of our friend were over.

Such impressions, however, were soon effaced, by the new and exciting topics that were continually coming up. It was so in this case. Rumors began to be in circulation of the nearness of some of our forces, and almost all were whispering, "Something's up." The rebels posted their men about the prison, as if in readiness of some expected attack. Simultaneous with this came up an exciting matter among the prisoners themselves. Some of them started

#### A PETITION,

urging the President, and Governors of States, to procure for us a speedy release, either by parole or exchange. When it came to my knowledge, I had a talk with Sergt. Lee about it, and we both came to the conclusion that it was a *foolish affair*, and one not calculated to

effect anything in getting us out, while, at the same time, it would materially lower our standing as *soldiers* and *men*, both with the government and the people. Asking the former to release us, seemed to imply that *it* could do it, but did not *choose* to, and I was not quite willing to believe that. It was true our number was becoming less every day, by death. Some were being constantly released in this way. A day or two after we had taken leave of D——, we mourned the departure of another dear friend and comrade, C——, of Co. A. He died in the early part of the day, and although he was unconscious, and left no dying testimony, yet we knew from his previous life that his peace was made with God, and that he had gone to be the willing inhabitant of another sphere.

Such were the scenes transpiring *within*. *Without*, all was hurry and excitement, for some cause or other. The rebels were busy as bees in throwing up earth-works, in plain sight of us. Trains were coming up from below, loaded with troops, and a large number

of new tents were pitched near the railroad station, and things generally indicated uncommon stir and bustle. The inference we very naturally drew from it was, that the Yankee raiders were nearer than had been reported, but we could not tell. They worked away busily upon their breastworks, making them as formidable as they could. As a train came in at eleven o'clock at night, and the whistle was heard, the "Rebs" greeted it with loud cheers, but there was a sudden cessation when they halted, which we attributed to the reception of news that was not very welcome to them.

Seventy-five prisoners came in during the 21st, from Gen. Sherman's army. One of them was placed in our "ninety," to fill the vacancy caused by the death of C———. He was a member of the 11th Kentucky Cavalry, and was in Atlanta the morning before his entrance to prison, at which time most of our army had crossed the river, and our skirmish line was but three miles from the city. The railroad upon which he found conveyance to Andersonville, was cut an hour afterwards by a party of



our cavalry. It was said, also, that our forces were operating in the vicinity of Columbus, Ga., and destroying all the flouring-mills in their way. We were not particularly jubilant over this, for it seemed quite likely to affect our rations, and we could ill brook a reduction in this matter. We had hoped that some of them would come to our liberation, but if there was a way in which we could accomplish our own, we would wait for nothing. The "tunnel" had finally been carried through, and was so nearly ready we counted on passing through it at night; but just before sunset the "Rebs" made the discovery.

Four of the boys were at work in it at the time, and of course were caught; but instead of meeting with punishment, the Rebel Quartermaster gave them each a *double ration* for the skillful manner in which they had constructed the "tunnel." It seemed of little use for the men to think of getting out, but they were coming in by the hundred. Six hundred came on the morning after our attempted escape. They were a part of Wilson's raiders, and were captured on the 29th of June, but

had since been detained at Richmond on account of the interruption of their railroad facilities. While things were thus proceeding, the rebels were using all their available time for the strengthening of their position. The result of their labor soon became apparent in the long line of fortification which appeared a little way from the stockade, and directly in front of it. Evidently, it was the intention of the enemy to use us as a shield for themselves in case of an attack, for an assault could not be made on them without exposing us to the fire of our own men. It would be a sorry day for them, we thought, if they should undertake to commit so dastardly a deed. Things at this time were hard for us. A small allowance of corn-bread was our principal article of diet. I began to look about me to see if there was any thing in my possession with which I could part, that I might have something a little different. My strength was failing, owing in great measure to the miserable and insufficient fare, and a change of food seemed absolutely necessary. I thought of my *gold pen*, that had done me daily service, and resolved to sell

that. Thus decided, I went forth to see if I could raise money for my need in this way, but the first day my efforts were all unavailing. It would not do to let courage die out, so I said, "Perhaps I will be more successful to-morrow;" and so it proved, for I finally succeeded in selling it to a Rebel Lieutenant for *three bars of soap*. I then sold the soap for five dollars and twenty cents in "greenbacks," retaining a good sized piece for my own use. The following morning I went over to the Rebel Sutler's, bright and early, and invested my little fortune in beans and salt, and for that day I had something good to eat, in comparison with my usual food. I felt much better every way, and was convinced that it was nothing but *gradual starvation* that had made me feel so weak. Oftentimes, the *quality* of what little we did have was such as to destroy even the small appetite we had. I not only managed to obtain some variety of food by my trade, but it really varied the monotony of prison life a little by my speculations therein; but what would my parents say, I said to myself, if they should see their only

son seated on the ground, selling beans by the pint, and loudly extolling their excellent qualities. It was a condition of things best appreciated by those who were receiving nothing but three spoonfuls of sorghum molasses and less than half a loaf of corn bread to live on for twenty-four hours.

We heard from one of the clerks outside that Atlanta had really fallen into our hands, and that eighteen thousand of the prisoners were to be removed to other prisons in different parts of the South, and most earnestly did we hope that we might be of the number, since things were growing worse and worse with us. The petition scheme was not yet abandoned. One of the principal actors in the affair came around one morning, with the much-talked-of document, and requested our action in the matter.

Sergt. Levaughn ordered the "ninety" to fall in, the petition was read aloud so that all could hear, and then we were called upon to vote whether we would give it our indorsement or not. When the "ayes" were demanded, *not a man* responded to them; but the "nays" were

given *with a will*. Mr. Petitioner did not find it convenient to stay about our quarters long, and we missed him very soon. The majority of the prisoners, however, were in favor of the measure, although our vote was so decidedly against it.

Our prison army received reinforcements to about five hundred on the morning of the 27th. A greater part of them were "one hundred days" men, and had been taken by Early in his Pennsylvania raid. They came in with their knapsacks, but the cavalry who were with them, some of Wilson's party, were stripped and robbed as cavalry usually are. The rebels always seemed determined to wreak special vengeance on these men. I have seen them come in hatless, shoeless, without even their coats or blouses. They brought the story of exchange that was to take effect in August. It hardly seemed that these men could have any object in fabricating such news, but it had proved false so many times, we did not dare believe it then. The next day a thousand more made their entrance through the gate that was always open to

*receive*, but never to *depart*. A better looking set of men, and men better provided with things, had not come in since the Plymouth garrison entered in May. Nearly all of them had their knapsacks and blankets, besides a new suit of Uncle Sam's *blue*. Why the rebels allowed them to come in without robbing them at all, was more than we could account for. Just before they came in at the prison-gate, the "Rebs" in the fort around the Captain's quarters fired a *solid shot* across the prison, directly over our heads. A large crowd of us had gathered near the gate, to watch the new-comers, and the "Johnnies," thinking we might possibly seize upon the opportunity to make a break and get out, had fired over us in this manner to intimidate us.

What a howl of derision went up from "the doomed thirty thousand!"

Soon after this, a line of poles was planted through the prison, to which were nailed

#### WHITE FLAGS,

not as a sign of surrender, but as a warning to us, that no crowd should approach nearer

the gate than those, under penalty of being fired upon with artillery,—that is, when prisoners were being marched in. Their utility might have been quickly tested, for several hundred more came in the same day, and, like their immediate predecessors, they were provided with blankets, and well prepared to “stand grief,” if things *external* would conduce to it.

The latter part of the month, the rebels were moving around in camp, endeavoring to entice prisoners outside to work at *shoemaking* for the so-called “Confederate” government. They had done this before, and we then thought they would be careful how they did it again; but they had much to do about this time, and no doubt they thought it would be very desirable to have help. If they were successful in obtaining it, I am ignorant of it. They still continued to work faithfully upon their fortifications, not discontinuing their labor, even for the Sabbath. This was strange to us, for they had usually paid some regard to the observance of holy time, and we wondered what so much preparation could mean.

We could hardly think that they would take so much pains, and put themselves to so much trouble, as to do it simply to prevent an *outbreak* on our part. We therefore conjectured it might be as a place for Hood to fall back upon in case of an emergency in his history. They felled an immense number of pine trees, so that the landscape about us began to present quite a barren appearance, and this seemed to indicate the fact that they wished uninterrupted range for their artillery, for some cause or other, but of course we could know nothing, until the actual accomplishment of a thing had made it existing fact. Our information was mostly received through the newly arrived prisoners, but we would sometimes gain a little from some one of the rebel guard with whom we were thrown in contact. In a conversation I had with one, at one time, he remarked to me :

“I had a boy who was a prisoner with your people at the North.” “Indeed,” said I, “how was he *treated*?” “Very kindly, sir, very kindly,” he replied. “Did you receive letters from him while he was in prison?” I continued.



“Yes, sir, he wrote to us and we wrote to him.” “He probably fared much better than we do in this prison,” said I, “did he not?” With great frankness he answered, “Oh! yes, sir,—I reckon you fare pretty hard in there, but we aint to blame for it. The ‘Old Captain’ is as hard on us as he is with you. A heap of us were taken right off our farms, and we left the crops standing, with nobody to tend ’em but the *women folks*.” This is the way, then, I thought, that these men are conscripted. No wonder that “Jeff” manages to keep his army full. Our guards, generally, were an ignorant and superstitious class of men, and spoke the Southern dialect in all its *native purity*. They would sometimes ask us, “What makes you ’uns come down here to fight we ’uns?” and then would follow the confident assertion, “If you ’uns had staid at home there would have been no war.” They had no proper understanding of the true merits of the case at all. They seemed to think that we had come South merely to dispossess them of their property. Many of these were poor whites, and although they do

not own slaves themselves, they stand up as firmly for it as the more wealthy and intelligent. One of the latter, a Kentuckian, and a Surgeon in the Confederate army, said to me one day, "I believe that *slavery* is a *divine institution*. The negroes are placed in our hands, and we will be held accountable at the last day, for the manner in which we have treated them." I wondered if all took that view of it, especially the owner of that slave I had seen so unmercifully beaten a morning before. The Surgeon, himself, said that he "brushed his up a little when they needed it." Indeed, the whole system, say what they might, is one of cruelty and barbarism, and who does not know it?

One little affair happened about this time, which we considered the "cheekiest" thing that had been done by the "Johnnies." It was an attempt to secure the services of our men as artillerists, probably to drill their ignorant conscripts at the guns. A number of their Sergeants were sent, and circulated among our men, ostensibly for this purpose, but we thought it an instance of cool audacity on

their part. Soon after this was another specimen of rebel doings. A man, professing to be a Confederate Chaplain, came into prison, at the request, as he said, of Gen. Winder, and read an extract from the New York Herald, to a large crowd, regarding the matter of exchange. The article stated that the commissioners had met several times, and that through the tact of Col. Mulford, all existing obstacles had been removed, and that an immediate exchange was more than probable. After reading this he held a *religious* service. Whether he really believed what he had read, or whether the whole thing was perpetrated to raise our hopes, and keep us quiet, was more than we could tell. "It would not be strange, if there were none other object than this," was the thought that filled many minds, so faithless had we become in everything they said.

On the 2d of August, it was reported, and denied, also, that about two hundred of the sick in the hospital had been paroled, and were to be sent to our lines. Our men were dying. Three or four of our own regiment

had passed away within a few days. Our distress and exposure was great. I managed to buy a pair of shoes of one of the newly arrived prisoners, for my own comfort, but it was the first time I had worn any for two months. We were often visited by severe thunder storms, and it was not a thing unknown for the lightning to strike a tall pine tree in close proximity to us: beside, we had nothing to shield us from the rain, for our blanket tents had come to be of little worth now, except to shelter us from the burning heat of the sun. They had become sadly worn, and were almost no protection from the storm. One could but notice, at this time, the change which had taken place in us all. When we first entered the prison, we thought the time would not be long that we should have to stay, and we tried to pass the time away as pleasantly as possible. Fine, clear evenings, we would gather together and sing, but now everybody looked care-worn, and the boys moved about quietly and sadly. It was surprising, also, to see how many of the men were victims of insanity; those who had

become so in that place, we could scarcely call anything less than a *hell upon earth*.

One young man, of excellent education, and evidently of good birth, while in this sad condition, would go down to the little brook nearly every day, at noon, when the heat of the sun was most intense, and taking off his clothes, or more appropriately rags, would wade backward and forward, but rarely, if ever, washing himself. Seeing him one day, while performing his accustomed round, I said to him, "Why don't you wash and come out, and not stay there in the sun?" His hopeless reply was, "I am waiting for the water to become clear." *Poor fellow!* It never became clear to him. Another man would constantly imagine that he was some sort of an animal, and he would strip himself of all clothing, and persist in wallowing through the swamp on his hands and knees. Still another occupied his time in making curious sketches, in which rebels and devils would figure in intimate companionship, but not so very crazy there, we thought. He must have been a man of study at home, for he was well versed

in history, and could converse fluently upon almost any scientific subject,—almost too readily sometimes, for he never knew when to stop, when once started.

Melancholy as these things were, they were mild compared with what I saw afterward,—that of a *living man being devoured by maggots*. Parts of his body were eaten until they had become raw and bloody, and they could even be seen issuing from his eyes and mouth. He belonged to Co. A, of the 52d N. Y. Reg't, and he came to this terrible state through sickness, exposure and neglect. I then thought if I should live to get North, I would never speak of these horrors, for they would seem too much to believe, but they were the solemn realities of our prison life, as will be abundantly confirmed by hundreds of others. I had a feeling quite in sympathy with that of the immortal poet, when he wrote,

“But that I am forbid  
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,  
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word  
Would harrow up thy soul ; freeze thy young blood ;  
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres ;  
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,  
And each particular hair to stand on end,  
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine.”

A number of cavalry-men were captured in the attack upon Macon, and found their way to our dwelling place, or rather had it found for them, on the 2d of the month, it now being August. The city was receiving a brisk shelling when they left, and they reported Maj. Gen. Stoneman taken, with a number of his men. Thus did we obtain an occasional glimpse of the battling world in which we were deeply interested, and in this way experienced a slight disturbance in the even tenor of our thoughts, that otherwise might have found themselves tending to stagnation.

Coming in contact with one of the boys who had an old Bible, I found upon the back part of it, in almost obliterated characters, the following lines, which I thought worthy of preservation, although ignorant of the authorship. It was certainly richly suggestive of that holy tenderness of love, that sometimes dwells in the heart like a fragrant flower, which blesses with its sweetness those who come nearest to it:

“Forget thee? If to dream by  
Night, and muse on thee by day;  
If all the worship deep and wild,  
A *sister's* heart can pay;

If prayers ascend for thee  
To Heaven's protecting power;

If winged thoughts that fleet,  
To thee, a thousand in an hour;  
If busy fancy blending thee  
With all my future lot:  
If this thou callest *forgetting*,  
Then indeed art thou *forgot*."

Equally original, no doubt, but not quite in the same style, is the following, written by a "secesh" young lady to her lover. The letter which contained the brilliant effusion was found by one of our men.

"'Tis hard for you 'uns to live in camps,  
'Tis hard for you 'uns to fight the Yanks,  
'Tis hard for you 'uns and we'uns to part,  
Now you 'uns has we 'uns hearts."

For some reason unknown to us, an alteration was made in the line of white flags, soon after they were stationed in our midst; some were moved nearer to the stockade, while others were left remaining on the old line.

It is very noticeable how little

#### THE REBEL FLAG

is displayed at the South. One might almost travel from one end of the Confederacy to the



other, without seeing one, while at the North the "Stars and Stripes" are floating from nearly every prominent public building, and oftentimes from private dwellings. "Perhaps," we thought, "they are ashamed of their ill-omened emblem," or, what would be quite as likely, bunting might be scarce. But there is a reason that lies deeper than these things, which accounts for the difference. The people of the North have long been accustomed to associate their dearest interests, as a people, with the flag of their country. To them it is the symbol of everything that is just and true, and in its starry folds lies hid that peculiarly stimulating power which kindles the flame of loyalty, and makes them of strong heart and unconquerable will in the day of struggle, when its triumph is called in question. They are jealous of its honor, and rather than see it insulted and torn from its rightful position, they will do and dare until death in its defense. It has come to be almost an household idol in every Northern home, and children are imbibing a strange love for it, that will tell upon their devotion to country in their future his-

tory. To the soldier and the patriot it has a wonderful significance. To what holy heroism it moves him!—to what deeds of valor it incites him! What sublime instances of faithfulness have we seen in many of the color-bearers of our regiments! We have seen them steadily marching on in the face of danger, choosing to give their life-blood rather than prove recreant to the trust committed unto them, and all because they loved the *cause* which the flag symbolized.

Not thus with the South. They have none of this all-pervading appreciation. Their newly-constructed emblem does not appeal to the heart with much of power, for it has too weak a hold upon existence itself, to be as a pledge or basis of anything to come,—and besides, it means too little; it is too narrow, and declares the selfishness and arrogance in which it had its origin. To live, it must be planted in the hearts of men, spring up, mature, and bear fruit and yield its rich harvest of blessing, or, if this seems far-fetched, it must be thoroughly tested, and made to show its adaptation and fitness for the wants of men, before

it can be readily received by them, calling forth their love and veneration.

A squad of prisoners, about one hundred in number, came into prison on the 4th, and by their being stripped of everything in their possession, we concluded they had belonged to a raiding party. The old adage that "Misery loves company," was out of place with us. We could not but deeply commiserate the condition of every new one that came among us. It was nothing but an introduction to a life of wretchedness that could have no counterpart, it seemed, upon the face of the earth. One principal topic of conversation, forced upon us by our necessity, was, "something good to eat." I remembered having read that Lieut. Strains' party, in their perilous expedition across the Isthmus of Panama, when almost dying with starvation, were accustomed to assemble themselves around a fire, and luxuriate in imaginary feasts. Little did I then think that I should ever do a similar thing,—for the idea of a stay in any place, that would incline me to it, was something that never entered into my calculations at all; but we were

brought to it, and there was no relief, and we therefore resorted to a like expedient. If any one knew of a rare dish, something particularly nice, he would edify the rest by entering into a minute description of its ingredients, manner of cooking, &c., and anything extra would be noted down by those who had diaries. In consequence of these, I had in the back part of my diary a tempting array of receipts for making pot-pies, puddings, &c., while in reality I was almost starved, lacking even necessaries,—much more luxuries.

C——, of Co. D of our regiment, died about this time. He was a professor of religion, and, I think, a member of our Regimental church.

This church was organized by Chaplain Dixon, of the 16th Conn. Reg., and was called a "*Christian Association*," being composed of those who had been church-members at home, and those also were received into its fellowship who experienced a change of heart while in the army. There were a large number of these.

It was not sectarian at all, but included

every denomination, even all that loved the Lord, without regard to name.

While we were at Portsmouth, Va., we had a chapel, built mainly by the subscriptions of the men, though there were officers who were interested and materially aided, by their contributions, the worthy cause. It would have been thought a rude structure at home, but it answered the purpose of its construction very well, and we had very many happy seasons there. A number of ladies were visiting their husbands in the regiment at the time of its erection, and taking an interest in the object, they gathered together and did what was in their power to add to its comfort and neatness. They covered the preacher's desk with blue muslin, and when all was done the edifice was dedicated. It was on the Sabbath, and five Chaplains were present, a number of ladies, and a great crowd of soldiers. Rev. Mr. Smith, of the 8th Conn. Reg., preached the sermon.

Besides the religious services to which it was primarily devoted, one evening of every week was spent in it in debating topics of the

day which excited general interest; for a "Temperance and Debating Society" had been formed in the regiment previously to this. All members thereof signed a pledge of abstinence from intoxicating liquors, which was binding upon them while they were in the army.

On the night of the 6th, another of our boys passed away from earth,—a slender little fellow, only fifteen years of age, who never ought to have been admitted into the service. He was a brave boy, and felt quite proud that he was enduring his imprisonment as well as he seemed to for a time, but sickness seized upon him, and he died.

The next day we said among ourselves, "*Death, nothing but death here!*"—for we were called upon to mourn the departure of another dear comrade, Corporal Flower, of Hartford, Conn. He closed his eyes upon earthly scenes just at twilight, and his name, stricken from the roll-call of prison, was added to the long list of sleeping heroes treasured in the country's annals, and to that other list above, from which no name of earth will be

found wanting. Alas! who could send the sad tidings to the family circle he had left; who tell his bosom companion and fatherless ones of their loss? Such duty is mournful for any one to perform. Not only they, in this case, but all who had known him, would long hold him in cherished remembrance for his amiable qualities and manly virtues.

We held a short funeral service over his body before it was carried out,—the last and best tribute of respect we could give, and this we cheerfully accorded to all of our regiment who died in prison. Hardly were the services ended, before we learned that another, Corporal B——, had died also. We performed similar service again, with his mortal remains before us; and he was carried out to the dead house, and the men who bore his body thither were told that two more were dead in the hospital. What a day's record was that! It seemed heart-rending to see our comrades suffering and dying on every side of us, while we were utterly powerless to do anything towards alleviating their pain. We felt that this was worse than starvation.

Another prisoner also ended his days in a different manner, being shot, or murdered, by the rebel guard. The fatal bullet missed the person it was intended for, and pierced his head, while three feet away from the dead line. This, it will be remembered, was not the only instance in which the innocent suffered for the guilty, in the eagerness of the guard to secure a victim to their glory.

The Rebel Quartermaster told us on the 7th, that he had seen a dispatch from the Confederate Government to General Winder, ordering him to commence paroling the prisoners at once, or, at least, make preparations for it. Still we said, "A rebel lie, and nothing more," for past and sad experience had taught us that the word of a rebel officer meant little if anything.

Thirteen men, however, were taken from the first detachment out of prison, and instructed to take their things with them and bid their friends "Good-bye," as they would see them no more. It certainly looked a little like exchange, but why not take a larger number if that was the case? Another thing looked



as if they intended to keep us a while longer,—some of us, at least.

They had before had the building of some barracks in contemplation, and the frame of one was now brought in, ready to be put up very soon; so we were sure they did not intend the prison to be wanting in inmates a while longer.

