



# A Soldier's Diary

The Story of a Volunteer

---

1862-1865

---

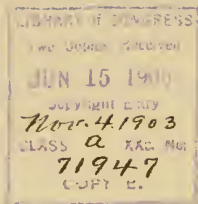
*David Lane*

THE LIBRARY  
OF CONGRESS

“We are coming, Father Abraham,  
Three hundred thousand more.”

E601

.L26



Copyright, 1905,  
By David Lane.

05-19671

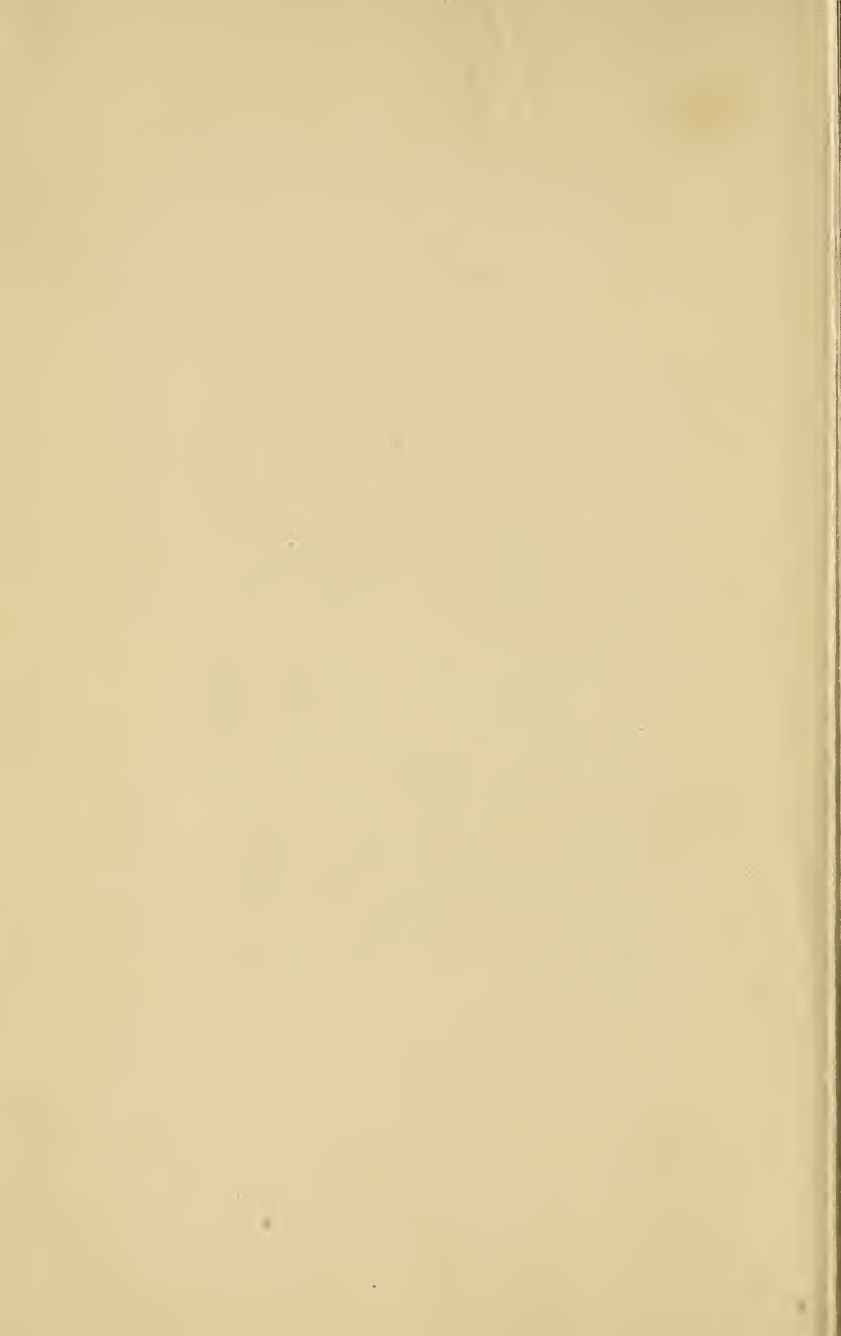
## P R E F A C E.

---

This book is made up from my diary, which was sent home at frequent intervals, that my family and friends might know the details of my daily life. The events recorded were written down on the date of their occurrence, or while still fresh in my memory. In my comments on current events, I endeavored to "Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice," but to give expression to my own convictions.

I had no thought at the time, nor for many years after, of having it published, but, as the years sped on, and the old veterans of the Civil War were being rapidly mustered for final discharge, I have been urged by many old friends and comrades to publish it, that our children and grandchildren may realize something of the hardships and trials their ancestors cheerfully endured for love of country.

I only regret that what I have tried to do has been so crudely done.



# The Story of a Volunteer.

---

## CHAPTER I.

Fort Baker, D. C., Aug. 31st, 1862.

I have already learned that—finding much leisure time upon his hands, after all soldierly duties have been performed—the private soldier naturally craves something to divert his mind, or, as he puts it, something to pass away the time. To many men, so situated, a game of cards is peculiarly fascinating. Others spend all their leisure time in fun and mischief; telling outlandish stories, singing vile songs, or playing practical jokes upon their fellows.

Having neither taste or talent in either of these directions, I have deliberately resolved to keep a diary or memorandum of current events, and will transcribe, from day to day, the facts that interest me and the thoughts they may engender. I enlisted August 12th, 1862, was mustered into the service of the United States on the 18th, and was assigned to Company G, of the Seventeenth regiment of Michigan Volunteer Infantry, then in barracks at Detroit, Michigan. Of the ninety-three enlisted men enrolled in Company G, sixty-five were farmers, ten laborers, five carpenters, six shoemakers, three clerks, one baker, one miller, one tinner, and one professional soldier. They range in age from the smooth-faced boy of sixteen years to the fully-developed man of thirty-eight. I judge about the same ratio will apply to the other companies of

the regiment, with the exception of Company E, which is composed largely of students from the State Normal School at Ypsilanti. The regiment is largely made up of men verging on middle life, who have left business, wife, and children, dearer to them than life, sternly resolved to meet death on the field of battle, rather than suffer rebellion to triumph and the Nation be torn asunder. We left the barracks at ten o'clock in the forenoon of August 27th, marched three miles to the wharf, where we left our baggage; then escorted General Wilcox around the city until five o'clock p. m., when we marched on board the steamer Cleveland, bound for the City of Cleveland.

The weather was fine, and we reached Cleveland at five o'clock the next morning, and immediately took cars for Washington, D. C., by way of Pittsburg and Baltimore. We arrived at Pittsburg at 7 p. m. of August 28th, and were most enthusiastically received, the whole population, seemingly, escorting us, with shouts, flags, and banners of various devices, to the City Hall, where a bountiful supper was spread for us. The hall was finely decorated. Among other mottoes was: "Pittsburg Welcomes Her Country's Defenders."

We left Pittsburg at nine o'clock in the evening and reached Harrisburg the next day at 10 a. m., where we took breakfast; then, "All aboard for Baltimore." We crossed the Alleghenies in the night, but when morning dawned I went out on the platform and could still see them in the distance, rearing their blue heads in solemn grandeur, forming a most charming back-

ground to the beautiful picture spread out before us. We were then running with lightning speed down the beautiful Juniata Valley, about sixty miles above Harrisburg, and a more picturesque spot I never beheld.

Hemmed in by long ranges of high hills, some running at right angles to the stream, others parallel with it, now rising in perpendicular bluffs with hardly room for the cars to pass, then receding, formed lovely valleys, dotted here and there with pleasant villages. We reached Baltimore about seven o'clock Friday evening, and were warmly greeted by the loyal citizens. After partaking of a hearty supper, we took cars for Washington at ten o'clock.

We had expected a row in Baltimore, and were prepared for it, but nothing transpired of a more serious nature than a few personal encounters. One hot-headed fellow jumped on board the officers' car and demanded to see their colors, cursing Unionists and swearing vengeance. Lieutenant Somers, stirred by righteous indignation, struck him a heavy blow in the face and knocked him headlong from the car. A crowd gathered, swords and pistols flashed in the gaslight, epithets were exchanged, and there the matter ended.

We reached Washington Saturday morning, and were assigned to Fort Baker, six miles south of the city.

Fort Baker is pleasantly situated on a high hill that overlooks the surrounding country for many miles. Fifty thousand troops are encamped in sight of us.

September 4th, 1862.

We have been three days in camp, and have fully recovered from the fatigues of our long journey. Drill is the order of the day, as it is the necessity of the hour. Officers and men have yet to learn the rudiments of military maneuvering. There is not a company officer who can put his men through company drill without making one—or more—ludicrous blunders. Yesterday our First Lieutenant was drilling a squad of men. He was giving all his attention to "time," and did not notice a fence had planted itself directly across our path. Suddenly he shouted: "Who—who—who! Come this way, you fellows in front—don't you see you are running into that fence?"

On Monday morning one of the men had been cleaning his gun, and, wishing to know if it would burn a cap, laid it down for the purpose of getting one. When he returned, instead of picking up his own gun, he took a loaded one that belonged to a guard. As a result of his stupidity, the ball passed through two tents, entered a young man's heel and passed through his foot lengthwise, rendering him a cripple for life. Rumors were in circulation all day Tuesday of Rebel movements. At dusk twenty rounds of ammunition were distributed. We were then sent to our quarters to await orders. A spirit of unrest pervaded the camp. Men gathered in groups and whispered their conviction of a night attack.

At nine o'clock a picket fired an alarm. The bugle sounded "To arms." Orderlies ran up and down the line of tents shouting. "Fall in! Fall in with your arms; the Rebels are upon us!"

For a moment there was some confusion, but in less than five minutes we were in line, eager to meet the foe. But no enemy appeared. It was a ruse gotten up by the officers as an emergency drill, and, as such, it was a decided success. There were some ludicrous incidents, but, as a rule, the men buckled on their arms with promptness and appeared as cool as on dress parade.

Yesterday morning, as we were forming for company drill, a courier rode into camp with dispatches from headquarters. Five companies from our regiment were ordered to repair at once to Fort Gaines, eight miles distant, on the Virginia side of the Potomac. We started off briskly, but before we had gone a mile the order was countermanded, and we returned to camp.

The news this morning is not encouraging. General Pope has been defeated and driven back upon the fortifications around Washington, and the Rebels are trying to force their way across the Potomac. We are under marching orders. Rumor says we are to join Burnside's forces at Frederic City.

## CHAPTER II.

Maryland Heights, Va., September 21st, 1862.

Toward evening of the 13th we left Frederic City and marched out on the National Turnpike toward South Mountain, and halted for supper and a few hours rest near Middleton. It was nearly midnight. We had made a rapid march of several miles, and were tired, and hungry as wolves. Hardly had we stacked arms when Lieutenant Rath inquired: "Where's John Conley?" John could not be found; he was already off on an expedition of his own. "Well, then," said Rath, "send me the next best thief; I want a chicken for my supper."

Our foragers soon returned; the Lieutenant got his chicken, and we privates were fairly well supplied with the products of the country. It strikes me as a little strange, the facility with which a soldier learns to steal his grub. It must be the effect of heredity. Perhaps, in the dim past, when our ancestors went on "all fours," and roamed the forests in search of food; possibly at a more recent date, but before a name was given to the deed; they formed the habit of taking what they wanted wherever it could be found, provided they had the physical power, or mental cunning, to accomplish it, and this habit, thus formed, became instinct, and was transmitted to their descendants. At

daylight we were on the move, headed for South Mountain. We had an inkling—how obtained I do not know; mental telepathy, perhaps, that occult, mysterious power that enables us to divine the most secret thoughts of men—that a mass meeting was to be held on that eminence to discuss the pros and cons of secession, and that we, the Seventeenth, had received a pressing invitation to be present. The Pike was in fine condition. Our men stepped off briskly, with long, swinging strides that carried them rapidly over the ground. We marched in four ranks, by companies, and were led by our gallant Colonel Withington. Company G was seventh from the front, which gave me a view of over half the regiment. And it was good to look upon. Only two weeks from home, our uniforms were untarnished. Dress coats buttoned to the chin; upon our heads a high-crowned hat with a feather stuck jauntily on one side. White gloves in our pockets; a wonder we did not put them on, so little know we of the etiquette of war.

As we neared the mountain, about nine o'clock in the morning, I scanned its rugged sides for indications of the presence of our friends, the enemy, and, as I looked, I saw a puff of smoke, and on the instant a shell sped howling above our heads, bursting some half a mile beyond.

Every man of us "bowed his acknowledgments;" then, as by one impulse, every spine became rigid; every head was tossed in air; as if we would say: "My Southern friend, we did the polite thing that time. No more concessions will you get from us and—may

God have mercy on your souls." Of our exploits on South Mountain I will not write. They will be woven into history and will be within the reach of all. About thirty of our brave boys were killed, and over one hundred wounded. Captain Goldsmith was wounded in the shoulder and Lieutenant Somers in the side. A number of Company G boys were wounded, but none were killed in this battle.

Eli Sears, the best, the most universally beloved of the regiment, is dead. He died the second day after the battle. A rifle ball, early in the engagement, struck him in the left breast and passed entirely through him. When I saw him he was so low he could only speak in whispers. He gave me his hand, with a pleasant smile, and told me he had but a few more hours to live. Bitterly do I mourn his loss. So kind, so thoughtful, always preferring another to himself. He died as heroes die, as calm and peaceful as an infant on its mother's breast. Albert Allen, Carmi Boice and Charlie Goodall were in the thickest of the fight and escaped unhurt.

The Seventeenth has been baptised in blood and christened "Stonewall." The battle of Antietam was fought on Wednesday, September 17th, three days after South Mountain. The Seventeenth did not lose so many in killed—eighteen or twenty, I think, although the list is not yet made out—and eighty or ninety wounded. Company G lost three killed, among whom was Anson Darling. We crossed the Antietam River about 1 p. m., and about three o'clock charged up the heights, which we carried, and advanced to near

Sharpsburg. Here, our ammunition giving out, we fell back behind the hill and quietly sat down 'mid bursting shells and hurtling balls until relieved. As we sat waiting, a spent ball—a six-pounder—struck a tree in front of us. Not having sufficient momentum to penetrate, it dropped back upon the toe of my comrade on my left. With a fierce oath he sprang to his feet and shouted, "Who the h—l? Oh!"

That night, while on picket, when all my comrades were wrapped in slumber, and silence reigned where, a few hours before, the tumult of battle raged, my willing thought turned to my Northern home. The most vivid pictures arose before me—so real—could they be imagination? And as I gazed upon these fancied visions and pressed them to my soul as a living reality, I asked myself the question, "Can this be homesickness?" The answer came, quick and decisive: No; I have never seen the time—even for one short moment—that I could say to myself, "If I had not enlisted, I would not." On the contrary, if, after the little experience I have had, and the little knowledge I have gained, I had not enlisted, I would do so within the hour.

## CHAPTER III.

Antietam, September 27th, 1862.

We have had one week of rest; are encamped three miles from our last battlefields, with a prospect of staying here several weeks. There is much sickness, but nothing of a serious nature. As for myself, I have not seen an hour's sickness since I left Michigan. Our camp is pleasantly situated on a high hill, and the surrounding hills and valleys are white with tents. In the evening, when every tent is lighted up, they present a brilliant and beautiful appearance. Several regiments are supplied with brass bands, which delight us every evening with a "concord of sweet sounds." Last evening the Fiftieth Pennsylvania serenaded the "Bloody Seventeenth," as they call us.

October 3d, 1862.

We have moved camp three miles, and are now five miles above Harper's Ferry, on the banks of the Potomac. The days are extremely hot; the evenings deliciously cool, and mornings cold. We had a grand division review this morning, in honor of the President, who favored us with his presence. My curiosity was gratified by seeing a "live President," and, above all, "Old Abe." He looks much better than the likenesses we see of him—younger, and not so long and lank.

Strange rumors have been in circulation for several days—rumors of compromise; of almost unconditional surrender. What does it all mean? Is there a bare possibility the Rebels have had enough of it? That “chivalry” will acknowledge itself whipped by “mudsills,” and ask for peace, while they have six hundred thousand men in the field? As far as the rank and file of this army is concerned, we would like to see them “line up” in front of us and fight it out, and have done with it.

Pleasant Valley, October 9th, 1862.

We moved from Antietam day before yesterday, in order, as reported, to be nearer our supplies. However, as soldiers know nothing of movements until after they are made, we may leave here today. As I was writing the last sentence, I learned we are to move this afternoon, about two miles, where we will have more room and better accommodations. The order to march is always welcome to me. I hate the monotony of camp life. The same is true of nearly all our regiment. We want to finish up our work and go home to our families—for nearly all have families. From our old camp to the present one is about twelve miles—the toughest twelve miles I ever traveled. Our route lay over the Elk Ridge Mountain, about six miles winding up its steep, rocky sides, the remaining half down the opposite side, the midday sun pouring his fierce rays against its rocky surface, making the heat well-nigh unbearable. There was not even a whispering breeze to cool our throbbing brows. Two

men of our brigade melted down and died, while hundreds fell out by the way and came straggling into camp next morning. The movement was foolishly conducted on the principle of a forced march when there was no call for haste. I was quite lame at the time, having cut a deep gash in my heel a few days before, which compelled me to walk on the toe of that foot. This made walking over such a road and for so long a distance rather difficult. I fell behind the regiment for the first time, but came into camp about sundown. Some companies left nearly every man by the roadside.

On Friday Robert Covert and myself went down to the river to wash our clothing. The day was hot, and Robert went in to bathe. I was sitting on the shore, in company with others of my regiment, dreamily watching the sportive antics of the bathers, when my attention was attracted to Robert by what I thought to be a peal of laughter. With an exclamation of horror I sprang to my feet. "My God, boys, he's sinking, drowning!" He had made but two or three strokes when taken with cramps and rendered helpless. I will long remember the pleading look, the agonized cry, as he rose to the surface. There was no time for thought; he was going down the second time; in a moment he will be beyond our reach. I cannot swim, but I seized a long pole and plunged in. It was not quite long enough to reach the place where he went down, but at that instant a man stripped for a swim rushed past me, and, holding to the end of my pole, threw his shirt to Robert as he

came to the surface. He caught it, and we pulled him to the shore.

I am frequently asked how I like soldiering. For a wonder, I am not disappointed. If anything, it is more endurable than I expected to find it. There are hardships—as a matter of fact, it is all hardship—but I was prepared for all that. I expected to suffer—to endure—and find myself the gainer by it. While others say: “If I had known, I would not have enlisted,” I can say with truth I am glad I did. If I can be of service to my country, I will be satisfied. That which troubles and annoys me most, others do not seem to mind. It is the intolerable, nauseating stench that envelops a military camp. My olfactories have become so acutely sensitive I can smell an encampment “afar off.” Many complain of the strictness of military discipline. That does not trouble me. The law is a “terror to evil doers.” I am thankful for the many kind friends I have found here. I hail with delight the President’s proclamation. I believe it is a step in the right direction.

October 12th.

It is now nine o’clock of a Sabbath evening, and as I pen these lines my wife and children, perhaps are listening to words of peace as they fall from the lips of their beloved pastor. How vividly memory recalls the past, and, as of old, we seem to walk the well-known path to the house of worship, to join with dear friends in singing hymns of praise, and to receive

instruction from the Word of God. How great the contrast between past and present.

Instead of pursuing the peaceful avocations of life, surrounded by my loved family, I find myself separated from them by many a weary mile, and surrounded by the savage enginery of war. Even as I write I hear the booming of cannon in the direction of Harper's Ferry. Last evening, while mustering for dress parade we received orders for every able-bodied man to get ready to march with only their guns, ammunition and blankets, in the shortest possible time.

## CHAPTER IV.

Pleasant Valley, October 17th, 1862.

Being in a wakeful mood, I will try and compose my mind by writing a few lines in my diary, for we have become great friends—yes, confidantes—and tonight I need a confidante. Did I ever tell you, my silent friend, of my Northern home; of wife and children, loving and beloved? Then listen, while I whisper in your ear the sacred secret. I have a wife and four small children far off in Michigan. I love them with all the intensity and devotion of my nature. The thought of them is ever uppermost in my mind. In the daily, monotonous rounds of duty; in the long, dreary evenings, when folly reigns; in the stillness of the night; on the rugged, toilsome march, or in the tumult of battle, thoughts of the dear ones at home are ever present, inspiring me with hope, encouraging me to duty, a shield against temptation, a beacon light, shining out upon the stormy sea of strife on which my frail bark is launched, enabling me, thus far, to shun the rocks and quicksands that surround me.

Our regiment returned today from Frederic, where it has been guarding the railroad. We hear that General Wilcox, Colonel Fenton and Colonel Withington are to be promoted. We are heartily glad their eminent services are about to be rewarded by the Government. They are men of marked ability, and have well

earned their honors. Although it will take from us our gallant Colonel, there is some compensation even in that. It will leave the regiment in command of Lieutenant Colonel Luce, who is beloved by all our men. We have heard heavy cannonading all day, but have not learned the result. It is rumored that we will move in a day or two—perhaps tomorrow. Where we go, even rumor sayeth not. Our men say it does not matter where, so they take us where work is to be done. Two men deserted from Co. G yesterday and two today. This splendid regiment that left Detroit two months ago nearly one thousand strong, mustered today, at inspection, two hundred and fifty-six men fit for duty. There are more sick than well, the result of insufficient supplies, and brutal, needless exposure of the men by officers high in rank.

The weather is delightful—cold and frosty nights, with warm sunshiny days and pure, fresh, mountain breezes that should strengthen and invigorate, and yet, of all who came from Blackman and Sandstone, I alone am well.

Camp near Lovetsville, Va., Oct. 28th.

We bade farewell to Pleasant Valley, and started for the land of "Dixie" quite unexpectedly to us privates. Orders were issued on Saturday to the different companies to have their things packed and be ready to move at daybreak next morning. We were aroused at three o'clock, prepared and ate our breakfast, and at five o'clock were on the march. It had rained some during the night, and morning gave prom-

ise of a rainy day. Well did it fulfill its promise. About eight o'clock a drizzling rain set in, which continued until about one o'clock, when the wind changed to the north, increasing in violence until it blew a gale, which continued until morning, raining incessantly. The north winds here are very cold, and the poor soldiers, marching or standing all day in the rain, with sixty rounds of ammunition, three days' rations, knapsacks and blankets on their backs, passed a very uncomfortable day. But they bore it uncomplainingly, and when, about sundown, we pitched our little "dog tents" on the soaked and muddy ground with shouts and merry jests, we made a break for the nearest fence, and soon each company had a pile of dry chestnut rails, with which we kept a roaring fire until morning. Many of the men were wet to the skin, and, too cold to sleep, could be seen at any hour of the night in circles round their blazing camp-fires, talking over past scenes or future prospects. As I passed from group to group through the brigade, I noticed a feeling of discontent, caused by a lack of confidence in our leaders. The men seemed to feel we are being outgeneraled; that Lee's army, and not Richmond, should be the objective point; that the rebellion can never be put down until that army is annihilated. When I returned to our company the boys had arranged it all—the President is to retire all generals, select men from the ranks who will serve without pay, and will lead the army against Lee, strike him hard and follow him up until he fails to come to time. So passed this fearful night away.

Camp near Fredericksburg, Dec. 9th, 1862.

It has been a long time—fully five weeks—since I made the last entry in this journal. The forced marches, exposure, and insufficient food of the week preceding our arrival at this place had been too much even for me. It had rained or snowed almost continuously; we were out of reach of our supply train for seven days. Food gave out, but on we pressed. When we halted on the evening of our arrival, too utterly worn out to pitch a tent, I spread my blanket on the ground, threw myself upon it and slept the sleep of exhaustion. It rained during the night, and when I awoke I found myself lying in a pool of water that half covered me. My recollection of what occurred for several successive days is very vague; I knew I was being cared for by somebody, somewhere; I had no cares, no anxious doubts or perplexing fears. If in pain, I had not sense to realize it. One morning after, I do not know how many days, I awoke to consciousness; I heard a well-remembered step tripping across the floor and stop at my bedside, a soft, cool hand was pressed upon my brow; a sweet, familiar voice whispered in my ear: "You are better, dear; you will get well now." Nay, do not smile, thou unbelieving cynic, for from that hour—yes, from that instant—I began to mend. I learned afterward that I had been very low with some form of fever; that I was not taken to the hospital because my kind friend and comrade, Orville Collier, had begged the privilege of nursing me in his own tent. I can now sit up, can walk about a little, and hope soon to be well.

## CHAPTER V.

Camp near Fredericksburg, Dec. 28th, 1862.

The battle of Fredericksburg has been fought and—lost. We are now engaged in the laudable occupation of making ourselves comfortable; building log huts to protect ourselves from the cold storms of winter. Our brigade—the First—was not engaged at Fredericksburg. We were commanded by Colonel Poe, a graduate of West Point, a man thoroughly versed in the art of war. He saw the utter hopelessness of the struggle, and, when the order came to advance, he flatly refused to sacrifice his men in the unequal contest. Of course, he was put under arrest, and will be court-martialed, but he saved his men.

The eighteen thousand slaughtered husbands and sons who fell at Fredricksburg does not comprise our greatest loss. This whole army, for the time being, is thoroughly demoralized. It has lost all confidence in its leaders—a condition more fatal than defeat.

The leaders of the different corps do not work in unison. Our commander lacks the mental force to weld and bind these discordant, disintegrating elements into one solid, compact, adhesive mass, subject to his will and guided by his judgment; and herein lies the cause of our defeat.

Everything has the appearance of a protracted stay. We cannot advance; the enemy is too strongly fortified; if he were not, we would give him time to do so. And yet it is dangerous to stay. It is all Government can do, with the river open and all available transports, to furnish this great army with supplies. Should the river freeze, or the Rebels gain a position on its banks, we would be starved out in short order.

December 29th, 1862.

As I was sitting by my cosy fire last evening—for we have evenings here, long, dreary ones—thinking of past events and trying, with my weak vision, to pierce the dark future, the thought occurred to me—where is all the trust and confidence with which I started out, and which cheered and sustained me until our late defeat? Have we made no advance? Surely we have made blunders, but will we not profit by them? We are learning the art of war—time is required to change a citizen into a soldier. Our officers are being weighed—the light weights cast aside or relegated to their class—and the good work will go on until one is found of size and weight to cope with Lee. 'Tis said, "Great generals are born, not made;" that true greatness is also modest, and does not vaunt itself; but our President is on the lookout for him and will find him—never fear—one who has the genius to plan, the will to do, the nerve to dare. As I pondered, hope returned and all my gloomy forebodings fled away.

As I was about to retire for the night, our door was thrown open and some letters were handed in. Among them was one for me. I recognized the well-known hand—tore open the envelope, and, after perusing the welcome contents over and over again, I went to bed and dreamed of home.

Inexpressibly dear, to the soldier, are letters from home. It is interesting to stand by as the mail is being distributed, and, as the names are called, witness the animated, joyful expression that illuminates the countenance of the happy recipients, while those less favored retire to their tents disappointed and sad.

Captain Goldsmith has returned, but will not stay long, as he has sent in his resignation. The regiment is hard at work building winter quarters. Our houses are all built after the same pattern—eight feet by ten in size, five feet high—rafters one-fourth pitch, covered with tent cloth. The different companies are separated by streets one rod wide. The men do not work with very good heart, as they expect orders to leave as soon as finished. They say this has been their experience in the past.

Contrary to expectations, the health of the men does not improve with frosty nights. Diarrhea, colds and rheumatism prevail, with now and then a case of fever.

January 15th, 1863.

Our shanties are completed, and we moved in yesterday. They are warm and dry, and cannot but affect the health of the men favorably. I received a letter from home last night, and great was my aston-

ishment to see, on reading it, an indictment against one dearer to me than life, and in whose behalf I plead "Not guilty."

My poor, wounded, suffering wife; what could have put such thoughts into your mind? Have you not always been the most tender, the most loving, of wives? Have you not always been by my side to advise, assist, uphold and sustain me? Have you not watched over me, in sickness and in health, and nursed me with more than a mother's tenderness? Have you not borne poverty without a murmur for my sake; and still, as a wife, you are a failure? Oh, banish such thoughts from your mind, for, I do assure you, they come of an over-sensitive imagination. You say you have always been a clog to my feet. No, no! I have been my own clog. The error was in the start. Youthful ignorance and folly added to the advice of men in whom I confided, but whose council proved a snare started me in the wrong direction, and I have continued to float downward with the tide. But, dear, I have no regrets. My life has been happy beyond the lot of most men, and what, my beloved, has made it so? Certainly not the pleasures of wealth or honors conferred by man. What, then, but the never-failing, self-sacrificing power of love which you have always lavished on your husband that has bound him to you with cords stronger than bands of steel? The only things I craved when I was sick were the tender accents of your voice and your dear hand upon my brow.

There seems to be a bond of sympathy between us that knows no bounds—is not confined by space. Many times since I left home have I visited you, or received your visits, and the impression left was that of reality. Last night, after I retired to rest—before I went to sleep, for the boys were gathered around the fire and I could hear their jests and laughter—I held your hands in both of mine, trying to comfort and console you, and it was real as reality itself. There is so much hollow-heartedness and deceit practiced here by men who, under the false guise of patriotism, seek wealth and position, that, had I all the world can bestow, I would give it all to enjoy with you one hour of social intercourse.

## CHAPTER VI.

Camp Pittman, Va., February 2d, 1863.

Our camp has been christened at last. We are building a huge oven, large enough to supply our brigade with soft bread. Furloughs are being granted to a limited number of officers and men. This will entitle our company to eight privates. In our company the lot fell between Wait Wright, of Eaton Rapids, and myself. Our cases were so similar the Colonel would not decide between us. He said we must talk it over and agree which should go first, and that, as soon as one returned, the other should go. I heard Mr. Wright's story and volunteered to remain until his return, which will be fifteen days from the date of his furlough. The past week has been very cold. It has snowed all day, and now—about four o'clock—is turning to rain, and bids fair to be a rainy night.

February 8th, 1863.

We are under marching orders again—ready to move at a minute's notice. The Ninth Army Corps is detached from the Army of the Potomac and is ordered to report to General Dix, at Fortress Monroe. The supposition is we go on an expedition somewhere—rumor says Vicksburg. The first detachment has

gone, and we are awaiting the return of the transports. The men are well pleased with the idea of going farther south. For myself, I say any place but this. When we came here the country was a wilderness, covered with a heavy growth of scrub pine. Now it is a desert with scarcely a tree, and not a fence rail for miles in any direction.

It seems that Richmond has lost its strategic importance, and the "decisive blow" which was to have fallen there has been transferred to five other points, viz: Vicksburg, Port Hudson, Rosa's and Foster's expeditions, and Charleston. "If these prove successful," say the Washington papers, "the rebellion will end in thirty days." God grant them all success. When I survey the past history of the war I can see but little in the immediate future to encourage hope. The conviction is forced upon me that if the North subdue the South, the war has but just begun. It can and will be done, but time and persevering effort only will accomplish it. The people are too impatient. They demand important victories now, while some fortified place—Vicksburg, for instance—can only be taken by siege, and siege means weeks and months of waiting.

Government, urged on by the people, acts as if the salvation of the country depends on all this being accomplished before the fourth of March. But I see nothing but failure in haste.

## CHAPTER VII.

February 15th, 1863.

We are now on the "heaving sea and the bounding wave." We were aroused yesterday morning at four o'clock, ordered to prepare breakfast and be ready to march at a minute's notice. At five-thirty the bugle sounded "fall in." We slung our accoutrements, the first time since the battle of Fredericksburg, and in fifteen minutes were en route to the depot, distance about two miles. After some delay we took cars for Aquia Creek, where we arrived at 10 o'clock a. m., and were immediately transferred to transports, bound for Fortress Monroe. The Seventy-ninth New York and Seventeenth Michigan were crowded on the North America, an old Hudson River propeller. There was hardly standing room, much less room to walk about. The day is fine, and the bay, unruffled by a breeze, presents a lively and picturesque appearance. Steamers are continually arriving and departing, sailboats of all sorts and sizes spread their white wings and glide leisurely through the still waters, while the active little tugs go whisking and snorting here and there, assisting larger and more unwieldy vessels. We left Aquia Creek at 10:30 o'clock a. m., expecting to reach the Fortress by nine o'clock next morning. I love the sea in all its forms and phases, and it was with a thrill of joy I took my

seat on deck, prepared to enjoy whatever of interest might present itself. The Potomac, at Aquia Creek, is truly a noble stream, if stream it may be called, for there is no perceptible current, being, I judge, one and one-half miles wide, gradually broadening out as it nears the bay, until at its mouth it is nine miles wide. There is a striking contrast between the Maryland and Virginia shores. The Virginia side, nearly the entire distance, presents a rugged, mountainous aspect, with very few buildings in view, while the Maryland shore is level, dotted with farm buildings, and, at frequent intervals a village with its church spires glittering in the sun. In contemplating these peaceful scenes of rural life, the quiet farm houses surrounded by groves of trees, the well-tilled fields, outbuildings and fences undisturbed by war's desolating hand, the genial air of quiet repose that pervades the scene calls up emotions that have long lain dormant. For many long months, which seems as many years, my eyes have become inured to scenes of blood, of desolation and of ruin; to cities and villages laid waste and pillaged; private residences destroyed; homes made desolate; in fact, the whole country through which we have passed, except part of Maryland, has become through war's desolating touch, a desert waste. As I gazed on these peaceful scenes and my thirsty soul drank in their beauty, how hateful did war appear, and I prayed the time might soon come when "Nations shall learn war no more."

Gradually the wind freshened, increasing in force as we neared the bay, until it became so rough the

captain thought it unsafe to venture out, and cast anchor about five miles from the mouth of the river to await the coming of day. I spread my blanket on the floor of one of the little cabins and slept soundly until morning. When I awoke in the morning the first gray streaks of early dawn were illuminating the eastern horizon.

The gale having subsided, we were soon under way, and in about half an hour entered the broad Chesapeake. And here a scene most grand and imposing met my enraptured gaze. Not a breath of air disturbed its unruffled surface. Numerous vessels, floating upon its bosom, were reflected as by a mirror. A delegation of porpoises met us at the entrance to welcome us to their domain; they were twenty-two in number, were from six to eight feet in length; in color, dark brown. It was truly amusing to witness their sportive antics as they seemed to roll themselves along. They would throw themselves head foremost from the water half their length, turning as on a pivot, perform what seemed to be a somersault, and disappear.

A flock of sea gulls fell into our wake, sagely picking up any crumbs of bread that might be thrown them. They are a strange bird, a little larger than a dove, closely resembling them in color and gracefulness of motion. They followed us the whole distance, and as I watched their continuous, ceaseless flight, the effect on the mind was a sense of weariness at thought of the long-continued exertion.

Soon after we entered the bay I observed what I thought to be a light fog arising in the southeast. We

had not proceeded far, however, before I discovered my mistake, for that which seemed to be a fog was a shower of rain. I was taken wholly by surprise, for I had been accustomed to see some preparation and ceremony on similar occasions. But now no gathering clouds darkened the distant sky, warning me of its approach, but the very storm itself seemed to float upon the waves and become part of it, and before I was aware, enfolded us in its watery embrace. The storm soon passed, but the wind continued through the day, and, as we neared the old Atlantic and met his heavy swells, they produced a feeling of buoyancy that was, to me, truly exhilarating.

Some of the boys were seasick, and a number "cast up their accounts" in earnest. We entered the harbor about sundown and cast anchor for the night under the frowning guns of Fortress Monroe.

Vessels of war of every class, monitors included, and sailing vessels of all sizes, crowded the harbor. It was a magnificent scene, and one on which I had always longed to gaze.

In the morning we learned our destination was Newport News, distant about five miles. We arrived about eight o'clock, marched two miles to Hampton Roads, our camping ground, pitched tents and, at noon, were ready for our dinner of coffee and hard-tack.

We have a pleasant camping ground, lying on the beach, where we can watch the vessels as they pass and can pick up oysters by the bushel when the tide is out.

## CHAPTER VIII.

February 28th, 1863.