The 9th day of that sultry August month was a day long to be remembered in Camp Sumter, for it almost seemed that the elements of heaven were commissioned for our rescue, and that in spite of armed soldiers we should go free. About noon, a

#### TERRIFIC RAIN STORM

commenced and continued nearly the whole afternoon. It must have extended over a large tract of country, for very soon the little brook that ran through the prison increased in size, until it became a rushing torrent, covering the whole of the swamp, and tearing through the camp with irresistible force. The stockade was soon undermined, and fell over in six different places, but, of course, the alarm was given in what the rebels would call

“right smart quick,” for two of the guns in the fort about the head-quarters of Capt. Wizz, were at once discharged as a signal for them to rally, and instantly their whole force outside fell in under arms, and took position in front of these gaps, to keep the “Yankees” in. It was some little consolation to many to see them stand there in the pouring rain, and we cared little if they had to continue their watchings through the night under the same dispensation. The large timbers which had composed the stockade, came floating down the stream, and as wood was an almost priceless treasure to the men, many of them plunged into the angry waters, at the risk of their lives, to secure, if possible, the much coveted article. Many were successful, but even then, after all their risk and their labor, they were not allowed to cut it up, under penalty of the whole camp losing their rations for five days. We could ill afford to dispense with our ordinary fare, if we thought of remaining in the terrestrial sphere, although that day it was nothing more than a few boiled beans, cooked without salt, and full of dirt.

BREAKING AWAY OF THE STOCKADE BY THE FLOOD.



1<sup>st</sup> APR. 1864.



The rebels worked faithfully and steadily until morning, to close the openings which the heavens made for us, and at that time things were mostly replaced, so as to appear in their old condition, and let in three hundred more prisoners from Gen. Sherman's army.

Left to themselves, the inanimate forces of nature would have opened a highway for our exodus, but even they were checked in the attempt. The time had not come.

"How poor are they who have not patience."

In everything pertaining to our earthly lot, we were as poor as mortals could well be, and if there was any wealth in the cultivation of the graces, we might as well observe them, for there was no growing better in any other direction. If there was any advantage in being tested, one might surely realize all the benefit accruing from that, for we had been subject to the crucible a long time, and the true metal could but be manifest, if there was any to be seen. It is true, we were weary of pacing our little round, and longed for *freedom*—such *freedom* as we had once known, and in thinking of it, the language of Young seemed

not extravagant to apply to it in connection with our relations thereto.

“Art thou not dearer to my eyes than light?  
Dost thou not circulate through all my veins,  
Mingle with Life, and form my very *Soul*?”

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## CHAPTER VI.

### HOPES AND FEARS.

THE boys who went up at sick-call on the morning of the 10th, to receive their prescriptions from the Surgeons, saw a member of our regiment, who had been detailed to work in the cook-house, and had a long conversation with him, with reference to our affairs. Through him we learned that our Lieutenant Colonel was exchanged, with the rest of the officers who were sent from Macon to Charleston, S. C., and also that Gen. Winder had been heard to say that paroling would commence among us on the 15th of the month. If our officers had really been ticketed for the North, it really seemed there was hope for us also. It was true “dog day” weather. We were

having heavy showers of rain frequently, and the crowds of men, unsheltered, were rapidly becoming diseased, and fast dying. Small numbers still continued to come in, many of them from cavalry parties, who had been thoroughly robbed. The following day was the anniversary of my soldier life, and in view of it I made this record in my diary: "Two years ago to-day I entered the service of my country, and I can honestly say now, *I am not sorry that I enlisted*, although I am 'in durance vile.'"

## CONFIDENCE

in the justness and importance of our cause had not faltered in all the days of our exile. We could not go heart and *hand* in sustaining the government, as we had done, but we could go heart and soul, and that we generally did. It is true, that with our feelings of hope and confidence were mingled those of pain and sadness, because of the fearful reduction of our numbers by death. Upon an average, up to this time, one had died every day of the month, and others were very sick, and evidently sinking. At this rate, if

we should remain prisoners, it would not be long before nearly all our regiment would be sleeping the sleep that knows no waking; they would have passed "beyond that bourne from whence no traveler returns." "Coming events" did not "cast their shadows before," in all their length and breadth, when we passed through the streets of Hartford, with jubilant tread, twice twelve months before, else we had been conscious of deeper emotions, amid the cheers and congratulations of parting. Doubtless there was more or less of vague feeling, that some would be left behind, since the chances of battle were such, but each had a certain buoyancy of hope that, after all, he might escape to return to home and friends.

About one hundred came into prison on this day of which we are speaking, and some of the Plymouth men, who had been wounded and left in hospitals, were among them. Our Orderly Sergeant, N——, was one of them. They had been at Salisbury, N. C., and bore evidence of good treatment, for they came in with clean faces and clean clothes,



while we scarcely made even a respectable appearance. We were without any conveniences whatever, to keep ourselves clean, and beside we sadly lacked soap. But two issues had been made of this article since we had been in prison, and then we only received about a table spoonful of soft stuff, of the poorest kind, for each man. In our own army we had always a plentiful supply, and that which was of very good quality.

We obtained access to some Macon newspapers about this time, which stated that Mobile, or its forts were in our possession, and that it surrendered without firing a gun. Were this the truth, we could not have a very exalted opinion of the fighting capacity of the garrison, we thought, but editorial expression was not always correct, we had found, and were destined to find again. These same papers stated that the work of paroling prisoners was to commence on the 15th, and as it was a simple corroboration of the story we had been told before, we dared to build hopes upon it. However valuable concurrent testimony may be in most cases, we had never found it par-

ticularly reliable in our intercourse with the southern people. What an exhibition of their *pride* and passion we had seen! What ideas of their intelligence and humanity we had been compelled to form! What manifestations of their power and ability to govern, had been thrust upon us! The treatment we had received, in every respect, was not such as was calculated to enhance in any wise, a man's admiration for the Southern Confederacy, but only to make him pray to be delivered from it. "It will not last always," was the consolation we took to ourselves in such hours as ration-drawing, when there was nothing to come to us, for at times we received nothing at all, and were left to experience the *gnawings* of hunger without mitigation. As if *starvation* was not enough, we had to endure the insults of their officers,—boastingly denominated high-toned and chivalrous. One of them, a so-called

OFFICER OF THE DAY

for the time, ascended the sentries' stand, near the main entrance to the prison, and began to taunt us with the idea that we were placing

ourselves on a level with the "nigger," by making a soldier of him. After he had gone on in this manner for some time, one of the prisoners interrupted him with the query, "Captain, which is the worse? We use the *negro* as a soldier. You employ blood-hounds to do a soldier's duty," referring, of course, to the mode of pursuing the prisoners who made attempts to escape. Evidently he was not lost to all sense of shame, and he replied, as he hung his head, "This is the only place where they are ever used." A man who had been confined at Danville, Va., spoke up at this juncture, informing the officer that they were used there, while another who had been at Cahawba, Ala., asserted that he knew them to be kept there also, for the same nefarious purpose. It was quite plain that the Captain didn't relish the turn in the argument, for he said no more, and quickly took himself from our midst,—a wiser and a better man, we hoped, from having thus been enlightened by us.

One hundred more prisoners now came in from Sherman's army. One of our number,

who was at work outside, framing barracks, gathered up the information that this General had blown up part of Atlanta, and flanked Hood's army again; so that we imagined that things were working, notwithstanding affairs seemed so quiet to us. We judged, in some measure, of the activity of our armies by the number of prisoners who were captured by the enemy. More or less of these determined the quantity and quality of movement, inasmuch as *signs* are often the full expression of language that is not written. Wood was issued to us about this period, the first time since the 30th of June, and then we were only given two sticks for the whole "ninety." We made up our minds that one thing was certain,—“generosity” was not a distinguishing feature of the Southern character; and it revived the wish in all its intensity, that the time might not be far distant when we would be out of the clutches of these miscreants. With what fervor did we exclaim, “Oh that we could once more abide in the land of the ‘mudsills,’ ‘greasy mechanics,’ and ‘Black Republicans’!” We would willingly have bade

adieu to the warm-hearted hospitality of the South, of which so much had been cited, and turned our feet towards a less pretentious region.

The 14th was the Sabbath,—the time for Sabbath School Concert at home, and we knew we should not be forgotten in that gathering. Having faith in the efficacy of prayer, we hoped their petitions for us might be speedily answered in our deliverance from this living death. That day we took the last look of another of our boys,—Jimmy B——, of Co. A. He had joined our regiment but a short time previous to its capture, and was young and inexperienced. A few days before, he had told me in conversation that he thought he should live to get home, and asked about some rules of diet which it might be best to observe, should he find himself in the midst of plenty again. He was possessed with a passionate longing for a turkey,—“a large one,” he said; and he seemed to anticipate much in looking forward to the comforts and luxuries which home might furnish for him. Apparently it was a bright vision for him, to think

of his mother preparing these nice things ; but they were all ended, and loving hands could no more minister unto him.

The sun rose on the following morning, bringing the long-looked-for day which was to present to our eager gaze the grateful spectacle of several thousand prisoners leaving for our lines on parole,—at least, it was the *promised* day. Slowly the hours passed away to the anxious multitude ; and what was worse, they came and went, without bringing any change. We had known enough in the past, to teach us not to be too sanguine, but hope will hang on a slender thread sometimes, and for this reason we had allowed the saying of the papers to have some weight with us. One of the rebel surgeons, or one in *name*, scarcely so in reality, told me that the press was controlled by their government, and they could not themselves believe half they read. Is this the boasted independence for which they are fighting ? was my mental query. About twenty prisoners came in through the day. The number had been gradually diminishing for some little time, so that at this period

comparatively few made their entrance together.

Whether the sight of our misery was attractive to the rebels, or something else influenced them, we could not say, but some photographic artists came from Macon, and taking their position in sentry-boxes at different points around the stockade, they proceeded to engrave our wretchedness by art. It might have been by order of the authorities, or simply a private enterprise, but we thought we would have liked one of the pictures to show to our friends, and to look at, if we should ever be away from the miserable scenes themselves. They certainly would be daguerreotyped upon faithful memory as long as we should live, but no words or touch of pen could give any semblance of the reality to others.

#### SCURVY

began to be fearfully prevalent. We had had no vegetables given to us since we entered in April, and we were without money to buy any. Sergeant L——, who had been in command of the “ninety” ever since we had

been in prison, became so disabled by the disease in his ankles and feet, as to render him unfit to perform the duty of drawing rations ; and being yet free from it myself, I took his place. This is the form which the disease often takes, so contracting the cords of the limbs as to deprive the sufferer of the power to walk. Again it will be seen in the swelling of the different parts of the body, and still again in the decaying of the gums and loosening of the teeth. Hundreds of poor fellows lost their lives by this disease alone. Nearly the whole of our regiment were more or less affected by it. Perhaps the stories of exchange, which were in almost daily circulation, did something to sustain some of the men, who were expecting and fearing the unchecked workings of that terrible scourge.

A little different version of things was started by some who professed to know something about it, to the effect that an article deemed of considerable authority was to be cut from the paper, and posted upon the letter-box, where we might see it. Curiosity, of course, was on the alert, to discover the pecul-

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iarities of the case; but it turned out to be the identical piece which the Confederate Chaplain had read to us with so much dignity the first of the month, and we concluded it would hardly pay to become much excited over it.

In the midst of these things, one of the boys who had been at work without the stockade, brought in the gratifying intelligence that there was a large quantity of letters from the North at the office of Captain Wirz, and that probably they would be brought in soon. How our hearts bounded with joy at the possibility of hearing from home once more! A perfect fever of expectation seized us all, for *who* would be the favored ones, and *what* would be the character of that which we should hear? How, too, should those bear the disappointment that would be passed by with no word or message from those their hearts were with? News of some sort I did find, however, as I went over into the prison-extension to visit a friend of the 7th P. V's. He had a copy of the "Macon Telegram," and I learned from it that Maj. Gen. Hunter had

been relieved by Gen. Sheridan, and that Gen. Grant's campaign had proved a failure, although something whispered to me, in regard to the latter, "they had better wait until they see the end of it, before making such a confident declaration." It had, also, an article commenting upon the "disgraceful and humiliating surrender" of the forts at Mobile. Doubtless, the Confederate heart was somewhat tried by the course things took in the matter.

For once, our rations increased a little, and were of better quality than usual. Information also came to us, through the rebel Quartermaster, that he was about to commence issuing sweet potatoes, and that he would soon make us as sick of those as we were then of beans, and this, we thought, would be no hard matter, if they were cooked in the same filthy way. The rebels claimed that iron wire was so very scarce, that they could not procure enough to make the necessary sieves with which to clean their beans, before cooking, and therefore we must eat them as they were, dirt, pods, sticks and all.

In addition to the other sensation stories which were in circulation, was another, that the rebels had asked again for an armistice in which to treat for peace, this time to consist of thirty days, and that our government had granted it. We could not believe that the Northern people were so very inconsiderate as to allow them such a resting spell at the time when they seemed in a fair way to be conquered. The way for them to obtain peace, it seemed to us then, was the one and only way we had always maintained,—and that was to lay down the weapons of their rebellion, and submit to our lawfully elected administration. We must conquer our peace if we would have it real and lasting. We had known four months of imprisonment for the cause, and we would not have it lost.

Death was rioting among the strongest men in our regiment, making no distinction between the stronger and the weaker. We wondered if another month would find us there still, but we felt like saying,

“Conquer we must,  
For our cause *it is just*,  
And this be our motto,  
In God is our trust.”

Capt. Wirz, our inhuman prison commandant, was taken sick about this time, and went to Macon. Various were the wishes of the men as they heard it, but the mildest form they took was, that he might never recover. He was succeeded, temporarily, by Lieut. S. B. Davis, and from all that we could learn of him, we thought the change might be much to our advantage, as he would probably be more humane in his treatment of us. He had the reputation of being a good officer among the men who knew him, and the rations which followed his inauguration were certainly larger and better, and indicated a heart little larger than that which dwelt in the bosom of his predecessor. The day before, we only had a little corn-bread, without meat or salt, and now came fresh beef, bacon, beans, bread and molasses. These things, which may seem of little consequence to some, were, nevertheless, of vital importance to us, who were suffering from the privations we had endured. The slightest addition to our comfort, in any way, was highly prized. To secure a little more, externally, it became necessary to

remodel our little tent, which was sadly out of repair. The blankets were worn a great deal, on the side exposed to the rain and sun, so we turned them and put the other side out, and when it was completed, we found ourselves in possession of quite a stylish residence, compared with those who had no covering at all.

The prison was visited at this time by a foppishly decorated

CONFEDERATE CAPTAIN.

As he stepped around very daintily, in his patent leather boots, he professed to feel "quite shocked" at the horrible condition of affairs which he saw. It was very evident that he counted himself something on an argument, for he began to discuss slavery and the war, with an air of wonderful dignity, little imagining, probably, that he would find any one in the ragged, dirty, uncouth crowd of listeners before him, who would venture to dispute his opinions. He was greatly mistaken, however, for some of his hearers advanced better arguments entirely, soon worsting him, and driving him from the field,

perhaps with the thought that, though the external condition of persons may not be prepossessing, yet

“A man’s a man for a’ that.”

Our knowledge of things, now, was mainly gathered from such as called upon us, and from the southern papers which we occasionally saw, for prisoners had ceased to come in as frequently as in the past. From the latter we learned that Jonesboro, on the Macon and Augusta railroad, was held by a large force of Federals, with the intention of causing the rebel army to fall back from the position it was then occupying. It was also stated that a large body of cavalry and mounted infantry were marching on Milledgeville, with ultimate designs upon our place. “Well, let them come,” we said, but yet feared we should never see them. There was a little appearance of something being done in our midst. Quite a large number of Sergeants, holding officers’ commissions, but who had never been mustered in as such, were taken outside, and we were told by the rebels they were destined to our lines for exchange. Two of the

Plymouth men were among the number. This seemed a favorable indication for the rest of us, for surely, we thought, the government would not exchange the officers, who fare better than we do, and leave us to die by inches.

Much to my disgust, I found on the morning of the 23d, that the scurvy had at last got hold of me. I had been hoping that it would pass me by, in its visitations, but it was unmistakably present in my mouth. I went up to the sick-call, and was prescribed for by the Surgeon, the first time since I had entered, and in consequence, at night I was to receive about a table spoonful of sumach berries, the usual remedy for the disease, the tea made of it being very sour and astringent.

Meantime, a few sailors came in, who had been captured at Mobile. "How is Mobile?" we asked. "That's all right; we'll have it in a week," was the reply. This, of course, gave a momentary impulse to languid courage, but with such a dreadful disease staring us in the face, we could do nothing less than dwell upon the probabilities of deliverance in our own

case. We could hope for little improvement where we were, but as diversion of mind often tends to physical advantage, we availed ourselves of everything that was offered, to secure this. One of my comrades, by some means, became the possessor of "Woodbury's Shorter Course in German," and I began to study that language, or rather, re-commenced it, as I had been engaged in its acquisition at the time of our capture. This book was a perfect treasure, and with it I passed many an otherwise dull hour, agreeably and profitably.

Lieut. Davis, our new commandant, did institute a better order of things. Our food was better every way, and beside, he issued an order, requiring the prison to be kept clean. The order was posted in different parts of the prison, so that all could see it, and avail themselves of its privileges. He furnished us with the requisite tools to perform the work assigned to us, and it was something so unusual to see our enemies taking even a slight interest in our comfort, we ardently hoped that Capt. Wirz would



never make his appearance again, for he would never do as much for us as we were having done then. With his second advent we knew would come anew, misery and starvation, for his active mind would probably devise new methods, while he was lying by, to enhance our sorrow, if he should return.

We deemed it no wonder that so many of our men died. The wonder, rather, was that *any* lived. At roll-call on the morning of the twenty-sixth, thirty-two in our squad of ninety men were too sick to stand up in the ranks to be counted. If they had been in our lines, they would have been sent to the hospital, received the tenderest care, and the most delicate food, but there, it was the same coarse bread and greasy bacon, for sick and well alike. Sorghum molasses was an article they seemed to have in great plenty, and this was often dispensed to us.

I recovered from the influence of the first day with the scurvy, so as to feel quite well again, and, indeed, it seemed quite necessary that I should keep up, since I was the only well man, with one exception, in "our family"

of eleven. The rest were either lame or sick. We hoped much from a change in the atmosphere, as the weather was growing clearer and cooler, and might induce a better state of health in the camp generally.

Two or three hundred men from Sherman's army came in during these days, to take board in our extensive establishment. "Twenty-six States of the old Union," they boasted, "were represented in the prison at Andersonville." It certainly revealed the fact then, that there were Union-loving men in States they had claimed their own,—men who were willing to run the risk of great privations, and of even life itself, that they might be instrumental, if possible, in restoring what had been ruthlessly cut off. Whether they thought of this amid their boastings or not, we can not say; but History may suggest the thought to them in coming time, if they live to see it.

The entrance of these prisoners, and occasional news concerning exchange, were the prominent matters to break the monotony of our life during the latter part of this month. When the Sabbath came, we would indulge in

extra day-dreams of "Home, sweet home," and perhaps the prayer went up with still more of fervor, "God grant we may not be doomed to disappointment again."

Quite the last of the month, within the last day or two, it was said that our Government had really accepted the proposals made by the South in regard to exchange. The all-absorbing question in connection with it was, "What are the conditions upon which the South is willing to do this?" The rebel officers all agreed in saying that they only required man for man and officer for officer according to rank. This, certainly, did not seem unfair; and if true, we could not imagine why our release was not secured. "Can it be," we would ask among ourselves, "that our Government is not aware of our suffering condition?" If they were, there must be very strong reasons against exchange, or they would not leave so many of us to be sacrificed in our pestilential prison-pen.

Another canard in circulation also, was to the effect that Vice-President A. H. Stephens, Gov. Brown, and one other, had gone on to

Washington, bearing proposals for peace ; but we believed less of this than the other.

While ruminating upon these things, M——, the clerk in the office of the Prison Commandant, came in on a pass, bringing with him the unwelcome intelligence that Capt. Wirz, our old tormentor, was back again from Macon, and in command again, so we had nothing to look for but a return of our old regime. He also told us that he overheard the rebel officers say that an army corps had left Sherman, with fifteen days' rations, for an unknown point ; but it was the opinion of Captain Wirz that they were destined to strike a blow for us. Thus, like guilty persons, always fearing detection, did these men in authority continually fear the advance of our troops upon them. No considerable portion could move in any direction, but they supposed it to be with evil intent upon them.

Quite a number of letters came in on the 1st of September, for the boys of our regiment. They were all from home, but contained nothing but domestic news. One of our number passed beyond the boundaries of

time in the morning: G——, of Co. A. His brother, an old prisoner, who belonged to another regiment, died a few days before. The next day, still another died after a long sickness. The boys who carried out his body to the dead-house, learned that another of the same company was also lying dead. Our regiment was getting sadly thinned, and we said in our sorrow, "God only knows how many of us will live to tell the sad tale." The charge of the "ninety" devolved upon me, as the other sergeants had become too feeble to discharge their wonted duties. It would keep me busy nearly the whole day drawing rations and cooking for the poor sick boys who were unable to cook for themselves. As if we had not enough already, some sick and wounded ones were sent in from Macon, and a few so-called convalescents were sent in from the hospital to the prison, that room might be made for them there.

The idea of "thinning out" was started, and one of the men who worked outside brought it in to us. The plan, he said, was in contemplation, to remove about eighteen thousand

of us to some other prison. Any change, we thought, would be agreeable, although it were nothing more than a change in *prisons*. Among other things, he learned that General Winder had been relieved from command, by a person with a queer name, which he could not remember, but whom the rebels declared a "better man." Of one thing we were certain, that he could not be much worse. But we had known even Gen. Winder to do one

#### KIND ACT.

One of the Plymouth prisoners was an old citizen, who had been chief clerk for the Post Quartermaster at that place, and in former and more prosperous days a captain in the regular army; even holding, at one time, a position upon this same Gen. Winder's staff. He was very much respected where he was known, and almost every body in Plymouth knew Capt. Everett. He was put into prison with the rest of us, and was finally taken sick, the hardships of his confinement proving too much for his age. When Gen. Winder learned the condition of the man who had once been

associated with him, he took him out of his miserable place and gave him good care, providing medical attendance and better food than he would otherwise have had. But it was too late. The old Captain died, yet he had a respectable Christian burial; and this convinced us that there was one soft spot in the heart of the Rebel General, after all.

• Early on the morning of the 4th, I was aroused from my sleep by one of the boys, who gave me the sad news that Orderly Sergeant L——, of Co. C, was dead, at the same time requesting me to break the mournful truth to his brother, who held a corresponding position in another company. It was a hard task to go and do this, but I did it. Elder Shepard conducted a very touching and beautiful funeral service over the body before it was carried out. The afflicted brother was present, and though he said but little, we all knew that silent grief was at work, and we deeply sympathized with him.

It was a calm Sabbath day, and our friends at home were probably enjoying it; but we were suffering—dying. Soon after this we

had a death in our own tent. One of our comrades, who had been with us ever since the regiment first went out, passed away, after an illness of just two weeks. A night or two before his departure, when he was very feeble, he said to me, "If I could only live just to see my wife and mother, I could die happy; but to die *here*, far away from home, and to be buried here,—I tell you, Robert, it is tough!" And it was. None but those who were there could realize it in all its terrible earnestness. They were scenes that could not be imagined, and only endured with patience and cheerfulness by those who had such faith as to bear them aloft above earth, where they could catch a glimpse of the

"Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood,"

which

"Stand dressed in living green."

It was said on the 6th, that a general exchange of prisoners had been agreed upon, and it was accompanied by orders for the first eighteen detachments to be ready to move at any moment after twelve o'clock at night.



This really looked as if it might amount to something, and we hoped the

## DAY OF DELIVERANCE

had at last come. All was rejoicing and hurry and bustle in the detachments that were ordered to be ready. Indeed, the whole prison was in a furore of joyous excitement. Every body was talking over with his neighbor the probability of the reality of the movement, but most of them were quite certain that this was surely the first true step towards exchange. The next morning our eyes did indeed behold a joyful sight. Seven detachments, or over eighteen hundred men, were taken out of prison and put on board cars, and in all probability they were bound for our lines. The orders to many more were, to "be ready to leave," and it would come our turn soon. What exultation was kindled at the prospect! It seemed hard that H—— could not have lived to go with us, but it was not for us to question God's doings. Evans, another of our number, was very sick, and we feared he might die before our turn should come. We

were not counted in the morning, and we indulged in the blissful thought that we should be no more troubled in that way, for the officers over us had been heard to declare that the prison was finally to be left *empty*. That night, at one o'clock, or rather morning, they began taking out more detachments, and at daylight the opposite hill-side looked quite bare. When the light of the morning dawned, poor Evans was no longer an inhabitant of earth. He was ready and willing to go, and his last message to his friends at home was, "*tell them I was prepared to die.*" It was sorrowful indeed to see our comrades dying, even when the work of exchange was going on. Some of the detachments who went out in the morning came in again in the afternoon to wait until more cars should arrive. They said they were allowed to have their liberty, and do about as they pleased while outside, and that only two guards went on each car of the train that had already left. Some would not, even now, believe that the movement meant exchange, and persisted in saying, "It's all humbug," although the Confederate offi-

cers, without exception, assured us that we were going home, and that they had not another prison large enough to put us in, if they wished to. If they were really attempting a transfer, and nothing else, we thought they would have placed a larger guard in attendance. Everything looked favorable to our hopes, but we had so many times been disappointed in these, we could hardly believe they were to be realized, even when the door was open for us. It seemed to us high time for a change of some sort, for we were drawing only a little coarse corn meal and a scrap of raw fresh beef for our rations. The next morning one of the boys who had deserted from the rebel service, and had been with us ever since we were captured, died. When Plymouth surrendered a number of the

#### LOYAL NORTH CAROLINIANS,

of the 2d regiment of that State, were taken with us. The rebels were very bitter against these "buffaloes," as they called them, for many of them had been on their side, and left it for the service of the Union. These men had

suffered almost everything at the hands of those they refused to serve, and they felt for them corresponding hatred. To avoid detection, many of them assumed different names, and passed off as members of our regiment, or some others. Some of them were afterwards discovered by the "rebs," but a number went into prison with us as Connecticut, Pennsylvania or New York men, and we did everything in our power to help them, and prevent them from being found out. It was one of those who fell, a victim to disease, that morning.

Over twelve hundred men went out before sunset, and a large number had the promise of being taken out before morning. Seven of our "ninety" succeeded in "flanking out" with the detachments who went out the night before, and others, encouraged by their example, went up to the gate with these, hoping to find a more speedy release in this way. The next day we waited impatiently for orders to move, and at twilight, or near the close of the day, our wishes were gratified. We were drawing rations, and a rebel Sergeant came down with the welcome informa-

tion that our "ninety" must be ready immediately, and take their position in line near the prison gate. We had very little baggage, of course, to care for, and in a very few moments we were waiting to go out. We were all in a tremor of excitement. To think that we were really going to leave that horrible place, was enough to fill our hearts with deepest joy. There was one drawback to our happiness, however, caused by being compelled to leave two of our number, who were sick, and altogether unable to be moved. We tried to cheer them by telling them they would probably come along in a few days, and meantime they would receive better care than if they went with us, but when we finally bade them *farewell*, we were very sad, for it seemed to us the last time we should ever exchange a word with them, and it was manifest that a like feeling was theirs also. We had suffered so long together; so long shared each other's trials and misfortunes, we loved each other as brothers, and it was hard to leave them, but there was no other alternative. While these things were passing through

the mind, we were suddenly diverted by the cry, "there they go," and sure enough the line had commenced to move, and we were to pass out that gate that had been closed against us so many weary months. Many, very many, who had gone in with us at the beginning, were now no more, but a sigh and a tear was all the tribute we could leave them then. We had ministered to them in sickness, and closed their eyes at the last, and each had a place in memory, but nothing more could be done. The place we were leaving was one about which the saddest associations would ever cluster; not wholly because so many of our brothers-in-arms had found the prison gate the *gate of death*, but there were other things combined to make us shudder at the remembrance. Taunts, insult and abuse in almost every possible form had been heaped upon us, and the impression of this could never be effaced.

But before we proceed any further in our narrative, and in order to give a complete history of affairs at Andersonville, we insert a chapter relative to the *Hospital* department.

For information concerning this, we are indebted to the following testimony of Hiram Buckingham, Quarter-Master Sergeant of our own regiment, who was detailed as hospital steward, or Doctor's clerk, and consequently was well fitted to give a just description of the inner and outer condition of that melancholy place.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### HOSPITAL AT ANDERSONVILLE.

THOUSANDS throughout our country have a personal interest in this ill-fated spot, for thither, husbands, sons and brothers were carried, to finish their earthly course; their career as patriots and soldiers, and there, within a short distance, their bones lie, as it may seem to some, a lost contribution to national honor, but to many, far otherwise. Though no monument of granite ever mark the place where these heroes lie, telling of the mighty sacrifice that was made there, yet that spot in Georgia soil will be forever conse-

crated, in countless homes in every part of our land, and who shall intimate the power and extent of that influence that shall go forth from these to awaken the fire of patriotism in other hearts, bidding them "go and do likewise," if need be. *Indignation*, too, will fan the flame, for the sad conviction is forced upon the minds of people that, were it not for utter *neglect* and *inhumanity*, thousands of valuable lives might have been spared that are now forever lost to friends and country by this one cause. It is a *tearful history*—a *sad record*, and many will shrink from the revolting details here given, but it is confidently asserted that there are none of these statements but will be corroborated by every one who had the misfortune to be a prisoner in that unhappy locality. "When I first went into the prison," says Mr. Buckingham, "on the first of May, 1864, the hospital was inside the stockade, half of it on one side of the stream that ran in our midst, and half on the other side. The condition of things was horrible in the extreme. A single glimpse of things within was enough to make a man sick.



He could but turn away in loathing and disgust, from the sight of so much wretchedness and misery; so much filth and pollution. Most of the inmates at that time were Belle Island prisoners, who had endured all the hardships of the previous winter, and were worn and wasted by exposure and its consequent diseases. There were comparatively few of them then, scarcely over two hundred, a circumstance accounted for in two ways. In the first place, a man never went in and came out alive, for usually he was so low upon his admission, that there was almost nothing to hope for, and in the second place, if a man had a friend or comrade to help him, he would not go in at all, for he preferred to die in the comparative quiet of his own tent, surrounded by such comforts as friendly sympathy could procure, rather than end his days where so much wretchedness was congregated. This was the last resort, and to see a poor fellow brought in upon a blanket, was to conclude that his race was almost run; his days well nigh ended, and that there remained nothing for him but to breathe his life away

in the midst of such misery as was inconceivable to any but those who walked the melancholy round themselves. The utter want of cleanliness; the pestilential air; the improper and miserable food, and scanty medicines, all combined to render the swift coming of death sure. One could expect nothing else when he entered. If by any possibility one survived the shock, and went forth among his fellows a living man, it was looked upon as something well-nigh miraculous. It was rarely, if ever, known. It was the general expectation, when any went into the hospital, that it was the last of earth for them; and how could it be otherwise? Where was the single condition that tended in the least degree to restoration? Where was the slightest thing favorable to anything like invigoration? The excellent condition of our Northern hospitals: their comfortable couches, tender nursing, abundant remedies, with their appropriate stimulants and delicacies, oftentimes win back the feeble sufferer to life, and make him strong and well again; but not so there. Pieces of canvas only sheltered those poor sick and dying men

from the rain and sun of a climate that would have been none too favorable for them under the best of circumstances.

Their emaciated, pain-racked frames had no place to rest but upon the cold, hard ground, and in numberless instances their heads were pillowed upon nothing softer than a stick of wood.

The skin would often wear away, leaving their bodies sore, and these could not be cared for, as there was nothing to dress them with; and even if there had been, their necessary position allowed no respite in the acuteness of their suffering.

Added to these things, the sink was dug within a single rod of these men, which, of course, did not add to the purity of the air about them. It was enough, of itself, to make a man sick.

What would not these men have given for a clean bed, pure air, and a dish of something that would have been inviting to the taste! Many of them had been unused to want or hardship before they entered the army, but words of murmuring or complaint were sel-

dom heard. Many of them were conscious of having been moved with the "sublime inspiration of a great purpose," when they enlisted to fight the battles of their country, and they took its chances and its changes with heroic firmness.

In all probability a great many lives might have been saved, that have now been sacrificed, had it not been for the barbarous treatment to which they were subjected. A sad necessity was upon us. We must see our men pine away and die, while we were utterly powerless to help them. Could we have had the satisfaction of feeling that everything had been done for them that could be done, we might have seen them close their eyes in death with far different emotions, but we could not escape the impression that a vast amount of life-blood had been spilled, simply to gratify the malice of a heartless foe, who gloried in the wrecks before them.

About the first of June, the hospital was completed outside the stockade. This was situated about one hundred rods from the entrance to the latter place, and occupied quite

a pleasant position. Some of the trees had been left standing, and furnished quite an agreeable shade. It was enclosed by a board fence about six feet high, and contained about four acres of ground. This was laid out in streets and wards, and now and then a tent was to be seen, but most of them were nothing but square pieces of canvas spread over a pole, which formed a roof, but left it all open below, so that the patients were exposed constantly to the rain, sun, and night dews. Quite a stream of water ran through one end of the enclosure, and all the men who were able could repair to this for the purpose of keeping themselves clean. About a thousand poor creatures had refuge there at that time.

They began with an attempt to keep the sanitary affairs of the hospital in tolerable condition. They had a police squad, who made their appearance twice a day to see that the requisite order was maintained to secure this result. About a month after the removal from the stockade, they enlarged the grounds so that they could accommodate twenty-five hundred; and at its completion, Dr. White,

Surgeon in charge, admitted seven hundred men in one day. Nearly half of these could walk, but the remainder of them went in just as they could, some of them on their hands and heels, their legs being so drawn with scurvy that they could not keep in an erect position.

A person coming in at such a time, unused to the horrors of prison life, would have turned pale at the sickening sight before him. He would have *felt* things unutterable in view of these half-starved, half-clothed, diseased and wretched beings, who had once deliberately clothed themselves in the uniform which distinguished them as the peculiar property of their country, but were now dying under a pressure they had no power to resist. History tells of bands of men that are sent forth, doomed to infamy and poverty, wretchedness and want, because public opinion where they dwell deems it a just punishment for what they have done. No sympathy goes with the exiles, for society is better off without them than with them. Their hard features, reckless expression and uncomely visages may awaken

contempt, but scarcely pity, for they have wrought out their own destiny, by their own perverse willfulness. These are the lawless ones that are a scourge to the world, and every one feels that it is a mercy to be rid of them. In such case we might look upon an equal amount of misery, and not be touched as in the other instance. In the one case, it is self-inflicted and for base ends; in the other, imposed upon for devotion to and action in the prosecution of noble aims; for unselfish working for the general good.

The little army that filed in at the hospital in July, at Andersonville, may have looked externally like beggars; but they were no convicts,—no exiles for crimes that they had done. They had left home in the full exercise of every manly virtue, and society mourned their loss.

They were the pride of loyal people; the light of countless homes; the idols of many hearts; and Love was keeping the fires bright upon myriad altars awaiting their glad return. One looking upon them would have known that these fires would go out in darkness; that

but few, if any, of that sickly crowd, would ever look again upon those they had loved; ever see or hear again a congenial sight or sound.

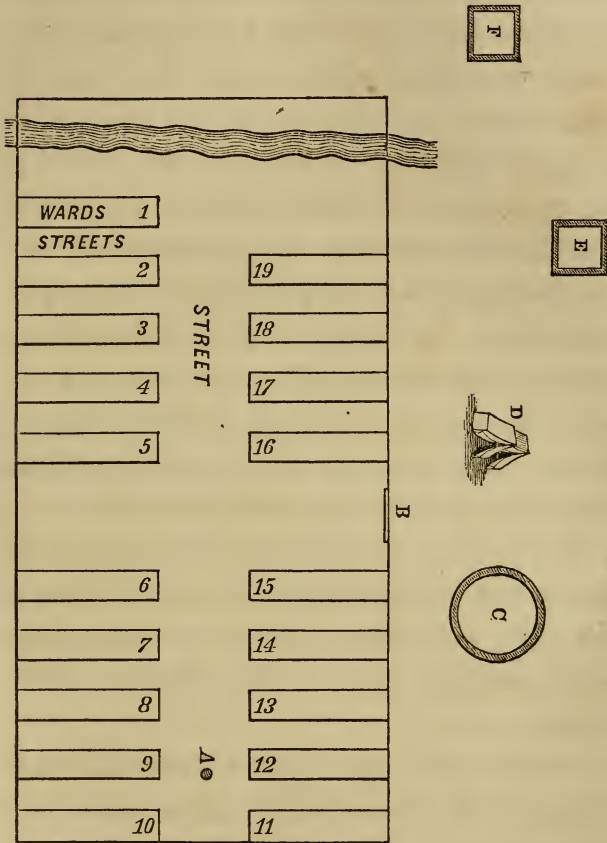
It was this that would have unsealed the fountain of tears, and stirred the heart to truest pity. It was a sad sight,—sad for any one, but more so to those who knew what they must suffer when once admitted and subjected to the treatment of

#### PHYSICIANS,

many of whom had no feeling for them. All were conscripts, and chose the profession in which they were engaged, rather than shoulder the musket and go to the front. They were allowed eleven dollars a month, which was about equal to *one* in “greenbacks,” and the government ration of meat and bacon. They availed themselves of the opportunity to acquaint themselves with surgery, and were not therefore slow in performing amputations if they saw fit. They had also a dissecting-house not very far distant, where they continued their experiments.



# ANDERSONVILLE HOSPITAL.



A WELL.

B GATE.\*

C FORT.

D HEAD-QUARTERS TENTS.

E DISPENSATORY.

F DISSECTING HOUSE.

\*The other sides of the Hospital border upon Swamps.

They commenced their duties about eight in the morning, and finished about one in the afternoon. The interest which they felt in their work was manifest in the manner of doing it. They would stand in the middle of the street, and with folded arms ask the patient how he felt, and then very indifferently tell the clerk to renew the prescriptions of a previous time. In justice to some, however, we can say, they were kind to the sick and did what they could for them, but they were reluctant to go into the tents on account of the lice which were there in such quantities.

The form to be observed before one could get into the hospital at all, was a burden to the men who were already so feeble they could scarcely support the weight of their bodies.

Outside was built a board fence the whole length of the stockade, and about three rods wide, where the doctors had the

#### SICK CALL.

Here they had a little shed built to protect themselves from the sun, and here over one

thousand persons would come out daily, hoping to find some remedy for their sufferings. A third of them would be brought in blankets by their comrades, as no prescriptions were given unless they saw the patient. The number then sent to the hospital would correspond with the vacancies death had made in the previous twenty-four hours. These would have a piece of paper, with their number and name, put upon their clothes, or in their pockets, and it was not a strange thing that they were left in the hot sun all day, without anything to eat, or water to drink, and with a burning fever in their veins. Their sufferings, of course, were indescribable, and it was little that their comrades could do to help them. Some of the physicians were educated men, from whose hearts the law of human kindness was not wholly effaced, but some were unfitted in every possible way for the work assigned them.

The Doctor of my ward was a Georgian, a fine fellow, and a Union man. To him I confided my purpose to escape, and met with the assurance that he would afford me any assist-

ance in his power to gain such an end. With him, as with many others, choice could not have its way, else they would have been found in other positions, more congenial to their feelings; they would have been offering help and comfort to their fellow-men, under an administration more desirable than that of the Confederates. Everything about us seemed marked by cruelty and heartlessness. One night I was startled by the sound of a musket, and immediately after, I recognized a human voice, uttering the exclamation, in plaintive tones, "Oh, I am shot." I instantly arose and hastened to the spot from whence the sound proceeded, and there found that one of the poor fellows in my ward had gone to the fire that was kept by the guard who were stationed inside the fence, for the purpose of warming himself. Some one from the outside passing by, called out gruffly to him, "Get away from there," and without giving him time to obey the heartless order, fired upon him, breaking his leg just above the knee. The following morning he was subjected to amputation, but he never rallied from it. He

lingered about three weeks and died. Some of the physicians pronounced it an outrage, and seemed inclined to do for him what they could. This was not an isolated case; an individual instance where hatred and malice wreaked their vengeance upon a single object of dislike. It is only one of the countless number that we might record, of which we have been eye-witnesses, and which show the merciless character of the men with whom we had to deal constantly.

Among so many, selfishness finds expression, also, and such manifestations among the sick in a hospital, give anything but the pleasant side of human nature. Some of the nurses were very kind, and did all in their power for the comfort of those upon whom they attended, but others would stand over dying men, and search them for the valuable things they might have in their possession, before the breath had left the body. The physicians had something of a variety of medicine, but it was altogether insufficient in quantity. They obtained them from the laboratory at Macon, and a month's supply would

last only about two days. There was no alternative, then, but to let disease go on its way unchecked, or to resort to the woods for such barks and roots as were known to be medicinal in their nature. For astringents, in cases of diarrhea, we used white oak and sweet fern, and sumach berries for scurvy in the mouth; but it was not medicine, after all, that was so much needed, as good, wholesome food. Could we have had this, with plenty of vinegar, or some acid, what a change would have been wrought in our wretched looking company at the hospital!

#### THE RATIONS,

for twenty-four hours, for these poor sick ones, was a piece of corn bread about two inches square, and two ounces of meat. In case of very severe sickness, they might have *two gills of flour*, enough for a biscuit, and this would be baked by the nurse of the ward, and sometimes they had a little rice, but so miserably cooked as to be almost loathsome. It would be boiled in two large kettles, and then filled up with cold water to make it hold out, for the supply of those who needed it. Any

way and any how, seemed to be the principle upon which everything was done, as may be seen in case of the meal of which the bread was made, it being a mixture of the cob and corn, for it was all ground together, thus furnishing no better material for the diet of a sick man than we had commonly seen given to swine at home. What wonder, then, that we saw so many living skeletons constantly before us!

I have seen men walking about, in hundreds of cases, that, according to my judgment, would not weigh seventy-five pounds, and these were men, too, who had once known a uniform weight of one hundred and eighty. They would live in this way for months, gradually growing thinner and weaker, until they were entirely worn out, and there was nothing left on which *life* could feed itself. The principal

#### DISEASES

were diarrhea, scurvy, dropsy, and typhoid fever. To think of these as they exist at the North, one has no idea of them whatsoever. The aggravated form they assumed there,

with every possible thing to augment their power of working, is past all conception, terrible. The intensity of suffering, among those who were the victims of the first mentioned disease, surpasses all description. I have known many of them to eat nothing for a week at a time, except a little flour paste, while all the while their evacuations would be nothing but *blood*, and attended with the most excruciating pain, and oftentimes the requisite change in their position would at once produce faintness. We always expected death as the inevitable result in such cases, for none were ever cured.

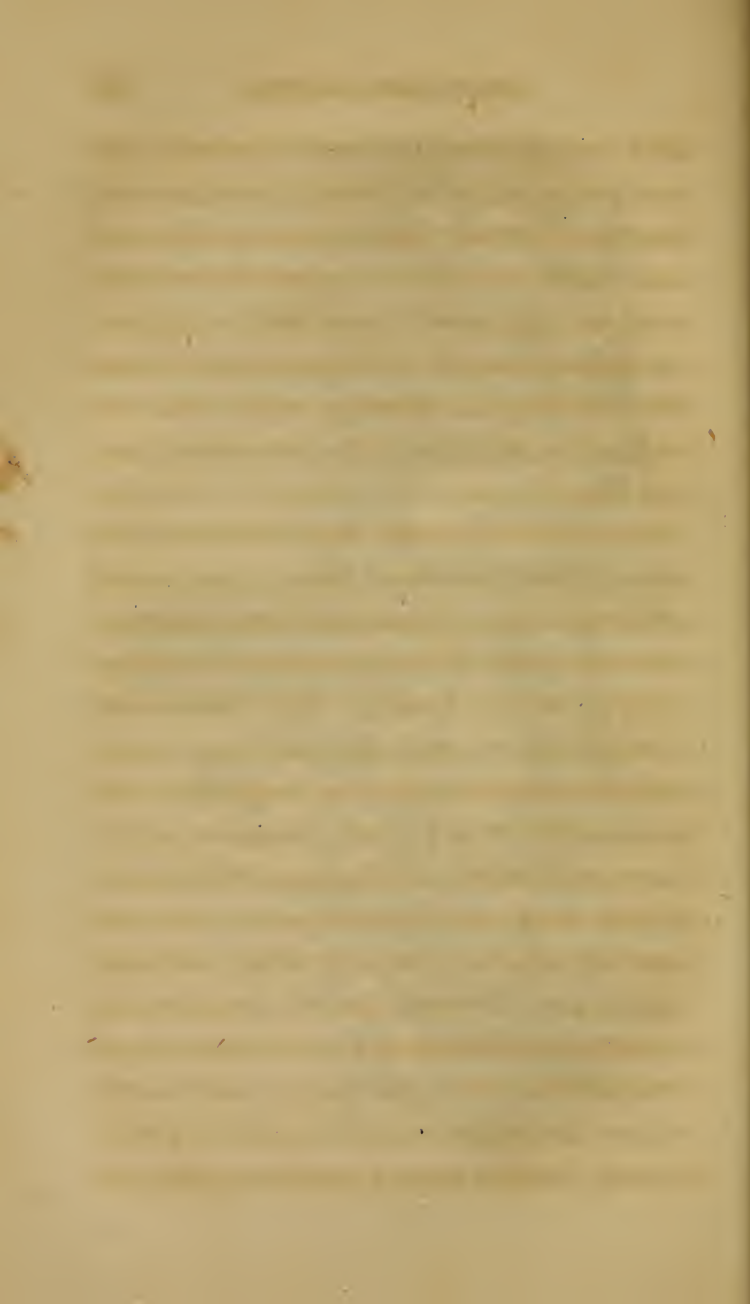
In dropsy, the suffering was hardly less acute. I have seen the limbs of some of the patients which had become so badly swollen, they would burst, and for the want of proper treatment become filled with living things. An instance occurs to my mind now, of one poor man, whose body was so racked with pain by this disease, that he cried out in his agony for some one to kill him. He lingered a while in this condition, and death finally came and took away the spirit from its dis-



INTERIOR VIEW OF THE HOSPITAL.