Newport News is a military post, and is of no importance in any other sense. There were no villages or cities here previous to the war. Now there are quite a number of temporary buildings, and barracks to accommodate 60,000 men. It is an ideal camping ground, lying on the north bank of Hampton Roads and inclining gently to the northeast. The soil is light sand, which absorbs the rain as fast as it falls and is never muddy. The Ninth Corps, composed of forty-eight regiments, is extended in a direct line along the beach, covering about two miles in length. Stringent rules have been adopted, which, if carried out, will greatly enhance the efficiency of the men in field operations. We are to have reveille at six, when every man must turn out to roll call; breakfast call at seven, when we fall in line, march to the cook's quarters and receive our allowance of "grub." Immediately after breakfast we are marched to the creek, where every man is required to wash hands, face and neck. From eight to half-past, police duty, or cleaning up in front of tents; from eight-thirty to ten-thirty, company drill; from this time until noon, clean guns, brasses and do any little jobs we may have on hand; dinner at twelve; from one-thirty to two-

thirty, skirmish drill; from three to four, battalion drill, after which is dress parade; at eight-thirty, tattoo, or go to bed; at nine, taps, or lights out. Saturday is set apart for washing and cleaning up generally. Sunday morning at eight o'clock is inspection of arms, and at two o'clock divine service.

Some of the boys think the regular routine is reversed in our case—fighting first and drill afterward. Poor fellows; I expect they will see fighting enough yet. I have not seen a newspaper since our arrival, and know as little of what is going on in the world as did Cruso on his desert island.

March 17th, 1863.

We have just received orders to be ready to march at a minute's notice, with two days' rations in our haversacks. The quiet of repose is suddenly disturbed by war's alarms; the Rebels attacked our forces today at Suffolk, about twenty miles from Norfolk. The supposition is we go to support our forces at that place. Our men are excited to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. As I write I hear their shouts and joyful exclamations. The Seventeenth has recovered its old-time energy, and is eager for the fray.

Louisville, Ky., March 27th, 1863.

We did not go to Suffolk as I anticipated. The Third Division went in our stead, while we took another direction, and in eight days, by water and rail, landed in Louisville. We broke camp at Newport News on the 19th inst., marched on board a

fleet of transports, went to Norfolk, where we took in coal. While lying there a heavy storm of snow set in, which lasted several hours. It was bitterly cold, or so it seemed to us, and we suffered severely. Toward night the storm abated and we sailed for Baltimore. There we were transferred to cars and came by the way of the B. & O. R. R. to Parkersburg, W. Va. From Harper's Ferry our route followed the course of the Potomac River to Columbia, a lovely city far up among the mountains, and near the head of that river. The country from Harper's Ferry is mountainous, and Columbia is near the dividing line, from which point the water flows in opposite directions. We were three days and three nights on the cars, winding around or darting through the rocky barriers that opposed us. For, where they could not be evaded, the energy and power of man pierced their huge forms and ran his fiery engines beneath their towering summits. There are twenty-seven tunnels on this road, twenty-five of which we passed through in the daytime. Some of the shorter ones are arched with brick, others with heavy timbers, while some are cut through solid rock and need no support. At Parkersburg our three regiments were crowded into one vessel, and away we went "down the Ohio." We made a short stop at Cincinnati, where we received orders to report at once to Louisville, as an attack at that place was apprehended. We halted on our way through Louisville and partook of a free dinner, prepared for us by the loyal ladies of that city. Soft bread, potatoes, boiled ham, cakes and hot coffee

were served us till all were filled (and many a haversack was also filled), when we gave three cheers and a tiger for the generous donors.

We found much excitement, as bands of guerillas came within six miles of the city the night before, conscripting men and confiscating horses and other supplies.

We stole a march on the Johnnies in coming here, they having notified the citizens that they would breakfast with them on the morning of our arrival, and when they—the citizens—saw their streets filled with soldiers, they thought the promise about to be fulfilled, but the Stars and Stripes soon undeceived them. Here our brigade was divided, the Eighth Michigan and Seventy-ninth New York going to Lebanon, the Seventeenth and Twentieth Michigan remaining at this place.

Bardstown, March 31st, 1863.

Bardstown, where we are now encamped, is an old city of about six thousand inhabitants. The Seminary, which we now occupy as a hospital, was built when there were but three houses in Cincinnati. The majority of the people, I am told, are secessionists. We are encamped on the farm of Senator Wycliff, just outside of the city, in a fine grove of beech and maple; a beautiful stream runs through our camp, while a spring of pure water, enough to supply a brigade, bursts from a crevice in the rocks.

Lebanon, Ky., April 10th, 1863.

We left Bardstown on April second and marched to this place, twenty-eight miles, in two days. How long we may remain here I cannot even conjecture. Kentucky is like a seething volcano, ready to burst into flames at any moment; nothing but the concentration of a large force can prevent an uprising. I think the presence of so many Michigan boys may have a soothing effect.

## CHAPTER IX.

Lebanon, April 13th, 1863.

We have lost our favorite commander, Brigadier General Poe. He is promoted to captain in the regular service, and delivered his farewell address early yesterday morning. He has won the confidence and esteem of every man in the brigade, and they deeply regret his loss. It was his disobedience of orders that saved the First Brigade from slaughter at Fredericksburg. His disobedience led to his promotion. In appearance he is just the man I would select from among a thousand for a bandit chief.

We had a raffle of excitement yesterday in camp. Early in the morning the Eighteenth and Twenty-second Michigan Regiments were ordered to leave for Murfreesboro, Tennessee. The officers of these regiments, in common with others, have employed negroes as servants. Kentucky is violently opposed to the President's Emancipation Proclamation. Here was a fine opportunity for a Kentucky General to show the "Abolitionists" that his state was not included in that pronouncement. As the Eighteenth was about to board the cars, General Manson, commander of this post, ordered them to halt and deliver up all negroes in the regiment. Upon inquiry it was found that all, except one, were Kentucky negroes, and were given up. This did not satisfy; he must have the free

man also. The Sixteenth Kentucky Infantry and the Twelfth Kentucky Cavalry are doing post duty here. These General Manson ordered to form in line of battle, and again demanded the surrender of the negro. But Michigan was not to be intimidated. Colonel Doolittle resolutely refused, formed his men for battle with loaded guns and fixed bayonets, and defiantly bade the Kentuckian to "come and take him." Not caring to attack with only two to one, General Manson sent for the Seventy-ninth New York to come and help him, but the gallant Colonel of that regiment replied: "I am not fighting Michigan men." In the meantime General Burnside had been telegraphed for orders. He replied: "I have nothing to do with it." Colonel Doolittle then telegraphed the War Department, and is now awaiting orders. The Eighteenth lay with their arms beside them all last night, apprehensive of an attack. They kept the negro.

We have a fine camping ground, nearly as good as at Newport News. The brigade is encamped in the form of a square. There is a spring of water in the center. In our front is the City of Lebanon, a place nearly as large as Jackson, and old enough in appearance to have been built in the middle ages. On our right and left are splendid farms, on which negro slaves are busily engaged plowing and planting. In our rear is a piece of timber from which we supply ourselves with fuel. We have thickly planted the borders of our streets with evergreen trees, which not only gives our camp a picturesque appearance, but affords a comfortable shade these hot, sultry days.

Our stay here depends entirely on the movements of the Rebels. We are here to protect the loyal people of Kentucky from guerillas; also to support Rosencrans should his rear be threatened by way of Cumberland Gap. The Ninth Corps is separated into fragments; the Third Division is in Virginia; the First and Second are in Kentucky, a brigade in a place, but so situated they can be quickly concentrated at a given point. Doubtless it is pleasant, this lying in camp with nothing to do but drill and play ball, which is all the rage just now, but it is not satisfying. It may do for regulars, who have so long a time to serve, but for volunteers who enlisted to do a given amount of work, would like to do that work and go home to their families.

Columbia, Ky., April 30th, 1863.

At the date of my last entry—the 26th inst.—I had seen no indication of a move. We retired that night at the usual hour, and just as I was dropping off to sleep the order came: "Be ready to march tomorrow morning at five o'clock with two days' rations." It came like a "clap of thunder from a cloudless sky," surprising both officers and men. Our officers had formed numerous and pleasant associations with Kentucky's fair daughters, and it was with many regrets they were compelled to leave their agreeable society for the stern duties of the field. But military orders are inexorable as fate, and at precisely a quarter to five the bugle sounded "fall in," and at five we were on the move, bound for Columbia, forty miles away.

The weather is warm and pleasant now, but the burning heat of a Southern summer is close upon us. A forced march was before us, with no teams to carry our luggage. We could not carry all our winter clothing, therefore hundreds of good blankets and overcoats were thrown away. When we had marched three or four miles many of the men found they still had too much load, and then the work of lightening up began in earnest. For miles the road was strewn with blankets, dress coats, blouses, pants, drawers and shirts. In fact enough clothing was thrown away for Rebels to pick up to supply a whole brigade. No wonder so many Rebel regiments are dressed in our uniforms. As for myself, I was determined to stay by my goods, if I could not carry them. As a matter of fact I carried load enough that day to down a mule, and feel none the worse for it. We marched to Campbellville, twenty miles, and camped for the night. We were expected to cover the entire distance in two days, but fully one-half of the brigade were so utterly used up it was found to be impossible. We only made nine miles the second day, and camped at Green River. Here the Eighth Michigan and Seventy-ninth New York were ordered to remain; the Seventeenth was ordered to Columbia and the Twentieth to the Cumberland, forty miles beyond.

Lieutenant Colonel Luce is Provost Marshal of this district, and we are detailed to do provost duty. Colonel Luce's orders are: "Protect government property, keep good order in the town, arrest all disloyal citizens and report to headquarters every day." This

part of the state has been much infested by guerillas, and we expect lively times.

Lebanon, Ky., June 1st, 1863.

I have been home on furlough, and am on my way to rejoin my regiment. I reached Louisville last night at midnight, and stayed at the Soldiers' Home until morning. Charles Groesbeck came with me from Detroit, and we found two more of our boys and our Chaplain here, waiting to take cars this morning.

We have a good "drive" on our drum major. He reached Louisville on Friday and reported to the post commander for a pass to his regiment. The Colonel gave him a pass, all right, but to his utter dismay and disgust sent him to the barrack, kept him there until this morning, then sent him to Lebanon under guard. Charlie and I did not report, and came through like free men.

We have a march of sixty miles before us, but a wagon train is going out, and we may get our baggage carried part of the way.

We left Lebanon at three o'clock and walked ten miles. Next morning at three o'clock we were again on the road, intending to make Columbia, but, a heavy rain setting in, we took possession of a barn about four miles out and stayed until morning. We had walked twenty miles and carried our baggage, and were ready to walk eighteen in the afternoon, which is the distance from this place to Jamestown, where we expect to overtake the regiment.

## CHAPTER X.

Lebanon, Ky., June 6th, 1863.

I did not go to Jamestown, as I intended. I called on the Provost Marshal for a pass and learned the program had been changed, and the Seventeenth was then on its way back to Lebanon. I found the company about nine o'clock in the evening, a half mile from Columbia, tired and worn by a march of twenty-six miles. The boys had stretched themselves on the ground, too tired to erect their tents, but when they learned of our arrival, they flocked around us to learn the latest news from home. And such warm greetings I seldom ever witnessed. The Colonel said we were all right on time; he did not expect us to start from home until Monday.

Here I learned the Ninth Corps had received orders to report immediately at Louisville. We started early next morning and marched twenty miles. After supper we threw ourselves upon the ground and forgot our pains and aches in "balmy sleep."

At two o'clock we were aroused by "the shrill bugle's cry," and were told we were to be in Lebanon at 12 m.—eighteen miles. We turned out, cooked and ate our breakfasts, and at four o'clock were on the move. The Quartermaster soon overtook us with teams that he had "pressed" to carry our knapsacks

for us. With many thanks to Colonel Luce—it was he that ordered the wagons to follow us—we started on our way with light hearts and lighter feet. But eighteen miles in half a day is no easy task, even in light marching order, and soon the men, worn out by repeated forced marches, began to tire, and many were ready to declare they could go no further, when we were met by a wagon train, sent from Lebanon to bring in those not able to walk. The train was soon filled to its utmost capacity. Not being one of the unfortunates, I “hoofed it” the entire distance.

The all-absorbing question with us is, where are we going? The Louisville Journal says we are “going to take a new lesson in geography.” Of course, then, we leave the state. Our officers are about equally divided between Washington and Vicksburg. But which? If we are to take a new lesson we will not go east. Then it must be Vicksburg. Our men say it makes but little difference to them, if only we go where work is to be done.

Cairo, Ill., June 10th, 1863.

We are now three hundred and sixty-six miles from Lebanon, which place we left at 3 p. m. of Sunday, and reached Louisville about seven. The ladies had prepared supper and we partook of it with many thanks to the generous doners. After supper we crossed over to Jefferson and took cars for this place. Here we missed the executive ability of General Poe. In all our journeying from Newport News everything was arranged with care and precision. Here all was

disorder and confusion. The cars assigned to our regiment were partly filled with men and baggage of other regiments. Colonel Luce requested the officer who seemed to be in charge to remove them. This he refused to do, swearing they would have a fight first. The Colonel looked in vain for someone to bring order out of this chaos. Finally he assumed the responsibility himself; told the officer in charge if a fight was what he wanted, a fight he should have; ordered us to throw them out, and we did it with a will. About daylight we took possession and were soon under way.

Our trip through Indiana and Illinois caused an ovation. It seemed that the entire population turned out to encourage and cheer us on our way. Women and children, with bright smiles and waving handkerchiefs, thronged the way, and at every station fruit, cakes, bread and butter, newspapers, and, better than all, warm, friendly greetings, were literally showered upon us.

At Washington, Indiana, we halted for supper. It was midnight, but, as usual, the station was thronged with people of both sexes and all ages. Some ladies came to our car—food was served in the cars—and requested that all who were asleep might be awakened, for, as they had been cooking until that time of night, and had then walked nearly a mile to see us, they would like to see us all. So we aroused the sleepers, and had a lively time during our short stay.

They presented us with bouquets, cards, mottoes, etc., and took their leave with many kind wishes for

our success and safe return to our families and friends. God bless the loyal people of America, is the soldier's prayer.

We reached Cairo about twelve o'clock last night, and immediately went on board of transports.

June 11th, 1863.

We are fairly packed on board a small transport; so thickly are we crowded in, it is almost impossible to stir; yet all will stir. Every man seems to think his very existence depends on movement. As I sit here on my knapsack, my back against the railing, inkstand between my feet to prevent it being kicked over, a continuous stream of restless, uneasy men is pouring around, on and over me, which, added to the motion of the vessel, makes writing difficult. We left Cairo yesterday at five o'clock in the afternoon, and steamed down the river a few miles below Cumberland, Kentucky, and anchored for the night.

The captain dare not run his vessel in the night, it being dark and cloudy, and the Mississippi being the most dangerous river in the world to navigate. We expect to reach Memphis early in the morning, and will then learn our final destination.

Having crossed the Mississippi at Dubuque, some three hundred miles above Cairo, I was somewhat disappointed, as it did not appear to be any wider at Cairo than at Dubuque, but, by close observation, I discovered that what it lacked in width was made up in velocity and depth.

At Dubuque, too, the water is clear as crystal; from St. Louis down it is the color of chocolate. The banks of the river are uninhabited and uninhabitable most of the way. Every spring and fall they overflow from ten to thirty miles, and then this mighty mass of water will not be confined. The river channel is constantly changing. The light, loose soil of the valley cannot withstand the tremendous power of the resistless floods that are hurled from the north upon its yielding bosom. This is one cause of disaster. The sand bars change so often it is impossible to keep track of them.

June 14th.

We are still in the harbor at Memphis awaiting orders. Eight hundred and fifty wounded men were brought to this place yesterday from Vicksburg. Grant is still hammering away at that seemingly impregnable fortress. The weather is extremely hot, which renders our situation, huddled together as we are, very uncomfortable. Yesterday we steamed up the river about a mile to a fine grove, and all went on shore while the crew gave the old boat a thorough cleaning. This morning our surgeon ordered us all on shore as a "sanitary measure." We marched off by companies, each company going where it chose, but to different points. We went to Court House Square and disbanded. It was like being transferred from a gloomy prison to "smiling fields and shady groves." The square contains about five acres; is enclosed by an iron fence; is thickly set with trees of different varieties—the brave old oak, with its spreading branches

and delicious shade; the gorgeous magnolia, the tree of paradise; the orange and lemon, with an almost endless variety of evergreens. Near the center of the square is a bust of General Jackson, cut in marble.

On one side of the pedestal is incised those memorable words of that grand old patriot: "The Federal Union; it Must Be Preserved." I noticed the word "Federal" was partly obliterated, and inquired the cause. A citizen told me it was done by a Rebel Colonel at the beginning of the war; that his men, still cherishing some regard for the hero of New Orleans, took him outside the city and shot him. At four o'clock we were marched on board our prison ship.

## CHAPTER XI.

June 15th, 1863.

Orders have come at last. "Forward to Vicksburg!" is the cry. We are steaming down the grand old river once again, ready to face danger in any form, either by Rebel bullets or the more dealy miasma of the Southern swamps, for "Liberty and Union." The way from Memphis down is not entirely safe for transports. Guerillas have a trick of concealing themselves along the banks and firing on them as they pass. We have a strong guard, with loaded guns, ready to return their greeting should they salute us. As we do not travel nights, it will take us at least two days to make the trip.

June 16th, 1863.

At about four o'clock this afternoon we met two of our gunboats near Napoleon, Mississippi, who told us they had just dislodged a Rebel battery planted on the shore, and had burned two small villages. Thinking it not safe to proceed, our fleet was hauled inshore, a strong guard was posted and pickets stationed on shore to prevent surprise. Most of the men threw themselves down, their arms beside them, to rest as best they might. Some few had gone ashore and were enjoying a social chat around their blazing camp

fires, while the more restless ones were working off the effects of the bad whisky they had imbibed during the day with boisterous, hilarious merriment. It was half-past ten; feeling wakeful, I had not retired, but sat on the railing of the vessel, talking over past events with a friend from Jackson. Presently two rifle shots rang out, followed by a volley from our pickets. Then was there hurrying to and fro. The men sprang instinctively to arms. Officers rushed from their rooms in dishabille, the timid crouched behind anything that offered the slightest protection. Confusion reigned. But soon our Colonel appeared, cool and collected, calm as a summer eve. "Steady, men, stand by your arms and wait orders." More pickets were sent out and we patiently awaited the attack. But it did not come. It was, probably, an attempt by some cowardly wretches to murder one or two of our pickets and escape under cover of darkness. No one was hurt. We started soon after daylight, convoyed by two gunboats, prepared for any emergency, and expecting fun. One gunboat led the way, the other followed in our rear, their bright little guns protruding from their coal-black sides. They have a jaunty, saucy air, that seems to say: "Just knock this chip off my shoulder, if you dare." We were all excitement for a while, eagerly scanning every tree or log, thinking to see a puff of smoke or a "cracker's" head at every turn. Seeing nothing for so long a time, we began to think it all a hoax, when suddenly, as we rounded a point, running close inshore, the transport in front of us was fired on by a concealed foe. Their fire was instantly

returned, and the saucy little gunboats rounded to and gave them a broadside of grape, followed by shell, at short range. Our boys were quickly in line, watching with eager eyes for Rebel heads. Fortunately not a man was injured on either vessel. A sad accident occurred this afternoon. A young man of Company H was standing guard at the head of the stairs. He stood on the upper step, leaning on his gun. It slipped and the hammer struck the step below. The bullet passed through his stomach and lodged near the spine.

Haines Bluff, Miss., June 18th, 1863.

Once more on land, and glad are we of the change. We arrived at the mouth of the Yazoo at ten o'clock yesterday morning, six miles from Vicksburg, and, turning upstream, came to anchor at this place, fifteen miles from its mouth, at 12 m.

We had a perilous voyage down the river. It would seem, on looking back on the dangers through which we were safely carried, that a power higher than man's had been exerted in our behalf. To say nothing of the guerillas, three times were we in imminent danger of being "blown up." Once nothing but a miracle—men called it luck—saved us from capsizing; once we were driven on shore by a hurricane on the only spot, so said our pilot, where we could by any possibility have escaped being wrecked.

Part of our division, two days in advance of us, has reported at Vicksburg. Two divisions of the Ninth Corps are here, the other—the Third—is at Suffolk, Virginia. The place we now occupy was lately in

possession of the Rebels. It is strong by nature, and has been made still stronger by man, but those terrible little gunboats made it too hot for secession, and they left in haste, leaving part of their baggage, a few horses and cattle, and even poultry, which our boys found skulking in the bushes. Of course, they arrested the cowardly creatures and brought them into camp.

The inhabitants have all left, driving their stock with them, and burning what furniture they could not carry.

The face of the country is rough and broken, quite as much so as Maryland and Virginia. Spite of Jeff. Davis' prohibition, I find much cotton planted in this part of Mississippi, but it will not come to much unless Uncle Sam soon gives it in charge of his colored children, who literally throng our camp. I wish I could describe the beauty and grandeur of these forests, but to be appreciated they must be seen. That which gives them their greatest charm is the long, wavy, gray moss which hangs suspended from every limb, from the smallest sapling to the mighty, towering oak. Wild plums and blackberries, large and luscious, abound and are now in season. Figs will soon be ripe. Among other things, good and bad, fleas and woodticks are in evidence.

June 21st, 1863.

The sky is overcast with clouds, a cool breeze comes from the west, which makes the temperature delightful. I have been out berrying, and have succeeded admirably. On my way in I found some

short pieces of board, of which I have made a comfortable seat, with a desk in front, on which I am now writing. I feel quite like an aristocrat. In my ramble across the field I discovered a flowering vine, the most bewitchingly beautiful thing I ever saw. I searched in vain for seed sufficiently matured to germinate. I wish I could describe its matchless beauty, but words are feeble.

We are still lying here waiting for Johnson, of course, to come to us, although no one seems to know where Johnson is—whether on the Yazoo, the Big Black or the little one. I suspect it is not definitely known whether his “large army” is a myth or a reality. But, doubtless, these hidden, secret, mysterious “strategic movements” and original plans will, some time, be made apparent, and then I, at least, will make one desperate attempt to appreciate and admire the wisdom and energy which could see, plan and execute with such unerring certainty and success. But Vicksburg, the center of gravity at present, is really a very stubborn fact. I do not understand it, cannot comprehend it, but I believe Grant will investigate it to the satisfaction of all loyal people. All the reliable information I can get at present is brought on the wings of the wind. This is not Grant's official report, but the report of his artillery. Last night his cannons' sullen roar reverberated from cliff to cliff and shook the hills. There are all sorts of rumors which it is folly to repeat, for they are replaced by new ones every hour. I believe I will record the latest, so here goes:

Last night Pemberton conceived the brilliant idea of turning loose four or five hundred horses and mules, creating a stampede among them, and, when Grant's lines open to let them through, as certainly would be done, if he suspected nothing, why, out they would rush, artillery, infantry and all, before the lines could close again, and thus escape. But Grant was wide awake, fell back a mile or two to give himself room to work, opened his lines for the horses to pass through and the Rebels to pass in, then closed on them and had them trapped.

## CHAPTER XII.

June 23d, 1863.

Once more we are on the wing. Yesterday morning we were ordered to be ready to march when called on. Of course, the men do not expect to stay anywhere, but it always comes a little tough to leave a pleasant camp just as they get comfortably settled. But military orders are inexorable, and, in spite of regrets, we "struck tents, slung knapsacks," and started on our winding way among the hills. This part of the country is made up of ranges of high hills separated by ravines down which the water has cut channels from ten to twenty feet deep. We marched about three miles on the road leading to Vicksburg and halted on the top of a high hill just large enough to hold our regiment. It was plowed last spring and planted to cotton. Colonel Luce looked indignant, the company officers grumbled, the men swore. General Welch regretted, but Major General Parks ordered the left to rest here, and it rested. But Colonel Luce could still do something. Ordering us in line, he said: "Men, you need not pitch your tents in line in this open field; go where you can make yourselves most comfortable, only be on hand when the bugle sounds." Three cheers and a tiger for Colonel Luce. then a wild break for trees, brush; anything to shelter us from the fierce rays of a Southern sun. We are now nine miles from Vicksburg by the road, six miles

in a direct line. We can distinctly hear musketry at that place, which has been kept up almost incessantly the last three days. At intervals the cannonading is terrific. Our Orderly Sergeant rode over there yesterday, to see his brother. He says Grant's rifle pits are not more than twenty-five rods from the Rebels, and woe to the man on either side who exposes himself to the marksmanship of the other. As near as I can learn, matters remain about as they were three weeks ago. Unless General Grant succeeds in mining some of their works, thus affecting an entrance, he will be compelled to starve them out.

We would think, in Michigan, such land as this utterly unfit for cultivation. But the highest hills are cultivated and planted with corn or cotton. Corn, even on the highest hills, I have never seen excelled in growth of stalk. One would naturally suppose that in this hilly country water of good quality would abound. Such is not the fact. Soon as we broke ranks I started out in quest of water. I followed a ravine about half a mile, then crossed over to another, but found none. Blackberries being plentiful, I filled my cap and returned to camp. Some of the boys had been more successful, and after resting a few minutes I took another direction, for water we must have. This time I followed a ridge about half a mile, then began to descend—down, down, I went, seemingly into the very bowels of the earth, and when I reached the bottom found a stagnant pool of warm, muddy water. Making a virtue of necessity, I filled my canteen, returned to camp, made some coffee, ate my berries,

with a very little hardtack, and went to bed to dream of "limpid streams and babbling brooks."

This morning my comrade and I arose with the early dawn and started out in search of berries, which we found in great abundance.

A strange stillness pervades our hitherto noisy and tumultuous camp. The men are scattered in every direction, lounging listlessly in the shade, not caring even to play cards, so oppressive is the heat. I am sitting in the shade of a mulberry tree, Collier lying on the ground near by; we alternately write or lounge as the mood takes us. Most assuredly I never felt the heat in Michigan as I feel it here. Yet men can work in this climate, and northern men, too. The Eighth and Twentieth have been throwing up fortifications for several days.

#### Haines Bluff, June 24th.

Yesterday, as I was strolling through the ravines, picking berries, I came across a spring of delicious water, cold and pure. It is about half a mile from camp, in a lovely, romantic spot, almost shut out from the light of day by the thick foliage of the magnolia and other evergreens which are thickly interwoven with flowering vines. I wish I could picture the unrivaled beauty of the magnolia. The largest I have seen is about fifty feet in height, leaves from four to six inches in length by two in breadth in the middle, rounding each way to a point, and are of the darkest shade of green. Its chief beauty lies in its blossoms, which are pure white, about six inches in diameter, contrasting strongly with its dark green leaves. It is very frag-

rant, filling the air with sweet perfume. Nature is indeed prolific in this Southern clime, bestowing her gifts in the greatest variety and profusion, both animate and inanimate, things pleasant to look upon and grateful to the senses, and those that are repulsive and disgusting in the extreme. Insects and reptiles, varying in size from diminutive "chiggers," too small to be seen by the unaided eye, but which burrows in the flesh and breeds there, to the huge alligator that can swallow a man at a single gulp. I have not seen an alligator yet, but some of our men have seen him to their sorrow. Soon after our arrival some of the men went in to bathe and wash off some of the dust of travel. They had been in the water but a few minutes when one of their number uttered a shriek of terror and disappeared. Two of his comrades who happened to be near by seized him and dragged him to shore. The right arm was frightfully mangled, the flesh literally torn from the bone by an alligator. Since that incident bathing in the Yazoo is not indulged in.

Moccasin snakes and other poisonous reptiles abound, and a species of beautifully-tinted, bright-eyed, active little lizards inhabit every tree and bush, creep into and under our blankets and scamper over us as we try to sleep. The nimble little fellows are harmless, but quite annoying.

There has been uninterrupted firing of small arms and artillery at Vicksburg today. We are busily engaged in throwing up breastworks two hundred rods from here. Our regiment was detailed for that purpose today.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Haines Bluff, Miss., June 26th.

We get no news from the outside world. Not even the New York Herald or Detroit Free Press, those blatant organs of secession, can penetrate these lines. But the air is filled with rumors—rumors that are true today and false tomorrow. It is said the Rebels have a battery now where they fired on us when we came down; that they have captured all our mail and destroyed the mail boat. Today they sank the boat in shallow water and one of our gunboats secured the mail. All we are sure of is we are here, felling trees and throwing up breastworks; that General Grant is still knocking for admittance at the "Gates of Jericho." Were I to credit what I hear, and it comes from "reliable sources," I would believe he has already made the seventh circuit of that doomed city with his terrible ram's horn in full blast, and now, covered with sweat and dust, has paused on a "commanding eminence" to witness the final consummation of his plans. But the continuous thundering of his artillery and the occasional rattle of musketry convince me that, in these latter days, the tumbling down of formidable walls is not so easily accomplished as in the olden times when the Almighty seemed to take more interest in the affairs of men. But, although the long-wished-

for event is delayed until hope is well-nigh dead, still, seeing and knowing what I do, I have entire confidence in Grant's final success.

But hark! What cry is this? Oh, joyful sound. The mail! the mail has come! Thank God, there is one for me!

June 27th, 1863.

A letter from home—the first since April 25th, and written by my beloved wife. On receiving it I sought my tent with eager haste and perused its welcome pages over and over again. Well may my darling say, "God has been better to me than my fears," for we have been spared to each other, and our children to us both.

I do not believe my darling's dream was all a dream. On that same day, the 9th of June, I was on my way from Louisville to Cairo. We went directly north to Seymour, Indiana. Almost home, it seemed to me, where we changed cars for the southwest. I was cast down, discouraged, more so than at any other period of my life. My thoughts and affections were drawn out to my sorrowing wife with an intensity that was agonizing. I had given up hope of her ever becoming reconciled to our fate, and believed she would mourn her life away for him who would gladly have given his own to save his wife. I felt I could do no more. Under the circumstances was I not permitted to visit her, that my spiritual presence might cheer, comfort and encourage her by the assurance that she was not forsaken; that, though far away, her husband was still present, even to her outward

senses. I believe my darling has often visited me, and I love to cherish the fond thought. Every nerve and fiber of my soul has thrilled with joy unspeakable at the familiar touch of her dear hand upon my brow.

July 3d, 1863.

We are encamped six miles from Haines Bluff, on a ridge of ground, in a perfect wilderness. I have hardly seen level ground enough, in this State, for a regiment to camp on. I find blackberries in abundance, and, therefore, am content. They have formed a large share of my diet, and have been both food and medicine. Scurvy and diarrhea have entirely disappeared. That which we most need and cannot get is pure water. The streams have all run dry, and unless it rains soon, every spring within reach of us will fail. Water is now so scarce every regiment except the Seventeenth has placed a guard over its own spring, and will not allow others to use it. If we stay here long, we will be compelled to dig wells.

We are now twelve miles from Vicksburg and eight miles from the Big Black. I can still hear the thunder of artillery, morning and eve, at the former place. If Grant celebrates the Fourth inside of Vicksburg, as report says he intends to do, he must do something decisive soon. He may be doing that very thing this minute. When I began writing, his cannon kept up a continual roar. It has almost ceased. Perhaps he is now storming their works.

Our men are still throwing up fortifications. The whole country for fifteen miles around Vicksburg is little less than a fortification. The inhabitants around here did not run away at our approach. Most of them are intensely loyal just now. The reports of want and destitution with which the papers are filled, and which I doubted, are true. Many families draw all their supplies from our Quartermaster. Soon all must do so.

July 4th, 1863.

"Be ready to march at a minute's notice," is the order. At the same time we learn that Vicksburg has surrendered; that Johnson is in a trap, and that we are to help "bag the game." So away we go, in light marching order. We marched eight miles and camped for the night.

July 5th, 1863.

We have moved about one and one-half miles today. No doubt our northern friends think they have seen dusty roads, but if they could have seen us yesterday or today, they would have thought the dustiest time they ever saw was clean and airy in comparison. The road, and two or three rods on either side, was beaten into the finest powder, and the feet of men and horses caused it to rise in sooty clouds, which enveloped us in their stifling, smothering folds. There was no breeze to carry it away—no possibility of avoiding it. When we halted at night every man of us was a "free soiler," and carried enough dirt on his person to make a "garden spot." Thanks to a kind providence, water is plenty

at this place, and we soon washed and forgot our miseries.

One of the boys just killed a huge rattlesnake a few feet from where I am writing.

Near Jackson, Miss., July 11th, 1863.

On the 6th of July, at about 3 o'clock p. m., we fell into line and started for the Big Black River, distant about two miles. The Rebels had shown themselves in considerable force on the opposite bank, and had engaged our skirmishers from rifle pits, which were dug close to the river bank, and were concealed by a thick growth of small cane, killing and wounding several of our men. Their force was unknown to us, the river fifteen to twenty feet deep, the banks level, and, on the other side, covered with a heavy growth of timber.

Bridges must be built, and the hazardous task was assigned to the First Brigade. In crossing a level stretch of cleared land, by looking back, I could see the whole brigade in motion, winding along like a huge serpent and extending nearly a mile in length, and a feeling of pride and exultation surged over me as I saw, once more, the grand old Ninth Corps advancing on our country's foe, and led, too, by the glorious Seventeenth.

On arriving at the river we formed in line behind a bank, thickly covered with brush, and awaited the darkness of night before beginning our task.

At dusk each regiment was formed into reliefs, for fatigue duty, and the work of building began.

Contrary to our expectations, no opposition was offered. A raft was built on which skirmishers were carried over, but they found no enemy. As soon as they discovered our determination to cross, they fell back toward Jackson. We built our bridge, and crossed the next day, July 7th, at 12 m. A deserter told us they had heard of the surrender of Vicksburg, and had left in haste. Quite a number of mules and beef cattle were left behind, and were taken in charge by our Quartermaster. Here our advance assumed somewhat the nature of a forced march. We halted but a few minutes at a time, and continued, until nearly midnight, to feel our way. Our first day's march, after crossing the river, was over a rough, broken country, covered by a thick growth of timber, which afforded a grateful shade, alternated by open stretches of cleared land, where the sun beat down upon us in all its fierceness. Many of our men fell out; several were sunstruck, two of whom died in a few minutes. On our previous short marches we had been greatly inconvenienced by the scarcity of water, but we had now to travel thirty miles through a country almost destitute of springs or streams, the inhabitants depending on cisterns and artificial ponds for themselves and stock. I have not seen a well of water in Mississippi. The negroes tell us we will not find a drop of water for thirteen miles for man or beast. The long-continued drought has nearly exhausted cisterns and dried up most of the artificial ponds. We could only push ahead and trust in providence. But we were not left to perish,

for that very night we marched into camp in the midst of one of the heaviest thunder showers I ever witnessed. It seems to me as much a miracle as the "Smiting of the rock for the Children of Israel." And I thanked God and took courage. That, and the frequent showers that followed, saved thousands of men and horses from perishing of thirst. As often happens when large bodies of troops are in motion, our supply train did not come up, and the second morning from the river found us with empty haversacks. Unlike Virginia, this part of Mississippi abounds in cattle and hogs, and the ravines around our camp were soon converted into slaughter houses, from which our men supplied themselves with meat. We stayed here until 2 o'clock p. m. for the train to come up; half rations were issued, and we resumed our march, and kept it up until midnight. This was a hard day for men and horses, owing to the scarcity of water and the excessive heat. A number of men died of sunstroke, and twenty-five horses were found dead. Not a man of the Seventeenth has died, although several were compelled to fall out. As for myself, I marched near the head of the regiment all day, and was ready for a like excursion the next morning. We camped that night within five miles of Jackson, and our advance had already skirmished with their pickets, who had slowly fallen back. We were aroused at 4 in the morning, drew four days' rations, and a little after 5 were on the move, cautiously feeling our way to avoid surprise. We marched in this way about two miles, when the

enemy was discovered about three-fourths of a mile ahead, in a cornfield, drawn up in line of battle. Smith's division formed quickly to oppose them, artillery was ordered to the front, and every preparation was made for an engagement, but, before our artillery could be brought to bear, they fell back to the left of the city and took up a position in a piece of timber.