DR. ORRILL.



eased and wretched tenement, leaving it all unconscious of the torments it had endured. Sometimes it would settle in the face, and in such cases they could not see at all, and they would meet us in our round, their disfigured countenances mutely challenging our sympathies, and kindling constant regret that we could do so little to help them, when they must have it or *die*.

The horrors of scurvy none can know but those who have witnessed them. It appeared in different forms. Sometimes it would appear in the limbs, and the cords would be so drawn up they could not walk. The flesh would become discolored as if they had been beaten with clubs, and so soft, the impress of the fingers would remain as they pressed upon it. Sometimes it would be confined to the bones, and not show itself outside at all. In such cases it would be attended with the most intense pain. At other times it would be in the mouth, and the gums would become separated from the teeth, and finally they would drop out altogether, and not a tooth be left in the jaw. I have seen hundreds of cases in

this disease, where the men have *actually starved to death*, because they were unable to eat the coarse food that was furnished them by the Confederates.

They had but a limited supply of medicines that were necessary in these instances, and for want of these it would be unchecked until *gangrene* set in to fill up the measure of suffering.

The blood of the men, generally, was in such an impure state, that the least break of the skin would be almost sure to lead to a gangrenous sore, and many amputations were performed in consequence. Under the influence of a scorching sun, the entire upper surface of the foot would become blistered; these would break, leaving the flesh exposed, and having nothing to dress it with, or protect it in any way, gangrene was inevitable, and this would be followed by the loss of the foot, if not a larger portion of the limb. In many cases they were so much debilitated when the attempt was made, they would never recover from the influence of the chloroform, and if they had strength at the beginning, they

would afterwards die for the want of proper nourishment, which it was impossible to obtain. The amputations would average as many as half a dozen every day, and I knew not a single instance of recovery from them.

In addition to these things, there were also cases of extreme suffering, without number, caused by the use of bad vaccine matter. Whether the rebels did this intentionally, or not, we can not say, but it certainly became a melancholy fact among us. I remember the sad condition of a man, who had it break out under his arm and eat into his vitals, and the opening was so large as almost to admit a man's hand.

Some became the victims of *total blindness*, occasioned, it may be, by constant exposure to the heat of the sun, and its action upon the nervous system.

In the month of June it rained twenty-one days in succession, and it was not strange that disease should multiply and assume every imaginable form. There were fifteen thousand men in the stockade, without shelter of any kind, and it might be expected that the

hospital would be rapidly peopled from their ranks. Indeed, the latter place was hardly any better. During the warm season it was dreadful. The men scarcely ever wore any clothing at all, but a shirt, that they might keep as free as possible from the lice, which covered all their clothing. It was three hours' work every day, in my comparatively healthful condition, to keep my own body tolerably free from them, and the poor, sick men, who were too feeble to help themselves, would actually find their life-blood taken away from them in this way. Many men have died apparently from no other cause than that of being overrun with lice. I have had men's hair cut, when, if these had been measured, there would have been in bulk a half pint of them, and in size about a quarter of an inch. Mosquitoes, too, were terrible. A man who could not, through weakness, defend himself, looked as if he had the measles, so completely would his face be covered with their bites, and fleas without number vied with these to torment the poor prisoner, sick or well. It is hardly possible to conceive a greater accumu-

lation of woes to come upon mortal men, than fell to the lot of our prisoners at Andersonville.

In view of all these things, some of the rebel Surgeons felt compelled to call for something better, but it fell mostly upon unheeding ears.

Nearly a thousand died during the month of August, and in the midst of this fearful mortality, Surgeon Reeves reported as follows, and we must remember this bears the mildness of

#### REBEL TESTIMONY.

“I find the tents in bad condition, a great many leaking, and a great many of the patients lying on the ground and getting very wet when it rains. — would most respectfully recommend that straw of some kind be secured for bedding; also some arrangement to raise them from the ground. Without a change in this respect, it will be impossible for me to practice with success.” No response was made to this, and still later another, Surgeon Pelot, uttered his protest with regard to diet. “The corn bread,” he says, “received

from the bakery, being made up without sifting, is wholly unfit for the sick, and often, upon examination, the inner portion is found to be perfectly raw. The beef received by the patients does not amount to over two ounces per day; and for the past three or four days no flour has been issued to the sick. The bread can not be eaten by many; for to do so would be to increase the disease of the bowels, from which a large majority are suffering; and it is therefore thrown away."

Themselves being judges, they declared the rations too small, and not sufficiently nourishing, and they gave it as their deliberate conviction that the patients of the hospital suffered as much from hunger as from disease.

About the middle of August Dr. Thornburg reported his patients in a "deplorable condition," some of them being without clothing of any kind. "In the first, second and third wards," he writes, "we have no bunks, the patients being compelled to lie on the ground, many of them without blankets, or any covering whatsoever. If there are any beds in 'Dixie,' it is to be hoped that they will be pro-



cured. We need straw very badly, especially for the fifth ward. We have men in this ward who are a living, moving mass of putrefaction, and can not possibly be cured of their wounds unless we can make them more comfortable.”

Such is the testimony of men whom we would not think likely to exaggerate in this matter. They even declare that some of the food furnished the prisoners would “produce disease among swine.”

As a sad consequence of all this, *thirteen thousand* of our brave boys lie buried in that ever-to-be-remembered place. How often did we think, “had they died on the field of battle we could have felt differently,” but they must die by inches, in the most miserable of places, and with the most miserable treatment, day after day, and week after week, hoping, watching and praying for release. Hundreds of times in a day would the question be asked, “*Is there no news of exchange?*” They seemed to have a wonderful tenacity of life. Hope seemed to keep them up until almost every spark of life had gone out, and when it

went altogether, it was so sudden they seldom mentioned anything about dying, and, indeed, they never seemed to realize it when death was just upon them. So gradual and constant would be their decline, they would be accustomed to weakness and suffering without thinking what it would inevitably tend to.

One poor fellow fell over and died while in the act of eating a biscuit, and very many came to their end in a way equally sudden and unlooked for. We could scarcely account for it. Evidently the springs of life had been drying at their source, all unconsciously to themselves and others. Occasionally some one would talk with me of the coming event, and send little messages to the friends who shared their dying thoughts.

D. S. Birdsell, of Hartford, Ct., went into the hospital just before I left. Upon his entrance he told me he thought death was doing its work, and every feature of his countenance was marked with sadness as he said it, for he had a wife and children that would mourn his loss. Tears filled his eyes as he thought of them, and how desirable it would

be if he could only spend his last days with them. It was a struggle for nature to yield, and he said, "It's hard to die here. I had hoped to die at *home*," and how much that word means to a soldier and a prisoner, especially to one that sees his days to be almost numbered. I obtained soup for him that I thought would strengthen and revive him, and did all I could for his encouragement, and for a time he seemed better, but it did not last long. He died, and is one of the thousands who lie buried there. At his entrance he gave me his diary and pictures to have in charge until I could send them to his family, and bade me tell them of his love and remembrance in his last days, far away from them.

Others also sent pictures and messages to their friends, but these instances were comparatively isolated, for reasons that we have before mentioned.

It may seem strange that this should be so, and it often appeared so to myself, but it is best understood by those who were acquainted with the condition of the men and witnessed their slow decline.

Death was often times doing its work before the men were carried to the hospital. They had two ambulances and an army wagon, in which they always carried the patients. An ambulance would hold four, and from this number I have often seen two taken out dead, having breathed out their lives on the way, and many died while waiting outside the stockade for some one to come to their relief.

After death, the men were carried to the gate and laid inside the stockade, next to the dead line, where they often remained in the hot sun until the next morning. They were then taken by our own men, who had been paroled for the purpose, and carried outside to a

DEAD HOUSE,

made of pine boughs, which formed a kind of screen. After all had been collected at this place, they were carried out unto the place of burial. I have seen one hundred bodies in a row, and some of them so decomposed as to fall to pieces on being removed. Large quantities of whisky were given to the men who attended to the burial of these.

Surprising as it may seem, it came to be considered a great privilege to assist in this work, so that men would almost contend for it. It even came to be a matter of trade, and from one to three dollars in U. S. money was the price for being permitted to carry out a dead body,—those who died in the stockade.

Not having a sufficient number of stretchers, they were carried out on blankets or on sticks of wood, and the bearers thus found admission to the hospital, where they were likely to find some untasted portion of food that had been given to the sick, and this they would obtain to appease their hunger. They could also get wood in this way, by which they could cook their small allowance, so that it was esteemed a double gain among these half-starved men which they realized for their dreadful work.

After the death of the men, they were numbered, and their names written on a piece of paper and pinned to their clothing. They were then taken to the dead-house, as we have said, but this was within hospital grounds, so that it was a wonder to ourselves that we had

no contagious diseases from having so many decaying bodies in our midst.

Before the plan of marking and numbering was observed, those who died while waiting to be carried to the hospital were buried with the single word upon them, "*Unknown*,"—and these were men, many of them, who had been reared in luxury, and who had friends whose hearts would well-nigh break if they knew half the truth respecting their sufferings. Oftentimes I thought it blessed ignorance for them, but melancholy in the last degree for the poor soldier. I have shed many a tear myself at their sad fate, as I saw them rudely and unfeelingly conveyed to their last home.

Every morning a large army-wagon would be driven up to the dead-house, and twenty or thirty bodies would be loaded in like so many logs of wood, one top of another, some with an arm hanging out at the side, and others with their limbs protruding at the sides, for there was no covering at all. The rebels finally became ashamed of their own want of decency, and provided a covered wagon.

When they first took their prisoners to

Georgia, they furnished coffins, but the mortality became so great that they finally neglected to do that, and dug a trench about two and a half feet deep, with a kind of shelf of the dirt ten inches high, on which they placed slabs of wood to keep the earth from them. In a little time they died too fast for even this, and they then dug a trench that would hold about one hundred and twenty-five bodies, in which they placed them close together and covered them up. Being thus buried, they would take pieces of wood upon which the numbers had been placed, and drive them down at the head of each body, not knowing or caring whether they were where they ought to be or not.

The place of burial was about half a mile from the hospital. It was situated on high ground, being level, and surrounded with pine forests, which made it very pleasant. It is emphatically a *Soldiers' Cemetery*, and a fearful comment upon Southern cruelty.

But for their wretched system of treatment, the earth would not have held in its embrace so many of our brave boys; but for this, so

many of the survivors would not carry with them broken constitutions and maimed bodies, as they must now do.

The recital of these tales of horror touches the deepest springs of sympathy, and kindles the fires of indignation to a fervid glow; but it may not be for us to strike the blow which justice demands.

“Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.” The cry of the martyred thousands has gone up before high Heaven,—not heedlessly, but to be the means of a visitation, it may be, to the oppressors, which they will be ill prepared to meet.

Fearful wrongs may not always exist. There comes a time when Right will assert its inherent dignity, and show itself triumphant; but, meantime, the friends of the Northern soldier should be awake to their duty and their trust.

If there is anything that can be done, these men ought not to be suffered to pine away in the miasma of Southern prisons. The fact that one hundred and fifty have died in a single day in the foul atmosphere of such a place as the prison at Andersonville, ought to



awaken the people, and through them the Government, to a sense of these things, and bid them hasten to their relief. Much of the seeming apathy is doubtless due to the want of knowledge respecting the real state of affairs; but when we give these mournful statements, we know whereof we affirm.

Day by day we have gone the rounds of that wretched hospital, and looked upon almost every variety of suffering that the human frame is capable of presenting.

We have seen the misery of "hope deferred" written on many a countenance as we have passed the patient creatures on their low couch of earth.

We have seen their gaunt faces and protruding bones make their silent and wistful appeal week by week, and wondered that there was none to remember us in our sorrow.

We have witnessed amid all their woe and want, their

#### FIRM DEVOTION

to the Union cause, and known their intense longings for victory and success to crown the

Federal arms ; and thought would continually suggest that such unselfish patriots were worthy a better lot,—that they ought, at least, to be rescued from starvation.

I wearied of the sickening sights constantly before me, and determined to make my escape. I accomplished my object by obtaining a suit of sailor's clothes, changing my name, and allowing myself to be taken to Charleston, and from thence to Libby prison at Richmond. There I was exchanged, having been a prisoner just six months. No statement have I made but will be confirmed by every prisoner at Andersonville, who knew anything of the interior of the hospital. The *truth* can not be told ; it beggars all description. It is to be hoped that the time past will suffice, and that a like experience will not have to be wrought out by any company of soldiers in the future. The *Georgia Cemetery* should be as a mighty trumpet to proclaim against it

## CHAPTER VIII.

## DEPARTURE FROM PRISON.

As we marched out of the gate, we were divided into squads of sixty men each, and marched over to the depot. The sick ones were placed between the strongest of us, who bore them up, and in this manner we wended our way slowly along the road. When we were passing the head-quarters of Captain Wirz, he cried out to us, "You'll never come back here again!" and if it was not expressed, the sincere and inward response of every man was, "I hope we never may." Upon our arrival at the depot, we were immediately loaded into the cars, a squad of sixty in each one, with two guards upon the top. They were merely common box cars, such as are used at the North for transporting freight. We found placed for us inside, some corn-bread and bacon, which we were told was our allowance for two days, and also one or two wooden buckets in which we were to get our supply of water at the different stopping-places. We

immediately divided and distributed the rations, and had barely time to fill one of our buckets with water, when the cheering sound of the locomotive's whistle was heard, and we were off. Yes! we were really leaving behind us that plague-spot upon the fair earth—Andersonville. We went as far as Macon that evening, and waited there until four o'clock in the morning. Just before reaching Fort Valley, while the train was stopping for a few minutes, several men, who would not believe the affair would be crowned with exchange after all, jumped from the cars, and attempted to make good their escape. Our first knowledge of the fact was the simultaneous discharge of two muskets from the guards who saw them and fired. They were captured and brought back.

Sunrise found us traveling at a rapid rate on the Georgia Central Railroad, bound for Savannah, as we then supposed. The country through which we were passing was very beautiful, and looked like Eden to our delighted gaze, shut up as we had been for so many months. The trees, the green grass, the

flowers and pure air,—everything was lovely to us, and received our warmest praise. As we passed Gordon, we saw some of the destruction wrought by our cavalry, under Gen. Stoneman. The handsome railroad station and freight house was burned, and stood there dismantled and lonely, while bent and twisted rails, and partially burned ties, were scattered all about.

The road had been rebuilt, and was then in good, running order. When we arrived at Millen, instead of continuing on the Central road, we switched off to the Augusta road. "How is this?" we began to inquire. Not having very strong confidence yet in those with whom we had to deal, we were a little fearful what might happen. Visions of another prison began to appear before us, but our fears were soon dispelled by assurances that this was the nearest and quickest route to Charleston, which we were told was the point of exchange.

The fifty-two miles from Millen to Augusta was quickly sped, and shortly before sunset we entered that beautiful city, and here we

had to wait a long time, but it was far from being tedious, for we received every possible attention from the citizens. Men, women and children did their utmost to supply us with good, cool water, and this was something we were greatly in need of. One family in particular, I shall never forget. Their home was in a large white house, near to the car in which I sat, and all of them kept hard at work, filling our canteens and tin cups with refreshing water, and bringing milk, biscuit and meat, with the request that it might be given to the sick, and it may be imagined how gratefully it was received by those who had nothing but miserable bread and bacon to tempt their sickly appetites. As the lady of the house was stepping away from the car, after having brought a *plate of delicacies*, I said to her, "*Madam, if you please, will you let me know the name of one who has been so kind to us?*" "Yes sir," she replied, "Mrs. J. B. O'Donnell." Our hearts prompted the strongest expressions of gratitude, and even now, in remembrance of it, I feel like saying, "may God bless her for the sympathy and kindness

which she and her family displayed toward us!" I do not know whether she was Union or rebel in sentiment, but I do know that she had a heart overflowing with kindness. A great many were gathered there, and those who talked with us, wished us a safe passage home, and above all other things did they wish for peace to be smiling upon them again. They spoke as if they were heartily tired of the war, and indeed we thought all Georgians were from some things we had seen. When we left there, we were taken out of the cars and marched over into another street, where others were awaiting us on a different track. While waiting here we came in contact with

A REBEL SOLDIER,

who had been exchanged only a few weeks before, and held quite a conversation with him. We had a great many questions to ask him, for he had come from our own land, and we imagined there had been quite a contrast between the treatment he had received and that which we had endured.

"Where were you kept while a prisoner?" we asked. "On Johnson's Island," he told us,

“How did our people treat you,” we continued, anxious to draw him out on points of difference. “*Very* well, indeed, sir.” “Did you have enough to eat, and good food, too?” “Yes, sir!” “Did you receive any vegetables?” “Oh, yes; quite often.” “And how was it if you were sick,” we asked, “could you get medicine and receive medical treatment?” To this he readily replied in the affirmative, and having satisfied our curiosity as to the manner in which our government treated its prisoners, we began to enlighten him a little on the way we had been treated, and we had pretty conclusive proof of the truth of our statements with us, in our own persons, or, at least, he seemed to think so. Reaching into my cloth bag, which answered as a “haversack,” I drew forth a piece of corn bread, about the size and weight of a good *brick*. I handed it to him for inspection, saying, “*there*, that is what your people give us. What do you think of it?” He looked at it, felt of it, and shaking his head, handed it back, acknowledging it was “mighty poor feed.” “And, look here,” said I, “what do you



think of this shirt," as I pointed to the miserable apology for such a garment, "all worn to tatters, and these pants, all rags and dirt?" He was honest enough not to undertake to excuse such a course of treatment, and confessing that "it wasn't right," he turned and went away.

At ten P. M. we left on the Charleston train, bound direct for that "city by the sea," carrying with us pleasant recollections of our short stay in Augusta. On awaking in the morning, we found we had traveled only thirty miles during the night, and the journey through the day was conducted in the same style, bringing our

#### ENTRANCE INTO CHARLESTON

at three, P. M. We immediately left the cars, and were marched about half a mile, to the race-course, where a guard was thrown about us, and we were left to our meditations, first being told, however, that it was no exchange after all, but simply a hurried removal, caused by great fear of Gen. Sherman and his army. "How blind we had been," we thought, "not to have been mindful of that before!" "Now

we see," we said to ourselves, "that those who did not believe in the rebel lies were the *wise* men, and we were the foolish ones."

"Can these rebels have any hearts at all, to deceive suffering, dying men, in this systematic manner?" we asked, but upon consideration we thought it no wonder after all, for they perjured themselves when they seceded from the government, and when men have once done this, it becomes an easy matter afterwards to repeat it as often as they please, and in such form as suits them best. It seemed that a few more such developments, and a little more of like experience, and we should have a pretty clear insight into rebel character.

Collecting our thoughts, we looked about us to see how we were situated. The race-course upon which we were camped, was a broad, grassy flat, just outside the city, but commanding a view of its houses and buildings. The track was grown over with grass, and the judges' stand looked very rickety, indeed, hardly able to stand by itself. The large building formerly used as a stand for

spectators, was now occupied by Col. Daniels, of the 5th Georgia regiment, and Lieut. Col. Iverson; the latter in command over us. These soldiers were much better clothed, and were a better and more intelligent set of men, than the conscripts who guarded us at Andersonville. They told us, with a great show of pride, that they had "always been at the front, until within four weeks."

We had been there but a little while before Gen. Foster sent his compliments over to the city, in the shape of a *shell*, which burst in the air, directly in front of us. It did seem aggravating to be there, so near those who manned our own guns, and yet as helpless as if we were a thousand miles from them. After we left the cars, and were marching over to the place of encampment, we met with great kindness from the citizens, who brought us water to drink, and gave us food to eat. They all expressed a great deal of sympathy for us, and a few of them dared to whisper, while unseen by the guard, that "they hoped our army would soon come to our deliverance."

That night our rations were wholly exhausted, and all that we received was promises that we might have good bread and bacon on the morrow.

The disappointment was so very great, we feared it would prove too much for the boys who were sick, and that they would die, but those who were well, could but feel that it was some improvement to be surrounded by cool, clear air, not yet laden with pestilential odors.

When the morrow came, we received our hard bread and bacon which had been promised, each one having three and a half large crackers, made of good sweet flour, about six inches square, and about twice the quantity of bacon we had been in the habit of having at our prison. Some of the messes had, also, soap and salt.

We were organized, here, in a manner altogether different from that down in Georgia. Instead of being in detachments, as there, here we were placed in "thousands" and "hundreds." Our squad was designated as the 3d "hundred." 1st "thousand." Each one of these

divisions was commanded by a sergeant. The rations were drawn from the rebels by the officer over the "thousand," and those over "hundreds" drew their respective shares from him. The whole number of prisoners gathered there was some over six thousand. We had no tents and no shelter whatsoever furnished us, but such of us as had blankets erected something that served to shelter us from the heat of the sun, but they were of little use when it rained.