About a mile from that place we halted and prepared again for battle. Rebel cavalry could be seen hovering near our left, while a strong force of infantry could plainly be seen in the woods in front of us. Our brigade—the First—was ordered to the front, and formed in line of battle, supported by the Third Brigade. The Forty-fifth Pennsylvania and Second Michigan deployed as skirmishers about forty rods in advance of us. They moved cautiously about one hundred yards, when the enemy fired on them, wounding four. This was a signal for an advance. We had formed in a cornfield, and advanced at 2:30 p. m. The sky was cloudless; not a breath of air was stirring. Our course, after emerging from the cornfield, lay across a level pasture. We advanced steadily, but the Rebels fell back as we approached, firing occasionally, until dark, when we halted in the wood until morning, sleeping on our arms. Soon after daylight we were up and after them, keeping, all this time, our line of battle. As we emerged into an open field we were saluted by a volley that passed harmlessly over our heads. This was their parting salute, for they immediately retired behind their forti-

fications, and we took up the position assigned us on the left of the city.

I have written these sketches as I could snatch a moment here and there, a few lines at a time.

July 18th.

Our colors float from the walls of Jackson, but Johnson is not bagged; there was a hole through which he escaped.

Twice the Rebels charged us, and were sent back quicker than they came. Their loss in these two charges was three hundred men, in killed.

## CHAPTER XIV.

July 20th, 1863.

Vicksburg is ours; Johnson defeated and his forces scattered; our work in Mississippi is performed, and we have taken up the line of march for some other distant field.

We left Jackson at 3 a. m. today for Haines Bluff, where we take transports for some point north or east. I think I will be glad to put in the balance of my work a little farther north, although I would not hesitate to go anywhere, so I might contribute my mite toward putting down this rebellion. But, other things being equal, I would choose to be where we could get pure water, and, what I prize more than all else, hear from my loved family with some degree of regularity. It has been a sore trial, and hard to bear, to be compelled to wait for days and weeks for tidings from a sick and suffering wife.

We marched twelve miles this forenoon, and have halted for dinner. Fifteen miles must be made this afternoon to obtain water. It is a tough march, but necessity compels. It would seem that, in an emergency like this, when our lives depend upon our "staying power," some unseen hand sustains us. As for myself, I have never borne hard marches so well as in Mississippi.

I see by the papers there is much talk of the Rebels carrying the war into the North. Well, let them go. "Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad." I am not sure but it is the only thing that can unite the North; certainly it will hasten the downfall of the Confederacy.

Haines Bluff, Miss., July 23d, 1863.

We arrived at our old camp yesterday—twenty days from the time we left it—the toughest twenty days of our experience. A dirtier, more ragged and drilled-out lot of men I hope never to see. The first thing I did, after eating a little hardtack and drinking a cup of coffee, was to bolt for the spring, build a fire, boil my shirt, pants and socks, scrub myself from head to heels, put on my clothing wet—though not much wetter than before—and return to camp a cleaner, therefore a better man. There have been times when we could not get water to wash our hands and face, to say nothing of our clothing, for a week or more.

It was dark when I returned to camp, but fires were burning brightly in every direction, and around them were gathered groups of men silently reading letters. I hastened to the Orderly and asked him "Have you anything for me?" "Yes, I have four letters for you." My heart gave one great bound of gladness, and, grasping them tightly, I hastened to the nearest fire to learn what news from home. Rumors of a great battle, fought and won by Meade, had been in circulation several days, but no one knew

whether true or false. These letters from my wife confirmed them. The threatened invasion took place, was crushed, and Lee was suffered to recross the Potomac at his leisure, as he was allowed to do after Antietam.

Haines Bluff, July 29th, 1863.

We did not leave on the 23d, as was rumored, but are still in our old camp, enjoying a short season of repose preparatory to our voyage up the river. It is a repose much needed by our men. What prompted our commander to hurry us through as he did—sixty miles in three days—I cannot conceive. Strict orders were issued against straggling. No man would be allowed to leave the ranks without a written pass from the Surgeon, and all stragglers were to be picked up by the Provost Guard and taken to headquarters for trial by court martial. The General “reckoned without his host.” Some men, so great was their respect for discipline, marched in the ranks until they fell, in a dying condition. But most of them cursed the General and his orders and sat down to rest and cool off whenever their judgment told them they were getting too hot, and, when rested, came on again.

After the first day, no attention was paid to orders. Men fell out in such numbers the Provost could not arrest them, and came straggling into camp until nearly morning.

The next morning after our arrival, in the Seventeenth alone, one hundred twenty men were reported unfit for duty, and forty-five are now sick in hospital. Doubtless much of this sickness is the effect of the poi-

sonous liquid we were compelled to use for cooking and drinking purposes. How grateful to us, then, is the delicious, sparkling water that flows in abundance from that romantic spring I described on our first arrival. Before I leave this subject, let me record our experience the week we were encamped before Jackson. The first day we used cistern water, but that soon failed. After that, all that was left for coffee and for cooking purposes was water from an artificial pond, scooped out in a barnyard, and all the battery and camp horses—five or six hundred of them in number—were watered there every day. They were ridden right into the pond! Rather than drink it, I have been three miles to the rear, after having been on duty all day, for a canteen of cistern water.

July 30, 1863.

Another letter from my poor, suffering wife. As I think of her sorrows, cares and perplexities, I cannot force back the thought that will unbidden rise, can so much be required of us; such great sacrifices, not only of property, but our cherished plans, embracing the future welfare of our children, in fact, all of earthly good, while others are exempt—have no part or lot in it—who would not even know that war existed were they not led to inquire the cause of such unexampled prosperity—and, when rebellion at home stares them in the face, and the “fire in the rear” so often threatened really breaks forth, loudly call for soldiers to come and protect their precious lives and property?

Where are those Union Leagues, who were going to "unite the loyal people of the North and subdue Copperheads?" Where are those patriots who could not leave their business to go to the war, but would "take care of the Rebels at home?" But a little cool reflection banishes such thoughts. I have to act only for myself, and answer only to my own conscience.

July 31st, 1863.

Our transports have arrived, and we expect to leave this afternoon for Cairo. Some of our boys are very sick, and urge me to go with them on the hospital boat. They have obtained the consent of Colonel Luce, and I may be detailed for that purpose. Rumor says the sick are to be sent to St. Louis. If so, I will go there with them and join the regiment as soon as possible, wherever it may be. I do not like to leave it, for I am lonely and discontented when out of sight of the Seventeenth. Colonel Luce says we are going to Indiana, but there are so many contingencies, we may be needed elsewhere.

## CHAPTER XV.

August 7th, 1863.

It was with a bounding heart, brimful of gratitude to God, that I stepped on board the Dakota and bade farewell to Haines Bluff on the second day of August. We have three hundred sick and wounded on this boat and are short of help. Quite a number who started as nurses are sick. Four men died the first night. We ran the boat ashore, dug a grave large enough for all, and laid them in it, side by side. Our Chaplain read the burial service, and we hastened on board to repeat the ceremony, the next morning, for some one else. It seems hard—even cruel—but it is the most solemn burial service I ever witnessed. Nine have died since we started, and one threw himself overboard in the frenzy of delirium and was drowned. We kill a beef every evening. Two nights in succession the best part of a hindquarter has been stolen. The boat hands were questioned, and a huge Irishman acknowledged the theft. He was court martialed and sentenced to be "banked." The boat was stopped opposite a wilderness. No human habitation was in sight. He was forced to pack his bundle, take to the woods and run his chance with hunger and the Rebels.

As we were running leisurely along, about 3

o'clock in the afternoon of yesterday, my curiosity was aroused by our boat running suddenly against the shore and sticking there. All hands were called, and, with the aid of soldiers, she was soon shoved off, and on we went again. A Sergeant asked the Mate why we landed there. His reply was, "Something wrong in the wheel house." One of our boys asked a darkey the same question. "Well, boss, I 'specs dey see a rabbit ober dere, an' t'ink dey kotch 'im." Soon after, as two comrades and myself were sitting in the bow enjoying the cool breeze, my attention was attracted by the glassy stillness of the water in front of us. Pointing to the right, I said, "Yonder is the safe place to sail." The words had scarcely left my mouth when we felt a sudden shock, the bow of the boat was lifted about two feet, a full head of steam was turned on, which carried us over the obstruction. We had "struck a snag." Soon after, we anchored for the night, as the pilot was "too sick" to run the boat.

The sick from our regiment are doing well. I never saw wounded men do so nicely. Of five who came as nurses, four are on the sick list. As for myself, I have not been so well in years.

Louisville, Ky., August 11th, 1863.

Again in Louisville—eleven hundred miles nearer home than one week ago—and yet how far. Still, it is joy to feel I am comparatively near. We reached Cairo on the evening of the seventh, took on fresh supplies, and left next day at noon for Cincin-

nati, which place we expect to reach some time tomorrow. We are now—3 p. m.—taking on coal, and will start in a few minutes.

The Ohio is very low—in places not more than three feet deep. We have brought up against sand bars and been forced to back off perhaps fifty times since leaving Cairo. From this place to Cincinnati, I am told, there are no obstructions. The most difficult part of our way was from New Albany to Louisville. We were six hours in making three miles last night. It was nothing but “Back 'er and try again” for about a mile, and then we had a canal with three locks to pass through.

We have had no deaths since the seventh, and our sick and wounded boys are doing nicely. These fresh northern breezes are more exhilarating than wine, and the hope that they may be sent to their homes to recruit their health is more healing than medicine.

Cincinnati, Ohio, August 12th, 1863.

We arrived here at 9:30 this morning. My day's work is, at last, completed, at 9 p. m. This has been a busy day. In fact, I have not been idle or had much rest, by day or night, since July fourth, and yet I am fresh and vigorous as in days of old. The sick and wounded all removed—the worst cases to the General Hospital in this city, the convalescents to Camp Denison, eighteen miles out, while a few return to their regiments.

The Seventeenth passed through here today, and is now in camp near Covington, on the opposite bank of

the river: I expect to join them in the morning, and look for a handful of letters.

People call the weather here very hot, but it is not Mississippi heat, and I enjoy it. The mornings and evenings are delightfully cool, while there it is constant, relentless heat both day and night. Here a coat is comfortable in the morning—there one needs no cover day or night.

Camp near Hickman's Bridge, Ky.,  
August 16th, 1863.

I did not join the regiment as soon as I expected, owing to the negligence of the Medical Director, whose duty it was to furnish me transportation. As I had no money, I was forced to await his pleasure. The regiment took cars for this place the day they crossed over, so I was left in Cincinnati until Friday evening to live as best I might. I crossed the river on Friday, and next morning took cars for Nicholasville, fourteen miles beyond Lexington, and one hundred fifteen miles from Cincinnati. I was just in time to get two months' pay. I should have drawn for two months more, but there was a mistake in the pay rolls, which cannot be corrected until next muster. The Paymaster says he is going to pay us again next month, and the next time muster us out of the service.

We have a very pleasant camp, in a shady grove, and an abundance of pure, sparkling water, which I appreciate now as I never did before.

Nicholasville, Ky., August 27th, 1863.

We are again enjoying the quiet of camp life. Our miniature tents are pitched in regular order, streets are policed and brigade guards posted to keep our unruly boys within bounds.

Colonel Luce, five line officers and twenty privates have gone home on furlough—others to Cincinnati on leave of absence. Everything indicates a period of rest. Our boys are trying to make up for their privations "down below." Nearly every tent presents the appearance of a market for the sale of fruit or vegetables.

Potatoes, peaches, apples, cabbages, onions, water-melons and green corn are piled in heaps or lie around loose throughout the camp. Then we have artists, too. Two Daguerian cars are running full blast, where the boys get indifferent pictures at one dollar each. I saw a great curiosity today—a relic of by-gone ages. About a mile from camp there is a shop where the old-fashioned spinning wheel is manufactured on quite an extensive scale, and they find a ready sale. This is a fair index to the progress of the people. Their manners, forms of speech and customs all point to past ages. They are very loyal and very friendly when sober, but when filled with corn whiskey, hypocrisy and self-interest take a back seat, and they speak their real sentiments with a frankness and fluency that is not at all flattering to us "Yanks." From what I have seen, I conclude all Kentuckians drink whiskey. There are distilleries in every little town, where the "genuine article" is turned out. I

called at a farm house one day for a drink of water. The good woman was catechising her son—a lad of ten or twelve years—about ten cents she had given him with which to buy some little notion at the store. She gave me a drink of water, then, turning to the young hopeful, angrily inquired, “But where’s that ten cents I gave you?” “I giv five cents to Bill.” “Where’s the other five?” “Bought my dram with it.” The explanation appeared satisfactory.

## CHAPTER XVI.

Camp Parks, Ky., August 20th, 1863.

I received a letter from a friend in Michigan last evening, saying: "If you were in Michigan, or could see the situation from the standpoint of the North, you would be less hopeful of the speedy termination of the war." If by "speedy" is meant a single campaign, as was promised us one year ago, I do not now believe in it, but nothing but the most signal failure can change my faith in the ultimate success of our cause. We have steadily gained ground from the first. The series of reverses that attended our arms the first year of the war has forced our government to accept the inevitable, seemingly against its will. I do not forget the violent opposition to the Emancipation and Confiscation Acts, passed by Congress in December, 1861, by Northern men of undoubted loyalty, nor the President's timid recommendations in his inaugural address to that Congress. I remember well that reverses and disasters attended all our efforts until the government was compelled, as by an overruling Providence, to free the slaves of rebels, which includes them all; and that from the moment these measures became the fixed policy of the government, reverses ceased. It is not the issue of a battle or campaign that gives me hope, but the successes that have

attended our arms all through the month of July were attended by such peculiar circumstances as to force upon me the conviction, "There IS a destiny that shapes our ends, rough hew them as we will."

August 22d, 1863.

I had comforted myself with the reflection that when we returned to Kentucky, where communications were uninterrupted by guerillas, and were only separated by twenty-four hours of time, I might be permitted to correspond with my family without such harrowing delays, for I would not have my darling in doubt as to my situation or whereabouts for one single day, knowing, as I do, the uncertainty of suspense is worse than the reality. But 'tis said, "The darkest hour is just before the dawn," and, even as I write, my mind filled with dark thoughts, a ray of light from my Northern home flashes across my vision. The whole current of my thought is changed, and thankfulness takes the place of my repining. Thankfulness that it is as well with my beloved ones as it is. Oh, that I could remove every burden, and make their pathway smooth and flowery. I find most of our trials are imaginary, but none the less real for being so. For instance, my beloved wife's imagination pictures me on my weary way back to old Virginia's blood-stained fields, subject to every hardship, exposed to every danger, and her suffering could be no greater if it were so. On the contrary, I am still in Kentucky, in a pleasant, shady grove, enjoying a season of welcome quiet and repose, soft bread to eat,

plenty of pure, cold water to drink. What more could mortals crave. The newspapers were right, as far as they went, about our being ordered to the Potomac. We did receive such orders, but General Burnside telegraphed the War Department the Ninth Corps had marched, during the year, an average of twenty miles a day; that it had just returned from an exhausting campaign in Mississippi; that the men were worn down by fatigue and sickness, and were unfit for active service, and asked that they be allowed to remain here for a season. His request was granted. One year has passed since I left my pleasant home to serve my country—a year big with the fate of millions yet unborn—a year the most eventful in our history; perhaps in the world's history.

August 24th, 1863.

We have nearly the same regulations here as at Newport News, everything being regulated by bugle call. Of course, we drill; it would be hard to imagine a military camp without drill; but it would make a horse laugh to see us do it. We fall in line, march to the parade ground and halt under the shade of a big tree. A Sergeant puts us through the manual of arms about five minutes; then stack arms and rest. The remainder of the time is spent in lounging on the grass until the bugle sounds recall.

We are under marching orders again; that is, we are ordered to be ready, an order altogether superfluous, for we are always ready. The general impression among the officers is, this division is to be broken

up and scattered over the State, a regiment in a place. Our old brigade commander, General Poe, is here. He is now Chief Engineer in the regular service. He is working, I am told, to get our brigade attached to the engineer corps. I hope he will not succeed, as I do not fancy that branch of the service. If he does succeed, I think I will resign. There has been much talk of mounting this brigade and sending us to fight guerillas. That would suit me to a fraction. Give me a "bounding steed" and a "God speed you" from my "lady love," and never did "armed knight" grasp spear and shield with greater enthusiasm and devotion than I would experience as I hastened to the field of bloody strife. But I do not believe Burnside will send us from the State at present. He has already sent away most of the troops in this vicinity, and is sending the rest fast as he can mount them, and probably we will take their places.

August 25th, 1863.

We are still in camp, where each day is like the preceding one. The same routine of "duty" is gone through with, which, to me, is exceedingly tiresome. Give me the variations; something new and startling every day. For this reason I prefer active service. Those who love fun, and have a natural penchant for mischief, have abundant opportunity to indulge. I have never heard Billy Dunham complain of ennui. So long as guards are to be "run," melons to be "cooned," peach orchards to be "raided" or a peddler to be harried, tormented and robbed, Billy is in

his native element. Peddling to soldiers is not the most agreeable business in the world, especially if said soldiers happen to be, as is often the case, on mischief bent. I have seen a crowd of soldiers gather around an unsuspecting victim, a few shrewd, witty fellows attract his attention, while others pass out to their accomplices melons, peaches, tomatoes and vegetables, and when the poor fellow discovers the "game" and gathers up his "ropes" to drive away, the harness fall to the ground in a dozen pieces, the unguided mule walks off amazed, the cart performs a somersault and the poor peddler picks himself up and gazes on the wreck in silent grief. At sight of his helpless misery the wretches seemingly relent; with indignant tones they swear vengeance on the "man who did it;" help him to gather up his "wares" while he secures his mule. This is soon done, for his "stock" has grown small and "beautifully less." He smothers his rage from prudential motives, throws the "toggle" on his mule and prepares to depart. Alas, the millennium has not yet come. His cart wheels, refusing to perform their accustomed revolutions, start off in opposite directions, while the air is rent by the screams and derisive yells of his tormenters. When once begun, the amusement continues until the stock is exhausted.

Speaking of Billy, he has become reconciled to his fate, and takes to soldiering like a duck to water.

## CHAPTER XVII.

August 25th, 1863.

Lieutenant Chris. Rath has received a Captain's commission, and has been assigned to Company I. He has well earned his commission by his bravery and efficiency.

There was a sudden change of weather last night. The day had been hot and sultry. Toward night we had a light shower, preceded by a hurricane which cleared the atmosphere of heat most effectually. It is now uncomfortable sitting in my tent with my coat on. Uncle Sam seems inclined to make up to us, in some measure, for past neglect. We have soft bread and other rations more than we can use. Today we were surprised by an issue of tea and sugar, more than we can use. We sell our surplus at twenty-five cents a pound. The Brigade Surgeon has put a stop to drilling except as punishment. No signs of a move are in sight. My health is good. It is years since I was in possession of such buoyant, vigorous health.

Camp Dick Robinson, Ky, August 28th, 1863.

Again we are on the move en route to Crab Orchard, thirty miles from our late camp, where a military post is to be established. I understand there is to be a line of posts from Lexington to Cumberland Gap.

Report says these posts are to be held by the Ninth Corps. I hope not. I much prefer active service, with its toil and exposure, to a life of comparative ease in camp. While there is work to be done, and God gives me strength, I want to be doing. When I can be of no more service, then I would go home.

But I see no preparations for field service. We have no artillery or ambulances, which is proof conclusive. I was disappointed in Camp Dick Robinson. I had read so much of it, I expected to find a military station, or fortifications of some kind. Instead, I find a beautiful grove of oak and black walnut trees. It is noted as being the first camping ground occupied by loyal troops in Kentucky. General Nelson, its founder, who was shot last fall by General Davis, is buried here.

I have borne the march well today. My feet were somewhat tired, and what wonder? Two hundred twenty pounds—the weight of myself and load—is quite a load to carry ten miles over a macadamized road in half a day.

Crab Orchard, Ky., August 30th, 1863.

We arrived at 10 a. m., making ten miles from Lancaster this morning. Crab Orchard is a lovely town of about one thousand inhabitants. We are encamped about one mile south of the village, in a lovely spot, shut in on all sides by high hills and forests. To the south, far in the distance, the Cumberland Mountains raise their blue peaks as landmarks to guide us on our course when next we move. From

what I see and hear of the surrounding country, the boys will have to depend on their rations for food.

Soldiers are strange beings. No sooner were our knapsacks unslung than every man of us went to work as though his very life depended on present exertions. We staked out streets, gathered stakes and poles with which to erect our tents, and now, at 3 p. m., behold! a city has arisen, like a mushroom, from the ground. Everything is done as though it were to be permanent, when no man knows how long we may remain or how soon we may move on.

Part of our route from Camp Parks lay through a country made historic by the chivalric deeds of Daniel Boone. We passed his old log fort, and the high bluff from which he hurled an Indian and dashed him in pieces on the rocks below. At the foot of the bluff is the cave in which he secreted himself when hard pressed by savages. His name is chiseled in the rock above the entrance. The place is now being strongly fortified.

We had a lively skirmish in Company G this morning. About a week ago the Brigade Surgeon ordered quinine and whiskey to be issued to every man in the brigade, twice daily. During our march the quinine had been omitted, but whiskey was dealt out freely.

Solon Crandall—the boy who picked the peaches while under fire at South Mountain—is naturally pugnacious, and whiskey makes him more so. This morning, while under the influence of his "ration," he undertook the difficult task of "running" Company G.

Captain Tyler, hearing the "racket," emerged from his tent and inquired the cause. At this Solon, being a firm believer in "non-intervention," waxed wroth. In reply he told the Captain, "It's none of your business. Understand, I am running this company, and if you don't go back to your tent and mind your own business, I'll have you arrested and sent to the 'bull pen.'" At this the Captain "closed" with his rival in a rough-and-tumble fight, in which the Captain, supported by a Sergeant, gained the day.

I have the most comfortable quarters now I have ever had. Our tent is composed of five pieces of canvas, each piece the size of our small tents—two for the top, or roof, the eaves three feet from the ground. The sides and ends are made to open one at a time or all at once, according to the weather. Three of us tent together, and we have plenty of room. We have bunks made of boards, raised two feet from the ground. This, with plenty of straw, makes a voluptuous bed. I received a letter from home last evening, dated August 13th. Oh, these vexatious postal delays; they are the bane of my life. I wonder if postmasters are human beings, with live hearts inside their jackets, beating in sympathetic unison with other hearts. I wonder did they ever watch and wait, day after day, until hope was well-nigh dead, conscious that love had sped its message and was anxiously awaiting a return. A letter from home! What thrilling emotions of pleasure; what unfathomable depths of joy it brings the recipient. It is not altogether the words, be they many or few, but the remem-

branches they call forth; the recognition of the well-known handwriting; old associations and past scenes are brought forth from the storehouse of the memory and held up to view. The joy of meeting—the agony of parting—all are lived over again.

We are having brigade inspection today, which is suggestive of a move, but our artillery has not turned up yet, and we will not take the field without it.

The health of our men has improved wonderfully since we reached Kentucky. A more rugged, hearty set of men I never saw than the few who are left. But, as I look around upon the noble fellows, now drawn up in line for inspection, a feeling of sadness steals over me. One short year ago nine hundred ninety-eight as brave, true men as ever shouldered gun marched forth to battle in their country's cause. Of all that noble band, only two hundred in line today. Where are the absent ones? Some, it is true, are home on furlough, but not all. They have left a bloody track from South Mountain's gory height through Antietam, Fredericksburg and Vicksburg to Jackson, Mississippi.

Oh, how I miss familiar faces!

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Crab Orchard, Ky., September 9th.

Again has the note of preparation sounded in our camp, and all hands are busy getting ready for another campaign. In all probability we will soon be on our winding way among the Cumberland Mountains, en route for East Tennessee to assist in driving treason from that unhappy State. Orders have not been issued, but our artillery and ambulances have come, clothing has been issued, knapsacks, haversacks, canteens and tents have been distributed, and, more ominous still, forty rounds of cartridges have been dealt out to every man—in fact, we are ready to take the field at a minute's notice, and only await the order.

"Be ready to march tomorrow morning at 8 o'clock," is the order that greets me as I write. It is one hundred forty miles to Knoxville, our objective point, and will take us fourteen days if unopposed.

London, Ky., September 13th, 1863.

We broke camp last Thursday morning, the tenth of September, bound for Cumberland Gap, ninety miles distant. The first day we marched eleven miles over a rough, broken country, and encamped for the night. The next morning we started at 5 o'clock and made eighteen miles; yesterday, nine miles—

thirty-eight miles in three days, with eight days' rations and our accoutrements. The second day we marched rapidly, making few halts, our business being urgent, for Burnside's left was threatened, and we were hastening to the rescue. But, thanks to a kind Providence, a messenger met us at this place with the intelligence that the Rebels had suddenly left East Tennessee to join Bragg's army at Lafayette, and the Gap was already in possession of our forces. There being no cause for haste, our commander decided to spend the Sabbath here, and give the poor, tired mules a chance to rest. We will probably resume our march in the morning and proceed leisurely to the Gap—perhaps to Knoxville. We have borne the fatigue thus far better than I expected.

It is a long time since I carried a knapsack, but the more I have to do, the more strength I have to do it with.

September 14th, 1863.

We were aroused this morning at 3 o'clock and ordered to be ready to march at 5 o'clock. In a very few minutes hundreds of fires were brightly glowing, striving by their feeble rays to dispel the gloom of night. At the appointed hour we were up and away with hearts as light and buoyant as though privations, toil and danger were unknown. The morning was delightfully cool, and before the god of day had risen to scorch us with his burning rays, nearly half our day's march was done. The rest of the day was made easy by frequent halts, and when, at 2 o'clock

p. m., we filed into line and stacked arms, all were agreeably surprised. We had marched twelve miles.

Today is the anniversary of our first battle—our baptism. The mind naturally reverts to that trying time, and all its scenes pass rapidly in review. Then, for the first time, we met face to face our country's foe. The chivalry of the South then met the mudsills of Michigan and learned to respect them. Today we met them again, but not in battle array. As we were starting, this morning, we came upon 2,300 prisoners taken at Cumberland Gap. They were free to talk, and a more ignorant lot of semi-savages I never met. We could not convince them that Vicksburg or Port Hudson were in our possession. They were very "frank," and indulged freely in epithets and pet names.

September 14th, 9 o'clock p. m.

Our camp is in a beautiful grove, on the banks of a "babbling brook." A cool, delicious breeze is gently blowing from the west. The sky is cloudless, and the bright, scintillating stars shine out in unwonted brilliancy, and the pale moon is pouring down upon the earth a flood of silvery light. It is an ideal night in which to rest after a fatiguing march—an ideal night, so seem to think our boys, in which to celebrate the anniversary of our first battle. The Sutler came up about sundown with the "accessories." The preliminaries have been gone through with, and the "celebration is in full blast." Pandemonium reigns. This quiet glen has been transformed, for the time being, into the council hall of demons. Men fall

upon each other's necks and weep, and laugh, and drivel, and shout "'Rah for Seventeenth Michigan.'" It was an impressive ceremony, and one in which all allusions to the brave men who fell and sympathy for their bereaved families were considerably left out, lest they wound the tender sensibilities of the living.

September 15th.

We marched fifteen miles to Barbourville and encamped on the banks of the Cumberland River. Many of the men fell out by the way and came straggling into camp until after dark. I am too tired to write, and will lie me down and rest.

September 16th.

I was so completely exhausted yesterday I did not expect to be able to march at all today, but, thanks to my recuperative powers, I arose this morning "good as new." The distance is nothing; it is the load we carry, and the rough, hilly country, winding up, higher and higher, that fatigues. Rough and hilly as it is, this country is thickly settled by a people who raise barely enough to keep soul and body together. We have marched only nine miles today, and will lay over until the day after tomorrow.

Cumberland Gap, September 20th, 1863.

We are now in East Tennessee, one mile south of the famous Gap in the Cumberland Mountains.

When we left Crab Orchard we expected a fight here, as it was then in possession of the Rebels. I

cannot say I am sorry they gave us possession without a struggle, for it is an ugly looking place, and "hard to take" without opposition. Our route, for the last sixty miles, has been over, around and among mountains, but this is the "back bone," or main ridge, which rises in a direct line high above the isolated peaks on either side. The Gap is a slow, gradual ascent that rises to about half the altitude of the mountain on each side; is very crooked, and, at places, barely wide enough for a wagon to pass. At the summit it widens out into a small plain, or basin, containing about five acres, and shut in by a solid wall of rock two or three hundred feet in height. Near the center of the basin is a large spring of crystal water. Here are the fortifications, and a stronger position can hardly be imagined. One thousand men can hold it against any force that can be sent against it, so long as provisions and ammunition holds out. On the summit is a marble shaft that marks the corners of Virginia and Kentucky and the north line of Tennessee. By taking two steps I was in three different States. We are awaiting orders, and may remain over tomorrow. It is yet undecided whether we go to Knoxville or to Morristown, thirty miles above the former place, on the Richmond & New Orleans Railroad.

## CHAPTER XIX.

Knoxville, Tenn., September 24th, 1863.

We left the Gap on the twenty-first and made twenty miles, climbing up one side of a mountain two or three miles, then down the other side. It was a toilsome march, and, when we halted at night, my feet seemed pounded to a jelly. We reached Morristown the twenty-second, and immediately took cars for Knoxville, as we supposed, but the engine coupled to the wrong end of the train, and away we dashed to Greenville, thirty miles up the valley. We arrived there about sundown, stacked arms, unslung knapsacks, made a dash for rails with which to build our camp fires, but, while we were engaged in making them fly again, the bugle sounded "fall in"—the rails were abandoned, we were ordered on board the cars, and took the back track for Knoxville. We arrived here at 4 o'clock this morning and marched directly to the Fair Ground, three-fourths of a mile from the city, where we are now encamped.

The boys are somewhat worn by heavy marches, and a few days' rest will do them good.

September 25th.

The Fair Ground, on which we are encamped, is simply a clearing in the wood, without buildings.

fence or shade. But it is a pleasant place, near a spring of good water, and bordering on the Holston River. I have just returned from the city, where I have spent most of the day. These are glorious days for the people of Knoxville. They tell me the day of their deliverance has come at last. The story of their sufferings has been but feebly told. Even a Brownlow cannot do it justice. Hundreds of citizens followed us to their homes, from which they had been driven a year or more ago. They are flocking in by fifties and by hundreds and are organizing for their own defense. We have given them the opportunity, and they are eager to embrace it. One lady told me it was with difficulty she could repress a shout of joy as she saw our blue coats filing down the streets. Loyalty here is pure and unalloyed, as proven by the sacrifices they have made.

We are objects of much curiosity. An old gentleman, a preacher, walked six miles to see us. We were the first Northern men he ever saw. He said he could not express his gratitude to us for their timely deliverance.

Parson Brownlow is expected here soon. I saw his son today. He is a noble-looking fellow, about 21 years of age; is Lieutenant Colonel of a regiment that has been raised since Burnside came here. Burnside is the hero of the hour in East Tennessee.

It is twenty days since I received my last mail. During all that time I have not seen a newspaper, therefore am totally ignorant of what is taking place in other parts of the world.

Knoxville, Tenn., September 27th, 1863.

We are again under marching orders. It is rumored we go to Rosecrans' support tomorrow morning. Our boys are quite as enthusiastic as when they first left home, and for the same reason. They are ready to go anywhere—do anything—to hasten the end. They have borne with wonderful fortitude the excessive fatigue of marching through a mountainous country. Burnside does not like to spare them—will not unless absolutely necessary. He owes something to the Ninth Army Corps. Those stars upon his epaulets that shine so brightly, and which he wears so jauntily, were won for him by the Ninth Army Corps. General Burnside is truly a noble man. We respect him for his honesty and frankness in acknowledging his mistakes as well as for his great administrative ability.

Our orders to march have just been countermanded. General Burnside told Colonel Luce he had received a despatch from Rosecrans that we are not needed at present. That seems to confirm the rumor of his success. We are having delightful weather, clear and cool.

September 29th.

It was rumored this morning that we march tomorrow at 5 a. m. Little attention was paid to this, however, and the men were enjoying themselves as usual, gathered in groups around their camp fires, which the cool mountain breezes rendered grateful, singing songs, spinning yarns or writing letters to loved ones at home. About 9 o'clock the official order came: "Reveille at 3; march at 5." Rations were

to be drawn, which occupied us until nearly midnight, and left little time for sleep. Again was there a change of program, and we were notified that reveille would sound at the usual hour. At last we retired to rest, thinking to get two or three hours of quiet sleep. Alas, the "glorious uncertainties of war," I had hardly closed my eyes in sleep—or so it seemed to me—ere our Orderly Sergeant came around to every tent—"Fall out, boys; pack up; we are off immediately." We have soldiered too long to stop and ask questions, be our curiosity ever so great, so out we fell, packed our traps in silence, and awaited orders.

We had not long to wait. Colonel Luce soon came around to each company and said, in his mild, quiet way, "Put on your things, men, and fall in on the color line without further orders."

In less than fifteen minutes from the time we were first aroused our brigade was in motion, filing down the ravine silently as a band of Indians upon the war-path. We marched directly to the ferry, south of the city, crossed over, and a little after daylight formed in line about two miles from the landing.

The road from the city followed a ravine running south about a mile, then turned abruptly to the right, winding around the hills in a southwesterly direction. At or in rear of this angle a cannon was placed in position to sweep the road for about half a mile. This piece was supported by the Twentieth Michigan. In advance half a mile, and on the left of the road, the Second Michigan was concealed in a cornfield,

while on the right, and a little in advance of them, another gun was masked and supported by the Seventeenth. Still further on, and to the left, were two more pieces of artillery, supported by the One Hundredth Pennsylvania. Not a sign of these movements could be seen from the road. Here, then, is a most ingeniously contrived trap. Where is the game? And what?

October 1st, 1863.

We have pitched our tents in rear of our guns and still occupy the same position. Our trap was set for a band of guerillas who have been operating a few miles south of us. Our cavalry—sent out to drive them in—encountered them yesterday, killed several, took a few prisoners, and are in pursuit of the remainder. We busy ourselves by arresting everything and everybody that comes our way. Citizens are all taken before Acting Brigadier General Leisure, who asks them all sorts of questions, gathering, in this way, much valuable information—administers the Oath of Allegiance, grants protection papers, etc. Deserters are constantly coming in, mostly from Bragg's army. I saw two North Carolinians last evening.

They say Beauregard and Longstreet are at Chattanooga—also that the Rebels burned Charleston and evacuated. We are kept very close, no man—not even officers' cooks—being allowed to cross over to the city. From the best information I can get, I conclude Bragg has sent a force to operate on Rosa's rear, threatening this place in their course.

Nine bushwhackers were brought in last night and were taken to headquarters.

These wretches are being hunted from their hiding places in the mountains with untiring zeal by the Home Guards.

## CHAPTER XX.

Knoxville, Tenn., October 2d, 1863.

We are shut out from all intercourse with the rest of the world. Even Dame Rumor has retired behind the scenes, exhausted, doubtless, by the herculean efforts she has put forth the last few days. By the last and only mail we have had since we came here, we received a bundle of Detroit Tribunes, dated September 15th. Since then the silence of isolation has enveloped us. There is a tiny sheet published daily at Knoxville. It is silent on all except local subjects, and nearly so on them. I notice, in yesterday's edition, a convention has been held by the people of this county to nominate delegates to a state convention, to be held at Nashville, for the purpose of nominating a state ticket. The delegates pledge themselves to support no candidate who is not truly loyal. Thus, while politicians and demagogues are wrangling over "reconstruction and territorial admission," the people are solving the most difficult problem by the most simple process.

October 3d.

Our trap is sprung at last. For three long, weary days and sleepless nights we patiently awaited the coming of that "flanking column" which we were to capture or annihilate. First they were reported crossing

at Tennessee Ford, twenty miles below, thirty thousand strong, to sweep the "Northern vandals" from this fair valley and open up a way for supplies to reach Richmond. Next their advance had reached Marysville, fourteen miles from this place. Citizens came flocking in all day Thursday, telling sickening tales of outrage perpetrated by their "advance" on unoffending "Union people." Some reported them four hundred strong, others fifteen or twenty thousand.

Yesterday it was reported ten thousand of our cavalry had gone out to reconnoitre. They visited the Ford no "raid" had been there—Rocksville; no cavalry had been there—to Loudon; no guerillas had been there. A council of war was held, and they decided to return by the way of Marysville. There the enemy had been seen. Cautiously they advanced to beleaguer the devoted town. A short distance from the town a halt was called and scouts sent out to reconnoitre. They found the city "occupied" by a force of—eight bushwackers. These were captured "without the loss of a man on our side."

October 7th, 1863.