We could obtain plenty of water by digging down about four or five feet, but it was not of very good quality. However, a great number were quickly dug by the men; so numerous, that one could scarcely walk at all after dark, without danger of falling into some of them. A saltish kind of mineral water was also brought up from the city, and was said to have been obtained from an Artesian well.

A great many of the women and children came over, bringing with them wheat bread, sweet potatoes, and clothing, which they would throw over the line, when the guards were turned with their backs toward them. They

had orders to stop anything of the kind they saw, and some of them were so accommodating they would not see if they could, and kept their faces turned away purposely, that in this way we might receive what the ladies brought us for our comfort.

Unpleasant as our situation was at this time, while experiencing the sorrows of blighted hope, it nevertheless seemed grand not to be confined inside a stockade. But our old friend,

#### THE DEAD LINE,

seemed determined to follow us wherever we went. A rebel soldier, with a horse and plow, went round our camp, turning over a light furrow a few feet from the sentries' beat; and that was to be all that should mark the line between life and death for us. Not even a railing was put up, like the one we had been conversant with. Soon after this, the whole of us were marched out of camp, and after staying awhile out, we had the satisfaction of marching back again,—done, as we learned, to afford a better opportunity of our being counted.

Fifteen of the "hundreds" were finally given one day's rations, and ordered to be ready to take their departure on the next day; and it was matter of much speculation with us, as to where their place of destination might be. They started early in the morning for their unknown home, but we conjectured that it might be Florence, as we learned the rebels had another prison there.

That day was to us one of the old-fashioned starvation days, for we had nothing but a scrap of fresh beef until after dark at night, when we had a little hard-bread given us. A Rebel officer came to the prison entrance in the afternoon, and called for volunteers to work upon fortifications in Charleston harbor, promising, as an inducement, all they wanted to eat, besides tobacco and whisky, and threatening to force them if they should refuse to do it of their own accord. I am sorry to say that several hundred *did* volunteer their services, and were accepted. It might be that they did it with the hope of escaping. We could not think they would so violate their enlistment oath, "not to render aid or

comfort to the enemy," on any other condition.

I received a line about this time from Major Pasco, of our regiment, who was a prisoner in the Roper Hospital buildings, down in the city. It was brought to me by the Catholic "Sisters of Charity," and made me feel like setting down one good deed in their favor, for it certainly seemed like an act of kindness then. I wrote a reply to the note, and supposing that it would have to be examined before it was allowed to go, I stepped up to the Lieutenant who was officer of the guard, and explained the case to him, asking him to read it, in order to satisfy himself that it contained nothing contraband. He made very slow work of it, and another officer, observing it, stepped up, and between them both they came to the conclusion that it was all right, and I was permitted to send it.

Several of our boys were sick, and really needed to be admitted to the hospital, and I used all my endeavors to secure such a result, but my efforts were all fruitless. It was a poor place indeed for a man to be sick, with-



out shelter or medicine, and apparently no prospect of having his condition bettered. My own right hand was getting to be in a very bad condition, arising from a little scratch on one of my knuckles, which had spread rapidly, and bid fair to render it unfit for use speedily, unless something could be done to arrest it. My blood seemed in a terrible state, and my system full of scurvy, for I had not eaten a vegetable of any kind since my capture in April, as none were given us, and we had no money to buy. It was not long before I had to give up the care of the "mess" to Sergeant G——, as it became impossible to do any work at all. In this state, one of the

#### SISTERS OF CHARITY

did a good thing for me. I asked her if she would be so kind as to give me some bandages for my hand. "Wait a few moments," said she; and she immediately went to an ambulance which stood near the guard line, and returned with her arms full of things for the men. Coming towards me, she put quite a large package of something done up in a

snow-white napkin, into my hand, saying that was for myself. Thanking her heartily, I walked away, wondering what it could be, but did not examine the gift until I reached the boys. I then undid it, and found it to contain some superb home-made wheat bread. I tore the napkin into strips for bandages, and administered the bread internally, and with such immediate and gratifying results, I went to sleep as happy as a king.

Every day, after this, two or three of these Sisters, accompanied sometimes by a dapper-looking little Priest, would ride over from the city in a two-horse ambulance, which was well loaded with good things and brought into prison to be dispensed alike to Protestant and Catholic.

To us it was a beautiful sight to see them come right in among us, not afraid to approach us, dirty and ragged as we were. They would have, at least, a kind word for us, but often they were attended by some more solid token of sympathy, and in the gratitude of our hearts we said, "May God bless them for their kindness!"

The rebels, it seemed, fully believed that "variety" was the "spice of life," for they issued in a single day, rice, hominy, corn-meal, flour, beans, beef, soap, and salt. It sounds very large, but in reality it was very small, for no one had enough of each, or all, to do any good.

Early in the morning of the 17th, I spoke to an officer respecting my own admission to the hospital, and ascertaining there would probably be an opportunity, I took my position near the prison-gate, with two of my comrades, and waited for the surgeon to make his appearance. After a long while he came, and as a result of the interview I was admitted. This was the first time I was ever booked in such an institution, and I thought it might be the last, for I was much reduced in strength, and there seemed to me no great prospect of recovery. We had no food that day but what was brought us by the kind ladies of the city. They brought bread, soups, &c., which were divided among us, thus giving each quite a taste of good food. The surgeon made us a visit in the afternoon, and I was

so fortunate as to get my hand dressed by him.

The next day was the Sabbath, but it was so painfully unlike holy time at home, that we were sad. So great was physical depression with me, I had begun to despond, and I wondered if I should ever see home and friends again. We had been deceived so many times, I had no confidence in an exchange, and my hand was getting so crippled, I was dependent on my comrades for even ordinary comforts. But Faith reasoned that it was the time above all others when I ought to look beyond myself to Him who noteth even the "sparrow's fall," and whose grace was sufficient for support in any and every trial that His trustful ones were called to endure. While engaged in these soothing reflections, the surgeon came to give attention to my hand. It had been growing worse, continually, and was now filled with gangrene. I began to be sorely afraid that I would be obliged to lose it.

External things did not conspire to render my situation particularly pleasant. I could hear the church bells ring for service, but the

summons was not for me, for I was a prisoner, and sick. I knew that our forces were not very far away, for there was heavy shelling upon the city, all the day, but they were ignorant of my condition, and could not help me if they were not.

Our hospital had really no claim to any such title. The treatment we received was a mere farce. I longed to gain admission to one of the city hospitals, that I might have more of some things which seemed absolutely indispensable to my recovery. There we were, about four hundred patients, sleeping upon the bare ground, with no covering furnished us at all, and no tents but such as we could make, of the few threadbare blankets that we had held on to, since our capture. Every afternoon the Surgeon, a young physician from the city, would pay us a visit, sometimes bringing with him a few diarrhea powders in his pocket, or a few drinks of whisky in a little stone jug. We very much needed acids, for the scurvy, but these, he declared, it was impossible to obtain. We thought he would have done more for us if it

had been in his power, but merely good intentions were simply aggravating, when men were dying as they were there. A large number of the strongest men were returned to the prison, on Monday, and their places filled by other sick ones, but many of them, however, were in no worse condition than some who were sent away. I now submitted my hand to the painful operation of severe cauterizing, hoping by some means to stay the progress of the poison.

About this time we were called to experience, what seemed to us, simply an

#### ACT OF INHUMANITY.

An order was issued from head-quarters, for the hospital camp to be moved at a greater distance from the camp of the 5th Georgia regiment, and in the midst of a drenching rain, the sick men had to strike their blanket tents, and put them up again as best they could, upon the wet, soaked ground, in the new position. We were told by an officer of the guard that there was considerable yellow fever in the city, and that we were moved from fear of contagion. It may have been

so, but the following day brought us a repetition of the same suffering.

Early in the morning everybody who could walk, no matter how sick, was ordered inside of the prison camp again, and so, several hundred of us, poor fellows, had to totter in as best we could, many, only to die soon after getting there. No reason was assigned for the heartless transaction. How we longed to hear from the flag of truce boat which had been sent down the harbor, or from the meeting of the exchange commissioners.

I found a welcome asylum in the tent of three of our regiment, who promised to take care of me until I was better, if that time should ever come. We received, at length, some vinegar with our rations, but in exceedingly small quantities. Some of the boys kindly gave me what was assigned to them, and by putting them together I had quite a drink, that I hoped would tell favorably upon my diseased hand. But it was not so easy to gain relief. My sufferings became so intense that I was finally admitted to the hospital again, where I was told that it was impossible

to save my hand, and that I must submit to amputation. I was sick at heart to think of losing it, but concluded that I must do it, or lose my life, and therefore I chose to have it performed. I was sent for, and taken out to the amputating room, which was in the lower part of the building formerly used as spectators' stand, at the great races. Upon arriving there I found several Surgeons, with the requisite instruments at hand, and also a crowd of Confederate officers and soldiers, who had pressed in to witness the operation. One beside myself was present to undergo similar treatment, which was also rendered necessary by gangrene. He was selected as the first victim, and in a few moments he was stretched upon the floor, with the chloroform at his nostrils. It took some time to get him sufficiently under its influence to begin the work, but as soon as the prospect justified the attempt, the young Surgeon in charge of us, applied the knife and the saw, and in a very short time the arm was off, and lying beside the unfortunate man. The arteries were quickly taken up, the blood sponged off, and



the stump properly bandaged. The patient now began to arouse himself, as if from sleep, and seeing blood upon the face of the Surgeon, he began to laugh.

“Aha! old boy,” said he, “your arm is off, did you know it?” He glanced at the place where once he had a strong right arm, and seemed surprised to find it gone. A little whisky was then given him, and he was removed.

I stood by, looking on, during the whole operation, laboring with the unpleasant conviction that my turn came next. The Surgeons then came to me and carefully examined my hand. The one in charge of the prison hospital was in favor of amputation, but the other three, who were old, gray-headed men, differed from him, and the final decision was *not* to cut it off then, but to give it a little longer trial. What moments of suspense were those, and with what a rejoicing heart did I leave that room, when I found that I was not to part with my good right hand, the value of which I had never known before.

I received, about this time, \$5.00 in Confederate money from our kind-hearted Major, and a similar amount from our Adjutant, both of them being confined in one of the city prisons. The money and letters were both brought me by the Sisters of Charity, and they also carried back my messages to them in reply. I invested this money in vegetables, knowing their great value in cases of scurvy.

A rebel sutler came up every day from the city, with one or two wagon loads of bread, sweet potatoes, radishes, salt, and other articles, which he sold at quite reasonable rates, considering the high prices that were demanded for everything in the Confederacy. His price for bread was fifty cents for a small loaf, and twice the amount for one a little larger. Sweet potatoes were \$10.00 a bushel; cooking soda \$10.00 per pound; pepper, in the berry, \$20.00 a pound; radishes, ten for \$5.00, and other articles in the same proportion. These prices, however, were in Confederate currency, which was worth but little compared with Uncle Abe's "greenbacks."

One dollar of the latter was worth seven of the former. At Andersonville it had been five to one. We thought it something to be proud of, that our money commanded so large a premium in the very heart of the Confederacy. The loaves of bread which we bought for one dollar, were about the size of a five cent loaf at home, and he would have charged more for them, as well as his other things, had not Lieut. Col. Iverson, the rebel commander, checked him in his exorbitant demands, and forbid him taking any more than would be required for the same things in the city.

This was one good quality in the rebel, we thought. This officer was a young, boyish-looking fellow, but one glance at his face revealed a great deal of decision and energy, and his soldiers obeyed him unhesitatingly, as indeed they did all their officers, down even to their Corporals. I never saw but one instance of disobedience of orders by a rebel soldier, and that was at Charleston, when the men had crowded rather too closely upon the "dead line," at the prison entrance. Col. Daniels, of the 5th Georgia regiment, seeing

it, stepped up to one of the guards and ordered him to fire into us. He replied, "I can not do it, Colonel." "I order you to fire into those men," repeated the Colonel, sternly, and again the soldier said, "*Colonel, I can not do it.*" The Colonel said no more, but turning on his heel, he walked rapidly away, and I never knew whether the soldier was punished for his disobedience or not.

The name of

#### THE YOUNG SURGEON

in charge of the prisoners, was Yarmony, and he was what was usually termed, "*a fast young man.*" He wore a tasty looking Confederate uniform, but seemed to care nothing at all which side was successful in the war. He had been, in other times, a medical student in New York city, and said "he'd like to be there again." We generally thought he did what he could for us, considering the limited means at his disposal, but there was one thing the doctor could not possibly do, and that was to speak without badly stuttering. One of the hospital attendants was the fortunate possessor of a medium sort of violin, and he

used frequently to tune his instrument and strike up a lively piece, much to our gratification. It happened that the Doctor was a great lover of music, and the melodious strains came to his ear one day, when he was making his rounds among the sick. From that time until we left, he made it his daily practice, after making his examinations and prescriptions, to come round and have some favorite air played for his special benefit. There was one lively thing, in particular, which he very much liked, and which he called the "I-I-rishman." The first thing he would say, usually, after sitting down, would be,—“C-c-come, F-F-Ferguson, p-play us the I-I-rishman;” so he would give him this and other lively pieces. Then he would say, “N-now p-play something s-soft;” and then something of this sort would follow, much to the Doctor’s edification.

Still again he would urge, “S-s-sing something.” It so happened that Hope, a member of our regiment, was also on duty as an attendant in the hospital, and he was widely known as the boy who could sing a song or dance a jig equal to any one. The Doctor, being told

of this, turned to him, saying, "C-c-come, Hope, s-s-sing us s-s-*something*, n-never mind w-w-what it is." Hope wished to be excused, but no; the Doctor would not hear of any excuse, so without saying anything more, he sang the following "true blue" Union song, to the music of "The Sword of Bunker Hill."

Sadly we gazed upon that Flag,  
 Torn from a brother's hand;  
 And shed a tear for those once loved,  
 Now joined to traitor's band.  
 They have left the Flag of Washington,  
 The Flag our Fathers gave;  
 A richer boon was never given,  
 No prouder flag to wave.

But when Jeff. Davis raised his hand,  
 To marshal for the fight,  
 Six hundred thousand freemen rose  
 To battle for the right.  
 Then to our God the prayer went up,—  
 Protect our noble band!  
 God bless our cause!—our Flag now waves  
 Within the traitor's land.

Down, down with that base Rebel Flag!  
 Tread it beneath your feet;  
 And gaily to the breeze unfurl  
 That Flag we love to greet.  
 Wave on, wave on, thou glorious Flag!  
 And still our song shall be,  
 Long live, long live that good old Flag,—  
 Three cheers, three cheers, for thee!

The Doctor seemed not at all displeased

with the sentiments of the song, but if he were, he very quietly kept it to himself.

The shelling of the city continued the whole time we were there. During the day the explosion of the shells would not be heard on account of the noise in the camp; but at night, when all was still, we could distinctly hear the booming of the cannon, and the scream of the shell from the moment it left the muzzle of the gun, until it fell, with a crash, into some building of the city, and there exploded with a dull sound. The papers claimed that no lives had been sacrificed, but we heard from Union people that a great many had been killed, and that a large part of the city was entirely uninhabited.

Receiving no medicine one day, we learned through the Surgeon that one of our shells had visited the office of the Medical Purveyor and rendered it necessary to remove it to a safer place; consequently, the usual issues were withheld.

## THE YELLOW FEVER

began to rage fearfully, and many of the officers and men among our guards, of the 5th Georgia Regiment, died of it. It did not make its appearance, however, among the prisoners, until about the 1st of October. Two of the hospital attendants were then seized with it, and were at once removed to a place used solely for such cases. Then commenced our removal from Charleston to Florence, which was prosecuted with as much rapidity as possible, and we were not sorry to have a long distance intervene between us and the dreaded disease. About fifteen hundred a day were taken, and the last of us left on the 8th. Those who were well went first, and the sick in the hospital last. I was one of the last to leave the spot, and therefore happened to be an eye-witness of a very laughable affair. Squads of rebel soldiers and a few of their officers were sauntering lazily over the deserted camp, when suddenly and accidentally they made an important discovery. Two of the prisoners had got into a well during the night,



and had been covered over with some old rubbish by their comrades, hoping in this way to remain concealed until darkness should come again, when they designed to crawl out and make for our forces at Port Royal ferry. They had either been hastily or carelessly covered, and in consequence, one of the "Johnnies" had caught a glimpse of them. Of course they were immediately unearthed and brought forth, looking dirty, and evidently feeling rather cheap to be made the subject of laughter both by the rebels and their own men also. The rebels now went to work, and probed the ground with short sticks, and thus succeeded in digging out quite a number of "Yanks" who were attempting this underground way to freedom. This was an entirely new dodge to the rebels, and one which they had not dreamed of, and but for that unfortunate glimpse, it would have been a success. After the ground had been thoroughly canvassed, and they were convinced that no more of us were stowed away, we were loaded into the cars, which were in waiting, and soon sped away to Florence and another stockade.

That ride I shall never forget. The cars, as usual, were simply those which had been used for freight, and they were filled to their utmost capacity with the sick, many of them so bad and helpless as to be brought to the cars on stretchers. Most of them were covered with filth and vermin, and the odor that filled the place where we were was suffocating. As if apprehensive that these skeletons, like riches, might "take to themselves wings and fly away," a couple of guards were placed over us, to keep us in the proper sphere. It may be, however, that they were not unmindful of what had once occurred at Andersonville, and concluded that no precaution could be too great. It was the custom in the prison there, to carry a man's body to the "dead house" on a stretcher, as soon as the breath was gone. One day a man so successfully counterfeited death, that he was carried out of the gate, past the scrutinizing gaze of the guards, and deposited in the wonted place with a long row of really dead men, where he remained immovable until the shades of night came on, when he "made himself scarce." Ever after

that, a sentinel was placed over the dead, to see that they did not run away.

At one of the stations between Charleston and Florence, the train stopped for wood and water. An old darkey woman came out with several "pones" of corn-bread for sale at \$2 apiece, in Confederate money. My whole worldly fortune consisted of just that amount, and as I was very hungry, I concluded to invest it in that way. She had only one or two cakes left, however, and a score of voices were shouting, "This way, Aunty!"—"Let me have it!"—"Here's your money!" &c., but by dint of great yelling, and continued waving of the dirty-looking bill, I finally secured one of the "pones," and when I got it, it was nothing but meal and water baked before the fire without any salt; but it tasted good then.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### ARRIVAL AT FLORENCE.

WE made our entrance into Florence, or, as we afterward learned, about a mile from it,

at ten o'clock in the evening. Here we were ordered to leave the cars, and spend the night in what had once been a corn-field, making our bed between the furrows. It was a cold, frosty night, and we suffered intensely. Our guards had bright, good fires, but we were neither allowed to come nigh them, or get any wood for ourselves; so all we could do was to let our teeth chatter, our knees knock together, and wait for daylight and the warmth of the sun. When it did rise, we well-nigh forgot these things in that other thing it disclosed—the dreaded stockade!

At about eight or nine we entered the prison, and although our sensations were different than when we entered our Georgia prison, yet I think we felt worse now than we did then; for at that time we did not dream of being held but a short time, and now we were asking ourselves in fear, "Can we live here through this winter?" Then, again, when we entered Andersonville, we were strong and robust, while now, those of us who were alive were broken down by long-continued exposure to all weather and all diseases. In the sorrow

of our hearts, we inquired, "What can the government be thinking of, that it leaves us here, month after month?"

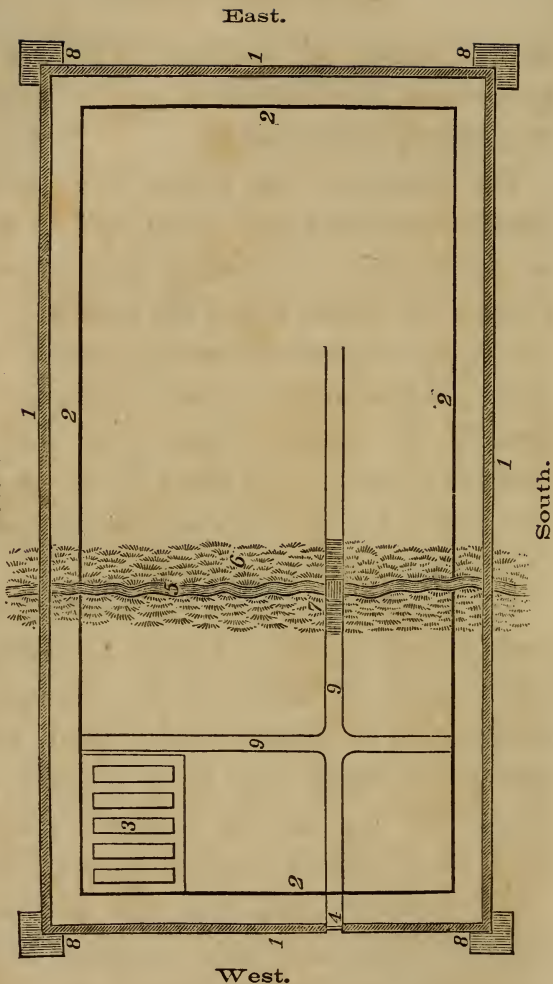
The interior of the prison, in its general features, resembled very much our old place of confinement. A swampy spot extended through the center, with a hill upon each side, but in one respect this was far superior, inasmuch as a fine stream of clear, cold water ran through the whole prison. The stockade enclosed, it would seem, about fifteen acres of land, nearly five of which were rendered unavailable by its being so swampy.

The "dead line" there was marked by a shallow ditch, or furrow, having *no railing at all*. Instead of sentry boxes, the guards walked upon an elevated beat of earth, which was thrown up so high as to overlook the camp,—the top of the stockade reaching about breast high to a man of common height.

The enclosure itself was built of unhewn trunks of trees, of nearly a uniform length, which were let into the ground, and placed side by side very closely. No tents or shelter of any kind were furnished us.

# FLORENCE STOCKADE.

North.



West.

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| 1. STOCKADE.    | 6. SWAMP.                                |
| 2. DEAD LINES.  | 7. CAUSEWAY AND BRIDGE.                  |
| 3. HOSPITAL.    | 8. ELEVATED PLATFORM FOR AR-<br>TILLERY. |
| 4. PRISON GATE. | 9. STREETS.                              |
| 5. BROOK.       |  |

When prisoners were first put into it, a large number of trees were left standing, but they had all been cut down when we entered, and the stumps were being worked up. Part of our regiment were among the first to enter at this time, and we improved the opportunity to lay in an ample store of wood for the winter; beside we were able to build some quite comfortable huts with the material we gathered. The 5th Georgia regiment, which guarded us at Charleston, were sent on to guard us here. There were also several battalions of conscripts, or "reserves," stationed there for the same purpose.