Colonel Luce is going home again, on furlough, to recruit. He takes with him three officers of the line and ten Sergeants—one from each company. They are to be gone sixty days. If enlisting is "played out," as many claim, sending men from active service for the purpose of soliciting enlistments is the height of folly. Perhaps there is so little for us to do just now, we may as well be in Michigan as Tennessee. If that is so, why not send all of us home?

October 9th.

At daylight yesterday we were ordered to be ready to march at 9 o'clock. It had been rumored for several days the Rebels had possession of Greenville, seventy-five miles up the valley, and that our forces were falling back toward Morristown. The Second Brigade was sent that way last week. Monday the First Brigade of the First Division moved forward to Morristown and was followed on Wednesday by the Second. Today the Third Brigade follows.

The Second and Twentieth Michigan Infantry and the One Hundredth Pennsylvania have gone, and we are momentarily expecting the train which is to take us. General Wilcox has arrived with five thousand new troops, and is at Morristown. We have, also, a heavy force of mounted infantry and cavalry at Greenville. The Rebels are reported eight thousand strong. The intention is to lure them on to near Bulls Gap, and, while the mounted men work around the mountains to their rear, we close in on them in front and grind them between us.

Burnside went to the front today, from which I infer there is work to be done. This line of railroad is of the utmost importance to Virginia Rebels. They cannot safely winter there without it, and they will make a desperate effort to regain control of it.

October 12th, 1863.

We left Knoxville at 9 a. m. of Saturday and arrived within ten miles of Greenville about sundown. The hills and valleys were covered with troops, those

in front in line of battle. Artillery and musketry could be heard about two miles in front, and we were told there had been skirmishing in front nearly all day. It was nearly dark, and our brigade, being in front, we marched about half a mile and encamped for the night. Before it was fairly light the next morning we joined our brigade, which was in the extreme front, supporting a battery. Every preparation had been made for a "big fight," and our boys awaited the attack with eager anticipation. Skirmishers were thrown out to ascertain the position of their infantry, that our batteries might open the ball by a salute at sunrise. Our skirmishers soon returned—they had found no enemy. Instantly away dashed a regiment of cavalry in hot pursuit, followed by the First Division—the Seventeenth in advance. We did some fast marching for about two hours, when we halted for two mounted brigades to pass. Here we learned the Rebels passed through Greenville about daylight, and were some ten miles ahead, making the best time possible. But Foster's cavalry had been sent around to intercept them should they retreat.

He was expected to cross the river at a ferry fifteen miles above Greenville and intercept them in a ravine about five miles beyond. But the ferry boats had been destroyed, and he was compelled to go several miles to a ford, which caused so much delay he did not arrive in time. We followed several miles and gave up the pursuit.

October 14th.

Our part in this expedition is done, and we are on our way back to Knoxville. Wilcox's "baby brigade," as our boys call them, and the Twenty-third Corps, together with cavalry and mounted infantry, are following up the retreating Rebels. I have not learned the result of the fight, and probably will not for some days to come. Over a hundred of their dead are buried at Blue Springs, where our forces first overtook them, and as far as I went—which was fifteen miles—every house was filled with their wounded.

I saw some were from Lee's army. One Lieutenant said he remembered seeing our regiment at Fredericksburg. He had stood picket opposite our boys several times. There was a brigade from the Rappahannock. Their force, he said, was about eight thousand, all mounted. The facts in the case were about as follows: Burnside had cleared his department of armed Rebels and had advanced into Virginia as far as Salt Town, where the Rebels had extensive salt works, strongly fortified. Before he could concentrate sufficient force to destroy these works, word came that Rosa was in danger—that Burnside was to hold himself in readiness to reinforce him at a minute's notice. In order to do this he must withdraw all his forces from the northeast and concentrate them near Knoxville.

The Rebels followed up as he fell back, and occupied the positions he had driven them from.

Before Burnside reached Morristown, word came from Rosa that he was safe inside his fortifications and

was being rapidly reinforced by Grant. This left Burnside free to do over again what had been undone, but through no fault of his.

It was a touching sight to witness the joy of these much-abused people at our return. Men who had fled to the bush as the Rebels advanced, and dare not, for their lives, appear, came flocking in and were welcomed with tears and shouts of joy by wives and children. Their gratitude was unbounded.

As I witnessed the delight of these people and listened to their tales of suffering, I felt more than ever that I was engaged in a just and holy cause, and my heart was strengthened to do and dare for human liberty.

## CHAPTER XXI.

Knoxville, Tenn., October 18th, 1863.

Once more have my eyes been gladdened and my heart made to rejoice by the reception of love's sweet messengers—letters from home. How anxiously have I watched and waited, and what a load has been removed by those grateful words, "Well as usual."

But eighteen days is a long time to await tidings of those we love. Arrangements are being made to have our mail carried over the mountains on pack mules. When these arrangements are completed I think there will be more regularity.

We are encamped again near the city, awaiting whatever may turn up. The regiment is in excellent health and spirits. We have become accustomed to soldiers' fare; nothing seems to affect us. There is a striking contrast between old troops and new. When in pursuit of the Rebels beyond Greenville, Wilcox's men tired out and were withdrawn from the chase, while we pursued ten miles further. They are six and nine months men from Indiana.

I see by Northern papers that Rebel sympathizers hope to carry Ohio, New York and Pennsylvania in the coming election, and this hope nerves the Rebel leaders to make the most desperate efforts to hold out yet a little longer. They are doomed to disappointment. These states will give an overwhelming majority for the Union.

Loudon, Tenn., October 21st, 1863.

We left Knoxville yesterday at 3 a. m. and took up our line of march for Kingston, forty miles distant, expecting to make it in three days. We took it leisurely and halted at 1 o'clock for dinner, having made twelve miles. We rested two hours and dined on hardtack and coffee. In the afternoon we marched six miles further and encamped for the night. The weather is delightful and roads good, which makes eighteen miles a day only gentle exercise. Very much depends on this. It is more tiresome to march ten miles when the roads are wet and slippery than twice that distance when dry and firm. We had hardly arrived in camp before the report of a dozen rifles told us the work of slaughter had begun.

Before dark good, fat beef was issued, and we supped on coffee, hardtack and beef. We have drawn nothing else, except sugar, since leaving Crab Orchard, and now we are getting only half rations of coffee and sugar. This morning we were aroused at 3 o'clock, two hours earlier than the usual time when on the march, but we "tumbled out," made coffee, fried beef, ate our breakfast, dried and rolled up our tents and blankets, and at 4 o'clock were ready for business. At 5 o'clock the bugle sounded "fall in," and in fifteen minutes the whole division was in motion. But not toward Kingston. I soon learned that Colonel Welford was in a "fix," and we were on the way to help him out. Cannonading could be heard in the direction of Loudon Bridge, which served as a stimulant, and away we dashed, making fifteen miles

by 11 o'clock. We were now within two miles of the bridge, and halted in a piece of timber. Here we learned that the crisis had passed, and Colonel Leisure told us to make ourselves comfortable as possible until morning.

Loudon bridge crosses the Holston a short distance above its junction with the Clinch. These two form the Tennessee. The railroad from Bristol to Loudon is entirely in our possession. From this place to Cleveland the rebels have small forces at different points. We have strong fortifications on this side the river, occupied by the Twenty-third Corps, who have just completed a pontoon bridge. Wolford, with a brigade of cavalry and mounted infantry crossed this bridge, advanced about six miles and began to fortify. One regiment was sent out to look for the enemy. Forage being scarce and hard to get, another was sent off with a train to gather forage. Just at this critical moment, when he was least prepared, the Rebels threw a force of five thousand troops between him and the bridge, thus cutting off his retreat, and summoned him to surrender. To oppose them Wolford had two regiments of cavalry, a battery of six pieces, but no ammunition. What was to be done—surrender? His case looked desperate; some might have considered it hopeless; but "Wolf" was only indignant. He bared his teeth and growled, "What! me surrender? Why, man, I'm here to fight. Go back and tell your people I'll call on them directly." He spiked his useless cannon and abandoned them; put himself at the head of his brave followers and hurls them like an

avalanche upon the enemy's center; cuts his way through their line, taking ninety prisoners, reached the bridge with little loss, while our artillery on this side made pursuit impossible. This took place yesterday. This morning, having been reinforced, he crossed the river to offer them battle. He found them but two miles away, and immediately engaged them. When we arrived here the roar of artillery could be distinctly heard, but gradually it grew faint and fainter, until at sundown it had died away in the distance.

October 22d.

Active warfare is said to be like a game of chess, and it is sufficiently active in West Tennessee just now. An unexpected counter move has brought us to this place. The force that attacked Wolford turns out to be the advance of a large army under Longstreet. Strange that, after marching so many thousands of miles, as we have done this summer, the fortunes of war should again throw us together.

Loudon, October 23d, 1863, 7 p. m.

This has been a dismal day. It reminds me of the day we crossed the Potomac last fall. It began to rain at 5 o'clock this morning, and has rained all day, and there is every prospect of a wet night.

I never think of that fearful night without a thrill of horror. I marched all that day in the pelting rain, soaked to the skin, and when night came, weary as I was, I faced the fierce northern blasts until morning. I date all my suffering from that dreadful night.

Although this storm reminds me of that day, and, under similar circumstances would have been quite as unpleasant, yet I have passed it quite comfortably. My comrade and I have a good tent, each of us a blanket and rubber ponchos, which enables us to keep dry and warm. These rubbers are very useful. If overtaken by a storm while on the march, not only is the person kept dry, but his blankets and haversack. At night we spread it on the ground, and no moisture can reach the person.

But this storm; what will be its effect on military operations here? I confess to a feeling of anxiety; I fear we are to be again "stuck in the mud," as at Fredericksburg. If this is really the beginning of the rainy season, we can do but little more. And so much remains to be done. We must occupy and hold this railroad, or evacuate East Tennessee, and that right speedily. We can get supplies in no other way. There are not mules enough in the United States to haul our supplies over the mountains in the winter. In fact, now, when the roads, are comparatively good, it cannot be done. We have been on half rations ever since we crossed the mountains.

But away with such gloomy thoughts, and let faith and hope prevail. Tomorrow may bring forth light from this pall of darkness.

## CHAPTER XXII.

Loudon, October 25th, 1863.

The storm has passed away, and the sun shines out warm and genial. The roads are in fearful condition, but getting better.

Yesterday all the teams, and everything and everybody that could not fight, were sent to the rear. Every preparation was made to repel the expected attack; things packed and we lay all day behind our arms with all equipments on, ready for instant use. About 8 o'clock a strong force was sent out to reconnoitre. Toward night we could hear the dull boom of distant cannon, feeling for the enemy. Impatiently we awaited the result.

October 27th.

Everything remains precisely as it was three days ago. We are not allowed to leave camp, at least beyond bugle call. Our guns must be kept in perfect order, ready for instant use. Artillery horses wear their harness night and day. In fact, we are ready for attack, advance or retreat at a minute's notice. Each morning the cavalry goes to the front, skirmish with the enemy, watch their movements through the day and return to camp at night. Matters wear a strange aspect; the Rebels seem playing with us; now

advancing, now retiring. I know not what to think of the way things are working.

Lenoir, Tenn., October 28th, 1863.

I said yesterday that I was puzzled. I am more than ever today. I am confounded, disappointed, chagrined.

Our forces evacuated Loudon early this morning. The Rebels took immediate possession. Everything of value that could not be removed was destroyed. Only last night a locomotive was run across the river to be used on that side as we advanced. Four cars had been left there by the Rebels when they evacuated. As we had no time to remove them, the engineer put on steam and ran them off the embankment into the river. The Union people left with us. We have fallen back six miles and encamped for the night. A strong force is posted on the heights to prevent surprise.

I am simply stating facts as they occur. Of course, I cannot know the whys and wherefores of these movements. Perhaps they are part of the "original plan," and not a retreat. We all have confidence in Burnside, but, if we do not see Knoxville between now and Sunday I am much mistaken. To my heated imagination the Cumberland Mountains loom up with wonderful distinctness.

Lenoir, October 29th.

Another letter from home last night, dated October 16th. Only four letters in two months; I find, too, my letters are quite as irregular.

I have just learned that Lieutenant Miller starts for home at 6 o'clock tomorrow morning. He will visit my loved ones and tell them all the news. I know not how to express myself in regard to our present situation. I am glad we were not forced to retreat. Still, I am certain we could have held those heights, and to leave without firing a gun! Oh, for a few Wolfords and Grants—men who are "here to fight."

All sorts of rumors are afloat. "Bragg, with all his army, is advancing." Longstreet is crossing the river six miles below Kingston to flank us on the right. Another heavy force is on our left, making for Knoxville. "Wilcox has been driven back from the east," and a hundred others equally encouraging. We know not what to think of it, and yet must criticise and form conclusions. But it is all explained at last. We fell in at 1 o'clock today, marched about a mile to a beautiful grove near a large spring of never-failing water. Here our division formed in line and stacked arms, with orders to remain in line until further notice. Lieutenant Colonel Comstock soon called our regiment to "attention," ordered company commanders in front of center, and then and there revealed to them the long-wished-for intelligence. All officers and men were taken by surprise. We were prepared to hear of some great calamity, but not for this. Nothing like it had ever before happened to the Ninth Army Corps. "Our fall campaign is closed. Prepare for yourselves comfortable quarters for the winter." For a moment there was a silence that could be felt, then a shout went up that "rent the heavens and shook the ever-

lasting hills." Not simply because we were ordered to prepare winter quarters, but a mysterious movement had been explained—a weight of anxiety removed.

Lenoir, October 31st, 1863.

We are working like beavers, building our little houses. They are to be eight feet by ten, and will accommodate four persons. Nothing can be heard but the clatter of axes and the crash of falling timber. Only the First Division is stationed here. This is said to be the lower extremity of Burnside's department. It is something like Fredericksburg, in this: Our pickets are stationed on opposite sides of the river within hailing distance. Colonel Leisure says a supply train is almost here. When it comes, our empty haversacks are to be filled and our rags exchanged for clothes. Everything is to be very precise and regular, as becomes an army of veterans.

Lenoir, November 10th, 1863.

No sooner was the order to build winter quarters given than the men scattered in all directions in search of material. There are many forsaken buildings in this vicinity. These were visited, the siding ripped off, floors torn up, chimneys, if brick, pulled down, and the material appropriated. Hundreds of men worked all night, and by morning had lumber enough to build bunks, floors and gable ends to their buildings. The reason of this all-night work was to get the start of the officers. They knew, by past experience, all building material would soon be put under

guard for the use of officers. A large brick storehouse at the depot had been burned. This was seized by headquarters. Not a brick could be obtained, only as it was stolen in the night. Just the same, the boys all had brick chimneys.

Not being disposed to work nights or Sundays, my tent mates and myself did not begin to build until Monday morning. In the forenoon we cut our logs and carried them about half a mile on our backs. In the afternoon two of us laid the foundations, while the other two went with the Sutler's team for a load of stone for our chimney. They also picked up a few boards. Tuesday we began to build in earnest—two at the house and two at the chimney—carrying them both up together. At night it was ready for the roof. Wednesday we "chunked and daubed" it, and put on the roof, built our bunks, and, toward night, moved in. Thursday we finished the chimney, put up shelves, etc. We have a warm, comfortable house, seven logs high, roofed with two thicknesses of tent cloth, which makes a very good roof. Our bunk is in one end, and occupies four feet across it, leaving a room six feet by eight. We have a splendid fireplace—back and jambs of stone, the top of sticks. In one corner are shelves for our dishes. On one side of the room is a drop table, which we button to the wall when not in use. Our bunk is not made of poles, rough and crooked, like those of last winter, but of pine boards, soft and luxurious.

On Thursday we had regimental inspection of arms. I told the boys I heard "music in the air," but

they could not believe it. It was there, however. About 10 o'clock in the evening Captain Tyler came to our tent and called for me. He told me to wake the boys and tell them to pack their things and be ready to take cars in half an hour for Knoxville. Here was a fix—to leave our soft beds and warm houses, our winter quarters, and go out into the cold—to ride on the top of cars twenty, perhaps seventy-five miles, and sleep—if sleep we might—on the cold, damp ground, and march twenty or thirty miles a day on half rations. But away we went, the Third Brigade only, to the station. It was 2 o'clock in the morning before the cars were ready, and we reached Knoxville a little after sunrise. Here we learned the cause of the movement. The Rebels had made a dash on Wilcox, near Greenville, capturing a section of the Second Ohio Battery and part of the Second Tennessee Mounted Infantry. Not knowing their strength, we were ordered to be within supporting distance while a force of cavalry was sent out to reconnoitre. We drew full rations of soft bread and beef, and lay on the cars, the engine keeping up steam until about 4 p. m. We then encamped for the night. Next morning we again drew rations, packed our things and awaited orders with impatience. But no orders came, and there we lay and waited all that livelong day.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

Lenoir, Tenn., November 11th, 1863.

This morning we were aroused by the Orderly at 3 o'clock, with orders to be ready to move at daylight. We sprang out of bed, built fires, cooked breakfast, which consisted of pancakes made of wheat flour and corn meal, issued in place of bread, beefsteak and coffee; packed up, and then sat down to await the coming of day. At 6 o'clock the bugle sounded, and we fell in and stacked arms. We then received orders to go to our quarters and be ready to fall in at a minute's notice. And so the matter has stood all day, and still remains. The reason for the movement is as follows: The Second Division has been engaged today in throwing a pontoon bridge across the Holston about a mile from here, and, not knowing the strength of the enemy, on the opposite side, we are to be ready to support them if necessary.

The bridge is nearly completed, and the Rebels have not shown themselves. Tomorrow the Second Division is to cross over. I understand they are to build winter quarters on the other side.

A "contraband" came into camp yesterday and reported himself direct from Rebeldom. He appeared intelligent, and told a straightforward story. He reports the Rebels in strong force across the river, and

says they are building pontoons in which to cross over to attack us. His information was considered so important General Ferrera sent him, under guard, to General Burnside at Knoxville.

Lenoir, Tenn., November 15th, 1863.

As the men are confined to camp, they busy themselves by cleaning up the accumulated rubbish. Our camp begins to put on airs. The men must get some clothing before they can do so. I see no prospect of it yet. The day has been most delightful—warm, bright and mellow. The weather here, as with us at this season of the year, is subject to sudden changes. Today it may be warm as summer; tomorrow the wind may change to the north and be cold as winter. Wood is abundant and of good quality—mostly white oak and hickory. But should we stay here all winter, there will not be a tree left within five miles of here. We have already cleared about fifty acres.

Spite of appearances, I cannot think we will remain here until spring. I cannot see—perhaps I have no right to try to see—where our supplies are to come from, or, rather, how they are to come. We have only six weeks quarter rations on hand, and the roads over the mountains are nearly impassable. There is some wheat and corn in the valley, which is being gathered in for the use of the army, but this cannot last long. Such an army, like the locusts of Egypt, will soon “devour every green thing.” Even now hundreds of citizens are leaving for the North to escape the impending famine. In view of these facts,

which are fully understood by every man in the regiment, one would expect them to be down-hearted and discouraged. Such is not the fact. The few men who are left are resolute, determined men, ready to suffer privation, to endure hardship, anything to advance the cause for which they are contending. An order is given to prepare for inspection. The Assistant Secretary of War is here to inspect the Ninth Corps. This may be an exception, but, as a rule, inspection means move.

I happened to get hold of a copy of the Detroit Free Press dated October 25th. From it I learn conscription has been postponed in Michigan until the 5th of November. By that time they hope to fill the quota by volunteers. I would like to see the North exhibit the energy and ability displayed by the South, but one-half seems to be asleep, the other half—mad.

Lenoir, Tenn., November 14th, 1863.

We have been under orders for several days to be ready to fall in at a minute's notice. That order was repeated at 3 o'clock this morning. We had become so accustomed to it, we began to think it only form, and meant nothing. At sunrise, however, we were startled by the order, "Pack everything and be ready to march immediately, bag and baggage." Officers' baggage was put on wagons, the sick in ambulances, supplies of food and clothing—a fresh supply had but just arrived—were reloaded, and the whole train headed toward Knoxville.

Our consternation can better be imagined than described. Every movement spoke of evacuation; of hasty, inglorious retreat. About 10 o'clock the cars came screaming in from Knoxville, bringing General Burnside. The wagon train was nearly formed, and, in half an hour, everything would have been ready for a general stampede. At 10 o'clock the bugle sounded fall in, and off we started toward Loudon. It soon leaked out the Rebels are crossing six miles below Loudon, and Burnside's arrival had changed the program. So away we went, through rain and mud, fourteen miles without stopping to rest, rejoicing it was not, after all, an ignominious retreat. We halted a little after dark in a thick wood, with orders to light no fires, but remain beside our arms, ready to fall in when called on. It had been very warm during the day, raining at times, and those not wet with rain were wet with sweat. Toward night the wind had changed, and it was bitter cold. And there we sat, two hours or more, cold and hungry, having eaten nothing since morning. The men began to grow impatient. The First Brigade were on our left, and fires burned brightly all along their line. Why could not we have fires? Tom Epley, of our company, thought we could, and away he goes for a coal of fire, while others gather wood and kindlings. But our lynx-eyed Adjutant discovers it, and down he comes. "Who built that fire?" says he. "I did, sir," says Tom. "Didn't you know 'twas against orders?" "No, sir; I thought the order was one fire to a company, sir." "You must put it out."

"Then how the h—l are we to cook? Do you think we can march all day in rain and mud and eat flour and raw beef?" "It's tough, boys," says the Adjutant, "but that's the order." Tom did not put out the fire, but built it larger, and soon the order came, "One fire to a company."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

We kept our fires brightly burning all night, expecting each moment the coming order. At 4 o'clock it came. Fall in, boys, very quietly, and quick as possible. Then, "about face," and off we went in the darkness, taking precisely the route we came. What was the meaning of this backward move? Our officers agreed it was to draw them out from the river that we might cut off their retreat and "bag them," as is our custom. We marched slowly and reached Lenoir about 2 p. m., when we formed in line of battle. At dark the Eighth Michigan was thrown out as skirmishers, or outpost pickets. They advanced about four miles on the Jamestown road, and as they formed their last post were fired on by Rebel pickets. The Rebels then rallied their skirmishers and charged the Eighth, which fell back to within a mile of our line of battle. They then faced about, charged the advancing Rebels, drove them a short distance, and held them until relieved. I now began to see how matters stood. The enemy had pursued us promptly and with energy; we were in line of battle awaiting an attack. Would they attack us before daylight? Probably not, as we held a good position. Will we await an attack or retire during the night? Of the latter I was confident,

judging by what I saw and heard. Fires were kept up along the whole line, and some of the boys, worn out with fasting and marching, wrapped themselves in their blankets and lay down and slept. But there was no sleep for me, and there I sat, listening to every sound, watching every move. Two trains of cars, heavily loaded with supplies, crept slowly away toward Knoxville, the very engines seeming to hold their breath fearful of exciting suspicion. The distant rattle of wheels told me the wagon train was falling into line, and the bright glare of fire at the depot spoke of government property being sacrificed because there was no time to remove it. At 2 o'clock I heard the artillery on the hill near us, and which we were supporting, move away and join the train. A few minutes later we followed the artillery, silent as an army of spectres. Our regimental Surgeon and his staff occupied a tent a few rods in the rear of the regiment. Before we had proceeded a dozen yards I missed them and asked our Captain if they had gone on ahead. He seemed puzzled, as their place was in the rear. Perhaps, he said, they were not notified—had been overlooked in the confusion—if so, they will be captured. I asked permission to go back and warn them of their danger. I found them soundly sleeping in their tent, aroused them, and in a few hurried whispers explained the situation—then struck across the fields for the Knoxville road. About two miles distant we came across a body of troops resting beside stacked arms. Near by we found our regiment, and all was well.

Knoxville, November 18th, 1863.

It was now about 4 a. m., and daylight would soon appear. The whole corps was waiting for the artillery and wagon train to get a reasonable start. Much rain had fallen and the roads were heavy; horses and mules were poor. About one hundred wagons, heavily loaded with army supplies, were abandoned because we had not time to burn them. A large amount of bread, bacon, sugar and clothing were thus turned over to Longstreet's Quartermaster. Just as daylight appeared we filed into the road en route for Knoxville. The Third Brigade was in the rear, and our regiment was detailed as rear guard, the post of honor and danger. One company of cavalry, all we had, was left to finish the work of destruction and to act as scouts. We were hardly out of sight before the Rebel cavalry made a dash, capturing several and scattering the rest. Their infantry was not far behind. They pursued and closed in on us with relentless fury. When too hard pressed, our little band would turn and charge with fixed bayonets, thus holding them in check while the others made a little headway. Mile after mile was fought over in this way, every inch contested, but all would not do. They pressed our flank and rear until Burnside was compelled to turn and fight them. The Knoxville road, in the vicinity of Campbell Station, leads through a ravine from one to two miles wide hemmed in by mountains or high hills, which render a flank movement well-nigh impossible. At the head of this ravine Burnside massed his artillery—120

pieces—formed his infantry in their rear for support, and awaited the assault. From our position we had an almost unobstructed view of what was taking place in front. No artillery could be seen; nothing but infantry. We could see them file out from a piece of timber and form in line, from hill to hill and rank on rank. At the word they moved forward, colors flying, shoulder to shoulder, a compact mass, seemingly irresistible. At a given signal from the head of the valley a sheet of flame bursts forth with a crash that shakes the earth—a blast of iron hail sweeps those serried ranks, opening wide gaps. They close and stubbornly move on. Again that withering flame; again that blast of death, and they recoil. Three times they make the attempt, and three times failed—then darkness closed the scene. By this time our wagon train was far on its way toward Knoxville, leaving the road unobstructed. One by one our cannon disentangled itself and straightened out on the line of retreat. The infantry closed in on its rear, making the best time we knew, hoping to reach Knoxville before daylight. We arrived at 3 a. m.

At sunrise the Rebels were within five miles of us. Our position is naturally strong, and our men were at once set to work to make it stronger. By 3 p. m. rifle pits encircled the city from river to river. When they were completed our brigade bands formed on the top of the hill and played "The Red, White and Blue," "When This Cruel War Is Over," "Rally 'Round the Flag, Boys," and finished up with "Yankee Doodle," to which the boys responded with

a yell of defiance as we stepped down into our ditches. We were ready for them, and every man of us understood we must whip them here or be taken prisoners.

Longstreet advanced leisurely, knowing we could go no further, and confident in his strength, for he outnumbered us three to one. But he evidently did not know our weakness. When stretched around the city we formed a very thin line; indeed, the men in trenches standing fully six feet apart. He might have carried our hastily-constructed works by assault, but it seems he chose to adopt the more humane method, and starve us out. The delay proved our salvation. In our retreat from Lenoir the Seventeenth lost 114 killed, wounded and missing.

Longstreet himself is on the ground, directing the placing of his men. I have seen him in many previous campaigns, and know him by his form and the way he sits his snow-white horse.

## CHAPTER XXV.

Knoxville, November 25th, 1863.

Only seven days of siege, and our larder nearly empty. We have been on half rations since September 25th, consequently had no surplus to fall back on. On the second day of the siege our rations were reduced to quarter rations. Now coffee and sugar have given out entirely. The men are constantly under fire. The enemy have advanced their sharpshooters to within one-fourth of a mile of our line. On the 20th they got possession of a house, just under the hill in our front, and annoyed us exceedingly. Colonel Comstock was ordered to burn it; he called for volunteers to perform the perilous feat. Instantly a company was formed, headed by A. J. Kelley, of Company E, and led by Lieutenant Josiah Billingsly. The house was set on fire and burned to the ground, but the heroic Billingsly was killed by a shell on his return.

Their sharpshooters had now advanced so near the men were forced to remain all day in their rifle pits. Every man who showed even his head became a target.

Yesterday morning, after it became fairly light, I jumped up on the embankment in front of me, as had been my custom, to see what advancement the enemy

had made during the night. I took one quick glance around, and as I looked I saw two curls of smoke directly in front of me; on the instant one bullet whistled over my head; another dropped into the sand at my feet.

This morning Lieutenant Colonel Comstock received a mortal wound from one of them. A number of our boys have been wounded. The first four or five days of the siege our men divided up into reliefs and went up on the bank, in the rear of our pits, to cook and eat their food. On the 24th, as I was eating my breakfast, a rifle ball struck a camp kettle, standing beside me, and spilled its contents. About that time one of my comrades was struck in the face, the ball passing through both cheeks, nearly cutting off his tongue. Inspired by these gentle protests, we moved our kitchen over the brow of the hill, where we could cook and eat our "flapjacks" undisturbed.

November 30th, 1863.

Our rations touch the starvation limit, and still "the song and the jest goes round." Not a murmur, not a word of complaint. We simply "gird up our loins" a little tighter. Our fare now is one-fourth pound per man of a mixture made up of coarse black flour, bran and unbolted corn meal; beef in proportion; not half as much as a man would eat, even of that vile stuff, at one meal. Night before last our pickets were driven in and sixteen of our boys captured. Last night an attack was made on Fort Saunders. We had expected a night attack and were on

the alert. About 9 o'clock our pickets were driven in and the ball opened. It was "fast and furious" while it lasted, but was soon over. The Rebels lost about one thousand in this assault.

Dr. Crosby, our Regimental Surgeon, has been to General Ferrera and got me detailed for hospital service, and has given me charge of a ward in the City Hospital. The doctor says he has discovered in me the "sympathetic touch," more soothing to irritated nerves than opiates. That is the way he puts it.

Our doctor has the poetic temperament, although one would hardly suspect it by his looks. But he is kind and tender to the sick and wounded, and skillful in his profession.

It is rumored Grant is organizing a force to send to our relief. God speed him on his way, for we are on the verge of starvation.

Knoxville, December 8th, 1863.

Thanks to Almighty God—and General Grant—the crisis is passed. General Sherman arrived on the 5th inst., but Longstreet had fled, and he returned immediately to Chattanooga. Nobody seems to know the exact date of Longstreet's withdrawal. Our forces were sent out in pursuit yesterday, the 7th inst., but no enemy could be found. We have passed through a terrible ordeal. Twenty days and nights under fire. Twenty days with death or surrender staring us in the face—and surrender meant Andersonville, a fate worse than death. On our retreat from Lenoir

we were compelled to leave most of our wounded. We have recovered our own and about three hundred wounded Rebels.

Knoxville, Tenn., December 21st, 1863.

I have been three weeks "head nurse" in the first ward of the First Brigade hospital. Dr. Crosby is with the regiment at Blains Cross Roads, about eighteen miles from here. Most of my patients are from my own regiment, and were wounded at Campbell's Station or during the siege of Knoxville. The building we occupy was once a court house. The room is about thirty feet by forty. There are two large fireplaces, one on each side of the room. There are now thirty-three patients. All but six of the wounded can walk about the room with or without the aid of crutches. Around each fireplace is a group of men, eagerly discussing the probability of being sent to Washington or Baltimore. At one end of the room, resting one arm on the railing that surrounds the "judgment seat," stands the "ward boss," trying to write to the loved ones at home.

I am not on duty, but my patients ignore the fact, and frequently interrupt me with: "Mr. Lane, please step here a minute;" or, "Please give me a drink of water." I return and try to shut out all sights, all sounds, all thoughts but those of home. Vain effort. The voice of my favorite, Fred Byron, faintly strikes my ear: "Davie; oh, Davie!" Involuntarily I drop my pen and hasten to his side. "What is it, Fred? What can I do for you, my boy?" "Oh, I'm so

tired, and nobody cares but you. That man with black whiskers handles me as though I am made of wood." I turn him gently over, adjust his bed and pillow, moisten his hot, feverish brow, and give him a sup of cool water. "There, Fred, now go to sleep, and when you wake you will feel better." As I turn to leave him, after bidding him good-night, he grasps my hand in both of his. "Oh, Davie, you are so kind; nobody can do for me as you can."

He is a German, from Massachusetts, nineteen years old, fair as Adonis—brave as a hero—which he is.

I have many strong attachments here, and cannot well forsake them to return to the regiment.

Knoxville, December 26th, 1863.

I still remain at the hospital—can all winter if I choose. The sick and wounded are doing fairly well. Most of them will soon be well enough to go home on furlough. They are to be sent fast as it may be safe for them. One squad starts tomorrow. The men are eager to get away from here—somewhere—anywhere.

This is called a United States General Hospital. It partakes of the nature of such an institution only so far as patients and shoulder-strapped doctors go toward making it one. And patients are becoming scarce, thank God. It is not a desirable place for convalescents, and, as soon as they are able, they gladly leave for their regiments. The wounded are all to have furloughs—so says the Surgeon—and they

are very impatient. They would run any risk to escape this den of filth, privation and starvation.

Think of a hospital where the patients have no bedding but the blankets they brought with them; no clothing but the dirty rags they wore from the field; no dishes but their tin cups and butcher knives; where there is no "bed pan," and only two night vessels for one hundred forty sick men; where washing is put off, week after week, for want of soap, there being not so much as one piece to wash hands with. I went to every store, grocery and sutler's shop in the city this morning, seeking soap and finding none. Where wounded soldiers are fed on coarse bread and beef or vegetable soup twice a day, and not half enough of this to satisfy.

It is no valid excuse that hospital stores cannot be procured here. They might have been sent from Kentucky before this time. Our troops—the Ninth Corps—in the field are in no better condition. They are encamped eighteen miles from here, unfit for duty for want of clothing; all are ragged; many have not a shoe to their feet or rags enough to cover them. Washington's army at Valley Forge is the only parallel in the history of this Nation. We have drawn very little clothing since we started for Mississippi in June last. I saw our Quartermaster Sergeant yesterday, Mr. Woodin; he assures me there is no prospect of our receiving supplies in the near future. What I have said applies to the Ninth Corps only; the Twenty-third and other corps are well supplied. The reason given is we are out of our department, and there is

no regular channel of supply. I have just drawn two months' pay. I intended to send every dollar of it to my wife, who needs it, but will be compelled to use some of it or go naked. I have only one shirt, and that is nearly worn out. Army shirts—no better than those issued to us—cost six dollars at the sutler's. My shoes are nearly off my feet, and army shoes cost four dollars. I am destitute of socks, and socks cost one dollar. I do not wish to find fault, but the thought will arise, if sutlers can get their goods over the mountains, why cannot the Government? Again, there is, and has been, a heavy stock of clothing at the Gap. Why don't they send it on?

December 31st, 1863.

A squad of ten convalescents left for the North today. The balance of the wounded will go as fast as their condition will permit. Twenty-six, out of thirty in my ward, will be able to go by Wednesday next, and I will be left without patients. I rejoice with the poor fellows. The thought of going home, where kind friends can minister to their wants and supply their needs, is a wonderful tonic.

There has been much excitement among the old regiments the past two weeks. The Eighth Michigan boys have enlisted for "during the war," nearly every man. The same is true of several other regiments whose terms of service expire next spring. They are to have four hundred dollars bounty and thirty days' furlough.

The Seventeenth is not included in this order, having over a year to serve. There is much talk of the Ninth Corps leaving this department. I wish I knew it to be true.

January 4th, 1864.

It has been very cold the past four days. The day before New Year's was warm and rainy. Toward night the wind changed into the north, "with a snap to it," as it does in Michigan sometimes. New Year's morning was very cold—not so many degrees, I presume, by a score or two, as we frequently experience in Michigan—but quite as piercing to me as the coldest weather at home.

Today is warm as summer again. This is a delightful climate "overhead," the coldest weather being about like October with us. But the mud is really fearful. The roads are next to impassable four months of the twelve. I could not be induced to live here. I have been in fourteen different states; in most of them have traveled quite extensively, and have seen nothing yet that excels Michigan. True, some states possess advantages that Michigan does not, but they lack in others. Whenever I have thought of a change of residence, my feelings rebel, and I can but exclaim, "Give me my own, my native land," for such I regard Michigan.

January 5th, 1864.

There are now thirty men in my ward. All but two are able to wait on themselves. There are six nurses to see them do it. It has not been so long, however. At first we had sixty of the worst cases

in one room. When off duty, until day before yesterday, the nurses had to shirk for themselves, sleeping on the floor in the room with the sick. Now we have a room eighteen by twenty, and warmed by a stove. There is a large building adjoining the hospital assigned to convalescents. Each morning the surgeon examines them all and sends such as he deems able to do duty, to their regiments. These convalescents kept good fires, and I frequently went there to warm myself, when off duty. One morning the surgeon, a new arrival and a stranger to me, noticed me standing by the fire, and thought from my appearance I was fit for duty. "To what regiment do you belong?" "The Seventeenth Michigan, sir." "How long have you been here?" "About six weeks." "What are you doing?" "Nursing." "Where?" "In the first ward." "What business have you here, then?" "No business, only to warm myself. It is rather cold standing in the street today, when off duty." "What, have the nurses no place to stay?" "No, sir; they are as poor as was the Son of Man; they have no place to lay their heads."

This surgeon was Dr. Cogswell, of the Twenty-ninth Massachusetts, who had lately relieved Dr. Fox. In a few minutes I was notified this pleasant room was at our disposal.

January 6th, 1864.

It has snowed all day, and the night is fearfully cold, but in our new quarters we feel it not.

This has been a day of unusual excitement in Knoxville. A legal murder has been committed in public.

In other words, a Rebel spy has been executed. His name is Dodd, of the Eighth Tennessee Cavalry. I did not witness the execution. I did not feel like it. I saw the procession as it passed my door. First, a regiment of soldiers; next a cart with the victim sitting on his coffin; behind, another regiment, with fixed bayonets. On each side, the street was crowded with men and women, eager to see a fellow mortal die. I am forced to see enough of human misery. Would God I might never see more. Oh, this cruel, murderous war! Will it never end? Perhaps, when political intrigue can keep it going no longer.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

Knoxville, Tenn., January 6th, 1864.

It is a serious thing to have the care of sick and wounded men. They are like children—fretful, impatient, exacting. I was a stranger to all but one when I came here; now I count my friends by scores. I endeavored to do my duty. My patients soon discovered this, and I do not lack employment. There is one old fellow—a Massachusetts man—wounded through the cheeks. He is as cross as a grizzly, ferocious as a hyena. The nurses can do nothing with him. He cannot talk plain, and if they do not understand the first time, he flies into a rage and curses them soundly. The first time he called on me to dress his wound he snatched the dish from my hand, saying he wanted some one to do it who understood it. I said nothing, but let him do it himself. The next day he asked me to warm some water to dress his wound. "No," said I, "I will have nothing to do with you until you can treat me as one man should treat another. When that time comes I will do all I can for you, willingly, cheerfully." In a day or two he came to me and asked, very civilly, if I would try and get him some tea, as his mouth was so bad he could eat nothing. "With pleasure," said I. From that day he is my fast friend. The boys call him "the boss's pet tiger."

January 11th, 1864.

Our wounded continue to await with what patience they possess their departure to the land of promise—but their hearts grow sick and their spirits faint at the long delay. The cause assigned is “want of transportation, and cold weather.”

Since the 1st inst. the weather is very cold. The ground is frozen like a rock, and worn smooth as marble. Snow has not been over an inch deep—just enough to whiten the ground. The air is piercing; some mornings at 10 o'clock, when taking my morning walk, the sun shining brightly the while, I have had my beard covered with frost in walking forty rods.

Imagine the situation of the men of the Ninth Corps, in their little shelter tents, barefooted and naked, through weeks of such rugged weather. I saw Mr. Woodin today. He says they are still on quarter rations, with no prospect of an increase of supplies at present. They have been, at times, forced to issue corn in the ear. He says the men were never in better health or spirits. There is not a sick man in the regiment.

Parson Brownlow has returned to his home. He continues to breathe out threatenings and denunciations against his secession brethren. I have not seen him, but, judging by his writings, I do not like the man. There is too much savage ferocity in his writings for an enlightened Christian. He is a man of great influence here, and I thank God it is exerted on the side of the Union.

I accidentally met an old acquaintance from Black-

man today. I was passing the convalescents' room, when my attention was attracted by a countenance that had a familiar look. I halted, but did not feel quite sure. Presently our eyes met, and we recognized each other instantly. "My God, Mr. Lane, is that you?" "I believe it is," said I, "and you are Austin Draper." We had a lively chat for a few minutes. Oh, it is pleasant to meet one we have known at home! He belongs to the Ninth Michigan Cavalry.

Our Chaplain has resigned and gone home. He told me, before he left, he was confident the Ninth will cross the mountains soon. Nearly all who have re-enlisted have gone already—fourteen regiments in all. The fact that no provision has been made for us here is conclusive proof, to me. It is the opinion of those generally best informed that we will go to Newport News to reorganize.

Evidently there is to be another summer campaign. Our friends, the loyal people of the North, have made it necessary by defeating the draft, which, practically, they have done. Fifty thousand—of the three hundred thousand called for—is the pitiful number realized; and it took from the field, at the time they were most needed there, forty thousand of our best men to secure these doubtful ones. The loyal people of Michigan, by combining to pay the conscription fee, did more to defeat the draft than did Horatio Seymour and his copperhead allies by resistance; for their resistance was put down by force.

It seems Congress is about to repeal that precious clause, and make it what its name implies, a bill to

raise men, not money. These are my individual thoughts and impressions, and may be all wrong, but I cannot help believing the course pursued will tend to prolong the war. In my eagerness to get home, to enjoy the dear companionship of my family, I have, at times, been led to set bounds—to limit the duration of the strife—forgetting, for the time, that the American people, through and by this struggle, are to be purified and brought up to their professions of liberty.

Our sky is again overcast. Doubt and uncertainty have taken the place of confidence and fancied security. All day yesterday and today reports from the front are most discouraging. Our forces are falling back. Longstreet is said to be advancing with an overwhelming force. Many begin to fear another siege. Cavalry have been passing through the city the last forty-eight hours, with the usual stampede of citizens. Something is in the wind. Is it a "strategic movement," or is it a retreat? I cannot believe that we are forced to fly from Longstreet alone. Has Lee joined forces with him to sweep us from East Tennessee? There has been but little fighting, and that little is confined to cavalry. Still, everything has the appearance of a hasty retreat.

At midnight last night the sick were ordered by train to Knoxville. All supplies were sent across the river at Strawberry Plains, and the bridge, a new one, was coated with tar, that it might be destroyed at short notice. Wagons loaded with provisions were burned. The most significant feature of all is, the

Ninth Corps is ordered to hold the bridge, and three Ohio regiments, on their way home, were halted at Loudon until further orders.

"Verily, these are troublous times and changeful."

January 20th.

Nothing reliable from the front. All sorts of rumors prevail, but so contradictory one can believe none of them.

Early this morning infantry began to come in, or rather to pour through, in the wake of the cavalry. All day long they came, a ceaseless flood. They belong to the Fourth Corps. I could get nothing satisfactory from them, only they were going to Louisville. After all, it may be only a change of position.

January 21st.

The tumult increases. Our forces have burned the bridge at Strawberry Plains and have fallen back to within six miles of Knoxville. The wagon train arrived here this morning—also the usual number of stragglers.

I said the wagon train arrived. I should have said the little that remains of it. It was mostly destroyed or left for the enemy. It is the general belief that Longstreet has been heavily re-enforced and is about to make a determined effort to regain possession of East Tennessee.

January 23d.

All is quiet here again. The Rebels have retired from Knoxville, the scene of their late endeavor. The Fourth Corps went to Loudon, the Ninth to Concord, the Twenty-third remains here. Our regiment drew clothing yesterday, and have the promise of full rations tomorrow.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

Knoxville, January 25th, 1864.

I saw Lieutenant Hurd, of our regiment, today. They are in camp five miles down the river. The Ninth Corps is turning over to the Government all horses and mules, reserving one team for each regiment. They are under marching orders, and are to draw eight days' rations today. The Lieutenant is so certain they start for the north in a day or two he offers to "bet any amount." He says Burnside has authority to recruit his corps to fifty thousand. We are having delightful weather, mild and balmy as May. Our chief surgeon, Dr. Bevere, was "gobbled" on the late retreat from Strawberry Plains. He halted at a farm house for dinner. His attendants rode on about half a mile, built a fire and cooked their own dinner. They had finished their repast and were preparing to mount when they saw a squad of Rebel cavalry dash up and surround the house. Nothing has been seen or heard of the Doctor since.

January 28th, 1864.

The all-absorbing topic with the Ninth Corps continues to be the probability of our speedy departure. No one doubts our going, but where and when? Is it strange that we would leave this place, and that

right speedily? It is the possibility, should we go north, of seeing our loved ones once more, if only for a brief period. Rumor says, and Dr. Bonine, Division Surgeon, corroborates it, the different regiments are going to their respective states to recruit. Who can blame us for cherishing the fond delusion, for such it will, doubtless, prove.

Mr. Collier has just arrived from camp. He makes his presence doubly welcome by bringing me a letter from my dear wife bearing date December 30th. How precious to me are these favors, permitted by kind heaven, to keep me from despair. I do not become accustomed to the separation. I long more and more for the society of my wife and children.

Governor Blair and Dr. Tunncliffe are entitled to the gratitude of soldiers and their friends for their persevering efforts in our behalf. Some Northern papers speak disparagingly of the high bounties offered by Government. What, then, is to be done? We must have men, and "it is beneath the dignity of freemen to submit to conscription." So says Governor Seymour. Perhaps it may be cheaper to buy volunteers, even at one thousand dollars a head, than to enforce the Conscription Act. Our currency is a marvel to the world. It will bear the strain; and then, soldiers will vote next fall.

January 30th, 1864.

There is much speculation in regard to Burnside's "new expedition," as it is called. Does it look toward Mexico? It seems to me our Eastern sky is becoming overcast. It may break forth in war with

France. It must, sooner or later, unless Napoleon recedes from his present position. Our forces and those of France are in close proximity on the Rio Grande, and are watching each other with jealous eyes.

February 1st, 1864.

I have not joined the regiment yet. The Doctor is very loth to let me go, and the patients urge me so hard to stay with them, it is hard to leave. Our regiment expected to start for the North tomorrow, but the order was countermanded today, and they have been notified to be ready to march, with two days' rations, and in light marching order. They have just passed through here and crossed the river to the front. Rumor says Wolford is in trouble again, and the Ninth Corps is to help him out. There has been some fighting near here for several days with Rebel cavalry. Prisoners are daily coming in, by fifties and by hundreds.

February 4th, 1864.

Fred Byron has given up the fight and sought repose in the bosom of his Mother Earth. His wound was not considered dangerous at first, but the shock was too great for his delicate constitution. He pined away gradually, almost imperceptibly, until I could carry him in my arms, like a child. Poor boy; my heart went out to him from the first, and his countenance always brightened when I entered the room. He lived about six weeks and—slept. He had neither

father or mother on earth—no relatives but a brother and sister, both married. And so they have gone, the young, the brave, our country's choicest spirits. Death has reaped a rich harvest.

Austin Draper is quite sick of a low form of fever. He is quite discouraged, poor fellow, but I do all I can to inspire him with hope, knowing this to be better than medicine. I do not know that I will be able to join the regiment before they go over the mountains. The Doctor and the men press me to stay. From choice, I would much rather be with the boys. Dr. Bevere has returned. It seems the Rebels did not think him worth his keep. He was with them three days and says they treated him well. The men are still on "tip-toe," momentarily expecting orders to pack up and be off. They say, however, like the true heroes they are, they are willing to stay as long as they are needed.

February 6th, 1864.

I begin to feel quite certain that "the world does move." The conviction is forced upon me by the fact that our Congress, the slowest of slow coaches, has actually begun to do what it should have done last year. Then look at Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas and Tennessee. The fires of war have lighted up these dark places, and the people begin to see the hideousness of their cherished institution. Like true patriots they have set themselves at work to make their country what its vain boast has been—a land of freedom. I have become more firmly convinced, every day, that when this war ends slavery will not exist.

The States I have mentioned will be free within a year.

February 7th, 1864.

I have just returned from attending divine service at the Soldier Chapel, an old, shaky building, without fire. We are to have preaching every Sabbath and prayer meeting every day. The Christian Commission is beginning to make itself felt here. Their agent visits us every day, distributes tracts, papers, writing paper, envelopes, etc., gives good advice, sings patriotic and other airs, prays with and for us, and does it all in such a kindly, benevolent way that he has won all hearts.

Everything is quiet—even rumor is ominously silent. Expectation is on the rack. I would not be surprised at anything but peace and our departure for the North. This hospital is not yet broken up for want of patients—transportation cannot be procured—food must be first attended to. There is but one engine running between here and Loudon. From Chattanooga to Loudon two flatboats make one trip each per week, if there is sufficient water. There are over three thousand sick and wounded soldiers in this city. Stores, taverns, court houses, are all pressed into hospital service. The original population has nearly all left; some have gone south, but the greater portion have gone north. And still they go. Every day "Old Joseph's" shrill voice may be heard on yonder corner, as he "closes out" some poor unfortunate, who is selling off his household goods to go to some more favored land.

Language cannot describe nor imagination picture the destitution of these people. I see by the Louisville papers the people of the North are much in doubt of our ability to hold Knoxville in case Longstreet again attacks us. I am surprised at the misapprehension of our situation now and during the siege. The Journal says our numerical strength is much reduced. The reverse is the fact. It says we have no supplies. We certainly have as many now as then, with the railroad to Chattanooga nearly completed. Our men have been constantly at work strengthening and perfecting the fortifications. Knoxville can only be taken by siege, and before we could be driven to any great extremity, relief could, and would, reach us from Chattanooga.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

February 10th, 1864.

In walking up Gay Street today I discovered a new feature in this city of soldiers, an index of progress, of civilization. It was a news depot in full blast, established by an enterprising Yankee, of course. We at the hospital are well provided with reading matter by the Christian Commission. They have a soldiers' reading room, supplied with piles of Northern papers, periodicals, and many religious works. There is also a table supplied with writing materials, all free. If we have no stamps, these friends of the soldiers stamp our letters. If we are sick—unable to write—they offer to write for us. Adjoining the rooms of the Christian Commission are those of the Sanitary Commission, another beneficent association for the benefit of sick and wounded soldiers. All delicacies our poor fellows receive come through their instrumentality. This is the great dispensary of all those countless gifts in the shape of clothing and eatables which the benevolent people of the North so freely bestow. The articles to be distributed are first turned over to the Surgeon in charge, he keeping enough for himself and assistants, then the cooks take out enough for themselves and friends. The balance, should there be a balance, goes to the soldiers. I know the above to be true, from personal observation.

The Christian Commission manage differently. Their agents give to the soldier such things as they may stand in need of.

February 11th, 1864.

The Second Michigan leave today for Cincinnati, by way of Chattanooga. The sick and wounded of that regiment start tomorrow. It is thought the whole corps will be under way by a week from next Monday. The sick will be removed as soon after that time as possible—probably by the first of March. At the earnest solicitation of Dr. Crosby, I have concluded to remain and go with them. He promises, in return, to use all his influence at Cincinnati to procure for me a furlough, or leave of absence. Possibly this had an influence on my decision. I have an almost uncontrollable desire to visit my family and home this spring. It seems like I cannot be denied; I believe my prayer will be granted.

No news from the front of any importance. Rebel cavalry are seen, now and then, in small parties, across the river. Fifty-three Indians were captured and brought in yesterday. They are a sullen, ugly looking set of cutthroats.

The most potent reason, or excuse, for playing cards, and one that seems to satisfy men who are strictly moral, is, "it serves to pass away the time." To most soldiers, when not on duty, time passes heavily. It is impossible to procure reading matter. Men do not always feel like talking. Most men cannot sit down by themselves and indulge in calm reflection—

they must have some excitement—consequently, for want of something better, they gather in knots and shuffle cards. My pastime is to dream of home and loved ones. From early morn until late at night I am busy—yes, doubly busy—for, while I do not neglect my duties, my mind is hard at work far from this cumbrous body. Annihilating space, it leaps all barriers and pauses not until by my loved one's side.

I have just been out to see a drove of beef cattle that are being driven to our brigade. One of them fell down in the street but a few rods from here, and no amount of "encouragement" could induce him to rise.

I would suggest to our Northern farmers, if any of their cattle are likely to starve to death, they slaughter them. Their bones make excellent "soup." I speak advisedly, for I have tried it. The mail route, by way of the Gap, has been abandoned for the present. It goes now by way of Chattanooga.

February 15th, 1864.

Through the kindness of Dr. Crosby, I was the recipient of a handsome present yesterday. It happened in this wise: A certain Israelite, having not the fear of Uncle Sam before his eyes, smuggled in to this loyal city a large amount of sutler's and other goods. Some prying official scented him out and demanded to see his "papers." Alas, of papers he had none; in default of which six thousand dollars worth of goods were confiscated. Three thousand dollars worth were turned over to the Sanitary Commission for

free distribution to the different hospitals. The clothing was given to the hospital attendants. The Doctor selected a hat, vest and shirt, the articles I most needed, when they first came in, and gave them to me.

February 16th, 1864.

A dear old lady acquaintance of mine used to say, "Whenever you are downhearted and disposed to complain, just sit right down and count your mercies." I have been counting my mercies today, and find I have many things to be thankful for. Instead of being half starved, I have now plenty of food, for Joseph Cooley, a particular friend of mine, is chief cook, and the Sanitary Commission furnishes "delicacies." I am now well dressed, for Dr. Crosby, my friend, issues what the Sanitary Commission furnish—good clothing. I have a good bed, with two white sheets, for the Sanitary Commission issues bedding. I am clean, for I wash and change clothing often, and sleep alone. Last, but not least, I am in good health, because God has bestowed upon me this priceless boon.

February 18th, 1864.

Time creeps along with steady pace, regardless of human happiness or woe. Winter has come and gone—the second winter since I bade farewell to family and friends to battle for my country, and, as I believe, for human liberty. How long the time appears; and yet, how short! When viewed in the light of sundered ties—of family connections, once pleasant and joyous, now broken—it seems an age.

Oh, God, can so much misery be crowded into eighteen short months? It is not of physical ills I speak, but tortures of the mind—the heart. My only consolation is the abiding faith that we will meet again; and then how surpassingly sweet will be the reunion. If this is not to be our happy lot on earth, it is said to be “Sweet to die for one’s country.” I but go where duty calls, leaving the event with God—not heedlessly, blindly, but in trustful confidence. I see by the newspapers the Eighth Michigan regiment is in Detroit. I hope they may be made welcome by the good people of Michigan. Much has been done for the benefit of the soldiers, but the people will never know—they cannot realize—how much these soldiers have done for them in turning back, from their peaceful homes, the devastating tide of war.

There is no news—now and then a cavalry dash, but nothing of importance. A steamer is now lying at our wharf, the first since the rebellion broke out. Two more are expected tomorrow.

February 21st, 1864.

Our brigade had general inspection and review yesterday. That means move. They also drew nine days’ rations.

The original occupants of this hospital have all left on furlough except ten, and they will soon go. I am thankful I have had the privilege of making many a heart glad by a word spoken in their behalf. I am going to see the wounded off, then will try to get a furlough for myself.

February 24th, 1864.

Another of our boys has drawn a prize, and leaves for home tomorrow on twenty days' furlough. A batch of names goes in tonight that will take all the wounded from my ward. There is great excitement here today. The enemy has disappeared from our front, our troops are again at Strawberry Plains. Where they have gone, even rumor saith not. All we know of him is, he has disappeared. Our Provost Marshal's office is literally besieged by citizens who want passes to their homes.

Perhaps the Ninth Corps can be spared now. The general impression is they will start in two or three days. The Washington papers say we are to be at Newport News by the first of May; a little over two months, which will give us at least six weeks in Michigan, should we be so lucky as to get there. But time is precious. My mind is so fixed on going home—if only for a few days—I can think of little else.

## CHAPTER XXX.

Knoxville, Tenn., February 25th, 1864.

Another of my patients leaves for his home tomorrow morning on furlough. His name is Joseph Spalding, of our company. He was wounded and taken prisoner at Campbell Station, but, being unable to walk, was left, with about three hundred of their own men, when the siege was raised. He enjoyed their hospitality about three weeks, and was satisfied. He says, however, they treated him as well as they did their own men. Our forces are still searching for Longstreet, the Ninth Corps in advance, as usual.

I learn they crossed the Holston today at Strawberry Plains. How far our boys will follow I do not know; certainly not farther than the cars can carry their supplies, for they have no mule train. They may go as far as Morristown, then strike across by way of Cumberland Gap. The officers' horses, that were sent to Kingston some time ago on account of forage, are ordered back. This means change of locality. The fact may seem of small significance, but I have learned to judge of movements by what I see, not by what I hear.

March 3d.

I have been a little "off my feed" for three or four days past. Not sick—only a little overworked. A

patient by the name of Hooper was assigned to my ward on the 15th of last month. His disease was typhoid fever of a virulent type. He was "out of his head" and very violent. He required the constant attention of two strong men. I dared not leave him to the doubtful care of nurses, consequently for twelve days and nights my eyes were seldom off him, or them. No one—not even the Doctor—thought he could live; but God was pleased to spare him "yet a little longer." The twelfth day he slept, for the first time, and when he awoke, after a few hours of quiet sleep, he awoke to reason—but oh, so weak. His poor, worn-out body scarcely retained the breath of life. Carefully I watched each fluttering pulsation, administering stimulants as required, and by morning felt that he would live. All he needed now was care, and for three days more I watched and waited, until the Doctor pronounced him out of danger.

Then, when I would have slept, I could not. For three nights I hardly slept at all, and I tried so hard. Yesterday I took plenty of quinine, and had a good night's rest last night, and awakened this morning much refreshed.

March 9th, 1864.

The beautiful weather of the past week terminated in a violent storm of rain, which continued without interruption forty-eight hours. The roads, before in good condition, are now a sea of mud, almost impassable; consequently that thirty days' expedition, of which we have heard so much, is indefinitely postponed. But the sky is once more clear, and the soil

here soon dries out. Perhaps, in another week, they may make a start. I have been suffering lately from what the Doctor calls periodical neuralgia. It comes on at regular intervals, and is very painful. I am anxious to get around again. The men are very kind, nurses and convalescents, but everything seems to go wrong. It takes two men to do my work, and then, of course, they do not do it as I would. It is much like managing a school of unruly boys. It requires the same tact, and the gift of government which few possess. The Inspector complimented me on the neatness and general appearance of my ward. Our ward Surgeon told him I kept it fit for inspection every day.

March 13th, 1864.

I received a bundle of Northern papers today. The Tribune thinks the Rebels and their Northern allies will exert themselves to prolong the war until after the next election. I fully agree with it, and think it better for the cause of freedom that they do so. Every day the war continues is another guaranty of the downfall of slavery. The time is not far distant when every Northern man will become an Abolitionist. Look at the Woods, the Brookses, the New York Herald, the New York World and all the leading pro-slavery men and journals of the North. Already are they trying to disengage themselves from the fetid carcass of their dead ally. I do not know as it matters where the final struggle takes place. It may be here, but I think not. Lee and his army will never

forsake their native state. There they will fight, and there they must be met and conquered. That done, the rest is comparatively easy. My health is improving. I think I might now take charge of my ward, but the Doctor will not permit it yet.

I am overwhelmed with joy at so favorable report of my only son. God bless my faithful, patient, persevering boy. May he be kept from deception and craft, his lips from guile.

Annapolis, Md., April 6th, 1864.

We left Knoxville, with the sick and wounded of the Ninth Corps, on the twenty-second day of March, by way of Chattanooga, and were thirteen days on the road. From Knoxville to Loudon we rode in open cars. It was quite cold and snowed all day. Snow fell fourteen inches deep at Chattanooga. At Loudon we lay all night, awaiting transportation—slept in the basement of a large building that had been used for a stable. Although without fire, we were quite comfortable, having plenty of blankets and warm clothing. Early next morning we took cars for Chattanooga, where we arrived about 8 o'clock in the evening. We went to the Soldiers' Home, and were served hot coffee, boiled ham and soft bread. About 10 p. m. we started for Nashville, where we arrived at 8 o'clock the next evening. Here we were taken to the barracks, where we stayed until nearly noon the next day, and were treated to warm supper and breakfast. We reached Louisville early Sunday morning and were given comfortable quarters. Mon-

day morning we crossed over to Jeffersonville and took cars for Cincinnati. We rode in passenger coaches marked "M. C. R. R." to Seymour, Ind., and it seemed like I was nearly home, and then to leave them and change direction, it cut me to the soul. At Seymour we were packed in "hog cars," littered with straw, and so closely it was difficult for all to sit down. We expected to stay at Cincinnati until the regiment came up, but were disappointed, only staying over one night. Some of our sick were unable to go further, and I was until nearly midnight getting them into a hospital. We started early next morning and made no farther stops until we reached Annapolis about 10 p. m. of April 4th.

The next day we drew rations and tents. We got our tents pitched about sundown, just in time for a storm of rain, which soon began, and has continued with unabated fury until the present time. Our regiment arrived this morning, and I have rejoined my company. They marched over the mountains to Lebanon—one hundred eighty miles—in ten days. From Lebanon they came by rail, over the same route taken by us a few days before.

I find the men very bitter toward General Wilcox. The report is current that he is the cause of our men not being paid before leaving Tennessee; that he feared they would buy whisky if they had the money—as, doubtless, they would have done. The men believed these reports, and were very angry, and, as a retaliatory measure, swore they would steal "every-

thing they could lay their hands on." Most disgracefully did they keep their oath.

We have received about one hundred recruits, mostly French from near Monroe. We are encamped on an inclined plane half a mile from the city. The soil is light sand. Our tents are eight feet square, and will accommodate four or five persons.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

Annapolis, Md., April 8th, 1864.

There have been rumors in camp ever since we came here, and long before, for that matter, all tending homeward. The fond illusion is, at last, dispelled. Colonel Luce returned last night. He says Governor Blair and himself did all in their power to get the regiment home on furlough. They wrote the War Department, and were refused on the ground that we had not been out long enough to entitle us to one. I did not expect one from the regiment. All my hope was in the hospital. Only a bare possibility now remains. How fondly I had hoped to see my loved family before active operations were resumed was not fully realized until now. I try to bow submissively. I cannot forget that I still owe my best services to my country.

I have been blest with health such as I had not enjoyed for years while engaged in the peaceful and, to me, congenial, avocations of life. Mail facilities are good, and I will try and catch the few rays of sunshine it affords.

April 15th, 1864.

Lieutenant Sudborough expects a short leave of absence, in a few days, to visit his home, and is in

great haste to get his business in shape. It is my duty, as it is my pleasure, to assist him. He has been very kind to me, and I feel under great obligations to him. He is senior officer, and has command of the company. Company books have not been posted since the first of January, for, in their marches and countermarches in Tennessee, they could not be carried. Accounts of clothing, camp and garrison equipage, etc., were kept on slips, and must now be transferred to the books; each man's account separately posted, his signature obtained and witnessed for each time he has drawn clothing. Then there are morning reports, monthly reports, invoices, inventories and receipts without number, with copies of each transaction. At these I have been busy, almost without intermission, since I rejoined my company.

Our company numbers an aggregate of ninety-three men and officers—sixty-five present for duty, twenty-six absent on sick leave. The weather is—April, and nothing else. Lieutenant Sudborough leaves for Michigan tomorrow, where most of the officers now are. He leaves all company business in my care. I take possession of his tent in the morning.

April 21st, 1864.

We received orders today to be ready to march at a minute's notice, with five days' cooked rations. I was prepared for an early move, but did not expect it quite so soon. I know not where we are going; care not, only as it takes me farther from my loved ones and renders communication more difficult. When we

go is equally uncertain. We will not take the field immediately, unless the most urgent necessity requires it. Our A tents are to be sent in advance, which means we encamp at some other point. There is yet much to be done to render the corps effective. The work of reorganizing has hardly begun. Brigades and divisions are not formed. We have no supply train—no artillery—no ambulance. Few recruits have arrived, and those that have are neither armed or drilled. We have had no general inspection or grand review. No, there is not to be a general movement of the whole corps at present. As I read the signs, this is only a change of rendezvous.

The Eighth Michigan have struck tents and sent them to the depot. The second move tomorrow at 4 a. m.

Alexandria, Va., April 25th, 1864.

One more weary march accomplished. I bore the march extremely well, considering I had been out of practice six months. We made the distance, forty-eight miles, in less than two and one-half days. The day was hot and sultry. The forenoon was consumed in getting the column in line of march. In the afternoon we made twelve miles. We had our winter clothing on hand, and many of the men had drawn or purchased new. All were heavily loaded, as they thought we might stop here a few days. But soldiers act from impulse, and the scenes I tried to describe on our march from Lebanon last spring were re-enacted.

Our brigade was in the rear the second day, and

I had an opportunity to see for myself. Before the second day had passed many had thrown away everything, not even keeping a change of shirts. I saw several poor fellows apparently in the agonies of death from sunstroke.

These first marches, after a long rest, are nearly as fatal as a hard-fought battle. In passing through Washington we were reviewed by the President and General Burnside.

This looks like a saving of time. Our ambulances are now filing past and going into camp. Our artillery is ready and awaiting us. Also a supply train. The Ninth Corps will soon be in working order, and, of course, at work. I would not have it otherwise. Where we are to work is not apparent. It matters little to old soldiers where.

The impending struggle is close upon us. It will, doubtless, be fierce and terrible. Let us hope it will be short and decisive.

Camp near Warrenton Junction, May 1st, 1864.

The Ninth Corps has relieved the Fifth Corps, which has been guarding the railroad between Alexandria and Culpepper, and which now goes to the front. We are scattered—one regiment in a place—all the way from Centerville to Warrenton. Our work is an important one.

All of Meade's supplies are dependant on our vigilance and energy. The Rebels, too are alive to its importance, and are making desperate efforts to cut off his supplies. Yesterday the Eighth Michigan were

sent out six miles to look after a band of guerillas that attacked a train. I cannot say that I am pleased with this arrangement.

Come to be once more on the move, the same feeling of restlessness, the same desire to do, has taken possession of me. I would "forward to Richmond" and continue to go forward, until the rebellion is crushed and I could return, in peace, to my loved home. The road from Alexandria to this place was of deep interest to me. The whole country has been baptized in the "martyr blood of freedom." Now, indeed, it is "sacred soil." We passed directly through the old Bull Run battlefield. Much as I had read of it, and often as I had heard it described by men who were in the fight, I find I had received very erroneous impressions. I had fancied the Rebel position to have been almost impregnable. On the contrary, one can hardly conceive a fairer battle ground. Their advantage lay in our ignorance of the country and of the strength of the force opposed to us, and, more than all else, a lack of generalship on the Union side.

Warrenton Junction, May 3d, 1864.

We had regimental inspection yesterday. Our muster rolls are nearly completed and other business in proper shape, so we are nearly ready to take the field.

All sick and wounded have been sent to Washington, and we have orders to be ready to march at 7 o'clock tomorrow morning. I am inclined to think, from certain indications, the railroad is to be abandoned and we are to join Grant's army in a determined effort

to crush Lee's force, and, by so doing, crush the Confederacy.

May 4th.

We fell in line at 8 o'clock, ready to march as soon as relieved, but were kept waiting until 4 p. m. We then marched ten miles and encamped near Rappahannock Station. It is reported here that Meade has crossed the Rapidan and that Lee has retired to a stronger position.

May 5th.

We left Rappahannock Station at 7 o'clock and crossed the Rapidan at 1 p. m. This is our "Rubicon," or so I can but consider it, and Grant is our Caesar. Sharp cannonading could be heard in the distance. We kept on three miles further and stopped for coffee. We heard firing in our front, which grew fainter and fainter until at 5 o'clock it has ceased altogether.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

Fredericksburg, Va., May 17th, 1864.

On the morning of the sixth our division—the Third—was ordered to the front, and remained under arms during the forenoon. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon we moved farther to the left, where we found the enemy and engaged him. We were once more face to face with our old acquaintance, Longstreet. At 5 o'clock the order was given to charge the enemy's works. The order was promptly obeyed, but the Rebels were strongly entrenched, and we could not dislodge them. Our loss was seven killed and thirty-three wounded.

The Army of the Potomac, in these two days, has lost about fifteen thousand men. Grant had established hospitals at Fredericksburg which were furnished with everything to relieve or mitigate the sufferings of the wounded. Under ordinary circumstances the provision made for removing them would have been ample.

The first train of ambulances, loaded to its utmost capacity, started for Fredericksburg at dusk, by way of Kellog's Ford. About half way to the ford it was halted. The Rebels had cut them off; some other route must be found. This occupied all the next day. Finally an opening was found by way of Chancellorsville. Again were the ambulances filled

with their scarcely living freight of bruised and mangled humanity. But transportation for all could not be found. All who could walk, if only a few miles, were ordered to do so. Still there remained one hundred nine who could not walk. These were all from our brigade. What was to be done with these helpless men? Time is precious. The army is already on the move. By midnight they will be entirely unprotected. Mosby, with his cutthroats, is reported in our rear, not far away. It is now 10 o'clock. The surgeons and officers of the brigade hold a hurried consultation. Dr. Bonine, of the Second Michigan; Dr. Brooks, of the Fifty-first Pennsylvania, and Henry Baker, Hospital Steward of the Twentieth Michigan, volunteered to remain with them.

The hospital attendants were then dismissed and sent with the train. Dr. Bonine then called for ten volunteers; men whom he could trust; who would not desert him in the hour of trial. I was one of the ten. Everything being arranged, the train and its escort moved forward and left us to our fate. There was no sleep for us that night. Each nurse was assigned a tent filled with wounded men, who required constant care. We expected the Rebels to appear early in the morning. I had but little preparation to make; nothing but to conceal the few greenbacks I possessed by sewing them under the lining of my clothing, and to destroy a few mementoes that I would not have fall into other hands. Among other things were a few old letters, crumpled and worn, but very precious to me.

The morning of the eighth of May dawned bright and beautiful. Ten o'clock came, and with it the Rebels. But, thank God, they are not guerillas, but a regiment of Stewart's cavalry, commanded by General Chambers. They file around us. A Major visits every tent, takes the name, regiment and description of every man—an officer follows and administers an oath by which we bind ourselves to not take up arms for, or assist or aid, the Government of the United States in its war with the Confederacy until duly exchanged, and we are paroled "prisoners of war."

We were treated with the utmost courtesy by officers and men. In the afternoon of the same day we beheld with joy a train of ambulances coming in, under a flag of truce, to our relief. We reached Fredericksburg about 10 o'clock that night. None but the wounded and their attendants were paroled. About one hundred stragglers were marched off to enjoy the hospitalities of a Southern prison. We are awaiting transportation to parole camp at Annapolis. How soon we go I cannot tell. I hope we may be exchanged soon. It annoys me exceedingly to be a prisoner, even within our own lines.

May 18th, 1864.

When we arrived at Fredericksburg and our wounded were cared for, we, the volunteer nurses, were relieved from duty. But what to do with us no one could decide. The general opinion among the officers was that our parole was worthless.

I decided at once to report to my regiment, where I felt sure of getting advice. Accordingly eight of us started at 7 o'clock in the morning and reached Division Hospital—fourteen miles—at noon. Dr. Bevere was there, and expressed great pleasure at seeing us. I told him my situation and intention to rejoin my regiment. He requested me to remain while he made inquiries. A consultation was held by the surgeons, and not knowing what to do with us, they concluded to send us to Washington with a train of wounded about to start. While they were taking our names, General Burnside appeared. The perplexing question was at once referred to him. His decision was prompt and unequivocal: "Their parole is good and must be respected. Send every man back to Fredericksburg." At 5 p. m. we were making our way, through rain and mud, back to the rear. The next day about twenty of us reported to the Provost Marshal for transportation to Annapolis. Transportation was out of the question at present, but we were assigned to very comfortable quarters.

All went smoothly for us for a day or two, and we hardly knew that we were prisoners. Soon a change came over our keepers. The day before yesterday—May 16th—we were summoned to appear before the Provost Marshal. He told the men—I was absent at the time—that our parole was not legal; there was much duty to be done, and we must help to do it; that guns would be furnished us, and we would be required to do guard duty; that every man who refused would be placed under guard on short

rations, which meant hardtack and water. They were then sent to their quarters until guns could be procured. When I returned our quiet camp was like a nest of hornets recently stirred up.

In about an hour we were ordered to fall in. No determination had been expressed, and I was fearful most of the men would submit. Just before reaching the office we were halted and ordered to "rest." William Anderson, of my company, asked me what I was going to do. My answer was, "I will not take a gun, let the consequences be what they may." That was the decision of every man, and, when the Captain returned, he found us in open mutiny. He raved and swore; threatened us with all sorts of punishments; but, finding us unterrified, changed his tactics and tried persuasion, with the same results. Threats and persuasions proving futile, he sent us to our quarters.

We occupy a comfortable brick building, draw plenty of rations, have a good cook and expect soon to be sent to a parole camp, from where I will make a persistent effort to get home. Now that I can be of no service here, it seems to me I cannot be denied.