We found with surprise and sorrow that many of our men had really taken the oath of allegiance to the Confederacy, and had gone into the Southern army, and that still more had signified their intention of doing it. Over at our left was a camp which we were told was occupied by those prisoners who had taken the oath. It was not hard to account for it. They were ragged, half starved, and death was staring them in the face.

By entering the Southern army they, no

doubt, expected to receive better food, and it was their hope and intention, also, to escape at the first opportunity. We all shuddered at the prospect of staying through the winter in the Confederacy, if, indeed, we should live so long.

Our rations, at first, were flour, corn meal and beans. We were organized as in Charleston, into "thousands" and "hundreds,"—the whole number being about twelve thousand.

Soon after our entrance, we heard that most of our comrades whom we had left behind in the Georgia prison, because they were too sick to go with us, and whom we had never expected to see again, were really in the hospital, about a mile from us. We had a great curiosity to see them, and hear of their adventures since September, and, indeed, necessity seemed to render it quite probable that I might be an inmate of the hospital, too, for my hand, though better than it had been, was still a source of great trouble, and needed care. At about four o'clock every afternoon, the Surgeon in charge, Dr. Strother, would come to the prison gate and take out all whom



he thought best to have go. Those who were able, walked to the appointed place, and an army wagon, drawn by a span of mules, conveyed the rest.

One afternoon I presented myself at the gate, with a score or more of the sick, and when the doctor came he kindly admitted me to the hospital with the others, although my general health was quite good at the time, the vegetables I had procured at C—— having infused new life into my system. I went with those who were able to walk, but as most of the crowd were lame with the scurvy, we had to march at a slow pace to accommodate them. We reached the place of our destination just before sunset, and found it guarded, and also surrounded by a "dead line." Some pretensions to shelter were made, in the shape of nine long sort of sheds, made of a frame-work of poles overlaid with pine boughs, which afforded some protection from the sun, but none at all from the rain.

There were ward divisions, eleven in number, and each one was in charge of a ward-master, assisted by from eight to ten nurses.

There were also seven stewards, whose business it was to receive the medicine from the dispensary, and see that it was faithfully administered to the sick, of whom there were about sixty in each ward.

Not far from the middle of the month I recovered sufficiently to be detailed as a

HOSPITAL STEWARD,

procuring the situation quite readily because of my knowledge of medicines, having been a *drug clerk* before entering the army. In a day or two after this, in company with a number of the other hospital attendants, I was marched over to the head-quarters of Lieut. Col. Iverson, and there signed the following parole of honor:

HEAD-QUARTERS, MILITARY PRISON,  
FLORENCE, S. C., Oct. 19th, 1864.

"I, R. H. Kellogg, Sergeant Major 16th Conn. Vols., a paroled prisoner of war, do hereby pledge my word of honor that I will not violate my parole by going beyond one-half mile from the hospital limits.

Witness, C. H. MOODY.

(Signed,) R. H. KELLOGG.

I now had a good opportunity to observe many things, which otherwise I would never have known. Whenever I could get away

for an hour or so, without neglecting my duties, I did so. About this time, Dr. Strother, the young Surgeon who had been in charge, was taken with the yellow fever, and nearly lost his life in consequence. His place was supplied by the Assistant Surgeon, Junius O'Brien, a Kentuckian, and one of the most rabid secessionists I had ever known. When he detailed me as a steward, he asked me what State I was from. "Connecticut, sir," was my reply. "Well," said he, "I am down on men from that State. That's where they make wooden nutmegs, isn't it?" "Yes, sir! and oak hams, too." I passed, however, notwithstanding the unfortunate connection.

While there we received a large lot of supplies from the U. S. Sanitary Commission, consisting of shirts, drawers, hats, shoes, stockings, slippers, dressing gowns, blankets, bed-quilts, besides things for the comfort of the sick, such as condensed coffee and milk, extract of beef, tomatoes in tin cans, &c. These articles were stored in the log house used as a dispensary, and one of the prisoners placed in charge of them. They were drawn

from this place as they were needed, by the stewards, and by them given to the ward-masters, who issued them to the sick men in their respective wards, they keeping an account of them as they were expended. The Surgeon and other officers acted very honorably, allowing nothing to be stolen or wasted.

The supply of medicines for the sick were obtained from Dr. Chisholm, the medical purveyor at Columbia, S. C. They were limited in their variety, and entirely insufficient in quantity. What was furnished for a month's supply, was barely sufficient for half that period. When the drugs failed entirely, resort was had to the bark of forest trees, of which strong decoctions were made. One of the principal remedies for diarrhea was prepared from oak, sweet gum, and persimmon bark. There was also a *tonic* made from the bark of the wild cherry.

Nearly all the packages of herbs in the dispensary, bore the label of the "C. S. A. Laboratory," but the quinine, and valuable drugs, had on a foreign label, English, I think, and undoubtedly found their way into the country by way of the blockade runners.

A sour beer was made from corn meal, and administered to those who had the scurvy, with very good effect. But a great many of our men died there, and were buried on the plantation of Dr. Garrett, a wealthy landholder, and an owner of many slaves, but who was said to be a Union man. He offered to enclose the ground used as a place of burial, by a railing, to preserve it from *desecration*, though I am not aware that it was ever done. The dead were carted away from the hospital every morning, in an army wagon drawn by mules. The deaths amounted to twelve per cent. per month of the whole number. As in Andersonville, they were piled one upon another until the wagon was filled. A party of prisoners were at work every day digging trenches where the bodies of the dead soldiers were to be laid.

About the 20th of the month the hospital, with all the sick, was removed inside the stockade, a reason for which we never ascertained. For some time after, the sick were without shelter, but by the first of November one barrack, or shed, was completed for their

accommodation, and preparation made for the erection of more.

These structures would highly excite the risibles of a Northern house-builder. Two of them were seventy-five feet long, and thirty-one in width, without a nail in them. The frames were made of timber, cut in the swamp near the prison, and fastened together with wooden pins. The roof was made of "shakes," or shingles held on by heavy poles for weights.

Dr. O'Brien was now relieved of his duties as Surgeon in charge, by Dr. David Fludd, who was one of the original signers of the Secession Act which placed South Carolina out of the Union. He was very kind and gentlemanly, however, with us, and won the respect of all who knew him.

A number of other surgeons arrived about this time, and were assigned to duty in the hospital. More patients were admitted also, until the whole number amounted to nearly eight hundred, so many that they could hardly gain sufficient attention to obtain prescriptions or have medicine dispensed to them as often

as necessary by the stewards. The 5th ward, which was assigned to me, had at one time over one hundred and fifty patients in it, and some of them very sick, to whom I had to give medicine, with the help of the nurses, three times a day, and sometimes oftener. It scarcely allowed me time to eat, and it was so with the other stewards. Another supply of Sanitary Commission stores reached us while in this condition. Among other things a large quantity of sheets were sent, some of them entirely new, and of fine quality. The sick men in the hospital were lying upon the bare ground, and these would do them but little good to be spread down in the dirt, so it was decided by the principal surgeon that they be exchanged for sweet potatoes, as these would be of more real benefit to the men, especially those suffering with the scurvy. A notice to this effect was posted in several different places, and soon the ladies, young and old, were flocking in from all the surrounding country, anxious to make the exchange. In this way quite a large quantity of potatoes was gained and issued to the men in the hos-

pital. The *old* sheets were used for bandages, and were invaluable for this purpose, as many amputations of limbs, affected by gangrene, were almost constantly taking place. Many of the ladies who came to the Dispensary to examine the goods, were dressed in the height of fashion, wearing clothing of the most costly material. It was difficult to see where the war had cost them much personal suffering.

On each corner of the prison was a raised platform; and from two of these, pieces of artillery frowned upon the helpless men inside. At all hours of the day and night, a man stood by these guns, ready for action in case of any attempted outbreak on our part.

The ladies usually concluded their visits by ascending to the top of one of these platforms, accompanied by the Confederate officers, and there laugh and joke at the misery of their enemies. No *true lady* would have stood there and looked with such spirit at the sights before them; but *they* seemed to enjoy it.



As the

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

drew nigh, the rebels became intensely excited, and eager to know the result. McClellan was their universal favorite, and they built high hopes upon the success of this cause. "If McClellan is elected," they would say, "we shall have peace in a short time." I never remember hearing this candidate spoken of in any other terms than those of the warmest commendation.

On the day of election, a quantity of white and black beans were given to Sergeant Kemp of the 1st Conn. Cavalry, by the Rebel Quartermaster, with the understanding that they be used as ballots, whereby the political opinions of the prisoners might be ascertained: the white beans representing McClellan, and the black ones President Lincoln. Two empty bags were hung up on the stockade, inside the "dead line," and the "thousands" were ordered to fall in, in succession, and all who wished to vote, to march in line to the spot. Beans were given them, and one by one they stepped up and deposited their vote as they chose, a

man standing by, the while, to see that no fraud was committed. It was conducted fairly and quietly, but the result was not particularly gratifying to those who commenced it. I have not the exact figures, but I think the proportion was two and a half for Lincoln to one for McClellan. This was an expression of feeling and opinion among men who were ragged and half famishing with hunger, yet were not in favor of any peace gained by disgraceful compromise. In about a week after this, the result of the great contest at the North was known, and the rebels were blue indeed. Such a set of sour, gloomy-looking fellows is rarely met with anywhere.

They understood the full significance of the re-election. They knew with sorrow they could not yet lay their armor off, and that their favorite hobby of "independence from Yankee rule" was far from being realized. This vote of the prisoners was all the more valuable from the fact that the Administration had been constantly misrepresented by the Confederate officers, to the men who had but little if any means of finding out anything

to the contrary. I had myself heard Dr. O'Brien repeatedly say to our men, "Your Government does n't care anything for you;" and, "Your Government will not exchange such of you as have served your time out;" and for proof of his statements he would refer to the refusal of Gen. Sherman to exchange a couple of thousand rebels for an equal number of our men, held by Gen. Hood, whose term of service had expired. "Was it a wonder, then, shut out from the world as we were, that the faith of many in our Government was changed to distrust?"

One of the

#### PUNISHMENTS

at Florence, for attempting to escape, was to suspend the offender *by the thumbs, with the feet from the ground*, thus bringing the entire weight of the body upon the thumbs. One afternoon, while at the dispensary, which was outside of the stockade, and but a few rods from the guard-house, I was attracted by the cries and groans of some one who was evidently in intense agony. Turning my eyes in

the direction of the sound, I saw for the first time, one of the prisoners undergoing this terrible torture. He was hanging from one of the beams which projected from the roof of the guard-house, swinging in the air, and crying, "Oh, for God's sake, have mercy upon me! Let me down! Oh! mercy! mercy!" But mercy was something that his tormentors were not blessed with. My blood boiled as I witnessed this inhuman punishment, and I remarked that "I would rather be hung by the neck, than to be in such misery." One of the surgeons heard me say it, and reported it to O'Brien, who immediately came to me, and wanted to know what remarks I had made. I repeated the words I had uttered. "Well," said he, in a great passion, "I detailed you to assist in the hospital, and not to pass remarks upon the doings of the Confederate Government; and if you are not satisfied, you can return to the stockade." He continued his remarks by saying it was his duty to support his Government in all things, and not to question whether they were right or wrong. After a long talk upon the enormity of my offence,



HANGING BY THE THUMBS.

W. J. M. 1850



I was allowed to return to duty. Then, probably thinking that he would improve the opportunity to the utmost, he assembled all the prisoners who were working outside on parole, and gave them instructions as to the course it was proper for them to pursue. "You can *think*," he said to them, "what you please, but you must not *express* your opinions."

This was a right he reserved for himself, and he was constantly forcing his opinions upon us. It was his favorite practice to sit in the dispensary by the hour, and recite to us tales of shocking barbarities perpetrated by our troops; but he never allowed us to speak of a single instance of rebel cruelty. It was also particularly distasteful to him to hear of any circumstance in which a Yankee got the better of a Southerner in any way. But things occurred sometimes to show it unto him,—as, for example, the following incident:

The rebel soldiers belonging to the different battalions were frequently granted passes by Lieut. Col. Iverson, which allowed them to come into the prison and trade for gold pens, rings, pocket-books, knives, buttons, or any-

thing that they could get, giving in return sweet potatoes or Confederate money. A "Johnnie" came in one day, with a great desire to obtain some New York State buttons, which, being very showy, were in great demand and high in price. It was quite plain that he had traded for them before, as he had a full row upon the gray coat he wore, and also four of them on the back. While he was bargaining with two or three of the prisoners, one of the boys stepped softly up behind, and with a sharp knife cut off the four upon the tails of his coat. Then presenting himself in front of the "reb," he said, "I have a few York State buttons that perhaps I'll sell you." "Have you?" exclaimed he, with evident joy upon his countenance, "Let me look at them." Taking them in his hand, and carefully examining them, he remarked, "They are just like these on my coat," so paying a good round price for his own buttons, he departed, greatly pleased that he had found some "more of that same kind." A small group of "mudsills" had a quiet laugh to themselves when he was out of sight.



A few rods from the north side of the stockade, was a large camp occupied by

## SLAVES,

several hundred in number, all under the command of Lieut. De Loyle, an engineer officer. This man had the sole charge of laying out the fortifications, and the slaves performed the labor upon them.

A line of breast-works had encircled the stockade in a short time, with a small place at each corner, in which to run in artillery. Beyond this was still another, and outer line of works, with a deep ditch. The slaves would commence their work early in the morning, and continue until sunset, stopping only a short time for dinner. Their overseers, or drivers, were black like the rest, and stood with whip in hand directing and hurrying up the work. If they chanced to see one of the men slack at all, they would sing out, flourishing the whip at the same time, "*Sharp dere, boy; sharp dere.*" It seemed their disposition to avoid work if it were possible. Sundays all work was suspended upon the fortifications, and they sported about in their best

clothes, which were none of the finest at that, however.

Evidently, they were a happy, kind-hearted race by nature, but they were kept in great ignorance, which accounts for some of their peculiarities.

That they were often severely whipped in their camp, we know, as the sound of the lash was often heard at the dispensary. The religious element greatly predominates in the colored people generally. At their prayer meetings they work themselves up into great excitement. One of our boys once overheard one of them pray, as follows: "*Come down, O, Lord, and frow corn in de winder, and sabe us, poor darkies, from starbin dis yer winter.*"

It was also amusing to hear them sing at their work. One of them, apparently a leader among his brethren, would perform the *solos*, and the rest would come in on the *chorus*, keeping time all the while as they pounded away on the breast-works. The following is a specimen of the richness of their songs:

"Possum up a gum stump,  
Coonies in de holler,

Wake snakes, an June bugs,  
I'll gib you half a dollar.

## CHORUS.

Go 'long squirrel, hum de doodle dum,  
Go 'long squirrel, hum de doodle dum,  
Wid yer head upon yer shoulders,  
And yer feet upon der land,  
I don't know de reason yer don't go 'long."

One verse of another is as follows:

"Aunt Sister Sal, she had a flea,  
She hung him up and skinned him,  
Carried him down to de shootin' match,  
And Uncle Ben, he win him.

## CHORUS.

And Uncle Ben, he win him,  
And Uncle Ben, he win him,  
Carried him down to de shootin' match,  
And Uncle Ben, he win him.

Our own condition, in prison and hospital, was still melancholy. Death was still busy among us, choosing its victims as it saw fit. Rev. Mr. Gardner, of the 135th Ohio regiment, died in the early part of November. He was one to conduct the religious meetings at Andersonville, and also frequently held short services over some of the poor boys who died there. His illness was a severe and protracted one, and we mourned for him, for he was known and respected by all, but we knew that

his sufferings were over, and that he had gained eternal rest and peace. The Chaplain of the 5th Georgia regiment now preached to us occasionally, and he also sent a great many tracts to be distributed among the patients in the hospital. They were printed by a Southern society, which issued religious publications, and were quite interesting. It was gratifying to us to see some of our enemies taking so much interest in us, as this, but in things relating to our physical need we were left to suffer.

About the middle of the month, the rations of the ward-masters, and other hospital attendants, were greatly reduced. Before this, we had received plenty of flour, beans, corn meal and salt, with an occasional issue of fresh beef, but now a bakery and cook house were constructed outside, and we received what we had, already cooked, but greatly reduced in quantity. At this same time, our comrades in prison were only getting a pint of coarse corn meal, with the smallest modicum of salt occasionally. We were not allowed to carry any of our food to them, and if we ever did it, it

was by stealth, in order that it might not be detected by the inquisitive gaze of Dr. O'Brien, who was always on the alert to discover such things. Sometimes the rations of the whole camp would be discontinued, for some trifling excuse. I remember one occasion, when the prisoners went without food for sixty hours, and this, too, when the regular diet was simply a pint of meal. The pretense was, that two tunnels had been dug by the prisoners, and everything must be cleared up before any food could be given.

The overseer of the prison was Lieut. Barrett, of the 5th Georgia regiment, and any one who was ever in that stockade, will always remember him. It seemed that a greater wretch never lived. Capt. Wirz surpassed him in cruel inventions to enhance our misery, but he did not equal him in coarse brutality. Like Capt. W., he constantly used the most profane and blasphemous language, and delighted in drawing his pistol and firing it over the heads of the crowd.

The 24th came round—*Thanksgiving day* at home, and so I thought it there, for, although

I had nothing but a crust of bread for dinner, I was so fortunate as to receive two letters from home, giving me the first and only information I had of my friends since the previous April. I learned that all was well there, but they were ignorant of my condition, and knew not whether I was really alive or not. Two days after this, the long looked for time arrived;—the time when we were to be exchanged, or rather paroled, preparatory to such an act. The news of such proceedings came to us only an hour before the work began. At about one, P. M., a number of Confederate officers, accompanied by several clerks, and a small guard of soldiers, came into the hospital. Two tables were provided, and upon these the rolls were spread out. The masters of the different wards, in turn, called off the names of the patients as they stood on the roll-book, until fifty from each ward had been paroled; making three hundred and fifty in all. One well man was then paroled, to each company of ten sick ones, as attendants. These were selected by the rebel Surgeons, from the hospital nurses, &c. It was in this

way I obtained my freedom. No man was allowed to go, who could not walk up to the table and sign the parole papers, and for this reason scores of poor fellows were left behind, while their comrades who were stronger, passed out before them. The paper to which we signed our names, as nearly as I can recollect, read as follows :

“We, the undersigned, do solemnly pledge our sacred word of honor, that we will not take up arms again in any garrison, fortification or field work of the United States, or do any police or constabulary duty, or any duty usually performed by soldiers, until we shall have been duly declared exchanged.”

Having done this, it was said we would leave for Savannah on Monday. It all seemed like a pleasant dream, but we had been deceived so many times, it was impossible to remove all doubts from the mind. However, I determined to act as if it were a reality, and accordingly I went over to the prison in the evening, and told the boys to have their letters and messages ready the next day, if they wished me to carry them to their friends at home.

We were busy all day Sunday in getting the patients in readiness to leave. A special

requisition for soap was made by the surgeon in charge, and the nurses were ordered to see that the men who were to leave were scrubbed clean with soap and water, and, if possible, to have them shaved and their hair trimmed. This was done so as to render them presentable to our forces at time of delivery. One of the men in my ward, who was paroled, died on Saturday night. Exchange came too late for him, as it did for many others.

Shortly before sunset on Monday, we were marched out of the stockade, and encamped for the night near the cook-house; and here, two days' rations were issued to us.

That night we had a jolly time. No guard was placed over us, and we were left to do just as we pleased.

While we were there, two rebel soldiers paid us a visit. One of them kept a sharp lookout lest they should be seen or heard by some of their officers, and the other carried on quite a conversation with us. "They knew we were going home," he said, "and wished us to go with correct impressions of the true state of things among them." "My Father always



taught me to love the *Stars and Stripes*," he continued, "and never to raise a hand against them; but I am here in the Southern army because I can not help myself, and there are hundreds of men in the army who feel as I do, but it will not do for us to let our opinions be known. We are living under a complete *military despotism*." That he was sincere and truthful in his expressions, I have no doubt.

We were aroused at two o'clock in the morning, and marched over to the railroad track, a distance of half a mile, where the roll of the entire body of paroled men was called, after which we were loaded into the train, which had arrived in the meantime. Fifty-five prisoners and two guards were placed in each car. Dr. Orme, of Milledgeville, Ga., went with the train, and he did his duty well. A large tub was put in each car, and a body of men detailed to keep them filled with good water.

We had started from Florence at sunrise, and arrived at Charleston after dark in the evening, having been all that time in running

a distance of one hundred and three miles. We waited a long time at one station, and upon inquiring into the cause of the delay, we were told by the engineer that he had been running faster than schedule time allowed, and therefore he must wait awhile.

We stayed about two hours in the last-mentioned place, and then left on another train for Savannah. While on the way, we passed a train loaded with Union prisoners. We had an opportunity to speak with them, and learned that they had been confined at Blackshire, S. C., and were on their way to Florence from Savannah, where they had expected to be exchanged, having been previously paroled. We did not know what to make of this, and began to doubt quite seriously whether we were, even now, to realize our hopes. We made very slow progress, but finally reached the city of our destination, where we found great excitement in regard to Sherman's advance, his army being only forty-five miles distant. The negroes and citizens were hard at work, throwing up light earth-work defenses, such as the General's veterans would

laugh at. What we could see of the city, gave us very good impressions. The streets were wide and straight, and lined with beautiful trees, known as the "Pride of India." The houses were neat and handsome, and indicated taste and refinement on the part of their possessors. Here we were taken from the cars, to spend the night on the corner of Liberty and East Broad streets, in a vacant lot.

Some of the citizens came to see us. I had a short conversation with a wealthy cotton-factor, in which he said, "I have not handled a gun yet, and I do not intend to; and as for Gen. Sherman, I'm not at all alarmed about his coming, for I have nothing to fear from him."

The next morning the weather was clear and pleasant, and we marched down to the dock not long after sunrise, where three steamers were in waiting for us, and we immediately went on board. Here the old women, who made it a point to avail themselves of every opportunity to sell something to the soldiers, presented their baskets filled with pies, cakes, &c., and the boys, full of glee at

the prospect before them, were ready for a little fun, and therefore made corresponding offers, such as \$100 in Confederate money, or three cents in silver, for a piece of pie,—a distinction in the value of currency that some of the Southern bystanders did not relish particularly.