Hanover Court House, Va., May 25th, 1864.

I left Fredericksburg on Sunday to rejoin my regiment in order to get my parole papers, as I can do nothing without them. We are now within twenty-six miles of Richmond, and very much nearer to Lee's army, which I consider vastly more important.

I find that during my absence Grant and Lee have "locked horns" nearly every day, with no decided

advantage on either side. Grant is now crossing the North Anna with the hope of finding a more vulnerable point. I find the Seventeenth taken from the brigade and doing provost duty at Wilcox's headquarters. They were nearly annihilated at Spottsylvania on the 12th inst., and muster but 125 men. I am not doing any duty. The position in which I find myself is annoying, but I bear it patiently as possible, firmly believing I did my duty. I do not seem to have lost friends in the regiment—rather the reverse. I still expect to get home before a great while.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

June 5th, 1864.

I received two letters from home yesterday. Although nearly a month has passed since they left the hand of my loved one, the joy and comfort they bestow is inexpressible. Oh, my darling, how my heart has been tortured by the long delay.

The siege of Richmond has actually begun. We are only eight miles from the city, and I can plainly hear the booming of heavy siege guns. There has been heavy fighting the last three days, all resulting in our favor. I have been where I could hear and see much of it. Dr. Bonine, who has our parole papers, is surgeon in charge of Division Hospital. He is very busy during these days of continual fighting, and cannot attend to us. So we must wait until this campaign is over. I have liberty to go where I choose within our lines. I saw Mortimer Crawford yesterday. He said he had been through all the late battles and escaped unhurt. Jerome Beardsley was killed in the first day's fight in the Wilderness. Lieutenant Gould was also killed.

White House, Va., June 8th, 1864.

I am constantly on the move, seldom sleeping two nights in one place. I came here by request to procure supplies for our field hospital. The paroled men are all at the hospital, by order of General Burnside,

until some provision can be made for them. Most of them are doing nothing, but I cannot remain in sight of so much suffering and do nothing to alleviate it, especially when help cannot be procured. I am not—will not—be detailed, and, by so doing, take a soldier's place. On the contrary, what I do is so much that would not be done did I not do it, and I would do the same for friend or foe. God knows there is little enough done now, and I think He would hold me guiltless could I do an hundred times as much.

Dr. Bonine gives me full authority to do as I think best, asking nothing, and sanctioning all I do. Constant exertions, under unfavorable conditions, begin to tell on our brave men.

There are now more sick than wounded coming in, or, rather, passing through, this hospital, for they are sent away as fast as transportation can be procured. How sad and sickening the thought that the ceaseless tide of buoyant manhood that has been surging along in seemingly resistless force, as steadily returns, a crimson flood that threatens to deluge every hearthstone in our land with tears and blood. But the more fierce the storm, the sooner past. Our soldiers are firm in the belief that this is to be the closing struggle, and fight with a determination seldom equaled, never excelled.

Petersburg, Va., June 22d, 1864.

It is nearly two months since I heard from my loved ones. I cannot express my anxiety; words are too feeble.

The fighting continues around Petersburg. It has

raged, without intermission, since the 15th inst., night and day. All their works have been carried by storm except their last, or inner, works, which seem to be impregnable.

In the different engagements around this place our—the Third—Division has lost in killed and wounded 1,500 men. I cannot describe—would not if I could—the scenes I have witnessed and passed through during the past six weeks. The sights of woe are enough to appal the stoutest heart. I have worked day and night since we arrived here, and cannot see that I have done anything, so much still remains to be done. Fast as possible the wounded are sent to City Point, and thence to Washington, to make room for fresh victims. City Point is about eight miles from here. Every possible comfort is there provided. Mrs. Brainard, Mrs. Wheelock and several other Michigan ladies are there, freely distributing to soldiers the people's gifts. I have written my friends if they have anything to give the private soldier, to do it through the Christian Commission or Michigan Soldiers' Relief Society. Tomorrow I go to City Point in charge of a train of sick; I will probably remain there for the present; at least, that is now my intention. My object is that I may the sooner hear from my loved wife, for this suspense is torture. My position is a peculiar one. I am left to take care of myself as best I can; am reported on company books as "Absent, prisoner of war;" can draw neither pay or clothing. For myself I care not, but the thought that my family may suffer—is suffering—is maddening.

City Point, June 6th, 1864.

The day before yesterday I came from the front with a train of sick and wounded, two hundred in number, all from the Third Division. Were I to say the weather is excessively hot, my words would convey but a faint idea of the terrible, burning, consuming heat to which we have been subjected the last three days. Surely the "sky is brass, the sun a ball of fire." I think of the hottest days, in harvest time, away north, in Michigan, and oh, how cool, compared with these. Sunstroke is an every-day occurrence, so common as to not excite remark. Typhoid fever prevails to an alarming extent; of the two hundred men from our division, one hundred five were sick, and over half of these were typhoid cases. Help to care for them is very scarce. Details have been made from the regiment and still more help is needed. I am giving my attention mostly to the sick. It may seem strange to an outsider, but there is a distinction made between wounded and sick men that is not only unjust, but cruel. A sick man gets little sympathy, and less of care, during an active campaign. The wounded must be cared for first, no matter how slight the wound, in one case, or how dangerous the illness in the other. All will be cared for here.

Dr. Bonine has given me charge of three wards, containing about one hundred patients, mostly sick. Mail comes regularly every day, and I shall count the minutes until I hear from home.

July 2d, 1864.

No tidings yet from home. Everything is going favorably with me. Good health, a good position, numerous friends, abundant opportunity to do good, and will to do it, and yet I am very miserable. How can I endure this agonizing suspense? Were it not for the hope of hearing from my loved ones in three or four days, at farthest, I should, indeed, despair. There lies the secret: "Were it not for hope," which keeps the heart from breaking in its sorrow.

I am requested to go to Washington with a boat load of wounded—must go immediately.

July 3d, 1864.

We are within three miles of Washington. Have two hundred patients on board, all of the class called "bad cases." The vessel is not a hospital boat, only a river transport. The men lie on hay on the floor—some without so much as a blanket under them. They, too, live on hope, and expect all their wants will be provided for in Washington. We have not half the needed help. I dressed wounds until 1 o'clock this morning—but am more than repaid by the expressions of gratitude by my patients.

City Point, July 9th, 1864.

What strange beings we mortals are—swayed to and fro by each passing emotion. At last I have received a letter from home, dated June 21st. It found me wallowing in the dark pool of despondency.

I could not write—often did I make the effort and failed—could only conjure up images of evil. The only consolation I found was in ministering to the needs of others, and in this I found constant employ. All this a few cheering words from my darling has power to change. Hope, confidence and trust revive.

The newspapers bring us, today, news strange and startling. The Alabama destroyed! Sherman defeated, and a "Rebel raid" in Maryland! Great excitement in Washington, etc.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

City Point, July 11th, 1864.

Two days have passed since I made the last entry in this journal, an unusual occurrence of late. The reason is, I have changed my employment, and my time has been occupied in learning the details of my new business. I am now with the Christian Commission. All the sick and wounded, except forty convalescents, have been removed from my ward.

I accompanied the last detachment to Alexandria. There are now here about one hundred delegates to the Christian Commission. Mr. Collier has been cooking for them since the hospital was established at this place. In his department all went smoothly, he being a good cook and a man of energy. Not so in the dining room. There, three wild young soldiers and two "colored people" rioted uncontrolled. The table was never set in time, and seldom washed. Spreads are not in use. Dishes, knives and forks are not properly cleaned; in fact, disorder reigns. A head was wanted; Mr. Collier naturally thought of his old tent mate and friend; he recommended me to the agent as "reliable;" agent desired an interview; it was granted; he looked me over, talked with me, "sized me up," and here I am, running an eating house, with full powers to have my own way in everything. What

will my little wife think—for I can call her little in comparison, as I weigh 190 pounds—at this strange business for such as me? I can only judge of my success by what I hear, for I have had no previous experience. Delegates mark the change with evident pleasure. The agent, an aristocratic member from New York City, compliments me on the change I have wrought. Today he expressed himself as “very pleased” with my arrangements.

“Act well your part,” is my adopted motto. I have already formed some agreeable acquaintances with delegates—have often been mistaken for one, myself. I am not ashamed to correct the mistake and acknowledge myself a private soldier. In a sense I am one of them, for I have worked in the same cause, the last two years, with all the strength that God has given me, and done a soldier’s duty, too.

July 13th, 1864.

Another fond letter from my loving wife. Thank God, the way is once more opened. With all the trembling anxiety of her tender, loving heart apparent in every word, she asks, “What will become of you?”

Can you not see, my darling, that He who cares for sparrows has not overlooked your husband? She asks me next if I think I am treated fairly. To this I must reply, no, not quite fairly; not quite honorably. At the beginning of the spring campaign it was decided by the proper authorities that paroles, given on the field of battle, would not be recognized. This was the general rule that was adopted. As a general rule

it was a good one, but there must be exceptions to all general rules. And General Burnside was quick to see our case was exceptional. If, then, as he decided, "under the circumstances their parole is good and must be respected," I do not think it fair or honorable to place us in circumstances that render it impossible to comply with the conditions specified in our parole. Some of the men have become worn out and discouraged by the treatment they have received, and have returned to the ranks. Through the kindness of my officers I am permitted to "run at large" inside the lines, and do the best I can for myself. I did expect to be allowed to go home, as, at least, I have a moral right to do. I still think I may, should this campaign ever close, as it must eventually.

City Point, July 21st, 1864.

I have been sick with some form of fever for a few days past—just how many days, I have actually forgotten. I did not go to the hospital—Mr. Williams would not consent to that—as I could have good medical treatment and better care where I am. Yesterday I began to mend; today am feeling quite well, only rather weak. While I was sick the boys had things their own way, and a fearful way it was—nearly as bad as at first. Today I am sitting, or lying, where I can see the work is properly done and things "put to rights." I saw Colonel Luce today. He tells me we—the Seventeenth—are going home in August to recruit, under the President's last call. Good news, if true, but it fails to call up any enthu-

siasm on my part. "A burned child dreads the fire." Possibly it may be true. The regiment has done no field duty since Spottsylvania, and has been changed to Engineers and Mechanics; besides, it is General Wilcox's pet regiment. I am trying hard to make myself believe it. I do, almost. Soon as I am strong enough, I am promised a horseback ride to the regiment. There, if the above report is not generally believed, I will try and get a furlough. We have had one rainy day, and the weather is delightfully cool.

July 26th, 1864.

It has been unusually quiet at the front the past week. It is the calm that precedes the storm. That storm will, doubtless, be a fearful one; the very earth will shake in terror when all Grant's artillery opens up in concert. The signal is to be the springing of a mine or mines. All able-bodied soldiers, doing duty in hospitals, leave for the front today, their places being taken by musicians. Every man will be needed in the coming onslaught.

It is nearly supper time, and I, who never gave a thought to such matters in all my previous life, must go and see that the table is properly spread.

July 28th, 1864.

I expect to visit the regiment some day this week. My friend, Mr. May, has promised to accompany me, and I anticipate much pleasure. I am told General Wilcox has been made a Major General, and is to take command of the Department of Ohio, headquarters at Cincinnati.

We expect a detachment of "invalids" from Washington to do hospital duty. Soldiers call them "condemned Yankees." All detailed men are ordered to the front; they are packing up, getting ready to move tomorrow morning. Invalids and musicians are to man the hospitals, by order of Lieutenant General Grant. I pity the poor, unfortunate patients; boys make but poor nurses, and musicians are mostly boys.

July 30th, 1864.

I hear tremendous explosions and repeated volleys of musketry in the direction of the Ninth Corps today. Can it be that Burnside's mine has been exploded and that our forces now occupy Petersburg?

I see by the papers Secretary Chase has resigned. Mr. Chase is a politician, and is ambitious; he has worked three years, with all his mighty intellect, for the Presidency. In this he failed; he withdraws from the Cabinet to further his own schemes. I may judge him harshly, but I can not forget Fremont.

Can it be really true that my countrymen are despondent at the prospect of another "call" for men? Would they enjoy all the benefits to be derived from this war and share none of its perils? Are their lives too precious to be put in jeopardy? Have they become so degenerate as to make Mammon their idol?

Another appalling blunder has been perpetrated. Part of the Rebel works were blown up yesterday, and an assault was made by the Ninth Corps, which resulted in failure. Their works were carried, but, for want of support, could not be maintained.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

City Point, Va., August 5th, 1864.

I see by the newspapers there is great excitement in the North over the rumor that the Rebels are about to attack Washington with an army of seventy-five thousand; also a conspiracy, embracing a half million men, is already organized in the North; and, worse than all else, the loyal people of the North are "disheartened;" to all of which I reply, "May God speed the right."

The Seventeenth was not in the fight last Saturday. I hear that General Meade is held responsible for last Saturday's failure, and is to be superseded by General Hooker; that he—Meade—thought it a favorable opportunity to "crush" a rival instead of the rebellion.

It seems the people at home think Grant's position here a critical one. It is well to look matters squarely in the face; to know the worst, and prepare to meet it. I believe Grant's position here to be impregnable. The Richmond papers say: "He has involved himself in a labyrinth of fortifications from which it would be almost impossible to extricate himself if undisturbed."

Certainly, then, they cannot drive him out. Then, his base of supplies is as nearly safe as it is possible to make it, his communication being by water and under

the protection of gunboats. But, can he take Petersburg with his present force? No, not by direct assault, and I think the "golden opportunity" to exhibit his "genius for strategy" passed with last Saturday's failure. Lee will now be more than ever on the alert. Flank movements are also "played out," and the idea of "sieging" has become ridiculous. What, then is to be done? Simply to hold his own until re-enforced by the new levy. This he can do and spare part of his forces to operate in other places, if necessary. But, while we are waiting, the opposing forces are not idle. No ant hill was ever more busy than they. Marching and countermarching, mining and counter-mining. This week General Wilcox discovered the Rebels were mining one of his forts.

The next night the guns were all removed and logs were put in their places. Another fort was built at a safe distance in the rear, and the old one was abandoned, without exciting suspicion. When they are ready, they will spring the trap they have so skillfully set for themselves.

August 7th, 1864.

It is the Sabbath, and is so strangely quiet I am strongly reminded of home, where I have spent so many happy Sabbaths, in years gone by. With the army there is no Sabbath. Each day is like the preceding one, except on Sunday there is a little more cleaning of brasses, brightening of arms, polishing of equipments, etc., than during the week. Here, at the Commission, the Sabbath is observed as a day of rest; a day of worship. We have divine service at 10

a. m. and at 2 p. m., in the chapel, a tent large enough to seat one hundred persons. Besides this, the colored people hold prayer meetings in the afternoon and evening. I love to attend these meetings. The simple, earnest piety of these poor unfortunates is truly affecting. There is a large camp of them just outside the hospital grounds, who came in with Wilson, from the southwest of Petersburg, when he returned from his "great raid."

The Rebels have blown up the "decoy" fort left them by Wilcox. They tried the experiment night before last—the 5th inst. A little after sundown a huge pile of dirt, with sixteen "Quaker guns," and other rubbish, was lifted high in air. The smoke had not cleared away ere the Rebels charged, with yells demoniac, across an open field. Our artillery was massed a little in the rear, and to the right and left of the exploded mine, loaded to the muzzle with grape and canister, ready to welcome them to the feast of death. They were allowed to approach to within short musket range before a shot was fired. Suddenly they were met by a storm of iron hail that swept their ranks as with the "besom of destruction." Mortals could not endure it. At the first discharge they wavered; the third sent them to cover. Our loss, none; the Rebels, "much greater."

The quiet calmness of this Sabbath eve invites retrospection. Almost two years have passed since I enlisted to serve my country—two years where days have lengthened into weeks, weeks into months, months to an endless period of time. Two years of

toil, compared with which all former labors have been pastime. Two years of suffering and exposure, burned by the consuming rays of a torrid sun, where thirst and hunger have striven for mastery. Worse than all this, yes, infinitely harder to be borne, two years of separation from my loved ones. Another year remains. Oh, may it quickly pass! During all this time my hope has never wholly failed. I never, even for one moment doubted that I would see their dear faces again; that the object for which I have sacrificed so much will be accomplished; that this Nation will, in due time, emerge from the darkness which now envelops it, "purified as by fire."

City Point, August 9th, 1864.

A fearful tragedy was enacted here today. A barge, laden with ammunition, was blown to atoms, scattering death and destruction around. How it happened will forever remain a mystery, as not one that was on board lives to tell the tale. Near as can be ascertained at this time, about two hundred were killed and wounded. A vast amount of property was destroyed. Blocks of timber, shells, grape shot and other missiles were thrown over a mile. We are situated about a mile and a half from the landing. I was on my way to the Point; had covered, perhaps, one-half the distance. As I looked toward the landing I saw a lady, mounted on a white horse that belonged to the Commission, ride up the bank from the river and turn in the direction of Grant's headquarters. I recognized her as a member of the Mich-

igan Relief Society. The horse was a spirited one, and I could but admire the ease and grace with which she restrained him and compelled him to do her bidding. He tossed his beautiful head and spurned the ground beneath his feet as he lightly galloped over the plain.

They had reached a point perhaps half a mile from the landing, when a violent concussion rent the air. From the landing fire, smoke and innumerable missiles were being hurled upward, in a whirling eddy, as from the mouth of a volcano. Heavy timbers and other debris flew over and around me. I looked for the lady on horseback. For an instant I could see nothing in that direction but a swirling cloud of dust; in another instant I saw, through the dispersing gloom, a white horse clearing the ground with rapid strides, and on his back, cool and erect, a lady.

I was afterward informed the lady was Mrs. Wheelock, of Jackson, Michigan, a member of the Michigan Relief Society.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

City Point, Va., August 12th, 1864.

Today is the second anniversary of my enlistment. I have been trying to look backward and compare the present with the past. I find the task a difficult one. The past two years appear like a dark chasm, into which the most startling events have been compressed; during this time the present has absorbed my attention; its hopes and fears; its prospects and bearings on the future. What a striking resemblance the past bears to the present. Then, as now, the war was nearly ended. Then, as now, the Rebels were on "short rations," and would soon be "starved out;" then, as now, a blow was about to be struck that "would break the back of the rebellion." Six hundred thousand men were needed to "close up the rebellion." "One short campaign would end the rebellion." Today five hundred thousand men are needed for the same purpose. We are whistling that same old tune today, with as much gusto, and for the same purpose—"to keep our courage up."

Should this nation act as foolish as our editors and politicians talk, we will be the "laughing stock" of the world. In view of the past, humility would be more becoming than arrogance. I do not believe this Nation will be dissevered and a slave oligarchy built

upon the ruins of Liberty. I do not believe that a people, with almost unlimited resources, and that can muster three millions of men to fight its battles, will ever succumb to treason. Much as I love peace and hate, even to loathing, everything that pertains to war, never would I give up the struggle. At first, before the war began, I was in favor of a convention of the people to decide the vexed question of secession, and, if the people of the South desired it, I was ready to bid them go in peace, and enjoy, to the full, their sin and shame.

As much has been said of Grant's genius for strategy, and the skill and secrecy with which he executes his movements, I will record a specimen. The night before last, at dusk, the Christian Commission was notified that six hundred sick from the Second Corps would soon arrive. In the morning the entire corps made its appearance at the Point. A fleet of transports was in waiting to take them somewhere. It was night before all had embarked, and during the day many officers and men came here for food.

All said they were going to catch Early. At dusk they steamed down the river a few miles, and anchored until the moon went down. Then they turned around and steamed up the river to Drury's Bluff, where, at daylight, the sharp report of their rifles could be heard.

August 17th, 1864.

Lieutenant Sudborough has received a captain's commission, and commands the regiment. Rath is in

Michigan, recruiting. It is very sickly here; mostly confined to new regiments and recruits. Very little sickness among the veterans.

The Christian delegation is very low; less than half as many as three months ago. Many become scared, the first week and leave for their homes. Delicate-looking ladies endure the heat, fatigue and malaria much better than the men.

August 20th, 1864.

I have visited the regiment, as I intended. I found them all well except Colonel Luce. He is suffering from injuries received at Spottsylvania and from fever. Preparations are being made to send him home. I had but little time to visit with the boys, as they moved that night. When I returned this morning I found great changes had taken place in the hospital. First, a new Surgeon is in charge, and, of course, new regulations. All the old incumbents have been removed and an entire new set installed. An order has been issued by General Meade forbidding any enlisted man helping in any of the hospitals or commissions, which throws me out of a job. As things are not to my liking here, I will report at once to the field hospital.

Field Hospital, August 23d, 1864.

I left City Point about 5 p. m. of the 21st inst., and arrived here at 8 o'clock. It began to rain before we were out of sight of the hospital, and kept it up until morning. A little soaking, now and then, is more agreeable than otherwise, this hot weather, but not so the mud. Sacred soil is very adhesive.

Yesterday I went to the Point for a load of ice. The roads were so soft we were compelled to walk back. Darkness and a heavy rainstorm met us half way. To add to our enjoyment, we lost our way, and wandered around in mud and darkness until nearly midnight, expecting each moment to be picked up by our pickets. That gratification was denied us, and we were forced to furnish our own lodging. "All is well that ends well." None of us are any the worse for our misadventure. We are to move our hospital this afternoon eight miles to the left, to near the Weldon Railroad. A great battle has been fought there and victory won. Many prisoners have been taken and many lost. This same railroad was once taken by the Sixth Corps, and afterward abandoned. General Grant is very active, "butting," now here, now there. At every move the Rebels get the worst of it.

August 25th, 1864.

We have sent away all our sick and wounded, and expect to follow in the morning. I do not like the idea of getting so far from our base, as it is likely to interfere with our rations. However, we will probably not remain very long. With field hospitals, change is the order; here today, there tomorrow. We have no patients; nothing to keep my mind from realizing its utter loneliness. At such times my heart reaches out to my family with unutterable longing. But, be still, fond heart. Two years of banishment are past, but one remains. God is good, and kind,

and merciful. Let me gather consolation from the past, and look with confidence and hope into the future.

I have said that I am lonely. I would be much more so were it not for the comradeship of my friend, Mr. Collier. We take long walks together, talking over old times and future plans until we get to some high point everlooking Petersburg and its fortifications. We then sit down for an hour or two and enjoy the cool evening breeze, and witness the grandest pyrotechnic display the mind can conceive of. I saw William Dunham today; he has been promoted to sergeant. There is no better or braver soldier in the Seventeenth Regiment than he.

City Point, August 31st, 1864.

I left the front at noon today, partly for a load of ice for the hospital, mainly to get my mail, if any had arrived, which I did not doubt. As to the first, I was successful, and hope to be with the latter tomorrow. It hardly seems the same place, so great have been the changes in two weeks. Nearly all the delegates have gone home. Men free to act—to come and go as they please—will not long endure the perils of this climate.

While the people at home are watching with eager eyes the progress of these armies, we, the members of these armies, are equally intent with the progress of events now transpiring in the North. The draft—the Chicago convention—the great conspiracy—all are subjects in which we take the deepest interest.

After all, I see more ground for hope than cause for fear in the immediate future. I do not believe the draft will be resisted to any extent. The conspiracy is rendered harmless by its publicity. The only fear I hear expressed is that the leaders may not be sufficiently punished. If the Administration is afraid to assume the responsibility at this critical period, let those leaders be persuaded to visit the army. I am quite sure they would be convinced it is poor policy to buy ammunition for traitors.

When I contemplate the present condition of the country, I am bewildered by the fearful magnitude of events now hurrying to completion.

Camp near Petersburg, September 6th, 1864.

Our hospital is now pleasantly situated about three miles from the old ground and two miles from division headquarters. The grounds are laid out in the form of a shield, which is the badge of the Ninth Corps. Evergreen trees are planted around it, in double rows. Arches wound with twigs of evergreen; in fact, everything is arranged with taste, and at great expenditure of labor. Tents were nearly all pitched when I arrived with the last load. About sundown a division of the Second Corps marched past, and formed in line but a few rods distant. In a few minutes they were engaged in throwing up breastworks. I had received that truant letter of August 20th, which had miscarried, and had lighted a candle with a view to answer it, when the order came, "Pack up, boys, and get ready to move immediately." In an hour tents

were struck and loaded, the sick put in ambulances and the train in line, with orders to "move out a mile and await orders."

This awaiting orders is never very agreeable, and a heavy thunderstorm did not add greatly to our enjoyment on this occasion. Seeing no prospect of an early move, my comrade and I lay down upon the ground, with a rubber under us, and a rubber over us, and "sweetly slept till break o' day." Soon as fairly light the train moved on, and at 8 o'clock we were in our old camp again, still to await orders. It is now 9 p. m., and we are in the same "blissful state of glorious uncertainty." The sick remain in the ambulances. A railroad is being laid to connect City Point with the Weldon Road. It passes within a few rods of us. Nearly a mile of track is laid each day.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

September 5th, 1864.

Early next morning we resumed our march, and continued it until within a half mile of the place we vacated yesterday with so little ceremony. Here we set to work as though it had all been "part of the original plan," and tonight have our hospital in good working order. This time there is no style. Judging by contraries, we will remain here for some time.

We did not leave the old ground a minute too soon. That very day the Rebels, in trying to shell the railroad, shelled our old camp. A half mile beyond was General Meade's headquarters. They made it so hot he was compelled to get out in a hurry.

The Chicago convention has met and done exactly what everyone here expected it to do—nominated McClellan for the Presidency. My feelings for him are mixed—pity and contempt—pity that the once mighty McClellan should fall so low; contempt that he allow ambition to ruin him. Henceforth "Little Mac" is powerless. Whether he accept or reject, there is no more magic in his name. Poor old dog Tray, your experience was identical with that of McClellan. On the other hand, "Old Abe's" prospects are brightening. Sherman is successful in "stumping" Georgia. His "speech" at Atlanta is working won-

ders here. Even Rebels are affected by it, and many have already "come over and joined our side."

Some of our men are disposed to speak bitterly of the manner in which "volunteers are raised" in the North. I consider it magnanimous, in those patriotic men who are exposed to the draft, to allow the wives and widows of soldiers to contribute their mite toward buying substitutes. And there is some compensation in this. We want men who will fight. Most foreigners will do that; so will negroes. Copperheads will not; at least on our side. This money, with that wrung from the wives and widows of soldiers, will buy foreigners and negroes; and so we get the men.

Camp Near Petersburg, Va.,

September 9th, 1864.

I wish my Northern friends could look in and see my new house, this morning. My comrade and I worked all day yesterday, trying to make it comfortable. But first let me introduce my comrade, Mr. Charles Blanchard, son of Judge Blanchard, of Tecumseh, Michigan. He is a young man of good manners and pleasing address, is intelligent, and a very agreeable companion. Everybody calls him Charley. Like myself, he is a paroled prisoner. Now for the house. To begin, we went to the woods and cut four armfuls of poles, which was our building material; then leveled off the ground, ditching around a piece eight feet by twelve. This for our building and front yard. Next in order was the bedstead. Four stakes were driven into the

ground, four feet by six feet apart, with a pole across each end. Across these, small poles were fitted, close together, for our spring mattress. On top of these, a thick coating of pine boughs, in lieu of feathers; on top of all, our rubbers and blankets are spread, and our bed is made. A soft, voluptuous bed it is. We then set two poles in the center of each end, to support a ridge pole. Over this pole is thrown our canvas, which is stretched to cover six by eight feet, the lower ends two feet from the ground for ventilation. To the ends we affix other pieces of tent, when behold, the bed is made and the house enclosed.

All that is lacking now is a floor, table and pantry. Lumber is scarce; sawmills there are none. After dinner, away we go, on a voyage of discovery. About a mile from camp we run across a deserted encampment, where we find plenty of lumber. Two trips suffices. We now have lumber, but no nails. Leaving Charlie to saw the boards to the proper length (with a hatchet), I start off in another direction after hardware. About a mile and a half from camp I find where some quartermaster's cook has made firewood of hardtack and other boxes. In the ashes I find plenty of nails. Our task is now easy and soon completed, and we have as nice, comfortable house as soldiers can ask for in this climate.

I am gaining in health and strength every day. May and June, or the work I did in those two months, nearly used me up. I have placed Baby Nell's picture in my diary, beside that of my wife, and never open it without first looking at them. Of

one thing I am quite certain; we are on the best of terms, are baby and I. At first she was a little shy, or so I fancied, and frowned on me, as babies do on strangers. But now she smiles every time I take her—and so do I. If I do not come home until my three years of service expires, she will be eighteen months old, and I do love little babies so very dearly.

Camp near Petersburg, Va.,  
September 10th, 1864.

Charlie went to City Point this morning and found confusion there, as well as here. Last week the General Hospital was moved about a mile up the river to establish winter quarters. Today it is being moved back to City Point. I refer to the Ninth Corps hospital; the others have not been disturbed. It is said we are to leave this department soon. Selfishness prompts me to wish it may be true. The campaign will then be ended for us, and there will be a possibility of getting a furlough. The corps is engaged in building fortifications to protect our rear, in case of an attack from that quarter. Recruits are pouring in rapidly; said to average seven thousand daily. Charlie says they are being drilled all the way to City Point. Grant's railroad, running in the rear of our lines, much of the way in sight of the Rebels, seems to annoy them exceedingly. Night before last they obtained a position from which they could shell a long bridge that spanned a ravine, and began to fortify. Last night our forces charged these works, carried them and captured the working party. I

could plainly hear the shouts of triumph that announced their success. General Grant is making preparations for the fall rains. In wet weather the roads are impassable for loaded wagons. The railroad is completed and cars now run from City Point to the Weldon Road.

September 15th, 1864.

I have changed my quarters again. I was not needed at the hospital, there being as many nurses as patients. I cannot live here without some occupation. Captain Sudborough wished me to return to the regiment and assist him. This suited my inclination, and I went. I found the company books precisely as I left them, four months ago. I see plenty of work, and that is what I need—what I must have. I am always better satisfied when with the regiment. I left a nice house, but have another just as good. Soldiers soon learn to take care of themselves. The Ninth Corps held a grand review today, which, of course, means move.

Camp Seventeenth Michigan,

Near Petersburg, Va., September 18th, 1864.

Another Sabbath day has come—another week has passed away. We, of the army, take little note of time. Eighteen days in succession our regiment has toiled, without intermission, on fortifications or on roads. Today is general inspection of arms, equipments, clothing, etc. The regiment musters one hundred twenty guns. It was a sad sight, to me, to see

this little band of tried heroes march out and rally on their torn and battered colors. I thought of the hundreds who had given up their lives, a free offering on the altar of freedom; of others undergoing tortures more cruel than death in Rebel prisons. Of still others languishing on beds of sickness, far from home and kindred, with none but rough men to minister to their wants or speak a word of sympathy, and then I thought of my wife's last letter, in which she said: "It grieves me to say the majority of people here are not over-fastidious as to the means used to bring about peace."

I would like to tell it so that all our friends might hear and know that it is true, that we, the soldiers in the army, hold in contempt the man who would accept peace on any other terms than submission to law. We have fought too long; have suffered too much; too many precious lives have been lost, to falter now.

The Rebels themselves acknowledge all their hopes are based on a divided North; they are straining every nerve to hold out until after the fall elections, hoping their friends may triumph.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Blicks Station, Va., September 22d, 1864.

Blicks is the name of a station on the new railroad, near our camp. A spur runs from this road to each camp, and storehouses are being built. Nothing is being done here at present but building and drill. All hands are busy. Not an idle man in all this army, that is able to do duty. Old fortifications are being strengthened and new ones built, and drilling is pushed with as much vigor as fortifications and railroads. Barely enough men are left in the rifle pits to watch the enemy; the rest are drilling—drilling—in squads, by companies, battalions, brigades, and, twice a week, an entire division at a time.

This place has become a camp of instruction for recruits. Some regiments are nearly full. The Fifty-fifth Massachusetts has received over two hundred "Yankees" direct from Germany.

Glorious news from the "Valley" today. A dispatch was read to the men on drill, giving the news of the day up to 6 p. m. of yesterday. The air was rent with shouts that could be heard for miles. We fully understand the importance of a genuine, decisive victory in that quarter. I am waiting, with feverish anxiety, the details of Sheridan's achievements. We are having beautiful weather—rain enough to lay the dust, but not enough to make the roads muddy.

Blicks Station, September 24th, 1864.

Another letter from home reached me this morning, giving me cause to thank God anew for His goodness and mercy in preserving, thus far, the lives of my dear family. It seems to me that, notwithstanding the sufferings we have endured the past two years, we have been highly favored by a kind Providence. We still remain an unbroken family, while others have fallen on our right hand and on our left. Although death has come so near we could almost feel his icy touch and see his grizzled visage, we have been spared. It is not for us to know why—short-sighted mortals that we are—we are led in safety through dangerous, crooked paths, but our past experience should teach us to trust, with unwavering faith, the hand that guides us. But, after all, how frail we mortals be, and powerless. I find it to be impossible to abate one jot of my anxiety in their behalf. I am keenly alive to all the embarrassments our situation exposes them to, and can only school myself to endure, for a brief period, by considering the sacredness of the cause in which we are engaged. My wife can never know how much the confidence she expresses in my integrity has strengthened me in my determination to deal justly. I acknowledge I have been tempted. The inducements held out to me have been strong. Thus far, I have been enabled to resist them. The knowledge that my wife expects better things of me, added to my own sense of right, has thus far kept me, but there are times when I need advice—encouragement. I want it—crave it—from my wife alone.

With men I am sufficiently self-reliant, asking no favors. With her it is different. I know she is sincere. I confide in her judgment; her intuition.

I am somewhat disappointed in McClellan's letter of acceptance. I had given him credit for more manliness than he possesses. He accepts the nomination but repudiates the platform, which is the soul of the party that nominated him.

I do not know how it may be in the North, but he has lost his influence in the army. I have talked with many who were his friends, who now say they would as soon vote for Vallandigham. In fact, I hear none but boys, and a class of men whose only reason is, "d—n the man who won't vote for McClellan, anyhow," speak in his favor the last ten days. There is not the least excitement. Everyone seems to have settled down to the conviction that "Old Abe is the best we can do," and acts accordingly.

Blicks Station, Va., September 26th, 1864.

The Ninth Corps is in motion, being gradually withdrawn from the front. Various rumors are in circulation. That which seems to be the best authenticated is: "We go to Baltimore and report to General Burnside." It is amusing to hear these matters discussed by men who are supposed to know nothing but to obey orders.

We have heard nothing definite from Burnside since his return from his pleasure trip to the Green Mountains. I am positive he will not serve longer in this army, and equally positive he will have a com-

mand somewhere, and that where he is, the Ninth Corps will go; soon as it can be spared from here with safety.

Paymasters are here, and will begin paying off today or tomorrow. There is some doubt about our regiment being paid this time. Our payrolls were wrong, and were sent back from Washington. I made them out anew, and they were sent off last Friday. If they receive prompt attention they may be returned in time. I cannot reconcile myself to the disappointment. I have had no pay in eleven months, and through no fault of my own. I am grieved for my family's sake, and am really vexed at the wrong done me.

Then Fremont has "sold out?" What a miserable thing is his letter announcing the important fact. How much it reads like Vallandigham's speech "ratifying" McClellan's letter of acceptance.

September 28th, 1864.

About two miles from the hospital, two large mortars are planted—one thirteen-inch, the other fifteen-inch bore. From them to Petersburg is two and one-half miles. One evening—it was very dark—I happened to be looking in that direction, when I saw a thread of fire leap from the woods where the mortars lay concealed, describe a half circle against the darkened sky, ending in a lurid light far away over the city. After this came the rushing, roaring, screaming sound flying through the air in swift pursuit. If any harm was done it was all over with before the report

reached me. Even so it was with my daughter's dangerous illness. Before I heard the report, the worst was over. Then imagination did its worst and filled my mind with dread foreboding. Days passed; long, endless days; and sleepless nights, ere another message reached me. Thank God, she lives! My child is better.

It is 10 p. m., and the order is, "Pack up and be ready to march immediately."

September 29th, 2 o'clock p. m.

Since 2 o'clock last night we have been waiting—tents struck, everything ready—and still we wait. Everything goes but headquarters baggage. Sutlers' and extra baggage is ordered to City Point. For once I will try and refrain from speculation, and will await events.

It is evening, and we still occupy our old camp. This has been a day to try men's patience. All the long day, and most of last night, we have been in constant expectation of being called on to march. How many such days have I experienced, and still am prone to take it unkindly. Tell of "Job's patience;" doubtless he was sufficiently tried for ordinary purposes. I am glad he was not subjected to this. But the day has worn away, as all days must, and we will retire to rest with a strong conviction that something is about to happen—some time—somewhere—perhaps tonight—perhaps tomorrow. There never was a time, before this summer, that I could not tell, before a move was made, exactly how.

where and when it was to be done; what troops were to be engaged; what would be the result, and all about it. But Grant has nearly taken the conceit out of me this summer. From the time we left Alexandria until now, every move he has made has been exactly contrary to my "previously formed plans," thus causing much useless labor on my part. I would feel much chagrined did he not play the same pranks with editors who are supposed to know everything, and get pay for it, too, which I do not. However, I do not intend to go off in a pet and flare up with the old gentleman, for, after all, it turns out about as well as if he followed my plans.

Today, from morning until night, teams and railroad cars have been busy as bees removing everything movable from right to left, or toward City Point.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

Blicks Station, Va., September 29th, 1864.

Heavy skirmishing has been going on most of the afternoon, about six miles to our left, near Rears Station. Cavalry alone are engaged. For the last hour cheering has been heard in that direction. It gradually approaches—nearer—nearer still. It comes creeping along the line, in increasing volume. Now it has reached our division. What is it? Good news, of course, but from whom? From where? Has Mobile fallen, or Sherman executed some strategic movement, or Sheridan driven Early headlong from the Valley, or—but hark, here it comes! “Fall in, Seventeenth, and listen to orders.” The line is quickly formed; the Adjutant steps briskly forward, bearing a lantern in one hand, in the other a folded paper. “Attention, Seventeenth.” The Seventeenth is all attention. He reads: “General Butler attacked the enemy on the right; carried his works on the Petersburg & Richmond Railroad; took fifteen pieces of artillery; three thousand prisoners; and is now within five miles of Richmond.” Three cheers for General—no, not for Butler. “Three cheers for General Grant.” Ninety-one throats responded, and the noise passed on. The men gathered in groups to discuss the glorious news for a few minutes, then retired to rest.

We have moved at last. Captain Sudborough sent me back to the train with the regimental baggage. I remained there two days, when I was ordered to overhaul the baggage and send that which was not absolutely needed to City Point for storage. Monday I put the surplus on cars and took it to the Point and got it stored on a barge, and returned to camp in the evening.

I found the regiment about one and one-half miles west of the Weldon Railroad. All is quiet, with no signs of an immediate advance. Lieutenant Colonel Swift is here, chief of Wilcox's staff. Rath returned today with fourteen recruits.

October 6th, 1864.

We have come to a standstill once more, and are making ourselves "comfortable." We have a splendid position, and are fortifying. We moved past the low, swampy country, and are now on high, sandy ground about four miles southwest of Petersburg. We have fitted up a very nice and comfortable camp. We have learned, by experience, that it pays as a sanitary measure. Old soldiers never sleep on the ground if they can get as many as two poles to sleep on. This is one reason why we enjoy better health than recruits.

I have sad news from Arthur Mathis. The poor boy has not long to live, and must die among strangers. It seems needless cruelty to keep him here, so far from friends and relatives who would gladly minister to his wants and smooth his pathway to the tomb.

Payment was suspended by our late move, and, as our pay rolls are returned "Approved," we come in with the rest.

Camp near Petersburg, Oct. 7th.

It lacks nine days of four months since I first beheld, through sulphurous smoke and leaden hail, the tall spires of Petersburg. It was the time the Ninth Corps made their first charge and were repulsed. Since that time we have made several advances—always by the left flank—until now we extend from river to river around the city. But we are not discouraged. In fact, we were never one-half so confident as now. We are fulfilling, to the letter, the old injunction to "make haste slowly." Experience tells us the taking of a city, a victory where the enemy, "runs away and lives to fight another day," only prolongs the contest. Their armies must be destroyed. Grant has hit upon the right plan. What if Copperheads do say "Grant cannot take Petersburg." We know better. His operations here are but part of a plan that is literally destroying Lee's army. It embraces Butler, on the James; Sheridan, in the Shenandoah Valley; Sherman, in Georgia. All are acting in concert, controlled by one master spirit, who rules and guides the whole.

For a time I feared Grant had met his match in Lee. But, as the plot thickens and the current of events brings out and develops his deep-laid plans, I see the hoary-headed traitor struggling with desperate but futile energy to disengage himself from the toils of

his relentless foe. In speaking of Grant last spring I said, "I suspend judgment for the present." Since that time he has exhibited qualities that prove him to be, with scarcely a rival, the military genius of the age. We talk of Sherman's campaign in Georgia; of Grant's campaign in Virginia; of Sheridan in the Valley; of Mobile and Charleston. There has been but one campaign, and that is Grant's campaign against the rebellion. The whole—north, south, east and west—had been guided and directed, under God, by his far-seeing mind. I believe we have at last found the man who is capable of directing the energies of this country, and of leading us on to victory and peace.

October 8th, 1864.

I received a letter from home this evening, freighted with love and wifely endearments. As I read that comforting letter, my heart overflowed with gratitude to the Giver of all Good for the bestowal of this, His most precious gift to man. I rejoice at the safe arrival of my "relic." I valued it more than money. I had marked several pieces which were my favorites. Among them was one entitled "We Miss Thee at Home." The first time I sang it was in company with Mr. Collier and two other good singers. I was never in better trim for singing than on that night. We had sung several of my favorite pieces and were passing the otherwise tedious hours very pleasantly. But this was too much for me. My voice, before so clear, suddenly thickened and became hoarse. My eyes, before so strong, refused to trace the "mystic

words." I could only see my poor, grief-stricken wife, as, solitary and alone, she mourned her absent mate.

But I must return from these "dreamy wanderings" to record the rugged scenes of cruel war. The Ninth Corps is again on the "war path." It started this morning, at daylight, on a reconnoissance toward the South Side Railroad. When I last heard from them—at 3 p. m.—they had advanced one mile, driving the enemy before them, which brings them to within one mile of the road. Yesterday I could plainly hear the engines whistle defiantly. The Seventeenth remained in camp to receive pay. I have drawn for eleven months, which will relieve the most urgent needs of my family and enable them to tide over "the coming winter." One might infer, from what I have written this summer, that I had been a "man of business." Well, I have had a hand in nearly everything that floats. My parole bars me from "regular duty," and, taking advantage of it, I have followed my inclination in the main, only being careful to "keep within the lines." My Captain commands the regiment, and this makes me some extra work, as I do all his writing. Our business relations are satisfactory. He treats me with unvarying kindness.

We have drawn our fall clothing today. It came in good time, for most of our men were thinly clad. The weather, which only three days ago was very hot, has suddenly taken cold—so cold we actually had a frost this morning; hardly discernible, 'tis true, but still a frost, and we were fain to get up early to

"gather 'round the fire, and we piled the rails on higher" until we fairly turned night into day. All to little purpose, however, for, like "poor Harry Gill," my teeth did "chatter, chatter still."

Our recruits who came to us recently say it is not nearly as cold here as in Michigan when they left. The General and his staff are having brick fireplaces built in each of their tents. Privates cannot afford this luxury, as brick houses are scarce in this part of the country. Unfortunately for us, the houses are all of wood, and their chimneys, when torn down, will not supply the officers with brick. Most of the houses, too, are occupied by their owners, they not having been notified of our contemplated visit.

But hark! what causes all this uproar? More good news, I think, for I seldom have heard such cheering. "What is it, Amos?" "Don't know; guess Burnside's come, er the boys 'ave scart up a rabbit." "More good news from Sheridan," says Charley. "He's had another big fight with Early, whipped him, took nineteen pieces of artillery, seven thousand prisoners, most of his supply train, and, at last accounts, was following him up close, bound to capture his whole army or follow him into Richmond." I expect this is slightly exaggerated, but the news is good. I wonder if the noise disturbs the Johnnies?

## CHAPTER XL.

Peebles House, October 13th, 1864.

The evenings are all my own, to pass as best I may, when in camp. When I can get candles I write either to wife or children, or jot down some straggling thought in my diary. But candles are hard to get. Government furnishes only about one inch per day, and sutlers sell at seventy-five cents a pound, or two for a quarter. When I have no light, my evenings are spent in "wandering to and fro," dreaming of my Northern home. I live, at present, a very secluded life, although surrounded by human beings. I have few sympathies in common with most men—or so it seems. Perhaps it is because all the sympathies of my nature, all the emotions of my soul, are constantly flowing, in one unceasing tide, back to my distant fireside. How my impatient spirit chafes at the long delay. Fain would I lash the lagging wheels of time into more furious pace. What power there is in love—even human love. If I have any virtues that other men have not, they all are born of love. If fewer vices, love is the shield. Daily I strive to be that which the fond imagination of my loving wife doth paint me. Oh, from the darkness of our sorrow may new light break forth, new strength to do and suffer, if need be, new resolves and freshest hopes.

Colonel Luce, whom we have looked for since last Saturday, has just arrived. I have not seen him, but can now hear his voice as he inquires, with fatherly solicitude, as to the well-being of his men. He is one of the kindest, most indulgent of commanders; too indulgent, perhaps, but his men obey him cheerfully. I refer to the rank and file of the regiment; with officers he is sufficiently exacting.

October 14th, 1864.

I saw Colonel Luce this morning. He is much improved in health, and takes command of the regiment tomorrow. There are rumors in circulation that our regiment is to be broken up. It is said our recruits are to be transferred to the First Michigan Sharpshooters, both officers and men, while the old members are to be retained at Division Headquarters as provost guard, clerks, orderlies, etc.

Peebles House, October 15th, 1864.

The army, at this point, is pursuing a course of "masterly inactivity." Even the work of fortifying, which has been carried on with so much vigor the past five months, is partially suspended. The hostile armies, separated by only a few rods of forbidden ground, are silently watching each other. Not a shot is fired, by day or night, along the front. The pickets, in some places not more than ten rods apart, are on the best of terms, exchanging newspapers, trading rations for tobacco, etc.

From the top of a hill but a few rods from here the Rebel camp is plainly visible. By the aid of a field glass I can see the "Johnnies" lounging lazily in camp or at work on their fortifications. But, for all this seeming quiet, we are in constant expectation of the storm that is liable to burst upon us at any moment. General Grant, with Secretaries Stanton and Fessenden, are at Ninth Corps headquarters tonight. Generally, where Grant goes a blow is to be struck. He is almost omnipresent. Today we hear of him with Sheridan, in the Valley; tomorrow he is closeted with the President; before we have time to turn around, he is back in City Point.

Our officers are, during this temporary quiet, freely indulging in those refined tastes which army life is so well calculated to develop, by engaging in such innocent amusements and gentle recreations as horse racing, gambling, and their usual accompaniments, commissary whiskey, midnight revels and broken noses.

Part of this I have seen; the rest is told me by a "reliable gentleman" on duty at headquarters. Of course, he does not make public what he sees, as it would cost him his position and do no good. Last Saturday a very exciting contest came off between two blooded horses, owned by two "bloods," both Brigadier Generals. Another match is announced for tomorrow and another for Saturday. With such examples, is it any wonder that gambling is on the increase? So far as my observation goes, nine men of every ten play cards for money.

I received a letter from home today, filled with gloomy forebodings.

Sometimes, almost unconsciously, I give way to gloomy thoughts, bordering on despair, where hope lies buried. With me, such moods are of short duration. Can it be possible my darling wife has breathed the tainted air from the "slough of despondency" for two long years? Come up with me, dear one, and together let us climb the mountain of hope. Lean fearlessly on your husband, for he is strong in faith and will lead you gently up, above the dark, murky clouds of doubt, to bask in the bright sunshine of trust and confidence. Viewed from this height, how bright the prospect. Home treason lies powerless, bound hand and foot by a free people's choice. Armed treason, that hideous monster, is fiercely struggling in dying agony. Its heart still beats at Richmond; but Grant, and Sherman, and "Glorious Phil" are sapping its life blood. When the heart shall cease to beat, the extremities must die.

Peebles House, October 25th, 1864.

We will probably, leave here tomorrow morning. Where we go no one knows, but all feel that something startling is about to happen. Appearances indicate a long and rapid march. All baggage not absolutely needed is to be sent to City Point. Instead of wagons, pack horses are to be used. We are to carry three days' cooked rations in our haversacks, and five days' uncooked in our knapsacks. A pontoon bridge is to accompany us.

October 26th, 12 o'clock m.

Active preparations still continue. All detailed men are ordered to their regiments. Cooks, clerks and grooms, and even commissary sergeants, are ordered to carry guns, or have them on hand in case of emergency. We will not move until night, if then. All Michigan men who are sick in hospitals are to have furloughs. I have made out several today.

4 o'clock p. m.

The General is striking tent; will probably be off in the night. We are ready to march at "tap of drum." All surplus stores, everything that might in any way impede our march, has been sent to City Point. Of the men, those who are so fortunate as to be sick, be it ever so little, are on their way to Michigan. I have been at Headquarters nearly all day making out furloughs. It is an agreeable task, even when I am not personally interested. Many of the poor fellows have not been home since they enlisted, and would not now, had not furloughs been given by wholesale.

7 o'clock p. m.

We have just been notified we march at 3 o'clock tomorrow morning.

Peebles House, October 28th, 1864.

Contrary to expectations, we are back again in our old camp. I confess I am disappointed. I can form no idea, at present, of the result of the movement, as

I know nothing of Butler's operations the last two days. I conclude it was only a feint, on our part, to draw part of Lee's forces from Richmond, out of Butler's way. Be that as it may, to me it was a failure. The "Fighting Second," commanded by the "invincible Hancock," was to have the honor of attacking, while the Fifth and Ninth were to draw their attention to other points. The attack was made, and the Rebels were driven before them, like chaff before the wind, until our forces struck the railroad. Then they rebounded like a rubber ball.

October 29th, 1864.

Having somewhat recovered from the fatigues of our late expedition, and the keen edge being worn from the mortification I felt at falling back to our old quarters, I can see that, if not successful, no great disaster befell our army. I have heard nothing from Butler; nothing to prove this to have been a feint, while the real attack was to have been made at another point, but of this I am sure, an earnest, determined attack was not made on the left; barely enough to show the Rebels were in strong force. So soon as this was ascertained, the Second and part of the Fifth Corps withdrew and marched rapidly to the right. Our loss was not heavy—about seven hundred.

## CHAPTER XLI.

Peebles House, Va., November 4th, 1864.

We have had a few days of cold, stormy weather. It even snowed a little yesterday. We have built comfortable quarters, most of them with fireplaces. I have been so busy since our return, with muster rolls, monthly returns, etc., that I was compelled to postpone building until today. We have a very comfortable place, built of pine logs, six feet by seven on the inside. It is completed except "chunk and daubing," which will occupy but a short time. About half of it is occupied by our bed. In one corner is our table, two by three feet square. The remaining corner is our sitting room. Our bed of poles is covered with a thick layer of "Virginia feathers." Over these a rubber and one blanket, leaving one blanket and our overcoats to spread over us.

We may not remain here long to enjoy the fruits of our labor, but then, we may. Probably another attempt to move will not be made until after election. I will be heartily glad when that is over. I am sick, tired, disgusted with the whole arrangement. Popular election, indeed! It is all humbug. The very name is a lie and a cheat. Mr. Winegar, of Grass Lake, has arrived as commissioner to receive the votes of Michigan regiments. The McClellan vote will be

quite strong in this regiment unless something can be done to counteract it. The French recruits will all vote that way, and they comprise nearly one-half the regiment.

"Fall in for mail," is the cry of our Postmaster. Not expecting as much pleasure as another letter would give me, I continued to write, listening, all the time, to hear whose names were called. Can it be? Yes, my name is called. Another dear letter. Oh, my sweet wife, would to God I could fold you in my arms and pillow your weary head upon my bosom, its rightful resting place.

All Michigan men in hospitals who want furloughs get them. I have no idea this campaign will end until Richmond is taken and Lee's army is destroyed. Grant has fought all summer "on these lines," and will continue the fight all winter if not successful. But the time is close at hand when military operations must, of necessity, be suspended. Furloughs will then be given, and I will avail myself of the first opportunity.

Peebles House, Va., November 8th, 1864.

It is the evening after election. The turmoil and excitement of the day is past, and, almost prostrated by the intense anxiety of the past week, I long to flee to the sympathetic heart of my wife for comfort and consolation. Never before has a political contest assumed such vast proportions. In it I see a Nation sitting in judgment on its own acts. The question to be decided involves its very existence. Individuals are lost sight of. Life and death hang quivering in the

balance. Feeling this, I entered into the contest with all the energies of my nature. "Sleep departed from my eyes and slumber from my eyelids." My sphere was circumscribed, but it was no light task to rescue my own loved regiment from a record of infamy. Thank God, it is accomplished. Of one hundred ninety-four votes polled today, only forty-six were cast for McClellan and Secession. One week ago they claimed a majority. 'At that time, in Company G, eleven out of eighteen loudly proclaimed fidelity to the "Hero of Malvern Hill." Today, in this same company, three votes were polled for him. I think I can say with truth, and without egotism, the result is largely due to my efforts. I devoted my time mainly to the recruits throughout the regiment, visiting them in their tents, seldom leaving one until I had obtained a promise that he would not vote for "Little Mac." Faithfully they kept their word in nearly every instance.

The day was fine. At sunrise the regiment assembled, chose inspectors, clerks, etc., and proceeded to business. I never knew an election to pass off so quietly. No drunken brawls, for whiskey could not be obtained. General Wilcox and staff came over and deposited their votes. It had been confidently asserted that Wilcox would vote for McClellan, but he called for an "Administration ticket" and deposited it in the ballot box. No partiality was shown to rank; several officers were challenged and had to swear in their votes. The day, with its overwhelming weight of responsibility, is passed beyond recall and I

calmly await the announcement of the result. As the polls were about to close, a telegram was received announcing the capture of the pirate Florida. I accept it as an omen of good.

November 10th, 1864.

Mr. Collier came over and spent the evening with me. His visits are highly prized by me. He brought his note book, and we sang "Sweet Home" together, and then, as usual, we talked of home. He is a singular being—a "specimen," and a rare one, too. It is impossible to be long afflicted with the dumps when in his society. Like a bubbling spring, he overflows with mirth and good nature, and is sufficiently intelligent to be an agreeable companion. Goodness is natural to him. He neither chews, smokes, drinks whiskey or uses profane language. There is not a particle of deceit in his composition. Added to all these good qualities, and many more I might mention, he adores his wife and baby. All this I can say of him, after two years of intimate acquaintance. Spite of the contrast between us, and it is great, the strong attachment and friendship I feel for him is reciprocated.

November 11th, 1864.

I have gratified a long-cherished wish today—that of visiting the outer fortifications in our front. I wish some of my Northern friends, who are disposed to growl because the army does not "move forward," had been with me. The questions they ask would have answered themselves, for, in looking at our works,

they would have seen a counterpart of the Rebels'. First, a continuous chain of rifle pits, or breastworks, running from Appomattox River, on our right, to our extreme left, where it turns a half circle back, in our rear, toward City Point. These works are built of pine logs laid up as high as a man's head, and firmly joined together. On the side facing the enemy a ditch is cut, about eight feet from the logs, the dirt being thrown up against them and firmly packed, forming a protection against solid shot, and shell unless they burst directly overhead. In front of these works, from a quarter to a half mile, the timber is "slashed," rendering it next to impossible for men to make their way through it, even if not opposed. Much of the way the breastworks are protected by abbatis. A ditch is dug some three feet deep, from four to six rods in front of the line of breastworks, then the tops of trees are inserted in the ditch closely packed together, every limb sharpened and projecting toward the enemy, and the dirt is then thrown back and packed, to hold them firmly in place. But this is the weakest point of the line of defense.

All along this extended line, at every angle, forts are built, mounting twelve to thirty guns. These forts are within musket range of each other, so situated as to sweep the intervening space with grape and canister.

This is a very faint and imperfect description, but is, I think, enough to show that mortal man cannot carry these works, if earnestly defended. The Rebel works are quite as strong as ours.

I had several fine views of them through a field

glass, which annihilated distance, so far as vision is concerned. Half way between the two lines are the pickets, but a few rods apart.

November 13th, 1864.

It has been growing cold all day, and toward night the wind increases to a gale, bringing a few flakes of snow with it. Tomorrow we begin building winter quarters, by order of the General commanding. So the vexed question of moving seems to have been settled. Mail matter came in freely last night.

The election returns are very gratifying to me. The people, with a unanimity never equaled, have decided in favor of a united government. President Lincoln is now, emphatically, the chosen of the people, he having received a majority of all the votes cast. Supported by the moral force of the Nation, he can now proceed, untrammled, with the great work before him.

There is much talk in the newspapers of a Thanksgiving dinner which is to be given the Army of the Potomac and the James by volunteer contributions of the people of the North. It is a gigantic undertaking, but can be accomplished by the aid of Adams Express Company, who, I understand, have offered to deliver free of charge.

The new railroad is completed to within a half mile of Ninth Corps Headquarters, on the extreme left of the line. Wagon loads of express boxes arrive at Division Headquarters nearly every day. Nearly every man in our regiment has received a box filled with "creature comforts." I had the pleasure of test-

ing the quality of some Michigan butter today, sent to a Mr. Hopkins, of Oakland County. He was so unfortunate as to get a furlough on the day of its arrival, and left it in care of his tent mates, enjoining them to be sure and not let it spoil. They are doing all in their power to prevent it, with fair prospects of success. About one-fourth of the sixteen pounds is already saved.

An incident just occurred that created some excitement. A man who claims to have once belonged to the Eleventh New York Cavalry, now a cripple in both arms, has been through camp selling papers, songs, etc. One of our men, thinking he recognized him as a Rebel spy whom he had seen in Frederick City, Maryland, reported him as such to the Provost Marshal. He was able to give a good account of himself, however, producing a pass signed by the Secretary of War, and a letter of recommendation from General Phil Sheridan.

## CHAPTER XLII.

Peebles House, Va., Nov. 15th, 1864.

All is quiet in front of Petersburg. The sharp crack of the rifle is superseded by the clatter of axes. When we came here, some six weeks ago, this whole country was almost an unbroken wilderness. Now hundreds of acres are completely stripped of tree and shrub. The officers have built good, substantial log houses, with brick chimneys. The Seventeenth is now building stockades for the General's horses.

I have had but little work since election, most of my work coming on during the last half of each month. A short period of rest was never more grateful, or more needed—I have not been sick; only worn out, as sometimes happens when teaching school. "Teaching school;" how the phrase calls up old memories of the shadowy past. Thank God, they are pleasant memories. I wonder, will I ever more follow that, to me, delightful occupation? I think not; the "old man," after three years of "service," can hardly expect to be "up to date."

We are looking again with our accustomed eagerness, for the "Greenback Man." We expect, too, General Burnside will be here, in a day or two, to take command of his old corps again. The event will be hailed by us with joy. Let others think of him

as they may, he possesses the confidence of the Ninth Corps to an unlimited extent. The reverse is true of our present commander, General Parke.

November 18th, 1864.

This has been one of the most pleasant days that ever visited this storm-swept world. So soft and balmy—I have not words to describe it; I have almost fallen in love with this Southern climate.

I confess to a feeling of dread when I think of the severity of our Northern winters. The coldest weather we have yet had was only sufficient to cause a light frost. And yet I actually suffered with cold before I had a fireplace in my house.

The house I built a few days ago was comfortable, but rather small. I could not build larger, for I had not the strength to draw the logs on my back. Fortune has been kind to me, as usual.

Today I moved into a large, new house, all complete. It happened in this wise. The regiment had been at work at the field hospital and for General Wilcox, which made it impossible to build their own houses without resorting to strategy. The day before yesterday a squad of men from our company was detailed, as usual, to cut logs for the General's stables. On reaching the woods, Charlie Groesbeck and William Jones separated from the squad and went to work on their own account. By 11 o'clock their timber was cut; how to get it drawn was the next question. Luck favored them. A teamster came along looking for a load of brush that was to have been cut by—

somebody. The boys told him they "guessed" they were the men, but the brush were not all cut. If he would draw a load of logs they had cut, the brush would be ready on his return. He consented to the arrangement, and the thing was done. The next day they built their house, and, when completed, invited me to share its comforts.

General Burnside has been here. He had hardly arrived before the air was filled with rumors, all looking to a removal from this department. One newspaper has it the Seventeenth is to be detached from the corps to guard prisoners at Elmira, New York.

I was the recipient of a handsome present last night—a portfolio bound in morocco. The donor is W. B. Jones, one of my tent mates.

November 20th, 1864.

A storm of forty-eight hours' duration has followed the pleasant weather of last week; two days and nights of incessant rain; and still, as night shuts in, the darkening clouds foretell another night of storm. Doubtless the long-talked-of fall rains have set in. From a military point of view, it may be unfortunate. A move was in contemplation which must be suspended, for the present. In all probability General Butler will have time to test his "peace doctrine" before he can resume active operations.

It is my design to confine myself to facts, when writing in my journal, and to leave out my own opinions and speculations, but I find it to be impossible. I am so deeply interested in the progress of events, I

cannot always confine myself to the past and present. I am continually watching, with intense anxiety, for something on which to hang a hope of coming peace. In almost every transaction of daily life, that which we firmly resolved to do is already half completed. I hail the result of the late elections as the expressed determination of the American people to fight the battle out to the bitter end. Grant calls it "a great moral victory, depriving the Rebels of their most efficient weapon."

Long have they, with exultation, pointed to a "divided North," and to what they pleased to call a "united South." Time was when they were united, but that time has passed. They have experienced the horrors of war, as no other people of modern times have experienced them. They know, without help from some quarter, their cause is hopeless. That help, Jefferson Davis tells them, they need not expect. The New York Herald says: "President Lincoln can now afford to be magnanimous. Let him offer them terms of honorable peace." Good might come of it, but I would not have him abate one jot or tittle in the vigor of preparation, or withhold his hand when possible to strike. On the whole, I see abundant cause for encouragement. To me, the future is full of promise.

November 22d, 1864.

The storm that has raged the last three days has passed away. Since last Friday evening until today, there has been a steady downpour. The swamps and lowlands are flooded. In our camp, situated as it is

on high, sandy land, no inconvenience is felt. Now is the time Grant's railroad comes in play. Without it we could not hold our position. About half the land between here and the Point is submerged; all of it is as bottomless.

Our furloughed men have all returned. They all tell the same story; a pleasant, happy time, but oh, so short, so quickly passed. They had only fifteen days. So soon as twenty days are offered, I will make an effort to obtain one for myself.

November 23d, 1864.

It is very cold today. The wind changed to the west last night, with a snap to it, which reminded me, oh, so vividly, of home. Many is the time my wife and I have sat, side by side, and listened to the furious blast as it raged harmlessly outside, and I wondered if my loved one was now, alone and trembling, passing through a similar experience.

The sun shines brightly, but fails to warm the frozen earth. When I awoke this morning I heard the heavy army wagons thundering over the frozen earth.

Tomorrow is Thanksgiving. Already the "good things" donated by the generous people of the North begin to arrive. My tent mates and I have been getting a supply of wood today. It is becoming scarce and hard to get. By bringing it a mile, in our arms, we have accumulated a quarter of a cord of good oak wood, which will last nearly a week.

I must now stop writing and draw our company

ration of soft bread, which is issued twice a week. We also get mackerel once a week, codfish once, with now and then one potato and one onion per man.

November 26th, 1864.

Thanksgiving Day came bright and beautiful, as though Nature smiled approval, and accepted the thank offering which kind friends, with a degree of liberality never equaled, have sent to cheer the hearts and make glad the stomachs of their "brave defenders." I am sorry to be compelled to say the kind intentions of our friends were, in a measure, thwarted by circumstances beyond their control. The transports that brought them to City Point were delayed by a storm and did not arrive until Friday evening. Then the work of unloading and distributing to the different corps occupied all the time until Thanksgiving morning. The first installment, designed for the Ninth Corps, did not reach this station until noon of that day. The afternoon was consumed in issuing to divisions, and from them to regiments. We must wait until morning for our dinner.

Doubtless all have seen, in newspapers, an estimate of articles sent to this army. From it, and the time consumed in distribution, some idea can be formed of the amount of food consumed by an army in one day, and the necessity of keeping its line of supplies in working order.

November 26th, 1864.

A dinner of roast turkey in the army! I am inclined to think it unparalleled in the annals of war-

fare. There were liquors of almost every brand; turkeys both roast and raw; chickens with rich dressings; pies, cakes, fruits and sweetmeats—enough, as intended, for every soldier in the army.

Now for the result.

We drew, for thirty-three men in Company G, twenty pounds roast turkey; thirty green apples; four pounds potatoes; seven cookies; three doughnuts; seven papers fine cut tobacco; three papers smoking. The regiment drew in proportion.

We will not measure our thanks to the generous donors by what we received. The effort on their part is appreciated by us, and will be cherished as an expression of sympathy and good will.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

Camp near Petersburg, Va.,  
November 30th, 1864.

“Be ready to march tomorrow morning.” This is the order that greeted us the night before last at 10 o'clock. It was a surprise to us, as we had seen no indications of such an order; not even an order to draw extra rations.

In the morning we learned the Ninth Corps was to relieve the Second Corps in front of Petersburg. At 10 o'clock the next morning we were under way. The day was cloudless, the roads in fine condition, and we made the sixteen miles at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

We halted within two miles of our destination until dark, as the rest of the way was in range of Rebel guns, and in plain view. In the interval we treated ourselves to coffee and hardtack, the first since morning. Soon as it was fairly dusk we resumed our march, and brought up, a little after dark, on the right of Petersburg, near the Appomattox River. It seems like meeting old acquaintances, after weeks of separation. This part of the line is nearest the city, and is the scene of the “usual amount of firing” mentioned in every daily paper. Many is the evening Mr. Collier and I have visited these hills and listened to the thunders of artil-

lery that threatened to shake them from their foundations. Too tired to pitch my tent, I spread my blankets on the ground, and, undisturbed by the roar of cannon, sweetly slept until morning. This morning we relieved the Thirty-sixth Wisconsin, and took possession of their quarters, which are very comfortable.

We are encamped on a high hill that overlooks the city, and the Rebel lines are in full view, far to the right and left. Close by is a fort that mounts "thirty-two-pounders."

Eighty of our men are permanently detailed at General Wilcox's headquarters; the rest are scattered on temporary details.

Captain Sudborough is in command of a detachment on the railroad near City Point. I will report to him tomorrow.

Cedar Bottom, Va., December 3d, 1864.

I have just settled in my new quarters with Captain Sudborough's detachment. We are three miles from the regiment and five from City Point. The men are well pleased with this kind of soldiering. They have good quarters, plenty of rations, light duty, and are out of reach of Rebel bullets; the first time in seven months. There are sixty men on duty here.

Colonel Luce has resigned and starts for home next Monday. His reasons are given out as "broken health, ruined fortunes," and a kindly regard for his men, whom he loves as a father loves his children. Had he remained, his rank would have forced us into

the line, as the Second Brigade is now commanded by a Lieutenant Colonel.

He is one of the most kindly men I ever met, and we will miss him sadly. I am living alone, away from the noise and turmoil of my boisterous companions. I prefer thus to live, where I can work without interruption, and, when my task is done, can revel in my own small "world of thought."

I will apply for a furlough next Monday. It will be detained five or six days in the "Circumlocution Office," which will bring me home about the fifteenth, if successful.

December 6th, 1864.

I find, on inquiry, the time has not yet come for me to visit my loved home. Since the fourteenth of last month, furloughs have only been given in extreme cases. They are now entirely suspended, for a brief period, in the Ninth Corps.

Grant is concentrating his forces. The Sixth Corps has just arrived, and is moving to the left. The Nineteenth Corps is on the way. Porter is collecting his fleet of ironclads in the vicinity of Dutch Gap. Butler's canal is nearly completed. Should this canal prove to be a success, Porter may make a desperate attempt to reach the Rebel Capital, the land forces co-operating on the right and left. But this move, whatever it may be, is not the cause of furloughs being withheld, for the order is confined to the Ninth Corps. Men are going, every day, from other portions of the army. General Burnside was here on Saturday, and returned to Washington on Sunday. On Monday the

order was issued: "No more furloughs from the Ninth Corps until further orders."

Lieutenant Colonel Swift is trying to get leave to take the regiment to Michigan to recruit. General Wilcox tells him the old members have seen more than their share of hard service, and advises him to let them remain where they are until their term of service expires. Swift is ambitious, and has an "itching palm" to wear the silver eagle.

December 15th, 1864.

Another sweet messenger from home, dated December 4th. It seems to have been quite a long time on the way; ten days in a time of comparative quiet.

I do not know how it may be with those removed from these busy scenes of strife, but, with me, the mighty present swallows up the events of the past and almost obliterates them from memory. Movements which, in process of execution, claim all our attention and from which the grandest results are anticipated, become, when past, but as a "watch in the night."

All eyes are now turned on Sherman, awaiting news of him in breathless suspense. At the same time movements are on foot here that will eventually compel the evacuation of Petersburg.

Unfavorable weather has caused a short delay, but the storm is over and our troops are on the march again. Meanwhile, I can wait, feeling that "the night is far spent and the dawn is at hand," doing the little I can for my fellows and my country; ambitious only that I may be worthy the good opinion of my

loving wife, so tenderly, confidingly expressed in this, her last letter. Courage, dear one; yet a little longer must we toil and struggle on. Our paths are now converging; they soon will meet, in blissful union; then, hand in hand, together will we pass down the declivity of life, purified and made better by these sore trials.

So we are to have another dinner—a Christmas dinner—prepared by the kind friends at home expressly for the Seventeenth Regiment, the whole to be superintended by Mr. Winegar, of Grass Lake. Mortimer has rejoined his regiment. I heard of the event last night, and early this morning started in quest of him. His regiment is in the inner line of works, about five miles from here, near a large fort called the Crater, from the manner in which it belches fire and smoke and iron missiles from its huge guns. I found him looking well, though a little thin, and was glad to see him, for had he not just returned from home—my home? Had he not seen and conversed with my loved ones, only a few days instead of years ago? And then, those little articles of comfort, direct from home; precious mementoes of a wife's devotion and tender remembrance. Is it any wonder as I clasped his hand, my eyes were dim with the mists of pleasing memories?

I will not attempt to picture the pleasure I experienced as I looked on that on which my wife's dear eyes had rested, watered, perhaps, with bitter tears; in handling that which was fashioned by her hands. And those towels! Soon as I returned I hung one

beside the door of my little house. How homelike it did look! And then I washed me very carefully, lest I stain its snowy whiteness and dried me on her towel, as I used to do at home. Can I ever wear those stockings? For her dear sake I will, although it seems like sacrilege.

I could only spend two hours with Mortimer, but we made the best possible use of the time. During that time I heard more gossip than in the past two years.

He told everything "I said and they said," with the variations; some agreeable, some otherwise. I asked him what he thought of our darling baby, Nell. "Oh, it's quite a decent-looking young one, but no better than other folks's." He said: "Aunt Sene asked me if she wasn't the handsomest grandchild they had, and I told her 'No, Flora was.'" Then, fearing he had shocked my sensibilities, he apologized by saying: "Flora has got to be a darned purty girl; you never see anybody change as she has."

I saw Billy Richardson. He says he can go on picket and fire his "hundred rounds" at nothing as well as anybody.

December 22d, 1864.

I walked three miles and waited until 9 o'clock this evening, so sure was I of tidings from home. I waited in vain. I was disappointed but not disheartened. Surely tomorrow I will be more fortunate. and if not tomorrow, I will still wait patiently, trusting that all is well.

I do not know why it is, but I cannot feel downhearted of late. Whether it is owing to the buoyant health I now enjoy, the conviction that the crisis is passed and peace is about to smile upon our blood-stained land; or that the time is drawing nigh when I may return to my loved ones; whether it be either or all of these, I cannot tell, but so it is. I feel a lightness and buoyancy of mind and body that I have been a stranger to for years.

I do not forget, even for one moment, the sufferings to which my family are exposed this terrible winter, and I thank God for putting it into the heart of Brother Salmon to furnish them firewood and for other acts of kindness.

We are having cold weather here just now. It actually froze a little last night. Snow fell on the tenth, about an inch deep. In a day or two the sun came out and it fled from before the brightness of his face. Our winters here are about like Michigan, with December, January and February left out.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

Camp Seventeenth Michigan Infantry,  
December 30th, 1864.