The names of the respective steamers were the “Beauregard,” “General Lee,” and “Jeff. Davis.” The first carried the officers, and was also the flag-of-truce boat. The two latter carried the enlisted men. They were steered by three rudders.

At about nine o'clock A. M. we started from the dock, the “Beauregard” carrying the flag of truce in advance, and the other two following at a respectable distance in her wake. Just before leaving, Dr. Orme said to Hospital Steward Reed of the 12th N. Y. Regiment, “You can tell your people at home just as bad stories as you please about the manner in which you have been treated,—anything that will hasten an exchange, for we want our men badly. But don't represent that we are nearly whipped, for, as long as there is a pine tree

left for us to sleep under, we will fight you." The Dr. was indulging in this same style of bombast one day in the hospital, when he was reminded by one of the ward-masters, a brave Ohio boy, that "they didn't talk in that style at the front." Upon that, the Dr. thought best to subside.

To return to our trip. The distance from the city to our fleet was about twelve miles, and we reached Venus Point, the rendezvous, at ten o'clock. On our way down the river, we were passed by an iron-clad steamer dashing up toward the city at a rapid rate,—the same "Savannah," I think, which was blown up by the rebels on the surrender of the city to Gen. Sherman. Another formidable monster of iron was anchored in the stream near Fort Jackson.

The river just below the fort was obstructed by rafts of timber, &c., leaving but a narrow channel to pass through. Only vessels of light draft could pass at all. The one I was in struck something which threw it up a foot or two, but did no serious damage at all. Having passed through this, we soon found our-

selves nearing our own noble fleet, and there was *our Flag*, flying from the rigging of a large steamer. It was impossible for us to gaze upon that precious emblem of Freedom with dry eyes. It was a touching sight to see the upturned faces, the eager gaze of our men. Never before was that flag so dear to our hearts. How insignificant and contemptible in comparison was the flaunting Rebel rag that had so long been displayed to us.

The "Beauregard" steamed up side of one of the vessels, and held communication with those on board, while we lay off in the stream awaiting the result. Capt. Hatch, the Rebel Exchange Agent, finally signalled to our steamer, and in a few moments we were alongside one of our transports, the "Star of the South," ready to go on board.

When we stepped our feet upon her decks, we breathed easily, and not before. The assertions of the rebel officers that our Government would not receive men whose term of service was out, led us to doubt whether we should meet with any reception at all, or be turned back to linger yet longer in rebel hells.

At the time of our parole, the rebel officers had taken, as far as practicable, those men whose time had expired, evidently intending to cheat the Government as much as possible; and one of the examining Surgeons also took out some of the men for bribes, obtaining in this way gold rings, greenbacks, &c. Two of my own comrades succeeded in making their escape in this way.

Moored on the river with the steamer already named, were the "New York" and the "Crescent." The one first mentioned was styled the "receiving ship," and we went on board that when we left the rebel craft. From there we went to the second one, as fast as circumstances would allow, that being designated the "clothing ship."

Here we were called upon to divest ourselves of our wretched garments and throw them all away, and we saw the miserable rags float down the river without the least feeling of regret,—and our old companions, the lice, also. We washed ourselves in water dipped from the cold stream, and though it caused some shivering sensations, we were heartily

glad of an opportunity to be clean once more. As fast as this was done, we were marched in a row to the counter, where each man was given a new suit of Uncle Sam's blue, and a good pair of shoes. Being thus washed and clothed, and "*in our right minds*," we were allowed to go on board the "Crescent," which was the "feeding ship." There we received our first meal of army food, and what a feast it was. We could not find words strong enough to express our admiration;—and that *pint of hot coffee*;—it was fit ambrosia for the gods and goddesses; *nectar*—which inspired one with happiness and contentment.

I doubted if there was ever a happier crowd than we were that night. Some danced, others sang, and every one was full of jokes and good humor over our fine fortune.

"How is this," says one, "are we going to another stockade?" "Not muchly, I guess," responds the one thus interrogated.

"How are you, corn meal?" says another, "that's played, isn't it, Tom?" "If I know myself, it is," gaily replies Tom.



Still another, thinking of home, says, "I wonder how we'll find things up North, and I'd like to know if my girl has gone and married another, while I've been down in our Georgia pen." He had been a prisoner a long time, and it would be no wonder if he had long ago been given up by his friends as one dead.

One group might be heard singing "Just before the battle, Mother," and other patriotic airs, and still another company were engaged in looking at the rapid steps of one of the boys, who was dancing a jig, and in this way some of the abundance of good feeling escaped. No sooner did one tire than another took his place, but there were many who were too weak to indulge in any such active demonstrations of joy, but who sat with a quiet smile upon their thin faces, drinking in all the fun that was going on about them.

In the exuberance of our joy, I trust we did not forget to thank Him, who from on high had watched over us in all our ways, and had finally brought us deliverance.

From the "Crescent" we went on board the

transport "Gen. Lyon," and when we finally weighed anchor, we felt that we were leaving the *Confederacy* for the pleasanter scenes of our northern homes; getting into "*God's country*" once more, as the boys called it. No tears were shed as the land of the traitor faded away in the distance, but only congratulations were heard, and hopes expressed that we might never be called to sojourn there again.

After we had passed Fort Pulaski, and were well out upon the ocean, there came up a fresh gale of wind, and the sea was rough. It was not long before many were seen leaning over the side of the ship, evidently inclined to part with the good things they had so warmly praised a little time before. The sailors enjoyed the rough condition of affairs, and doubtless looked with supreme contempt upon us poor landmen, who were able to endure so little.

As we were proceeding, our steamer stopped to overhaul a small schooner, which had run the blockade with about eighty bales of cotton. The first mate, with a boat's crew,

went on board of her, but after taking an inventory of her cargo, they returned, allowing her to pursue her course. Why it was done we did not know, but it was probably for *good reasons*, or at least, so considered. But Capt. Ward was heard to say, he would send somebody after them who would take care of them. The next day was beautiful, with fine sailing, and we were going in just the right direction for us. Nearly all sail was set, and under the combined influence of wind and steam, we sped along right merrily—"Homeward Bound." We saw several sails in the distance, in the morning, and at noon one of our naval vessels sailed near us, when one of their officers put a speaking trumpet to his lips, and hailed us with the enquiry, "Who are you?" "Transport, Gen. Lyon," replied our Captain, "with paroled prisoners." "Where are you from?" continued they. "From Savannah river," we told him, with the additional information that we had fallen in with a blockade runner the day before. "Where?" "Off Charleston." "All right, sir," said they, and off they went in pursuit of it. We continued

our course, and passed Cape Hatteras at about eight o'clock in the evening. The sea at this point was very rough, and our steamer rolled and pitched in a way that was anything but delightful, but were we not nearing the long wished for port, and should trifles vex us?

Just before reaching Fortress Monroe, we passed a large school of whales, which were spouting and blowing in all directions. They came very near to the steamer; so near that we could plainly see their backs as they sported about in the water. We remained an hour or two at this place, so well known in the history of the war, and then weighed anchor again, bound for Annapolis, Md. As we arrived at this latter place, or neared the dock, we were greeted with "Hail Columbia," from the Marine Band, and its cheering strains never fell upon the ears of more grateful listeners, for we felt that it savored strongly of "*Home*." We were soon on shore, and well cared for, and now, we said, "our troubles are all over." There we received two months' pay, and commutations of rations for the

time we had been in prison, at the rate of twenty-five cents a day, and this was followed by the happy sequel for us,—*a thirty days' furlough.*

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Rations issued by the United States Government to Rebel Prisoners of War.—(Note the difference.)

Hard Bread,	14 oz. per one ration, or 18 oz. Soft Bread, one ration.
Corn Meal,	18 oz. per one ration.
Beef,	14 " " "
Bacon or Pork,	10 " " "
Beans,	6 qts. per 100 men.
Hominy or Rice,	8 lbs. " "
Sugar,	14 " " "
R. Coffee,	5 " ground, or 7 lbs. raw, per 100 or men.
Tea,	18 oz. per 100 men.
Soap,	4 " " "
Adamantine Candles,	5 candles per 100 men.
Tallow Candles,	6 " " "
Salt,	2 qts. " "
Molasses,	1 qt. " "
Potatoes,	30 lbs. " "

Statement of Clothing issued to Prisoners of War, at Fort Delaware, from Sept. 1st, 1863, to May 1st, 1864.

7,175 Pairs Drawers, (Canton Flannel.)

6,260 Shirts, (Flannel.)

8,807 Pairs Woolen Stockings.

1,094 Jackets and Coats.

3,480 Pairs Bootees.

1,310 Pairs Trowsers.

4,378 Woolen Blankets.

2,680 Great Coats.

Average number of prisoners, 4,489.

## CHAPTER X.

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### LIBBY.

FROM the corner of a dingy brick building in one of the streets of Richmond, Va., may be seen a small sign, which tells to the passer by, that "Libby & Son, ship chandlers and grocers," have invited their patrons to this point, as the one where their business was conducted, and where those must repair who were interested in bargains particularly associated with their vocation. It was not of sufficient importance, in time of peace, to obtain a very wide celebrity, neither were the owners thereof so distinguished as to be of great notoriety, but as the inauguration of war has inducted many into office who were hitherto obscure and unknown, so the contingencies of our civil strife, has opened this place to the public gaze, and made it *famous*, or rather *infamous*, before the world, beside conferring a lustreless fame upon the proprietors. The very name of Libby has become synonymous with that of *terror*; it carries

tyranny and oppression in its simple sound. The soldier who is taken prisoner in Virginia vales, is at once haunted with visions of this darksome den, and shrinks from entering a place so full of bitter experiences as that is known to be.

Fierce hate and revenge reign supreme there, and consequently there is wrought out a system of discipline which produces a condition, such as we might expect when the discordant elements of being rage unchecked, and we are not surprised to find the culmination reached in almost fiendish expression. Thousands who have been in Libby prison, will rehearse the story of their misery, want and woe, to others; these will pass them along to other listeners still, so that the echo will scarcely die out at the remotest period of the present generation. Households, in coming time, will gather about the fireside, and talk of their friends and ancestors, who ended their days in so much wretchedness, because of their attachment to the Union, and in proportion as their bravery and heroism, their courage and constancy is admired, will the

malice and fury of their persecutors be condemned.

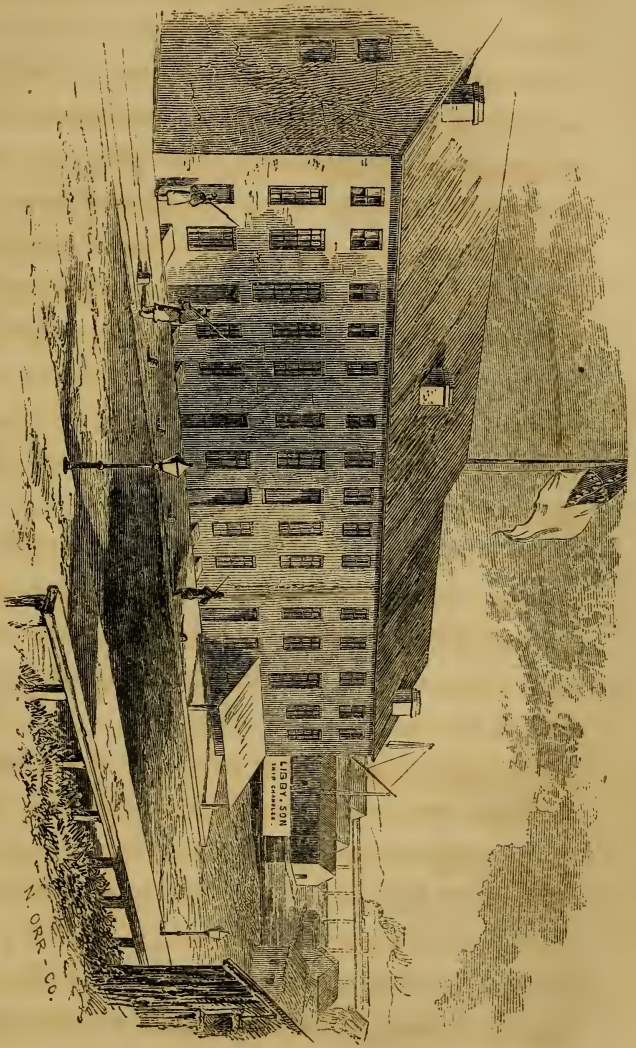
It may be, and probably is, one of the essentials of war, that places be provided for the confinement of prisoners, but they do not necessarily include every species of torment which the human mind is capable of conceiving. They should not naturally presuppose the absence of all humanity, and the annihilation of every condition of comfortable existence, as they have seemed to, in almost every part of the South where the Confederate authorities have opened them.

Says one of the 16th Conn. Regiment, who was in Libby for a season, "Their treatment of prisoners was very abusive, kicking them, and never speaking of one only in the most opprobrious terms.

The nights were very cold, and there being nothing but gratings in the windows, the men were obliged to walk the whole night long, to keep from freezing, and if they could meet the friendly embrace of slumber at all, it was during the day, when the sun would shed its kindly beams upon them, and so imparting



VIEW OF LIBBY PRISON.



N. ORR - CO.



sufficient warmth to their bodies to keep them from shivering.”

We have an idea of their utter destitution when we listen to the statement he makes respecting the manner of their obtaining the food which they must have in some way, or perish.

“I have seen men,” he says, “draw their bean-soup in their *shoes*, for the want of a cup, plate, or anything of the kind to put it in.” And what seemed worse than all the rest, was the almost Satanic rule, that if a man was caught resting his eye upon the glad scenes of nature through a window, he must be quickly translated from earth by the ball of a musket. The whole thing is arbitrary in the extreme, but we could expect little else under the very shadow of the Confederate Capital, where the original framers of secession go in and out, seeking to form a dynasty, though it be founded in the tears and blood, the cries and groans of their fellow-men. Of the numbers who have been admitted within the walls of the Libby building, we can scarcely speak, for multitudes have been con-

veyed thither temporarily, to remain only until such time as they could be transported to other places. Very many thousand have found a transient home here, and their united testimony is the same.

One who visited the place for the purpose of ascertaining the truth for himself, has given the result of his visit in one of the leading journals of the day, and we give the description of it in his own words, as affording the best outline we have been able to get.

“It was three stories high, and, I was told, eighty feet in width, and a hundred and ten feet in depth. In front, the first story was on a level with the street, allowing space for a tier of dungeons under the sidewalk; but in the rear, the land sloped away till the basement floor rose above ground. Its unpainted walls were scorched to a rusty brown, and its sunken doors and low windows, filled here and there with a dusky pane, were cobwebbed and weather-stained, giving the whole building a most uninviting and desolate appearance.”

Upon passing inside, he says, “We entered a room about forty feet wide and a hundred

feet deep, with bare brick walls, a rough plank floor, and narrow, dingy windows, to whose sash only a few broken panes were clinging. A row of tin wash-basins, and a wooden trough which served as a bathing-tub, were at one end of it, and half a dozen cheap stools and hard-bottomed chairs were littered about the floor, but it had no other furniture. And this room, with five others of similar size and appointments, and two basements floored with earth and filled with *débris*, compose the famous Libby Prison, in which, for months together, thousands of the best and bravest men that ever went to battle have been allowed to rot and to starve.

“At the date of our visit,” he continues, “not more than a hundred prisoners were in the Libby, its contents having been recently emptied into a worse sink in Georgia; but almost constantly since the war began, twelve and sometimes thirteen hundred of our officers have been hived within those half-dozen desolate rooms and filthy cellars, with a space of only ten feet by two allotted to each for all the purposes of living.

Overrun with vermin, perishing with cold, breathing a stifled, tainted atmosphere, no space allowed them for rest by day, and lying down at night 'wormed and dove-tailed together like fish in a basket,'—their daily rations only two ounces of stale beef and a small lump of hard corn-bread, and their lives the forfeit if they caught but one streak of God's blue sky through those filthy windows,—they have endured there all the horrors of the middle passage. My soul sickened as I looked upon the scene of their wretchedness. If the liberty we are fighting for were not worth even so terrible a price,—if it were not cheaply purchased even with the blood and agony of the many brave and true souls who have gone into that foul den only to die, or to come out the shadows of men,—living ghosts, condemned to walk the night, and to fade away before the breaking of the great day that is coming,—who would not cry out for peace, for peace on any terms?"

We need no other proof of the true nobleness of soul in the young men of our country, than the voices which come ever and anon

from these forbidding prison-places, telling us of a quenchless love for the cause of right; of a devotion and fervor that knows no abatement; and a willingness to do and to dare, to suffer and to die, that the tyrant of oppression may be crushed, and the glad hosannas of Freedom ring through the land, and reverberate among the hills; that we may have, not a "circle within a circle," but one that is continuous, unbroken, clasping in its mighty embrace a free, happy, and united people.

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### CASTLE THUNDER.

Who that is conversant with English history, does not know of the Tower of London, and the gloomy associations of that place? The mind is thronged with dark and mournful memories, at mention of its name; and so in coming time will Castle Thunder appear to the mind and memory of the American. That place, where all manner of cruelty has been practiced, will not be forgotten. Even in the

immediate locality, and among the rebels themselves, it has a most unfavorable reputation, life there being considered well nigh the culmination of earthly misery. But the length of time that prisoners were confined there, with some other circumstances, render it a place of less note than many other places, and less is said about it. Rebel convicts, Northern deserters and citizens, Southern Union men and negroes, are confined there, and there is a vast deal of suffering and a great amount of inhumanity experienced and practiced.

Southerners generally make a broad distinction between the common class of people and those they consider gentlemen, such as occupy a place in the aristocratic ranks of society; and this disposition was manifest in their treatment of men at the place of which we are speaking. Persons of the worst character were congregated there, but these men were usually singled out, and elevated to a different sphere, where they received something of the consideration their superior dignity entitled them to; where less tyranny was shown, and



more privileges accorded than to the generality of the prisoners.

The "gratuitous indignities" which have been heaped so unmercifully upon the soldiers in some prisons, were not showered upon them there. But woe was upon many of the unhappy prisoners. The very name is suggestive of inflexible rule; of stern authority and inexorable law, which might not be trampled upon without the bolts of Justice falling upon the head of the offender.

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### BELLE ISLE.

HOWARD LEEDOM, of Co. G, 52d N. Y. Regiment, was taken prisoner at Orange Grove, near Chancellorsville, in November, 1863, and was carried immediately to Richmond, and from thence to Belle Isle, and through him we obtain a glimpse of the fearful tragedies acted there.

"The space occupied by prisoners is about six acres, enclosed by an earthwork three feet

in height; within this space were confined as many as ten thousand prisoners. The part occupied by them is a low, sandy, barren waste, exposed in summer to a burning sun, without the shadow of a single tree; and in the winter, to the damp and cold winds up the river, with a few miserable tents in which, perhaps, one half the number were protected from the night fogs of a malarious region; the others lay upon the ground in the open air."

The officers of nearly all the Southern prisons seem to have imbibed the spirit of the prime leaders of the rebellion, and therefore show out the same ruling purpose in their treatment of prisoners, which appears to be nothing else than present misery and ultimate unfitness on a broad scale, in the case of those with whom they have to deal.

The history of the subject of this sketch is similar to that of thousands of others who have dwelt upon this lonely island in James river. He was conveyed thither as the coldest and most inclement season of the year was approaching, and instead of being allowed to

retain what little he had that was conducive to comfort, even this was taken from him, and he was left in utter destitution. His captors took from him his blanket, and even the gloves on his hands and the shoes on his feet, substituting for the latter, however, a miserable pair, so filled with rents as to be scarcely an apology for a covering, affording almost no protection from the cold and frost, as will be seen, when we are told that his feet became badly frozen, and all the toes of one foot were lost in consequence. His fortune differed from that of some of his comrades, in that he had something in the shape of a tent to lie under, although it was nothing that would exclude the rain, or keep the sleet from falling thick about him. Many of them had to lie in the open ditch, without anything to impart warmth to their shivering bodies; the only shadow of protection being a simple embankment, which was thrown up about them, evidently designed as their circling boundary.

It is not strange, under these circumstances, that life should become congealed at its source, and that it should be written of many,

that they were "*frozen to death.*" It is a melancholy verdict to render, but it is confirmed by more than two or three witnesses, and we may therefore judge it to be established in truth. The heart is sad, as imagination shows those defenceless soldiers, not only bereft of their arms, which were so much their pride to bear, and their glory to wield, but also deprived of every personal comfort and convenience, and condemned to lie down exposed to the frowning elements of nature, and the still more pitiless abuse of humankind.

It were scarcely possible to conceive of more persistent, wholesale misery, deliberately heaped upon men, than the agents of Southern malice have poured upon their Northern kindred. The racks and the tortures of the Inquisition were terrible, and we shrink back with horror as we peruse the history of this period, but did they rival in enduring anguish, the lingering agonies of these imprisoned ones, who are consumed by the slow but certain pressure of the foul hand that is upon them? The flames, as they rise from the fast kindling fagots, and curl about the form of

the martyr, as he is tied to the stake, have a power to stir our souls within us to their utmost depths, but who will say they are more dreadful than the slow burnings which eat out the vitals, leaving the tenement of clay a mere wreck before the spirit quits its frail abode?—or more to be feared than the tightening of the frosty bands which prevent the play of life, as surely as the anaconda's grasp, or the tiger's embrace?

There are some of these things to be taken as the natural consequences of war, and some that are not. We know that the "*chances and fortunes*" of war are varied; that privations, exposures and suffering, are the inevitable lot of those who engage in the service; but we seldom hear our willing soldiers complain of these. It is the inhuman, inexcusable treatment they receive as prisoners.

They bear their misfortunes "bravely and patriotically," complaining not of their government, or of their fate, only blaming the conduct of their merciless enemies, and can we wonder at this?

The object of their hate in the case of the

one of whom we have been speaking, suffered severely, merely escaping starvation and death. A little time on the Island sufficed to make him a proper subject for the hospital, into which he was taken to become the victim of pneumonia. There, as well as in prison, he knew what it was to experience hunger, without anything to gratify the insatiable demand of the system. Not even corn bread was given him in sufficient quantity to appease the gnawing within, meat was a luxury granted only at intervals, sometimes once a day oftener but once during the week.

His frozen feet received daily attention at certain seasons, while again, for days together, they went with nothing done to soothe the intensity of pain occasioned by the neglect. He survived to tell the story of wrong and sorrow, but multitudes found their graves on the island of the James. In history it will be placed side by side with other places of rebel notoriety, and it will excite the same emotions in the hearts of those who shall read the records. Associations will ever linger around Belle Isle, of no pleasing character. It

matters little how fair or how uninteresting it may be by nature, the name will start a train of melancholy reflections whenever it is alluded to. War has introduced it to the public gaze, but only as a place where "sharp-toothed unkindness" has played upon mankind to the death.

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### SALISBURY PENITENTIARY.

The Salisbury Penitentiary, in North Carolina, was originally designed as a place of punishment for Southern soldiers, guilty of military offenses, and as a place of committal for hostages, and all those captives the rebels desired to lose in forgetfulness. Later in the history of the war, it came into more general use, and thousands of prisoners found a home there, not unlike, in feature and character, to many others furnished by the Confederate authorities, in their so-called *Southern empire*. When a household was first gathered there, the administration of affairs by those placed over it, was comparatively mild.

The members thereof were allowed the privilege of exercising in an open enclosure, two hours each day, thereby reaping the benefit of the exhilarating influences of nature, and many other things conspired to render confinement tolerable and imprisonment endurable. In process of time, however, there came a most unwelcome change. The inmates were compelled to submit to a state of things that was highly revolting. Apparently, the rebels were sorry they had allowed even a shadow of comfort to rest upon the poor men, and therefore went systematically to work to lessen it.

That we may better obtain an insight into this prison den of the South, we transcribe the testimony of Mr. Richardson and Brown, both widely known as being prominently associated with the *public press*. They were confined in this place, each of them, for a considerable length of time, and the following statement was made by the former before the committee of the conduct of the war:

“I was captured,” he says, “on a hay bale in the Mississippi river, opposite Vicksburg, on



the 3d of May, 1863, at midnight." After experiencing a season of confinement in six different prisons, and thus enlarging the circle of his knowledge in regard to the peculiar discipline of Southern officials, he was finally sent to Salisbury, on the 3d of February, 1864, where he remained until the 18th of December, of the same year, when he made his escape, thus gratefully terminating his unhappy and unwilling connection with a people who had no sympathy with his views, and no feelings in unison with his own.

"For months," he says, "Salisbury was the most endurable prison I had seen; there were 600 inmates. They were exercised in the open air, comparatively well fed, and kindly treated. Early in October, 10,000 regular prisoners of war arrived. It immediately changed into a scene of cruelty and horror; it was densely crowded, rations were cut down and issued very irregularly; friends outside could not even send in a plate of food.

The prisoners suffered considerably, and often intensely, for the want of bread and shelter; those who had to live or die on

prison rations always suffered from hunger; very frequently one or more divisions of 1000 men would receive no rations for twenty-four hours; sometimes they were without a morsel of food for forty-eight hours.

A few who had money would pay from five to twenty dollars in Rebel currency for a little loaf of bread. Many, though the weather was very inclement and snow frequent, sold the coats from their backs and shoes from their feet. I was assured, on authority entirely trustworthy, that a great commissary warehouse near the prison was filled with provisions. The Commissary found it difficult to find storage for his corn and meal; and when a subordinate asked the post commandant, Maj. John H. Gee, "Shall I give the prisoners full rations?" he replied, with an oath, "No! give them quarter-rations."

"I know from personal observation," he continues, "that corn and pork are very abundant in the region about Salisbury."

For weeks the prisoners had no shelter whatever; they were all thinly clad, thousands were barefooted, not one in twenty had an

overcoat or blanket, many hundreds were without shirts, and hundreds were without blouses. One Sibley tent and one "A" tent were furnished to each squad of 100 ; with the closest crowding, these sheltered about half the prisoners. The rest burrowed in the ground, crept under the buildings, or shivered through the night in the open air upon the frozen ground. If the rebels, at the time of our capture, had not stolen our shelter-tents, blankets, clothing, and money, they would have suffered little from cold. If the prison authorities had permitted them, either on parole or under guard, to cut logs within two miles of the prison, the men would gladly have built comfortable and ample barracks in one week ; but the commandant would not consent,—he did not even furnish one-half the fuel needed.

The hospitals were in a horrible condition. More than half who entered them died in a few days. The deceased, always without coffins, were loaded into the dead-carts, piled on each other like logs of wood, and so driven out to be thrown in a trench and covered with earth. The rebel surgeons were generally

humane and attentive, and endeavored to improve the shocking condition of the hospitals; but the Salisbury and Richmond authorities disregarded their protests.

On the 25th of November, many of the prisoners had been without food for forty-eight hours, and were desperate, without any matured plan. A few of them said, "We may as well die in one way as another; let us break out of this horrible place." Some of them wrested the guns from a relief of fifteen rebel soldiers, just entering the yard, killing two who resisted, and wounding five or six others, and attempted to open the fence, but they had neither adequate tools or concert of action. Before they could effect a breach, every gun of the garrison was turned on them, the field-pieces opened with grape and canister, and they dispersed to their quarters. In five minutes from its beginning, the attempt was quelled, and hardly a prisoner was to be seen in the yard. The Rebels killed sixteen in all, and wounded sixty. Not one-tenth of the prisoners had taken part in the attempt, and many of them were ignorant of it until they

heard the guns. Deliberate, cold-blooded murders of peaceable men, where there was no pretense that they were breaking any prison regulation, were very frequent.

Our lives were never safe for one moment. Any sentinel, at any hour of the day or night, could deliberately shoot down any prisoner, or fire into a group of them, black or white, and never be taken off his post for it.

I left about 6,500 remaining in garrison on the day of my escape, and they were then dying at the average rate of twenty-eight per day, or thirteen per cent. a month. The simple truth is, that the Rebel authorities are murdering our soldiers at Salisbury by cold and hunger, while they might easily supply them with ample food and fuel. They are doing this systematically, and I believe are killing them intentionally, for the purpose either of forcing our Government to an exchange, or forcing our men into their own army."

In harmony with the above is the testimony of Mr. Brown, also a correspondent of the *Tribune*.

"I have often wished," says this gentleman,

“that I could obtain a photograph of that room in Salisbury prison, for I can give no idea of its repulsiveness and superlative squalor.

The prison was formerly a cotton-factory, about ninety by thirty feet, and when we were there, they had only six or seven hundred confined within its walls. A dirtier, smokier, drearier and more unwholesome place, I had never seen, than the room in which we were placed. It reminded me of some old junk-shop in South street of the city I had left, and was hung round with filthy rags, tattered quilts and blankets, reeking with vermin, which the wretched inmates used as clothes and bed-covering, and thronged mostly with Northern and Southern citizens, most of whom were in garments long worn out, and as far removed from cleanliness as the wearers from happiness.

In that abhorred abode we were compelled to eat and sleep as best we might. There were but two stoves, both old and broken, in the room, and they gave out no heat, but any quantity of smoke, which filled the apartment

with bitter blueness. Vermin swarmed every where; they tortured us while we tried to sleep on our coarse blankets, and kept us in torment when awake. No light of any kind was furnished us; and there we sat night after night in the thick darkness, inhaling the foul vapors and the acrid smoke, longing for the morning when we could again catch a glimpse of the overarching sky."

How many who have escaped from these pestiferous places in the South, will follow him who utters these words, with heart-felt appreciation, while he tells what he and they have thought and felt.

"Think," he says, "of this death-life month after month! Think of men of delicate organization, accustomed to ease and luxury, of fine taste, and a passionate love for the beautiful, without a word of sympathy, or a whisper of hope, wearing their days out amid such scenes. Not a pleasant sound, nor a sweet odor, nor a vision of fairness, ever reached them. They were buried as completely as if they lay beneath the ruins of Pompeii or Herculaneum. They breathed mechanically, but

were shut out from all that renders existence endurable. Every sense was shocked perpetually, and yet the heart, by a strange inconsistency, kept up its throbs, and preserved the physical being of a hundred and fifty wretched captives, who, no doubt, often prayed to die.

Few persons can have any idea of a long imprisonment in the South. They usually regard it merely as an absence of freedom, a deprivation of the pleasures and excitements of ordinary life. They do not take into consideration the scant and miserable rations that no one, unless he be half-famished, can eat; the necessity of going cold and hungry in the wet and wintry season; the constant torture from vermin, of which no care or precaution can free one; the total isolation; the supreme dreariness, the dreadful monotony, the perpetual turning inward of the mind upon itself, the self-devouring of the heart, week after week, month after month, year after year."

Such are some of the horrors of our cruel war,—horrors thrust upon us by the unprincipled and designing leaders of a wicked rebellion, who thirst for power and conquest, regard-



less of the cost by which they expect to obtain them.

They hesitate not to pass through rivers of anguish and seas of blood, if it be necessary to the accomplishment of their unhallowed purposes, and in view of it, one can scarcely forbear saying with Cowper,—

“Let eternal infamy pursue  
The wretch, to naught but his ambition true.”

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## RALEIGH.

Statement of Hospital Steward Butler, of the 16th Conn. Regiment, respecting the prison at Raleigh, N. C., where he was confined.

“This was comparatively a favored place, and any one going thither from Andersonville, Millen, or Florence, could say, ‘The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places,’ so great was the contrast. Doubtless this was owing, in some measure, to the strong Union element that existed in the vicinity. The expressions

of feeling with other manifestations, convinced us that this was the reality. Had the authorities allowed the people to contribute freely to the wants of the prisoners, it is not improbable they would have fared a great deal better than the rebels themselves, but the citizens were not allowed to visit them, or send them luxuries of any kind. Although this was strictly prohibited, and the reiteration made constantly, that nothing but ordinary fare should be allowed the captives, yet the friends of the Union and the soldier, outside the prison walls, did contrive, in various ways, to minister to the wants and add to the comfort of the men.

The ladies of the city were not at all inclined to that insulting, abusive manner, which was characteristic of their more southern sisters. It was not uncommon for them, while passing the hospital, to throw in bouquets through the open windows to the poor sick ones. Many similar acts of kindness and esteem were thus unostentatiously performed, so that we felt that it was quite to the praise of the good people of Raleigh that we were

treated with so much consideration and respect.

Instead of the loathsome and repulsive prison pen, the abode of filth and indescribable wretchedness, we had comfortable barracks. Instead of the inhuman and barbarous usage to which our fellow soldiers had been subjected in other prisons, we were kindly and courteously treated, receiving the same attention as the rebel sick and wounded, with the exception of those things we have named as restrictions.

The hospital was large, commodious and well ventilated. Beds were provided, and comfortable clothing allowed. The food was wholesome, and doubtless as good as could be procured, under the circumstances.

Adjoining this building was a large yard, or rather field, where our men had plenty of room to walk and exercise. Games, also, could be instituted to relieve the monotony of continued confinement.

Our own men were placed in the hospital as attendants, and they also acted therein under the direction of the Surgeon, as occa-

sion might require. This officer was a very good man, and did all in his power to make the situation of the men comfortable who were suffering from disease. The supply of medicines was quite good, and all reports and statements concerning things in the hospital were received without the least intimation of distrust or lack of confidence, for unlike some of whom mention has been made, we could rely upon their word when once pledged to us. The men who died in their hands were decently buried, something that can not be said of the thousands who perished at Andersonville, for they were buried in a manner that reflects everlasting disgrace upon the vaunted "*Southern chivalry.*"

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### CAMP LAWTON.

The following is the testimony of  
Goodyear who was removed  
from Andersonville, Ga., to the prison known  
as *Camp Lawton*, near Millen, in the same  
State, on the 1st of November, 1864. It was

pleasantly situated, about eighty miles north of Savannah, in a country where pine forests abounded. Indeed these were a prominent feature in the external surroundings of many of the Southern prisons. Trees would be felled, a clearing made, and here located the rude structure that was to be the cheerless home of thousands for long, weary months. Could a voice be given to these silent groves, and they become witnesses of what they had seen and heard, what revelations would be made of things that can never be known now!

The medium of human language fails to convey all the meaning involved in prison life in the South. It is true that a great part of the suffering in this present war, as in all wars, must forever remain with the secrets of *unwritten history*. A few who were themselves actors in the tragic scenes, may rehearse the story of their individual experience, and thus furnish, as it were, a key to unlock the gates through which others may enter and take a look. This is the only way in which the people at large can become acquainted with this thrilling portion of the war,

and authentic and reliable statements are therefore of deep interest and importance.

Forty-four acres of ground were enclosed by the stockade at Millen. The large pine timber which was cut down at the commencement of operations, for building the prison, was left upon the ground, and when the first prisoners went into their confinement there, they found these to be greatly to their advantage, for they were able to construct for themselves comfortable huts of the logs and branches lying about them. In this respect they were more fortunate than many, or most others. The last division that entered had no shelter at all, or at least, of any account. A small stream of good water ran through the center, which the men highly prized, particularly as it afforded the much needed privilege of bathing.

At the time of my arrival there, the list of prisoners numbered nine thousand. The weather was very cold and stormy, and as the majority of the men were very poorly clad, many of them being without shoes, blankets or coats, and also without shelter. the suffer-

ing was very great. No medicine was issued to the men within the stockade, and but very few were taken outside to the hospital, consequently the mortality was fearful. The number of deaths averaged from twenty-five to thirty-five per day. The prevailing diseases were such as are common to almost all prisons—the scurvy, diarrhea and rheumatism. It was no uncommon occurrence for the morning light to reveal the pallid faces of three or four prisoners who had laid down side by side, showing that death had claimed them all during the night. Such sights were heart-rending to the most unfeeling; the most stoical. A *prisoner* is condemned to these things, and there is no alternative but for him to gaze upon them however sad and revolting they may be. He must steel himself against that which once would have sent sympathy through his whole being—a gushing tide. It could not be that the fountain of pity be stirred to its depths so often. Nature could not sustain the pressure, therefore it seems that the whole is something like a martyr process, in which the very juices of life are crushed

out by an uncontrollable force. At the beginning of my stay at Millen, the rations which were issued were double the amount we had at Andersonville. We drew one pint of meal, six ounces of uncooked beef, six spoonful of rice, one tea-spoonful of salt, as our allowance for twenty-four hours. Beans were sometimes substituted for rice, but these were so much eaten by insects that they were often thrown away without being tasted. After a little while, however, the quantity decreased every day, so that they became nearly as small and poor as those issued in other prisons.

The prospect of being exchanged or paroled was so small, that some availed themselves of the opportunity to take the oath of allegiance to the Confederate government, and entered the rebel service. The inducements which were offered them to do this, were three bushels of sweet potatoes, a suit of clothes, and one hundred dollars in Confederate scrip. I was myself acquainted with quite a number who did this, and although I would make no excuse for them, I know the motive by which they were actuated. They saw no chance of



getting out of prison alive. They had barely clothes to cover their nakedness, and they thought to prolong existence in this way, and coupled with this was the idea of escaping and fleeing to the Union lines at the very first opportunity. But the whole thing was considered a mean, disgraceful act, by every true patriot. I would have died a dozen deaths rather than to have been guilty of such a thing, and there were thousands of others of the same mind.

As the time of the Presidential election drew near, the rebels expressed a desire that we should vote upon the question ourselves. Accordingly ballot boxes were procured, and on the day when the people of the North were deciding the momentous issue, we gathered together in Millen prison, and in the midst of great excitement, gave expression to our political preferences. We knew that it was *war* or *peace*. As we deposited our votes, so did we speak for one or the other, and show forth our position in the country's cause.

At sunset the votes were counted, and the result was 3,014 votes for Lincoln, and 1,050 for McClellan.

It was evident by the deafening cheers of the men, that, though broken in constitution, their devotion to the noble cause was firm and unalterable.

The guards by whom we were surrounded were more humane than any that had been placed over us at any other point. It was a common practice with us to discuss freely the matters relating to existing troubles, and also to trade with them in various little things. An old comb, with half the teeth broken out, would bring about a dollar's worth of provisions, and knives, forks and spoons would bring an almost fabulous price.

One thing that was done there is quite characteristic of rebel barbarism. A surgeon would examine the sick, and take their names as those to be paroled, and then would go away and sell the poor man's chance to whoever had money. Hard-hearted as this may seem, it was nevertheless carried on to a considerable extent.

We were finally told that it was necessary to remove all the prisoners to some other locality. We were curious to know what it meant, and one of the men sought information

from the guard. "What are you in such a hurry to remove us for?" said he. "There is a right smart heap of Sherman's men coming down through here," said the one thus interrogated, "and we must tote you away before he gets here." They were determined to exercise vigilance in this respect, and keep us within their embrace, if possible. We might be given up a prey to Death,—this was of little account, for in the silence and inaction of such a state, they had nothing to fear,—but to have us returned where there was the slightest probability that we should ever bear arms against them, this was something they wished to prevent, and assiduously sought to do.

## THE COUNTRY'S SACRIFICE.

As we conclude the sad story of suffering in which our youthful soldiers have borne so conspicuous a part, we are compelled to pause and admire their noble endurance, their cheerful sacrifices, and patriotic devotion to country amid want and hardship. They deserve a rich and lasting tribute, but we feel that *Sacrifice* finds but poor expression in human language, though it should be

“In thoughts that breathe, and words that burn,”—

for heart-struggles and heart-histories can not be written with the pen, or spoken by the lips. There is no appropriate outward manifestation for them, nothing to mark the strength and energy of working which characterize the inner experience of those who are exercised by them.

That the present war in our land, with its varied calls to duty, has caused more of this severe inward struggle than will ever be known, we do not question. Doubtless many went forth actuated by the love of novelty, the desire of adventure, a thirst for excitement, a hope of glory, and fondness for promotion; but aside from all these, there went a body of men who formed, as it were, a mighty wave of patriotism, rushing down from Northern hills to Southern plains, filling the would-be-conquerors with terror and dismay. The spirit of sacrifice marked them at the beginning. “What if we find a soldier's grave,” said they,—“What if we sleep upon the field of strife, unknown and unnoticed, provided we fall in the discharge of duty to country and to God!” This feeling was wide-spread, and every department of labor turned out its representatives. The merchant went from his damasked surroundings, from measuring off silks and laces for the dainty children of Fashion; the artist laid aside his brush and easel, and turned his back upon the charming studio; the man of culture turned from his literary pursuits upon which he had counted so much; the student, whose delight had been to linger in classic halls, was suddenly animated with new zeal that must needs be cooled, or heightened on the “broad field of battle.”

The professional aspirant for honor ceased to wed ambition, took a broader look, and went into the service of his country; while the poet, who had found his soul chiefly blessed in the utterances of lips “wet with Castalian dews,” felt that he must slake his thirst at other fountains,—and he, too, was seen on the way.

The minister at the sacred desk felt the new cause blending with his own; the mechanic and the artisan laid their tools to rest, and took others of a different character, wherewith they might strike for Liberty and Right; and everywhere the sturdy yeomanry declared themselves ready to do or die in so noble a cause. They laid themselves upon the altar of sacrifice,—and who shall tell how rich the offering, how precious the incense, that went up therefrom! If it be wise to talk of anything pertaining to mortals, as being worthy to be recorded “as with a pen of iron and the point of a diamond,” then might choice paragraphs be culled from the sacrificial records of these times, for posterity, ages down, to admire. The nobility of manhood has been vastly increased thereby, and lofty purposes and sentiments been written that do honor to mankind.

It is true, the voice of lamentation is heard for those who are not. There is mourning for the many who have fallen upon the field of battle, and the thousands who have died in prisons and hospitals; but if it be true that men live in *actions* more than in moments, in *deeds* more than in years, it may be these have accomplished more for the cause in which they were engaged, by their death, than they could have done in life.

A leaf of geranium, withered and faded, lay upon the table as I sat musing upon these things, and the fragile thing, broken from its stem, suggested points of contrast between itself and that living, breathing plant of human society, which had been torn from the place where it had been wont to grow, and made to droop and die in consequence. A fragrance, rich and sweet, came from the crushed and bruised leaf, more diffusive by reason of pressure, and it raised the inquiry, whether there might not be, after all, holier and more blessed influences attending the hidden properties which a mighty power had wrung out of the heart of the nation, than would have been apparent if it had never been subjected to such a process?

The delicate juices which conveyed such odor to my grateful senses, were as a voice that told how the country had been enriched by what had been evolved in the struggle to which it was called, and how individuals had been blessed, because the springs had been touched which opened the cells where the most precious incense was stored.

Altogether, it whispered of the power and blessedness of sacrifice, for it made manifest the value of those costly offerings which have been laid upon the nation's altar, and which so many have thought to be made in vain. It invested the sighs, tears and groans that

have been involved, with a peculiar sacredness, for they have no unimportant mission to perform in creating the more fragrant atmosphere which is to surround the people of coming time. More, indeed, has been demanded, than was anticipated. Had the veil been uplifted in that day when the few thousands thought themselves sufficient to annihilate the opposing host, and the long catalogue of death, disaster, and disappointment been seen, who but would have started back, appalled at the terrible sight?

Who, in the prospect, would have thought he could pass through the fiery ordeal, certainly without being crushed, never to rise again? Standing then upon the hill-top and looking out with prophetic vision upon scenes of carnage that were to drench the virgin soil with blood; with keen sensibility of hearing, listening to the wailing and lamentation that was to be known through the land,—who would not have prayed with an agonized heart to be spared from beholding the time in fearful reality? Such a picture spread before us in the summer of '61, as the sure embodiment of what was to come, would have filled every beholder with dismay, and sent the exclamation to every lip—Can it be possible?

But such is not Divine appointment. Slowly He reveals to men what they are to do and to suffer, and with the revelation mercifully gives strength to meet it. When He calls to great sacrifices, He gives the needful preparation, whether it be to individuals or nations. When He has a great work to perform, He provides the necessary materials, whether it be in men or means, that the work may be well accomplished. Amid, then, all the apparent tumult and discord, the trials and sorrows, the fears and sacrifices of these troublous times, there is reason why the children of men should comfort their hearts and even rejoice, because He who sits upon the throne of the universe knows full well the best methods of action, the wisest discipline for the times, and is surely pledged to make Right triumphant in the end. Peace was the watchword at the beginning of His reign, and it shall be the crowning glory of the same at the last. Then let the fearful and anxious hear a voice from heaven saying unto them—

“Dismiss thy fears,—the ark is mine.”

Let them also hear the words,—*Sacrifices are never lost.*

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