Company G has been relieved from detached duty and has rejoined the regiment. I left my snug little house this morning at sunrise. Rain fell thick and fast all the forenoon. In the afternoon it changed to sleet and snow, growing quite cold the while, until now, evening, it is quite winterlike. But I am already provided for until I can build a house of my own. I had no sooner arrived than a good Samaritan, by pity moved, opened his heart and door and bade me enter. I will soon have another house as comfortable as the one I left. I will now have one tent mate, as I cannot build alone. We sent our brick and lumber from Cedar Bottom yesterday. Monday we will get the logs and build our house.

January 1st, 1865.

The storm is past; the sun shines out, bright and cheerful, giving golden promise of the coming years. My darling's birthday, too. I had fondly hoped it might be my lot to be with her on that day. We have received no mail the last three days. A new arrangement has been made at the distributing office, in Washington, the mail being now distributed by brigades.

The Seventeenth could not be found in this great army, as we are not brigaded. A special dispatch was sent out instructing the mail agent to send our mail to First Division, Ninth Corps.

General Wilcox is in temporary command of the corps. The Rebels improve every opportunity to desert. All agree as to the scarcity of supplies and the hopelessness of their cause.

January 5th, 1865.

We mustered for pay December 31st, and I have been very busy every day, and often far into the night, making out muster rolls. A muster roll is a sheet of paper two feet by three feet square, the space between the lines about two-thirds as wide as the ruling on legal cap paper. On the left is a column in which the names of the men are written in alphabetical order. Then follows a complete description—where, when and by whom enlisted; where, when and by whom mustered; when and by whom last paid; where he now is; why and how long he has been absent; if anything is due the Government, for transportation, fines, damages, etc., or if due the soldier for clothing not drawn, etc. It must all be stated.

Company G musters seventy-two men, present and absent. In order to get all this on six square feet of paper, I am forced to write as fine as possible, and frequently to interline.

Then, four of these papers are filled at each muster, corresponding in every particular, the least error in one spoiling the whole. We muster the last day of

each alternate month, and the rolls must be completed within three days thereafter.

My rolls were in on time, and I have been at Headquarters all day, helping to compare and correct the regimental rolls, preparatory to sending them to Washington.

I have forced myself to write thus calmly of everyday occurrences, when, in fact, my very blood is on fire, and every emotion of my soul is in a tumult of glad expectancy.

I am going home. My furlough has been approved and is now at Division Headquarters. It will reach me in a day or two. Then will I fly, on wings of steam, to my beloved one's fond embrace.

Baltimore, Md., February 1st, 1865.

They have had cold weather here during my absence. The Potomac is frozen, which will prevent my going by way of Washington, as I had hoped to do. The cold weather is past, however, and it is now warm as summer. I have had the best possible luck, so far on my return trip, and everything looks favorable for the remaining part. I called on the Provost Marshal and got a pass for two days, as I will be detained until 2 o'clock tomorrow afternoon.

My furlough expires at 12 o'clock tonight, but I have made the best possible use of today, and will have no trouble. My pass will take me on board the boat; then I am all right to City Point, where my regiment is doing guard duty. Of course, I will have no trouble there. I have been to the

transportation office, and have the promise of transportation tomorrow noon, and will reach City Point on Friday.

Camp near Petersburg, February 4th, 1865.

Once more I find myself in camp, ready to act my humble part in the closing scenes of this great drama. I arrived at my journey's end last evening; found the regiment where and as I left it; the men in good health and spirits.

I had the good fortune to meet my comrade, Charles Groesbeck, at the depot in Jackson. Our journey to Baltimore was pleasant as circumstances would admit; no accident, which is itself an accident.

At Baltimore our annoyances began. The bay had been closed for nearly a week. My furlough expired that night. Thursday morning I went to the Quartermaster to see if a boat was likely to leave. I learned the mail boat was to make an effort at 3:30 p. m. We were not alone; hundreds of soldiers were there on the same errand; some had been waiting over a week. There was a rush for transportation, and we were forced to leave our furloughs until noon, when they would be returned to us with our transportation papers. Noon came, and with it our furloughs—minus the others. There was a fix. We would not be allowed on board without it; to obtain it that day would be impossible. At the wharf we found a Government shipping agent, whose duty it is to furnish transportation for troops when ordered by the Quartermaster. He informed us that a Government vessel

was to leave for Fort Monroe at 3:30, and, transportation or not, he would see us on board, and then we could take the mail for City Point. The time came, but no Government vessel, and the mail was about to leave. The bell rings; again it sounds out a warning peal; in five minutes she is off. Already they are preparing to haul in the planks. A hundred men in blue appeared, maddened by the unnecessary delay; gather around, threateningly. The temptation was irresistible; a charge was made; the guards were swept aside; we are on board. Put us off who can. The effort was not made.

We made slow progress until past Annapolis, stopping often for the ice boat to clear the way. Below Annapolis the Bay was clear of ice, and we made excellent time, reaching Fort Monroe at 8 o'clock next morning. Here another attempt was made to find out who had transportation and who had not.

Five guards were placed at the gangway, with bayonets fixed, and orders to let only one man pass at a time, while an officer stood by to examine our papers. The attempt was vain; again the guards were brushed aside; we rush on shore; make a "straight wake" for the Provost's office, had our furloughs stamped, rushed again to the Quartermaster, where we succeeded in procuring transportation to City Point. From this time all went smoothly until we reached the Point at 5:30 Friday evening. Here we had our furloughs restamped and boarded a freight train for the front.

I found my comrades all right, and our little house in as good condition as when I left.

The Ninth Corps is under marching orders, and are turning over mules, wagons, etc.

God knows what the future has in store, but the memory of those few days spent with my loved family will ever be cherished as among the happiest of my life.

## CHAPTER XLV.

Camp before Petersburg, February 7th.

For three days we have held ourselves in readiness to march at a minute's notice. It seems the Rebels, alarmed at our advance on Dansville, by way of Weldon, have concentrated their forces to oppose this advance. Well may they be alarmed, for, Dansville in our possession, all communication by railroad is cut off, and Lee's army is shut out of the Confederacy and is thrown back on Virginia for supplies. The whole movement, on our part, consists in being ready to repel attack. We have heard nothing from our left today, except the roar of artillery, which, at times, is terrific. The weather is most uncomfortable for those having no shelter. It began to rain at 5 o'clock this morning, and has continued through the day, freezing as it falls. God pity the wounded who may be exposed tonight.

Through the smoke of battle we are eagerly looking for the "bow of peace." The Rebels are now fighting for terms, and they cannot long maintain the unequal contest.

February 10th, 1865.

The "great movement by Grant's army," so much talked of by correspondents, is still wrapped in mystery. Nothing definite has yet transpired concerning

it. It is stated, however, on seemingly good authority, that Meade has advanced his lines about four miles, not across the railroad, but parallel with it, and is fortifying. Sixteen siege guns have gone out today, with which he proposes to "occupy the road."

I believe this move is simply to keep Lee occupied here, and thereby prevent his interference in other quarters.

February 20th, 1865.

It has never been so quiet along our lines as the past two weeks, there being strict orders against picket firing. We are eagerly awaiting news from Sherman, and a development of the toils which are being gradually drawn around Lee's army. Lee has now but one line of communication left open, and that will soon be closed.

General Wilcox is in Michigan on leave of absence. Furloughs are still freely given, which shows no important move is contemplated here at present. Captain Sudborough is Acting Engineer of the division during the temporary absence of the real one. It is his duty to inspect the front line of works every day and report their condition.

Telegraphic dispatches are again in order. Yesterday the troops were drawn up in line, and the glad news of Sherman's wonderful success was read to them.

A salute was fired today in honor of Washington's birth. All our batteries were opened, with shot and shell, at precisely 12 m., and was briskly returned by

the Rebels. The dangerous "practice" was kept up for nearly two hours, and was intensely exciting. Several of our men were killed by bursting shells.

It has rained all day, a mild, warm rain, and still continues. A detail of twenty men from our regiment has been at work the past three weeks to provide a suitable burial place for our dead. All our dead are to be taken up and buried in a proper manner.

February 24th, 1865.

More glorious news from the South. Wilmington is ours. Another salute was fired this afternoon, to which the Rebels feebly responded. It is impossible to describe the effect of these frequent successes upon our troops. The utmost enthusiasm prevails.

The opposite effect is plainly visible across the line. It makes itself apparent by frequent desertions. Another Captain, with his entire company—sixty men—came through the lines of the First Division last night, the second instance of the kind this week. Five men, with equipments on, came to Division Headquarters today. They were on picket and deserted their posts in broad daylight. An early movement of the Rebels is confidently expected. Our men are ready, with knapsacks packed, to move at tap of drum. It is only a precautionary measure, and means, "be ready to fight or to pursue."

To attack would be madness on their part; to retreat, an act of folly; to remain as they are much longer, is impossible. So, at least it seems to me, "Old Bobby" may think differently. Deserters say

he has given out word "he will astonish the world on the fourth of March."

It seems the draft is about to be enforced in Michigan. I do not wonder the new law is a mystery to men whose only object is to evade it. The present call means men. Paper credits will not avail.

March 12th, 1865.

Despite the numerous predictions of newspaper correspondents to the contrary, quiet, profound and undisturbed, prevails along our lines. We are not "mud bound," but are awaiting the movement of the immense force Grant is now concentrating near Hatcher's Run, ready to sieze on any advantage that may offer and to perform their part in the final struggle which cannot be long delayed.

The First and Second Divisions of the Ninth Corps are holding the works around Petersburg, and are stretched to their utmost tension. The most difficult and complex combinations are about to be brought to an issue. If successful, Lee's army is destroyed; the rebellion crushed; the war terminated. As I read them, "the signs of the times" are full of promise.

March 13th, 1865.

I confidently expect another great battle will soon be fought. It must come soon. Sherman must be checked, and that right speedily, or the Confederacy is lost. I believe that Lee will attempt to break our lines at Petersburg, with the hope of joining his forces to Johnson's to oppose Sherman. I also believe Grant will be able to hold him in his present position.

March 17th, 1865.

Military affairs here are approaching a crisis. Everything betokens immediate action. Quartermasters have sent all superfluous baggage to Washington, and have everything packed, ready to move. Officers and men are sending home their "extras," by orders from Headquarters. The Second and Fifth Corps struck tents at 12 o'clock last night, but had not moved at noon today. The Ninth Corps has been engaged for several days in throwing up breastworks to protect their flank, which shows that we are to hold these lines, while all troops on our left will be cut loose and sent to some other point. Furloughs continue to be granted as freely as last winter, which shows Grant is not short of men.

Mr. Collier started for home yesterday. Mr. Woodin leaves tomorrow morning. Colonel Swift, who went home to recruit, is on detached duty in Detroit.

A flag of truce came inside our lines the fifteenth inst. Rumor says, "Peace Commissioners."

March 19th, 1865.

The pleasant weather of the past week has given way to wind and storm. This morning the sun rose bright and beautiful, as on preceding days, but before noon was nearly obscured by gathering clouds. A little after noon the rain began to fall; gently at first, and continued through the day, so warm and pleasant; but as the sun went down the wind veered to the southwest—all our worst storms come from that direc-

tion—gradually increasing in force, until now it is almost a hurricane. And the rain! It comes, now in great, pattering drops; now in solid sheets; an almost resistless flood. My little house rocks and quivers like a ship at sea. I have fastened a rubber blanket over the top to keep the rain from splashing through. With all the wind and rain, it still is warm, and my little house is dry and comfortable. But how about the pickets, without shelter, fire or exercise; anything to protect them from the pelting storm or deepening mud? It is now four months since the Ninth Corps took this position—four winter months—and the men, during all that time, have been on picket as often as every third day, besides doing their other duties; and yet, a more stalwart, healthy-looking lot of men I never saw.

During the past week more vigilance than ever has been exercised along our lines. The men are required to stack arms at dusk, and remain in readiness to fall in, with accoutrements on, until 9 o'clock. They then retire until 1 o'clock, when they again stack arms and watch until morning.

The long-talked-of demonstration on our left has not yet taken place. Correspondents will tell the people this storm has caused the delay. In my opinion, the storms are innocent in that regard. When the proper time comes, or his plans are fully matured, General Grant will strike.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

Camp before Petersburg, March 25th, 1865.

One more "battle fought and victory won" for right and freedom. Never was an attack made under more favorable circumstances for the Rebels; never was repulse more complete.

The excitement and expectancy of the last two weeks had entirely died away. Sutlers had returned, and only yesterday General Wilcox's Headquarters was enlivened by the presence of ladies.

This morning I was awakened, about daylight, by a single cannon. Soon a well-known sound struck my ear; a sound that instantly aroused all my faculties. Often had I heard it; at South Mountain, Antietam, Fredericksburg, at Cold Harbor, in the Wilderness and at Petersburg.

No, I cannot be mistaken; it is the Rebel "battle cry." They are charging our works! But I hear no answering shout; no rattling musketry! It cannot be! They have heard good news, or are having a big drunk.

These are some of the thoughts that flashed through my mind as I listened to those fearful yells; more hideous, far, than tongue can tell or pen describe.

I was not long left in doubt. "Fall in, Seventeenth, with guns and equipments," was the order that passed from tent to tent.

Then I knew that work was to be done. The Rebels had played a "Yankee trick" on our pickets by sending out a small force in advance, which, by pretending to desert, threw them off their guard until near enough to force them to surrender. Thus an opening was made through which they advanced on Fort Steadman, taking the garrison completely by surprise, most of whom they captured. Then they swept down the line, driving the Third Brigade from their works and taking possession.

Thus matters stood at daylight. Fort Steadman in their possession, their skirmishers advancing, supported by three brigades of infantry. When the Seventeenth formed in front of General Wilcox's Headquarters. the Rebel skirmishers were within one hundred rods of them, evidently bent on paying their respects to the General.

Thinking their presence might be intrusive, at this early hour, our boys charged them, as only the Seventeenth can charge, and drove them back upon their main body, taking about thirty prisoners. By this time the Third Division of the Ninth Corps, held in reserve, had formed in front of the gap and checked their further advance. The Seventeenth formed on the right of the Third Division, and when the final charge was made for the recovery of the lost works, charged with them and held a position in the line until 1 o'clock in the afternoon, when they were relieved.

In this last charge one man of Company G was killed, and Captain Sudborough was wounded in the right side and arm.

At 2 o'clock we had recovered every foot of lost ground, and were as firmly established as before. I have heard, as yet, no estimate of our loss, or of the Rebels, except in prisoners. We took between three and four thousand prisoners, which is more men than we had engaged.

I feel a little curiosity as to the coloring correspondents will give this affair. Will they acknowledge it a surprise? The commander of the fort was taken in bed; also most of the garrison. After it was discovered, it was superbly managed, and Lee's desperate attempt to join his forces with Johnson's was rendered abortive.

March 26th, 1865.

I have just read the President's Inaugural. I consider it the most remarkable state paper of modern times. Beautiful in its simplicity; grand and majestic in its expressions of lofty faith in the "Great Ruler of Nations;" it resembles more the production of one of Israel's ancient rulers than the Inaugural Address of a modern politician. I gathered strength and courage from its perusal. Our camp has settled down to its usual quiet. Nothing remains to remind the casual observer of the strife of yesterday.

Our men are busily engaged, under cover of night, in repairing the damage done our works. Part of our regiment went to Hatcher's Run today, and returned with the news that the Sixth Corps advanced, and now hold one line of Rebel works, and that they took about two thousand prisoners.

Poor, old, misguided Robert; every effort to shake off the strangling grip with which Grant has throttled him but serves to tighten it. This attack and failure proves his weakness beyond a doubt.

March 30th, 1865.

My curiosity as to what correspondents might say of the battle of the twenty-fifth inst. is partially gratified by a perusal of the Herald's dispatch. Their account of the affair, after daylight, is in the main correct, that dated at City Point coming nearest the truth. But the facts in regard to the Rebels getting possession of the fort are suppressed or misrepresented. Neither does General Parks' "official" come nearer the mark.

"The fact is, we have one more occasion to thank God for saving us from the stupidity of "men in high places."

The long-expected movement on our left is under way. Yesterday Army Headquarters moved to Dinwiddie Court House, about four miles beyond Hatcher's Run. Part of the Twenty-fourth Corps and the Twenty-fifth corps have joined the expedition, which must swell the number to near one hundred thousand infantry.

This force represents the "upper" and Sherman's the "nether" mill stones that are grinding the Confederacy to powder. Meanwhile the post assigned the Ninth Corps is one of responsibility. We must hold these lines or Grant's supplies are cut off.

It has rained all day, steadily; a warm, gentle rain

that seems so much in keeping with the season, I enjoy it. What a bright, fresh green it gives to vegetation, and how sweetly the new-born flowers look up and smile their thankfulness.

April 1st, 1865.

The Rebels are very restless in our front. Nearly every night this week they have threatened the line in front of the Third Division.

And now, that dark night has "spread her sable mantle o'er the earth," and those who remain in camp have retired to snatch, perchance, a few hours sleep, perchance to be aroused before slumber has closed their eyelids, to face war's rude alarms, I sit me down to ponder on the whereabouts and doings of General Grant during the past four days.

"Any news from the left?" meet whom you may, is the eager inquiry. "Nothing reliable," the unvarying reply. Of course, the air is filled with rumors.

Inside of Petersburg, April 3d, 1865.

I was cut short off night before last by orders to "get ready to move, immediately." Petersburg is ours, at last. The fighting yesterday was terrific, lasting from 3 o'clock in the forenoon until dark. The Seventeenth was not engaged; was detailed as Provost Guard. The First Division entered the city early this morning. I can write no more now. Everybody shouting. My heart overflows with happiness, too deep for words.

April 4th.

I have slept one night in Petersburg. Again, with knapsack packed, I am ready for the move. I have

no time to chronicle particulars; would that I had. This much I will say: I am about as happy as man can be far from his loved ones. Yesterday was a glorious day for the Nation and for us.

#### April 7th.

These are busy days with us; days of glorious activity, wherein we reap fruits of former toil. Our harvest time of victory, watered by tears and enriched by blood, is yielding bountifully. I have no time to give details; not even an outline of what has transpired during the past week.

We left Petersburg day before yesterday, and marched out on the South Side Railroad to near Southerland Station, where every man, not otherwise employed, was placed on picket. Yesterday we started at 9 o'clock and marched sixteen miles, which brings us twenty-five miles from Petersburg. We expect the cars will run as far as this place tomorrow.

#### April 8th.

We have remained all day in camp, expecting, each moment, the order to move. Last night was a night of rest, the first in seven long, weary days. Today we are ready to march, or fight, or do any work remaining to be done, to finish up the job we have in hand. I do not, however, anticipate any more fighting, unless with small bands of guerillas. Our men are scouring the woods in every direction, but with small success.

Good news comes pouring in. Last night an "official" from General Grant was read, telling us of the capture of six Major Generals, fourteen pieces of artillery and thirteen thousand prisoners. This evening it is reported that Lee, hard pressed in front and rear, has asked Grant for terms of surrender. Thus the good work goes bravely on. I read of great rejoicing in the North over our success. What, then, must be our emotions? Words cannot express them. I can only say, in all sincerity, I am glad I contributed my mite to bring about this glorious result. Colonel Swift has been appointed Provost Marshal of this district, and has asked me to act as clerk.

April 10th, 1865.

It has just now been officially announced that Lee has surrendered the last remnant of his broken army. Everyone is wild with joy. As for myself, I cannot write! I cannot talk; only my glad heart cries "Hosanna! Hosanna in the Highest; in the Highest!"

## CHAPTER XLVII.

Hobbs House, Va., April 10th, 1865.

Transportation has nearly failed since we left Petersburg. The cars are running past here, but the roads are in such condition the troops can with difficulty be supplied with rations. Captain Sudborough has left us on twenty days' leave to visit his home in Michigan. He goes by way of Richmond, fearing he may have no other opportunity to see that famous city, the goal of our ambition the last four years. During the last two days great changes have been made in our police regulations. The General has put his machine in running order, and we can now turn out "citizens of the United States" with neatness and dispatch.

Nearly every man, woman and child in this County have taken the oath of allegiance. The people of this County are quietly resuming their usual avocations. From the little knowledge of human nature I possess, I believe a majority of them to be more truly loyal now to the "Old Union," as they term it, than they ever were before.

April 19th, 1865.

Yesterday afternoon we received sad news from our Nation's Capital; news that caused each soldier's cheek to blanch, as if in presence of some dire calam-

ity. Our President is murdered; ruthlessly struck down by an assassin's hand! The demon of Secession, in his dying agony, poured out the vials of its wrath on our Executive. [Imagination cannot paint the whirlwind of revengeful wrath that swept over the army; the strong desire, openly expressed, to avenge his death by annihilating the people whose treason brings forth and nourishes such monsters.] Woe to the armed Rebel, now and henceforth, who makes the least resistance.

To illustrate the feeling of the men, I will write down an incident that occurred in our regiment. We have one reptile left, and only one, to my knowledge. When the news reached us, he was heard to say, with an oath: "I'm glad of it. If I had been there, I would have helped to do it."

Before his words had time to cool, he was seized by the men near him; a tent rope was thrown around his neck, and he was hustled toward a tree, with the intent to hang him. The officers interfered, and sent him under guard to the "bull pen."

Tomorrow is to be observed as a day of mourning throughout the army. Never was man more sincerely mourned than will be Abraham Lincoln, and in history his name will be enrolled beside our Washington.

Alexandria, Va., April 24th, 1865.

One year ago we passed through this city on our way to Richmond. Today we tread its streets with buoyant feet, on our way home, our work accomplished.

I am filled with gratitude that I am permitted to see this day. 'Tis a long, weary road, the one we traveled, but what matter now? A year's campaign! Surely it has few parallels in history. Eleven months, lacking nine days, the Ninth Corps occupied the trenches before Petersburg, under fire both night and day; but the grand results more than compensate for all our sufferings.

We are going home, soon as the coils of red tape that bind us hand and foot can be unwound.

April 28th, 1865.

We are now encamped on the homeward side of Washington, about two miles east of Georgetown, where we are to remain, so say our officers, until mustered out. Of course, that day will not be revealed to us until the date of its arrival. It would not be military to give out information in advance. I form my conclusions after reading the signs of the times, and am convinced our final muster-out will occur the last of May or first of June.

Only one thing can delay us, and that not for long; and that is Sherman's unfortunate treaty with Johnson. That was a sad mistake, but I think General Grant will easily correct it.

Tenleytown, D. C., April 29th, 1865.

I can write of nothing, just now, but "Home, Sweet Home;" can think of nothing else. Is it a wonder? When work was to be done, did I not set my face, like flint, to do it? And now, the task

complete, our Nation's unity restored, slavery wiped out, and peace secured, is it any wonder my impatient soul chafes at restraint? But, patience, thou spirit of unrest. I have been making out muster rolls today; tomorrow we muster. Captain Sudborough has returned. He learned, in Philadelphia, that we were coming, and hastened to join us, that he might go home with the regiment. Every detailed man has been returned. The next muster rolls I make will be to muster us out of the service.

May 4th, 1865.

The work of preparation progresses, but oh, so slowly. But the work is gigantic. The dismantling of this mighty engine of war; of returning this "citizen army" to its legitimate and proper field of action, transforming it to an army of citizens, is an herculean task. Officers are busy arranging their affairs for the final settlement.

Everything that has passed into or through their hands must be accounted for. There is but one "loop hole" for the dishonest officer. "Lost in battle," like charity, can be made to cover a "multitude of sins."

Our pay rolls are completed and have been sent to the Paymaster. We draw clothing nearly every day, as the officers insist every man shall wear a new suit home. Guns, too, are being issued to every enlisted man, as we return our guns to the State Arsenal.

Governor Crapo and Senators Chandler and Howard are in Washington, and come out occasionally to see us.

Drill and dress parade—"fuss and feathers"—are the order of every day.

May 8th, 1865.

Two weeks today we arrived in sight of Washington, from our year's campaign, crowned, this time, with victory. Why the impatience with which I await my discharge? I wonder, am I homesick, at this late day, just on the point of going home?

I certainly am not well; it is equally true I can think of naught but home. But, I am better than when I came; therefore I will write it down—impatience.

There are rumors of grand reviews, triumphal processions, and all the rest of it; and our flag, too, must have all the various battles in which we were engaged inscribed upon it. And officers are in no hurry to lay aside their trappings. Why should they be? It clothes them with authority which, lain aside, they never more can wear.

May 12th, 1865.

I received a letter from home last night, dated the sixth inst. Its effect was magical, and confirmed me in the suspicion that I am—a little—homesick. Of course, I must know that arrangements are being made to send us home, and that the time is near at hand. Red tape requires time, and its fountain head is here. "How not to do it" seems to be the study of all officials in Washington. Still, there are some things to encourage us. Two regiments from the Ninth Corps

have started for home—the Thirty-first and Thirty-second Maine went yesterday.

May 19th, 1865.

The grand review has been officially announced to come off on Tuesday and Wednesday of next week, in Washington. The First Division, Ninth Corps, is being reviewed this afternoon by Generals Grant, Sheridan and others. Our brigade commander tells us this is to be our last demonstration; no more drills; no more reviews.

Probably the First Division will be required to do guard duty in Washington until after the review. That will all be over next week. Captain Sudborough tells me he has learned for a fact we will not be kept here longer than next week.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

Tenleytown, D. C., May 21st, 1865.

The long-delayed, eagerly-looked-for order has been issued; read to us on dress parade. "All troops whose term of service expires on or before the first day of October, 1865, shall be mustered out immediately." and our officers are to make out their final muster-out rolls without delay. Recruits are to be transferred to veteran regiments, which will be retained for a time.

Five copies of muster rolls are to be made out, and a descriptive list of each recruit, of whom there are thirty-three in our company. The glad day on which we bid farewell to "Dixie" does not yet appear, but I can now await, with patience, the necessary time.

May 24th, 1865.

The grand review is over. No doubt it was imposing, beyond the power of words to describe. Now we can begin our work in earnest. We had positive orders from Headquarters to do nothing until that event was disposed of. We could not get blank muster rolls until tonight. Working little by little, I have prepared the descriptive lists and accounts of our recruits, and have put company papers in proper shape. Our departure now depends on dispatch; first come,

first served. I must now forget my "pains and aches" and settle down to a week of persevering effort.

The captain gives me leave to detail as many men as I can use.

May 31st, 1865.

Dearest Wife:

I cannot rest this night without writing you a few lines to report progress. Have we not been busy these last—I cannot tell how many—days? To me, it seems an age. Our papers are all complete and have been sent to Headquarters for inspection. Our roll accounts for one hundred seventy-three men; this for Company G. Of the above number, twenty-three are present to be discharged.

The Twentieth Michigan was mustered out this morning, and will start for home tomorrow morning. We expect to be mustered out tomorrow; certainly the next day. My anxiety is for you, my wife, fearing the suspense is greater than you can bear.

It is useless for you to write to me again, darling, and this is the last letter you will get from your soldier. Before this reaches you, I will be on my homeward way, a full-fledged citizen, and as I come, my glad heart will sing the joyous refrain: "Oh, I come, I come, ye have called me long; I come o'er the mountain with light and song."

Yours lovingly.

B

RD-941

June 8th, 1865.

We were discharged at Delaney House, D. C., on the third day of June, and next day took cars for Detroit, where we arrived on the seventh, and were disbanded. We are no longer an organized body. Each individual is at liberty to consult his own interests or inclinations. After exchanging photos and kindly regards with my late comrades, I took the mid-night train for Jackson, where I arrived at 5 o'clock in the morning.

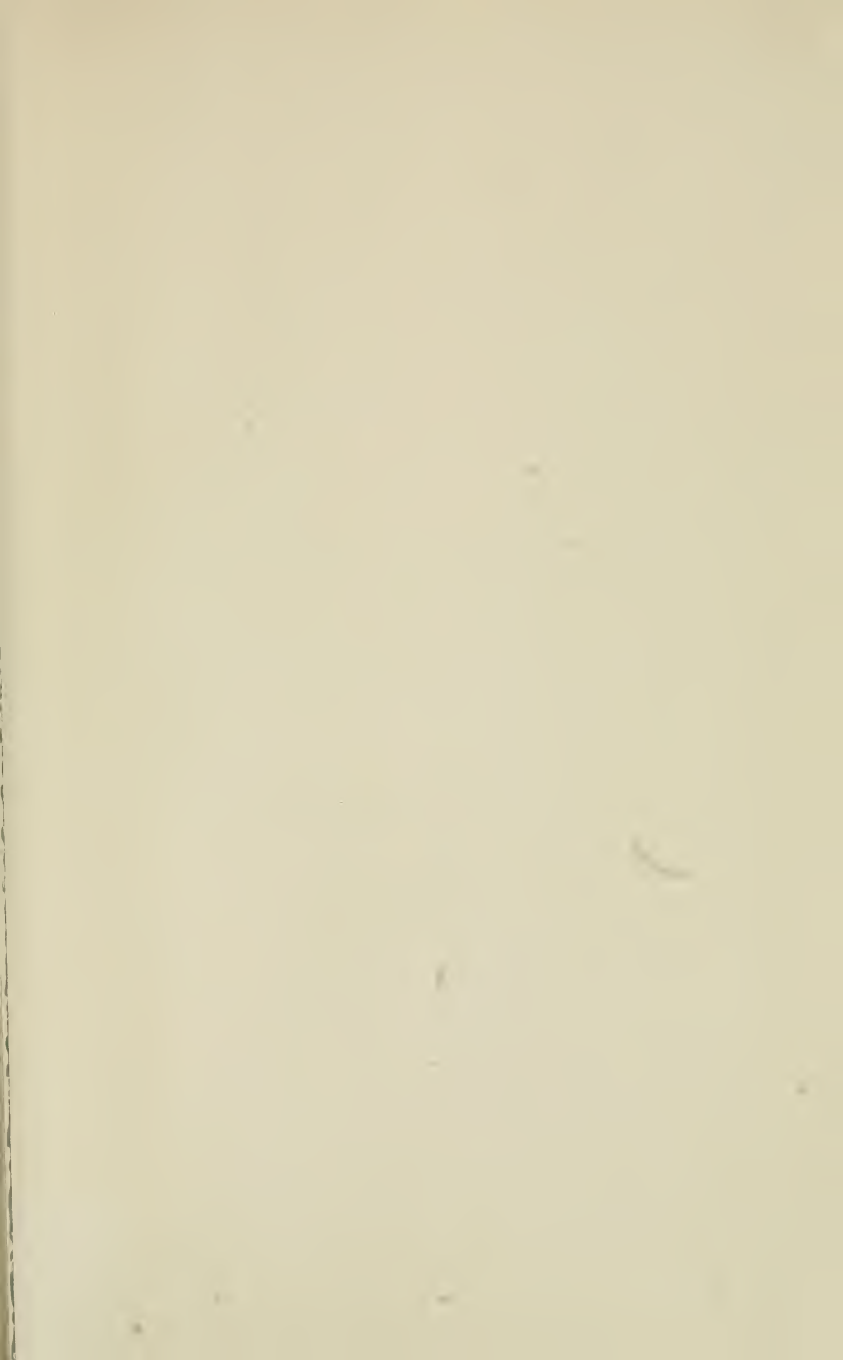
It is now five miles to my country home. I lost no time in friendly greetings by the way, but leaped from the cars before they fairly stopped; passed swiftly up the track to the first street crossing; up "Moody Hill" and along the "Gravel;" turned to the left; on down the "Marvin Hill" to the old "Clinton House;" again to the left, past "Markham's" and "Shipman's," to the little school house on the corner. I am now one mile from home. What a beautiful world it is, this bright June morning; and how familiar the sights and sounds that greet my senses.

The trees, dressed in their robes of darkest green, wave me a welcome. The wayside thorn, arrayed in spotless white, doth waft to me its richest perfume. The feathered songsters, their bright plumage flashing in the sunlight, attune for me their sweetest melody, and every nerve and fiber of my being responds to these kindly greetings.

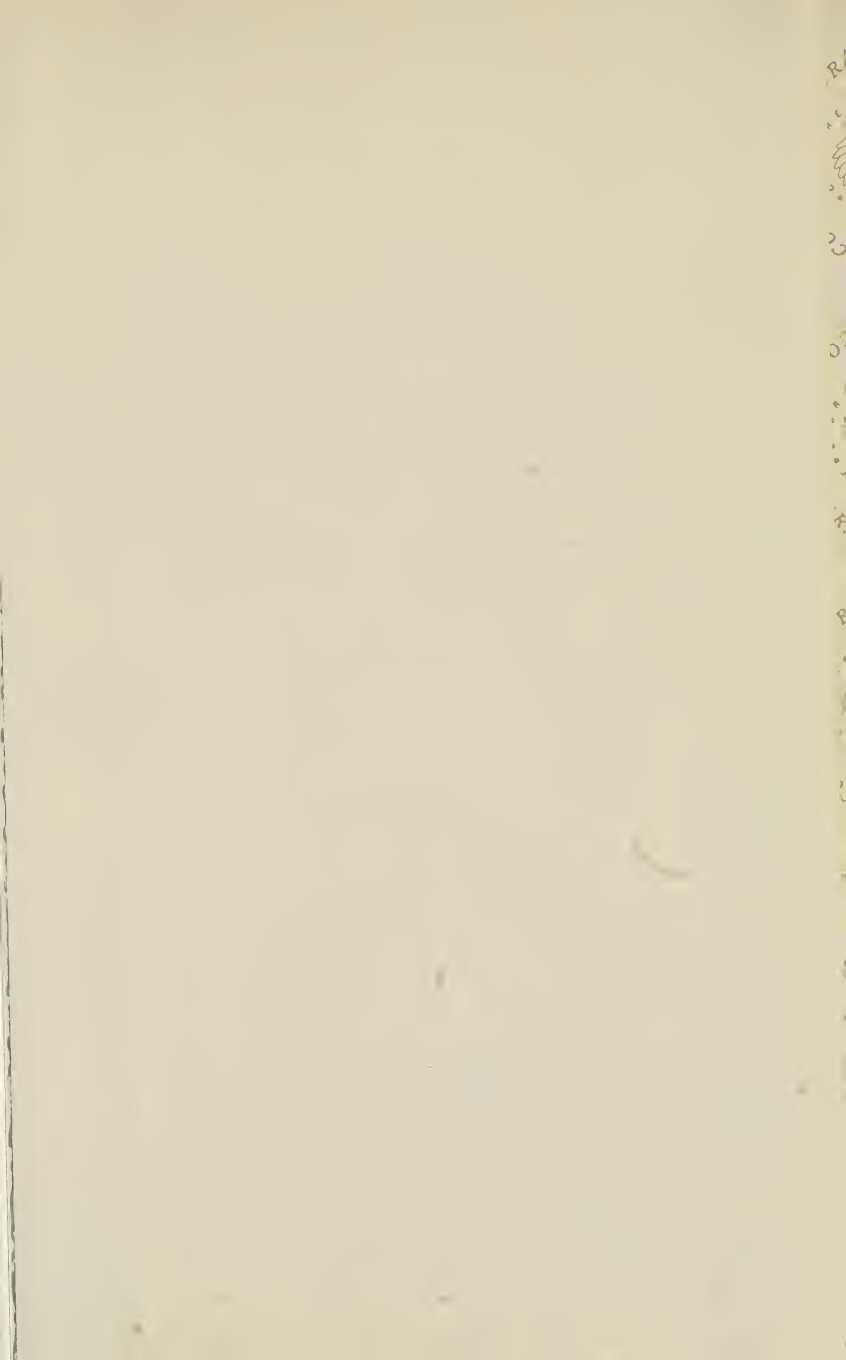
I am almost home; just around the corner. I see the cottage now, set in a grove I planted many years ago, when first my mate and I did build our humble

nest. I wrote them yesterday I would break my fast with them this morning. I wonder, did they get it? Yes, they are on the lookout. In the east door, that commands this angle of the road, stands my darling, waving her handkerchief, her dear face transfigured with joy and happiness. In the south door is my eldest daughter, clapping her hands in unaffected delight. Another daughter and my son have climbed the road fence, and are giving vent to their joy in childish boisterousness, while "pet," the little lass, is running down the street, fast as her little feet can carry her, to leap into her father's arms and bid him Welcome Home.













DOBBS BROS.  
LIBRARY BINDING

MAY 80  
ST. AUGUSTINE



FLA.  
32084

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00021114431

